



BERLIN IN RIGA
The Centenary of the Birth of Sir Isaiah Berlin
Riga, Latvia
June 1st-6th 2009

www.berlininriga.com

Aims of the centenary:

- ◆ To advance Berlin's principles of pluralism, liberalism, tolerance and personal freedom, as tools for tackling present-day problems in Europe;
- ◆ To celebrate Berlin's life and thought;
- ◆ To evoke Berlin's Riga: a centre of European Jewry, a city of intellectuals and ideas

Detailed programme (as at March 24th 2009)

Events at Maza Gilde unless indicated otherwise

Monday, June 1st

10.00-10.15 Introductory remarks: Andris Aukmanis

10.15-11.30 Ronald Dworkin: "Liberty and Religious Fundamentalism"

11.45-1.00 Larry Siedentop: "IB and the Enlightenment"

1.15-2.15 Lunch

2.30-3.45 Avishai Margalit: "IB, Home and Homeland"

4.00-5.15 Leon Wieseltier: (title to come)

5.30-6.30 Tea & coffee break
6.30-7.30 Timothy Garton Ash: "IB, Europe, and Diversity"
7.30 Reception

Tuesday, June 2nd

9.00-9.15 Introductory remarks: Evan Zimroth
9.15-10.15 Aivars Stranga: "The Jews of Riga"
10.30-11.30 Gershon Hundert: "IB, Jewish History and Biography"
11.45-12.45 Barry Rubin: "What Would IB Say About Israel Today?"
12.45-1.30 Lunch
1.30-4.30 Bus tour of Riga ghetto, and Rumbula massacre site
5.00-6.30 Discussion at the Jewish Communities Center: "Jewish Community in Riga Today"
7.30 "IB as I remember him". Discussion over dinner (by invitation), moderated by Berel Rodal, with Peter Halban

Wednesday, June 3rd

9.00-9.15 Introductory remarks: Pauls Raudseps
9.15-10.00 Showing of Michael Ignatieff's Interview With IB, BBC Television, 1992
10.00-11.00 Ian Buruma in conversation with Bill Emmott: "IB as a public intellectual"
11.15-12.30 Henry Hardy: "IB In Pictures"
12.30-2.00 Lunch
2.15-3.15 Tatyana Pozdnyakova: "Akhmatova and IB"
3.30-4.30 Jonathan Levi: "Guest From The Future"—IB and Akhmatova in opera
4.30-5.00 Tea & coffee break
5.00-6.00 Justin Cartwright: "The Song Before It is Sung"
6.15-7.15 Arkady Ostrovsky: "The Coast Of Utopia"
7.30 Liela Gilde: Alla Demidova reads the poetry of Anna Akhmatova

Thursday, June 4th

2.30-5.00 Stockholm School of Economics: "Berlin and Liberalism in Latvia today"

Discussion open to the public, led by Latvian participants in the Centenary Seminar Group (see below), relating Berlin's thought to practical issues in contemporary Latvian society and politics, notably:

- Is individual freedom more important than social cohesion?
- What is the right balance between national identity and minority rights?
- Are we products of our history, or producers of it?

Introduced by Nils Muiznieks

6.30-8.00 Stockholm School of Economics: "Nationalism is the friend of democracy"

Oxford-style public debate between teams of invited speakers, with questions and vote

Moderator: Charles Grant, Centre for European Reform

Friday, June 5th

3.00 Kino Riga: Premier of Gints Grube documentary film, "Isaiah Berlin"

6.00 Kino Riga: Opera on film, "Guest from the Future"

7.30pm Blackheads' House: Jevgenis Samoilovs, Beethoven and Schubert

Saturday, June 6th

Dedication of a bust of Berlin, by Anthony Stones, for the National Library.

Speakers and moderators

Ian Buruma, writer and academic; Luce Professor of Democracy at Bard College, New York

Justin Cartwright, novelist and broadcaster

Ronald Dworkin, legal philosopher; Professor of Jurisprudence at University College, London, and New York University

Bill Emmott, journalist and writer; editor of The Economist 1993-2006

Timothy Garton Ash, writer and academic; Isaiah Berlin Professorial Fellow at St Anthony's College, Oxford

Charles Grant, director, Centre for European Reform, London

Gints Grube, documentary-film maker, Riga

Peter Halban, book publisher, Halban Publishers, stepson of IB

Henry Hardy, editor and publisher; IB's editor; fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford

Gershon Hundert, Professor of Jewish Studies, McGill University; editor-in-chief, YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe

Anatole Kaletsky, associate editor and principal economic commentator, Times of London

Jonathan Levi, journalist, playwright and librettist

Edward Lucas, author and journalist, The Economist

Avishai Margalit, scholar; George F. Kennan Professor at the Institute of Advanced Study, Princeton

Nils Muiznieks, writer and academic; director of Latvia University Institute of Social and Political Research

Robert Nurick, senior fellow in non-proliferation studies, Monterey Institute

Arkady Ostrovsky, journalist and translator; Moscow correspondent, The Economist

Tatyana Pozdnyakova, research director, Anna Akhmatova Museum, St Petersburg

Berel Rodal, vice-chair, International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, Washington, DC

Joel Rosenthal, President, Carnegie Council for Ethics In International Affairs

Barry Rubin, Director of the Global Research in International Affairs

Larry Siedentop; writer and academic; PhD supervised by IB; fellow of Keble College, Oxford

Aivars Stranga, professor of history, University of Latvia

Margers Vestermans, historian; founding director of Latvian Jewish Museum

Vaira Vike-Freiberga, politician and academic; president of Latvia

1999-2007

Leon Wieseltier, literary editor, The New Republic

Evan Zimroth, professor of English and Jewish studies, City University of New York

Attendance note:

To ensure an informed and active local and regional core audience for the centenary events, we have prepared four initiatives:

(1) "The Centenary Seminar Group". Richard Wolin, from the City University of New York, will give a short course on Berlin's ideas to a group of 12-20 Latvian professionals from the government, private sector, NGO sector and media. The seminar will run from May 16-30, in Riga.

(2) "The Student Seminar Group". Professor Wolin will teach a parallel seminar for 12-20 students from Latvian universities.

(3) "East-East Group". We have funding from the OSI to bring 25 outstanding young intellectuals from other central and eastern Europe countries to Riga, for a programme of political discussion intersecting with the centenary. The East-East Group will attend almost all of the centenary events; their programme of political discussions is given in the appendix below.

(4) We are advertising in the TLS and the NYRB in April, for others wishing to attend the centenary, particularly those with a personal or professional connection to IB.

Appendix: East-East Group programme:

Each session to consist of a 15-minute expert introduction, followed by 45 minutes of group discussion.

Monday

12.45-1.45 Nationalism In Europe

5.15-6.15 Civil Society

Tuesday

1-2 Whose History?

2.15-3.15 Getting To A Rule Of Law

3.30-4.30 The Russia Question

Wednesday

12.45-1.45 Why Democracy?

Thursday

9.00-10.00 Is The EU An Answer?
10.15-11.15 Is Nato An Answer?
11.30-12.30 Energy And Geopolitics
1.00-2.00 Is Capitalism Dead?

Patron of the centenary:

Dr Vaira Vike-Freiberga, president of Latvia 1999-2007 .

Sponsors of the centenary:

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Nicholas and Ireide Walker
Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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