MY JOURNEY TOWARD REGINA JONAS

I WILL NEVER FORGET my ambivalent feelings at the closing scene of the film *Yentl*. For most of the film, I was transported back to the eastern European shtetl where Yentl is portrayed famously as a young girl struggling to have the education and opportunities that were only permitted in those days to boys. But suddenly, in the final moments, I watched Barbra Streisand seated in the hold of a ship, together with other Jewish immigrants, heading for America. The actress begins to sing the song that by now is so well known: "Papa, can you hear me?" She rises and goes to the ship's deck, where she stands by the railing and brings the song to its ecstatic conclusion. The camera slowly draws back until the expanse of ocean fills the screen. The boat traverses the horizon. The end.

Was that the right thing to do? To leave? To retreat? To start life again somewhere else? Did Yentl have no chance in Europe? Did a young woman who had just conquered the world of the Talmud on her own turf, and who had triumphantly stood her ground with men, inevitably have to leave the scene?

The filming of Isaac Bashevis Singer's story took place almost four decades after the Shoah, the murder of European Jewry by the Nazis. As a Jew who had grown up in Germany, I had conflicting feelings as I sat in the Hamburg movie theater that day, but my knowledge of recent history would not permit me to find words to express my ambivalence. Naturally, as a Jewish member of the audience, I *had to be* grateful.

Thank God Yentl got out of Europe on time! Thank God she and her descendants were spared from the tragedies looming on the European horizon: pogroms, anti-Semitism, persecution, culminating finally in the Nazi death camps.

But something in me resisted this message. I knew the answer contained in the film's conclusion could not be the right one for a woman like me, a Jewish feminist in Germany in 1983.

The Shoah, which almost completely extinguished Jewish life in Europe, resonated wordlessly in the film's final scenes, adding to the sense of relief at Yentl's emigration. But the story contained a second, subtler message. Long before "gender" had become a term used in feminist discourse, Yentl had traversed gender's traditional, accepted boundaries. As a girl dressed in a man's clothing—as a "yeshiva *bocher*"—she immersed herself in a male world of learning, thus reclaiming a spiritual inheritance that had been passed down exclusively among men for centuries. And this all happened in "old Europe," supposedly a forbidden zone for such pursuits. Following the logic of the film's conclusion, Yentl the troublemaker, Yentl the rebellious woman, ultimately must leave Europe, thereby also leaving the old ways undisturbed.

But was this the only and unavoidable response to the challenge? Was Europe so hardened by convention that Judaism, too, would be unable to open new doors in Europe? And what was the situation now, for me?

In fact, back in the 1980s, when I saw the film, it was unimaginable for a Jewish woman in Germany to conquer the world of the Talmud—because fathers were no longer handing down Jewish tradition to their sons, let alone to their daughters. It never even occurred to most of us younger women that a female Jewish scholar could become a rabbi, because hardly any men would take on such a task either. Not only had the Shoah almost completely destroyed European Jewry in the physical sense; spiritually, too, Jewry was devastated to its core.

The few survivors who rebuilt their lives after 1945 on the ruined foundations of German Jewry came not only from Germany but from all across central and eastern Europe. Most ended up staying by chance, not by choice, in the land of the murderers, and most were too deeply wounded in their souls to develop an active, positive Judaism ready to take on contemporary challenges. In addition, these survivors carried with them memories and traditions from their destroyed homes. These memories gave them stability, but did not provide a vision for the future. Postwar Jewry arose against the backdrop of these many, varied memories.

We children of survivors grew up with the attitude that at best we were an "epilogue." Our "Jewish upbringing" often fostered an inferiority complex, according to which we no longer really existed. Relatives from Israel or America helped confirm this complex, so that we developed neither self-confidence in our Jewishness nor an appreciation of the fact that what once had existed could still be meaningful for us. The answer, for those who wanted a *real* Jewish life, was—just like Yentl—to set out for America, or better yet, Israel. The very idea of promoting equality for women in the Jewish tradition in postwar Germany seemed laughable,

particularly because tradition as such lay shattered, and few could picture creating Jewish life from these broken shards.

Thank God, Yentl left Europe just in time, so that the seedlings she and other Jewish women planted at least could thrive in the United States!

But this was not the entire answer.

Wouldn't Yentl encounter similar reservations among men in America as in Europe? Were not female rabbis in the United States—at least until the 1970s—just as little accepted as in Europe? In Yentl's day, was not the struggle for equality between the sexes in Judaism only starting on both sides of the ocean?

Between Yentl's generation and mine lay the abyss of the Shoah. But between the film *Yentl* and the publishing of this book today, an event occurred that changed our outlook: the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. Before, few thought European Jewry would ever thrive again, to pick up where it left off in 1933. But unlike Yentl, who had to leave at the end of the story, European Jews in my generation have reasons to stay.

Some of those reasons were revealed like long-hidden treasures when, after the end of the communist dictatorship in the East, the archives of the former East Germany were opened. In 1989 the remaining Gesamtarchiv der deutschen Juden (Central Archive of German Jewry) was located in Potsdam. Seven years later, in 1996, this archive was given to the Stiftung Neue Synagoge Berlin—Centrum Judaicum. The archive contained sensational material. And the most remarkable rediscovery was—in my view—the first female rabbi in the world: Regina Jonas.

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In 1989 the name Regina Jonas was barely known anymore. She was born on August 3, 1902, in Berlin and murdered in Auschwitz, most likely on October 15, 1944. Jonas had given her documents presumably to the Berlin Jewish Community for safekeeping in 1942 shortly before her deportation to the Theresienstadt concentration camp. Most probably, these fourteen files were transferred from the Berlin Jewish Community to the archive, where they lay for five decades without awaking anyone's interest.

In particular, there were two outstanding documents. First, there was Jonas's eighty-eight-page halachic treatise, "Can Women Serve as Rabbis?" Jonas had written this in 1930 as her final paper for the Berlin Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums [Academy for the Science of Judaism]. There, Jonas made the historical first attempt to argue, on the basis of Halacha, or Jewish religious law, for the emancipation of

women up to and including admission to the rabbinate. The second groundbreaking document in this collection was a certificate of ordination, written in Hebrew. According to this document, Regina Jonas became the first female rabbi in the world on December 27, 1935. A leading liberal rabbi of that day, Max Dienemann, had signed the document.

In addition, Jonas's files contained letters from most of the renowned contemporary German rabbis. Some letters were from Jonas's teachers, including her professors at the Academy for the Science of Judaism, including Leo Baeck, Eduard Baneth, and Harry Torczyner (Tur Sinai); others were from colleagues with whom Jonas had worked closely: rabbis Max Weyl, Isidor Bleichrode, Felix Singermann, and Joseph Norden; and many letters were from people who had supported Jonas's courage and persistence during years of struggle for recognition as a rabbi.

As sensational as the discovery was, it also evoked a sense of deep disappointment. Why had no survivor of the Nazi regime spoken about Regina Jonas? Why was her story suppressed for decades? When Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati ordained Sally Priesand in 1972, the press celebrated her as "the first woman rabbi of the world." Why did hardly any of those who knew better not correct this information? Why should it have taken more than a half-century before Regina Jonas could be restored to her proper place in Jewish history?

Wasn't Regina Jonas someone of whom surviving German Jews could be proud? Why did Leo Baeck, who survived Theresienstadt and spoke out for liberal Judaism, never mention his former student who suffered with him at the concentration camp? Jonas had worked closely in Theresienstadt with the Viennese psychoanalyst Viktor Frankl, whose postwar publication and autobiography *Ein Psychologe erlebt das Konzentrationslager* [A Psychologist Experiences the Concentration Camp], published in English as *Man's Search for Meaning,* revolved around his experiences in the concentration camp, from which Frankl developed his own approach to therapy. Why is there not a single reference to Regina Jonas in this book? Frankl certainly had not forgotten her. In an interview in 1991 with the German-American theologian Katharina von Kellenbach after the rediscovery of Jonas's works, not only did Frankl remember very well the female rabbi in Theresienstadt, but one of her sermons had moved him so much that he could even repeat it in detail.

Why was Regina Jonas kept from us? And who else have we younger women been denied? In the early 1990s, several Jewish women—including myself—organized within the Berlin Jewish Community to press for equality for women in the synagogues and services. Why did none of Regina Jonas's former students, of whom quite a few still lived in Berlin, inform

us that we were following in her tradition, that we in fact were only picking up a debate that had begun decades ago?

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I have two answers to these questions. The first is shame. The survivor generation had cut itself off emotionally from German Jewry and suppressed its memory. Its members were ashamed to have believed in a country that had abused their trust so terribly, inflicting the most horrible trauma on Jewry. To remember Regina Jonas would be to recall a time when hope for the future had been transformed into murderous self-betrayal. For many, this was too painful.

The second answer is also shame. Even today, a woman who steps out of line and succeeds in a male domain quickly becomes an embarrassment—particularly if she calls attention to controversial subjects. During my research, I sensed that some eyewitnesses—both men and women—had felt threatened by Jonas's public breaking of taboos. Instead of taking her seriously, they portrayed her as a negative exception, one of those unconventional, high-achieving women with unpleasant attributes, such as "hysterical," "odd-looking," "eccentric," and so on.

Perhaps only a new generation of Jews who choose to live in Germany—a generation that no longer struggles with the inferiority complex of "still" living in Germany, but rather that deliberately connects with its spiritual heritage on the very ground where it was generated—can appreciate the message of Regina Jonas's life.

As time passes and the pain begins to fade, the messages left to us by victims of the Shoah become more complex. Some of these messages—such as "staying"—can be reevaluated and seen in a new light only in my generation. Regina Jonas did not leave—unlike Yentl. She stayed at the cost of her own life. Jonas always refused to flee. She, like many other rabbis in Nazi Germany, could have left; perhaps she could even have made a career in the United States. But she did not leave. She saw her life's work as staying with those of her people who were in need, and she took the same path of suffering that cost the lives of more than fifty-five thousand Berlin Jews who were murdered in German concentration and extermination camps.

For many Jews, it certainly took courage to leave Nazi Germany. But Jonas's decision to stay displayed a courage of its own, which is meaningful for me and the generation of younger German Jews. Her commitment to Jewish life in Germany contains seeds that can regenerate in us, contradicting decades of insistence that there can be no more Jewish life in the land of the Nazi perpetrators.

To stay as an act of resistance.

To stay as a way of holding on to a greater past, a past that must not be sacrificed due to current circumstances—the epitome of the Jewish leitmotif.

To stay as an antiheroic act, an act that contradicts the dramatic, almost kitschy film and fantasy scenes of persecution, decline, flight, and death, and instead focuses on the daily ups and downs of life.

To stay as a radical constructive approach.

My generation would stay, hold on, rebuild, perhaps even take new directions. And Regina Jonas bequeathed to my peers and me exactly the right bridge.

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In 1998, while I was helping prepare the first Bet Debora conference in Berlin for female rabbis, cantors, scholars, and spiritually interested Jews, Dr. Hermann Simon, director of the Stiftung Neue Synagoge Berlin—Centrum Judaicum, asked me to examine the unpublished work of Regina Jonas that had been revealed by our new access to the East German archives. He wanted me to write a biography about her, and then to edit and write a commentary on her halachic treatise, "Can Women Serve as Rabbis?"

As great as the silence of remaining eyewitnesses, colleagues, students, and friends of Regina Jonas had been, so was their excitement now over the fact that a book about Jonas would be published. It was crazy. Suddenly, dozens of voices were raised—for or against Regina Jonas. These aging opponents or supporters of the first female rabbi in the world argued so vehemently that I began to feel that, even after more than half a century, the provocation of a woman entering the rabbinate was as stirring as if it had occurred yesterday.

Initially, negative attitudes predominated—including, to my astonishment, those of a significant number of women. One of Jonas's contemporaries, who also had studied at the Academy for the Science of Judaism and later became a professor for Jewish studies, described Jonas as a "hysterical person" whose only goal was to "show herself off against the men." A former pupil of Jonas who also became a professor of Jewish studies considered Jonas's treatise, "Can Woman Serve as Rabbis?", to be "nothing special" and her arguments to be "cold coffee" compared with today's publications by American Jewish feminists. Some of Jonas's male colleagues, too, stressed that "no one took her seriously" and added that her certificate of ordination was not genuine. At a podium discussion to

which I was invited and where I mentioned the name Regina Jonas in passing, the son of a cantor who was Jonas's contemporary interrupted me and warned me not to use the term *Rabbinerin* [female rabbi] casually. Jonas was "no *Rabbinerin,*" she was "only a preacher!" He emphasized that Leo Baeck "did *not*" sign Regina Jonas's original Hebrew certificate of ordination but "only the translation" into German. And he added that Max Dienemann "accomplished single-handedly" an ordination that remained extremely questionable among German Jews. Furthermore, he said, the Jewish Community only allowed Regina Jonas to preach in the synagogues because during the Nazi period many rabbis had fled abroad or were imprisoned, creating a great need for rabbis. The same man expressed his opinion in a letter to a German Jewish newspaper, in response to which Jonas's supporters raised their voices. "This is total nonsense!" Rabbi Ted (Theodor) Alexander of San Francisco railed in a letter to the newspaper. "The man has no idea!" On the contrary: many rabbis stood behind Jonas and not only respected her as their equal but saw Dienemann's step as "long overdue." As a youth, Rabbi Alexander, today of Congregation B'nay Emunah, went to the same synagogue on Shabbat with Regina Jonas. In an enthusiastic letter to me, he expressed his joy over Jonas's triumph in becoming a rabbi, noting that his daughter also has become a rabbi. Rabbi Nathan Peter Levinson, who also knew Regina Jonas well as a young man, likewise expressed to me his belated appreciation for Jonas. Her ordination cleared the way for new developments in Judaism and ended up encouraging many women—including his wife, Pnina—to follow a similar path. Pnina Navè Levinson herself was a pupil of Regina Jonas in Berlin and was the first to put out Jewish feminist publications in postwar Germany.

The "Jonas case" brought the denominational coordinates of Germany's pre-1939 rabbinical system back into play. Orthodox and liberal Judaism—both of which had moderate and radical forces—suddenly faced off against each other again in the context of the 1920s and 1930s. Not one rabbi from this period was without an opinion about the ordination of women. Once again, the great authorities of those days took their positions vis-à-vis the scandal. And the debate took place in German—my language. I was able to perceive and appreciate all the optimistic innocence with which one could, even in the early 1930s, feel in touch with the most important developments in Judaism.

I felt almost wistful when I saw how much "further along" the Jews in Germany had been, just how much had been possible then, just which struggles were remaining but had at least been discussed, themes for which there was little recognition today in Germany, barely any understanding. Had

these possibilities become obsolete through the destruction of the Shoah? Or could it be that if we wish to have a vibrant Judaism here today, we must connect with the very themes taken up by Regina Jonas and others—in other words, to reattach ourselves to this heritage?

I started to feel a foundation under my feet, a base on which not just I but all Jews in Germany today could have been standing had there been no Shoah. It seemed only natural that Judaism would be able to develop under new terms. Because if they could see new horizons back then, why should I not have the same possibilities today? Rescuing Jonas from oblivion opened new doors.

Word soon got out about my research. In 1998 I had placed ads in German-Jewish newspapers worldwide, and people reacted with letters, e-mail, and phone calls. The responses continue to this day. In all, there have been more than forty contacts.

The response was unexpected, because virtually nobody had spoken about Regina Jonas for decades. And as an editor of *jüdisches berlin* magazine, I knew that very few people ever respond to authors' queries. But very quickly, people reacted. It was as if they all had been waiting to say something about Regina Jonas, whether good or bad. The story moved them in a way that the ordination of Sally Priesand had not, because Regina Jonas was ordained in Germany—specifically, in Berlin. It was a way for all these older people to reconnect with their own past.

Here too, I experienced as much approval of Jonas as aggression against her. One woman who was a forced laborer in 1941 together with Regina Jonas utterly refused to speak with me. One should let the "blanket of forgetfulness" cover Regina Jonas, because "everything she did as a woman was forbidden!" Such silences made me realize how much open rejection Regina Jonas had to endure from other Jews even during the Shoah, and I also saw how little compassion they showed for her sixty years after her murder. Still, numerous former religious-school pupils reported how much Jonas's lessons had meant to them, particularly in those dark days in Nazi Germany. For many girls, this unusual religion teacher became a lifelong role model.

A former pupil of Jonas who taught at Berlin's Jewish kindergarten after the war referred to Jonas's "modern pedagogic style," which was already noteworthy then and drew many girls back to Judaism. For example, Jonas wrote a play that her pupils performed with great enthusiasm every year for Chanukah. The kindergarten teacher told me that for decades she had tried to find a copy of the play because it had been more effective than many contemporary teaching methods at instilling a joy in Judaism among children.

I also learned much about the relativity of oral history. Often, the descriptions revealed more about the witnesses themselves than about Regina Jonas. It was astonishing how much weight many former pupils gave to Jonas's appearance. And here I made an interesting observation. Those students who had been preadolescent had an overwhelmingly positive recollection of their "unforgettably beautiful" and "impressive" teacher, who managed to "make learning unbelievably interesting." For the older girls, in whom sexuality and competition over boys played a role, negative memories predominated of a teacher who clearly was threatening, who did not set an example as a wife or mother but instead agitated for professional equality with men. Even today I detected some disrespectful giggling and nasty comments in the descriptions of those then-adolescent young women. Regina Jonas supposedly did not take care of herself, her wardrobe left much to be desired, and even her hair supposedly stood on end.

It hardly mattered whether the memories were positive or negative: I was amazed at the deep impression Regina Jonas had left in these women and at how vividly they could describe their former teacher sixty years later. Several former pupils could even recite their lines from the Chanukah play.

Just as the eyewitnesses described the controversy surrounding Regina Jonas as if it had taken place only yesterday, so did Regina Jonas become ever more present to me as a person—even physically. When I visited the places where she lived and worked, it sometimes felt as if she were accompanying me—as if she actively pushed me toward the most important questions. I asked myself how she would have related to my Jewish feminist positions: a women's Rosh Chodesh group (new month celebration), experiments with Hebrew liturgy, feminine terms for God, new rituals for new lifestyles. How would she have responded if she could have been a guest of honor at our first Bet Debora conference in May 1999? She would certainly have been deeply moved to find a younger generation in Germany carrying Jewish tradition into the future. Her dream would have been fulfilled. It was always her goal as a rabbi to enable women to have an active role in Judaism, because this promised the revival of tradition.

Regina Jonas probably would have been somewhat amazed by our new ideas, considering she was herself quite conventional, if not conservative. She was never out to change the Jewish religion. Rather, she wanted to reactivate Judaism against the backdrop of the "immoral" ways of the "Roaring Twenties," to reinstill moral values in the Jewish youth of Berlin. Thus, she even argued that a female rabbi should remain single in

order to exemplify the ideal of *zniut*—dignified restraint and chastity. This view of course later conflicted with her love relationship with Rabbi Joseph Norden of Hamburg, who was a widower and much older than she. Nevertheless, "higher morality" remained her lifelong ideal. And in this respect she trusted women more than men. Correspondingly, she argued for the female rabbinate as a "cultural necessity." Here again she was amazingly modern and open to new possibilities. In her halachic treatise, "Can Women Serve as Rabbis?", Jonas managed more or less to reconcile the emancipation of women with principles of Jewish religious law.

But she would certainly not have missed the chance to step up to the *bima* with us younger women during the Shabbat service at Bet Debora. Yes, she would have joined in, and she would have discovered to her satisfaction that most of the debates that take place today in the United States and in Israel about the female rabbinate were already handled in her treatise.

Today, orthodox Jewish women are seeking halachic arguments with which they can advance the cause of women entering the rabbinate. Jonas's halachic treatise provides them with valuable suggestions. Today, rabbis discuss the pros and cons of a male or female title: in Hebrew, *Rabbanit, Rav,* or *Rabah;* and in German, *Rabbiner* or *Rabbinerin.* This theme, which emerged in Jonas's 1930 writings, was taken up recently by Rabbi Moshe Zemer of Israel. In other respects, too, Regina Jonas's life and work has been well received, with interesting results. The Hadassah International Research Institute of Jewish Women at Brandeis University published Gudrun Maierhof's article about Regina Jonas's activities as a rabbi in the Nazi period. Currently, a doctoral candidate is comparing Jonas with other religious female thinkers during the Shoah, including Edith Stein.

However, with the discovery of Jonas's writings, not only must Jewish history be rewritten with regard to the female rabbinate, but a new chapter of Jewish life in Germany must be written too, for me and many others whose families remained after the Shoah: the chapter connecting us with our predecessors. True, the discussion about women in the rabbinate today is far more advanced in the United States. But the U.S. experience cannot be translated directly to the European context. We who have stayed have to write that new chapter by ourselves, based on our own experiences.

Unlike in the United States, where female candidates now make up the majority in liberal rabbinical seminaries, Europe still must fight for the acceptance of women in the rabbinate. In Germany, at any rate, this book already has contributed greatly to this purpose. Thanks to the name

Regina Jonas, the subject of *Rabbinerin* is no longer quite so provocative, because a woman already was accepted to the rabbinate many decades ago. The next wave of German-speaking female rabbis, starting with Daniela Thau in the 1980s and Bea Wyler in the mid-1990s, and continuing with Eveline Goodman-Thau and Gesa Ederberg, now could refer back to Regina Jonas and were no longer seen as "taboo breakers" in the full sense of the word.

It seems that both the Jewish and non-Jewish public were waiting for this book to arrive: almost all the major newspapers dedicated space to the themes of Regina Jonas and women in the German and European rabbinate today. The October 1999 German first edition was snatched up within a few weeks, making a second printing necessary in the spring of 2000. Then, in the fall of 2003, Berlin publisher Hentrich & Hentrich came out with the third edition of Jonas's biography. To this day I am invited to deliver talks about Regina Jonas on an almost monthly basis. Audiences range from liberal Jews to committed Christians to feminist politicians. In launching the second Bet Debora conference in 2001, I unveiled a memorial plaque at Rabbinerin Jonas's former home, on Krausnickstrasse 6. Germany's first female cantor, Avitall Gerstetter, sang at the ceremony. This, too, drew the attention of German media, and the plaque is an attraction for many tourists today.

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The present English-language edition of the book contains numerous extensions of the first version in German. I have extended and amended it with a view toward the reader who may not be familiar with the German context of the 1920s and 1930s. Where necessary I have added detailed explanations. In addition, more witnesses emerged in response to the first publication. Their recollections are included in this U.S. edition. I wish to mention in particular the children and grandchildren of Rabbi Dr. Joseph Norden, Regina Jonas's lover. Not long after the publication of the second edition, I received a call from Dr. Ulrike Schrader, the director of the Alte Synagoge in Wuppertal-Elberfeld, the synagogue where Norden served for years as a rabbi before serving in Hamburg. She seemed astonished that Norden had been together with Jonas, and she reported that Norden has grandchildren, and that one of his five children was still alive. She then invited me to deliver a talk on Regina Jonas in Wuppertal, and invited Norden's granddaughter in California, Hanna Renning, and her husband, Dieter. Hanna brought along letters from her grandfather from 1940 to 1942 in which Norden told his children about his relationship

with Regina Jonas. Some of these letters were written while Jonas was spending her vacation with Norden in his home in Hamburg. They even contained handwritten comments from Jonas herself. Independent of their content, the letters were sensational for me, because virtually all the letters in Jonas's collection of documents, including of course Norden's, were written *to* Regina Jonas. There are almost none that she wrote to others. On the basis of these letters and the new information they provided, I have completely reworked the passages on the love relationship between Jonas and Norden.

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Regina Jonas has influenced and changed my life as few others have. Not only have I grown spiritually through the subject of the book, seeing certain things today differently from a decade ago, before I became involved in this project, but my confrontation with Regina Jonas, which, admittedly, led temporarily to an overidentification with the first female rabbi in Jewish history, also brought me to a decision of great significance in my own life. While working on this book, I often thought I heard her voice with its pleasant "sonorous" ring, which so many of her former pupils still remembered well. This voice seemed to prod me: "And what about you? Could you not also serve as a rabbi?" In fact, almost sixty years after she was murdered in Auschwitz, Regina Jonas became my teacher and trailblazer. In a symbolic fulfillment of her role, my own rabbinical ordination under the Aleph Rabbinic Program coincided with the publication of this U.S. edition.

In this context, the publication of this book is also an expression of a greater development—the renewal of a German, a European Jewry that no longer stands only on the ruins of the Shoah, that is no longer imprisoned by the trauma of the destruction, but that builds bridges to a great past. That development is spurred by the initiatives of Jews across Europe today. Bet Debora is only one of them. In all of Europe's largest cities, new Jewish communities or groups have formed in which women and men connect—on an equal basis—with their Jewish heritage. It is still too early to say how European Jewry will look in the decades ahead. But there is no doubt that, with this renewal, some great names of the past are returning—as if they had only been waiting to reach out to the generation that would stay.

The author unveiling a plaque to Regina Jonas

The author unveiling a plaque to Regina Jonas at Jonas's former residence in Berlin, Krausnickstrasse 6, at the beginning of the second Bet Debora conference, June 2001.