

Fiona Murphy ~ Remember Baghdad. Arabic Version. With Introduction From Edwin Shuker

Five families from the Jewish community look back on a scarcely imaginable time in Baghdad - Iraq was booming, it was pleasure-seeking, and there was inter-communal trust. Iraq was once one of the most diverse places on earth, more tolerant of its minorities than any European nation.

Today, after decades of war and instability, Iraq is a very different place. In spite of the danger, North Londoner Edwin Shuker decides to return to the country he loved. We follow him back to Baghdad. He wants to buy a house in Iraq so that he can say "the Jews have not all gone". He wants to plant a seed of hope for the future.

Website: <https://rememberbaghdad.com/>

From the Director's Statement:

'The lives of my parents' families closed down as the British Empire shattered: my father's community was thrown out of Ireland and my mother's fled Jamaica. I grew up in London, conscious that people suffer for the crimes of generations long gone.

So when I was between films and was offered a job cataloguing an extraordinary archive of early home movies belonging to an Iraqi-Jewish family, I responded vividly to the news that the Jews of Iraq did well under the British, and paid for it. They had committed no crimes, and unlike mine, nor had their community.

The end of the British Empire was not the only strand that bound their stories together with mine. My mother's family was ethnically Jewish. And while that was where the historical similarities ended, the smiling faces in the archive and the stark fact that only five Jews remain in Iraq today, awakened my own sense of loss.

At first I just wanted to convey the pain of losing your home. It seemed important,

now, right now, to push back at the narrowness of our news, dominated by discussion of economic migrants, desperate refugees and the difficulties of integrating immigrants. The older stories were laments about the pain of exile: “It’s a Long Long Way to Tipperary”, and “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept”. I wanted to show that that migrants travel with heavy hearts, give them a voice, and bring back the world that was lost. I knew this must be my next film.’