

Letter from Akiva Orr:

18 March, 2006

Thanks Shimshon,

I read the [article on Esther Alexander](#) and liked it.

I knew Esther well. I was her “Cell Secretary” in the Jerusalem branch of the Communist Party Cell of Science Students at the Hebrew University during the early 1950s (the “Terra Santa” period).

She and her husband Shlomo, together with Moshik Machover and his wife, and a few others like Tamar Sneh (Golan), Max Robinson and Ytzhak Kaflawi – some of whom became professors of Physics, Mathematics, Biology, etc. – were all active members of our CP cell. (Shlomo became head of a Physics Department at the Weizman Institute, Moshik became Professor of Mathematical Logic and Philosophy at Kings College, Max Robinson became a Professor of Physics in Canada and Meir Smorodinsky became a Professor of Mathematics at Tel-Aviv University.)

Contrary to the current image of such people as mindless fanatic followers of Moscow, we were all critical thinkers. We looked for a theory that explains social dynamics by visible, measurable, factors, in order to use this theory to change society for the better.

We were not academic careerists but political activists who wanted to replace the current political system. We not only read and thought, but also went into factories, talked to workers, supported strikes and various social struggles. We participated in demonstrations, wrote leaflets, distributed them, talked and argued with working people. We were not just theorists but also political activists.

None of us acted for personal gains.

We wanted to improve society, to create a just society that treats all its members equally despite the fact that no two human beings are biologically or psychologically, equal.

I consider this period as the best school for politics I had, and never regretted being a member of the CP.

I know that Shlomo (and maybe also Esther) wanted to forget about their membership in the CP. His niece Ossi told me he refused to talk about the time he was a member of the CP. I presume he regretted it. Both of them joined the Academic Establishment and tried to succeed in The System.

I, and a few others, never wanted to succeed in The System. We rejected the system and its values and wanted no part in it. I retained the zeal to replace the entire system, not to participate in it.

I did not see Esther after 1956. I sometimes read her articles but did not follow her theoretical development. Your article clarified to me her theoretical developments. I am grateful to you for this. She was a decent person.

Many thanks for sending me the article.

Aki