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ADAPTATION AND IDENTITY AMONG SECOND-GENERATION INDIAN JEWS IN ISRAEL

Joan G. Roland

THE three Jewish communities of India, the Bene Israel, the Cochinis, and the Baghdadis, were never subjected to anti-semitism in their native land and were therefore not compelled to emigrate. However, most of them have left India. This study focuses on the Bene Israel, the largest community, numbering about 25,000 at its peak in the early 1950s. Having enjoyed some preference in employment under the British, the Bene Israel feared that their economic situation might deteriorate in an independent India. A small percentage emigrated to the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia; but the vast majority moved to Israel, attracted to the Jewish homeland for national and religious reasons.[1] The first wave started in the 1950s, with large-scale migrations occurring in the 1960s and 1970s, and a trickle continuing into the 1980s and 1990s. Although official statistics do not differentiate among Indian Jews, community leaders agree that there are approximately 40,000 citizens of Bene Israel origin in Israel today, while fewer than about 6,000 have remained in India.

Bene Israel settled all over the country, with large concentrations in southern and northern development towns which had been established in the 1950s and 1960s in peripheral regions — such as Dimona, Yerucham, Ashdod, and Beersheva — and in the centre, especially in Lod and Ramleh, where many work in El Al and the Israel Aircraft Industries. There are also smaller communities of Bene Israel in and around the principal cities — Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem.

Indian Jews are generally considered to be part of the *edot ha-Mizraḥ* (oriental communities), a term used to refer to Jews from Asia and Africa — as opposed to Western or Ashkenazi Jews, those originating mainly from Europe and America. Most Oriental Jews had earlier been settled in Middle Eastern and North African countries, where many of

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them spoke Arabic and had adopted some elements of Arab culture; but other 'Oriental' Jews came from different national backgrounds, from India, Iran, and Ethiopia. Although many Bene Israel came from rural or urban working-class backgrounds, the large middle class had a strong overlay of British culture, including the English language, as a result of centuries of British rule; they were neither viewed by others, nor did they view themselves, as conforming to the stereotype of Oriental Jewry.[2]

In the first two decades after the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the prevalent ideology was that of the 'melting pot': it was expected that the immigrants from Asia and Africa would abandon their own values and traditions and adopt those (then openly considered to be much superior by the Ashkenazi or Western establishment) of the 'more civilized' Europeans who had founded the State of Israel. For the Indian Jews, their religion had not been a problem in India; but they now found that it was a problem to be Indian in Israel, where Eastern cultural norms were openly devalued.[3]

Since the 1970s, partly because of the numerical strength and rising political power of Oriental Jews, particularly the Moroccans, and partly because of the (sometimes violent) protest by the younger Mizraḥis, new attitudes have developed in Israel. As is now the case in the United States, cultural pluralism is being promoted in Israel as the ideal — fostering at least a tolerance of, and in some cases genuine respect for, ethnic diversity. Thus Jews from Asian and African background are more able at the present time to take confident pride in their heritage.[4] According to Adler and Kahane, those of the second generation, however, have distanced themselves from their parents' 'traditional ethnic community values, symbols, customs and even institutional arrangements in order to move into the societal system at large'.[5]

Hansen's 'third generation hypothesis' holds that, in the United States at least, the immigrant generation clings strongly to its old culture, the second generation rebels and seeks to integrate fully into the new society, and the third generation seeks to forge a combination of the old and the new.[6] It has been suggested by Herbert Lewis that in Israel, the transition from rebellion against the old culture to an integration of aspects of it into the new is already taking place within the life-cycle of the first and of the second generations.[7] Jeff Halper has commented: 'The children of the immigrants are today addressing the essential problems of tradition versus Westernization whose answers the absorption agencies tried to dictate to their dependent and vulnerable parents'.[8] Adler and Hodge have noted that the persistence of country of origin as a social force in Israel and the fact that 'cultural differences appear to have been refined and elaborated rather than diluted and eliminated in the Jewish melting pot ... [suggest that]

cultural background, rather than Jewishness, has become an important source of personal identity in modern Israel'.[9]

Research on ethnicity in Israel is likely to focus increasingly on the second generation of immigrants, particularly those of Oriental background. However, since second-generation Bene Israel have not manifested the difficult problems of adjustment which have characterized other second-generation citizens of Eastern background, Indian Jews have not attracted much attention.[10] For the purposes of this study, I have included in the second generation not only the Israeli-born (that is, sabras), but also those who were born in India and who came to Israel at the age of 12 or younger, thus completing a substantial part of their schooling in the Jewish State and later undergoing compulsory military service — important aspects of the absorption process.

This article is based on replies to questionnaires posted to Bene Israel in 1992 and 1993, and on interviews I carried out in Israel in 1992 and 1994. The original questionnaires were written in English but later new questionnaires were drafted in Hebrew. I then selected, from among the respondents, second-generation Indian Jews; I chose those whom I wished to interview in some depth on the basis that they represented a cross-section of gender, age, socio-economic status, and geographic location. Indian Jews are a very tight-knit community in Israel and one contact led to another — so that I was able to interview also friends and kinsmen of these initial informants, children of immigrant respondents, and others whom I met while I was a participant observer in many of the Bene Israel activities.

About three-quarters of the 63 informants which have been selected (47) had been born in the country or had arrived by the age of five years; the remaining 16 had come when they were between the ages of six and 12. When I interviewed them, in 1992 and 1994, the youngest was seven and the eldest, 53 and they lived in various parts of Israel. About a third (23) of the total sample filled out extensive qualitative questionnaires and 13 of these were interviewed in depth. The 40 other informants, who had not filled out any questionnaires, participated in open-ended, in-depth, interviews. Additional data were obtained from 113 other Bene Israel informants, often immigrant parents, who conveyed information about their children in questionnaires and/or interviews.

While the sample may not be sufficiently large to be statistically significant, especially for controlling for factors such as education, occupation, place of residence, etc., some generalizations can be made, nevertheless, at least as a basis for further research.

Integration into Israeli Society

Education

The fact that the academic performance of Mizraḥi children has for long compared badly with that of their Ashkenazi counterparts has

been a source of great concern in Israel for decades. Families from Asia and Africa were often households with a large number of children, headed by parents who were economically disadvantaged and who had had the benefit of only a very limited formal school education. They had to struggle to provide basic needs such as housing and food; and they had neither the time, the ability, nor, in many cases, a sufficient knowledge of the Hebrew language to supervise their children and to help them with their school work. Many of these parents also did not value educational achievements to the same extent as most Ashkenazi parents did.

Additional factors might have been the tendency of teachers to assume that the pupils were of a somewhat inferior intellect and the contents of the curricula which until recently emphasized primarily Western culture, hardly mentioning the heritage and history of Jews from Africa and Asia. Moreover, recent efforts at enrichment, remedial work, and school integration do not so far seem to have closed the gap significantly.[11] In order to meet the needs of less academically-oriented pupils and to reduce the drop-out rate in high schools, the authorities have provided vocational tracks in comprehensive schools and in special vocational high schools. But only a few such programmes offer academic studies at a sufficiently high standard to prepare students for the national matriculation examinations leading to the *bagrut*, the diploma which is a prerequisite for university admission. The school establishments channel the pupils into what they believe are the appropriate tracks and by the early 1990s, well over half of Jewish Israeli high school students were in the vocational tracks, including at least two-thirds of the students of Mizraḥi background. By obvious contrast, two-thirds of Ashkenazi students were in academic tracks which would prepare them for entrance to the universities, if they wished. There is also a correlation between ethnicity and socio-economic status: those in academic tracks usually come from the middle and upper-middle social strata while students in vocational tracks tend to come from predominantly working-class households.[12]

A large number of Bene Israel pupils, especially in the south, seem to be directed to classes for slower learners in junior high schools and are then channelled to vocational programmes when they reach the ninth grade, at the age of about 14. There has been a great deal of research on the educational problems of Oriental Jews in general, but I do not know of any specific well-conducted research concerning the Bene Israel pupils. In many cases, Indian parents are eager to see their children progress educationally, but they do not have the knowledge or the advice on how to set about stimulating and encouraging their young offspring. They also cannot afford the special tutoring fees which the more prosperous parents are able to pay. Some of the development towns, such as Dimona, Ofakim, and Yerucham, where there are

concentrations of Oriental households, have schools which attract few talented and ambitious teachers and where many of the pupils — even those of the third-generation — come from homes which would still be considered as deprived and disadvantaged. In many cases, however, second-generation parents who have been educated in Israeli schools and speak Hebrew are able to help their children with their homework, and to discuss with the schoolteachers their concern about the performance of their offspring.

The Bene Israel have pointed out to me that there are also other factors leading to the low achievement of their children: the latter are often very quiet and reserved during classes and may therefore receive less attention than do more assertive pupils. Or it might be that teachers assume that a quiet, non-participating child is slow to learn and tend to refer him/her to a lower class. There is the added fact that Indian parents often will not allow their children to go on school trips, where friendships are fostered, or attend class evening parties. It must be noted here that in some cases schoolteachers have visited Bene Israel parents to try to persuade them to give their children the opportunity of engaging in extra-curricular activities which would be beneficial to their progress.

In the early 1980s, a Bene Israel municipal councillor in Dimona was concerned when he conducted a survey and discovered that nearly 80 per cent of the children in the lowest and slowest tracks were of Indian origin — although, in the same schools, the highest classes had a good percentage of Bene Israel, and the very best achievers were often Indian.[13] He went to the offices of the ministries of education and social welfare in Beersheva, the regional centre for Dimona, with the result that extra money was injected into the Dimona schools — but not directly into the Bene Israel community. It became evident that the entire school system in the town had to be upgraded, with better-qualified teachers, longer hours of study, and other improvements. Later, additional funds were allocated to entire neighbourhoods which were involved in the Jewish Agency's Project Renewal initiative, which aimed to rehabilitate urban neighbourhoods and development towns and thus to reduce the educational, social, and economic gaps between the Western and the Oriental Jews.[14] Some provision was made to allocate resources to schools in disadvantaged areas, and as a result, according to the former Dimona councillor mentioned above, there are nowadays fewer Bene Israel pupils in the lower tracks.

Educated Indian Jews in Israel are concerned that only a very small percentage of their youth seem to pursue university studies; a university education is a prerequisite for a professional career and entry into the Israeli elite. An article published in 1990 stated that only 15 per cent of young Oriental Jews (mainly of Egyptian or of Iraqi origin), enrol in institutions for higher education, compared with about 40 per

cent of the Ashkenazi high-school leavers.[15] In 1983, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics of the country, in the population group aged 15 years and above, nine per cent of all Israel-born citizens had at least a bachelor's degree, but only 1.6 per cent of those in the group of Indian origin had obtained such a qualification. On the other hand, 4.2 per cent of those Indian migrants who were aged 15 or older when they had entered the country between 1965 and 1974, had been awarded such degrees either in India or in Israel. It seems therefore that the second generation had failed to achieve even the same level as the immigrants, that there was a decline, rather than progress, among the Israel-born offspring of the Indian immigrants.[16] In this context, it is worth noting that Bene Israel associations involved in granting scholarships to young members of their community have told me that there have been in recent years only between 150 to 400 Bene Israel students enrolled in all Israeli universities at any given time and that women outnumber men. They added that there might be a further few hundred attending various technical colleges or teacher-training courses which do not grant university degrees.

Such claims are confirmed by Bene Israel university students and graduates whom I interviewed and who stated that they had come across very few other Bene Israel during the years of their attendance at university, and that this was true even of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, in Beersheva, where one would have expected a greater number of Indian students, owing to the heavy concentration of Bene Israel settled in the south of the country. But one Indian graduate from Ben-Gurion University reported that when she was a student there, in a student body of about 9,000, there were only some seven young persons who were of Bene Israel origin. Another graduate student told me that whenever she applied for a scholarship, university interviewers asked detailed questions about her background and culture: what language her parents spoke at home, for example, and what was her father's occupation. She commented: 'They seem really surprised to see an Indian going this far and they want to know all about me. They don't ask these questions of people coming from other communities'. She believed that it was very important for young pupils to have Indian role models in order to raise their aspiration levels.

There may be many reasons to explain the fact that only a very limited number of Bene Israel attend universities in Israel. Some of these have been noted above: schools in the development towns, where most Indians live, do not attract the most qualified and dedicated teachers and tend to have standards markedly lower than those of schools in the centre and coastal regions of the country. A far smaller percentage of high school students follow a programme leading to the *bagrut* in the development towns than in the more affluent areas of the country, and of those who do take the examinations, a still smaller

percentage pass, sometimes with grades too low to qualify for university entrance. Furthermore, there is a higher than average drop-out rate from high school in disadvantaged regions, with teenagers finding paid employment for a year or two before joining the army.[17] Some Bene Israel girls get married before they complete high school.

Another factor contributing to low university attendance is the incidental cost of high school education; there are no tuition fees, but parents have to pay for educational materials such as textbooks and photocopies as well as for extra-curricular activities such as school outings. Bene Israel households with restricted means can obtain modest help from local Indian associations, which urge parents to allow their children to complete high school. One must also note that many Bene Israel parents seem to encourage their children, especially the boys, to enrol in practical, vocationally-oriented courses, because they fear that if their sons go to university and choose to specialize in the liberal arts, they might have difficulty in finding a job. Thus, sometimes in order to avoid the inferior education offered in the south, parents will make sacrifices — although the government will subsidize needy families — to send their children to technical or agricultural boarding schools, where they may or may not obtain the *bagrut*.[18]

Bene Israel parents further point out that military service often reduces their children's motivation for higher education: after two to three years in the defence forces, young people, especially boys, are not eager to become students again, but are tempted to start working and earning, in order to obtain a standard of living higher than that which their immigrant parents have achieved. This is particularly true of those who have acquired special skills during their service, such as mechanics or electronics. Some will enrol in more technically-oriented courses. On the other hand, young persons who have been released from the army and who had not previously obtained the *bagrut*, may attend special preparatory classes (*Mechina*) in order to qualify for university entrance. These courses are free for a limited time after the completion of military service.

The current fashion for young Israelis to have a complete change of scenery after being released from the defence forces and to travel for some months (or even for a year or two), also delays higher education. One young informant said:[19]

> Most of the young people who finish the army, they travel ... Then when they come back, it's tough to suddenly go back [to school].... But this break can be very good. It depends on the person. You always study. Even if you're in the army or travelling, you're always learning something. Most of the time it's not practical study, but it's learning through experience. It's good for your perception of things.

Many Bene Israel, especially young women, would like to attend a university but are worried about the costs. Even middle-class

households consider the tuition fees (the equivalent of U.S. $2,000 a year) to be high and may not be able to fund a child at university for a minimum of the three years required to obtain a bachelor's degree. And if the young person attends a university far from the parental home, the cost of room and board must be added. One possibility in cases of financial difficulties is for young Israelis to stay in some paid position in the armed forces for a further period in order to save money for tuition later in some institution of higher learning. Then, those who cannot rely on their families to cover their additional expenses, will work as well as study part-time — which means that a university degree will take a longer period to acquire. Thus it takes a great deal of motivation and determination to complete university studies if one is not backed by parents who are willing and able to provide the necessary funds. There is a government scheme called *Perah* which allows for a reduction in university tuition fees of up to 70 per cent if the student will tutor or supervise a child considered to be educationally or socially disadvantaged for four hours a week: many Indian students have volunteered to do so. The Federation of Indian Jews and the Central Organization of Indian Jews together award about 75–85 modest grants a year to university students; the funds come from the government, the Histadrut, the World Sephardic Federation, donations, and cultural festival ticket sales. Municipalities in development towns may also give scholarships for young people to study in the universities.

Military Service

Conscription defines for young men and women a kind of rite de passage in Israeli society. During compulsory military service, life-long friendships and ties are usually formed, shared experiences have a lasting effect, and those who have been in uniform are entitled to some rights and privileges. Those who have benefited from special technical training or who have been recruited in an elite fighting unit, may have better opportunities later in civilian life. Since the 1980s, young conscripts have been asked to name the branch of the forces in which they would prefer to serve, and if they have the necessary qualifications, they are often granted their wish. In earlier periods, however, there was less choice and there were therefore many complaints by Bene Israel that they had not been given the opportunity to serve in the prestigious fighting units, but instead were assigned to such functions as drivers, cooks, unskilled or semi-skilled mechanics, filing clerks, or telephone operators. Nevertheless, there had been a number of highly successful Indian career officers.

Although they felt discriminated against, it has been argued that in these older days, the Bene Israel recruits were not unreasonably relegated to dreary posts in the defence forces: circumstances, not mere

prejudice were the cause. Placement in a military branch depends upon a number of factors: performance in a variety of academic, physical, and psychological tests; grades in high school; and motivation. For reasons detailed above, many Indians were unlikely to score well in academic tests. And some elite units — such as fighter pilots, submarine crews, and the Golani brigade — are volunteer sections, and many Indian parents are reluctant to allow their youngsters to serve in branches which may be dangerous; but even if a Bene Israel does volunteer, it is only to discover that the selection process is rigorous. A young man who was one of the few Indians to serve in the Golani Brigade (and who, incidentally, seemed proud of the fact he was so 'Israeli' in his manner that most people did not think he was of Indian origin), stated that the army prefers for that brigade to recruit North Africans, who can be tough, not North Americans and Indians, who are considered to be too soft.

Some Bene Israel informants have suggested that in the 1960s and 1970s, Indian immigrant children did not feel the intense commitment to defend the land of Israel which those who were born and brought up in the country felt, with the remembered ideals of heroism and of fighting with all one's might so that the country would not be lost to the invading enemy forces. That is advanced as one explanation of the reason that not many volunteered for the dangerous combat branches — a situation somewhat similar to the present attitude of recent Russian immigrants in the 1980s and 1990s.

Nowadays, it is easier for young Bene Israel to compete for the prestigious placements in the defence forces: they have assimilated elements of Israeli ideology, some of them have had the opportunity to progress academically, especially in the centre or north of the country where the schools are better equipped, and they have more self-assurance. Many, however, still opt for units specializing in mechanics or electronics, because they're interested in these fields and especially because they might have been in the vocational track in high school and they now wish to acquire further training in a speciality which may lead to a well-paid position when they return to civilian life.

Israeli young women cannot join the combat units, but they serve in a variety of other branches. In earlier decades, many Indian parents, wary of the 'unsupervised' mixing of boys and girls, were reluctant to let their daughters join the defence forces and engaged in tactics which allowed them to obtain exemption for young women: early marriage or attendance at a religious school. Some young women who — perhaps only in deference to their parents' wishes — did not serve in the army, are now expressing regret that they missed the experience. Military service is an important part of achieving maturity for Israeli Jews and many who did not participate feel they are not quite fully a part of Israeli society.

Occupational Trends

As noted above, there is a high correlation between educational background and occupational and socio-economic mobility. The gap between Oriental and Western Jews may have diminished recently, but it is still significant. The lower strata in the country are largely of African and Asian origin.[20] An appreciable number of Bene Israel immigrants, especially those who had a good command of the English language and/or were professionally qualified or technically trained, acquired very good positions soon after they first arrived in Israel. On the other hand, semi-skilled and unskilled workers, who were generally Marathi-speaking, were sent to peripheral development towns in the north and south, which were mainly populated by other Oriental Jews, and were given jobs in factories, often producing textiles.[21] Jews of Oriental origin now dominate special sectors of the economy: technical services, small businesses, and specific trades.[22]

My second-generation Bene Israel informants included 23 students (at all levels), 14 professionals (ten of whom were schoolteachers), five technical workers, four soldiers, ten clerical/administrative workers, six small shopkeepers, six manual or unskilled workers, six managerial and business employees, two government employees, and one kibbutz resident. (There is some overlap because a number of college and graduate students were also in paid employment.) There are substantial numbers of young Bene Israel (usually, but not always, the offspring of educated parents living in fairly well-to-do regions of the country) who have high aspirations and who have achieved a high measure of success: they are doctors, lawyers, army officers, pharmacists, high-school teachers, engineers, and senior managers. But many more lag well behind. A 21-year-old informant, a sabra, commented: 'It seems to me that the Indians are pushed aside ... It is important that they find employment to overcome this and to live a good standard of life'. Others have claimed that although Indians may have the requisite degrees or certificates and be called for interviews, they lack the *protektsia* (the contacts and pull) which will help them to obtain the jobs for which they have applied and for which they are qualified; there are not enough well-placed and influential Bene Israel able and willing to make the crucial telephone call which will tilt the balance in favour of their fellow Bene Israel who needs such help. It is also alleged that some Indians, who have secured a position of some prestige, are reluctant to use their influence in favour of other Indians — unlike members of other Jewish communities in Israel, who more readily come to the assistance of members of their own ethnic group. As a result, an applicant with lesser qualifications but with strong *protektsia* is appointed in preference to a Bene Israel with superior qualifications but with no pull.

One young informant believed that the Indian applicant who is courteous, well-dressed, replies in a quiet tone, and tries to behave with proper decorum may not be engaged precisely because his manner puts the personnel director on his guard, believing that the applicant is putting on an act of being deferential and is therefore likely to prove untrustworthy. There is a preference in Israel, according to him, for the more assertive, straightforward type of person, who is not afraid to speak his mind and to speak with confidence of his own competence for the vacant job.

In the southern development towns, unemployment has been a source of great concern since the early 1970s, rising as high as 20 per cent in the 1990s. It is only recently that Indians, especially women, are succeeding in obtaining jobs in banks or as senior clerks in the public and the private sectors.[23] Many women have become teachers — some choosing to work for a teacher's diploma as a first degree, while others go into the profession after having obtained a first degree in a specific field and then deciding to qualify for a teaching position. Some men are still employed in skilled work in the development towns, often using the training they obtained when serving in the army; but others can find only semi-skilled factory work. One young woman was so eager to move to the centre of the country that she gladly accepted a temporary job as a nursery-school assistant in a suburb of Tel Aviv rather than earn more money as a factory worker in the south.

Many Bene Israel, of both the immigrant and the second generations, complain about the discrimination they suffer, but they do not tend to exhibit the bitter resentment and the violent anger which many of their North African counterparts show against the Ashkenazi-dominated establishment. Unlike many Oriental Jews, who attribute their low socio-economic position to Israeli ideology and prejudice, some Bene Israel blame themselves for their lack of progress, for remaining in the background rather than thrusting themselves forward — according to a young female informant.

Politics

With few exceptions, the Bene Israel were apolitical in India. In part, this was because they constituted such a minute community compared to the vast numbers of Hindus and of Muslims, that they would have had little chance of political success. Of greater importance, however, was the fact that during the Indian nationalist struggle against the British colonial power, they sat on the fence. They acknowledged that they were Indians, but they had benefited from British preference in employment and they feared for their future when the British would grant independence to India. This adherence to a low political profile was carried over when they settled in Israel: their only involvement in politics, in the majority of cases, is when they choose to

vote at elections. Jews of Oriental origin tend to vote for the Likud and other right-wing or religious parties, but the electoral preferences of the Bene Israel span the whole gamut, from extreme right to extreme left, with limited numbers voting for religious parties. It is not uncommon for members of the same household or the same kinship group to have opposing political allegiances when there are general elections.[24]

Young Bene Israel have little interest in politics and show little liking for politicians. When they are asked for their opinion about current issues, they often answer, 'I haven't thought about it'; but they think that it would be of some advantage to their community if more Indians were politically active. Many Bene Israel wished that more than one Indian would be a member of the Knesset (at the time of writing, the only one is Eli Ben Menahem who was elected on the Labour ticket in 1992 and served as deputy housing minister in the Rabin government) but on the other hand they are aware that it would be extremely difficult, and not necessarily desirable, to succeed in electing a Bene Israel MK on an Indian ethnic ticket. One candidate tried that strategy some years ago, but failed in his attempt.

One of the rare exceptions to the general political inactivity of Indian Jews is that of a Bene Israel who came at the age of 12 years with Youth Aliyah in the 1950s and went to an agricultural training school. He became a member of Mapam (a militant left-wing party) and is concerned with both domestic and international issues; he has worked for Project Renewal in his own neighbourhood and has also taken part in peace demonstrations. He was a member of *Yesh Gvul* (There is a Limit), the group of soldiers who refused to serve in Lebanon in the 1980s, and during that period he tried to persuade a large number of Indians to vote for Mapam, so that they might eventually be rewarded by securing a seat for an Indian in the Knesset. The plan failed because, according to him, his community cannot unite to select a leader or representative of the Bene Israel in the country. Together with others, he believed that it is very important for Indians to become committed at the local level, to attempt to place Bene Israel on the municipal, workers, or religious councils and even perhaps to elect an Indian as the mayor, of a locality where Indians constitute a substantial portion of the inhabitants.

Phyllis Palgi, an Israeli anthropologist, had predicted in the early 1970s on the basis of her familiarity with the community, that a local leadership would emerge among the younger generation, as a result of a wider range of exposure to Israeli society — such as the army, the kibbutz, and training in youth-absorption institutions.[25] In fact, some second-generation Bene Israel, now in their 30s and 40s, have indeed been active in various towns and a few have been elected (on local Indian tickets or as members of national parties) to the municipal councils of Yerucham, Dimona, and Ashdod, for example. Others are

employed in paid work or as volunteers in the municipalities of Dimona, Beersheva, or Kiryat Yam, specifically as formal or informal liaison personnel with the Indian communities. These individuals have tried to provide assistance in negotiating the bureaucratic mazes of a municipality, a housing authority, a union, or a social security department, for the benefit of members of the immigrant generation who often do not know what their entitlements are in various fields, are too shy to ask the authorities, or lack sufficient knowledge of the Hebrew language.

Ben-Zadok has noted that in the development towns, the transition from politics based on national ideology to politics based on territoriality, has been spearheaded by the younger generation, who represent local interests and grassroots action for autonomy.[26] In the town of Ofakim, in 1992, an energetic and idealistic Bene Israel woman aged 20 organized a group of 15 young members of her community to canvas for a Moroccan candidate for mayor on the Labour ticket against the Likud incumbent, who was standing for re-election. The young persons she approached were in their 20s and 30s, and most had voted for Likud in the general election of that year, but they had now been persuaded that in local contests they should support whatever candidate would be best for their community in their own locality. The Moroccan mayoral candidate had promised that he would help the Indians in Ofakim and that he would even try to secure the election of an Indian to the municipal council. The young Bene Israel activists worked energetically, going to the homes of local Indian residents to canvas and making speeches at large public gatherings, but they did not find it easy to involve the older generation in their campaign: they could not even persuade many to attend a special function organized for them, with free music, dancing, and food. In the event, the Moroccan Labour candidate did win the election, although the party did not gather enough votes for the Indian candidate to obtain a seat on the municipal council. The mayor promised to help the Indians anyway. The young woman who had organized the campaign in 1992 and was one of my informants in 1994, was disillusioned by the lack of interest of the local Indians and has moved to central Israel, where she has secured paid employment; but she stated that if she found a position with the Ofakim municipality, she would return to the town in order to be of help to the local Indian community.

Apart from few such cases, it seems that the second-generation Indians in Israel show an interest in the country's politics mainly concerning the Arab-Israeli question and on the whole, the younger they are, the more conservative they seem to be — often, more so than their parents are. That is probably true of most young Israelis, partly because of their service in the defence forces.[27] They are aware that they or their friends may eventually lose their lives (or that some of their

friends have already died) defending their country, and they are therefore more reluctant to consider giving any part of it back to the Arabs without a fight. They tended to vote for Likud in the 1992 general election. Those who had been conscripted when Raphael Eitan was the very popular Chief of Staff were especially likely to vote for his Tsomet party; he appealed to them not only because he was a hawk on the Arab question, but also because he wished to abolish exemption from military service for ultra-religious men. A number of Bene Israel had served in the occupied territories during the *Intifada* (the Palestinian Arab uprising) and they were angered by the fact that they had been ordered to show some restraint while repressing the violent demonstrators, in spite of the fact that many Israeli Jews were being killed or badly injured. However, some officers who were then in their 30s and 40s, were badly shaken when called upon to serve in the territories and asked to drag Palestinian boys from their homes as weeping mothers knelt to kiss their feet and pleaded with them not to take their sons. Many of these officers admitted that the effect on them had been to acknowledge that peace was the only solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In early 1994, although there were Bene Israel who expressed hope about the peace process, most were reluctant to give back too much territory — other than Gaza — to the Palestinians; they wanted Israel to remain responsible for security in the West Bank, and certainly did not want to see the emergence of a Palestinian State. Nor, like the majority of Israelis at the time, did they wish to return the Golan Heights to Syria. The few Bene Israel who have settled in the occupied territories seem to have done so for economic, not for ideological motives; but, on the other hand, they probably have become more right-wing in order to justify their decision to settle there.

I met some Bene Israel sabras who were openly left-wing. One of them was a young woman married to an American — the couple lived on a kibbutz affiliated to the Conservative Judaism movement. They had both demonstrated with other left-wing activists with the Peace Now movement and she explained to me that her husband normally wore a skullcap in the kibbutz, but that he took it off during demonstrations because onlookers criticized him, as an observant Jew, for participating in a Peace Now protest. She added that as she was noticeably of Oriental origin (Bene Israel are generally darker than Ashkenazi Jews although the complexion colour can range from quite light to very dark) people also expressed surprise that a person of Eastern Jewish background should be in favour of a Peace Now platform.[28]

A Bene Israel teenager was selected in 1993 to go on a special peace mission to a meeting in Italy with other Israeli (mainly those of Oriental origin), Palestinian, and Italian young persons for three weeks

to promote understanding and friendship; there she became friendly with a Palestinian girl, with whom she has kept in touch by telephone.

Maintenance of Indian Cultural Ties

Language

In India, most Bene Israel lived in Maharastra or other parts of western India and usually spoke Marathi, and in some cases Hindi. Young Bene Israel in Israel generally understand Marathi if it was spoken in their homes by their parents and older relatives, and in such cases they can often speak the language with varying degrees of fluency — when talking to their elders or when they do not wish their own young children (those of the third generation) to understand what is being said.[29] In towns with large concentrations of Indians, such as Dimona, not only do second-generation Bene Israel inhabitants sometimes speak Marathi between themselves, but even their children can understand the language and perhaps speak a few phrases, especially if they have had close contact with grandparents.

On the other hand, those who grew up in Israel and who understand and even speak Marathi or Hindi, cannot read these languages and for the most part are not interested in learning to do so — unless they wish to understand the dialogue in Indian films or wish to carry out research where a reading knowledge of Hindi or Marathi would help. No Bene Israel schools exist to teach these languages and it is likely that in about 20 years, the languages will have died out in Israel — unless the recently improved relations between India and Israel lead to the establishment of courses at the universities.

In India, it was common for Bene Israel to speak English, with varying degrees of fluency; and for some members of the immigrant generation, English is the primary language spoken at home in Israel; that is often perceived as a marker of status, rather than of Indian identity. Some of the children of these households, who grew up in Israel, speak English quite fluently and that has been an asset to them when seeking employment.[30] On the other hand, in common with the children of other English-speaking immigrants (such as those from the United States or Britain) who have made energetic efforts to speak Hebrew at home, many Bene Israel youngsters in such households have grown up with a limited knowledge of English and do not have a command of spoken and written English which is much superior to that of their schoolmates who have learnt English in the course of their general education. But where the immigrant parents never acquired more than a rudimentary knowledge of Hebrew, their sabra children are of help in explaining to them in Marathi or English the bureaucratic intricacies of coping with housing or employment or insurance problems.[31]

Religion

Both the immigrant Bene Israel and their native-born children agree that the latter, having grown up in Israel and therefore having experienced less of a need to express their Jewish identity through religious practices than did their families in the Diaspora, are less religiously observant than their parents.

Most second-generation Bene Israel have been educated in state secular schools. Only about 20 per cent of Jewish children in Israel attend state religious schools, where the general standards in secular subjects are said to be distinctly lower than those in secular schools. The religious schools also contain a higher proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds than do the secular schools.[32] Although some Indian parents who sent their children to the state religious schools may have been religious themselves, others did so because the schools were nearer home or because girls who have attended such schools can have exemption from military service. Ultra-Orthodox schools, privately run (that is, not under state control), sometimes offer to give free education to poor children, even in boarding schools. When Bene Israel parents have taken advantage of this option, they are often shocked and hurt when their children return on home visits because they object to the food prepared without adherence to the strictest rules of *kashrut*. Later, a few of these children go to orthodox Ashkenazi yeshivas, where they may study for the rabbinate, and often end by distancing themselves from Indian Jews. If they do attend a Bene Israel synagogue, they will often exert pressure for the old traditional practices to be altered in order to conform to more normative, usually Ashkenazi, Judaism; at religious ceremonies they will often chant melodies in the Ashkenazi rather than the Indian style.

It is of course easier to observe the main religious practices in Israel than in India: as work places are generally closed on Saturdays, the sabbath can be spent at home or in prayer or in leisure; there are many synagogues in residential areas; holy days are public holidays; and kasher meat is more readily available. Even young Bene Israel voluntarily carry out some of the rituals with which they grew up: they light Sabbath candles and they recite a prayer over wine on the eve of the Sabbath, at a *kiddush*. But they often view these practices as important family traditions, rather than as religious rituals. Most of them say that they intend to preserve some of their Bene Israel traditions and prayers, including special dishes, for religious holidays. The women in particular become interested in their roots after they have children and begin to think about what part of their heritage they would like to pass on to them.

One of the most distinctive customs is the *malida* offering during a ceremony honouring the prophet Elijah — *Eliahu ha-Navi*. He is especially revered and prayers are offered to him on many occasions:

for example, to give thanks for the birth of a child or for recovery from illness; to ask for the safety of a child about to enter the army; or for blessings upon moving into a new home. Guests are invited and the *malida*, a concoction of rice, coconut, fruit, and spices is served. The whole ritual has become a kind of cultural marker of ethnic boundaries, a symbol of belongingness and rootedness in the past;[33] even young persons who marry Jews from other backgrounds, or who might otherwise be quite secular in their outlook, insist on having the ceremony performed on appropriate occasions and will return to the parental home for the *malida*. They themselves are more likely to see it as a part of their cultural heritage, although their parents may view it primarily as a religious ceremony. There are also some young persons who may not care about observing that particular tradition on some occasions, such as moving into a new home, but will carry out the ritual if only in deference to their parents' wishes.

Some second-generation Bene Israel will use the services of an Indian *mohel* to carry out ritual circumcision, according to the old tradition. Others still adhere to the custom which had been observed in India of shaving the head of a baby boy after 40 days and that of a baby girl after 80 days, and invite guests to the ceremony. Some do so only in order to please and honour the grandparents of the newborn children; but others stoutly refuse. One young woman told her mother that she would not allow her to see her grandchild if she raised again, however gently, the question of shaving the baby's head.

Cultural and 'Folklorist' Activities

Israeli authorities now encourage the preservation and transmission of regional folk culture, usually devoid of political and economic undercurrents, as a positive expression of ethnicity. Like other *edot*, the Bene Israel have been making deliberate efforts to perform the music and dance of the 'motherland'. Halper has suggested that ethnicity may meet the individual's need for belonging and meaning more than membership in Israeli society as a whole.[34] This would be in line perhaps with the concept of Herbert Gans of 'symbolic ethnicity': immigrants seeking to effect a synthesis of the old and the new cultures in ways that are less time and energy consuming than ethnic structures and institutions, tend to focus on the arts, literature, customs, and history which can be displayed to outsiders.[35]

Nostalgic immigrant parents may encourage their daughters to study Indian dance — Hindi film style, folk, or classical; that is all the more noteworthy because Jewish parents in India often frowned upon the practice by their women of popular dancing styles, since that was considered suitable only for the lower orders of society. But as is true in many Eastern communities, it is precisely the popular (and for Indians, the Hindi film) music and dance which is the most appealing part of

their culture to the youngsters, who are less familiar with the broader civilization and history of their countries of origin than their immigrant parents are. That new interest in 'folklore' might be considered as a re-invention of the heritage on the part of the second generation; it places them in an ethnic context that is now valued in Israel. One sabra, a writer, has written about the development of her awareness of her Indian identity using music as a theme.[36] The Israeli Bene Israel community has spawned a few bands, consisting mostly of young men, which play Indian and Israeli music on a combination of Indian and western instruments. They are immensely popular and are engaged for Bene Israel weddings, bar mitzvahs, and other functions.

As might be expected, organizations of Bene Israel women have played a prominent role in deliberately preserving and promoting such elements of Indian culture as dancing and folk songs which they teach to young children, whom they also involve in traditional celebrations of festivals, thereby enhancing the usual, continuous maintenance of traditions that one finds in areas of large concentrations of Bene Israel.[37]

The Central Organization of Indian Jews has sponsored since 1987 an annual Festival of Indian Music and Dance at the convention centre of Jerusalem (*Binyenei ha-uma*). More than 3,000 members of the community of all ages and socio-economic strata come from all over the country to attend the celebrations; there are performances — mainly by Indian Israelis, but also including some guest stars from India — as well as competitions of classical and popular Indian dance and music, featuring many second-generation Bene Israel as contestants. Most teenagers, however, are interested in seeing only their particular admired performers and otherwise spend their time in the lobby, mixing with their peers, uninterested in the speeches being delivered in the auditorium or in the awards ceremonies.

The ready availability of Hindi films, primarily musical extravaganzas, on Jordanian television, cable from India, and especially video tape, has heightened the interest in Indian popular culture. Older people are especially appreciative of the familiar Indian locales shown in the films while some members of the second generation find the stilted love plots silly but like the dancing, the music, and the film stars. Indeed, the young sabra performers have learned in their own homes the songs and dances in their repertoire from the video and audio cassettes available in Indian specialty shops in areas of Bene Israel geographical concentration. One young woman observed: 'I was born in Israel and I am a Jew and an Israeli in every respect, but . . . I found "India" [the land of my origins] in films available in Israel and I have loved it from a very young age'. She has become a connaisseur of Hindi films, is the only one of six children in her family interested in things Indian, and has expressed a desire to visit Bombay and tour the site of that city's film industry.

Food

When Bene Israel were asked in questionnaires to indicate which were the aspects of Indian customs and culture in which they still participated, the most frequently circled item by those across the age spectrum was food — which is, of course, a common ethnic marker. Even immigrants who have been settled in Israel for more than 30 years may still eat primarily Indian style meals; they buy the necessary ingredients, and sometimes even the special cooking utensils imported from India, from Bene Israel shops. The second generation in Israel has grown up with this cuisine, and some of their number are learning to cook Indian dishes — which they find are much appreciated by friends from other Israeli communities.

Travel to India

Most Oriental Jews in Israel cannot easily visit their country of parental origin; but of course the Bene Israel can freely take a trip to India, and a considerable number in fact do so. The older generation have retained warm feelings towards their homeland; the contacts they renew, as well as frequent visits to Israel by their kinfolk still living in India, strengthen their social and cultural ties with their homeland and its inhabitants. However, such a reaction is not always to be found among the younger Bene Israel when they first go to India on a visit. Sometimes they have been delighted by the warmth of feeling, the traditions, the culture, and the scenery of the land of their parents and they have become more interested in their background and their roots. A few young people have commented that visits to India have given them a greater understanding and positive appreciation of their parents' attitudes and ways. Having been exposed to Bene Israel traditions and customs in India, they feel they would like to preserve them in Israel before they get lost through assimilation. One young woman said:[38]

> We landed in Calcutta and it was a shock. Everybody tried to cheat you the minute you put your foot down on the ground.... Then we started to get into the atmosphere of the place. And we started to love the country, to really want to go there again and stay there. All of it — city and rural.... I love the tranquility, even in all the mess they live in.... It's something special.... When I was in India, I felt the Indian part of me rising up.... I started to feel not at home, but good ... Deep inside, your heart is happier, you are more joyful, you feel secure.

Some second-generation Bene Israel go to India looking for the things they've heard about over the years from their parents and are surprised at the modernization of Indian cities. Others have been appalled by the poverty, dirt, density of the population, and health problems — which their parents might not have warned them to expect — and they could hardly wait to return home to Israel. One young

man, who was 20 years old and doing his military service, stated that he might well visit India after he was demobilized and embarked on a period of travelling; he commented:[39]

> India is a very interesting place to be in. I'm talking objectively, not as an Indian searching for my roots. I'd like to travel and explore there. But a trip to India wouldn't be any more special than going to the Philippines or Bangkok. I don't feel a direct contact or link with India. The only link I have is to Israel. This is where I was brought up and this is my country. Now that I am serving my country, I feel strongly about it. I feel totally Israeli who just happens to be of Indian background, like everybody is of some background or another. From my point of view, that's the way it's supposed to be.

The Transformation of Indian Identity

Prejudice

In Israel, immigrants from Asia and Africa experienced considerable discrimination and deprivation when they came to settle in the country and their resentment and anger at the contempt which their communities seemed to arouse — among Western Jews and often among the Israeli authorities who had the task of absorbing them — played a role in the construction of their own identity as Israeli citizens of Oriental origin. The children of these immigrants were also somewhat affected by that experience.[40] One young Bene Israel woman who had been brought to Israel when she was only six months old said that she does not feel like a sabra because when other children asked where she was born and she told them that it was India, she felt that they reacted negatively. A number of other informants recalled that when they were growing up in Israel, some of their playmates or fellow pupils would jeeringly call them 'Hodi' (Indian) or even 'Kushi' (black one), and they felt hurt and had a lowered sense of self-esteem. One mother related an incident which occurred when her son was five years old: she had given him some cake with white icing, and he kept asking for more of the icing, and eventually said, 'maybe if I eat a lot of this it will make me lighter and the other children [in the kindergarten] won't call me *Kushi*'.

Sometimes parents told their children simply to ignore the taunts, which only revealed the ignorance and lack of manners of the other children or of the latter's parents. A young woman who grew up in Dimona said that the Indian children often kept to themselves, as a group, because they were made to feel inferior and were therefore not very confident about mixing with children from other communities, who did not seem to wish to accept them on equal terms. Some second-generation Bene Israel also confessed that as children they were uneasy when they walked with their mothers, who wore saris, and

attracted the stares of passers-by; but eventually they learnt to cope with such feelings of shame or discomfort.

A young woman raised in Lod, where there is a large concentration of Bene Israel, said that she studied very hard so that she was always at the top of her school form; she knew that the only way she could break away from the Indian community was to excel in her studies and achieve. But when she went to the university, she discovered that there was a current stereotype that the Indians (who were mostly from Dimona) were lazy or unambitious, so she was a little ashamed to say she was of Indian origin. Moreover, other students did not seem to hold her in much esteem and were not eager to study with her; but when she began to obtain very good marks in the chemistry laboratory, then they wanted to know more about her and they asked her to help them with their work. She believed that Israelis did not generally hold a positive impression of Indians until they got to know a particular individual. One informant commented on the fact that his fellow Bene Israel were reluctant to take an aggressive stance in the face of such attitudes and suffered for it. He added:[41]

> Today there is so much being done on television to make people understand the Ethiopians ... and accept them, whereas when the Indians came, they had to take it all, because nobody understood or said anything .... Indians tend to be sensitive and to take it very personally. They rarely fought, even with the Rabbinate. The Ethiopians are very outgoing and fight for their rights.

Other informants have commented that the Israeli rabbinate and the establishment at first were more likely to question the 'Jewishness' of the darker-skinned communities, such as the Indians and Ethiopians, than that of the fair-skinned Russians, even though a good number of the latter were most certainly not of Jewish descent. As adults, many second-generation Bene Israel claim that the authorities generally show more favour to citizens who originate from Europe and America; they remind those who are interested in their community that their parents had generally been sent to underdeveloped regions of Israel, when they came to settle in the country, and were not given the opportunities which those of Western origin were granted of living in the central or the coastal areas. Younger Bene Israel, like other Oriental Jews, also point out that their parents were given far less aid when they arrived than recent Russian immigrants receive. They believe that there is discrimination against Indian Jews because of their skin colour, culture, traditions, dress, food, and type of English accent. A few have remarked that there is a general lack of Indians and of darker people on Israeli television and of Indian music on the radio.

A 42-year-old Bene Israel woman who had grown up in a moshav wrote in a questionnaire that even nowadays, 'there's a label to being an Indian ... the Indian culture is always on the margins — even in the

newspapers ... It doesn't appear much'. Others have mentioned the lack of material on India and on Indian Jews in the school curriculum; a 20-year-old sabra believed that because 'the society wished to copy from western countries', it didn't preserve the special or unique contributions of the Jews of Eastern countries.

Some respondents thought that there was less prejudice in areas of the country which did not have large numbers of Indians; it was more likely that in such regions, individual Bene Israel would be judged on their merits, and not be lumped together with other Indian Jews and stereotyped.[42] When asked which ethnic groups in Israel they believed to be most discriminatory toward the Bene Israel, opinions varied. Some respondents said that they were more likely to be considered inferior by other Eastern communities, such as Moroccans or Iraqis, than by the Ashkenazim. 'We have to be on the lowest rung', one said, 'so that they [other Oriental communities] can feel better, and go up.' However, an Indian who was a sabra asserted that she had not been subjected to any discrimination on the moshav where she had grown up, where most of the other households were either Egyptian or Moroccan; it was only later, when she lived elsewhere in Israel, that she was. She has been working for many years as a teacher and counsellor to Mizraḥi youth groups to help these young people to build a positive identity, to become more self-assertive, and to fight for their rights.

When it comes to marriage, some respondents have said that Ashkenazi parents have been reluctant to welcome Indians as spouses for their children, but that Moroccan, Tunisian, and Yemenite families have been more ready to accept them. The initial assumption of Ashkenazim is often that their child's Indian friend comes from a backward, uneducated household and so they are pleasantly surprised when they discover that that is not the case. There is generally less objection to a daughter-in-law than to a son-in-law who is of Indian origin, it is claimed. Most Bene Israel parents have stated that they would not object to their offspring marrying into any other Jewish community — although a few had reservations about Moroccans.

Values and Styles of Behaviour

Indian parents generally wish their children to become 'typical' Israelis, to assimilate to the normative culture. The younger generation naturally tend to have friendship networks which are broader than those of their parents, but there are variations according to the density of the Bene Israel community in any specific region.[43] Some of the young people, particularly those who live in the north and centre of the country, consider themselves to be primarily Israeli and not even Indian-Israeli, and they prefer to choose their friends from all communities, not to limit themselves to fellow Bene Israel; but they believe

that they would feel more Indian if they lived in a community with an appreciable number of Indian households.

As we saw above, most second-generation Bene Israel wish to retain some of their community's traditions and ceremonies, but on the other hand, they also wish to shed whatever Indian attributes they believe to have isolated their parents from the mainstream Jewish society, especially the type of mentality or attitudes which hindered their progress — such as lack of assertiveness, deferential attitudes to authority, and reserve about mingling with other ethnic groups. A few shrewd Bene Israel observers of the wider scene have commented that there are no truly prominent Indian Jews in either public life or the private sector and they think that this fact has helped to maintain the Bene Israel low profile. One young woman said that her mother had always told her that a woman should be quiet and reserved, and she commented:[44]

> It's very bad to teach someone like that, because in Israel, if you don't have elbows, you don't come up. If you have Chutzpa, people will listen. If you want to be somebody, you have to do it with elbows. So people will know they can't push you around. But because we are Indian, we are taught to be nice and quiet. It's hard to be assertive. It may be hard for the parents, but those children who are more assertive do better. My brother had more Chutzpa. He was more Israeli, and I more Indian, so it was harder for me in the family.

A social worker of Ashkenazi origin who had worked with a number of Indian families has stated that he had seen a great deal of anger on the part of young people about the passive attitude of their parents. One boy said, 'I'm not going to be like this old man', referring to his father. It seems that for Indians, as for other Mizraḥi younger persons, to become more Israeli means to reject some of the parental attitudes, values, and concepts of relationships to a greater extent than is common among different generations of other ethnic groups — and to a greater extent than the familiar almost universal generation gap in developed societies. Israeli absorption ideology has helped to foster such modes of behaviour.[45]

Sabras as well as those who were brought at an early age to Israel have the remarkable ability to behave sensitively and with apparent ease in an Indian milieu and within their kinship group, but they have been sufficiently acculturated to general Israeli norms to be more assertive in wider Israeli settings — and are thus able to negotiate Israeli society more successfully than their elders have been able to do. They are Indian on the inside but Israeli in their public face.[46] Some achieve this bi-cultural personality with apparent ease, but others feel some discomfort about it. A sabra in her thirties explained:[47]

> Most of us develop two kinds of identity: one is for outside, the other is for inside. If you go outside, you behave like the others, you try, and even you live an illusion that you are part of it, but if you are a little sensitive to

> yourself, you understand that it's a kind of game and then you have to face it. It's not so easy, because you see that you don't have a space here, ...
>
> During high school, I started to leave their [parents'] values and their way of thinking. After twenty years I understood that it's stupid. Why should I? I cannot fight against it anymore — I wanted to be myself, and myself was partly Indian.

Conflicts with members of one's family are not unusual. Some sabras claim that their parents are 'primitiv' — a word often used in Israel to mean old-fashioned and lacking sophistication, and set in one's ways.[48] A 17-year-old girl commented:[49]

> My parents are more traditional, conservative, and in some ways more vulnerable. As there are differences between the Israeli society and the Bene-Israel community, that is the way in my house because I represent the Israeli society in the house and my parents, our community.

The contrast between the strict code of behaviour of the immigrant parents and the general permissiveness of mainstream Israeli Jewry can result in friction. An informant interviewed in Israel in January 1994 explained that parents want to do things in the Indian way and he added:[50]

> ... they don't want the girls to go out, they're willing to let the boys go out.... They are afraid that if the girls go out at midnight, they will get into trouble. And if they do, everybody's going to point their finger at the parents and say, 'well you let her out, you were sleeping, and she was roaming around in Tel Aviv, and this is what happens.'

Immigrant parents are said to be very concerned with 'what the neighbours would say'; that attitude has caused many clashes with their offspring, irritated by an attitude which aimed to restrict their movements and behaviour.

Such intergenerational conflicts are to be found in many different countries, of course; but the Bene Israel seem to be more respectful of parental wishes than the Israeli youth of other ethnic groups are. The hope of the second generation is that they will have fewer problems with their own children, because sabras will find it easier to understand the attitudes of the third generation. Some Indian immigrants, especially those among the more educated stratum of Bene Israel society, said that they had made real efforts to move with the times and to understand the attitudes of their children who were being raised in Israel — so that although they began by being very strict with their first children, they absorbed some of the standards and behaviour of the general wider society, and gave much more latitude to their younger children. An informant commented in an interview, also in 1994:[51]

> They're sabras, they're different. And we're no longer new immigrants, we're old-timers. Our attitudes have changed. We know Indian families here who raised their children their way. We tried to raise our children

> according to the situation here and this society's attitudes. If you want children to be successful here, you have to change. If the parents won't change, the children won't have a chance.

Some parents went to the extent of deliberately encouraging their children to join youth movements so that they would be less shy and assimilate better to the life-style of most young Israelis.

There are a few young Bene Israel who value the traditional manners and upbringing of the parental generation. They are aware that although they were born and brought up in Israel, they are calmer and more tolerant than the majority of others in their age group who are members of other communities. Some attribute this fact to their upbringing, others to their genes. But they are united in their belief that Indian Jews could make an important contribution to Israeli society, by demonstrating the virtues of patience, dignity, kindness, tolerance, and respect for others. One young woman commented: 'It's very important to give space to the others, to respect them. You don't insult others. You give them the opportunity to be what they want'. Teachers often pay tribute to the good manners and respectful attitudes of Bene Israel children; indeed, even Indians who were brought up in Israel and who have become teachers have been saddened by the lack of courtesy of the majority of Israeli pupils, and they hope that they may succeed in inculcating in them the attitudes of kindness and politeness, in teaching them to be less brusque and less aggressive. Such a synthesis between Indian and Ashkenazi attitudes might result in the cultural synthesis which Patai had advocated in the 1950s.[52]

Sabra teenagers in the north of the country, who have mixed with other ethnic groups, often state that their counterparts in such southern towns as Yerucham, Kiryat Gat, or Ashdod, are 'too Indian' and are reluctant to be outgoing and move freely outside their limited circle. Dimona is cited as an example of such a 'closed' group of Indians: indeed, approximately one-third of the population of the town is of Indian origin and it is regarded as 'little Bombay' even by Indians in other southern towns — confirming Ben-Zadok's observation:[53]

> Mutual cultural infusions are less likely to occur, and distinct ethnic frameworks are more likely to be preserved, in homogeneous communities that are distant from large urban areas. Thus, the boundaries of oriental ethnicity, and the conflict of values that revolves primarily around ethnic issues, will probably remain more significant in the towns.

Northern teenagers claim that the Dimona young people are reserved and old-fashioned, in the way they 'think about things and do things' and that even those who grew up in Israel 'never want to do anything'. They prefer to be with other Indians, to watch Indian films, and to be involved in Indian social and cultural activities, rather than mix with members of other communities. In such circumstances, young

persons cannot socialize freely with those of the opposite sex and develop easygoing friendships with them. Their encounters are expected by their elders to lead to a more formal relationship — to marriage. In many cases, young persons are too shy to seek a girl friend or a boy friend and their parents will take it upon themselves to find a suitable partner for their child. They will check very carefully the person's background and reputation and then will arrange a meeting between the young people who are usually willing to be introduced; although in many cases the relationship goes no further, in others the parties will continue to see one another and eventually marry. In other regions of Israel, second-generation Indians might well refuse even to meet someone chosen by their parents as a prospective spouse.

In many ways, it is inevitable for most young Indians to grow away from their family traditions, even at the level of recreational activities: young men join Indian basketball leagues, rather than the cricket teams of their fathers. Younger women have little interest in joining Indian women's associations, whose members are mainly of the older, immigrant generation. As for dress, the young women will not normally wear a sari, as their mothers often do, although they might do so or put on a Punjabi costume for a formal function or for Purim, a festival at which it is traditional for many Oriental Jews to wear fancy-dress costumes. But at the time of marriage, a bride may be quite willing to wear a sari for the henna ceremony known as *Mendhi* or the wedding itself, and she may do so even if she herself is not a Bene Israel but her bridegroom is of Indian origin. Some Indian brides choose to follow traditional customs to the extent of having special henna designs applied to their hands, not just the smearing of fingers.

A traditional Bene Israel wedding ceremony, which is long and may last for more than the day that the marriage is solemnized, requires the bridegroom to sing to the bride, describing in flowery language the beauty of her features and of her personal qualities. Some Bene Israel girls are very appreciative of that tradition and one informant stated that she would insist on it, even if her bridegroom were not an Indian: she would teach him the words and the melody. Young persons may go through the lengthy wedding ceremonies in order to please their parents; or they will have only the henna ceremony with Indian dress, food, and music, but that will be followed on another day by a wedding according to mainstream Israeli practice. An experienced Bene Israel social worker observed:[54]

> They [the young people] don't want to look back and think of their Indian origin, perhaps because there is a wide cultural and social and psychological gap between the ideas and ways of those brought up in India and those who live here.
>
> The school, and army, the more competitive and aggressive way of life here, as compared to the passive, philosophical outlook in India, the

> difference between the strong cultural controls in India as compared to the free and uninhibited way of living in Israel . . . also causes generational gaps. The absence of strong family ties and social responsibility of children for parents as in India . . . the struggle for a living for the younger people in day-to-day life in a westernized society are some of the things that have led to this disparity in thinking.
>
> I have found, however, that where the children have been brought up in communities where they have closer ties with others of Indian origin, and where family influences have continued to be strong, the likelihood of identification has been greater.

There are young Bene Israel who are proud of their heritage, and wish to incorporate features of it into their identities, although they have largely adopted a mainstream Israel lifestyle; they learn Hindi film songs and music and they go to see Indian musicians and dance groups, film festivals, and art exhibitions which have been promoted since the establishment of full diplomatic relations between Israel and India, in 1992. In India, only a very few Bene Israel were engaged in research on their community; but in Israel some young adults are now writing about their customs and/or history during or after their university studies. In 1994, one woman was preparing a master's thesis in sociology on the *Eliahu ha-Navi* ceremony. Another was writing a novel based on her experience as an Israeli-born Indian. A Bene Israel in Beersheva was trying to organize exhibitions for individual Indian artists who are still practising traditional arts and crafts. School children of the second and even of the third generation have undertaken projects focusing on their community and have often found that pupils from other ethnic groups are interested in Bene Israel culture and traditions.

Intermarriage

It will be difficult to preserve Bene Israel culture in Israel since the community is comparatively very small (approximately 40,000) and since there are growing numbers of marriages with spouses of other ethnic groups. There are no official statistics, but it is believed that more than 50 per cent of second-generation Bene Israel who marry seem to be choosing partners who are not of Indian origin. Many of these unions have been with Jews of North African or Middle Eastern origin, but there have also been Ashkenazi partners, including Americans, Rumanians, and Russians. A few young informants said that they would prefer to have an Indian spouse because of the qualities of kindness, gentleness, and respect for the other person; but the majority have indicated that they were prepared to marry Jews of any other community, stressing that an individual's character and background should determine one's choice. However, some young women insisted that they did not intend to marry an Indian Jew, because such a man

would expect his spouse to confine herself to the traditional duties of wife and mother: 'An Indian boy, especially one who has immigrated from India, might have old-fashioned attitudes and wouldn't let me do as I want, to travel, study, and work. I would be expected to be more subordinate and obedient', one explained.

As noted above, there are Bene Israel who wish to see their children marry within the fold and who will try to introduce them to suitable prospects. But most parents are perfectly happy to acquire a Jewish son-in-law or daughter-in-law who is not of Indian origin. It is recognized that such marriages will help the Bene Israel spouse to assimilate better. Young people agree: 'If you want to become Israeli, and want to progress and advance, you must intermarry', observed one young woman. Marriage between members of different communities leads to cultural fusion, weakening the particular heritage of one or of both spouses. Those who marry out of their ethnic group tend to see themselves as an Israeli-Jewish young couple, not as an Indian married to an Iraqi or a Rumanian. However, each spouse is likely to try to preserve some of the customs, especially those surrounding festivals, which were practised in his or her own home, as manifestations of 'symbolic ethnicity'. I know of one instance in which, when the household was assembled for the lighting of the Ḥannukah candles, the Bene Israel husband began to recite the blessing in the Indian melody. His non-Indian wife interrupted: 'No, do the Israeli tune, because that's what the kids will be doing all the time'. He did so, but then stated: 'They are going to hear the Israeli tune all over the place. They need to learn the Indian one as well'; and the following night the blessing was recited in the Indian style.

A non-Indian spouse, especially an Ashkenazi partner, is very likely to be interested in Indian traditions, including those connected with wedding customs and with food, and will usually co-operate in preserving such practices. Many young Bene Israel women, however, are aware of the likelihood that the old ways will fall into desuetude. One 22-year-old commented:[55]

> Today I see the tradition as a nice thing that is unique to us, something which has to be preserved. In my youth, many things seemed banal and tasteless. I even distanced myself from them. I will try to preserve the customs but I know most of them will disappear and vanish and my children will not experience the special and beautiful tradition of our community... They will have to be content with visits to grandparents' houses and see and hear these special customs.

Conclusion

The preservation or redefinition of Bene Israel culture may well depend upon the second and third generations in the Jewish State. With fewer than 6,000 Bene Israel left in India, the perpetuation of

their culture there cannot be guaranteed. Ernest Krausz has stated in an article in this Journal[56] that although Jews of Asian and North African origin wish to retain their sub-cultures, they are not so desirous of perpetuating their separateness, but hope instead to achieve socio-economic equality with Ashkenazim and acceptance on equal terms in Israeli society. The younger generations are more secure and are not worried lest their attachment to the culture of their origin would represent a threat to their acquisition of an Israeli national identity or provoke an accusation of disloyalty to the country where they have grown up. Moreover, ethnic traditions have now become indices of successful integration and cultural distinctiveness can represent individual identity. Goldberg has noted: 'Immigrants and their children have been socialized into Israeli skills, roles and styles, while preserving and reshaping significant elements of their particular traditions'.[57] A young Bene Israel explained, 'I don't think I have to make an effort to preserve my special identity. Even in my external appearance [it is there]. Personally, I define myself as an Israeli and then an Indian.'

Certainly continued attendance at functions such as weddings, circumcisions, and bar/bat mitzvahs that tend to bring members of the small community together will keep the second and third generations of Bene Israel in touch with their ethnic heritage and may reinforce the maintenance or construction of a Bene Israel sub-identity. For many, especially for those who marry into other communities, the familiarity and involvement with Indian and Bene Israel historic and cultural roots may become (or remain) superficial, perhaps limited to food and music. For others, the increasing legitimization of ethnicity and cultural pluralism in Israel will result in an intensified appreciation of their heritage, as they redefine it, and pride in their Indian-Israeli identity, as they transform it.

When asked whether she thought the sense of community or identity of the Bene Israel would disappear in another generation, a young woman replied:[58]

> I don't believe it will vanish ... because like today, all the Iraqis, the Yemenites — everybody is kind of mixing with one another, but in a small way, there is still the sense of community.... Now, it's not so important to maintain the old mentality. That could disappear more easily, gradually. The mentality will come closer to the Israeli norms. But there will always be a Bene Israel community.... It will stay, it will be so deep inside of the person and the family. It stays for ever, ...

Acknowledgements

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NOTES

[1] See Joan G. Roland, *Jews in British India: Identity in a Colonial Era*, Hanover and London, 1989, pp. 242, 247–49; see also Margaret Abraham, 'The Normative and the Factual: an Analysis of Emigration Factors among the Jews of India' in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 33, no. 1, June 1991, pp. 5–19; and Shirley Berry Isenberg, *India's Bene Israel: A Comprehensive Inquiry and Sourcebook*, Berkeley, 1988, pp. 268–73.

[2] See Judith Goldstein, 'The Rise of Iranian Ethnicity in Israel' in *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, vol. 29, 1983, p. 39.

[3] See Jeff Halper, 'The Absorption of Ethiopian Immigrants: A Return to the Fifties' in Alex Weingrod and M. Ashkenazi, eds., *Ethiopian Jews and Israel*, New Brunswick, 1987, pp. 114–15.

[4] See Erik Cohen, 'Ethnicity and Legitimation in Contemporary Israel' in *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, vol. 28, 1983, pp. 111–24.

[5] See Chaim Adler and Reuven Kahane, 'Introduction: Israeli Youth in Search of an Identity' in *Youth and Society*, vol. 16, 1984, pp. 115–27.

[6] See Marcus Hansen, 'The Third Generation in America' in *Commentary*, 1952, pp. 492–500.

[7] See Herbert S. Lewis, 'Ethnicity, Culture and Adaptation Among Yementies in a Heterogeneous Community' in Alex Weingrod, ed., *Studies in Israeli Ethnicity: After the Ingathering*, New York, 1985, p. 232.

[8] Halper, op. cit. in Note 3 above, p. 124.

[9] See Israel Adler and Robert W. Hodge, 'Ethnicity and the Process of Status Attainment in Israel' in *Israel Social Science Research*, vol. 1, 1983, p. 19.

[10] See Avi Gottlieb, 'Second Generation Immigrant Youth in Israel: How do they Fare?' in Meir Gottesmann, ed., *Cultural Transition: The Case of Immigrant Youth*, Jerusalem, 1988, pp. 45–70.

[11] Reuven Kahane, 'Informal Patterns of Absorption of Youth in Israel' in Gottesman, op. cit. in Note 10 above, p. 31; See also Joseph Schwarzwald and Yehuda Amir, 'Interethnic Relations and Education: an Israeli Perspective' in Ernest Krausz, ed., *Education in a Comparative Context: Studies of Israeli Society*, vol. 4, New Brunswick and Oxford, 1989, pp. 249–54.

[12] Chaim Adler, 'Israeli Education Addressing Dilemmas Caused by Pluralism: a Sociological Perspective' in Krausz, op. cit. in Note 11 above, p. 29; Abraham Yogev and Hanna Ayalon, 'High School Attendance in a Sponsored Multi-Ethnic System: the Case of Israel' in Krausz, ibid., pp. 222–23; Yossi Shavit, 1) 'Tracking and Ethnicity in Israeli Secondary Education' in Krausz, ibid., pp. 209–19, and 2) 'Segregation, Tracking and the Educational Attainment of Minorities: Arabs and Oriental Jews in Israel' in *American Sociological Review*, vol. 55, 1990, pp. 115–26.

[13] One informant reported that when she graduated from Ramleh-Lod High school, considered to be one of the best in Israel, there were only six Indians among the 240 students preparing for the *bagrut*; but the top five students were Indians. She suggested that one of the reasons for this might have been that most of the poorer Indians had been in vocational schools or even less good

comprehensive schools — so that those who went to her school were in a sense self-selected.

[14] See Ilana Shelach and Eyal Ben-Ari, 'Interorganizational Linkages and Community: A Case Study of a "Project Renewal" Rehabilitation' in *Israel Social Science Review*, vol. 6, 1988/89, pp. 57–59; see also Hana Ofek, 'The Integration of Renewal Neighborhoods into the Mainstream of Israeli Society: Illusion or Reality?' in Efraim Ben-Zadok, ed., *Local Communities and the Israeli Polity*, Albany, N.Y., 1993, pp. 123–53.

[15] See Chaim Adler, op. cit. in Note 12 above.

[16] Central Bureau of Statistics, 1990, *Population and Housing Publications*, Census 1983 No. 24. In recent years, Arab-Israeli men have been attending post-secondary schools at higher rates than Oriental Jews, probably because Arab high schools have only an academic track, so that those who complete high school have prepared for the matriculation diploma, whereas only 25 per cent of Oriental Jews are in academic tracks. See Yossi Shavit, 'Segregation', cited in Note 12 above.

[17] See Yogev and Ayalon, op. cit. in Note 12 above.

[18] About 20 per cent of 13 to 17 year olds in Israel are educated in residential settings; see Yitzhak Kashti, 'Residential Schools for First and Second Generation Immigrant Youth' in Gottesmann, ed., op. cit. in Note 10 above, p. 72.

[19] Interview with informant in Israel, February 1994.

[20] Adler and Kahane, op. cit. in Note 5 above, pp. 118–19; Adler and Hodge, op. cit. in Note 9 above, *passim*.

[21] See Yoav Peled, 'Ethnic Exclusionism in the Periphery: the Case of Oriental Jews in Israel's Development Towns' in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 13, 1990, p. 353. See also D. K. H. Amiran and A. Schachar, *Development Towns in Israel*, Jerusalem, 1970, pp. 58–185; Harvey Goldberg, 'Disadvantaged Youngsters and Disparate Definitions of Youth in a Development Town' in *Youth and Society*, vol. 16, 1984, pp. 237–56; and Efraim Ben-Zadok, 'Oriental Jews in the Development Towns: Ethnicity, Economic Development, Budgets and Politics' in Ben-Zadok, ed., op. cit. in Note 14 above, pp. 91–122.

[22] Cohen, op. cit. in Note 4 above, pp. 118–19.

[23] Spilerman and Habib pointed out that the concentration of North Africans in development towns is thus in itself a major reason for the disparities in income and occupation between European and Middle Eastern and North African groups. See S. Spilerman and J. Habib, 'Development Towns in Israel: The Role of Community in Creating Ethnic Disparities in Labor Force Characteristics' in *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 81, 1976, pp. 781–812.

[24] See Asher Arian, *Politics in Israel: the Second Generation*, Chatham, N.J., 1985, pp. 139–44.

[25] Phyllis Palgi, 'The Bene Israel Community' in *Israel Year Book, 1972*, Israel, 1972, p. 168.

[26] Ben Zadok, op. cit. in Note 21 above, pp. 113–14.

[27] Arian, op. cit. in Note 24 above, pp. 136–39.

[28] Interview with informant in Israel, January, 1994.

[29] See Yvonne Bromberg, 'The Loss of the Marathi Language among the Bene Israel Community in Israel', unpublished paper, English Department, Bar-Ilan University, Israel, 1993.

[30] On the retention of English among the Bene Israel in Israel, see Shalva Weil, 'Verbal Interaction Among the Bene Israel' in *Linguistics*, vol. 193, 1977, pp. 77–84.

[31] Kahane, op. cit. in Note 11 above, p. 27.

[32] Schwarzwald and Amir, op. cit. in Note 11, p. 256.

[33] See Harvey Goldberg, 'Historical and Cultural Dimensions of Ethnic Phenomena in Israel' in Alex Weingrod, ed., op. cit. in Note 7 above, pp. 189–90. For a discussion of the importance of the *malida* ceremony to Bene Israel in an Israeli development town, see Cynthia Guy, 'The Bnei Israel Indian Community of Midbarit, Israel', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 1984, pp. 172–89.

[34] Halper, op. cit. in Note 3 above, p. 119.

[35] See Herbert J. Gans, 'Symbolic Ethnicity: the Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America' in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 2, 1979, pp. 1–20; see also Walter Weiker, 'Ethnicity in Israel in the Nineties', paper presented at the Israel in the Nineties Conference at Ben-Gurion University, Beersheva, 10 January 1994, p. 1.

[36] Guy, op. cit. in Note 33 above, pp. 305–08. Goldstein has observed a similar phenomenon for young Iranians: see Judith Goldstein, 'Iranian Ethnicity in Israel: The Performance of Identity', in Weingrod, ed., op. cit. in Note 7 above, p. 251. Halper discovered that although third or fourth generation immigrants from Iran were 'Persian only to the extent that their forebears came from there and knew little about Persian Jewish culture and history, they attended the Persian traditional spring festival and attended Iranian synagogues on the High Holidays': see Jeff Halper, 'The Persian Jews of Neveh Shalom: A Study in Mobility' in *Ariel* vol. 53, 1983, pp. 48–49. On Yemenite efforts to involve the younger generation, see Herbert S. Lewis, op. cit. in Note 7 above, pp. 229, 231. Harvey Goldberg has commented on the fact that some features of the non-Jewish environment which were not practised by Jews in their homeland became prominent in Israel: see his 'Historical and Cultural Dimensions', op. cit. in Note 33 above, p. 188. See also Ilana Sugbeker Messika, 'Sober Eyes' in *Ha Patish*, March 1994, p. 31 (in Hebrew).

[37] Ben-David and Matras argue that groups at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder, perceiving discrimination because of their concentration in low-status occupation and neighbourhoods, such as one finds among Bene Israel in Dimona or Yerucham, tend to retain ethnic bonds and traditions; see Weingrod, ed., op. cit. in Note 7 above, pp. xv–xvi.

[38] Interview with informant in Israel, February 1994.

[39] Interview with informant in Israel, February 1994.

[40] Alex Weingrod, *Israel: Group Relations in a New Society*, New York, Washington, and London, 1965, pp. 39–41; Halper, op. cit. in Note 3, above, p. 113; and Schwarzwald and Amir, op. cit. in Note 11 above, pp. 248–49.

[41] Response to questionnaire, 1993.

[42] Neil Sandberg found that when there was a negative stereotype, although some members sought to disappear into the larger culture, others tried to strengthen ethnic identification by associating mainly with their own group: see Neil Sandberg, *Ethnic Identity and Assimilation: The Polish-American Community*, New York, 1974, p. 74.

[43] Fran Markowitz has commented on the tendency of Russian immigrants to form friendships mainly amongst themselves and to speak Russian as their main language even after several years in Israel: see her 'Israelis with a Russian Accent' in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 35, no. 1, June 1993, pp. 105–07.

[44] Interview with informant in Israel, January 1994.

[45] Weingrod, op. cit. in Note 40 above, pp. 34–37.

[46] See Alan Roland, *In Search of Self in India and Japan: Toward a Cross-cultural Psychology*, Princeton, 1988, p. 195.

[47] Interview with informant in Israel, February 1994.

[48] Halper points out that the ideology which called for the elimination of ethnic (that is, Eastern) cultures in Israel led absorption agencies, the media, and academics to label Jewish immigrants from Muslim countries as 'primitives.' They were expected to discard their 'old' ways in favour of Israeli norms: Halper, op. cit. in Note 3 above, pp. 115–18.

[49] Quoted in Zehavit Saralkar, 'Bene Israel Community in India and Israel, Mutual Attachment, Changes and Renewal', unpublished paper, Ironi Aleph High School, Haifa (in Hebrew), p. 56.

[50] Interview with informant in Israel, January 1994.

[51] Interview with informant in Israel, January 1994.

[52] See Raphael Patai, *Israel Between East and West*, Philadelphia, 1953, *passim*.

[53] Ben-Zadok, op. cit. in Note 21 above, p. 52.

[54] Uriella Solomon, private communication.

[55] Quoted in Saralkar, op. cit. in Note 49 above, p. 57.

[56] See Ernest Krausz, 'Edah and "Ethnic Groups" in Israel' in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 28, no. 1, June 1986, pp. 5–18.

[57] Harvey Goldberg, 'The Changing Meaning of Ethnic Affiliation' in *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, vol. 44, 1987, pp. 45–47, 49–50.

[58] Interview with informant in Israel, February 1994.

SOVIET JEWS IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY: THE REBUILDING OF A COMMUNITY

Madeleine Tress

Background

WHEN the second wave of Jewish emigration from the former Soviet Union began in 1987,[1] the then prime minister of Israel, Yitzhak Shamir, approached North American and Western European officials and pointed out that since these Soviet Jews had exit visas for Israel, he wanted guarantees from Western leaders that refugee status would be denied to these émigrés so that they would have to be resettled in Israel. Owing to the increasing number of asylum requests throughout the 1980s, most members of the European Community were willing to comply; but the Federal Republic of Germany explained that because of its 'historic past', it would not close its borders 'just for Jews from the Soviet Union'.[2] Moreover, both the government of the Republic and the media indicated that the re-establishment of a flourishing Jewish community would be welcome. German Jewish citizens were concerned about their demographic decline, after the losses during the Nazi era, and because of the present low fertility rate, the ageing community, and an accelerating rate of intermarriage — but they did not voice that concern formally, although they believed that the immigration of Soviet Jews would help to rebuild Jewish life in Germany.

There has been so far comparatively little published data on the results of research on Soviet Jewish immigrants in Germany — in contrast to studies of foreign-born residents, such as guest workers, asylum seekers, and repatriated ethnic Germans (*Aussiedler*), and works on xenophobia and right-wing political violence in the country. Bodemann and Ostow have contributed reports on Jews in contemporary Germany for the *American Jewish Year Book*, while there have been some published and unpublished results of research projects and also some newspaper and magazine articles in both the United States and Germany, providing mainly anecdotal information.

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I have made use of all these sources available to me as well as of the literature on the resettlement of Soviet Jews in other countries. But the primary data on which the present article is based were collected in Berlin in 1993 in the course of interviews with key informants and with officials, and other members, of the Jewish community of Berlin. I conducted the interviews myself, recorded and transcribed them.

Migration

The Federal Republic of Germany has the greatest number of Soviet Jews permanently resettled in the country, after Israel and the United States (see Table 1). The 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees states that a refugee is an individual with a 'well-founded fear of being persecuted in his country of origin for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion'. The 1980 German Act on Measures for Refugees, strengthened by the 9 January 1991 Bonn Resolutions of the State Minister-Presidents, has distinguished Soviet Jews from other refugees.

TABLE 1. *Soviet-Jewish Immigration to Israel, The United States and The Federal Republic of Germany (By Calendar Year)*

Year	*Israel*	*U.S.A.*	*FRG*
1974	16,816	3,490	N.A.
1975	8,531	5,250	N.A.
1976	7,279	5,512	N.A.
1977	8,348	6,842	N.A.
1978	12,192	12,265	N.A.
1979	17,614	28,794	N.A.
1980	7,570	15,461	N.A.
1981	1,767	6,980	N.A.
1982	731	1,327	N.A.
1983	387	887	N.A.
1984	340	489	N.A.
1985	348	570	N.A.
1986	206	641	N.A.
1987	2,072	3,811	569
1988	2,166	10,576	546
1989	12,172	36,738	568
1990	181,759	31,283	8,513
1991	145,005	34,715	8,000
1992	64,057	45,888	4,000
1993	69,132	35,581	14,759
1994	68,100	32,835	N.A.

Sources: National Conference on Soviet Jewry, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), Central Welfare Board of Jews in Germany, Federal Administrative Bureau (Cologne), World Jewish Congress

Throughout the 1980s, most Soviet Jews came to Germany with visitors' visas and then either applied for asylum under the old Article 16.2.2 of the Basic Law of Germany or acquired residence and work permits through their affiliation with the country's Jewish

communities, as will be shown below. That article stated: 'Persons persecuted on political grounds shall enjoy the right of asylum'. On 1 July 1993, a more restrictive law came into effect; and amendments now allow border police to turn back asylum seekers from Geneva Convention countries, border states, and 'safe' countries. However, because Soviet Jews have not been considered to be individual asylum seekers since the Bonn Resolutions, but are recognized instead as 'quota refugees', these more restrictive measures have had little impact on the acceptance of Soviet Jews. On the other hand, there has been a retrenchment in resettlement benefits.

Following Fix and Passel,[3] I distinguish between immigration and immigrant policy: the Federal government in Bonn determines immigration policy; it has enacted legislation concerning contract labourers, guest workers, asylum seekers, quota refugees, and *Aussiedler* (who are not considered foreigners). But it is the *Länder*, the constituent states of Germany, which decide how immigrants are to be integrated into the German economy and society.

The easing of travel restrictions throughout the Warsaw Pact countries facilitated the emigration of both Soviet Jews and *Aussiedler*. The latter, under Article 116 of the Basic Law, are not considered to be foreigners or immigrants, but as persons entitled to be 'resettled' under a 'right to return' provision; but the number of applicants has recently decreased, partly because of the efforts of the Federal government to offer economic aid and cultural activities to persuade would-be emigrants to remain in their countries of residence (mainly the former Soviet Union, Poland, and Romania). Soviet Jews who wished to settle in Germany represented a minute proportion of the number of total immigrants (that is, individual asylum seekers or *Aussiedler*) to Germany in the late 1980s; but by August 1990, the Federal government was not only advising its Soviet consulates to refuse to process new visa applications by Jews, but was also calling on the East Germans to act similarly.[4] As a result, 10,000 Jews applied during that year as *Aussiedler* at the Moscow embassy and a support committee was established in Frankfurt. Most of these requests, with the exception of spouses of *Aussiedler*, were rejected by the Federal authorities.

During the 1980s, Soviet Jews had also begun to enter the German Democratic Republic (GDR, or 'East Germany') as tourists, hoping that they would be able to seek asylum in West Germany — essentially entering the West through the back door.[5] If the Federal Republic denied entry, then the GDR would guarantee refugee status to these Jews. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Jewish Cultural Association of East Berlin lobbied parliamentarians for legislation that would grant permanent residence rights to Soviet Jews. But when the two Germanies were unified, the Federal government announced that all foreigners living in the former GDR must return to their countries of

TABLE 2. *Asylum-Seekers, Ethnic Germans (Aussiedler) and Soviet Jews Resettling in the FRG*

Year	*Asylum-Seekers*	*Aussiedler*	*USSR Aussiedler*	*Soviet Jews*
1979	N.A.	355,381[a]	7,226	N.A.
1980	107,818	52,071	6,954	N.A.
1981	49,371	69,455	3,773	N.A.
1982	37,423	48,170	2,071	N.A.
1983	19,737	37,925	1,447	N.A.
1984	35,278	36,459	913	N.A.
1985	73,832	38,968	460	N.A.
1986	99,650	42,788	753	N.A.
1987	57,379	78,523	14,488	569
1988	103,076	202,673	47,572	546
1989	121,318	377,055	98,134	568
1990	193,063	397,073	149,950	8,513
1991	256,112[b]	221,995	147,320	8,000
1992[c]	438,191[d]	230,489	195,576	4,000
1993	322,842	218,888	N.A.	14,759
1994	127,210	222,591	ca. 167,000	N.A.

Sources: Central Welfare Board of Jews in Germany, Federal Administrative Bureau (Cologne), German Information Service (New York), *Migration News Sheet* — January 1995, *Deutschland Nachrichten* — 13 January 1995

[a] Includes 1970–79
[b] Includes 5,690 from the former Soviet Union
[c] In 1992, there were also 36,200 de facto refugees from the former Soviet Union living in Germany. These are persons not granted political asylum but who cannot be deported because of the non-refoulement clause in the Geneva Convention.
[d] Includes 10,833 from the former Soviet Union

origin. The Jewish communities of western Germany pleaded for an exception to be made for their co-religionists, who numbered several thousand in the former GDR. Bonn proposed that admission of these émigrés be limited to a thousand each year, stating that Jews were no different from any other non-German ethnic group whose members desire to settle in Germany.[6] The Central Council of Jews in Germany questioned the wisdom of linking Jewish immigrants with the generality of other immigrants; and the Federal government then agreed to honour the status accorded by the GDR.[7]

On 9 January 1991, Chancellor Helmut Kohl and the Minister-Presidents of the sixteen German states (the *Länder*) met in Bonn and agreed that Soviet Jews be admitted on humanitarian grounds as quota refugees, under the provisions of the 22 July 1980 procedural law on refugees, and further decided that all Soviet Jews who had been admitted by the individual *Länder* after 1 June 1990 should be considered retroactively quota refugees. From 15 February 1991, only German consulates in the Soviet Union would accept applications for refugee status; these applications would be dealt with immediately, without any lengthy bureaucratic and legal procedures. Approved applications are forwarded to the Federal Administrative Bureau in Cologne, the agency that deals with the distribution of quota refugees

among the individual states; it sends the applications to the Central Admissions Offices in each state, which always have to approve entry, and provide support, for new arrivals. Refugee allocations are made in proportion to the total population of a particular state. The Cologne bureau then sends the approved applications back to the consulates in the former Soviet Union, which notify the applicants of the conditions attached to the entry permits. The process takes about a year.

Applications for quota refugee status must be made in the former Soviet Union. Those who enter Germany without refugee status must petition the immigration authorities for change upon arrival. The general regulations of the Immigration Act apply both to Jews migrating directly from the former USSR and to secondary migrants, such as those who left Israel during the Gulf War. An extended stay could be obtained only by observing the relevant Immigration Administration proceedings.[8] The ministers of the Interior of the various *Länder* estimated in 1991 that they could collectively absorb up to 10,000 Jewish refugees annually and they decided that the policy would be reviewed if the number of arrivals exceeded that limit.[9] However, the ceiling of 10,000 was never enforced and 'the historical resonance of the potential renewal of German Jewry after all that has happened was hardly mentioned'.[10]

Quota refugee applicants to Germany have to prove their Jewish descent by producing an identity card, a passport, a birth certificate, and other documents which can verify their claim to be Jewish. But German embassies in the successor states have some discretion in interpreting the evidence presented. For example, if the passport lists 'Ukrainian' as nationality but the applicant states that he or she has a Jewish grandparent, the application will generally not be accepted: applicants are considered to be Jewish if they are so entitled by Orthodox Jewish law, the *halakha*, because their mother was Jewish; or according to Soviet law, if either parent was Jewish.[11]

Basic Demographic Characteristics

In 1933, when Hitler came to power, there were approximately 500,000 Jews in Germany; between 1936 and 1939, 330,000 fled; and just before the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, only about 120,000 remained.[12] More than 50 years later, on 31 December 1992, the statistical unit of the Central Welfare Board of Jews in Germany stated that there were 37,498 Jews registered with the various communities in Germany; but the total number has been estimated to be well over 40,000.[13] There are three main groups of Jews in Germany: those who are descended from the immediate pre-war population; displaced persons who found themselves in the country when the Second World War had just ended; and migrants who arrived in later years. Very few survivors of the Holocaust returned to their

original home country: the vast majority went to Israel, the United States, and various other countries. Only about 15 per cent of the present Jewish community in Germany are either Holocaust survivors and their offspring or returning exiles and their offspring, all of whom had been living in both East and West Germany after the Second World War. Displaced persons, numbering about 20,000, have remained in Germany because they found themselves to be there when the Allied troops occupied the country; but they were not former German nationals. The third group, those who migrated in later years, included Israeli economic immigrants who came to Germany during the 1960s and refugees from Warsaw Pact countries, following antisemitic outbreaks there, and lived in both East and West Germany. In that group, there were three waves of Polish Jews (1956, 1969, and 1972); Hungarians in 1956; Czechs in 1968; Romanians throughout the post-war period; and two waves of Soviet Jews, in 1973–82 and from 1987 to the present.[14]

No detailed records exist about these two waves of Soviet migrants in either the Federal or the *Länder* statistics,[15] and neither did East Germany keep such documentation before the Berlin Wall was pulled down in 1989. It is also important to note that the Central Welfare Board of Jews in Germany keeps records of only those émigrés who are registered with Jewish communities and whose Jewish identity is verified according to the principles of Orthodox Jewish law, the *halakha*; but the Federal German authorities include in the quota refugee group not only individuals with only one Jewish parent (father or mother, while in *halakha* a Jew is a person born of a Jewish mother), but also their non-Jewish kinsmen. It has been claimed that about 20 per cent of the quota refugees to Germany, as well as to Israel and the United States, produced forged documents as evidence of Jewish ancestry.[16] It must be added that some Soviet Jews have come to Germany and been accepted, although they had not arrived under the legal categories of refugee or asylum seeker: a contingent was admitted to Berlin in early 1991 as 'tolerated' individuals,[17] which meant that they could remain in the country but had no legal status and no social rights.

In what may be called an unofficial form of reparations for the Nazi persecutions and the Holocaust, all foreign Jews in Germany — even 'tolerated' Jews — are granted special privileges (that is, privileges not accorded to other foreign groups in the country). Proof of registration with a Jewish community in Germany will enable a foreign Jew to obtain a residence permit at once from the immigration authorities and a work permit from the Labour Bureau.

Table 3 shows arrivals and admissions from 1987 to the end of 1993. It can be seen that the numbers rose dramatically in 1989 and 1990, when the Soviet Union liberalised its emigration policies and the Federal Republic treated the Soviet Jews in East Germany as new

migrants. All available figures (from the Central Welfare Board of Jews in Germany as well as the Federal government and other sources) show that the admission of about 25,000 Soviet Jews from 1987 to the end of 1993 has meant a 50 per cent increase in the German Jewish population in the past decade.

TABLE 3. *Soviet-Jewish Arrivals and Admissions to the FRG, 1987–93*

Year	*Central Welfare Board of Jews in Germany*	*Other*	*Federal Administrative Bureau*
1987	569[a]		
1988	546		
1989	568	6,000	
1990	5,000	4,600[b]	8,513[c]
1991	8,000		
1992	4,000[d]		
1993	N.A.		14,759[e]

Sources: *American Jewish Year Book* — 1989–1993 and the Federal Administrative Bureau (Cologne)

[a] Country of origin not stated.
[b] This figure represents the number of Soviet Jews who resided in the German Democratic Republic at the time of unification.
[c] This number represents those who arrived in Germany between 1 June 1990 and 15 February 1991 and were retroactively counted as quota refugees.
[d] The Central Welfare Board reports 12,000 newcomers for 1991 and 1992 combined. It is therefore assumed that approximately 4,000 Soviet Jews registered with the communities in 1992.
[e] This number includes all Soviet Jews who entered as quota refugees between 15 February 1991 and 2 November 1993.

There have been more than 58,000 applications since the beginning of the quota refugee programme; these include arrivals and those in the 'pipeline', that is, individuals granted refugee status who are still in the former USSR. In 1993 it was stated that there was also a backlog of about 7,100 persons who had filed applications and were awaiting approval for refugee status.[18]

Many Jews in the Newly Independent States of the former USSR have applied for immigration visas as an 'insurance policy', but they are aware that they face formidable obstacles before they can leave their native land and come to Germany as legal migrants. Before a Jew can leave the former Soviet Union, there are several hurdles to be overcome: affidavits from relatives, former employers and utilities bureaus stating that there are no outstanding debts. Local police departments must check that the person has no criminal record. But when all documents have been obtained, the hopeful migrant must then pay very large bribes to ratify the verification of all papers and permissions; and bribes must be paid not only to the exit authorities of the Newly Independent States, but also to the authorities of any bordering State and indeed it is claimed that even taxi drivers at train stations and airline workers threaten to delay departure unless they are paid off. For those who pass through the Russian Federation on the way

out, roubles must be purchased at great cost since they may hold only the devalued currency of their native State. These allegations of corruption in the Russian Federation and in the Newly Independent States are consistently made and must be taken seriously. Indeed, the data available in Berlin and Düsseldorf show that most Soviet Jews now living in the Federal Republic of Germany originate from the European republics of the former USSR, with Russia and Ukraine providing the largest percentages, followed by the Baltic States (see Table 4).

TABLE 4. *Soviet Jewish Emigration by Region Republic of Origin (As a Proportion of the Total Arrivals to Berlin and Düsseldorf)*

Region/Republic	*Berlin 1992* %	*Düsseldorf 1992** %
Baltics	8.1	1.1
Belarus	N.A.	3.6
Central Asia	3.5	2.5
Georgia/Caucasus	2.6	1.6
Moldova	2.8	1.4
Russia	29.6	33.7
Ukraine	30.2	31.7
All Others	23.2	24.6

* Reported as of January 1993.
Source: Julius H. Schoeps, *Das Deutschlandbild Jüdischer Einwanderer aus der GUS* — 1993

Berlin

As stated above, it is official policy for Germany to distribute refugees according to regional quotas. However, Berlin and the eastern *Länder* have had more than their theoretical share as a result of cultural and political factors. Soviet Jews look upon Berlin as more 'eastern' and cosmopolitan than other German large cities and indeed Berlin is the centre of Soviet Jewish life in the country.[19] In the *Länder* bordering on Berlin, the Soviet migrants can rejuvenate 'virtually geriatric existing Jewish communities and establish new ones' and they can reclaim former Jewish communal property on behalf of the Jewish communities of the area, lest it fall otherwise into the hands of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization.[20] Many pre-war Jewish communal properties in the former GDR had not been dealt with in restitution agreements. Unless it could be demonstrated that a presently existing Jewish community could use the former property, the Organization would acquire the property. There is also more temporary housing in Berlin than in other parts of the Federal Republic: mainly disbanded army camps and other East German properties.

In October 1993, there were about 10,000 Jews registered with the Berlin Jewish community; only 3,000 of these had lived in the city since

the late 1940s; a total of 6.000 Soviet Jews came to Berlin during the two main waves of immigration. In 1990, the number of Soviet migrants led Berlin's Jewish community to increase from 6,411 to 9,000; most of them were only 'tolerated' individuals, since only 101 of the 14,759 quota refugee migrants until the end of 1993 had been assigned to the *Land* of Berlin by the Federal authorities. Soviet Jews also constitute a disproportionate part of the foreign-born population of the city: although they account for less than one per cent of the foreign-born population in the country, they represent five per cent of the city's foreign-born residents.

Resettlement Services

The *Land* agencies provide the major part of resettlement services to refugees; but the benefits cease one year after arrival. The various Jewish communities in the country provide additional services, with the help of funds raised through the religious tax (*Kirchensteuer*), a tax raised by the government primarily as a voluntary payroll deduction of ten per cent. Jewish communities claim that this religious tax system does not even begin to offset resettlement costs and have requested additional funds from the Federal government.[21]

The procedure for resettling refugees begins with an assessment of the needs of the new arrivals and of their required adaptation to local conditions. Basic essentials such as food, clothing, and shelter are provided and then refugees are encouraged to lead a 'normal' life, with the adults finding employment and the children attending school. Table 5 lists the benefits available; the Soviet Jewish refugees can live in government-run hostels for up to two years and can find adequate medical care: there are several such services which co-exist, from private, to collective, to state-run clinics.

Religious Socialization

In Germany, case management and vocational services are supervised by public agencies; but the Soviet immigrants have brought with them their deep distrust of state-run institutions — even of those run by the Jewish communities. The latter's social workers have frequently reported that they have been offered vodka and hard currency in order to obtain more readily resettlement benefits[22] because the refugees had gathered before coming to Germany that the Jewish community would act as mediator between them and the state authorities. German Jewish communal organizations do serve as agents of the state in explaining general German principles of civil society integration; but they also help to provide religious socialization or Jewish acculturation. With the exception of 'refusniks' such as prominent Zionists who had been denied exit visas to Israel for years (for example, Natan Sharansky and Ida Nudel), there is probably little difference in Jewish background or

TABLE 5. *Refugee Benefits in the Federal Republic of Germany*

Benefit	*How Provided*
Initial housing	Subsidized entirely by state (*Länder*) government; refugee usually placed in special hostel (*Wohnheim*) for refugees and asylum-seekers for up to 2 years after arrival
Permanent housing	Needy eligible for rent assistance; otherwise no subsidy; Jewish communities aid in search
Furniture	Donated by Jewish communities
Initial clothing	Subsidy from state government and donated by Jewish communities
Children's toys	Donated by Jewish communities
Food	Subsidy by state government
Cash assistance	'Social allowance' (*Sozialamt*) from state government, averaging about $325/month/adult and $195/month/child provides basic financial support; Employment Exchange (*Arbeitsamt*) supports refugees through the end of 8 months; thereafter refugees eligible for unemployment benefits (*Arbeitlosenhilfe*)
Medical assistance	Insured under government health plan and released from obligations to pay insurance contributions
Educational services	State-run and Jewish schools available; all schooling subsidized by the state; university or professional schooling available as well
Child care	State government
General case management services	State governments and Jewish communities
Language instruction	German language training (GLT) mandated by state governments for eight months; instruction provided by public agencies, the Jewish communities, and sub-contractees such as the Goethe Institute
General social	In conjunction with GLT
Jewish acculturation	Jewish communities
Employment services	State government and Jewish communities
Employment training	State government, Jewish communities, and/or private sub-contractees
Legal services	Jewish communities

Source: Jeroen Doomernik, 'The migration of Jews from the (former) Soviet Union to Berlin (1990–1992)' — 1993

motivation between most Soviet Jewish émigrés, wherever they are now settled. Their Jewishness in the former Soviet Union had been defined mostly in terms of Soviet state policy and antisemitism. Those in Germany are in the main less interested than their counterparts now in Israel in living a Jewish life.

As a consequence, many refugees are ambivalent about the acculturation programmes to which they are subjected. Acculturation programmes ironically contradict the stated goal of giving arrivals the opportunity of regaining control over their own lives. Some refugees are in conflict with Jewish communal organizations despite their 'segmental assimilation' into the German Jewish communities.[23] Soviet Jews can adapt in one of three ways: acculturate and integrate into German society, to the extent of other Jews; do the opposite, by remaining highly visible and vulnerable foreigners through combined residence in refugee hostels and dependence on the state and private charities for support; or combine rapid progress with deliberate

preservation of the Soviet Jews' values and solidarities by creating a niche similar to that of the Turks in the country.[24] The Jewish communities in Germany prefer the first option. However, the acculturation programmes they offer reflect a paternalistic attitude, contrasting with the government public services which aim to foster independence.[25] The Jewish communal organizations are concerned that increasing numbers of their co-religionists, who have been settled in Germany for some time, are less willing to affiliate formally with the Jewish organizations and they attempt to revitalize their communities with arrivals from the former Soviet Union. Acculturation programmes are aimed to affect whole families — children, parents, and older adults. The migrant children usually attend Jewish day-schools, which are wholly subsidized by the German authorities through the religious tax. The chairman of the Jewish community in Berlin has asserted that the majority of day-school students are refugees.[26]

There are also extra-curricular activities for children: fine, applied, and performing arts opportunities —such as painting, sculpting, and embroidery classes, ballet, Israeli and Jewish folk-dancing, and music lessons, often taught by émigrés. There is an emphasis on physical fitness, with gymnasiums and swimming pools managed by the Jewish organizations. There is little or nothing particularly Jewish in many of these programmes, except that they occur in a Jewish setting and they provide an opportunity for refugees to meet other Jews and through them to become acquainted with other forms of Jewish activities. In larger cities, the Soviet Jews are more likely to learn German in government or other non-Jewish premises; but Jewish organizations tempt the newcomers with acculturation programmes in German language training, as part of the provisions for social integration. Some social workers claim that many newcomers welcome such programmes because they were denied a 'normal' Jewish life in their country of birth; but others point out that the newcomers view religious socialization in much the same way as they did the courses in Marxism-Leninism to which they had been subjected.

A Jewish activist in Berlin commented that 'Judaism in Germany is not fun; it is a burden of the past'; that attitude seems to permeate the level of émigré commitment. Soviet Jews in Germany are much more likely than their counterparts in the United States to be affiliated to Jewish organizations; but they are nevertheless more likely to be interested in recreational and artistic activities which do not have a Jewish content. The newcomers turn to the services provided by their co-religionists for such things as special computer classes, professional advisory groups led by first-wave migrants, science and technical discussion clubs, etc. But, according to one resettlement worker, only about ten per cent of the refugees integrate deliberately into the Jewish community; the large majority seem to prefer to adapt to German civil

society and they are successful in doing so to a greater degree than they would have been by being active members of the Jewish communities in Germany.

Nevertheless, German Jewish communities boast of their success in attracting hundreds of newcomers to celebrations of the major Jewish holidays and festivals; of the Russian divisions of Germany's Keren Hayesod; and the settled émigrés who volunteer to be of assistance to the more recent newcomers. Since there is a disproportionate group of artists and intellectuals, cultural achievements are highlighted. An art gallery was recently opened in eastern Berlin under the auspices of the Jewish Community of Berlin and has featured the work of the émigrés as well as of Jews still living in the former USSR. There is a new theatre company, whose 18 members are immigrants from Russia and Ukraine; it has received assistance from Berlin's Ministry of Culture, several theatrical groups, and from the Jewish community of Berlin.[27]

On the other hand, the communal officials seem reluctant to give more formal power to the newcomers. At present, Jews must be registered with a Jewish community for at least six months before they can vote in communal elections, and according to the president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, some communities are petitioning the Council to change voting eligibility to a five-year residence requirement; they fear that the influx of Soviet Jews will erode their own traditional power base. But in an interview I had with the president, he stated that it would be undemocratic to make such changes and that the communities should be more concerned with facilitating the integration of the newcomers.[28]

Socio-economic Integration

One of the first things which a newcomer to Germany must learn is the German language; that is mandatory and language teaching starts when a migrant arrives, to facilitate entry into the labour force. However, Freinkman and Fijalkowski found in their 1992 study[29] of second-wave Soviet migrants in Berlin that only ten per cent of their sample claimed to understand, speak, read and write German well, after being in the country for three years; about two thirds (63 per cent) stated that they had some knowledge of German but could not make themselves understood. As for gainful occupation, the country's employment exchanges will usually subsidize the cost of professional training or retraining courses. Those wishing to attend university may do so under the Federal Law supporting education, the *Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz*, commonly abbreviated to *Bafög*. However, Schoeps found that only 16.7 per cent of refugees in his sample of respondents in 13 cities were gainfully employed,[30] perhaps because lack of linguistic ability diminishes employment prospects. Furthermore, 80 per cent of individuals active in the labour force

considered themselves to be under-employed.[31] Schoeps noted that among those with no paid employment, more than a third (37.5 per cent) were collecting unemployment benefits, a quarter (25 per cent) were enrolled in German-language courses and receiving initial refugee benefits, ten per cent were in job-retraining programmes, and nine per cent were students.[32]

Doomernik and Freinkman and Fijalkowski[33] found that the refugees were greatly dependent on the black economy (*Schwartzarbeit*); that included import-export business, casino work (changing money for the gambling machines or selling snacks and beverages), and the sale of small consumer goods purchased with government subsidies. In Berlin, according to a 1992 study, 60 per cent of newcomers reported that they were dependent on the black economy for their own economic survival.[34] The remaining Soviet troops in eastern Germany were a lucrative source of trading in various articles. However, with the withdrawal of all Warsaw Pact soldiers, this sector of the informal economy has greatly diminished.

Conclusion

It is difficult to discover whether there are substantial numbers of Soviet Jews in Germany who are not affiliated to the various Jewish communities of the country. These communities have energetically taken part in the efforts to help the émigrés and have endeavoured to heighten their sense of Jewish identity. But it is of course difficult to identify migrants who have entered Germany because they have produced evidence that they were Jewish, and who later made the deliberate decision to distance themselves from their co-religionists. They may have simply joined non-Jews in Germany who are of the same professional or occupational background and established a network of informal friendship with them. It will be interesting to discover in time whether the Soviet Jews who have settled in Germany will continue to develop their own associations, as an ethnic group, distinct from their religious persuasion and not affiliated to indigenous Jewish organizations. The Kurds in Berlin, for example, have established women's groups, youth clubs, language classes, small printing facilities, and neighbourhood cafés.[35] Similar associations are beginning to emerge amongst Soviet Jews, but they remain mostly informal with cafés (particularly the Perestroika café) as the main meeting point.[36] It is too early to determine whether these associations reflect a realization of the Berlin Jewish community's slogan of 'help to self help' or if they are merely a mirror of a civil society and state with an ethnic understanding of membership in a polity (that is, the *völkisch* conception of citizenship),[37] coupled with difficulty in integrating, culturally, politically, and economically.

There is some anecdotal evidence about a burgeoning 'Russian mafia' in Germany, but since there are substantial numbers of former non-Jewish citizens of the Soviet Union settled in Germany, including over 600,000 *Aussiedler*, it is arguable whether 'Russian' organized crime is dominated by Jews.

If integration can be measured by naturalization rates, then Soviet Jews have been successful. The German Information Center[38] reports that nearly 10,000 Soviet Jews from the first wave have become German citizens, after meeting the requirement of legal residency in Germany (from eight to 15 years, depending on the age of the applicant). The second wave of migrants will be eligible for citizenship from 1995 onwards.

Germany, in common with many Western countries, is becoming a post-industrial society; its restructured economy places more emphasis on high technology, whereas many migrants entered the labour force with traditional jobs in manufacturing and industry. The unification of East and West Germany has also taken its toll, with unemployment rates hovering at about nine per cent; these rates are average for Western Europe but they are nevertheless among the highest unemployment figures in the world's leading capitalist economies.

There is a concern that refugees in Germany run the risk of being put in the category of the 'unworthy poor' as a result of increasing activities of nativist and xenophobic movements and the limitations recently imposed on the provision of welfare for legal migrants. Since Soviet Jews live in concentrated geographical areas and in housing usually provided by the *Länder*, they are easily identifiable and therefore more likely to be subjected to right-wing political violence. On the other hand, given the continued instability of the former Soviet Union, we can expect to see more Soviet Jews migrating to Germany in the next few years.

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NOTES

[1] The first wave of emigration began in the early 1970s, peaked in 1979 and ended around 1981. The second wave continues as of this writing (early 1995).

[2] Frank Collins, 'As Soviet Jews Seek Other Destinations, Israel Blocks the Exits', *The Washington Report on Middle Eastern Affairs*, August/September 1991, p. 8.

[3] Michael Fix and Jeffrey S. Passel, *Immigration and Immigrants. Setting the Record Straight*, Washington, D.C. (The Urban Institute), 1994.

[4] Y. Michael Bodemann, 'Federal Republic of Germany' in *American Jewish Year Book*, New York and Philadelphia, 1992, pp. 360–72.

[5] Charles Hoffman, *Gray Dawn: The Jews of Eastern Europe in the Post-Communist Era*, New York, 1992, p. 203.

[6] Andrei S. Markovits and Beth Simone Noveck, *The World Reacts: The Case of West Germany*, Santa Cruz, CA (Board of Politics, University of California), unpublished manuscript, 1992.

[7] David Kantor, '800 Soviet Jews Now in East Germany, Thousands More Applying in Moscow', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency Daily News Bulletin*, 5 September 1990, p. 3.

[8] 'Das Kontingent gilt nur für Juden aus der Sowjetunion', *Allgemeine Jüdische Wochenzeitung*, 21 February 1991, p. 11.

[9] 'Federal Republic of Germany' in U.S. Committee for Refugees, *World Refugee Survey*, Washington, D.C., 1992, pp. 70–72.

[10] Frank Stern, *German Unification and the Question of Antisemitism*, New York (American Jewish Committee, Institute of Human Relations), 1993, p. 5.

[11] *Allgemeine Jüdische Wochenzeitung*, op. cit. in Note 8 above.

[12] Hoffman, op. cit. in Note 5 above.

[13] Robin Ostow, 'Federal Republic of Germany' in *American Jewish Year Book*, New York and Philadelphia, 1994, pp. 306–27.

[14] Uri R. Kaufmann, 'Jewish Life in the Federal Republic of Germany' in Uri R. Kaufmann, ed., *Jewish Life in Germany Today*, Bonn, 1994, pp. 9–14.

[15] Jeroen Doomernik, 'The migration of Jews from the (former) Soviet Union to Berlin (1990–1992). Preliminary findings of a research project', paper presented at Neue Mobilitäten Bausteine der europäischen Integration, Berlin, 23–24 April 1993; Julius H. Schoeps, *Das Deutschlandbild Jüdischer Einwanderer aus der GUS: Dokumentation der Ergebnisse einer aktuellen Umfrage zur Prolematik der sozialen Integration und kulturell-religiösen Selbstbehauptung vor dem Hintergrund von Ausländerfeindlichkeit und Antisemitismus*, Duisburg/Potsdam (Salomon Ludwig Steinheim Institute and Moses Mendelssohn Center), 1993.

[16] Doomernik, op. cit. in Note 15 above.

[17] Y. Michal Bodemann and Robin Ostow, 'Federal Republic of Germany' in *American Jewish Year Book*, New York and Philadelphia, 1993, pp. 282–300.

[18] Doomernik, op. cit. in Note 15 above.

[19] Michael Brenner, 'Jewish Life and Jewish Culture in Berlin After 1945' in Uri R. Kaufmann, ed., op. cit. in Note 14 above, pp. 15–26.

[20] Bodemann and Ostow, op. cit. in Note 17 above.

[21] Bodemann, op. cit. in Note 4 above.

[22] Doomernik, op. cit. in Note 15 above.

[23] Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou, in 'Should Immigrants Assimilate?', *The Public Interest*, no. 116, 1994, pp. 18–33, use this term to define the process immigrants undergo in the United States. However, given the increasing heterogeneity of German civil society and its ethnicization of politics, 'segmental assimilation' can equally apply to Germany.

[24] Joachen Blaschke, 'Refugees and Turkish Migrants in West Berlin' in Danièle Joly and Robin Cohen, eds., *Reluctant Hosts: Europe and its Refugees*, Brookfield, VT, 1980, pp. 86–103.

[25] Steven J. Gold, 'Dependency, Stigma and the Structure of Refugee Resettlement', paper presented at the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, August 1989; Steven J. Gold, *Refugee Communities. A Comparative Field Study*, Newbury Park, CA, 1992; and Steven J. Gold, 'Soviet Jews in the United States' in *American Jewish Year Book*, New York and Philadelphia, 1994, pp. 3–57.

[26] Personal interview with Jerzy Kanal, 27 September 1993, Berlin.

[27] 'Jüdisches Theater Berlin eröffnet', *Deutschland Nachrichten* (German Information Center, New York), 18 February 1994, p. 7.

[28] Personal interview with Ignatz Bubis, 29 September 1993, Berlin.

[29] Nelli Freinkman and Jürgen Fijalkowski, *Jüdische Emigranten aus den Ländern der ehemaligen Sowjetunion, die zwischen 1990 und 1992 eingereist sind in Berlin leben — eine Studie über Besuchs-, Zeitarbeits- und Niederlassungsinteressenten*, Berlin (Immigration Committee of the Berlin Senate/Free University of Berlin: Institute on Migratory Workers, Refugee Movements and Minority Policy), unpublished manuscript, November 1992.

[30] Schoeps, op. cit. in Note 15 above.

[31] Freinkman and Fijalkowski, op. cit. in Note 29 above.

[32] Schoeps, op. cit. in Note 15 above.

[33] Doomernik, op. cit. in Note 15 above; Freinkman and Fijalkowski, op. cit. in Note 29 above.

[34] Freinkman and Fijalkowski, op. cit. in Note 29 above.

[35] Blaschke, op. cit. in Note 24 above.

[36] Freinkman and Fijalkowski, op. cit. in Note 29 above.

[37] Thomas Faist, 'How to Define a Foreigner? The Symbolic Politics of Immigration in the German Partisan Discourse, 1978–1993', *West European Politics* vol. 17, 1994, pp. 50–71.

[38] *Focus on. Foreigners in Germany: Guest Workers, Asylum-Seekers, Refugees, and Ethnic Germans. Facts and Reflections*, New York (German Information Center), 1991.

NORTH AFRICAN JEWRY

Alain Silvera

(Review Article)

MICHAEL M. LASKIER, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century: The Jews of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria*, xiv+400 pp., New York University Press, New York and London, 1994, $50.00.

ONLY less than a generation or two ago, there were almost a million Jews leading decent and productive lives in the Arab world. Today there are almost none. More than half of these so-called Oriental Jews had lived for centuries in French North Africa; the others were to be found scattered in other parts of what had once been the Ottoman empire: in Egypt, the Fertile Crescent, and Iraq, as well as in Libya and the Yemen. The conditions of their existence under Muslim or colonial rule and the abrupt disappearance of their once thriving communities in the brief space of less than two decades following the passage of the UN General Assembly's resolution to partition Palestine on 29 November 1947 have drawn the attention of many able scholars — although scarcely any, it should be said, from the newly independent Arab countries. Bernard Lewis and Norman A. Stillman, the late Elie Kedourie and Jacob M. Landau, Shmuel Ettinger, Michael Abitbol and others are unaninmous in tracing the decline and fall of Arab Jewry to two general sets of causes, both of them political, although intextricably intertwined with the broader impact of 'modernization' brought about by the region's encounter with the West.

One of these was the collapse of the great colonial empires and the emergence of independent and self-governing Arab states. These new regimes were dominated by ideologies that drastically curtailed the rights of minorities, hitherto entitled to the status of second-class citizens under the Ottoman dispensation of semi-autonomous *millets*, but which were now ruthlessly swept aside in the name of integral nationalism and what one writer has called a new ideological style of politics that swept across the Third World in the wake of decolonization. The other was the creation of the State of Israel, a crucial event in the history of world Jewry; it confronted Middle Eastern and North

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African Jews far more acutely than others living elsewhere in the diaspora with the dilemma of divided loyalties at a time of intense political agitation and national self-assertion. The end result of all this turmoil was to produce the total alienation and massive exodus of vast numbers of people evicted from countries they had long regarded as their traditional homeland.

From a historical perspective, such an outcome is not without its ironies, for the fate of the Jews in the lands of Islam, although certainly not enviable by any standards, had on the whole been far more tolerable than in other parts of the European Galuth. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, European Orientalists — many of whom were themselves Jews of Central and Eastern European origin — had spared no effort to glorify Islam's treatment of its ethnic and religious minorities as an example to be followed by their own contemporaries engaged in the great game of carving up nation-states out of the fragments of the Hapsburg and Romanov empires. The idyllic picture they evoked of a benevolent and pluralistic Islam was eagerly taken up by Arab nationalists to bolster their case against European overlords still clinging to their colonial dependencies. Pointing to Islam's long-standing deference to the rights and privileges bestowed on the People of the Book, the Arabs could argue that independence and self-determination could be safely conceded to Muslims who had never persecuted, or discriminated against, Jews and Christians living in their midst. Such a prospect of peaceful co-existence was rejected only by the Zionists who stood alone in expressing their dissent against such optimism. Their position was both simple and compelling: since the Jews were destined to remain a minority wherever they happened to find themselves, only a state of their own would allow them to retain their identity in a world of emerging sovereign states dedicated to the principle of majority rule.

Michael M. Laskier touches upon many of these themes in his meticulous and impeccably-researched study of the changing fortunes of North African Jewry in the twentieth century. His account of the precipitous collapse of their vanished communities is unabashedly, sometimes stridently, Zionist in its approach — an approach that is directly inspired by the firmly-held Israeli belief that all roads from the Diaspora must inevitably and ineluctably lead to *Eretz Israel*. Here Laskier follows the fashionable orthodoxy — reinforced, it is only fair to add, by the self-image reconstructed by many Israelis from Arab lands in an effort to put together a 'usable past' for themselves — that the Jews of North Africa were largely responsible for bringing about their own misfortunes by failing to see the writing on the wall. But such an interpretation deliberately disregards all other options to emancipation, including, most notably, the steady progress made in the direction of westernization and the almost universal yearning of Francophone

Jews to achieve the status of full-fledged French citizenship under colonial rule. For on the basis of the impressive evidence presented by Laskier himself, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that if only out of force of habit and the pull of tradition, the overwhelming majority of North African Jews were in fact reluctant to emigrate unless they were really obliged to do so. The disproportionate attention accorded to the Zionist crusade to win over the hearts and minds of the Maghrebi Jews contributes only to distorting the real extent and effectiveness of Zionist activity among their communities. Such an interpretation of the course of events is not only historically unwarranted; it also serves to undermine the merits of what is otherwise an interesting and useful discussion of Jewish vulnerability in the face of nationalism. The reader should be warned at the outset that this is a book deliberately conceived and carried out with the single-minded purpose of exalting the heroic role played by clandestine organizations in mobilizing and promoting 'aliya to the Promised Land, but to the exclusion of a much wider range of other Jewish experiences in Arab lands.

The demographic data cited by Laskier on France's vast and varied Maghrebi hinterland are impressive and revealing. As recently as the 1950s, North Africa was the ancestral home of approximately half a million Jews, most of whom had lived there for generations. Almost 300,000 of these dwelt in Morocco; the majority eked out a precarious existence in conditions of abject poverty and moral degradation. Algeria was home to another 135,000 of them, who — by virtue of the *décret* Crémieux promulgated by a Jewish member of the provisional government of the French Republic in 1870 — were classified as French nationals *à part entière* with the same rights and privileges as the European *colons*. The Algerian Jews were more than just protégés of metropolitan France: they formed an integral part of the French *pieds noirs* community and accounted for almost 14 per cent of Algeria's 950,000 white settlers out of a total population of nine million. Tunisia, a French protectorate since 1881, had about 105,000 Jews — representing a diverse Sephardi mix drawn from other parts of the Mediterranean and with a distinct middle-class Levantine flavour of its own. Unlike their Algerian co-religionists, Tunisian Jews could acquire French citizenship only on an individual basis, although 17,000 of them who were able to validate their status as *anciens combattants* or *pupilles de la nation* were accorded citizenship as a matter of right.

A large number of these Maghrebi Jews could trace their ancestry to the indigenous Berbers who antedated the Arab conquests. They were by far the most important single element in Moroccan Jewry, but not in the two other colonies, except for a few remote areas deep in the Saharan *bled*. Designated as lowly *berberiscos* by the Sephardi newcomers, they were concentrated in the *mellahs* of Casablanca, Fez, and Marrakesh, originally founded on the model of the Spanish *juderias*, and

still spoke a Judeo-Berber vernacular which had the effect of setting them further apart from both their Arab neighbours and the more Europeanized Sephardim. The Algerian Jews were almost entirely of Sephardi origin and retained the Judeo-Spanish carried over from their Iberian past but spoken mostly at home. Sephardim also represented the predominant component in Tunisian Jewry, but since most of them had settled there by way of Livorno, they preferred to speak Italian, the *lingua franca* of the commercial Mediterranean world; they were also more cosmopolitan in character, with family links with the Jews of Egypt, where many of them had emigrated in search of better opportunities. Algerian Jews, educated in *lycées* and *écoles communales*, had adopted French as their mother tongue and frowned upon the Tunisians for being too *baladi* (native) in their speech and habits. In Tunis, only the prestigious *lycée* Carnot — part of the *Mission Laïque* with many other offshoots in the French Levant — could provide its graduates, more than half of whom were Jews, with an opportunity to rise above their station, broaden their social and economic horizons, and aspire to reach the level of full-fledged *évolués* along European lines. But even their less gallicized kinsmen, living on the fringes of society in the *harat el-yahud* of Sfax or Sousse, were slowly but surely being offered a fair chance to become, if not *évolués*, then at least *apirants* to the blessings of French culture. This expanding receptivity to Western acculturation was almost entirely the achievement of the Alliance Israélite Universelle spreading its network of primary and secondary schools throughout the Arab world. Far more impressive were the inroads made by the Alliance Israélite in breaching the walls of the Moroccan *mellahs*, these ghetto-like quarters set up to segregate and isolate both rural and urban Jews from the rest of the inhabitants. By the outbreak of the Second World War, fully a third of Morocco's Jewish children had thereby received access to French education. Many foreign observers drew attention to the pervasive self-delusion which kept the Jews apart from the Muslims' national yearnings and political agitation. But most of them, not unlike their co-religionists in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East, still stood at a slight angle to the world and remained oblivious to the nationalist rumblings around them.

Laskier has elected to overlook much of this social and cultural dimension and to concentrate instead on the political divisions between assimilationists and the champions of emigration, first to Palestine, then to Israel, in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. After a perfunctory chapter on the painful setbacks suffered under Vichy rule, he devotes the bulk of his book to a vivid and lively account of how the Jews were forced into exile as a result of circumstances which were entirely beyond their control. The main protagonists of the story are, on the one hand, the community leaders, who had embraced French culture with enthusiasm and still looked to France for guidance

and inspiration despite the shameful record of the Pétain years; and, on the other, the emissaries sent by the Jewish Agency or the Mossad who, both overtly and covertly, preached a policy of emigration to Israel as the only way to save the Jews from expulsion. The saga of the Maghrebi Jews who chose to cast their lot with the French as the only way to assert their separate identity is only dimly perceived by Laskier as he relentlessly drives home the point that the path of integration was a snare and a delusion. A more careful and balanced examination of their interaction with the rising nationalist elites (the Istiqlal, the Néo-Destour, and the FLN) as well as of their ambiguous relations with the other European elements, would also have given the book a richer texture and relevance, only dimly conveyed by his painstaking interviews with former members of the communities. But this is offset by relating their predicament to the more immediate needs of the new State of Israel as it moved along the road to independence. Written with a careful attention to detail and based on a variety of printed and archival sources supplemented by many eye-witness accounts which help to recreate the flavour of a period still within the living memory of many, this book can be recommended as a valuable but one-sided contribution to the literature on the subject.

BOOK REVIEWS

EFRAIM BEN-ZADOK, *Local Communities and the Israeli Polity*, xvi+ 285 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1993, $19.95.

In democracies where political participation and individual rights and obligations are dominant as ideals if not as facts, central government appears to be remote and profoundly unresponsive to individual needs. However, the demands on government are contradictory: on the one hand, requests are made for the targeting of aid to individuals or to specific regions; on the other hand, governments are lambasted for their encroachment on — even violation of — the democratic rights of citizens through the bureaucratization and standardization of much of social and economic life.

Israel with its democratic values and free institutions is no less affected by a general disillusionment with government. Indeed, in his introduction to this collection of readings, Professor Ben-Zadok argues that the scope and intrusive nature of government in Israel makes that country one of the most centralized and government-dominated in the democratic world. While once there was a need for strong government to create and maintain a viable state in the face of Arab hostility, administrations of the right and of the left have failed to acknowledge change and to respond to an increasingly complex economy and an electorate equally complex in its cultural and political diversity.

Professor Ben-Zadok claims to offer a new departure from the usual academic analysis which trawls the all-too familiar areas of the secular/religious conflict or the Sephardi/Ashkenazi divide in order to explain Israeli political behaviour; he argues that there is a more potent force than ethnicity or class which threatens to divide and ultimately fragment Israeli society. The focus of the book is upon the relationship between the regional and the local distribution of population and the consequences it has for the political system. An immediate question arises regarding the practicability of using indicators such as region or locality in so small a country as Israel; Ben-Zadok is aware of this and he suggests that we consider instead a concept which he calls a 'spatial sector'. This term encapsulates a physical location where contiguity combines with shared values to separate a segment from the general population in order to delineate an easily identifiable sub-group. Thus it is possible to consider in the same category ultra-orthodox Jews congregating in some urban areas as well as the more clearly demarcated (and demographically visible) Israeli Arabs living in villages in Northern Israel.

The idea of explaining social conflict in terms of political geography is valid but the empirical research upon which each separate chapter in this book is based does not suggest that using the 'spatial sector' concept is more useful, more enlightening, and essentially different from the insights offered by interest-group theory. There seems to be little connection between Professor Ben-Zadok's theoretical concerns expressed in a rather convoluted introduction and the subsequent chapters. Indeed, the readings are grouped under the familiar headings of 'The Arab-Jewish Cleavage', 'The Ethnic-Class cleavage', 'Religious-Secular', 'Left-Right', and are descriptive in their approach. The editor's introduction draws a picture of Israeli society about to fragment under the weight of social and political conflict engendered by frustration with an ever intrusive central government, protected by an impenetrable bureaucracy and indifferent to the legitimate demands of individuals or groups. The ensuing chapters refute this. Thus the chapter on the Gush Emunim by Dr Giora Goldberg charts the evolution of this militant group from a vociferous social movement to an interest group; its demands are practical and instrumentally oriented and they are conducted well within the bounds of democratic procedure. The slow demise of the kibbutzim has not drawn bitter ideological fire on the left of the political spectrum; the farming collectives have become an interest group, one among many competing for government favours, as Dr Neal Sherman points out. Ben-Zadok raises the spectre of some sort of home rule for the ultra-orthodox if their power increases. However, the results of the 1992 general election surely indicate a revulsion by Israeli society in general against the political practices of the religious community.

Only in the case of the chapters on the West Bank (by Professor Donna Robinson Divine) and on the Israeli Arabs (by Dr Majid Al-Haj), do social values and geography coincide to lend substance to the term 'spatial sector'. They are indeed apart from mainstream Israeli society geographically and in the case of the Arabs in the occupied territories, fundamentally opposed to the centralized rule of the Israeli government and the society in which it functions. Both sectors, however, are victims of the Arab-Israeli conflict and that long dispute itself has been used as a lever in the superpower rivalry between the United States and the former Soviet Union. It is important to note that much of the research published in this book concerns Israel in the 1970s and 1980s. A Labour government headed by Mr Rabin is not anticipated and the idea of a peace agreement between the Arabs and the Israelis — let alone its implementation — lies outside the imagination of the contributors. They are tied to the analysis of a political system dominated by a Likud administration obsessively irredentist in its attitude towards the territories, whilst overly casual in its handling of the economy and social problems. However, it is good to see the

Israeli Arabs and the Palestinians treated as valid political actors with their own agendas. The most interesting research in the future must surely be in the area of Israeli-Arab relationships within the Jewish State and the desire and ability of future governments to integrate fully these Israeli citizens into Israeli society.

Although there is a passing reference to the cross-pressures exerted on individuals by membership in more than one social category, conflict and fragmentation within the political system is emphasized to the neglect of powerful institutions within Israeli society which modify behaviour and change attitudes towards membership of primary groups. The overt role of the army and national service as a mechanism of social integration is never raised. Conflict in abundance exists within Israeli society, but conflict and dispute are endemic in any political system that claims to be free, open, and democratic. The reasons that underlie the cleavages in Israeli society are complex but this book does not make a persuasive argument for focusing upon spatial distance and exclusive ideologies as key factors.

If the Israeli electorate feels itself to be excluded from important decision-making at the centre of government, the remedy surely lies in the reform of the electoral system and not in the granting of autonomy to disaffected groups rather in the style of the old Ottoman Empire. The problem with Israel's electoral system is familiar to all informed readers: pure proportional representation with a low threshold for participation and the election of individual MKs (members of the Knesset) dependent on the party lists rather than upon the choice of the electorate voting in constituencies. The wooing of particularistic interest groups masquerading as political parties by the larger parties in order to tempt them into supporting a coalition government promotes an atmosphere of cynicism and staleness because successive administrations have always managed to produce the same faces advocating the same policies.

The results of the 1992 election, however, may come to represent a watershed in Israeli national politics. Mr Rabin has assured the President that the next election will be fought under a new set of rules. Indeed, the previous Knesset finally passed a bill providing for the direct election of the Prime Minister in 1996. A direct vote for the Prime Minister will shift the balance of power between the incumbent and the Knesset, but it will not necessarily make that institution more responsive to the electorate. The old guard of Israeli politics is disappearing even if two septuagenarians are at the helm today and there are many able young MKs across the political spectrum who advocate change. But Mr Rabin needs a broad consensus of public opinion in order to negotiate and carry through difficult and controversial decisions. Any significant change in the electoral system must therefore wait until the peace process becomes an established fact of life for the region. Only

then will it be possible to engage in the difficult internal processes of electoral reform.

DAVID CAPITANCHIK

MOSHE DAVIS and MEIR HOVAV, eds., *The Living Testify* (adapted from the Hebrew by Moshe Kohn), vi+120 pp., Gefen Publishing House (P.O.B. 6056, Jerusalem 91060) and available from Gefen Books (12 New Street, Hewlet, N.Y., U.S.A. 11557), Jerusalem, 1994, n.p.

This book commemorates 'the Hungarian Shoah and Redemption of the Spared Remnant'. One of the editors, Professor Moshe Davis, tells us that he and his wife and young children were guests, on the occasion of Rosh Hashanah in 1950, of the builders of Nir Galim. It is an agricultural settlement near Ashdod, which now numbers about 400 persons and is affiliated to the Iggud Hamoshavim of the Hapoel Hamizrahi Religious Labour Movement. After Professor Davis came with his family on aliyah in 1959, Nir Galim became their second home and he and his wife are 'honorary members' of Nir Galim. In his introductory chapter, he recounts movingly how he eventually persuaded the survivors to speak about their experiences, with the help of Yad Vashem staff. Shraga Shemer, who had suffered barbaric punishments as a teenager conscripted into a labour unit, states that if it were not for Moshe Davis's 'devotion to this undertaking and his contribution to both the concept and the implementation, this book would never have seen the light of day' (p. 106).

The core group of Nir Galim had lived in eastern and north-eastern Hungary until the deportations to the camps in the spring of 1944. The present volume is an English adaptation of a book published in Hebrew in 1990 (and reprinted several times), recording extracts from 46 individual testimonies. An archive has been established in the settlement. The book under review is handsomely designed and produced. In each case, the survivor's date of birth is generally given, followed by a terse summary of the periods spent in detention camps, forced labour camps, concentration camps, and death marches, until liberation in 1945 by the Allied troops. The end of the war was not the end of the serious obstacles to overcome in order to leave Europe and settle in Eretz Yisrael. Some were not allowed to leave Hungary by the authorities, while several of those who did manage to sail for Palestine before 1948 were refused permission to land and were interned in Cyprus.

There is a photograph of each of the 46 survivors and the names of the spouse, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren are given. The extracts from the testimonies make very grim reading. At the end of the war, the survivors were still in their teens or early twenties, and had been subjected to appalling indignities and cruelties.

However, there is the occasional glimpse of humanity. Hannah, born in Hungary in 1930, was deported to Auschwitz and later sent to Germany to work in a factory making airplane spare parts. She states that both the foreman and his secretary were kind to her. The secretary 'wore a swastika on her chest, and she had a son serving in the SS, yet she was very good to me. Every morning, when I rinsed her coffee cup, I knew she had saved a thin slice of bread for me. She gave me an extra undergarment so I should be warm. And the foreman always gave me a smile' (p. 14).

There is the testimony of twin sisters who were victims of Dr Mengele's infamous experiments; after liberation, they went back to Hungary, joined a Zionist training camp in Budapest, and came to what was Palestine in 1947. They both married and both have had children and numerous grandchildren.

Another survivor, born in 1930, found that her father was in another part of the camp and he was able to send her messages, in which he stressed again and again, 'You must remain alive'. In one note, he wrote: 'The One-on-High has a great account to settle with us; who are we to argue with him?' and she comments: 'I have often wondered how a Jew going through all that could still be so full of faith'. He was shot in October 1944 and she managed to survive a death march in 1945 and a severe attack of typhus and asserts: '... if not for Papa's command I would never have been able to go on that march, wrapped in a blanket, stepping on corpses along the route. His command impelled me to go on living. There is one thing I would like very much to do: go back to Auschwitz, to the place where Papa died, and shout: "Papa, I remained alive!"' (p. 97). She has, moreover, married, and had four children, and 22 grandchildren.

JUDITH FREEDMAN

RELA M. GEFFEN, ed., *Celebration and Renewal: Rites of Passage in Judaism*, x+278 pp., The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia and Jerusalem, 1993, $19.95 (hardback, $34.95).

This volume of ten essays, organized and introduced by Rela M. Geffen, professor of sociology at Gratz College in Philadelphia, sets out to present a comprehensive survey of Jewish perspectives on the life-cycle. The traditionally acknowledged rites such as birth, bar mitzvah, marriage and divorce, conversion, death and mourning, are of course covered. In addition, 'parenting', sickness, and aging evoke skilful reworking of traditional sources to exhibit the implied structures through which tradition gives meaning to these events, and Barry D. Cytron breaks new ground by exploring rabbinic literature to reveal a concept of 'mid-life'. The volume is informative on the range of current Jewish practice across the denominations. Differences between

Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist with regard to bar/bat mitzvah, confirmation, marriage, and conversion are clearly stated and well documented. Irwin Haut's brief essay on divorce — 'The Altar Weeps' — is an excellent summary of the halakhic issues and the ways in which they have been addressed from the rabbinic period to the present day.

One unfortunate consequence of the sociological approach is the disappearance of priorities determined by other agendas. David Novak, for instance, in his perceptive and scholarly essay on birth, is compelled to devote the same attention to trivia — such as why Sephardim sometimes call their children Clement — as he does to major issues such as contraception, abortion, and adoption. Daniel H. Gordis contributes a well-informed and sensitive essay on marriage, which he aptly refers to as 'Judaism's "Other" Covenantal Relationship', but the sociological agenda constrains him, when writing about the wedding preparations (p. 101), to equate the significance of *mikveh* for brides with the custom (neither widespread nor halakhically mandated) of visiting the graves of the couple's parents.

The book suffers from an apologetic tone. Criticism of Jewish sources occurs, but is muted. For instance, Steven Brown tells us (p. 35) that 'perhaps the greatest source of advice for parents in traditional Judaism is the *Shulhan Arukh*, the code of Jewish law compiled by Joseph Caro in the sixteenth century'. He then cites, as if it is from the Shulhan Arukh, a passage which is not in that work at all, but from a nineteenth-century code by Solomon Ganzfried, and even then mistranslates 'It is the duty of fathers to train their children' as 'it is the duty of parents...'. The passage, moreover, would certainly strike a modern reader as oppressive, sexist, and violent. For instance, fathers are to 'guard their children from every forbidden act' and if this is not achieved with words they should 'chastise them with a rod'. What Ganzfried meant, translated into politically correct American sociological jargon, is that the dominant male in the family should repress, by violent means if necessary, the striving for self-expression of members of his family; whether it is meaningful to them or not, they must be compelled to abide by all the requirements of the halakha. Instead of stating this clearly and rejecting it, Brown reads current sociology into it; it means that 'parents are responsible for the overall education of their children.... They are charged to recognize the needs and abilities of each child ... there is a clear concern lest physical means of control become abuse...'. Well, yes, those general principles are indicated, but there is a world of difference between the way Ganzfried and Brown respectively apply them.

Then there is the great hijack syndrome, by which texts which once served God now serve political correctness. A well-known Midrash tells how Abraham, at the age of 13, smashed his father's idols. 'What an

endorsement of adolescent rebellion!' gleefully exclaim Melvin and Shoshana Silberman (p. 59). No, dear friends. *You* may endorse adolescent rebellion; the Midrash — utterly 'judgmental' — pours scorn on idolatry and praises young Abram for his recognition of the Truth.

Clearly, there is a conflict between traditional Judaism and modern American liberal values, at its most acute with regard to intermarriage and the equality of the sexes. Gordis articulates this: 'In liberal Conservative and Reform communities, the concern is less for the strict requirements of Jewish law than for egalitarian treatment of men and women' (p. 111). The defining agenda of 'Rites of Passage' somewhat distorts Judaism, whose own agenda is dictated by the *mitzvot* as rituals of transformation. This of course includes rites of passage, but also much else such as *kashrut* and the observance of sacred times, not treated in the volume.

This book would make an excellent foundation for an adult education class on the Jewish life-cycle. It is readable, informative, raises all the right questions, has excellent bibliographies, and is relatively free from dogma (other than sociological). The strictly orthodox may be uncomfortable with its inter-denominational balance; others will prize this as a virtue.

NORMAN SOLOMON

YOSSI KATZ, *The Business of Settlement: Private Entrepreneurship in the Jewish Settlement of Palestine, 1900–1914*, 367pp., The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (distributed by the Bar-Ilan University Press, Ramat-Gan), 1994, $35.00.

Professor Katz has set himself the task of balancing the usual concentration in studies of Jewish settlement in Palestine, at the time of the Second Aliyah, upon collective endeavour under Zionist sponsorship with its significance for the history of the Labour movement, by looking at the efforts at settlement made by using the spur of private enterprise common in the history of European overseas settlement with which he is also familiar.

Two books (in Hebrew) on this subject have appeared from his pen; the present handsomely-produced volume — with maps, tables, and photographs to illustrate the text — is an English (not very elegant) version of his writings. In view of the difficulties which had to be overcome, the degree of success in the endeavours at settlement was remarkable — and there might have been even more achievements, had it not been for the onset of the First World War. As it was, these efforts created seven new agricultural settlements, five plantation centres, and seven neighbourhoods which later became parts of cities — including the nucleus of Tel Aviv, a distant offspring of Ebenezer Howard's idea of a 'garden city'. In all, immigrants contributed some

22,000 persons to the growth of Palestine's Jewish population between the beginning of the century and 1914. The 'Hebrew workers' were about 1,300 all told, while the remainder were the products of the process which Yossi Katz describes. Some readers may find this a very long book to deal with the fortunes of some 20,000 individuals; this is partly due to the detail into which the author finds it necessary to go, and partly to a degree of repetition: each chapter is summarised and there is a summary of the whole work at the end. But it cannot be denied that he has added a vital ingredient to our knowledge of the early Yishuv.

Professor Katz is fully aware of the historical and legal, as well as the economic, background to his story which takes one not only across the length and breadth of Palestine but also to Odessa, Moscow, Warsaw, Bialystok, New York, St Louis, and Winnipeg. Jews with money had to be found, who would be willing to invest it in Palestine, either with the expectation of eventually making their home there or of securing a dividend from those willing to undergo the physical hardships of settlement — not to speak of the dangers involved. While the various companies and associations formed to make this possible have their counterparts elsewhere, the author is clear that the movement was inspired by more than the hope of material reward; those concerned were ready to accept a smaller margin of potential profit than they could have got from other investments for the sake of contributing to the 'redemption of the land'; what we have is 'national-capitalist settlement'. On the other hand, it is equally true that when private enterprise faltered, the budding national institutions were there to give a helping hand. So too, must one add, was the omnipresent Baron Edmond de Rothschild, always referred to here as 'the Baron', as though there were no other barons.

Some of the detail of the hopes and fears of the period may come as a surprise. For instance, it is clear that there were occasions when a settlement was hurriedly established because of fears that the coveted land would otherwise be the object of colonizing efforts by German Christians: the country was not the Holy Land only of the Jews. Or again, since the Neta'im company was run by nationals of the Ottoman Empire and chartered in Constantinople, it is understandable (if curious) to discover that one of its projects was for settlement in Anatolia as a kind of ultimate way-station to Palestine — a sort of Turkish 'Uganda'. Much of the rest of the story contains elements familiar then and later. It took time to discover what crops the agricultural settlements could most profitably undertake to grow. The available expertise was variable in quality. Jewish labour from Ashkenazi immigrants was expensive, so the commercial argument was in favour of employing Sephardim or Yemenites — or even less palatably for the 'Hebrew workers', Arabs. It was the source of some bitterness

that the need for commercial success might contravene the basic ideology. 'Mixed labour' was only one aspect of the central Arab problem. The land that was bought was from landlords who could prove a legal title: purchases by companies of areas already in Jewish hands made no sense, since that would not contribute to the basic aim of land redemption. The landlords themselves might be absentees, but none of the leaders of the colonizing movement apparently worried about the effect that displacing the fellaheen who worked their lands might have on the future fortunes of the country. Security was sought by planning Jewish settlement in such a way as to produce contiguous blocks — urban as well as rural — and that was believed to be sufficient while the Jews were a small minority. But a forward look, politically speaking, was rarely in evidence, despite the experience of 'clearances' elsewhere. It is somewhat ironic to note that the colonization expert H. Auhagen, who was sent to Palestine in 1912 by the Geulah Committee in Russia to examine purchasing and sales policy, based himself on the settlement of the Posen (Poznan) area by the Germans.

MAX BELOFF

JONATHAN WEBBER, ed., *Jewish Identities in the New Europe*, xix+ 307 pp., published for the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies by The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, London and Washington, 1994, £16.95 (paperback).

The themes of this collection of 24 essays have been persistent features of Jewish life since the Emancipation era of some two centuries ago (or later, in some countries). Can Jewry as an identifiable entity survive in the face of the attractions of modern, secular society? If there is to be a choice between integrating into the life of the majority and maintaining some degree of separate identity, is the former likely to win? And if so, will this necessarily result in the minority's numerical and cultural decline? Clearly, there have been long-term changes: the loss of a Jewish language as a first language, a decline in religious activity, and out-marriage, for example. Yet there have been countervailing forces. External hostility — antisemitism — has hindered full acceptance by host societies and caused Jews to seek solidarity within their own group; and for many, Zionism has taken the place of religion as the main binding force.

But while the general lines of the discussion in this book are not novel, the specific context in which it is set certainly is. No study of modern Jewry can ignore the Holocaust and its consequences, not just for Jewish demographic and geographical patterns — the destruction of so many European communities — but also for Jewish and non-Jewish attitudes. Nor can a study of modern Jewry ignore the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. But the 'new' Europe refers to more

recent changes. The Foreword surprisingly gives a precise date — 1992 — for its coming into existence, the same year when the papers were delivered at a symposium in Oxford, organized by Professors Evyatar Friesel and Robert Wistrich. The main new developments comprised the breakdown of Communism in countries of Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the former Soviet Union, along with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany. There is little dramatically comparable for Western Europe except for the European Union and brief reference is made to the Single European Market (p. 11). It might be said, though, that this is no more than a logical extension of the original Treaty of Rome and the applicability of, say, standardized and uniform market conditions to the subject of the book may not be too apparent. However, individual essays on Western Europe bring out changes specific to particular countries.

In practice, the authors are quite properly ready to look not just at present and very recent experience. Some of the essays indeed take in fairly long historical periods. The contributions are grouped into seven sections: A Changing Europe; Demographic and Sociological Considerations; Hopes and Uncertainties in Religious Trends; Jewish Communities in Former Communist Countries; Jewish Communities in Western Europe; Rethinking Interfaith Relations in a Post-Holocaust World; and Jewish Europe as Seen from Without. Both the Foreword and the Introduction (the latter by the editor) helpfully provide analytical frameworks for the subsequent discussion in terms, for example, of factors internal to Jewish life as well as those external to it. The former include such matters as changes of religious and non-religious association among Jews, or the greater interest in the Diaspora among Zionists. Central to the notion of Jewish identity is: who is included within Jewry? These days, it often goes well beyond the Orthodox definition of a person born to a Jewish mother to include those with more remote connections. External factors include the positive developments in Christian-Jewish relations as well as the incidence of antisemitism and Muslim fundamentalism.

The essays are inevitably a mixed bag. There are general articles surveying the whole scene, such as Max Beloff's 'The Jews of Europe in the Age of a New Völkerwanderung' and Sergio DellaPergola's 'An Overview of the Demographic Trends of European Jewry'. There are chapters based on detailed research providing new data, like Stephen H. Miller's 'Religious Practice and Jewish Identity in a Sample of London Jews'; and there are descriptions and analyses of Jewish experience in individual countries — Western countries like France and Britain, as well as Poland and Hungary in Eastern Europe.

It is made absolutely clear that how Jews have reacted to the various changes and developments described in the book depends to a great extent on the specific national environment in which they live.

Generalizations are therefore difficult to make, apart from the opinions of individual authors. For example, in the section on the post-Holocaust world, Evyatar Friesel's 'The Holocaust as a Factor in Contemporary Jewish Consciousness' considers some of the ways in which Jewish communities are coping with the Holocaust. He refers to two categories: research into the Holocaust (he thinks that not much new will be discovered); and the various ways in which the victims are commemorated. In the latter case, he deplores the recent almost 'uncontrollable' multiplication of shrines such as Holocaust museums — 'Museumania', he calls it. Generally, he worries about the expansion of that teaching of Jewish history which emphasizes death and misery but largely neglects the positive side of Jewish life and culture.

The book is well produced. Unusually, it cites the names of the copy editor and the proof readers.

HAROLD POLLINS

CHRONICLE

The Fall/Winter 1994–95 issue of *Tel Aviv University News* states that some 25,000 students were enrolled for the 1994–95 academic year; they included 5,000 first-year undergraduates and 1,600 new graduate students. The university has also established — as a joint project with Tel Aviv municipality and the Council for Higher Education — the Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo. The aim is to alleviate the shortage of places in the Universities of Israel by providing higher education at the level of a bachelor's degree; more than 400 students were enrolled for the first year of study and it is hoped that there may eventually be a student body of 5,000.

Tel Aviv University now has a new school of architecture. The President of the University said at the opening ceremony: 'It is not our intention to duplicate existing departments of architecture in Israel, but to place the new school firmly within the artistic tradition of the Faculty of Arts'. There will be a multidisciplinary approach to architecture in a five-year course of study combining the principles of functional design, engineering, and culture leading to a bachelor's degree in architecture.

*

Tel Aviv University (T.A.U.) and Nanjing University in China have entered into an agreement for academic co-operation. Two Chinese researchers will come to T.A.U. to specialize in Middle Eastern Studies and Jewish Studies and they would also teach Chinese. T.A.U. has eight Chinese students enrolled in advanced studies. 'According to the agreement, TAU will assist in the development of the Jewish Studies Institute at Nanjing University, which is headed by Professor Xu Xin, who this year published the *Encyclopedia Judaica* in Chinese.'

*

It was stated last January that a German government report showed that there has been a sharp increase in antisemitic attacks in Germany. In 1993, 656 antisemitic incidents were recorded; but in the first nine months of 1994, there were 937. At the end of December 1994, a Jewish cemetery was desecrated in a town of Baden-Wurttemberg and 14 tombstones were overturned.

Last March, it was reported that the German authorities had banned the Free German Workers Party (FAP), one of the largest neo-Nazi factions in the country. The German Minister of the Interior is quoted as stating: 'The FAP resembled in its nature the Nazi Party, revered Nazi leaders, and fostered Nazi rites. It showed contempt for human rights, defamed democratic institutions and spread anti-foreigner and antisemitic hatred'. In 1994, right-wing

extremist violence against foreigners had decreased; but by the end of the year there were 1,147 attacks on Jewish targets.

*

In March 1995, a memorial was unveiled in Berlin to commemorate the 1933 Nazi bonfire of 20,000 books by Jewish, left-wing, and foreign authors who were deemed to be 'decadent'. The memorial was designed by an Israeli sculptor; it is an underground library room, with empty white bookshelves, and it can be seen by pedestrians through a glass window. It is situated on the square in central Berlin where the book burning occurred more than 60 years ago. The memorial plaque cites the words of the poet Heinrich Heine: 'Where they burn books, in the end they will also burn people'. The books had been taken in 1933 from Humboldt University across the street, from Berlin bookshops, and from private collections.

*

The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has been keeping a record of antisemitic incidents in the United States for 16 years and it stated in February 1995 that 1994 had been the worst year for such manifestations against Jews: more than 2,000 incidents were registered. There were 869 acts of vandalism against Jewish institutions and property; and there was an increase in cases of arson and of attempted arson. The five states with the highest totals of antisemitic incidents were New York (440); New Jersey (237); California (232); Florida (158); and Massachusetts (134). Molotov cocktails were thrown at Jewish communal buildings in Texas and in Georgia; armour-piercing bullets were fired into a synagogue in Eugene, Oregon; and there was cross-burning outside a synagogue in Scottsdale, Arizona.

*

A Jewish radio station and a Jewish weekly in France sponsored a survey carried out by a specialist polling agency. The results were published last February. A thousand persons were interviewed, representing a cross-section of the French adult population. French Jewry totals about 650,000; but 20 per cent of the sample believed that there were more than five million Jews in the country. The total number of Jews in the world is about 13 million; but one-third of the sample believed that the total was more than 50 million. As to the possibility of a Jewish President of France, 60 per cent thought that could happen and 96 per cent were shocked at the desecration of Jewish graves. For 10 per cent, the word 'Jew' has connotations of 'miser' and of 'dirty race'.

*

The January 1995 issue of *Middle Eastern Studies* (vol. 31, no. 1) has an article by P. R. Kumaraswamy entitled 'India's Recognition of Israel, September 1950'. In May 1948, when the State of Israel had been established, 'Nehru acknowledged that his government had received a request from Israel for recognition. According to Israeli documents Shertok's cable to Nehru, who also served as India's Foreign Minister, was sent on 17 May 1948'.

But recognition was repeatedly delayed until 17 September 1950, when an official communiqué stated: 'The Government of India have decided to accord recognition to the Government of Israel'. Nehru is quoted as writing on 1 October 1950 that India delayed 'because of our desire not to offend the sentiments of our friends in the Arab countries'. The author of the article comments: '... by the time India recognized Israel, all the confronting Arab states had formally signed an armistice agreement with Israel, which in a way meant tacit Arab recognition of the Jewish State'.

However, recognition was not followed, as is customary, by the establishment of diplomatic relations. On 23 October 1950, K. P. S. Menon, who was then Ambassador of India in Moscow, wrote to Walter Eytan, director-general of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs: 'I am very sorry that the exchange of Missions between India and Israel has not yet taken place. I hope and trust that it is now only a matter of few weeks. I shall do all I can from this end, as I am really keen that we should establish a Mission in Israel without further delay'. But it was not just a few weeks: it was more than 40 years later, in 1992, that India decided to establish diplomatic relations with Israel.

*

A new Jewish school was opened in 1994 in Warsaw, the first since 1969. In that year, Poland's last Jewish school, in Lodz, was closed by the Communist authorities. There were more than three million Jews in the country before the Second World War but today the country's total Jewish population is estimated to number less than ten thousand. In 1989, a Jewish kindergarten was opened, also in Warsaw.

*

It was reported in September 1994 that in some 80 libraries throughout the former Soviet Union, there are now Jewish books available on a variety of subjects, including Russian Talmuds, Yiddish poetry, Hebrew literature, and information about the State of Israel. The first Jewish library conference was attended by some 70 librarians; it took place in Kishinev. It was sponsored by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which had provided about 250,000 books for libraries in the former Soviet Union, including children's books. It was stated that 'libraries often turned into Jewish centres, offering meeting places for Yiddish clubs, pensioners' groups, theatre performances and poetry readings. In some cities, they even serve as places of worship, as in Kiev for example, where the Reform congregation gathers for Shabbat services in the reading room of one of the city's Jewish libraries'. The participants at the conference had come from many regions, including Moscow, St Petersburg, the Caucasus, and Siberia.

The Jewish municipal library in Kishinev, Moldova, has thousands of books in Yiddish, Hebrew, Rumanian, and Russian, a children's collection, a small theatre, a Jewish museum, and 11 professionally trained librarians. It was officially opened in February 1991 and has been growing in size since: 'the Jewish exodus from Moldova helped. As families left, they unloaded their books at the library'.

*

The *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions* is a publication of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique; its October–December 1994 issue is entitled 'Judaïsme-Israël'. The three articles printed are: 'De l'émancipation à l'intégration: Les transformations du judaïsme français au XIX^{e} siècle' by Martine Cohen; 'Israël: de l'invention de la nation à l'examen de conscience; la morale à l'épreuve du politique' by Régine Azria; and 'Les Haredim en perspective: tendances des sciences sociales des religions en Israël et aperçu bibliographique 1988–1992' by Danielle Stroper-Perez.

*

The Sociological Institute for Community Studies of Bar-Ilan University publishes *Sociological Papers*. Volume 3, no. 4, November 1994, consists of an article by Leo Davids entitled 'Jewish Age and Family Trends in Contemporary Canada'; its 14 pages are a revised version of a paper presented at the Eleventh World Congress of Jewish Studies in June 1994. Volume 3, no. 5, December 1994, prints an article by Avraham Leslau and Mordechai Bar-Lev; it is a much longer paper (57 pages) and is entitled 'Religiosity Among Oriental Youth in Israel'. The authors state (p. 11): 'In this study, two populations of 12th grade pupils were examined: one in State general schools, and the other in State religious educational institutions. In the State general schools, our sample included 1,830 male and female students. . . . In the State religious schools, 5,356 students were examined, totalling 70 per cent of the entire pupil population in the 12th grade classes of State religious institutions'. In the section entitled 'Discussion and Conclusion', they say: 'In this paper we have concerned ourselves with three types of belief: central tenets of faith, belief in the supernatural powers of righteous personages, and belief in life after death. Oriental youth have faith in all three types of belief to a greater degree than do Ashkenazi youth. The reasons for these differences between the two ethnic origin groups vary according to the type of belief. Where the central tenets of faith and belief in life after death are concerned, the strongest influence is family religious background and socio-economic background. Ethnic identification represented a much smaller influence, and was significant only among the females. As for belief in the supernatural powers of religious personages, ethnic identification has a uniquely strong influence'.

*

It was reported last December that Mr Mordechai Ben-Porat, a leading member of the Iraqi community in Israel and a former Member of the Knesset, had stated in an interview: 'Since 1992, 30 Iraqi Jews have left the country and have arrived in the U.K. They received their visas at the British embassy in Amman. Their departure was organised by the Babylonian centre, in close co-operation with the Israeli Foreign Ministry which, in turn, worked together with the Foreign Ministries of Holland and Britain'. Mr Ben-Porat is the head of the Babylonian Heritage Centre, which is based in Tel Aviv. Other Iraqi Jews, who left their native land since 1992, are now living in Holland. There are still small Jewish communities in Baghdad and in Basra; according to Mr Ben-Porat, they live in 'relative comfort' and he added: 'I know from a close source that the head of the Iraqi community meets Saddam Hussein at least once a year'.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Books listed here may be reviewed later)

Abramson, Glenda and Tudor Parfitt, eds., *Jewish Education and Learning* (published in honour of Dr David Patterson on the occasion of his seventieth birthday), with a Foreword by Isaiah Berlin, xvi + 321 pp., Harwood Academic Publishers (for Great Britain: P.O. Box 90, Reading, Berkshire, 1994, n.p.

Bayme, Steven and Gladys Rosen, eds., *The Jewish Family and Jewish Continuity*, xiv + 342 pp., Ktav Publishing House, Hoboken, N.J., 1994, $14.95 (hardback, $29.50).

Belcove-Shalin, Janet S., ed., *New World Hasidim: Ethnographic Studies of Hasidic Jews in America*, with a Foreword by Samuel C. Heilman, xv + 285 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1995, $18.95.

Brym, Robert J. with the assistance of Rozalina Ryvkina and Howard Spier as editor, *The Jews of Moscow, Kiev and Minsk: Identity, Antisemitism, Emigration*, xvi + 142, McMillan in association with the Institute of Jewish Affairs, Houndmills and London, 1994, £35.00.

Dan, Joseph, ed., *BINAH volume 3: Jewish Intellectual History in the Middle Ages*, xiii + 200 pp., published for the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization and for the Open University of Israel by Praeger, Westport, Ct. and London, 1994, £16.95.

Girtler, Roland and Friederike Okladek, *Eine Wiener Jüdin im Chor der Deutschen Wehrmacht. Die Geschichte Einer Rebellin*, 200 pp., J & V Edition Wien, Vienna, 1994, n.p.

Imonti, Felix and Miyoko, *Violent Justice: How Three Assassins Fought to Free Europe's Jews*, 318 pp., Prometheus Books, 59 John Glenn Drive, Amherst, N.Y., 1994, available in Great Britain from Prometheus Books, 10 Crescent View, Loughton, Essex, at £23.00.

Kaplan, Lawrence J. and David Shatz, eds., *Rabbi Abraham Kook and Jewish Spirituality*, xiii + 346 pp., New York University Press, New York and London, 1995, $20.00 (hardback, $55.00).

Kritzman, Lawrence D., ed., *Auschwitz and After: Race, Culture, and "the Jewish Question" in France*, x + 335 pp., Routledge, New York and London, 1995, $14.99 (hardback, $40.00).

Leydesdorff, Selma, *We Lived with Dignity. The Jewish Proletariat of Amsterdam 1900–1940*, translated by Frank Heny, x + 278 pp., Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1994, $39.95.

Polonsky, Antony, Ezra Mendelsohn, and Jerzy Tomaszewski, eds., *Jews in Independent Poland 1918–1939*, Volume Eight of *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, xxi + 457 pp., published for the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies, an associate centre of The Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, by The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, London and Washington, 1994, £39.50 or $59.95.

Schwarzmann, Gina with Evelyn Julia Kent, *The Disappearance of Goldie Rapaport*, xvi + 218 pp., Evelyn Kent Associates, distributed by Gazelle Book Services, Queen Square, Lancaster, 1994, £4.99 (paperback).

Schreiber, Jean-Philippe, *Politique et Religion. Le Consistoire central de Belgique au XIX^e siècle*, preface by Hervé Hasquin, viii + 439 pp., Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles, Brussels, 1995, 1,500 Belgian francs or 277 French francs.

Seltzer, Robert M. and Norman J. Cohen, eds., *The Americanization of the Jews*, xx + 468 pp., New York University Press, New York and London, 1995, $20.00 (hardback, $50.00).

Winawer, H. M., ed., *The Winawer Saga*, 444 pp., London, 1994, available from H. M. Wanawer, 20 Forman House, Frendsbury Road, London SE4 2LB, at £15.00 plus postage.

Wistrich, Robert S., ed. *Terms of Survival. The Jewish World Since 1945*, xvii + 461 pp., Routledge, London, 1995, £50.00.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ROLAND, Joan G.; Ph.D. Professor of History at Pace University, New York City. Chief publications: *Jews in British India: Identity in a Colonial Era*, 1989; and articles and chapters on Indian Jews: in *Jewish Social Studies*, in Thomas Timberg, ed., *Jews in India*, and in Nathan Katz, ed., *Studies of Indian Jewish Identity*.

SILVERA, Alain; Ph.D. Ancien Elève de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure. Professor of History, Bryn Mawr College. Chief publications: *Daniel Halévy and his Times*, 1966; editor of *The End of the Notables*, 1974; 'The French Revolution of May 1968' in *Virginia Quarterly Review*, vol. 47, no. 3, 1971; and 'Egypt and the French Revolution' in *Revue Française de l'Histoire d'Outremer*, vol. 255, no. 2, 1982.

TRESS, Madeleine; Ph.D. Research Associate at the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS). Has written extensively on Soviet Jewish Refugees in the United States and Germany, including: 'Resettling Unattached Soviet Refugees in Small U.S. Communities' in *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, vol. 68, 1992; 'United States Policy Toward Soviet Emigration' in *Migration*, vols. 11–12, 1991; and 'Germany's New "Jewish Question" or German-Jewry's "Russian Question"?' in *New Political Science*, vols. 24–25, 1993.

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Britain joined a list of countries with growing antisemitism
Guardian 22 June 1994

High tech message of hate spreads *Daily Mail* 22 June 1994

The *Report* of the Institute of Jewish Affairs claims that politicians look for the support of racist groups *Corriere della Sera* 16 June 1993

The Institute ... has monitored antisemitism throughout the world since 1941 *The Times* (London) 16 June 1993

Anti-immigration measures nourish antisemitism
Le Monde 17 June 1993

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