

Handwritten notes:
Jan 1983

***JEWISH IDENTITY
IN AN ANGLO-JEWISH COMMUNITY***

Barry A. Kosmin and Caren Levy

The Findings of the 1978 Redbridge Jewish Survey

RESEARCH UNIT BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS
1983

**RESEARCH UNIT
BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS**

Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place, London, WC1H 0EP

Executive Director: Dr. Barry Kosmin, F.S.S., F.I.I.S.E.
Research Consultant: Caren Levy, B.A. (Econ), M.C.R.P.
Secretary: Mrs. R. Century

The Board of Deputies of British Jews, founded in 1760, is the representative body of the Anglo-Jewish community. The Research Unit was established in 1965 following a conference on 'Jewish Life in Modern Britain' which the Board convened in 1962 in association with the Institute of Contemporary Jewry of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. The Unit compiles statistical data on various aspects of the community, and prepares interpretive studies of social and demographic trends. It functions under a special Committee of the Board, comprising the Honorary Officers, lay members and academic advisers.

Research Committee

H. Diamond, J.P. (Chairman)
Dr. V. D. Lipman, C.V.O. (Vice-Chairman)
The Hon. Greville Janner, Q.C., M.P.
Dr. Lionel Kopelowitz, J.P.
Martin Savitt
Victor Lucas
Prof. Percy Cohen
Prof. Ivor Crewe
Prof. L. Finkelstein
Mr. A. Gould
Prof. S. J. Gould
Mr. S. S. Levin
Dr. S. J. Roth
Mrs. M. Schmool
Mrs. Ruth Winston-Fox, J.P.

Contents

Introduction and Summary

Chapter 1
Religious Affiliation and Membership/7

Chapter 2
The Practice of Judaism/10

Chapter 3
Religious Belief/15

Chapter 4
Jewish Education/19

Chapter 5
Israel and Zionism/25

Chapter 6
The Jewish Day School/33

Chapter 7
The Issue of Outmarriage/39

Chapter 8
Localism and Community/41

List of Tables

		<i>page</i>
1	Synagogue Affiliation.	7
2	Synagogues and their Memberships in the London Borough of Redbridge, 1977.	8
3	Distribution of Households by Synagogue Group.	8
4	Adult Synagogue Affiliation by Age.	9
5	Synagogue Attendance: Percentage Distribution During the Last Year for the Population Aged over 15 Years.	10
6	Distribution of Regular Attenders at Place of Worship by Age and Sex.	11
7	Regular Synagogue Attenders as a Proportion of Each Age Group and Sex.	12
8	Percentage Distribution of Non-Attenders at Synagogue Over Age Ten.	12
9	Percentage of Redbridge Jews Observing Selected Rituals in Their Home.	12
10	To What Extent is it Important to Observe Shabbat and the Jewish Festivals?	15
11	Ideological Commitment Scale for Keeping Shabbat and the Festivals by Synagogue Affiliation.	15
12	The Effect of Household Size on Ideology and Practice.	16
13	Percentage Distribution by sex of Reasons Given for Answer on the Importance of Observing Shabbat and the Festivals.	17
14	Scale of 'Religiosity' by Synagogue Affiliation.	17
15	Highest Level of Jewish Educational Institutional Attended: Percentage Distribution by Age and Sex.	20
16	Synagogue Affiliation and Type of Jewish Education.	21
17	Current Education of Children Aged 5-14 Years by Parents' Synagogue Affiliation.	21
18	Jewish Education of Teenagers 15-19 Years by Parents' Synagogue Affiliation.	21
19	The Impact of Jewish Education on Synagogue Attendance.	22
20	Current Educational Situation of Redbridge Jewish Children.	23
21	1978 Jewish Education Statistics.	24
22	Percentage Distribution of Redbridge Adults Who Have/Have Not Considered Aliyah.	27
23	Relationship between Attitudes to Aliyah and Visits to Israel.	28
24	Teenagers' Aliyah Potential: Would you Contemplate Going to Live in Israel?	28
25	Ways in Which Israel is Attractive or Unattractive to Adults as a Place to Live.	29
26	Ways in Which Israel is Attractive or Unattractive to Teenagers as a Place to Live.	30
27	Would you (Parent) Want Your Child to Attend a Jewish Primary School? Jewish Secondary School?	33
28	Do You (Teenager) Think Jewish Children Should Attend a Jewish Primary School? Jewish Secondary School?	33
29	Supporters' Reasons for Favouring Jewish Day Schools by Percentage.	33
30	Opponents' Reasons for Negative View of Jewish Day Schools by Percentage.	34
31	Influence of Synagogue Affiliation on Attitudes Towards Jewish Day Schools.	35

	<i>page</i>
32 Percentage Distribution of Teenagers' Views on Desirability of Jewish Day Schools by Parents Synagogue Affiliation.	35
33 The Influence of Jewish Educational Experience on Attitudes Towards the Jewish Primary Day School.	36
34 Importance of Keeping Festivals and Shabbat and Attitudes to Jewish Day School Education.	36
35 Recent Experience of Anti-Jewish Prejudice in Rebridge, 1978.	42
36 Non-Family Sources of Advice.	44

Figures

1 'Religious Profile' and Synagogue Affiliation.	13
2 'Religious Profile' and Type of Household.	13
3 A Comparative Distribution of Teenagers' and Adults' Views on Israel, Redbridge Jewry, 1978.	32

Maps

1 The London Boroughs.	5
2 Geographical Distribution of Redbridge Jewish Population 1978.	43

Introduction and Summary

Redbridge Jews are typical of Anglo-Jewry. The third or fourth most numerous Jewish population in a Greater London borough they live in the corridor located between the North Circular Road and London Green Belt, where the most populous and growing Jewish populations are to be found. *Jewish Identity in an Anglo-Jewish Community* is the fourth report in a series based on an extensive survey of this population.

The first report, *Community Resources for a Community Survey*, dealt with the methodology and implementation of the survey, which was based upon a stratified random sample of 500 households from among the Jewish population of the London Borough of Redbridge. The second, *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, dealt with the demographic characteristics. From the latter study it emerged that this population is essentially local in character and demographically and residentially stable. Not only is it 93.4 per cent British-born, but 87 per cent has London and the Home Counties as its birthplace. More than half the population has lived in their present home for more than 10 years. The age structure was found to be biased towards parents in the forties and fifties and their teenage children. Redbridge Jewry was estimated to number 19,350 persons living in 6,493 households and to constitute 8.24 per cent of the total Redbridge population in 1978.

The third report, *The Work and Employment of Suburban Jews* provided a very detailed picture of the economic activities in which this population is engaged and insights into

its overall attitudes to work and employment. It is relevant background to the present study that 'the social class profile of Redbridge Jewry was found to be typical of Anglo-Jewry as a whole. This meant that there was a marked lack of semi and unskilled workers while 40% of the population fell into social class III.'¹

The Redbridge Jewish Survey was a co-operative venture and was supported by a variety of agencies and organisations working in the Jewish community. The survey itself aimed to provide information to assist them in the planning and administration of Jewish affairs and social services at the local community level. Many questions were specifically commissioned by organisations for their own particular purposes. As far as possible an attempt has been made to integrate the answers into an overall assessment of Jewish identity. These include some on topics such as the Jewish Day School, vocational education, *aliyah*, tourism and philanthropy to Israel.

In order to obtain the best possible overview of Jewish identity in Redbridge, a number of different facets of the population's behaviour and attitudes were brought together in our analysis. As is the pattern in Britain, the history and nature of Jewish settlement in Redbridge suggested that the synagogue, as the first collective manifestation of a Jewish presence in the area, was the appropriate place to begin our task.

At the outset a population with a high level of synagogue affiliation was revealed. 91.2% of households claimed affil-

Map 1: The London Boroughs



iation to a religious group and synagogue membership in that area implied that indeed about 80% of all Redbridge Jewish households were paid-up members. However, only 9.7% of the adult population attended synagogue weekly, with attendance peaking on important festivals and special occasions like marriage and *barmitzvah*. Despite this low participation in public worship, Redbridge Jews were found to have a high level of home observance, a characteristic which emerged even among some of the unaffiliated. 83.4% of households identified themselves publicly by placing a *mezuzza* on the front door post, and a similar proportion of individuals indicated that they fasted on *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement) and ate *matza* on *Pesach* (Passover). The figures on affiliation and the priorities given to the observance of festivals and *Shabbat* (the Sabbath) confirm those found in other local studies. This suggests that for Anglo-Jewry as a whole, synagogue affiliation is around 80%, and that there is a distinctive pattern of Anglo-Jewish observance in comparison with other diaspora Jewish communities. Moreover, the pattern of observance and belief in Redbridge was found to be largely independent of synagogue affiliation. When categorising the views on religious belief a Redbridge norm was apparent. This had little to do with the supernatural or belief in God, but was essentially concerned with the idea of Jewish peoplehood and the continued transmission of Judaism to future generations.

Jewish education must therefore be seen as an important instrument for transmitting Judaism. The majority of Redbridge Jewry received their Jewish education in part-time synagogue classes usually between the ages of 6 and 13 years. However, women in every age group were found to have a lower average education than men, with significant numbers of them in every age group having received no Jewish education whatsoever. The analysis shows that there has been a consistent improvement in access to Jewish education since World War II, so that some exposure to it is almost universal today among Redbridge Jewish males and has rapidly increased among Jewish females.

The centrality of Israel among diaspora Jews has often been asserted as a key focus of their identity. Certainly support for the existence and well-being of the State of Israel was an overwhelmingly held sentiment. However, in practice Redbridge Jewry's strongest link with Israel was through charity donated by 87% of households. It was found that 74% of this population had no family in Israel, 74% had never visited Israel, 90% were not members of Zionist organisations and 71% had never considered *aliyah* (emigrating to Israel). There appeared to be a distinct lack of any clear Zionist ideology, although perhaps unexpectedly it emerged that teenagers were more positive and less negative than adults towards Zionist issues.

The questions which provided practical manifestations of Jewish identity in Redbridge and among Redbridge Jews were examined in depth. These were parents' attitudes towards outmarriage, and the Jewish Day School. On the

issue of outmarriage there was again an overlapping consensus in favour of endogamy. 89% of parents said they would oppose any potential outmarriage among their children. This deeply held viewpoint appears to contradict these same parents' and their children's attitude to the Jewish Day School. This type of educational institution is largely opposed on the grounds that it is segregationist.

Family and kinship ties were found to be of central importance in the lives of this population. In general, relations with the wider Redbridge community were good and the majority of households had no thought of moving from the area in the foreseeable future. Though the residential pattern of the Jewish population was found to be atypical of the borough as a whole and of other minorities, it neatly coincides with the local authority boundaries. The size and concentration of the Jewish population has enabled a wide range of Jewish activities to exist in Redbridge. This reflects a high level of community consciousness, and significantly in the light of the low take-up of communal services, a concern for 'other Jews'. Undoubtedly, this study demonstrates that Redbridge Jews comprise a distinctive social entity at both the operational and theoretical levels and that a Redbridge Jewish 'community' clearly exists.

The successful completion of the survey with high levels of response, support and participation from Redbridge Jews, is concrete evidence and further verification of these findings. The challenge to the organised Anglo-Jewish community is to gear itself so that it can tap the undoubted potential and goodwill of this powerful 'community resource'—the Jewish residents of Redbridge and similar districts in London and other major British centres.

Note

- 1 B A Kosmin and C Levy, *The Work and Employment of Suburban Jews*, London, Board of Deputies, 1981, p5.

Chapter 1: Religious Affiliation and Membership

The data base for all the reports emanating from the Redbridge Survey, relates to households which gave our enumerators a positive response to the question 'are you or any member of this household Jewish?'. As previously reported, the question did not pose any problems of definition. Our population thus relates to people who consider themselves Jewish.

What religious substance does this Jewish self-definition have? This is considered under three headings: synagogue affiliation, religious practice and belief. In all cases the evidence also relies on self-defining categories, the limitations of which must be recognised. However, the issue of self-definition is obviously crucial to an understanding of identity. Moreover, the relationship between self-definition and religious practice is basic to any discussion of Jewish identity. What light does the experience of Redbridge Jews throw on this matter? It is first pertinent to mention that among the Redbridge Jews surveyed, only 2.6% of households were 'mixed' or found to contain non-Jews. These non-Jewish persons, who comprise 1.4% of the population have not been included in our analysis even though the evidence suggested that because they are spread so thinly, for many social, political and even religious purposes they consider themselves 'Jewish'. 'They are also potential members of the Jewish religion. For instance, we found no cases of a born Jew who had converted to the Christian or any other faith, and only a handful who claimed 'no religion'. Yet though 13 persons were born protestant Christians, only three claimed this as their present religion.'¹

Synagogue affiliation

Redbridge Jews are characterised by a high percentage of synagogue affiliation with 91.2% of households claiming synagogue membership. Affiliation was a self-defining category, and not every Redbridge Jew who claimed affiliation to a religious group was necessarily a current fee paying member of a synagogue. However, the factors discussed in the subsequent sections seem to suggest that the vast majority were in fact paid-up members.

As Table 1 shows, the dominant religious affiliation is to the Orthodox, constituting 76.8% of households. Reform and Liberal account for 10.9% and 3.5% respectively. Together the Reform and Liberal members, who will be

Table 1: Synagogue Affiliation

	Households (n = 464)	Persons (n = 1418)
	%	%
Orthodox	76.8	73.3
Reform	10.9	11.8
Liberal	3.5	4.2
	91.2	89.3
None	8.8	10.7
	100.0	100.0

categorised as 'progressive', total just under a fifth of the Orthodox households. The proportion of unaffiliated households at 8.8% is more than double the percentage of Liberals and close to that for the Reform. Given that the affiliation of the household reflects the decisions of the adult population, this breakdown is remarkably similar to that found in the NOP survey of a national sample of Jewish adults conducted in 1970.² In this survey 76% of interviewees claimed to be Orthodox, 15% progressive (Reform and Liberal) and 7% unaffiliated.

The differences between the breakdown of households and persons in Table 1 serve to highlight further characteristics in the patterns of religious affiliation among Redbridge Jews. The first relates to household size. The majority of Liberal households are larger than the average, and this is reflected in the larger proportion of persons than households claiming to be Liberal. Unaffiliated households, unlike the affiliated, were found at both ends of the household size spectrum. The combination of the unaffiliated households and independent adults boosts the proportion of persons relative to households which are unaffiliated.

The second characteristic is that of multi-affiliation, and emerges because of the way household affiliation was defined for the purposes of the study. Households were classified according to the affiliation claimed by the 'head of household',³ with their spouses and unmarried children under 21 years being put in the same group. Households with additional adults claiming differing affiliation were allocated to the religious group which had most members in the household. This would also account for some of the discrepancy between the breakdown by synagogue affiliation of households and persons.

In fact, 6% of households interviewed were multi-affiliated. Most of them were inter-generational in composition. Just over two-thirds of them contained a mixture of Orthodox and unaffiliated persons, and in no case did the unaffiliated outnumber Orthodox members of a household. Of the remaining households, half were mixed 'progressive' and unaffiliated, in which 'progressive' members were dominant. The other half were mixed 'progressive' and Orthodox, in which equal numbers of Orthodox and 'progressive' members resided, the household being classified as explained above according to the affiliation of the 'head'.

Synagogue membership

The growth of synagogue membership in Redbridge is testimony to its rise as a Jewish population centre. For example, in the dominant synagogue body, the United Synagogue, the male membership of Redbridge synagogues rose from 192 in 1940, to 1018 in 1950, 1719 in 1960 and 3066 in 1970. Table 2 shows the membership of synagogues in the London Borough of Redbridge in 1977. These figures do not record synagogue membership for all Redbridge Jewish households. Some members live outside the Borough; for example, Barking and Becontree synagogue is located on

Table 2: Synagogues and Their Memberships in the London Borough of Redbridge, 1977

Synagogue	Males	Females	% of Total
Orthodox			
United Synagogue:			
Barking & Becontree	174	44	
Ilford	2,057	625	
Newbury Park	470	31	
Wanstead & Woodford	530	80	
			70.7
Orthodox Federation of Synagogues:			
Ilford Federation	560	129	
Ohel Jacob Beth Hamedrash	35	0	
			12.7
Reform:			
South-West Essex	675	73 ^a	13.2
Liberal:			
Woodford & District	150	41 ^a	3.4
Total	4,651	1,023	
% of Total	82	18	100.0

^aThe actual numbers of households having no male members were counted.

the border between the Boroughs of Redbridge and Barking. On the other hand, some Redbridge Jews still belong to synagogues in the East End. However, the figures are representative enough of Redbridge Jews to give an indication of the breakdown of synagogue membership.

Table 3: Distribution of Households by Synagogue Group (%)

	Board of Deputies Returns of Membership of Redbridge Synagogues 1977	Affiliated Redbridge Jewry, Redbridge Survey 1978
Orthodox	83.4	84.2
Reform	13.2	12.0
Liberal	3.4	3.8

Indeed, Table 3 shows how similar this is to the breakdown of affiliation claimed by Redbridge Jews, implying that there is a high percentage of fee paying synagogue members among them, probably in the region of 80%. This figure is not dissimilar to the proportion of synagogue members found in the Sheffield local study,⁵ where 86% of households held synagogue membership.

Returning to Table 2, the dominance of males among the synagogue membership is striking, with 82% of members in Redbridge Synagogues being men. The female member-

ship recorded in the table comprises single women, widows, divorcees and some married women who choose to hold membership in their own right. In most Orthodox synagogues this last group is a small minority of the female membership. Married women are not counted as members unless they themselves join and pay an individual subscription, whereas in the 'progressive' synagogues (Reform and Liberal) women and men have equal membership. Since as the table shows the vast majority of female members are Orthodox (89%), most are probably in the older age groups, given the disproportionately high number of widows over the age of 60 years among Redbridge Jewesses.⁶

Synagogue membership and the life-cycle effect.

The similarities between the breakdown of affiliation and membership in Redbridge makes it possible to use the age structure of the former to introduce the notion of the life-cycle effect on synagogue membership. As has been found in other studies of Jewish communities,⁷ the changing demands of the life-cycle of the Redbridge Jewish family and its members are most noticeable in the practice of Judaism and this is something which will be expanded upon in the next chapter. However, its influences are also discernable, though less dramatically, in the synagogue membership. Moreover, while the motives for practising rituals may be linked with less easily defineable issues like the desire on the part of adults to transmit 'Jewishness' to their children, the life-cycle effects on membership may be more pragmatic. For example, to get married is one reason for joining a synagogue. Other pragmatic motives for becoming a fee paying synagogue member are to be able to attend services in the High Holydays of *Yom Kippur* and *Rosh Hashanah*, to enrol children in religious education classes and above all, to receive a Jewish burial.

Thus, it is not surprising to find that the young adult age group of 20 to 29 year olds identified in Table 4, comprise 45.1% of all Redbridge Jews (i.e. those over the age of 20 years) who are unaffiliated. This tendency of unaffiliated Jews to be made up largely of young people has also been found in other studies. For example, though it is not strictly comparable, in the early 1960s Krausz found that 60.8% of the unaffiliated were under the age of 39 years in Edgware. Yet this age group comprised only 37.4% of the total sample.⁸ On the other hand Table 4 shows that young adults with synagogue membership seem to comprise a much smaller but stable proportion of the adult membership, constituting similar proportions among the Orthodox and 'progressives'. That a large proportion of the Orthodox female members are elderly, as suggested in the previous section, is confirmed in Table 4, with 21% of the Orthodox over the age of 60 years, almost twice the proportion for the same age group among the 'progressives' and unaffiliated.

Table 4: Adult Synagogue Affiliation by Age (%)

	Age			Total
	20-29	30-59	60+	
Orthodox	16.2	62.8	21.0	100.0
Progressive	15.8	72.0	12.2	100.0
None	45.1	44.1	10.8	100.0

Affiliation in perspective

In conclusion, synagogue affiliation among Redbridge Jews is high, with at least 80% being synagogue members. This is corroborated by the findings of the Sheffield study which appears to challenge the long held notion based on the work of Prais, that about one-third of Anglo-Jewry is unaffiliated.⁹ It could be said that in areas of Jewish concentration like Redbridge,¹⁰ and in tightly knit Jewish communities like Sheffield,¹¹ high pressure to conform in a basic area such as synagogue membership, a symbol of Jewish identity and solidarity, could be expected. Although the NOP survey, which covers the UK, supports these local findings, it is based on claims of affiliation rather than evidence of actual paid-up synagogue membership. However, other figures also corroborate these findings. The 1977 national synagogue survey suggested that there were 96,000 Jewish households with synagogue membership in the UK in that year.¹² Taking this figure as a percentage of all Anglo-Jewish households,¹³ this also suggests a level of synagogue affiliation of around 74% among Anglo-Jewry. While this method is somewhat crude, it lends support to these Redbridge findings. In absence of a national survey, the importance of such results lies in the crucial clue that the proportion of synagogue affiliated Jews provides as to the total size of Anglo-Jewry in the 1980s. Notwithstanding any discrepancies, the high affiliation and membership rates among Redbridge Jews would seem to reinforce the claim that 'the synagogue is a central institution of Jewish life'¹⁴ in this country and as such an important factor in Anglo-Jewish identity.

Notes

- 1 B. Kosmin, C. Levy and P. Wigodsky, *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, London, Board of Deputies, 1979, p10.
- 2 NOP Market Research Limited, *Report on Attitudes to and Practices of Religion and Superstition*, December, 1970.
- 3 This term was not used in the survey as our pilot survey revealed that it was resented by our enumerators and respondents alike, especially by women. Nevertheless, we had to adopt this classification in order to make comparisons with the official system of social class analysis in Chapter 7 of *The Work and Employment of Suburban Jews*. The head of the household whom we identified for this analysis was usually the chief male breadwinner in the household. The designated person in this instance was re-adopted for the analysis of religious affiliation.
- 4 B. Kosmin, C. Levy and P. Wigodsky, *The Social Demography*, p7.
- 5 B. Kosmin, M. Bauer and N. Grizzard, *Steel City Jews*, London, Board of Deputies 1976, p17.
- 6 B. Kosmin, C. Levy and P. Wigodsky, *The Social Demography*, p14.
- 7 For example: M. Sklare and J. Greenblum, *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier: A Study of Group Survival in the Open Society*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1979.
G. Cromer: 'The Transmission of Religious Observances in the Contemporary Jewish Family: The Methodology and Findings of a London Suburb', in V. Schmelz, *et al*, eds. *Papers on Jewish Demography 1977*, Jerusalem, Hebrew University 1980, p225-233.
- 8 E. Krausz, 'The Edgware Survey: Factors in Jewish Identification', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XI (1969), 152.
- 9 S. J. Prais and M. Schmool, 'The Size and Structure of the Anglo-Jewish Population 1960-1965', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, X (1968), 19.
- 10 Redbridge has the fourth largest concentration of Jews in Greater London.
- 11 Testimony to how tightly knit the Sheffield community is, is the fact that the United Sheffield Hebrew Congregation has remained the only synagogue in Sheffield by adopting 'a more flexible attitude towards modernist challenges', see B. Kosmin, M. Bauer, and N. Grizzard, *Steel City Jews*, p17.
- 12 B. Kosmin and D. de Lange, *Synagogue Affiliation in the United Kingdom 1977*, London, Board of Deputies, 1978.
- 13 This proportion is based on the newly accepted estimate for British Jewry of 354,000 persons; the number of households being calculated using a national average household size of 2.7 persons.
- 14 S. Roitman, 'Les Juifs Anglais de 1966 à 1976: Pratiques, Mentalités, Compartiments', University of Strasbourg, Human Sciences PhD Thesis, unpublished.

Chapter 2: *The Practice of Judaism*

The relationship between self-definition as a Jew and religious practice is basic to any discussion of Jewish identity. The religious practices of Judaism are all-embracing and highly ritualistic. However, in considering them in a study of this nature it is useful to employ the distinction between the two groups of rituals, or *mitzvot*, used by Sklare in a study of Jewish identity in suburban America.¹

The first group comprises *mitzvot* between the individual and God and it is on these that this chapter will focus. The second group of *mitzvot* which will not be addressed in this study deal with those between people. Not only is it difficult to evaluate adherence to some of these, such as philanthropy; it is also difficult to link them directly to the practice of Judaism since in a western society general cultural norms overlap closely with such *mitzvot*.²

In concentrating on the first group of rituals, however, questions on certain practices were excluded from the Redbridge survey. Because of the wide variation in the interpretation of *Kashrut* and the difficulties of data collection to which this would give rise, the issue of *Kashrut* was excluded altogether. Likewise, although it was suspected that many people join a synagogue primarily to ensure a Jewish burial, because of the sensitivity of the subject and the use of a volunteer interviewing-force, questions on death and the rituals surrounding death were not included in the survey. Finally, for practical reasons information on *bar-* and *batmitzvah*, and circumcision was not collected.

Synagogue attendance

Despite the high level of synagogue affiliation and membership, Table 5 shows that the majority of Redbridge Jews attend synagogue only on festivals. Indeed, the proportion of regular attenders, at 9.7% of the adult population, is even less than the 10.7% of Redbridge Jews who do not attend synagogue at all. Nor does this seem to be a trend unique to a suburban Jewish community in the late 1970s. In 1962-3

in Edgware, Krausz found similarly that only 13.6% of Edgware Jews attended synagogue regularly, 12.5% never attended, with the majority attending 'occasionally' or only on festivals.³ The findings put the claim that 'the synagogue is a central institution'⁴ of Anglo-Jewish life into perspective.

Table 5 also shows that while the median attendance for the two main synagogue groups is similar, falling half way between categories 3 and 4, there are two notable differences in the distribution of attenders in each group. Firstly, by far the highest proportion of Orthodox members fall into category 4, attending synagogue 'only on festivals'. Among the 'progressives' no one choice is dominant in this way. While the highest proportion of 'progressive' members fall into category 3, similar proportions can be found in categories 4 and 6. The second difference is the proportionately 3% more 'progressive' than Orthodox members attending synagogue more than once a week. However, this is offset at the other end of the scale with a similarly high proportion of 'progressives' attending only on special occasions.

Not unexpectedly, the majority of unaffiliated Redbridge Jews attend synagogue only on special occasions or not at all. However, the median attendance of 5.3 does reflect that small but not unsubstantial numbers of the unaffiliated attend synagogue more often than this, while most of these are divided between those who go only on the festivals and only on *Yom Kippur*, there is a small core of regular attenders among the unaffiliated, as the 6% of those attending on festivals and most *Shabbatot* shows.

It is interesting to note that the proportion of church attenders among the suburban adult population of Outer Greater London in 1979 at 9%, was similar to the 9.7% of regular attenders among Redbridge Jews. While some may be tempted to say that these figures indicate a general move away from religion by contemporary urban people, in the case of Jews at least, this would be misleading. What it does show is the low priority given to regular 'public' worship by

Table 5: Synagogue Attendance: Percentage Distribution During the Last Year for the Population Aged Over 15 Years. (n = 1083)

	Orthodox		'Progressive'		Unaffiliated		All Redbridge Jews	
		cumulative %		cumulative %		cumulative %		cumulative %
1 More than once a week	2		5		0		2.0	
2 On festivals and most Sabbaths	8	10	8	13	6	6	7.7	9.7
3 On festivals and sometimes on Sabbath	18	28	25	38	2	8	17.1	26.8
4 Only on festivals	37	65	24	62	18	26	32.7	59.5
5 Only on Yom Kippur	9	74	8	70	15	41	9.9	69.4
6 Only on special occasions (Barmitzvahs, Weddings etc)	18	92	22	92	31	72	19.9	89.3
7 Not at all	8	100	8	100	28	100	10.7	100.0
Median attendance		3.6		3.5		5.3		3.7

Table 6: Distribution of Regular Attenders at Place of Worship by Age and Sex

Age Group	Outer Greater London 1979 Church Attenders ⁵			Regular Synagogue Attenders in Redbridge (n = 162)		
	Males (%)	Females (%)	Total (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)	Total (%)
Under 15	17	18	35	19	12	31
15-19	3	5	8	4	3	7
20-29	3	5	8	4	5	9
30-44	6	8	14	6	6	12
45-64	8	11	19	17	10	27
65 or over	6	10	16	10	4	14
	43	57	100	60	40	100

Church Attenders = 9% of adult population. Regular Synagogue Attenders = 9.7% of adult population (15+).

Jews, as against the observance of rituals in the home which will be discussed later in this chapter. However, a comparison of the age and sex composition of regular synagogue attenders and church-goers does reveal some of the dominant influences on synagogue attendance for Redbridge Jews.

Life-cycle effect and gender bias in synagogue attendance

The life-cycle effect on synagogue affiliation and membership was discussed in the previous chapter. Table 6, comparing age and sex distribution of regular synagogue attenders with church-goers, highlights this influence as well as a strong gender bias in synagogue attendance among Redbridge Jews.

The most noticeable difference between the two religious groups is the almost exact reversal of the proportion of male and female attenders. While 57% of church attenders are women, 60% of regular synagogue attenders are men. The male dominance of religion is a recurring theme in the subsequent analysis of Redbridge Jewry. The second major difference is the stronger and more differentiated polarisation by gender between the youngest and oldest age groups amongst Redbridge Jews. The proportion of Jewish males under 15 years is slightly higher but similar to the proportion of male and female church attenders of the same age. In the case of male Jews, the 19% is made up largely of pre-*barmitzvah* boys. In contrast only 12% of young Jewish girls under the age of 15 years attend regularly. Most fall into the relatively recent category of *batmitzvah* girls. The low priority given to the *batmitzvah* is indicated by the relatively smaller proportion of girls who are exposed to Jewish learning and education at this age.

In the subsequent three age cohorts of regular 'shul-goers' following *barmitzvah*, the clear male bias in attendance disappears. The fact that there is a rise in the proportion of both men and women around the age of 45 attending synagogue regularly is not unexpected. The desire to encourage and support their children in the build-up to *bar-*

or *batmitzvah* would draw parents into more frequent practice of rituals. Indeed, one would expect to see the effect of increased parent involvement starting in the 35 to 40 year cohort, but this is disguised by the age cohorts categorised in Table 6 which were chosen for the sake of comparison with the information on church-goers. However, in addition to this motivation there are others which result in differential participation between men and women in this and the subsequent cohort.

As can be seen from Table 6, the rise in the proportion of men between the ages of 45 and 64 years attending synagogue regularly is peculiar to the Jews. Another explanation of this could be the 'macher syndrome'. This increased involvement in community affairs by men would carry over into the oldest cohort, the drop in the proportion of males in this group due largely to the high rate of mortality of Redbridge Jewish males over the age of 65 years.

Focussing on the proportion of females in the last two cohorts, the rise and subsequent drop in women attending synagogue regularly is also peculiar to the Redbridge Jews. The rise is comparable to the rise in female church-goers, but the proportion of 10% is substantially lower than the 17% of Jewish men in the same age cohort. This reflects in part the lesser exposure of Jewish women to Jewish education and the dominant role played by men in both the religious and communal arenas of contemporary Anglo-Jewry. Another contributing factor is probably related to the high number of Jewish widows and the family orientation of Judaism. It has been established that the number of Redbridge Jewish widows increases over the age of 60 years and dramatically so over the age of 65 years. The loss of one's partner could be a reason for withdrawing from the practice of Judaism for Jewish women, given the strong family orientation of the religion. This appears to occur despite the possible closeness, geographically or emotionally, of married children with their own families.

Thus the changing distribution of regular male and female synagogue attenders over different age cohorts mirrors the changing life-cycle of the Redbridge Jewish family

Table 7: Regular Synagogue Attenders as a Proportion of Each Age Group and Sex (n = 1369)

Age	Males	Females
0-9	13.5	13.8
10-14	33.3	14.8
15-19	8.1	9.3
20-29	6.5	9.3
30-39	5.8	7.7
40-49	10.4	7.4
50-59	14.7	5.9
60-69	18.0	8.8
70+	33.3	13.2

and its members. This life-cycle effect is highlighted in Table 7 which shows the proportion of regular synagogue attenders in each group for males and females. While the factors affecting their distribution are similar to those discussed in relation to Table 6, the low proportion of regular female attenders in each age cohort is even more pronounced because of the age structure of Redbridge Jewish women.

Indeed, the same overall patterns are found in the age distribution of regular attenders for each synagogue group. The differences between them reflect the age characteristics of each, i.e. that the Orthodox membership comprises more elderly people than does the 'progressive'. The 40% of regular Orthodox attenders are over the age of 50 years, while among regular 'progressive' attenders, a similar proportion is divided between the 40 and 49 years and 10 to 14 year age groups, very likely parents and their children.

The unaffiliated who attend synagogue regularly have an age structure which is totally different from either of these two groups. Significantly, just under 80% of them are between the ages of 15 and 29 years. The most likely reason for such a concentration of young people who attend synagogue regularly without membership is the financial barrier of high membership fees. This is perhaps a matter about which synagogues serving Redbridge Jews should be concerned, particularly since the present family orientation of this population will change over the next few years to comprise an increasingly ageing adult segment and their grown children reaching the ages around which these unaffiliated persons are concentrated.

The proportion of Redbridge Jews who do not attend synagogue at all, 10.7% of the adult population, is slightly higher than the proportion who attend regularly. Given the gender division of the latter, it is not surprising to find that the majority of non-attenders are women. Table 8 shows that only in one age cohort the 20 to 29 year group, is the proportion of non-attenders among men greater than women.

Table 8: Percentage Distribution of Non-Attenders at Synagogue Over Age Ten (n = 363)

Age Group	Males	Females	Total
10-14	2	4	6
15-19	5	5	10
20-29	10	8	18
30-39	6	7	13
40-49	9	9	18
50-59	7	10	17
60-69	5	6	11
70+	2	5	7
	46	54	100

Home observance and synagogue affiliation

Despite the fact that the majority of Redbridge Jews attend synagogue only on festivals, the extent to which they adhere to the rituals associated with these occasions in their homes appears to be very high. Six rituals were chosen to assess home observance, either by individuals or households as appropriate. Table 9 shows that in all but one instance well over two-thirds of Redbridge Jews or households observed these.

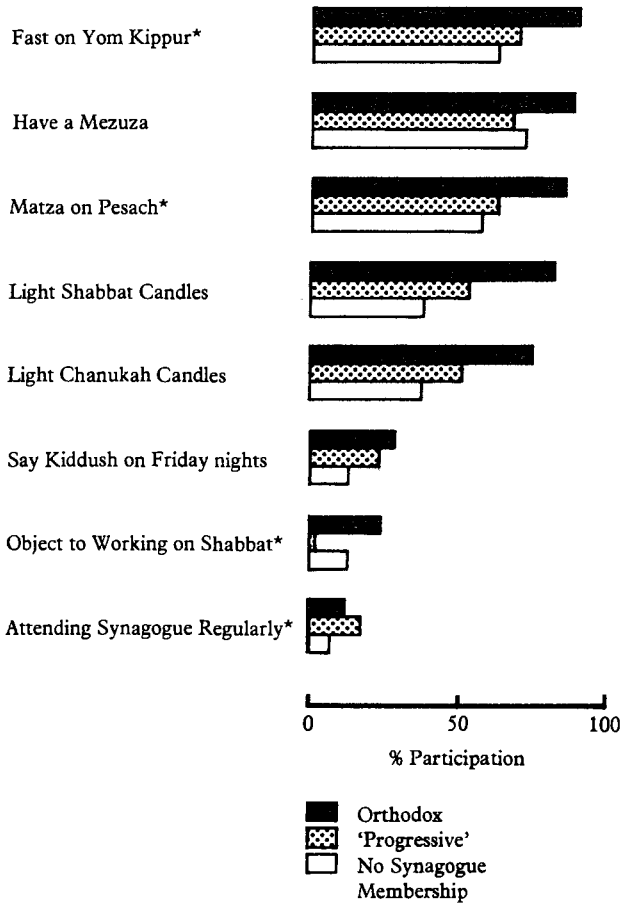
Table 9: Percentage of Redbridge Jews Observing Selected Rituals in Their Home

	Individuals	
Fast on Yom Kippur		81.8
Eat Matza on Pesach		79.3
	Households	
Have a Mezuzah on front door		83.4
Light Chanukah Candles		72.3
Light Shabbat Candles		70.2
Say Kiddush on Friday Nights		26.4

In the context of the pressures towards secularisation in contemporary society, it is clear that in their homes at least, Redbridge Jews remain strongly traditional in their ritual observances. Moreover, the high number of houses which have a *mezuzah* is indicative of the desire to be identified publicly as Jews. Given the male dominance in other areas of religion, saying *Kiddush* on Friday nights with the lowest level of observance is an interesting exception when seen against the high proportion of women in households who light *Shabbat* candles.

Perhaps the most astounding feature of the level of observance of the selected rituals is the high degree of consensus among Redbridge Jews of both synagogue groups and the unaffiliated as to their relative importance. Figure 1, which might be termed a 'religious profile' compares graphically the participation of the Orthodox, 'progressive'

Figure 1: 'Religious Profile' and Synagogue Affiliation

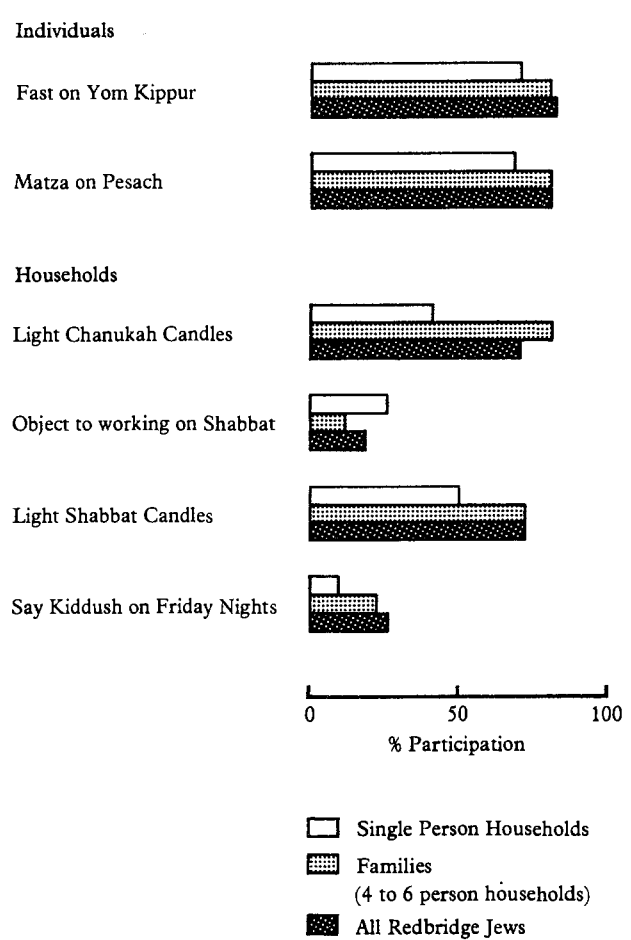


*Data related to individuals rather than households.

and unaffiliated in carrying out the rituals, juxtaposed against the level of regular synagogue attendance and the proportion of households with members who objected to working on *Shabbat*. Despite slightly higher levels of observance among the Orthodox, the 'religious profile' of each group is similar, with the same relative weight being given to the same rituals by all three groups.

Although levels of observance are lowest amongst the unaffiliated, adherence in the group is surprisingly high, reinforcing the suggestion in the previous chapter that, quite likely, it is high membership fees rather than factors of belief, which are influencing synagogue affiliation and membership among these Redbridge Jews. Particularly striking is the high proportion of the unaffiliated who have a *mezuzah* on their front door—a positive declaration of wanting to be identified as a Jew. The proportion is higher than that among the 'progressives', as is the proportion objecting to working on *Shabbat*. In the case of the latter, the proportion is probably boosted by elderly women who have allowed synagogue membership to lapse on the death of their husbands. In a previous study it was found that although only 17.4% of all Redbridge Jews objected to

Figure 2: 'Religious Profile' and Type of Household



working on *Shabbat*, over the age of 65 years the level of objection was much higher at 27% for men and 34% for women.⁶

The life-cycle effect on home observance

Figure 2 compares the 'religious profiles' of families in different stages of their life cycle with the average for all Redbridge Jews. It must be remembered that Redbridge Jewry is mainly composed of nuclear families. Levels of observance are lower among single person households which we know to comprise mainly elderly widows. This emphasises the communal and family elements which come into play in the practice of Judaism, especially since the evidence suggests that these elderly women often have strong views on keeping rituals and traditions, e.g. objecting to working on *Shabbat*.

As expected, the desire to transmit Jewish values and knowledge to children results in high levels of observance among families. The special appeal of *Chanukah* to children is particularly evident with the proportion of families with school-age children lighting *Chanukah* candles at 81% lying well above the average for all Redbridge Jews at 70%.

Religious practice in perspective

From the foregoing discussion it can be seen that religious practice among Redbridge Jews is essentially home-based and family oriented. For the majority of them, the synagogue assumes importance only on festivals and on special occasions. For example, 95.5% of couples got married in a synagogue. Thus high synagogue membership, while it does not necessarily imply regular synagogue attendance, is nevertheless reflective of the important role the synagogue plays in the life of the Redbridge Jews on festivals and on special family occasions.

Moreover, although levels of observance found by Krausz in Edgware in 1962-3 and by the NOP survey for all British Jews in 1970 were slightly higher than in Redbridge, there appears to be a remarkable consensus, both within Redbridge and Anglo-Jewry, in the pattern of observance of Judaism. This consensus emerges as a distinctive Anglo-Jewish feature when an international comparative perspective is adopted. The practice of Judaism in American suburbia appears to have been much more highly adaptive to the norms of the host society with even more emphasis on *Chanukah* and acts of public worship at the expense of the traditional Jewish emphasis on *Yom Kippur* and the *Shabbat*.⁷ Thus the 'nominal Orthodoxy' of Anglo-Jewry does appear to contain a component of residual Orthodoxy within the practice of Judaism in Redbridge.

Notes

- 1 M. Sklare and J. Greenblum, *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier: A Study of Group Survival in the Open Society*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1979, p46.
- 2 In the American setting, Sklare makes the following point: '... the motivation of the Lakeville Jews to make a philanthropic contribution may not only be the desire to conform with the Jewish sacred system; it may also be strongly influenced by the normative pattern of American philanthropy, which derives in large part from the Protestant tradition of 'good works'.' *Ibid*, p46.
- 3 E. Krausz, 'The Edgware Survey: Factors in Jewish Identification', *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XI (1969), 152.
- 4 J. Roitman, 'Les Juifs Anglais de 1966 à 1976: Pratiques, Mentalités, Compartiments', University of Strasbourg, Human Sciences PhD Thesis, 1978, unpublished.
- 5 Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism, *Prospects for the Eighties: From a Census of Churches in 1979*, Bible Society, London, 1980.
- 6 B. Kosmin, C. Levy and P. Wigodsky, *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, London, Board of Deputies, 1979, p25.
- 7 See for example Sklare and Greenblum, *op. cit.*, p52.

Chapter 3: Religious Belief

The religious beliefs underlining the outward manifestations of the Judaism practised by Redbridge Jews gives yet another clue to the identity and loyalties of this suburban population. Of course, a survey of this nature is limited in the way it can delve into theological questions of religious meaning. In addition, religious beliefs are very personally held feelings and are often difficult to articulate.

Recognising these factors, two questions in the survey were specifically developed to give an indication of the religious beliefs of Redbridge Jews. In the first question interviewees were asked to what extent it was important to keep *Shabbat* and the Jewish festivals; in the second, an open-ended question, they were asked why they thought this was so. The answers give some idea of the religious motivations of a population which has been found to have high levels of synagogue affiliation, but low levels of regular synagogue attendance, and is quite observant of all home-based religious practices.

The importance of festivals and Shabbat

Table 10 shows that, despite high levels of practising home-based rituals, almost two-thirds of Redbridge Jewish households thought observance was important to a certain extent, the second highest measure of commitment to keeping *Shabbat* and the festivals. It is interesting to note that the percentage of households most fervently committed, at 16.7%, is approximately the same as the percentage which said they objected to working on *Shabbat* (17.4%). Only 7.5% of households did not attach any importance to observance at all, matching the proportion of households which are unaffiliated at 8.7%, though the latter is known to contain a small but highly religious group of people.

The influence of synagogue affiliation

Once again there was a consensus among the affiliated and unaffiliated on this matter, with the largest proportion of households in both groups regarding observance as important 'to a certain extent'. Indeed, households in the two major synagogue groups ranked the importance of keeping *Shabbat* and the festivals in the same way as that in Table 10. The differences between them were a matter of degree, with 'progressive' households more widely distributed than the Orthodox. In comparison to the two-thirds of Orthodox households, 58.3% of 'progressive' households answered 'to a certain extent,' while marginally higher percentages of 'progressives' could be found in all the other categories.

Not unexpectedly, the second largest group among the unaffiliated were those households not attaching any importance to observance at all at 25.7%, 4 or 5 times higher than that among the affiliated. The smallest group were the 5.1% of unaffiliated who were very religiously committed.

These findings are reflected in Table 11 by applying a simple weighted index to the crude data using the categories in Table 10, from 4 'to a very great extent' to 1 'not at all.'

Table 10: To What Extent is it Important to Observe Shabbat and the Jewish Festivals? (n = 454)

	%
To a very great extent	16.7
To a certain extent	62.8
Very little	13.0
Not at all	7.5

Table 11: Ideological Commitment Scale for Keeping Shabbat and the Festivals by Synagogue Affiliation (n = 454 households)

Orthodox	'Progressive'	No Affiliation	Total
2.95	2.84	2.35	2.88

The results show that the average ideological commitment to keeping *Shabbat* and the festivals is remarkably similar within all groups. The biggest differences on this scale occur between the affiliated and the unaffiliated. The largest gap is that between the Orthodox and the unaffiliated which is a mere 0.6 points.

The life-cycle effect on the importance of Shabbat and the festivals

Being at different stages of the family life-cycle was shown to have an important bearing on what rituals were practiced by Redbridge Jews. Table 12 shows that a life-cycle effect on the religious commitment on this population is also discernable. In keeping with other trends, the majority of both family and single person households thought keeping *Shabbat* and the festivals was important 'to a certain extent.' However, the pattern between the two groups changes markedly after this. The second largest proportion of family households is found in two categories, 'to a very great extent' and 'very little' while the second largest proportion of single person households is concentrated overwhelmingly in the most ideologically committed category. At 27%, it is about 10% higher than both the proportion of family households and all Redbridge Jews in this category.

From our previous knowledge of single person households, we know that the majority of them consist of elderly widowed women, and that they are probably the same people who object to working on *Shabbat*. However, as Table 12 shows, there is almost no correlation between the practice of these single person households and their high ideological commitment. In no instance does the proportion of single person households exceed the proportion for family households or all Redbridge Jews observing the selected rituals. This reinforces the finding in the chapter on Religious Practice that the stage in the family life-cycle is an important influence on practice. Being alone, widowed and geographically separated from one's children, does not

Table 12: The Effect of Household Size on Ideology and Practice

	Families (4-6 person household)	Single Person Households	All Redbridge Jews
Importance of Festivals (Respondent)	%	%	%
To a very great extent	16	27	17
To a certain extent	61	53	63
Very little	16	12	13
Not at all	6	9	8
Object to working on Shabbat	12	23	17
Practice			
Yom Kippur fasting	79	68	81
Matza on Pesach	79	68	79
Chanukah	80	41	70
Shabbat candles	71	50	72
Kiddush	22	9	26

seem to support observance of the festivals and the rituals surrounding *Shabbat*, even though belief and ideological commitment may be strong. This lack of direct link between religious belief and practice also implies that generation rather than stage in the life-cycle is an important influence on ideological commitment.

The influence of generation and gender

In line with other indicators the highest proportion of Jewish men and women in all age groups thought the festivals and *Shabbat* were important 'to a certain extent.' Thus it is the second highest ranking of commitment which shows up a noticeable age and gender bias in religious belief.

Considering age first, the proportion of people who regarded observance as most important increases with age, rising markedly for men over the age of 50 years and women over 60 years. In addition, in the next older age cohorts in both cases, 'to a very great extent' ranked second for both men and women.

However, it is not just the elderly men and more particularly, elderly widows who hold strong religious beliefs. For women, except for those aged 30 to 39, the second highest response category for observance of festivals and *Shabbat* was also 'to a very great extent.' Among men this was only the case for those over the age of 50.

This gender bias in belief is especially interesting when seen in terms of practice. Those rituals which are observed most are home-based, traditionally the realm of the woman. In the public domain, Jewish practice is dominated

by men. Their apparently lower ideological commitment could be one reason why synagogue attendance is not as frequent as it is regular.

Reasons given for the importance of observance

Delving a little deeper into the religious motivations, Table 13 shows the range of reasons given by respondents for their degree of ideological commitment. It was an open question and the categories were created in the light of the responses, so the graduation of these from fundamentalist ('it's our religion') to least religious (Atheism) is not a strict continuum. At the one extreme the reasons given were that the holydays are an integral part of Judaism or that observance is a biblical command; at the other extreme observance is regarded as unimportant because general morality and humanitarianism is more important, or religion is not understood, believed in or practiced. The categories also divide broadly into two groups: those in the top half of the Table represent positive reasons while those in the lower half are negative.

From Table 13 it can be seen that 74.8% of Redbridge Jews gave positive reasons for the importance of observing *Shabbat* and the festivals. 'To preserve Judaism' emerged as the dominant reason, with just on a third of respondents citing it. Clustered around 10%, the next most often quoted reasons were respectively 'for the children,' 'it's our religion' and 'Jewish identity.' The nature of these reasons suggest that a primary motivation for observance is a social and communal one. Answers like 'to show the children the right way to keep a Jewish home,' 'if one does not make some effort Judaism will die out,' and that observance 'identifies us for what we are vis-à-vis other people' are all representative of the most voiced reasons. They reflect an overriding concern to transmit an inherited tradition to children and a need to identify with other Jews.

Support for all other reasons was marginal and widely dispersed. It is interesting to note that neither among the dominant nor less often quoted reasons was there any reference to God, and belief was hardly mentioned except as a vague reference to 'having a belief in something' and 'used to believe until . . .,' usually marking the negative impact of a death on religious feelings.

Demographic factors in motivation

Table 13 shows up interesting differences between the motivations of men and women among Redbridge Jews. In general terms, women tended to provide positive reasons for observance more readily than men. This is especially evident in the relatively higher proportion of women citing respectively the reasons 'to preserve Judaism,' 'for the children' and 'it's our religion' as reasons for observance. Women seem to place more emphasis on the transmission and preservation of Judaism through children and are marginally more fundamentalist than men. On the other hand, while men also regard 'to preserve Judaism' as a primary

Table 13: Percentage Distribution by sex of Reasons Given for Answer on the Importance of Observing Shabbat and the Festivals (n = 438)

Reason	Males	Females	Total
It's our religion	9.8	12.4	11.4
Biblical	0.5	0.4	0.5
Jewish identity	12.8	5.6	9.3
For children	9.4	14.9	13.8
To preserve Judaism	30.5	38.5	33.1
Family unity	—	1.7	1.0
Joyful	1.0	3.4	2.4
Need to believe in something	1.0	0.4	0.7
Other	2.0	3.0	2.6
	67.0	80.3	74.8
Out-of-date	6.4	1.7	4.0
Irrelevant personally	2.0	1.7	1.7
Earning a living conflict	6.9	2.6	4.0
Fanaticism is wrong	6.9	4.3	5.5
Difficult nowadays	3.4	2.6	2.8
Morally, creed more important than ritual	1.5	2.1	1.9
Don't understand religion	0.5	0.4	0.5
Atheist	5.4	4.3	4.8
	33.0	19.7	25.2
	100.0	100.0	100.0

motivation, they also put more emphasis on 'Jewish identity' than do women. Perhaps their greater involvement in work outside the home is an influence here. The major negative responses given by men do suggest that their exposure to economic pressures forces them to reflect on their Jewish identity, or to abandon it, as their greater proportion falling into the categories of answers like 'earning a living conflict,' 'fanaticism is wrong' and observance is 'out of date' clearly show.

Age also appears to be a factor influencing motivation, with both a life-cycle and generation effect apparent. While 'to preserve Judaism' is the major reason given by all age groups, it is subscribed to more often by the elderly and particularly by elderly women. 'For the children' assumes importance for men aged 30-39 and women aged 20-39, that is, for parents with young families.

On the negative side, the 'earning a living conflict' and 'fanaticism is wrong' were important reasons among men aged 20 to 39 years. Interestingly enough these reasons were given above average prominence by women aged 20 to 29 years, and those aged 40-59 years, coinciding with the ages at which Redbridge Jewish women will be more likely to work outside the home—that is, before they have their children, and once their children are more independent.

At the negative extreme, atheists were spread across age groups. However, within age groups, for both men and women aged 70 to 79 years, this was cited as the second most common response. On the other hand, men and especially women in the 60 to 69 year cohort gave particular

prominence to fundamentalist reasons for observance. Changing attitudes and polarisation among the elderly reflects more than just the cultural isolation of Redbridge widows and widowers and could be two specific reactions to the possibility of death.

Synagogue affiliation and religious motivation

Synagogue affiliation among Redbridge Jews does not seem to have a major bearing on their religious motivation. This finding is reflected in Table 14, which is derived by applying a simple weighted index to the crude data in the categories used in Table 13, where 17 is the most fundamentalist ('it's our religion') and 1 is 'atheist.'

As the Table shows the average for all three groups is clustered around 10 and 11 on the scales, that is around largely social motivations. The Orthodox give marginally more religiously positive answers, but the differences between all three groups are so small that it would be fair to say that, once again, there is a high degree of consensus among all synagogue affiliated groups about their religious motivations. Moreover, while these motivations are positively supportive of Judaism, they are clearly not grounded in Jewish fundamentalism.

Table 14: Scale of 'Religiosity' by Synagogue Affiliation (n = 454)

Orthodox	'Progressive'	No Affiliation	Total
11.84	10.43	9.52	11.43

Jewish education and religious motivation

It is generally believed in certain Jewish circles that a thorough Jewish education is the key to strong religious identity. Indeed, the handful of men who had attended *Yeshiva* had a strong 'religiosity' and put the greatest emphasis on 'to preserve Judaism.' However, those with primary or secondary Jewish schooling were only just marginally more likely than the average to give positive reasons for observance. Those who went to part-time classes and had home tutoring had a similar ratio of positive to negative reasons as did all Redbridge Jews. Those who had no Jewish education at all were indistinguishable from the average. There is even a suggestion that the proportion of atheists is likely to be greater among those who have had a primary or secondary Jewish schooling.

Thus it would appear that other than a *Yeshiva* education, Jewish education has had little impact on the religious motivations of Redbridge Jews. The overall positive motivation which exists is rooted in a combination of demographic, socio-economic, cultural and psychological factors rather than formal educational experience. Moreover, in the Redbridge situation there are such sharp gender differences in both the inferior educational experience and the more positive religious outlook of females as against males, that the real linkages between education, belief and practice must remain largely blurred.

How important is religious observance?

There is a high degree of consensus among Redbridge Jews irrespective of their synagogue affiliation and their level of ideological commitment on certain observances and on the underlying motivations for this commitment. The major differences among them are between gender, generation and various stages in family life-cycle. However, these differences are a matter of degree, within a commonly held framework of what being Jewish in contemporary Britain means to Redbridge Jews.

Within this commonly held framework there appears to be an anomaly. The level of commitment to observance is perhaps not as high as one would expect in a community with such a high degree of synagogue affiliation and home observance. Perhaps this is more revealing seen against the low numbers attending synagogue regularly. As a minority group Jews have made some accommodation to the host society, and among Redbridge Jews these are mainly connected with *Shabbat* and frequent public worship. For example, economic pressures for such behaviour may be linked to the high percentage of Redbridge Jewry in the Distribution and Service sector, where working on Saturdays is not uncommon. What is pertinent is the high degree of consensus about the compromises made.

Redbridge Jews also show no ambiguity about their motivations for observance. Religious acts do not seem to be connected to the supernatural or belief in God, but with the idea of Jewish peoplehood. Nowhere is this made more

explicit than in their attitudes to outmarriage. It will be shown in a later chapter that the vast majority of Redbridge Jewish parents were opposed to it regardless of their own commitment to ritual practice. Festivals and *Shabbat* were 'not important personally and were out of date' said one respondent, but she was strongly opposed to her daughter marrying out.

This 'undiluted' commitment to Jewishness is also reflected in the range of reasons given for their views on the importance of observance. It is interesting that as a minority in a country in which the head of state is also the head of the Church of England, the thinking of Redbridge Jewry does not reflect any Christian influences, for example, in the idea of personal salvation. Their concerns are largely social and cultural, and even the more fundamentalist oriented respondents incorporated no direct reference to God in the reasons for their observance.

Marriage and divorce are clearly important issues for Redbridge Jews and the way in which they carry out the practices related to them illustrates the interplay between belief and the legitimization of Jewish law in this community. Although 14.4% of Jewish households claim to be 'progressive' only 4.5% of husbands and wives said they were married in Reform or Liberal synagogues. The disparity could be due in part to the fact that many 'progressive' Jews changed over from Orthodox membership in later life, after their marriage. However, it has been suggested that the figures also reflect a concern for conformity and fears about the 'Kashrut' of their children in the eyes of the Orthodox majority and the dominant religious authorities. On the other hand, when it comes to divorce, only half of those getting a divorce obtain a religious divorce or *get*.¹ Furthermore, a prime motivation for seeking a *get* seems to be where there is 'a desire to have children and regularise the family's religious status.'²

Redbridge Jews' selection of what religious laws to obey and what to jettison on such issues reflect a number of characteristics which have been reinforced by the evidence throughout this study. They include a high degree of socially motivated religious conformity alongside a broad consensus as to what religious practices can be compromised for commonly acceptable pragmatic reasons. The religious belief of Redbridge Jewry is dominated by a commitment to a Jewish peoplehood and historical continuity which results in a strong sense of responsibility towards transmitting its socio-religious culture to future generations. How personally satisfying or effective this 'belief in survival' can be is an open question.

Notes

- 1 B. A. Kosmin, C. Levy and P. Wigodsky, *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, p32.
- 2 B. A. Komin, *Divorce in Anglo-Jewry 1970-1980: An Investigation*, London, West Central, 1982, p12.

Chapter 4: *Jewish Education*

Historical perspective

The level of observance of religious rituals and other manifestations of Jewish practice is very closely linked to Jewish education. This is because Judaism is a complex way of life and one's ability to participate in it and comprehend its rules is closely linked to one's knowledge of it. For instance, we have seen that Redbridge Jews rank festivals differently to traditional Judaism's clear hierarchy of major and minor holidays. Thus, present practice obviously suggests a lack of awareness and knowledge of Judaism and its precepts by many people. Education has always been a strong determinant of the Jewish religion and belief system. It was also deemed to be an end in itself and an integral part of the sacred way of life. In traditional Jewish society the ignorant man's Jewishness was in doubt while the educated and identified Jew was practically identical. Education and religion were very much fused institutions. It is also important to realise that traditionally Jewish education was the chief instrument welding the Jewish religion and 'Jewish peoplehood'.

In considering the Jewish educational background of Redbridge Jews, the changing availability of Jewish education during this century, particularly in London must be borne in mind. It was the influx at the turn of the century of Eastern European Jews, among whom were the grandparents of many Redbridge Jews, that brought about changes in the declining Jewish Voluntary school system of Victorian England. 'Owing to the traditional Jewish background of the new immigrants, parents found it necessary to supplement the meagre Jewish knowledge given by the voluntary schools and at the Board schools.'¹ The small *Cheder* and the use of private teachers met this need and became the forerunners of the *Talmud Torah* and synagogue classes respectively which developed after World War I. At the same time the 'Jewish Religious Education Board' so named in 1893, provided Hebrew and Religious education for Jewish pupils attending the Metropolitan Board Schools. This was the basis of the 'withdrawal classes' of today. The new style Jewish Day School with a strong Jewish curriculum was pioneered in the 1920s and by the outbreak of World War II there were 14 Day Schools in the UK, 10 of which were in London.

During World War II Jewish education in London suffered a severe crisis when most of London's schools were evacuated. The Butler Education Act of 1944 opened up new opportunities for Jewish education in that it made provisions for State aid to religious denominational schools and for pupils in non-denominational secondary schools to receive religious instruction. Postwar Jewish part-time education increasingly became concentrated on synagogue and withdrawal classes. In recent decades there has been a growing emphasis on full-time Jewish day school education with a drive to gain recognition as state aided schools. However, the actual Jewish curriculum varies between the various schools according to the ideological and religious out-

look of their sponsors.

The whole history of Jewish education this century is indicative of the differing quantity and quality available to different generations of Anglo-Jews. These generational differences are reflected in Redbridge Jewry to which must be added the further complications of change in access due to geographical location of both schools and the Jewish populations. Thus all these factors imply that the figures presented in this chapter must be interpreted with care and with due allowance made for the influence of local factors.

Categorisation

Education is a complex subject in our contemporary society and the constraints of formal education are well documented. Nevertheless short of giving our interviewees a Jewish knowledge test, the only method of obtaining some idea of their actual Jewish education was to ask them what type of institution they had attended. Therefore the data records exposure to certain types of institution and cannot provide any details on the quality or intensity of the education received.

Respondents were asked which was the highest level of Jewish educational institution attended and the enumerators placed their answers on the list as in Table 15. The different types of institutions were ranked rather arbitrarily from highest to lowest in terms of a rough formula based upon the years of study imposed, the level of the curriculum and a supposed progression through a system. Of course, the respondents had often attended several types of educational institutions but they were ascribed to the highest ranking one. It was also assumed that adult education alone was a substitute for a lack of Jewish education as a child, so for practical analytical purposes it was placed near the bottom. Home and private education is a type of informal education which again can vary very greatly in curriculum intensity and effectiveness but in most cases it merely applied to utilitarian training for a *barmitzvah* service.

It is obvious that the extremes of the ranking system or spectrum constructed—the *Yeshiva* and a complete lack of education—are quite clearly different and useful categories, but it is the intermediate categories which are unclear with regard to their analytical value.

How does one compare *Cheder* (part-time synagogue classes) over age 13 with a Jewish day primary school? Numerous factors come into play, the schools involved, the time, the place, the teacher, the religious outlook of the institution, the home background of the student and so on.

One should therefore be cautious when using the results in the following tables, particularly for small cells or sub-categories where small numbers of individuals are involved. Nevertheless, the data is valuable because it is the largest ever survey of the Jewish education of a representative Anglo-Jewish population, covering as it does 1200 individuals of both sexes and all ages. It thus allows us to measure the changes in Jewish education over time as they have

Table 15: Highest Level of Jewish Educational Institution Attended: Percentage Distribution by Age and Sex (n = 1241)

Institution	Age and Birth Cohort																Total Population	
	1968-72		1963-67		1958-62		1943-57		1938-47		1928-37		1918-27		Pre 1917		M	F
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Yeshiva	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	2	-	3	-	1.6	-
Jewish Secondary Day School	-	-	-	7	8	2	2	6	1	6	3	1	4	3	4	4	3.1	3.9
Jewish Primary Day School	14	10	9	9	6	-	5	5	5	6	3	3	4	4	2	6	5.2	4.7
Part-time Synagogue Classes beyond 13 years	-	-	9	-	11	12	19	12	17	12	15	9	25	14	23	11	17.3	10.6
Part-time Synagogue Classes until 13 years	58	35	73	66	74	50	64	46	61	45	64	43	57	45	52	46	61.8	47.0
Home/Private Tuition	14	25	9	2	-	6	9	7	4	2	4	6	7	4	8	12	6.3	6.4
Adult Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	2	-	3	-	1	0.3	1.1
None	14	30	-	16	-	30	1	23	5	28	11	36	1	27	8	20	4.4	26.3

effected different generations in the population. It also provides insights into the interconnections between Jewish education and other social and religious variables. Most importantly it allows us for the first time to analyse outcomes of various types of Jewish education.

The educational experience of differing generations

Table 15 compares the educational experience of different cohorts of males and females, and the overall situation for Redbridge's Jewish males and females. The prior warnings about sampling size and small cells are obvious when the Jewish Day School experience of certain age groups is examined, since the male-female differential appears anomalous. Nevertheless, the overall picture for the whole community appears consistent as does the general trend for each age group.

The outstanding feature which emerges is the consistent differential between the education of males and females. Jewesses in every age group have received no Jewish education whatsoever. This situation, remember, applies to a Jewish population where over 90 per cent of the households are affiliated to synagogues and the level of religious identification via *mezuzot*, festivals and observances and so on is high by general diaspora standards.

Certain other features are also evident. The really well-educated older immigrant generation has long died out, and the difference between the generations in a population 93 per cent British-born is no longer very wide. Another prominent feature is the impact of World War II and the disruption caused to Jewish education by evacuation, enemy action resulting in the destruction of educational buildings, and the military call-up of fathers and teachers. This applies to the age-group 40-49 years i.e. those born in the

years 1928-37, where the proportion of the uneducated rises to its highest for both sexes.

Since the wartime years there has been a consistent improvement in the total coverage. The current level for those aged 5-9 suggests that the pattern of almost total male exposure to some form of Jewish education will continue as will the slow decrease in the number of uneducated females.

The pattern of Jewish Day schooling is obviously linked to the residential movement of population. In Inner London, the old London County Council area, there were provisions for Jewish Secondary schooling, but the move out to Redbridge has meant the loss of easy access to this. Hence the decline in secondary day-schooling among the younger population. On the other hand there is local Jewish Day schooling available at the primary level, and this means that the score for this category in the younger age groups is higher than the general average.

The most prominent feature to emerge is the well-known fact that the majority of Jews receive their Jewish education in the *Cheder*, part-time synagogue classes, and mostly between the age of 6 and the *barmitzva* at age 13.

Education and synagogue affiliation

The differences in level of observance found between different types of Jews may relate to the differences in their religious educational experience. Of course, some differences could, indeed, be expected for the 'progressive' wing of Judaism does not subscribe to the idea of *Yeshiva*, nor would many 'progressives' be found at Jewish Day Schools which are Orthodox oriented institutions. On the other hand there is direct evidence of a trend of movement from Orthodox to progressive Judaism, so some anomalies may be expected.

Table 16 sets out the overall educational experience of

Table 16: Synagogue Affiliation and Type of Jewish Education

Education	Orthodox	'Progressive'	Unaffiliated	Redbridge Jews
Yeshiva	1	0	1	1
Jewish Secondary	4	2	2	3
Jewish Primary	5	2	8	5
Part-time Synagogue Classes beyond 13	15	12	7	14
Part-time Synagogue Classes until 13	55	55	51	54
Private Tuition	7	5	5	6
Adult Education	0	3	0	1
None	13	21	26	15
	100	100	100	100

the entire Jewish population. The pattern is very much what one would expect on the basis of Table 15, except that the differences between the three groups are not as wide as might have been thought. Certainly, the unaffiliated section of the population is not that different from the Orthodox except that it has a larger proportion of the uneducated. The 'progressives' have a higher uneducated proportion than the Orthodox, and significantly they are the only group with substantial numbers of people who have received only adult education. The 'progressives' with a Jewish Day School background are evidence of the move over from Orthodoxy. However, once again we see that for all the age groups it is the part-time synagogue classes which are the paramount educational institution.

The majority of persons in Table 16 are adults many of whom may not have belonged to their respective categories when they actually received their education, so it is useful to look at the current scene. This is done in Table 17 which shows the education of the current generation of children according to their parents' present affiliation.

Three points stand out immediately. The first is that the 'progressive' and unaffiliated element are later than the Orthodox in educating their children. Secondly, quite predictably, 'progressives' do not send their children to the Jewish Day School. Thirdly, informal education, mostly in the form of private tuition is still a substantial contribution to the education of the young.

Table 18 gives us the final outcome of the educational experience as it relates to the current generation of teenagers. If we compare Tables 17 and 18 certain trends emerge. Firstly, private tuition is obviously not a total experience for many and is bolstered by some institutional experience eventually. Secondly, the late start of the 'progressives' is confirmed. On the other hand, it appears that the total coverage of Orthodox children is rapidly improving since the current group of under tens already have a lower uneducated proportion than the teenagers. The other fascinating finding is the number of 'progressive' teenagers with a day school background. This relates to a trend for parents of teenagers to move out of the Orthodox camp after their sons are *barmitzva*h.

The unaffiliated section of the community emerges as a very mixed one. It obviously consists of two groups; a substantial section, say 10 per cent of very Orthodox persons, who for financial or other reasons, do not pay a membership fee to an Orthodox synagogue, and an alienated group of around a quarter, who are not interested in religious edu-

Table 17: Current Education of Children Aged 5-14 years by Parents' Synagogue Affiliation

Education	Orthodox (n = 111)	'Progressive' (n = 25)	Unaffiliated (n = 13)
Jewish Day School	17	0	8
Part-time Synagogue Classes	66	72	46
Private Tuition	10	4	23
None	7	24	23
	100	100	100

Table 18: Jewish Education of Teenagers 15-19 Years by Parents' Synagogue Affiliation

Education	Orthodox (n = 80)	'Progressive' (n = 20)	Unaffiliated (n = 12)
Yeshiva	0	0	8
Jewish Secondary School	4	10	8
Jewish Primary School	4	5	0
Part-time Synagogue Classes beyond 13	7	15	17
Part-time Synagogue Classes until 13	67	55	42
Private Tuition	5	5	0
None	13	10	25
	100	100	100

cation at all. The picture which emerges is that unaffiliated Jews do not fit any stereotype. Their composition changes over time and, most importantly, just as we have seen as regards attendance and observance, they are not that different to the rest of the community as regards their educational background.

Other influences in education

A large number of tests were carried out to ascertain whether certain background variables affected education or education affected other characteristics of the population. Surprisingly few significant factors were discovered. As regards place of birth, the vast majority of the Redbridge population are East London born so this is a poor variable to use. Nevertheless, certain trends did emerge. *Yeshiva* education seemed biased to those born outside London and especially those born abroad. On the other hand, however, those born abroad were also the most uneducated and, somewhat surprisingly, this was true for those born in Poland/Russia and other Europe as well as females in the Asia/Middle East birth category. Generally there was less of a gender bias in education received among the population born outside East London and Redbridge. This suggests that the gender differential in Jewish education is a particularly strong feature of Anglo-Jewry, and especially London Jewry.

As regards outcomes where it might be thought that time spent in Jewish education might inhibit secular studies and qualifications and thus position in the job market, no trend was discovered. There was no significant relationship between the current occupation and the Jewish education received. Jewish education neither inhibited nor encouraged careers. No link was discovered even as regards adult education. However, there was a tendency among male professionals for them to have a slightly larger component of those without any Jewish education—10 per cent compared to an overall average of 4.4 per cent in Redbridge Jewry's male population.

If we take one indication of high Jewish identity i.e. membership of a Zionist organisation, education again appeared to have little influence. Only 10 per cent of the population were members of a Zionist organisation, and no one educational background predominated. The Jewish Day School produced exactly the average Zionist commitment. On the other hand, a complete lack of Jewish education does appear to inhibit Zionist identification for only 3 per cent of those without any Jewish education were affiliated Zionists.

Composition of the recipients of adult education

Certain types of education attract people with different backgrounds as we have seen with regard to synagogue affiliation. Although these numbers were small, those who have received any Adult Education stand out as a unique group. The adult educated person is more than three times

likely to be female than male, which is not surprising considering the parental bias towards boys' education we have already discovered. The typical recipient of adult education is a provincially-born female over the age of 25 who is a member of the 'progressive movement'. About a third are converts to Judaism.

Jewish education and synagogue attendance

It was mentioned earlier in this chapter that the Redbridge Jewish Survey provided a unique opportunity to ascertain educational outcomes, or the impact of education on religious practices/behaviour. It was decided therefore to try and measure the interrelationship between the type of Jewish education a person received and their pattern of synagogue attendance.

Table 19: The Impact of Jewish Education on Synagogue Attendance

Attended	Percentage of Regular Attenders	Percentage Never Attend	Overall Impact
Yeshiva	65	0	+65
Jewish Day Secondary School	12	16	-4
Jewish Day Primary School	18	13	+5
Part-time Synagogue Classes beyond 13	19	7	+12
Part-time Synagogue Classes until 13	7	7	0
Private Tuition	16	14	+2
Adult Education	20	11	+9
No Education	8	18	-10
Redbridge Survey	10	11	-1

Each type of education was measured in relationship to the proportion of regular attenders ('more than once a week' and 'on festivals and most Sabbaths') and non-attenders ('not at all') as in Table 19. The overall impact of a certain type of education was the balance between the two extremes i.e. between the observant element and the alienated. It can be seen that certain types of education have more impact both positively and negatively than others.

Of course, home background and numerous other forces come into play in such a situation but results are nevertheless interesting for the patterns they present. The two extremes are quite clear. A *Yeshiva* education has a very positive correlation with regular synagogue attendance, whereas no education at all has the most negative correlation.

It is not certain that the Redbridge pattern is typical of

the whole of Anglo-Jewry but one practical policy finding to emerge is the suggestion that the teenage synagogue classes and adult education are at least as apparently effective in their outcome as Jewish Day Schools. In fact, it is the Jewish Secondary School which breaks the pattern of increased impact with education at higher ages. This result is particularly important because it contrasts with the Jewish Primary result which overall has a positive outcome. Considering that secondary education in a Jewish Day School usually follows a primary day education the results must be disturbing for the advocates of Jewish Day School education, particularly considering the disproportionate resources which are expended on this type of education compared to the other forms of religious education.

A policy suggestion which emerges is that education decision-makers should particularly concentrate their attention on the large element which is alienated by this type of Jewish education. Certainly before dismissing these findings out of hand as unrepresentative, they should undertake their own study of the overall impact on Jewish identity of Jewish Day School education. We have already noted that their products are no more Zionist than the average member of the community, and with 12% unaffiliated to a synagogue and 8% 'progressives', also no different from the average as regards religious affiliation.

These findings can be related to the general attitudes regarding Jewish Day Schools, which are dealt with later in this report, but it is important to realise that such results are not unique to Redbridge. A major study of the Jewish parochial school in Toronto was cogently entitled 'The Inevitability of False Expectations' and stated:

The findings, therefore, lead us to accept the study's null-hypothesis which predicted a comparatively small effect of the Jewish parochial school on the capacity of the Toronto Jewish community to maintain its ethnic boundaries . . . Jewish educators may want to take note of these instructive findings as they show that the impact of the school on all the dimensions combined is very small indeed. Educational theorists will also find a confirmation to their claim that, compared to the impact of the total culture and especially early childhood and the family (and later the peer group), the school as an agency of socialization and indoctrinator of social values and behavioural patterns is bound to lag behind. Clearly, this unyielding contradiction negates the popular belief, so prevalent in the reality of everyday Jewish life, that a person with more and better Jewish education is more likely to become a more identified (or committed) Jew.²

American scholars also support this view. Liebman comments that 'the research findings currently available . . . (show that) The influence of the school is most pronounced in imparting information . . . (whereas) it affects basic attitudes towards Jews and Judaism, and patterns of religious behaviour only slightly, if at all.'³

Current provision for Jewish education in Redbridge

It has already been demonstrated with regard to synagogue affiliation that the survey respondents are very representative of the total Redbridge Jewish population. With regard to current educational provision we can again take the known facts and compare them with the survey population. Table 20 shows the known provision within the borough in 1978, and the survey findings. The discrepancies are small considering the slightly different age groups used, and that provision is a current figure, while the survey is a cumulative total. Moreover, it is known that Jewish Secondary Day school pupils and the children of members of out-borough synagogues, even as close as Chigwell, are not included in the local pupil figures. On the other hand, the Ilford Jewish Primary Day school, and the religion classes of the South-West Essex Reform Synagogue both attract out-borough pupils. The correlation of the two types of data suggests what is already known, that the *Chedarim* are the major educational medium and that around 10% of children, mostly girls, do not receive any education at all.

Table 20: Current Educational Situation of Redbridge Jewish Children

Proportion on Roll in 1978 as a percentage of Estimated Number of Children Aged 5-12 years		Findings of Redbridge Jewish Survey 1978 for Children Aged 5-14 years	
Jewish Primary School	16.3	Jewish Day School	13.4
Synagogue Classes	67.2	Synagogue Classes	74.8
		Private Tuition	10.2
No Provision	16.5	No Education	11.6

Table 21a sets out the data used in Table 20 in more detail showing the actual numbers of children involved. In 1978 over 1,400 children of pre-*barmitzvah* age were being educated in Redbridge-based institutions. It is not possible to give comparative figures for the older age cohorts because of the difficulty over the numbers who leave school at 16 and subsequent ages. Moreover, the withdrawal class pupils and the post-*barmitzvah cheder* pupils may well overlap somewhat. Nevertheless, the importance of the withdrawal classes for teenage pupils is very clear given the lack of a Jewish Secondary School, and the low 'staying-on' rate after *bat-* and *barmitzvah*.

It has already been noted that the relationship between Jewish knowledge and religious observance is not linear; nevertheless, it is important to know that 90% of the current generation of Jewish children in a typical suburban community like Redbridge are exposed to some sort of Jewish and Hebrew language education at some time. Certainly the proportion is much higher than the current estimates used by educationalists, and by diaspora standards it is a very high figure. It is a remarkable achievement that uni-

Table 21: 1978 Jewish Education Statistics

A. Pupils aged 5-12 years

Ilford Jewish Primary School	350
Synagogue Classes	
Barking & Becontree	29
Ilford Primary	171
Ilford Senior	392
Newbury Park	143
Wanstead & Woodford	155
Ilford Federation	90
Woodford Liberal	91
S.W. Essex Reform	<u>223</u>
	1444
Redbridge Jewish Children 5-12 years	2150

B. Pupils aged 13 and over

Withdrawal Classes	
Seven Kings	67
Valentines High	280
Wanstead High	80
Post-Barmitzvah	
South West Essex Reform	47
Ilford Teenage Centre	<u>45</u>
	519

versal voluntary Jewish education for boys appears to have become the contemporary norm in Redbridge, even if the desired outcome for this input does not meet all its advocates' expectations. However, the deficiencies with regard to the Jewish education coverage of females must detract from this achievement in the context of the essentially home-based nature of Judaism in Redbridge.

Notes

- 1 M Davis, ed., *Let My People Know*, London, Office of the Chief Rabbi, 1971, p6.
- 2 Y. Glickman, 'Ethnic boundaries and the Jewish Parochial School in Toronto: the inevitability of false expectations', Paper read at the conference of the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association, Quebec City, November, 1977, p18.
- 3 C. S. Liebman, 'American Jewry: identity and affiliation', in D. Sidorsky, ed., *The Future of the Jewish Community in America*, New York, Basic Books, 1973, p148.

Chapter 5: *Israel and Zionism*

Redbridge in perspective

The place of Israel within the framework of the life and ideas of British Jews has never been investigated in any real depth. Considering the apparently tremendous emotional and practical investment of Jews in Israel and the long years since the Zionist 'capture' of the community's institutions in the 1940s, this situation is quite surprising.¹ The lack of regular communal polling and time series data on Jewish opinions and views of Zionism and Israel is in marked contrast to the situation of the USA, Australia and other diaspora communities. This means that there is no baseline which can be used for comparison with the findings of the Redbridge Jewish Survey. It cannot, for instance be asserted that at the time of this 1977-8 survey, feelings about Israel were more or less positive than, for instance, in 1967. Concomitant with this statistical lacuna is the lack of knowledge about the factors and mechanisms governing British Jews' attitudes towards Zionism and Israel.

The NOP 1970 survey showed that 80% of their Jewish sample supported the idea of a Jewish state. 36% of the sample would have liked to live in Israel and 38% would have liked their children to live in Israel. A further 11% of respondents would have liked to live in Israel 'if peace broke out.' This survey found that synagogue affiliation was a controlling factor with the Orthodox being a little more Zionist than 'progressive' Jews. Over a third of the 214 Jews in the NOP study were resident in Scotland and these tended to bias the results in favour of Zionism. This is relevant in the light of Benski's study of the Newton Mearns suburb of Glasgow, where she stated:

Zionism seems to be an exceptionally strong factor. Indeed, it seems to be the new focal point of Jewish identity. The strength of Zionism is revealed through various factors, such as frequent visits to Israel (paid at least annually by 56 per cent of the respondents), affiliation with Zionist bodies (held by 33 per cent of those who were affiliated with formal associations).

It soon became clear that the NM Jew regards Israel as his own country, and identifies with its fate and its people. Furthermore statements made by the respondents reaffirm very clearly the basic insecurity in their status and future in the Diaspora mentioned above. They stated that 'we must have a country of our own: none of us is safe here, you know.' Connected with these feelings of insecurity is the fear that basically anti-Semitism is a very lively issue which is only temporarily kept under control, while Israel forms part of that control, acting as a distant protection of Diaspora Jewry. Thus, Israel has become a topic which more than any other single factor, evokes a sense of peoplehood amongst NM Jews. It has become a symbol that they are proud to identify with and which gives them a sense of belonging and security around which their secular-national identity evolves.²

The untypicality of a small wealthy community in an area such as Glasgow where religious loyalties are still a political issue, surveyed by an Israeli at a time when local nationalism was a real political force is obvious. Without such biases it is unlikely that such strong support for Zionism will be found elsewhere in Britain. Edgware is much more representative of British Jewry, and much more like Redbridge. Thus Krausz writes of his Edgware Jews:

Only 16 per cent had been to Israel and most of them had gone only for short periods, for example, on holiday or business. On the other hand, the vast majority were interested in the country to the extent of giving financial support to it: 50 per cent contributed funds for Israel regularly; 41 per cent occasionally; the rest never. And of those who belonged to Jewish associations 25 per cent belonged to Zionist organisations, and in the case of wives of respondents the comparative figure was 53 per cent. But despite the interest exhibited through membership of Zionist groups and contribution to Zionist funds, only a small proportion showed a positive interest in the possibility of living in a Jewish country. Thus, 22 per cent indicated that they would go to live in Israel if circumstances permitted; 57 per cent would not go under any circumstances; and 21 per cent were undecided. It is probably not surprising that a largely English-born generation of Jews cannot visualise leaving England to settle in Israel.³

Points of contact

a) Family in Israel

Close kin living in Israel would, it was thought, be a personal and continuing link with the Jewish state so a question on this was asked of 849 respondents and their spouses. 630 persons or 74.2% of this sample had no family in Israel. 219 respondents or 25.8% had a total of 225 family relationships. 84% of these relatives were not immediate kin, and consisted of cousins, uncles, etc. The remaining 16% were more immediate and these close relatives included two cases of people with parents, 5 with children, 2 with grandchildren, and 34 with brothers and sisters in Israel.

The low degree of family ties with Israel suggest that *aliya*, emigration to Israel, is not a major force in Redbridge Jewry. Indeed, most of those with close relatives were, in fact, Israeli or foreign-born individuals.

b) Visits to Israel

The lack of close family ties with Israel among the majority of Redbridge Jews suggests that visits to Israel would be mainly in the nature of vacation tourism. It is only within the last 20 years, with the birth of the age of the jet aircraft and package holidays that such travel has been common. Additionally there have been many schemes to attract Jewish youth to spend summer vacations in Israel, e.g. working on *kibbutzim* or on archaeological digs.

26.4 per cent of Redbridge Jewry had visited Israel at the time of the survey. This minority of visitors to Israel included many frequent visitors. Half of them had visited more than once, and nearly 12 per cent had been to Israel more than six times. The characteristics of people with first-hand experience did not appear different to that of the Redbridge Jewry as a whole. For instance, there was no link between visits and certain forms of Jewish education. A slight bias was shown by age in that young families and the elderly were under-represented, and the age groups with more discretionary income, such as young adults and the middle aged, were more likely to have been to Israel. The only sub-group which was significantly over-represented among those exposed to Israel, were young males with higher education. This feature probably reflects the impact of the schemes referred to above.

83% of all visitors had been to Israel as tourists, 5% on business related visits and 10% as temporary immigrants. This 10% of former 'potential olim' has to be added to the further 2% of 'visitors' who were *Yordim* i.e. former citizens of Israel. We can thus assume that 3% of Redbridge Jewry as a whole has had direct experience of living in Israeli society.

The proportion of the Redbridge Jewish population who had been to Israel is higher than that in Edgware in 1963. It is also higher than the '16% of American Jewish adults, 21 years and over (who) had visited Israel by the end of 1971.'⁴ That these visits were predominantly in the nature of family tourism is emphasised by the fact that among adults only the proportion was 28%, which is hardly different from that of Redbridge as a whole.

c) Charity to Israel

All households were asked 'Does anyone in the home ever give to an Israel charity or fund?' No interest was displayed in the amount or frequency of these donations. In fact, 86.7% of respondents replied in the affirmative. It was found impossible to distinguish specific categories of donations and charities e.g. The Joint Israeli Appeal, *Yeshivot*, Magen David Adom. The general impression was that people would give something to anyone, and particularly any Jewish cause which approached them. Thus no specific socio-economic group had less than 80% of donors and only among the very elderly, those aged over 75 years, did donors fall below the 80% rate. One had the impression that this question related more to general attitudes over philanthropy and the traditional *mitzvah* (good deed) of *tzedakka* (charity) rather to anything connected with politics of Jewish nationalism. However, the fact that the most widespread tangible link between Redbridge Jewry and the Jewish state consisted of Israel as recipient of money as charity must be of considerable importance to its general image in the eyes of the population.

d) Membership of Zionist organisations

Both our enumerators and respondents had real difficulty

in recognising Zionist organisations and distinguishing them from other 'Jewish' groups. This perhaps reflects both the integration of Zionism into Anglo-Jewish life in recent decades as well as the lack of perception of a separate Zionist ideology.

The overwhelming majority of Redbridge Jews have no contact with Zionist organisations other than through the collection of donations for Israel. 89.7% of them do not belong to any Zionist, political, charity or cultural group. Among the 10.3% who do claim affiliation, allegiance is widespread with no one organisation dominating membership, but a preference for locally based Zionist societies and WIZO is evident. Among children and youth, Zionist movements are very much a minority interest and are much less popular than the local youth centres until late teenage years when in any event overall formal membership of organisations is low.

Marginally more women than men, 11.5% as compared to 9.4% claimed to belong to Zionist groups. The largest variations in membership rates are found between the different age groups for men and women. Participation is highest among men under 34 years of age, with an average of 18.8% of young men between the age of 15 and 34 years with Zionist membership. The level for women in the same age cohorts is only 12.0% but, with a fluctuation of only four percentage points on either side of this average, membership for women remains at this level in the subsequent age cohorts. Lowest involvement occurs among women aged 35 to 44 years and highest involvement among those aged 55 to 64 years, very likely a reflection of the changing demands of the family life-cycle. On the other hand, the proportion of Zionist members among men fluctuates dramatically over the subsequent age cohorts, with the lowest level at 2% at the age of 35 to 44 years cohort, and the highest at 14% of the cohort aged 65 to 74 years.

This pattern does not quite fit the '*macher syndrome*' described in previous sections of this study and implies that membership of Zionist organisations is distinct from involvement in synagogue affairs and local or national community bodies. Moreover, age and sex are the strongest clues as to who is most likely to be a member of a Zionist organisation. Factors like religious group, and education, Jewish and secular, only have marginal influences. Marginally more Orthodox Redbridge Jews belonged to Zionist organisations and their membership was spread over a wider range of organisations than among other synagogue groups. There is little positive correlation between Zionist membership and Jewish education for either men or women, although the figures do suggest that those without any Jewish education are least likely to become members of a Zionist group. The data suggests a positive correlation between higher levels of secular education (degree and 'A' level) and Zionist membership, but this too is only a very marginal influence.

From an ideological standpoint a logical practical conse-

quence of Zionist membership is *aliyah*. Therefore in theory the characteristics of those who belong to Zionist organisations should give some indication of which Redbridge Jews are most likely to settle in Israel.

Aliyah

The numbers of *olim* among British Jews in the 1970s appears to have varied widely. The Chief Rabbi made the point in 1977 that 'the figures have dropped so dramatically that it would be wrong not to draw attention to the very alarming decline in present rates of *aliyah*', despite the increase from 500 people per year in 1962 to 1,000 people per year in the early 1970s.⁵ On the other hand the Jewish Agency figures for 1979 showed the highest annual level of *aliyah* ever recorded, at 1,547 people. Over the decade therefore, it would probably be true to say that approximately 1,000 British Jews a year went to settle in Israel. At least two-thirds of these people were under the age of 30 years. The 1970s also saw the number of *yordim* or returnees increase. Nevertheless, the rate of *aliyah* among British Jewry has been one of the highest from diaspora communities in recent years. In this context it is interesting to get an insight into *aliyah* from a local British Jewish community, notwithstanding that since the survey views have probably been affected by more recent events in the Middle East.

In response to the question 'are you contemplating or have you ever contemplated going to live in Israel?' Table 22 shows that among adult respondents, the proportion of those going to live in Israel, at 1.5%, is six times the *aliyah* rate for all British Jews. However, the proportion of *yordim* is almost the same, and so one could say that the 'net *aliyah* rate' among Redbridge adults is similar to the rate for all British Jews. Unfortunately the numbers are so small in both instances (7 cases of *aliyah* and 6 *yordim*), it would be statistically unacceptable to draw clear conclusions about the socio-demographic characteristics of these two groups from the data.

71.2% of Redbridge respondents have never considered *aliyah*. A sixth have thought about it and 9.3% of respondents were still potential candidates. In looking at the characteristics of the sub-totals it should be remembered that it is these larger groups about which the data gives the more reliable information.

The proportion of men and women is the same in each category in Table 22, except for those who had thought about *aliyah* in the past. While 20% of men had considered it, only 13% of women had. This does not correspond to other indicators which often showed women to be 'more loyal' to Jewish tradition than men. However, uprooting oneself and perhaps one's family to go and live in Israel is arguably of a different order of ideological commitment than adherence to the rituals of Judaism.

There are also distinctive age differences between the male and female respondent in each household who has thought about living in Israel. Of those who had considered

Table 22: Percentage Distribution of Redbridge Adults Who Have/Have Not Considered Aliyah (n = 452)

Have made preparations/going soon	1.5
Have thought about it in the past	16.6
Maybe one day in the future	9.3
Have been but returned (<i>yordim</i>)	1.3
Never thought about it	71.2

living in Israel in the past, two-thirds of the women were under 44 years of age, while two-thirds of the men were over 45 years of age. On the other hand, the majority of women who thought settling in Israel a possibility in the future were over the age of 40 years, while most men in this category were under the age of 44 years. Since respondents were found to be representative of both sexes in the sample, this suggests that husbands and wives have different perceptions about *aliyah*. Indeed, because going to live in Israel seems to appeal to spouses at different stages of their life, the probability of making a unanimous family decision about going to live in Israel is more limited than may appear to be the case.

One aspect of perceptions about *aliyah* seems to be related to household size. The data shows that respondents with larger families are less likely to have thought about it, while two person households are marginally more likely to have considered it. Proportionately more single person households considered *aliyah* as an option in the future. Since most single person households are comprised of elderly people, particularly women, most probably dream of retirement in *Eretz Yisrael*. Interestingly enough, household size did not seem to be a factor in the decision of those going on *aliyah*. The small handful of Redbridge *olim* represented multi-person households ranging from 2 to 5 members.

One would expect contact or knowledge of Israel to play a role in people's consideration of *aliyah*. In fact such influences seem to be limited in the sense that either contact or knowledge of Israel among Redbridge Jews does not necessarily mean that they have thought about *aliyah* at all. Thus, for example, 53% of adult respondents who are members of a Zionist organisation had never thought about *aliyah*. This reinforces earlier suggestions of a lack of a separate Zionist ideology among these Jews. The dominant reasons for joining such groups seem to be social and cultural rather than Zionist inspired. Indeed of the 10.3% of Redbridge Jews who were members of a Zionist organisation, just over a quarter had thought about *aliyah* in the past, about a tenth were actually going on *aliyah* and less than a tenth entertained it as a future possibility.

It is clear that since 86% of adult respondents give charity to Israel but 71.2% of them have never considered *aliyah*, money for Israel is part of an overall Jewish philanthropy rather than an ideological manifestation. Put bluntly, it

could be said that charity to Israel is viewed as payment on an insurance policy on which one never wants to collect and Israel itself is viewed as a home for other Jews, usually those in crisis, rather than as a Jewish homeland for oneself. It is particularly interesting that the proportion of those giving charity is similar in all groups except for those who have thought about settling in Israel in the past. Among the latter 93% gave charity to Israel, 7% higher than the average.

In this context, perceptions of group relations between Jews and non-Jews in Redbridge is a critical push factor which may encourage local Redbridge Jews to consider emigration to Israel. In fact, around 80% of people in all categories thought group relations had remained the same over the past few years. The assessment of the remaining 20% does appear to have some influence on peoples' attitudes to *aliyah*. Of those who had never considered *aliyah*, 17% thought relations had improved and only 4% thought they had deteriorated. In contrast, of those who viewed *aliyah* as a possibility in the future, only 7% thought group relations had improved whereas 10% thought they had got worse. Falling between these two positions are those who had considered *aliyah* in the past. 15% of them thought relations had improved while 7% thought they had got worse, indicating that perceptions of group relations between Jews and non-Jews could have been a factor in their decision to stay in the UK.

The impact of Jewish education on attitudes to *aliyah* appears on the whole to be limited. The highest level of Jewish education for both *olim* and *yordim* was some input of *cheder* teaching. More intensive Jewish education seemed to be an influence only for those who had considered *aliyah* in the past. 15% of them, as against 9% for all Redbridge Jews, had been to a *Yeshiva*, a secondary or primary Jewish school. On the other hand, the distribution by level of Jewish education of those who had never thought about *aliyah* is similar to that of all Redbridge Jews.

With respect to academic qualifications, respondents with no qualifications were marginally less likely to have thought about *aliyah*. Those who considered *aliyah* in the past once again emerge as an educationally distinctive group, with higher than average proportions of people with A-levels, degrees and post-graduates, particularly among men. While the latter category comprises 40% of men with these qualifications, only 29% of all Redbridge Jewish men had similar qualifications.

Although knowledge of Israel, stimulated by education, does not seem to have any great impact on attitudes to *aliyah*, more personal and direct contact does appear to have some influence. For example, those adult respondents and their spouses who had relatives in Israel were more likely to have considered *aliyah*. One-third of those who were going on *aliyah*, had considered it in the past or saw it as a possibility in the future, had family in Israel. In contrast only 23% of respondents and their spouses who had never considered *aliyah* had family in Israel. As could be expected after living

Table 23: Relationship between Attitudes to Aliyah and Visits to Israel

	% of respondents or respondents with household members in each category who have visited Israel	% of respondents only in each category with first-hand experience of Israel
Going on aliyah	71	43
Maybe one day in the future	62	48
Have thought about it in the past	60	47
% of all Redbridge Jews who have visited Israel = 26%		

there for some time, *yordim* had the most family contact with Israel.

Many would agree that 'there is, in short, no greater inducement to settle in Israel than a visit to Israel.'⁶ Indeed among Redbridge Jews there is a high positive correlation between adult respondents or their household members who have visited Israel, and those who are going on *aliyah* or have thought about it. Table 23 shows that the proportion of those who are going on *aliyah* and those or their household members who have visited Israel, is almost three times the general percentage of Redbridge Jews who have ever visited Israel. At just over twice the general average are those or their household members who have visited Israel and are considering settling there in the future or have thought about it in the past. Thus, personal experience of Israel does play a positive role in attitudes to *aliyah*. However, it is interesting to consider the slight differences between first hand and second hand experience, shown in Table 23. Those going on *aliyah* have less direct contact, but more household contact with Israel. One conclusion from the data could be that if *olim* had first hand experience of Israel, they would be far less likely to become *yordim*—or they would not go at all.

So far the discussion on *aliyah* has been based on the responses of adults. Do their children share their views on *aliyah*? Teenagers were asked 'would you contemplate going to live in Israel?' Given their different personal situation, the questions asked of the teenagers were not quite the same as those asked of adults. However, although they were not exactly comparable, Table 24 shows that in general their attitude to *aliyah* was less negative than that of their parents. While 71.2% of parents had never considered *aliyah*, only 40% of teenagers rejected the idea outright. The proportion of teenagers who answered that they would consider going to live in Israel, at 25%, was similar to the total sum of all positive categories of Redbridge adults, at 29%. As might be expected of this youthful population, 35% of teenagers were unsure about their attitude to *aliyah*.

Table 24: Teenagers' Aliyah Potential: Would You Contemplate Going to Live in Israel?

	%
Definitely Yes	3
Yes	22
Unsure	35
No	23
Definitely No	17

The influence of family background does not seem to be a major factor in differentiating potential *olim* from other teenagers. The pattern of synagogue affiliation and membership of Zionist groups among their parents is no different from the majority of the Redbridge Jewish population.

Among the teenagers themselves those who said they would contemplate *aliyah* had some distinctive characteristics. There were proportionately more students among them than among all the teenagers interviewed. Moreover in comparison to the even sex bias of the total sample, there were just over twice as many males as females among the potential *olim*.

Half the potential *olim* were unaffiliated to a youth group which is similar to the proportion for all teenagers. Amongst the affiliated youth, the Redbridge and Barking-side Centres attract the majority of the potential *olim* and teenagers in general. However the balance between membership of Zionist youth groups and the Youth Centres is slightly more favourable to the former among the teenagers contemplating *aliyah*.

From this sample it appears that the background profile of the most likely candidate for *aliyah* is a male student with some connection to the Zionist youth movement. Yet this profile does not fit the majority of potential *olim*. Perhaps it is of more interest that the largest number of potential *olim* emerge from among teenagers unaffiliated to any youth group and from non-Zionist homes. Further investigations of the motivations, attitudes and background of the latter group would appear to be a very worthwhile exercise for those organisations concerned with promoting *aliyah*.

The image of Israel among adults

The image of Israel as a society and possible future environment plays an important role in the overall attitudes to *aliyah*. We have already seen that the vast majority of adults and already a significant body of young people have no desire to leave Redbridge and seek their futures in the State of Israel. Furthermore from the material already presented it is clearly evident that the majority of Redbridge Jews do not have first hand experience or direct contact with Israel or Zionism. Apparently their image of Israel is formed from second or third-hand opinions and from the general media.

In the Redbridge Survey the direct question on *aliyah* was followed by an open question asking the respondent for

the household 'in which way is Israel attractive and unattractive to you as a place to live?' Considering that 71% of those who answered the *aliyah* question had never thought about *aliyah*, it is perhaps not surprising that 33% of the total sample failed to answer the question on the attractions or otherwise of Israel. A further 29% provided only negative answers, i.e. ways in which Israel was unattractive. 16% expressed mixed opinions, whereas 22% reflected entirely positive views. The latter must be contrasted with the 62% whom we have noted had nothing at all positive to say about Israel as a place to live.

The actual answers were coded into categories of attraction and unattraction. Some people, of course, gave several reasons and up to 4 in either category were coded. In all 275 reasons for attraction and 294 reasons for unattraction were provided by our respondents. Table 25 shows the cumulative totals.

Table 25: Ways in Which Israel is Attractive or Unattractive to Adults as a Place to Live

Reasons Attractive (n = 275)		Reasons Unattractive (n = 294)	
	%		%
1 Sense of belonging; lack of stigma	38	1 Wars and security	22
2 Climate and countryside	20	2 Economic situation	21
3 Youth and spirit of the country	17	3 Personal circumstances	20
4 Heritage (religion and history)	14	4 Way of life	15
5 Others	11	5 Others	22

Presented in Table 25 are push and pull factors involved in *aliyah*. We can see that most of the pull factors towards Israel are intangible, fulfilling psychological and romantic needs. The social environment and the cultural atmosphere are paramount attractions. The dominant reason is the double edged awareness of minority status outside and majority status within Israel. Material betterment does not play a part. It is open to debate whether the overwhelmingly intangible content in the attractiveness of Israel has withstood the bad publicity and the large scale criticism of the years since 1978.

The reasons provided for the unattractiveness of Israel clearly contrast with the above. Firstly, no one reason stands out as a major deterrent. Secondly, all are firmly rooted in the material realm and the day to day practicalities of life in Israel. Respondents who had considered *aliyah* provided, as might be expected, above average numbers of attractive reasons. However, amongst some of those who had thought about it in the past, there was a significant element who now had mainly negative views of Israel's attractiveness. Surprisingly the handful of *yordim* took up mainly neutral positions providing both the 'pros' and 'cons' of living in Israel. It is fascinating to learn that 45% of those who

held to entirely positive views of Israel had never considered living there and that this particular group accounts for over 10% of Redbridge Jewry.

The image of Israel among teenagers

Following their own *aliyah* question in their special section of the survey, the teenage sample of 104 persons was asked to respond to a whole battery of structured questions aimed at eliciting their views. Five possible attractive reasons and seven negative reasons were offered as options in the form of questions. Respondents could reply 'definitely yes', 'yes', 'unsure', 'no', and 'definitely no' to each. Therefore it was

possible to give a positive response to an anti-Israel or anti-Zionist leading question and vice versa. A five-point scale of measurement of Zionism corresponding to the five possible response categories was constructed with 1 the most pro-Zionist and 5 anti-Zionist. From the 12 questions the mean average response of our teenage sample was 2.8 and the median 2.7. This suggests that the average view held fell on the positive side of the 'unsure' or neutral category.

There was a clear correlation between teenager's views on the attraction or otherwise of Israel as a place to live, and their response to the question on *aliyah*. Those who replied definitely yes on *aliyah* were the most pro-Zionist on our

Table 26: Ways in Which Israel is Attractive or Unattractive to Teenagers as a Place to Live

	Pro-Israel % of respondents answering positively	Anti-Israel % of respondents answering negatively	% Balance of opinion in favour of Israel
Is it attractive . . .			
because you believe Jews can feel secure there and there is no anti-semitism?	53	27	+26
because you believe that is where all Jews belong?	32	48	-16
out of a feeling of solidarity because you believe Israel needs you?	30	54	-24
because you believe there is a better future there for you?	12	66	-54
for religious reasons?	17	72	-55
	Pro-Israel % of respondents answering negatively	Anti-Israel % of respondents answering positively	
Is it unattractive . . .			
because you believe Jews have no right to live there?	97	1	+96
because you feel you have no tie or feeling for the people or land?	73	16	+58
because you believe that it is too isolated and a sort of ghetto?	71	16	+55
because you believe that the Israeli political and bureaucratic system is bad?	58	6	+52
because of the climate?	73	21	+52
for economic reasons?	24	47	-20
because you believe the Arabs are powerful or you fear war?	29	61	-38

scale at 2.03. The 'yes' group scored 2.44. Those who answered 'definitely no' to *aliyah* scored 3.03. Thus, the range between those definitely for and against *aliyah* was only 1.0 on the scale. This suggests that there is no polarisation of opinions on Israel among this group of people, despite their different attitudes to *aliyah*.

It is possible to use these replies to examine particular aspects of the image and perception of Israel among this sample of suburban Jewish teenagers. This is done in Table 26 by combining the 'definitely yes' and 'yes' response categories and 'definitely no' and 'no' responses into two sets of positive and negative statements about Israel as appropriate. The 'unsure' response has been omitted from the Table but does, of course, contain the balance of the answers.

The first point to notice in relation to the 'attractive' aspects of Israel is that aside from the anti-Semitism issue, the balance of opinion in these 'push factors' does not favour Israel. On the other hand for three questions the proportion answering positively far exceeds the proportion who are 'potential *olim*.' Only religious motivations and the perception of a better future in Israel fail to gain the positive response of even the quarter of the sample who saw a possibility of settling in Israel.

The teenagers' concern with anti-Semitism must be seen in the light of their unique experience of prejudice which is dealt with in the following chapter. The survey findings show a much greater degree of incidence of anti-Semitism at school than at work or social activities. Therefore, the younger generations of Jews are more affected and aware of prejudice than the adult generations among the Redbridge population. Explanation of the poor image of 'future prospects' in Israel could be linked to the communal emphasis on charity for Israel, and Israel as supplicant and recipient which has already been noted.

The 'unattractive' leading questions regarding Israel received a more varied and more pro-Israel response. The most obvious example is the question questioning the right of the Jewish people to live in Israel. This question received the highest score in the entire survey. Only one teenager endorsed the virulently anti-Zionist position. The response to the question of solidarity with Israel may affect the interpretation one puts on the almost unanimous response to the first question. 16% of the sample appear to have no particularly close feelings towards the Jewish state. This could suggest that the earlier question was interpreted by some of these respondents as a freedom of choice—human rights issue regarding Jewish peoples' right to settle wherever they wish. On the other hand the 73% who assert their close ties with Israel will please some pessimistic Zionists. The minority, 16% who felt no solidarity with Israel also saw it as a 'ghetto' but this image was again denied by a surprisingly high proportion of the teenagers.

The response to the question on climate must obviously be seen in the light of the Mediterranean holiday syndrome among North European populations. However, the unfav-

ourable image of the 'desert' climate held by a minority of teenagers must be linked to some of the adult responses which showed an ignorance of the range of climates in Israel.

Again Zionists will be relieved by the response to the question on the Israeli bureaucratic and political system which received less opprobrium than the country's climate. Obviously the message that Israel is the democracy of the Middle East has penetrated even among those generally unfavourable to the State. As one might expect of an inexperienced group of young people with little knowledge of Israeli life, a larger proportion (46%) failed, quite sensibly, to express an opinion on this leading question than on any other.

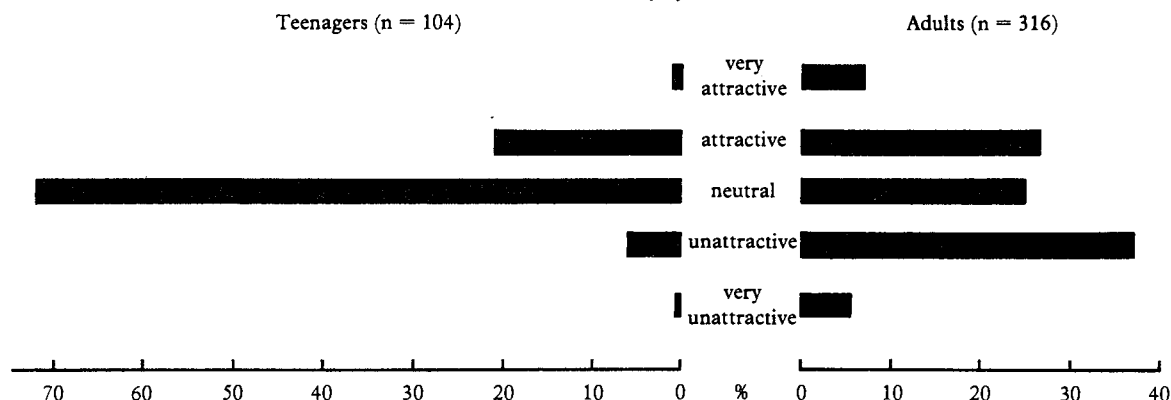
The media and communal attention given to Israel's 'poor economy' and hyper-inflation must have penetrated the thinking of these teenagers, as has the State's problems with its Arab neighbours. Therefore, not surprisingly, these last two issues, the economy and security, are seized upon as the greatest deterrents to living in Israel. The stronger fears about war than the economy are worth noting. On the other hand, the pro-Israeli replies from young people unconcerned by war and security or economic problems cover a larger proportion of the total than that revealed by the question seeking to ascertain the number of potential *olim*.

Generational factors in the image of Israel

All the evidence examined so far has suggested that there is a marked difference in the pattern of the answers between teenage and adult respondents. Unfortunately, there were no open questions in the teenage section of the survey which could be compared directly with the open answers of the adults. In the adult case, these open questions had revealed a wide divergence of opinion about Israel and Israeli society. Further analysis of these replies showed that the concerns of men and women varied slightly. Women tended to be more aware and anxious about the security situation in Israel and the likelihood of war. Men on the other hand, focussed more on the economic difficulties of life in Israel.

There were also some generational differences among the adults. The elderly were imbued with the same idealism as the teenagers. They also appeared more tolerant of Israelis of different origins and Israeli 'manners'. In contrast, the 30-60 age group were critical of the 'arrogance' and 'bad manners' of Israelis. In some cases it was qualified, as for instance, by a young woman of 33 who said 'I admire what they have done, but I do not like Israelis.' This middle generation also held political and ideological reservations regarding Zionism. Many, particularly, those of the generation of World War II, expressed, when asked about Israel, unambiguous statements about their British patriotism. Others mentioned their degree of 'anglicisation' as a barrier to living in the Middle East. As might be expected of the teenage generation who have grown up in a situation where

Figure 3: A Comparative Distribution of Teenagers' and Adults' Views of Israel, Redbridge Jewry 1978 (%)



Israel is a fact of life, their answers suggested that they did not question the establishment of a State of Israel.

The divergencies of opinion between generations about *aliyah* and the image of Israel, indicated that it was worthwhile to try and quantify the situation for comparative purposes. In the case of the adults, the answers to the open question shown in Table 25 were reclassified according to a five-point scale. A net total of two or more positive reasons in favour of Israel were placed in the 'very attractive' category, and vice versa for the 'very unattractive' category. Where opinions were balanced equally, they were placed in the 'neutral' category. The 316 adults were distributed as shown in Figure 3 on this basis.

The teenagers distribution in Figure 3 uses a five-point scale based upon their replies to the closed questions on the attractiveness and unattractiveness of Israel covered in Table 26. The 'very attractive' category are people whose average score reflected the most pro-Israeli stance on the scale. The 'very unattractive' category for teenagers consisted of answers which on average took the most anti-Israeli position. Neutral answers were those where the net average of their replies fell mainly within the 'unsure' category (i.e. 2.5-3.49).

In both cases the methods were arbitrary and the calculations rather complex. Figure 3 highlights the difference between the views of Israel held by adults and those held by teenagers. Adult opinion is much harder, being concentrated in and relatively evenly distributed around the 3 middle points on the scale. No one position stands out, although taken together, the 'unattractive' and 'very unattractive' categories exceed the two positive categories by a ratio of 5 to 4.

In contrast, where opinions were expressed among teenagers, the two pro-Israeli or positive categories outweighed the two negative categories by a clear 3 to 1 majority. This finding is not unexpected. Wasserstein found a similar situation among his sample of Oxford students and stated that 'Support for Israel is the one form of Jewish identification in which Anglo-Jewish students appear to equal if not exceed the intensity of their parents' Jewishness.'⁷ However, it is important to note that in the Redbridge case, 72%

of teenagers fell into the 'neutral' or unsure category so their opinions, on the whole, still remain to be formed.

A factor in the views held by adults, and presumably also teenagers, was ignorance about Israel. For example, there were many misconceptions about Israel's climate and odd individuals even imagined that all Israelis had to live collectively in *kibbutzim*. Since only a small proportion of Redbridge Jews had actually ever visited Israel, this is to some extent hardly surprising. The very high proportion of teenagers who fell into the 'neutral' category in Figure 3 indicates that lack of knowledge about Israel may be an especially important factor here. From Israel's point of view it is clear that it is the young Anglo-Jews who must be influenced if they are not to take on the largely negative attitudes of their parents in later life.

Despite these differences, for both Jewish adults and teenagers in Redbridge it would be accurate to say that support for Israel is a given fact. However, it is also true that in both cases political ideology and religion are minor influences on *aliyah*. The importance of the image of Israel is that it colours people's notions and conceptions of the practicalities of *aliyah*. Apart from external pressures like anti-Semitism, it is the issue of whether Israel is perceived as an attractive or unattractive society for young people and newcomers that will govern the future rate of *aliyah*. It is peace in the Middle East which would be the single most significant and positive development in bringing about an improvement in the image of Israel and the rate of *aliyah*.

Notes

- 1 G. Shimoni, 'Selig Brodetsky and the ascendancy of Zionism in Anglo-Jewry (1939-1945)', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XXII (1980), 125-164.
- 2 T. Benski, 'Identification, group survival and inter-group relations: the case of a middle-class Jewish community in Scotland,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, IV (1981), 313-314.
- 3 E. Krausz, 'The Edgware Survey: Factors in Jewish identification,' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XI (1969), 159-160.
- 4 D. Lazerwitz, *American Jewish Travel to Israel*, Jerusalem, Israel Tourism Administration, 1980, p4.
- 5 I. Jakobovits, in S. L. and V. D. Lipman, eds., *Jewish Life in Britain 1962-1977*, New York, K. G. Saur, 1981, p71.
- 6 C. Bermant, 'On the Other Hand', *Jewish Chronicle*, 16.8.1980
- 7 B. Wasserstein, 'Jewish identification among students at Oxford,' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XIII (1971), 150.

Chapter 6: *The Jewish Day School*

The Redbridge situation

In the light of the relationship of education to Judaism and Jewish identity discussed in Chapter 4 it is relevant to reiterate the profile of the products of the Jewish Day School revealed by the Redbridge Jewish Survey. In terms of synagogue affiliation they were quite typical of Redbridge Jewry, nor were they more likely than normal to be active Zionists. As regards synagogue attendance, they included a larger proportion of both the more regular attenders and the non-attenders.

In 1970 Redbridge Jewry established the state-aided, one-form entry Ilford Jewish Primary School in Barking-side, which was the successor of the old Stepney Jewish Day School. In recent years the concern of the advocates of Jewish day schools in the area has been to establish another one-form entry primary school or annex in order to feed and justify the eventual establishment of a Redbridge Jewish Secondary School. This was accomplished in 1982. This policy fitted into the overall aim of the Chief Rabbi's Office to provide a Jewish day school education for a third of Anglo-Jewish children. The following results of our survey suggest that in the light of grass-roots community attitudes such an aim can only be attained if Jewish day schools are 'good enough' to attract all their potential constituency. Our findings suggest that in a community such as that found at present in Redbridge, one would require a Jewish population size of 9,000 to justify a primary day school and 21,000 for a secondary school.

Table 27: Would You (Parent) Want Your Child to Attend a Jewish Primary/Secondary School?

	Primary School (n = 204)	Secondary School (n = 209)
	%	%
Definitely yes	15	10
Yes	9	9
Possibly	14	16
No	33	34
Definitely No	29	31

Table 28: Do You (Teenager) Think Jewish Children Should Attend a Jewish Primary/Secondary School?

	Primary School (n = 105)	Secondary School (n = 103)
	%	%
Definitely Yes	3	3
Yes	10	6
In certain circumstances	35	29
No	34	42
Definitely No	18	20

Parental and teenage attitudes

Tables 27 and 28 clearly set out the replies of our sample of over 200 parents of school age children and 100 teenagers as regards Jewish day schools. A clear majority of both generations are opponents of this form of education. 61.7% of parents and 51.9% of teenagers are opposed to the idea of the primary school, and 65.6% of parents and 62.1% of teenagers to the secondary school. Teenagers are much more unsure of their opinion than parents, so they include a lower proportion of supporters as well. 24% of parents are primary school supporters compared with only 13% of teenagers. Again, secondary schools are much less attractive even to those supporters of day school education, receiving the positive endorsement of only 19% of parents and a mere 8% of teenagers. There is a clear indication that on the basis of the parental attitudes revealed here, and if neutrals are included, at present a maximum of only one-third of Jewish schoolchildren would be sent to a day school. The fact that the teenage attitudes are merely a pale reflection of parental ones and that the two generations align quite closely, suggests that these are deeply embedded attitudes which will not change quickly.

Positive reasoning on Jewish schools

The question on parents' and teenagers' reasons for and against Jewish children attending Jewish day schools was an open one, answered by 223 parents and 96 teenagers. The categories in Table 29 were created in the light of the

Table 29: Supporters' Reasons for Favouring Jewish Day Schools by Percentage

Category	Parents (n = 67)	Teenagers (n = 24)
	%	%
1 Curriculum	40	38
2 Peoplehood	25	29
3 Educational Standard	21	4
4 Ethos/approach	8	21
5 Practical reasons	5	8
6 Other	1	0

answers, and so they need further explanation.

On the pro-Jewish schooling side the category 'ethos' represents religious and ideological answers such as 'I wish my children to observe Jewish holidays and the Jewish religion' or 'there is a need for religious education.' The term 'peoplehood' included answers on ethnicity such as 'to keep Jewish children together' or a teenager's comment that he 'liked being with a Jewish crowd and leading a fully Jewish life.' 'Curriculum' speaks for itself, but here the emphasis was mainly on Hebrew language rather than religion. The category 'practical reasons' mainly concerned convenience and lifestyle and issues such as transport and personal circumstances. The 'educational standard' on the positive side was mostly replies of negative comparison such as 'local

schools weren't always so good'.

Table 29 shows the distribution among the various categories of the minority who were asked their opinions, and came down on the pro-Jewish schools side. Both groups are agreed that curriculum and peoplehood concerns are the most important issues. These parents seem to have a higher regard for the education standard of Jewish schools, while teenage supporters are more concerned with their ethos and approach.

Negative reasoning on Jewish schools

In Table 30 an attempt was made to order the open-ended replies of the vast majority of respondents who were opposed to Jewish schools, so that they would equate with the categories in Table 29. Whereas the curriculum was the main attraction towards Jewish schools, curriculum issues were not that significant on the negative side. Those who mentioned curriculum argued that it was too narrow, stating that they wanted 'a general rather than merely a Jewish education' for their child.

Table 30: Opponents Reasons for Negative View of Jewish Day Schools by Percentage

Category	Parents (n = 156)	Teenagers (n = 72)
	%	%
1 Segregation	67	69
2 Ideological	10	6
3 Curriculum	8	15
4 Practical reasons	7	4
5 Other	4	6
6 Educational Standard	4	0

The converse of the peoplehood argument in favour of Jewish schools is the segregation one. Both parents and teenagers were very concerned that Jewish schools isolated Jewish children from the wider community. Feelings were very strong on this issue. Statements such as fears that their children 'might become isolated in a Jewish ghetto' or that they 'feel children should mix with all religions,' veered over towards extreme denunciations of 'separation' and the use of the term 'apartheid'. Such opinions apparently fit into the recent trend towards comprehensive education whereby all forms of segregation among schoolchildren on the basis of social class, ability and so on, are rejected. Ideological objections to Jewish schooling on the basis of the parents' opposition to 'brainwashing' or their own negative view of Judaism were not much more frequent than their criticism of Jewish schools' curriculum or practical reasons. It is intriguing to see that the rank order among teenage opponents is slightly different, and they are much more concerned with the curriculum issues than, for instance, the educational standard which none of them mentioned.

The opposition to Jewish schooling was undoubtedly, in the main, deeply held, but on occasion it produced some

rather bizarre answers such as a mother who stated that 'certain non-Jewish schools in the area are so good there's no need for Jewish schools.' A similar kind of thinking is found in the parent whose 'son failed the eleven plus so had to go to a Jewish school.' The most odd was the man who was opposed to Jewish schooling on the grounds that he wished his 'kids to go through anti-Semitism at an early age.'

The answers revealed by our survey may seem unusual or even atypical at first sight, but the thinking that lies behind them was corroborated by a 1982 Jewish Chronicle investigation on the same topic in Redbridge.¹ All the main arguments which were used by opponents and supporters, and which are categorised in Tables 29 and 30 were repeated by these interviewees.

Differences between primary and secondary schools

Differences between the levels of support and opposition towards primary and secondary schools were revealed by the survey. Tables 27 and 28 show that Jewish secondary schools were less popular among day school supporters, and opposition to them was harder among opponents. Why this should be is not very clear. Some parents whose children were over age 11 only answered for their immediate concern which was the secondary school, and this may have been a factor. On the other hand this could not account for the trend among teenagers. It may well be that the primary school is seen as less serious from an educational or social point of view, or perhaps the lack of a local example of a Jewish secondary school was an influence.

Whereas there was no sex bias among our teenage respondents, the mothers in the parents' group were more likely to be supporters of Jewish schools, than fathers. 19% of mothers said 'definitely yes' to Jewish schools, compared with only 9% of fathers. Overall 25% of mothers were supporters compared with 19% of fathers. On the primary—secondary issue it was movement in mothers' opinions that caused the differentiation. Fathers' attitudes were relatively stable with a steady movement down the categories in Table 28, but among mothers there was a strong movement especially away from the 'definitely yes' on the secondary school question.

Whatever the reason for the trend, it has to be seen in the light of the overwhelming cause of the opposition, the 'segregation' issue. Though Jewish parents consider segregation at school is bad and that their children should mix with non-Jews, they also desire to limit these contacts outside the school. There is undoubted pressure placed on children to attend Jewish youth clubs and social activities and above all, as we shall see in Chapter 7, to marry within the Jewish community. This suggests that more educational or instrumental influences enter the secondary school debate. This thesis is apparently confirmed by the answers to the vocational education question.

A Jewish vocational high school

As we reported in Chapter 10 of our previous report, *The Work and Employment of Suburban Jews*:

All parents were also asked 'in principle would you like to see the introduction of vocational training in Jewish schools where one could learn a particular skill or trade?'

To this 73% replied in the affirmative to the principle. 25% signified that they had children for whom they 'would want such vocational training.' This apparent increased interest in Jewish education, if combined with a practical employment benefit, suggests a general unease about the economic position of Redbridge Jewry in relation to future employment prospects. The model here, of course, is the successful schools operated by ORT, mainly in Israel, France and South America. This 25% response rate is a more positive response than one might expect, because one has to allow for those who have already named a professional career for their children, and those who were unwilling to contemplate changing schools.

A vocational education for their offspring was very attractive to older fathers (over 50) and those who had grammar and secondary modern schools as their highest level of education. Those with only elementary education were opposed to the idea. On the other hand, as a whole, those fathers with no academic qualifications were the strongest supporters. Those with 'A' levels were the only group to be divided on the issue.

Mothers slightly favoured vocational training more than fathers (74:72%). The strongest supporters were again the oldest group, those over 45 years. Among women, those with elementary education supported the idea. The strongest opponents were the younger mothers under 25 years. Those with grammar and tertiary education, and those holding 'O' levels had the most reservations.²

The influence of synagogue affiliation

In Chapter 4 the overall Orthodox orientation of the Jewish day school was established. Thus, on ideological grounds

Table 31: Influence of Synagogue Affiliation on Attitudes Towards Jewish Day Schools

	Redbridge Households	Positive Parents	Negative Parents
	%	%	%
Orthodox	76.8	80	65
Progressive	14.4	2	25
Unaffiliated	8.8	18	10

the 'progressive' Jews could be expected to be opponents of the concept. Moreover, if we divide the Jewish community into two groups, the 'survivalists' and the 'universalists', on historical grounds we should expect the 'progressives' to be oriented to the 'universalists' who wish Jews to make a contribution to the wider society and improve relations with them. On the other hand, the 'survivalists', who focus inward and concentrate on generational continuity and the quality of Jewish life, could be expected to be largely Orthodox oriented.

In the light of the Jewish day school debate as established by the survey questions the 'survivalists' would choose, as we have seen, to justify Jewish schools in terms of peoplehood, while the 'universalists' would choose to attack them in terms of their segregationist role.

Table 31 clearly shows that positive parents who answered 'definitely yes' and 'yes' are slightly more likely than average to be Orthodox, but more clearly that the 'progressives' are hardly represented among them. Somewhat surprising is the over-representation of the unaffiliated, but we have already explained the unusual composition of this group which is made up both of moral objectors to Judaism, and those whose personal circumstances prevent membership of their natural 'home' in the Orthodox camp. The 'universalist' oriented 'progressive' opposition to day schools is quite clear, so it is certain that on this topic an issue has been found on which a clear cut ideological position among the more cohesive 'progressive' subpopulation can clearly be differentiated.

The ability of parents to transmit their values on this issue to their children is shown in Table 32. Again the teenagers exactly reflect the trend of their parents' replies. Here

Table 32: Percentage Distribution of Teenagers' Views on Desirability of Jewish Day Schools by Parents' Synagogue Affiliation

	Orthodox	'Progressive'	Unaffiliated	Total
Jewish Primary School				
Positive response	13	0	14	13
Negative response	32	68	43	52
Overall response	-19	-68	-29	-29
Jewish Secondary School				
Positive response	9	0	14	8
Negative response	61	78	57	64
Overall response	-52	-78	-43	-52

the balance of opinion within the three synagogue affiliated groups is apparent. The lack of teenage 'progressive' supporters for Jewish schools is clear, as is the 'mixed' position of the unaffiliated. Considering the small cell sizes involved, the general trend away from support for Jewish day schools, and hardening of opposition to them between primary and secondary sectors, which is again evident in every case, is quite remarkable. It can therefore be concluded that synagogue affiliation is indeed an influential factor in this debate.

The influence of Jewish education

It is interesting to know whether the type of Jewish education individuals have experienced has in any way affected their view of Jewish day schools. On the one hand, how does the former day school pupil view the topic, and on the other hand is the former part-time pupil disappointed with his or her own experience and advocating something more intensive?

As far as parents are concerned the results are given for the two 'extreme' opinions in Table 33 in order to see if certain types of educational experience are over represented on either side. It emerged that parents with a full-time Jewish education experience are more likely than average to be supporters of Jewish schools, and that they are not generally opponents of them. It appears that on average supporters of day schools are 'better educated' than their opponents. The strong opponents of day schools are very much average Jews in terms of their Jewish education.

As we have learnt to expect by now, teenage answers ref-

Table 33: The Influence of Jewish Educational Experience on Attitudes Towards the Jewish Primary Day School

	All parents (Population Aged 30-49) (n = 217)	Positive Parents (Definitely Yes and Yes) (n = 49)	Negative Parents (Definitely No and No) (n = 59)
Jewish Education	%	%	%
Yeshiva	1	2	0
Jewish Secondary	3	14	0
Jewish Primary	4	9	2
Cheder 13+	13	20	14
Cheder to 13	54	37	59
Home/Tutor	4	4	4
Adult Education	1	0	0
None	20	14	21
	100	100	100

lect the parental ones. Teenagers with a day school background are more likely than average to be positive about this educational medium, but this is less clear in the secondary sector. 'Negative' teenagers have average educational backgrounds just like their parents.

The influence of Judaism

If the Jewish day school is the panacea for the community's growing disaffection for Judasim as its advocates believe, then one should expect 'survivalists' to be its greatest supporters. One should also expect those with a more religious Orthodox outlook to be its supporters since it is supportive of their religious lifestyle in the matter of kosher meals and Jewish holidays, as well as 'sacred learning'.

Table 34: Importance of Keeping Festivals and Shabbat and Attitudes to Jewish Day School Education

	Positive Parents %	Negative Parents %	All Redbridge Jews %
To a very great extent	17	14	16.7
To a certain extent	67	38	62.8
Very little	11	31	13.0
Not at all	4	17	7.5
	100	100	100.0

Table 34, however, shows that, in fact, the supporters of Jewish education are not much different on average to the Redbridge norm when confronted by an ideological religious question. In fact, this question is best at uncovering the divergence of the negative parents, who are definitely the less ideologically committed to the celebration of *Shabbat* and festivals. On the other hand, the lack of clear polarisation on the issue must be borne in mind since some people who care nothing about Judaism, want Jewish schooling for their children, while some of the most religious element hold negative attitudes to Jewish schools.

Another variable which can be correlated to this issue is those who object to working on *Shabbat*. The overall average of the *Shomrei Shabbat* among Redbridge Jews was 17% but this figure was biased by age group. The retired elderly population was 30% *Shomrei Shabbat* but the 35-44 age group was only just over 8%. Among supporters of the Jewish day school, 22% object to working on *Shabbat*, whereas only 5% of the strong opponents object. Of course, the 22% is not significantly above the Redbridge average, but it is several times the rate both among these parents' own age cohort, and that of negative parents. However, again it is important to realise that the majority of those supporting Jewish day schools are not ideologically committed to being *Shomrei Shabbat*.

The influence of Zionism

In Redbridge only 9% of adults were members of a Zionist organisation, but among supporters of Jewish day schools the proportion was 17% and among opponents 5%. So on average the supporters of Jewish day schools were twice as likely to be Zionists as other Redbridge Jews and the opponents only half as likely. In view of the strong female bias among 'supporters', it should not be surprising to discover that most of the over-representation of Zionists among supporters was composed of 'WIZO ladies' and their reason was mainly the school curriculum. Female Zionists in general were less hostile to Jewish schools than other groups examined, but the minority who fell into the opposition camp were interestingly enough nearly united in their use of the 'separation' argument.

The practical Zionist content of the two 'extreme' groups also needs to be investigated. 30% of Redbridge adults have visited Israel, but among 'positive parents' the proportion was 26% with only 12% among 'negative parents.' These figures have to be seen in the light of the age and financial responsibilities of this cohort of parents. However, the non-Zionist orientation of opponents of Jewish schooling is again evident. Yet when the answers to the *aliyah* question are correlated with support or opposition to Jewish schooling, no clear-cut divide can be found. Positive and negative parents are almost similar to each other and the Redbridge norm, where 71% of persons have never considered *aliyah*. However, the two parents who were potential *olim* and planned to emigrate in the immediate future, were both in the positive camp, while the two *yordim*, returnees from Israel, were in the negative camp. These two were the only *aliyah* categories which showed real differences between supporters and opponents.

Among teenagers, where there was much more commitment to Israel, those oriented to *aliyah* were not found to be significantly keener on Jewish schools. However, peoplehood motivations towards *aliyah* i.e. those who found it attractive because they 'belong' there, did correlate with teenage support for Jewish schooling. As with parents, in general among teenagers a strong non-Zionist viewpoint did correlate with opposition to Jewish schools, but on the other hand the two strongest youthful supporters of Jewish schools gave strong non-Zionist replies.

The influence of occupation

The supporters of Jewish schools appeared biased towards housewives and small businessmen. Among skilled manual workers and professionals no significant trend was established. Opponents of Jewish schools were found particularly among the economically active, own account workers, people in personal services, junior non-manual workers, taxi drivers, and managers and employers in large businesses. Among teenagers, working youngsters were slightly more negative than average.

The overall split can be interpreted as between house-

wives and shop owners on the positive side, and larger businessmen and people employed in big concerns in the commercial sector, i.e. those who are more exposed to the wider non-Jewish environment, on the negative side. This thesis is strengthened by the suggestion that many of Redbridge's professionals, whom we might expect in terms of education and outlook to take on a more 'universalist' outlook, actually operate in a largely Jewish milieu. Hence, no clear bias was found among them.

An overview of the debate

Since a Jewish day school education provides the opportunity for the more coordinated and intensive exposure of young people to Judaism, it is now regarded in certain circles as the most suitable and appropriate mechanism for realising the goal of 're-Judaising' Anglo-Jewry.³ However, it has already been shown that such common assumptions such as 'more means better' or that outcomes are linear and predictable, cannot be made in the educational sphere. In fact, a study of Anglo-Jewish university students by West⁴ suggested that the net results of exposure to Jewish day schools could be far from that which their advocates intended. Both Cromer⁵ and Wasserstein have accepted West's data as valid since the latter has clearly stated that:

Former Jewish secondary school pupils in her group of interviewees were more disposed to reject the Jewish religion than those from similar backgrounds who did not attend Jewish schools.⁶

This wider policy issue needs to be borne in mind when one examines the overall attitude towards Jewish day schools in Redbridge, which shows that a clear majority of the parental and younger generations have a negative view of them. The reasons why people support or oppose have been examined, as have the background characteristics of the supporters and strong opponents, in order to try and isolate specific influences on attitudes. Whereas 'Mr & Mrs Average' and their teenage children are opposed to Jewish schools, this does not mean that they clearly fall into the 'universalist' camp. Neither are the supporters of Jewish schools confirmed 'survivalists.' The vast majority of Redbridge Jews are probably pragmatists who see some merit in both viewpoints and wish to weld them together but have yet to be convinced of the value of Jewish day schools for their own children's education. Not surprisingly, therefore, it is difficult to give a clear profile of the parent who would send their child to a Jewish day school. As most people who have examined the topic know, the majority of day school pupils do not come from very observant backgrounds. Though in Redbridge the profile of the most likely parental 'supporter' is a female, Orthodox former Jewish day school pupil who is a member of WIZO, this is neither the background of the majority of supporters nor of the parents of those currently attending Jewish schools. These children's family backgrounds contain a much weaker degree of Jewish commitment and loyalties. Whether this accounts for

the rather disappointing educational outcomes reported in Chapter 3, is itself debatable.

This debate has revealed an obvious problem for the advocates of Jewish day schools, that is one of its image. The actual product appears less problematic than the packaging. It would be of great interest therefore to see what the findings of a similar survey would be in a community such as Birmingham or Liverpool where the small size of the population necessitates the admission of non-Jewish children into Jewish schools, with the result that the 'segregationist' argument against them would largely collapse. Certainly the factual evidence shows that in such provincial communities the majority of Jewish parents do actually send their children to the Jewish day school.⁷ It would be interesting to see if there was an acceptable compromise over a 'leaven of non-Jews' which would be acceptable to 'survivalists' and which could win over the current 'pragmatist' opponents, so that a Jewish secondary day school education could become a really viable proposition in communities like Redbridge.

Notes

- 1 'Redbridge readers give London Extra their views on Jewish education', *Jewish Chronicle*, 2 iv, 1982.
- 2 B. A. Kosmin and C. Levy, *The Work and Employment of Suburban Jews*, London, Board of Deputies, 1981, p35.
- 3 M. Davis, ed., *Let My People Know*, London, Office of the Chief Rabbi, 1971, p15.
See also J. Braude, 'Jewish Education in Britain Today.' in S. L. and V. D. Lipman, eds., *Jewish Life in Britain 1962-1977*, New York, K. G. Saur, 1981, p119-129.
- 4 V. West, 'The Influence of Parental Background of Jewish University Students,' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, X (1968), 277.
- 5 G. Cromer, 'Intermarriage and Communal Survival in a London Suburb.' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XVI (1974), 167.
- 6 B. Wasserstein, 'Jewish identification among students at Oxford,' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XIII (1971), 143.
- 7 In 1975 the state-aided King David Primary School and High Schools in Liverpool had combined rolls of 666, including 316 non-Jews; in Birmingham the King David Primary School had 53 non-Jewish children among its 180 pupils.
J. Brausde, *Survey of Jewish Day Schools in the United Kingdom and Ireland*, London, Institute of Jewish Affairs Research Report, 1975.

Chapter 7: *The Issue of Outmarriage*

Mixed households in Redbridge

The rate of outmarriage of Jewish persons to gentiles who do not convert to Judaism is a religious and social issue which has long been seen as a useful index of the Jewish identity of a population. The Redbridge Jewish Survey produced very low rates of actual outmarriage compared with similar surveys among other Jewish diaspora populations. Out of the 469 households in the enumerated survey there were 9 cases (1.9%) of mixed marriages and 7 cases (1.5%) where a partner had converted to Judaism. In a similar survey in Los Angeles 19% of the 413 respondents were married to non-Jews who had not converted.¹ A survey in 1969 in Cape Town discovered 2.5% of the Jewish males had non-Jewish wives and as the survey only questioned members of the affiliated Cape Town Jewish community, many mixed marriages were undiscovered.² In Edgware 1962-3, at least 3.2% of married couples had one partner who was currently or formerly non-Jewish while 5% of married children of Edgware respondents were married to proselytes and a further 5% to unconverted gentiles.³ The incidence of outmarriage is thus rare among our sample of self-defined Redbridge Jews. If we add the two cases of gentile fiances we found living in a Jewish household this gives a total of 11 mixed religion homes. Five of the 11 households hold synagogue membership (4 Orthodox, 1 Liberal) and 9 of the 11 observe *Yom Kippur*. This suggests that outmarriage without conversion of the gentile partner does not result in a severance of religious or social ties with the Jewish community.

The status of the children of such marriages is of interest. If the mother is Jewish then according to Jewish law so are the children. Of the 5 children of such marriages two were halachically Jewish, another had been converted to Liberal Judaism, while the other two had 'no religion'. There was thus no numerical loss to the Jewish population in the second generation as a result of these mixed outmarriages.

Parents' attitude to outmarriage

206 parents of children under age 16 consisting of almost equal numbers of fathers and mothers were asked if they would oppose their children marrying out of the religion. These parents answered on behalf of 151 sons and 151 daughters. Their answers were very emphatic. Half said they would oppose such a marriage 'to a great extent' and a further 32% would oppose it 'to a certain extent'. In all 88.8 per cent of parents were opposed to any potential outmarriage whereas only 11.2% (23 cases) claimed they would oppose it 'very little' or 'not at all'. This compared closely with 14% of a sample of 72 parents in Wembley who were 'indifferent' to the potential outmarriage of their children.⁴

Outmarriage of sons and daughters

There was no statistical difference between the pattern of the parents' answers on behalf of sons or daughters. Of the 102 parents who answered for children of both sexes only

seven scored their children differently, five feeling more strongly about their daughter and two more strongly about their son. The lack of gender differences on this issue is all the more intriguing in the light of the gender differences which are such a prominent feature of Redbridge parents' attitudes on other issues.

The attitudes of the outmarried and converts

Only 3 out of the 11 currently 'mixed households' replied to the questions on outmarriage. Two parents stated they did not mind any outmarriage, but one whose child was being brought up Jewish was against it. 3 of 5 couples where a partner had converted to Judaism were opposed, but two were not against outmarriage. Thus the outmarriage experience of respondents does not necessarily mean that they themselves will not be against outmarriage of their offspring; nor does experience of the conversion of a non-Jewish spouse.

Comparison with other surveys

It is difficult to make direct comparisons with other surveys of the attitudes of Jewish communities to the issue of outmarriage because of variation in the actual words used in the questions asked and differences in the sampling methods used. Nevertheless, the Redbridge results are sufficiently consistent in themselves to allow some comparison to be attempted.

An interesting starting point is the 1969 Cape Town survey of a Jewish population in a country where strong ethnic and religious differentiation is a social norm. Among the affiliated Jews of Cape Town only 57% directly opposed outmarriage while 27% were indifferent and 1% positively approved.⁵ At the other extreme in the open society of Los Angeles where only 5% of Jews were members of Orthodox synagogues and 71% were unaffiliated, 74% of the total sample would accept the outmarriage of their children. In fact, 26% of their children had actually married out without conversion of the gentile partner. On the other hand, 1% of these Californian Jews would disown their child, and 4% would insist on conversion to Judaism.⁶ Compared with these sort of results Redbridge Jews appear solidly disapproving and conservative with regard to outmarriage.

Of course, the closer their social background and context, the more valid the comparison. A 1970 survey of 133 Jewish students at the University of Oxford revealed a similar type of religious background to that in Redbridge.⁷ 69% of their parents were Orthodox members, compared with 76% in Redbridge and only 12% were unaffiliated compared with 9% in Redbridge. Their religious practice was also closer with 67% of the students' parents lighting candles on *Shabbat* eve in their home compared with 72% in Redbridge, and only 18% in Los Angeles. 58% of the students' parents 'strongly disapproved' and 21% 'mildly disapproved' of outmarriage. This 79% disapproval rate is close to the 88% opposition in Redbridge. The 21% of parents

who were reported as having 'no objection' is not far removed from the 11% who were unopposed to outmarriage in Redbridge. In fact, considering the Oxford parents group were more highly educated and of a higher average social status than the Redbridge Jews, the differences in attitudes are surprisingly small. This may very well be an issue on which there is not only a large degree of consensus within Anglo-Jewry, but also on which Anglo-Jewry feels more strongly than other diaspora communities.

The attitudes of the Oxford students themselves are not a good comparison because of the implicit age and education bias, but it is interesting to note that 26% of them thought outmarriage 'desirable' and 52% were neutral on the issue. The Oxford students' own level of Jewish education had only a slight influence on disposing them to be resistant to outmarriage. However, in the adult surveys a clear pattern emerges whereby the stronger the view against intermarriage, the stronger the Jewish identity on a number of other scores.

The characteristics of the minority unopposed to outmarriage

The 23 Redbridge parents who voiced little or no opposition to the potential outmarriage of their children, were, like the total sample of parents, equally divided between mothers (12) and fathers (11). This was contrary to the situation in Wembley where Cromer found fathers less opposed to outmarriage. One might have expected very clear differences between the vast majority of parents and this minority as regards their religious and social backgrounds. However, in Redbridge the division is not quite as clear cut or consistent as Cromer and other writers have suggested. Although the minority is undoubtedly less religious than average it does not compose a significant number of any synagogue, belief, or ritual oriented group. This is because some of those most disinterested in religious belief and practice feel most strongly about outmarriage.

Among the minority indifferent to outmarriage, as with the synagogue unaffiliated Jews, the *mezuzah* is very popular and 78% have it on the front door. However, they are significantly less likely to participate in domestic rituals. They are only half as likely as other Redbridge Jews to light *Shabbat* candles, have *Shabbat Kiddush*, *Chamukah* candles, or only *matza* on Passover. In fact, 47% of them do not fast on *Yom Kippur* and they are seven times less likely to oppose working on the Sabbath. Their beliefs are more likely to be anti-religious, they regard the festivals of less importance, and they are less likely to attend synagogue services than the average Redbridge Jew or Jewess.

Whereas this minority shows little difference in its secular educational background and in its attitudes to Israel and Zionism, its members are twice as likely as average not to have received any Jewish education. The religious differences are significant, but so too are attitudes towards the wider society. They are more likely than average to report

having been personally subject to prejudice as Jews from neighbours, and at work. On the other hand, none of them reported suffering social discrimination and none of their children had suffered from prejudice at school, though 16% of all Redbridge children had been affected by this.

The link between perceptions of the wider society, schooling and attitudes to outmarriage becomes clearer when the spatial variable is considered. This minority is only half as likely as average to live in the core Jewish wards where 58% of the Jewish schoolchildren and 54% of Jews are found, and yet they are three times as likely as other Jewish parents to reside in outlying wards with low Jewish densities and low absolute numbers of Jews.

Overview

The reasons and thinking behind the strong negative consensus on outmarriage among Jews of different outlooks and backgrounds in Redbridge cannot be revealed by restricted all-purpose research instruments like the Redbridge Jewish Survey. Important topics like friendship patterns and young peoples' dating are not covered. Nor was it possible to enquire as to how respondents viewed conversion to Judaism and how many proselytes they would tolerate before they began to fear a threat to their integrity of the group. Obviously our own findings that proselytes make good Jews and Jewesses as well as Harris's findings that they often retain lapsed Jewish partners for Judaism may influence opinion on such matters.⁸

Undoubtedly, the most observant amongst the Orthodox members were prominent among those most strongly opposing outmarriage, but they were not the majority of Redbridge Jewry's strongest opponents. Therefore, on the evidence before us we cannot fully subscribe to the full implication of Cromer's statement that 'attitudes towards intermarriage were closely related to the level of religious observance.'⁹

Our finding that there was a spatial variable involved in the profile of opponents of outmarriage suggests that a more complex social dynamic is involved. Redbridge Jews are a closely knit group in terms of their place of origin in the East End, their nominal Orthodoxy and their high degree of kinship ties. In fact, 84% of households had close kin in the immediate neighbourhood. This type of population is very similar to that prescribed by Farber for the USA as one most likely to evince strong Jewish familial concerns and rely on personal networks for their involvement in the Jewish community. Not only was 'living in an area of Jewish concentration associated with a tendency to assign importance to line of descent in kinship mapping' but 'childhood Orthodoxy and local birth' led to the highest emphasis on line of descent.¹⁰ Such findings make sense of the self-defined atheist discovered by Cromer in Wembley who explained 'the only reason I observe anything at all is because I've got a strong tribal instinct and I'm very concerned that my children marry within the faith.'¹¹

For Notes to Chapter 7 see inside back cover.

Chapter 8: *Localism and Community*

Family ties

The importance of family and kin plays an essential part in the Redbridge Jewish identity. In an earlier report, *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, the family as the primary unit of socialisation was highlighted by statistical findings. 84% of households had a close relative living nearby and 27% had three or more categories of close kin in the immediate vicinity. This means that kinship and local ties are very much intertwined. Furthermore, family influence seemed to have significant effects in areas as wide as job choice and *aliyah*.

The orientation of the Redbridge Jewish population towards the nuclear family is highly significant in its identity. 81% of households consist of a married couple with or without their offspring. 5% of households contain three generations of the family. It is therefore not surprising that fewer than 1% of households contain a person who is not a relative and only 2.6% a non-Jew. The household is also a very important economic unit and resource because children are unlikely to leave home before marriage. Partly as a result of this, 46.2% of households had two or more earners.

Not only is the household an economic unit but it is also the primary focus of religious observance. Previous chapters have provided evidence of the primacy of the home and child-centred nature of cultural and religious transmission. It is only against this background that the issue of outmarriage can be realistically assessed. Outmarriage is undoubtedly a threat to this cohesive social, psychological, religious and economic nexus even when not consciously identified as such. The Redbridge Jewish community may well be pictured as conformist and nominally Orthodox in its religious outlook. It is therefore even more significant that the 'deviants' who are apparently not committed to any focal points of Jewish identity, are also strongly opposed to outmarriage. It is outmarriage which personifies the threat to family ties and so illustrates the importance of these same family ties in the overall Jewish identity in this community.

Geographical stability

In addition to being a close-knit group, Redbridge Jewry is also a well-defined social and geographical unit. Redbridge Jews are a very local population. Not only are they over 93% British born, but 87% of them were born within a 25 mile radius of Central London. They therefore reside close to their origins and many of them return each day to work in the East End from which their community migrated.

The Redbridge community also has very stable residential patterns. 51% of the population have lived in their present home for more than 10 years. 70% of households have no thought of moving home within the foreseeable future. Three-quarters of those who are considering moving intend to remain within the borough or move into adjacent local authorities whose Jewish population's community life is oriented toward Redbridge and its Jewish communal facilities.

The Jewish population has a 'Redbridge identity' because its residential pattern neatly coincides with the local authority boundaries, except in the north on the Epping Forest District (Essex) border around Chigwell, which is a growing 'Jewish area'. Within the borough the Jewish residential pattern is skewed towards the central wards centering on Gants Hill. One cannot refer to the Gants Hill area as a ghetto, but it is an area in which Jews are a comfortable or secure minority without being segregated from the general population. The ward with the highest concentration is Clayhall which is 34.6% Jewish. The majority of Redbridge Jews live in wards where the proportion of Jews is more than 13% of the total population.

The core Jewish area which is centred at Gants Hill is at the junction of the Clayhall, Barkingside, Cranbrook and Park wards which contain many Jewish facilities and institutions such as synagogues, community centres and a school. In the streets leading south off the Gants Hill roundabout are found a number of synagogues, kosher butchers, delicatessens, a kosher restaurant and in early 1979 an Israeli Bank opened a local branch there. These facilities arose to meet the demands of the Jewish population and new facilities have been added as increasing population thresholds ensure their viability. Undoubtedly as the survey of reasons for residential movement showed, this hub of Jewish activities is now a factor in maintaining the level of residential stability of Redbridge and North-East London Jewry.

Relations with the wider community

One possible index in assessing the relationships of Redbridge Jews with the general Redbridge population is their residential pattern. In *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry* it was demonstrated that a 'unique Jewish residential pattern' existed.¹ A comparison of ethnic location quotients with both the Irish and New Commonwealth-born populations of Redbridge showed 'that the Jewish population exhibits more extreme concentrations than the other ethnic groups' and that 'the Jews are very divergent from these groups as well.'² The Jewish spatial distribution is independent both of the general majority or the minority groups' patterns. As we have seen the Jewish pattern is concentration but not complete segregation.

This ambivalence has also been revealed in the thinking of the Redbridge Jewish population on other issues. For example, its advocacy of integration in education and hostility to outmarriage. The same kind of trends were revealed even in the pattern of voluntary work in which the Redbridge Jewish community has a far above average involvement compared with the British population as a whole. Our survey revealed that among Redbridge Jewry '67% of volunteers worked solely in the Jewish community, 15% worked solely for the general community, and 18% did work for organisations in both the Jewish and wider communities.'³

Table: 35 Recent Experience of Anti-Jewish Prejudice in Redbridge, 1978 (%)

Have you or any of your family experienced anti-Jewish prejudice in the last few years in the following places?		
	Yes	No
at some social activity in Redbridge (n = 454)	4.3	95.7
from your neighbours (n = 454)	5.7	94.3
at work (n = 416)	9.9	90.1
at school (n = 235)	16.6	83.4

Specific questions in the survey were directed at the area of inter-community relations. When asked 'have relations generally between Jews and non-Jews in Redbridge changed at all in the last few years?', the replies again suggested a rather stable situation. 79.8% of respondents said there was no change, 15.2% said they had improved and only 5% thought they had worsened. It is important to remember that in 1978 the National Front was a rising political force in London, and six respondents gave unprompted comments on their activities.

Our questionnaire tried to identify and differentiate areas of friction in different areas of daily life, as Table 35 indicates. Questions were directed to appropriate households, i.e. that on work was only asked of households which contained a member currently working, and the school answers relate only to households containing school-children. The difference between the replies for the various activities is interesting. The low level of prejudice experienced at the neighbourhood level must relate in some way to the residential concentration of Jews. That school should be a greater area of friction than work is perhaps surprising, since the schooling patterns are more local than the work patterns. It appears to be the younger generation who are in the front-line in multi-racial and increasingly politicised schools which have been the focus of left and right-wing extremists' activity. Of course, the question did not probe whether the prejudice was institutional, from the teachers, or from school fellows. Nevertheless, this experience may be an important factor in explaining the greater *aliyah*-orientation of young people and the fact that Jewish security and lack of anti-Semitism was Israel's greatest attraction for teenagers. Jewish schools were considered by many parents to be a cause of anti-Semitism because of their exclusiveness. Thus a certain degree of anti-Semitism in the schools does not cause a withdrawal from general society locally, but among teenagers it drives them to adopt Zionist stances.

Another indicator of local Jewish-Gentile relations is the battery of questions about residential movement. As has been seen the overwhelming majority of the Redbridge residents were happy with their homes and only 30% contemplated moving in the next 5 years, whereas 10% of the general UK population move house annually. The majority

of 'movers' (114 respondents) were asked about their motivations and reasons for moving. When asked if it was 'because there are too many immigrants?' 90% said No, 2% definitely Yes, and 3% Yes. This was the lowest percentage of 'yeses' among the 14 categories offered. 6% of 'movers' were motivated 'because of problems with neighbours' which equates well with the proportion in Table 35 who had experienced prejudice from neighbours. 21% cited crime, noise, and a bad environment as a reason for moving. This again is significant since it suggests that these factors are not automatically associated with 'immigrants' among Jewish residents. However, it is interesting to note that Redbridge Borough has, by London standards, a below average proportion of other ethnic minorities.

Communal infrastructure

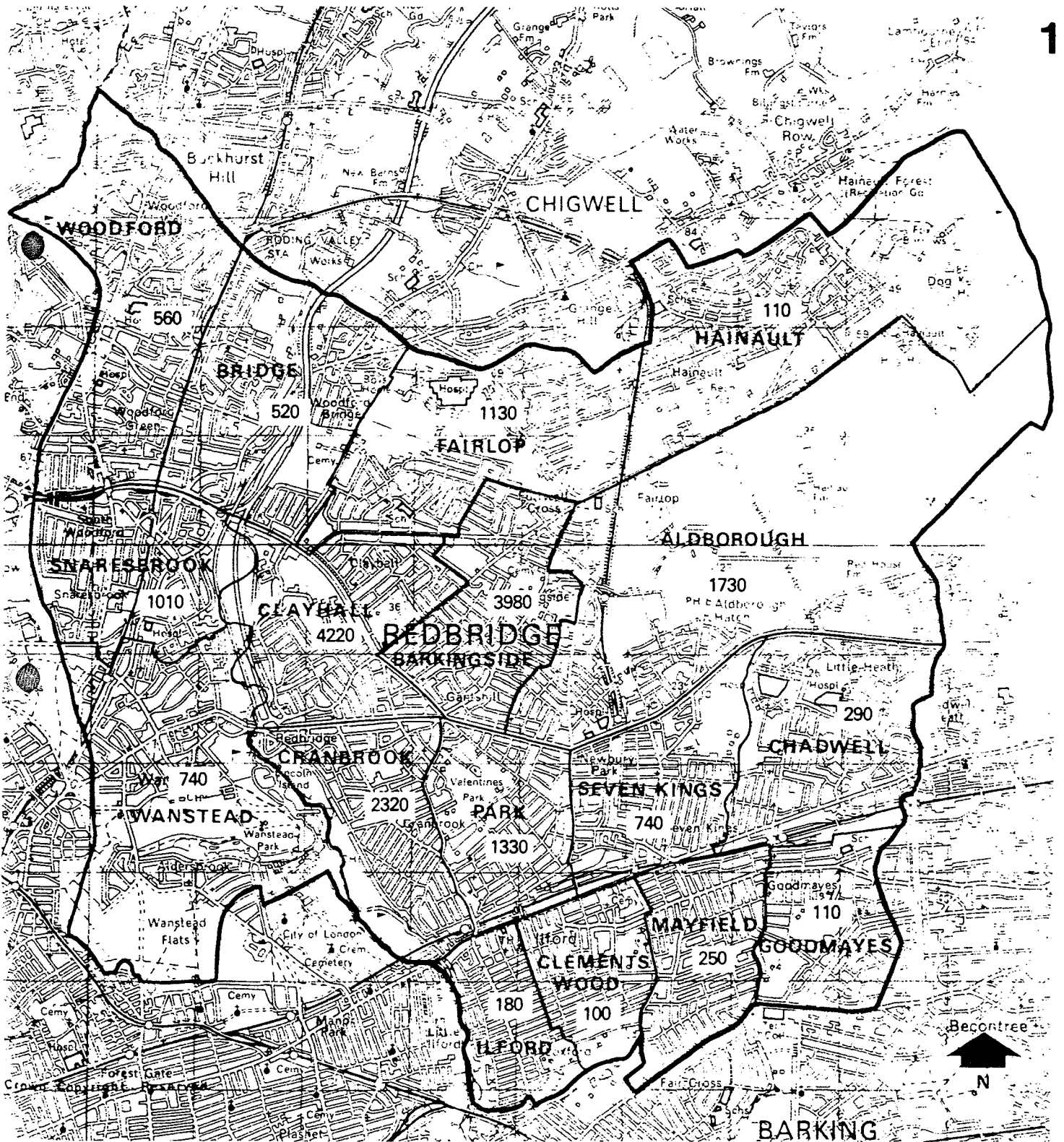
The current level of social investment by the community has grown in line with the increase in the local Jewish population. Originally it was the synagogues which provided the first community services in the form of education (Hebrew classes) as well as youth and social clubs. By the 1960s the Jewish population was large enough to support the development of a purpose-built Jewish youth centre which was opened in 1969 and extended in 1972. The 'Redbridge Youth and Community Centre' is the focal point of numerous communal activities and also served as the headquarters of the Redbridge Jewish Survey in 1977/78. Around the same period another purpose-built youth club, the 'Barkingside Jewish Youth Centre,' together with a new Jewish Primary Day School, was opened.

The centres have taken over and extended the roles which the synagogues formerly undertook. Their activities cater for all age groups, from kindergarten to youth club, and through to a day centre for the elderly. The Redbridge centre now even houses a synagogue, a branch of the very large Ilford United Synagogue. Despite this prominent activity, 10% of the youth and 11% of the elderly in the survey did not know of their existence and of the facilities which cater for them. Yet, when questioned about the unmet needs of the community, most people felt that everything and everyone was catered for, with some reservations about the provision for single young adults and the active old age pensioners.

The establishment of these facilities and organisations shows a high level of community consciousness and public concern for other Jews. This is not just a philanthropic concern as there is above average participation in the community for voluntary work. Moreover, the organisations which operate locally maintain the Jewish tradition of lay-leadership, as much in the new centres as in the synagogues. Thus, service to the community is held in high regard, whether as a football referee for the youth club or as a member of a synagogue board of management.

One feature of the communal solidarity is that it mainly consists of 'other regarding' activity, supplying facilities for

Map 2: Geographical Distribution of Redbridge Jewish Population 1978



other people. Facilities for the elderly and youth, are supplied on the assumption that these are 'vulnerable' groups in the community who would have difficulty providing for themselves. In earlier chapters a parallel attitude emerged in regard to financial contributions to Israel and even to the support of synagogues for other people to attend. Thus, the take-up of services in Redbridge is below expectations. Only 40% of the youth is affiliated to the numerous Jewish youth organisations, and only 48% of the pensioners belong to Jewish centres or clubs. Concurrent with this theme of communal responsibility to provide for other Jews, it was found that while the rate of attendance from the Gants Hill area is relatively low, the rate of usage of these facilities is higher by the residents of the outlying low-density Jewish areas.

One factor explaining this phenomenon of high provision but low take-up of community services may very well be the centrality of the family in Redbridge Jewish life. Most needs appear to be met within the family. Jewish social service organisations are for other people who do not have 'adequate' family support. This is very much a general Jewish attitude. When a national sample of Jews was asked 'to whom would you turn if you had a personal problem that was troubling you?' 76% gave a family relative, 7% a friend, and 7% a rabbi. The Jewish social service agencies who participated in the Redbridge Jewish Survey specially commissioned a question which aimed at finding out where people would seek advice and support when the family was unable to cope.

Table 36: Non-Family Sources of Advice
(n = 375)

If you had a non-medical problem of a personal and family nature which you could not solve within the family, depending on the type of problem, who would you contact first for advice?	
	%
friend	41
doctor	20
rabbi or minister	18
lawyer/accountant	14
social worker	7
volunteer worker	1
teacher	0
youth worker	0
magazine	0

What this Table shows is that beyond the family, informal networks are important and the next best option after the family itself. This pattern of informal community networks and support in problem-solving is very close to that found previously and reported on teenage career choice. '51% of teenagers are mainly advised by their close family . . . only 14% have been decisively influenced by the

official bodies established for the purpose—the careers teacher or the job centre.'⁴ It appears that among Redbridge Jews professionals and bureaucracies exist to serve 'other' people. These kind of 'self-reliant' attitudes may well be linked to the high degree of independence in the economic sphere reflected in the above average involvement in self-employment. It is in this context and with these paradoxes in mind that the provision and use of communal infrastructure, which gives tangible evidence and substance to the community identity of Redbridge Jews, has to be understood.

Community consensus

Redbridge Jews have high expectations of their community, their families and themselves. Little evidence was found of polarisation of opinion, or attempts to exclude people from their community, or deep-seated differences and frictions. In fact there was more cohesion on a wide range of 'Jewish issues' than one might have expected in contemporary times. The major differences regarding attitudes and behaviour were based on gender and generation or on stages in the family lifecycle.

It appears that amongst this community all types of ideology are spurned or largely ignored, especially if it is potentially divisive of Jewish people. The Redbridge Jew has a pragmatic approach to being Jewish. He or she is socially rather than theologically religious. Among such populations it is very difficult to penetrate the inner feelings which underly behavioural patterns. The survey instruments in the Redbridge study were not really capable of reaching the psychological base of Jewish identity among a people who are reluctant to expose themselves. Many people found difficulty in answering questions on Judaism and religion. It is interesting that they found questions on these subjects more threatening than those concerning personal details such as fertility, age, marital status and occupation. Because the survey was quantitatively oriented and primarily tried to measure behaviour, many respondents felt that, as one woman expressed it 'the questionnaire made them appear less Jewish than they really were.'

In the debriefing of the survey enumerators another characteristic of this community emerged: its tendency to hide or fail to recognise problems associated with deviancy, unemployment, career choice and senile relatives. This feature may well be an aspect of English suburban respectability, or a unique family and household orientation, or even a syndrome associated with minority group status. Perhaps it is an amalgam of all three. This kind of thinking reflects a community in which family bonds and social boundaries are usually more relevant than religious or ideological beliefs. Yet, however the identity of Redbridge Jews is defined, there undoubtedly exists in Redbridge a local Jewish milieu and a true sense of community giving rise to a distinct cultural entity.

Notes (to Chapter 8)

- 1 B. A. Kosmin, C. Levy and P. Wigodsky, *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, London, Board of Deputies, 1979, p24.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p25.
- 3 B. A. Kosmin and C. Levy, *The Work and Employment of Suburban Jews*, London, Board of Deputies, 1981, p37.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p34.

Notes (to Chapter 7)

- 1 N. C. Sandberg and G. N. Levine, *The Changing Character of the Los Angeles Jewish Community*, Los Angeles, University of Judaism, 1980.
- 2 Z. Strelitz, 'Jewish Identity in Cape Town with special reference to Outmarriage,' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XIII (1971), 73-93.
- 3 E. Krausz, 'The Edgware survey: factors in Jewish identification,' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XI (1969), 151-163.
- 4 G. Cromer, 'Intermarriage and Communal Survival in a London Suburb,' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XVI (1974) 155-159.
- 5 Strelitz, *op. cit.*
- 6 Sandberg and Levin, *op. cit.*
- 7 B. Wasserstein, 'Jewish identification among students at Oxford,' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XIII (1971), 135-151.
- 8 S. Harris, 'Identity of Jews in an English City,' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XIV (1972), 63-84.
- 9 Cromer, *op. cit.*, p161.
- 10 B. Farber, 'Kinship Mapping among Jews in a Midwestern City,' *Social Forces*, VII (1979), 1107-1123.
- 11 G. Cromer, 'The transmission of religious observances in the contemporary Jewish family; the methodology and findings of a London suburb,' in U. O. Schmelz, P. Glikson and S. Della Pergola, eds., *Papers in Jewish Demography 1977*, Jerusalem, Hebrew University, 1980, p230.