



# **A Russian Jew of Bloomsbury: The Life and Times of Samuel Koteliansky**

*Galya Diment*

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## **A Russian Jew of Bloomsbury: The Life and Times of Samuel Kotliansky** Galya Diment

Samuel Kotliansky (1880-1955) fled the pogroms of Russia in 1911 and established himself as a friend of many of Britain's literati and intellectuals, who were fascinated by his homeland's more civilized side: the Ballets Russes, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Chekhov. Kot, as he was known, soon became an indispensable guide to Russian culture for England's leading writers, artists, and intellectuals, who in turn helped introduce English audiences to Russian works. *A Russian Jew of Bloomsbury* looks at the remarkable life and influence that an outsider had on the tightly knit circle of Britain's cultural elite. Among Kotliansky's friends were Katherine Mansfield, Leonard and Virginia Woolf -for whose Hogarth Press he translated many Russian classics - Mark Gertler, Lady Ottoline Morrell, H.G. Wells, and Dilys Powell. But it was his close and turbulent friendship with D.H. Lawrence, with whom he had copious correspondence, that proved to be Kotliansky's lasting legacy. In a lively and vibrant narrative, Galya Diment shows how, despite Kot's determination, he could never shake off the dark aspects of his past or overcome the streak of anti-Semitism that ran through British society and could be found in many of his famous literary friends. A stirring account of the early-twentieth century, Jewish emigre life, and English and Russian letters, *A Russian Jew of Bloomsbury* casts new light - and shadows - on the giants of English modernism.

Galya Diment is professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures and Thomas L. & Margo G. Wyckoff Endowed Faculty Fellow at the University of Washington, Seattle. She is the author of, among others, *Pniniad: Vladimir Nabokov and Marc Szeftel* (1997).

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