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TOWARDS AN INTEGRATION OF NON-ASHKENAZIC JEWISH STUDIES INTO THE PROGRAM OF NORTH AMERICAN REFORM JEWISH RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS: A TEXTBOOK ANALYSIS AND AN EXPERIMENTAL CURRICULUM

By

Bruce D. Greenbaum

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

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Referee, Prof. Samuel K. Joseph

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my two daughters, Liotte and Shira. To Liotte, for helping me keep my priorities straight by insisting on playing Yahtzee games with me on the computer between paragraphs; and to Shira, for arriving into this world in the middle of Chapter II, you both gave me the strength to endure this challenging endeavor.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To Dr. Samuel K. Joseph, who first helped develop the questions which led to this work, and then assisted me in formulating those ideas into a completed thesis, for his patience, his encouragement, and his advice, I will always look to him as my teacher. I thank him.

Recognition must also be given to my Mother and Father, Norm and Diana Greenbaum, who have always supported my decisions. Every child should be blessed with such loving parents.

To my children, they kept me sane through a year of changes and challenges. Liotte's playfulness and Shira's arrival kept everything in perspective.

And finally, I want to thank my wife Susan. Her love and support would have been enough. Her willingness to proofread the entire text and make hundreds of positive suggestions was of unestimable help. This work was only completed because of her.

DIGEST

The goal of this thesis is to demonstrate the need for an integration of non-Ashkenazic Jewish studies into the North American Reform religious schools. Following an overview of Oriental and Sephardic Jewry, a textbook analysis in which 33 religious school texts are reviewed underscores the lack of information being taught to Reform religious school students. Not one of the 33 textbooks examined contained all the criteria needed to minimally teach non-Ashkenazic Jewish studies.

Chapter One, which is an overview of non-Ashkenazic Jewry contains seven sections. Section A defines non-Ashkenazic Jewry. Section B outlines non-Ashkenazic contributors and major non-Ashkenazic contributions to world Jewry. Section C examines the Sephardic population, concentrating heavily on the Inquisition, the expulsion from Spain, and the Marranos. Section D reviews in depth six Oriental Jewish communities in lands ruled by Islamic leaders. The six Oriental Jewish communities in this section are from the countries of Iran, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon (examined as one Jewish community), Turkey, and Yemen. Section E explores the non-Ashkenazic Jewish population in Israel. Section F is an overview of the non-Ashkenazic population found in the United States. The last section describes the relationship between non-Ashkenazic Jewry and Ashkenazic

Jewry. It reveals both the positive and negative issues involved when these two different Jewish communities unite in one country.

Chapter Two containing the textbook analysis, is divided into three sections. The first section explains the reasons for using a textbook analysis. The second section describes how the textbook analysis was used to examine religious school textbooks. It also lists the five criteria determined necessary if a textbook is to be considered useful for non-Ashkenazic Jewish studies. This section also contains the analysis of each of the 33 books reviewed. The last section in this chapter examines the findings resulting from the textbook analysis and clarifies the results through use of graphs. The data gathered shows the lack of material concerning non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

Chapter Three consists of a teacher-in-service and two lesson plans which can be used as examples of how to integrate non-Ashkenazic Jewish studies into the religious schoool classroom. The teacher-in-service is an outline of a two hour workshop given two teachers to help them adjust to adding non-Ashkenazic studies into their weekly lesson plans. The lesson plans, the first for a primary class studying the holiday Purim and the second for an intermediate class learning the life cycle event marriage, serve as paradigms of how to integrate non-Ashkenazic studies into the curriculum. Each lesson plan contains goals,

objectives, and completely outlined activities from which a teacher could instruct. Also included are resources for teachers.

This thesis demonstrates the importance of integrating non-Ashkenazic studies into the classroom and describes how this integration would be possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

One of our primary tasks in the Synagogue is to educate our children. Through education, we hope to instill within our children a sense of pride, a sense of being connected to their Jewish heritage. In our religious schools we teach our students about the history of the Jewish people, the accomplishments and sufferings of our ancestors. A major pedagogical problem is trying to cover that history in an extremely limited period of time.

Our Reform religious schools in North America attempt to teach Jewish history, culture, traditions, modern customs, and often Hebrew as well. Certainly some history, some traditions, a little of everything we try to teach is lost as the teacher attempts to cover such a wide range of material. To improve the education in our religious schools, major revisions have been implemented using various new curricula over the past twenty years. But as I examined the sources used by the students within the classroom setting, one major Jewish subject was almost completely ignored...non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

Through the omission of this major topic, approximately fifty percent of Jewish history, culture and traditions was also omitted. Non-Ashkenazic Jewry was either not mentioned or rarely discussed throughout these textbooks. A large portion of the Jewish people, today a majority

in the State of Israel, was either mentioned in passing, described in one paragraph or totally omitted from the texts. Non- Ashkenazic contributions to world Jewry were not described. Great non-Ashkenazic rabbis and scholars went unmentioned.

Sephardic Jews who developed their own style of poetry, schools of learning, and great scholars, were overlooked. Mention of the Inquisition or the expulsion from Spain might be the only material about this important Jewish population that appeared within the text.

Oriental Jews who were not descendants from Spain or Portugal or had never even met a Jew from the Iberian Peninsula were often incorrectly called Sephardim. Their rich culture, developed over centuries of living in Islamic ruled countries, was described as primitive if mentioned at all. Whether it be ethnocentric authors or simply an oversight, in each textbook non-Ashkenazic Jewry was at best, poorly covered.

This thesis has been constructed to examine this void of material on non-Ashkenazic Jewry and offer examples of how to further improve religious school teaching in Reform congregations in North America.

The first chapter of the thesis is an overview of non-Ashkenazic Judaism. Its purpose is to highlight the important aspects of this segment of the Jewish population. Concentrating on Sephardic Jews and Oriental Jews from

six Islamic ruled countries, it offers only a taste of the wealth non-Ashkenazic Jewry has given to world Jewry. This 'wealth' includes major written contributions, poets, philosophers, doctors, scientists... far too numerous to list. Also included in this overview are statements about non-Ashkenazic Jewish culture, traditions and customs that add to the beauty of Jewish ritual.

The second chapter systematically examines what is presently taught in our religious schools using a textbook analysis. Thirty-three textbooks are evaluated for five criteria which are given as basic requirements needed within a text if it teaches basic information concerning non-Ashkenazic Judaism. This thesis will show that none of the 33 books evaluated contain all five of the criteria. Thus none of these texts which have been commonly used within our religious schools properly cover non-Ashkenazic Judaism.

The final chapter includes a teacher-in-service and two lesson plans to demonstrate how non-Ashkenazic studies can be integrated into our religious school curricula. Both are constructed in a fashion to allow immediate use of the material with a limited amount of preparation. The lesson plans include formulated goals and objectives, lists of activities, and teachers' resources; all of which can serve as paradigms in creating a fully integrated curriculum containing both non-Ashkenazic and Ashkenazic studies.

It is hoped that this thesis gives Reform religious

schools sufficient reason and background information to begin integrating non-Ashkenazic Jewry into the curricula. If it encourages further study of non-Ashkenazic Jewry in North American Reform congregations then it will fulfill its purpose.

Chapter I

Non-Ashkenazic Jewry

A. Defining non-Ashkenazic Judaism

The question, what is a Jew, plagued the Jewish people for centuries. There was a general concern to assure the Jewish identity of the bride and groom before Jewish weddings were performed. With the reestablishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the question of Jewish identity arose when considering the Law of Return.

To aid the process of defining who is a Jew, Jews gave labels to different Jewish populations around the world. In the United States, often the terms Ashkenazic Jewry and Sephardic Jewry are used. There is general agreement that Ashkenazic Jewry are those Jews with Franco-German ancestry.[1]

What is less clear is the identity of Sephardic Jewry. Frequently the term Sephardic Jews is incorrectly used to describe all Jews who are not considered Ashkenazic Jews. More correct would be defining Sephardic Jewry as:

> "the descendants of Jews who lived in the Middle Ages in the Iberian Peninsula, and were expelled from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal a few years later."[2]

Although this description limits the time to 1492 when

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[1]Dr. H. J. Zimmels, Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Their Relations, Differences and Problems as Reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa, (London: Marla Publications, 1976), p. 9.

[2]Raphael Patai, The Vanished Worlds of Jewry, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company Inc., 1980), p. 12.

Jews were expelled from Spain, it does clarify who are Sephardim in our society today.[3] The name 'Sephardim' is derived from the Hebrew term for Spain, 'Sepherad'.

However there are many other Jews who cannot be designated as Ashkenazic or Sephardic. The Jew from the Islamic countries is an example that does not correctly fall under either category. They are more correctly defined as Oriental Jews. Confusion and mixing the groups is the result of the numerous migrations these different Jewish groups experienced. It is difficult to establish the origins of a people who migrated from one country to another every few generations. Records, if they were kept, often were lost. But it is possible to identify the origin of one's identity through one's customs and traditions, from the language used in prayer, and religious observance.

When one realizes that more than half of the present Jewish population is non-Ashkenazic, it is easier to understand the existence of numerous ethnic groups that are non-Ashkenazic. To simplify matters, we will define an ethnic group as:

> "a collectve entity, the members of which share in common: (1) some primordial attributes such as religion, origin or history, language or 'race'; (2) particular sociocultural features; and (3) a consciousness of constituting a group different from others belonging

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[3]Jews were forced to leave Spain prior to the great expulsion in 1492. These people would also be called Sephardic Jews.

to the same setting."[4]

For our purposes, we are most concerned with parts (2) and (3). Although there even will be some questions about the same religion, as when we examine the Marranos, there is virtually no dissension that Sephardic and Oriental Jews are indeed Jewish.

Disagreement arises whether or not the Sephardic and Oriental communities are separate ethnic groups. If one accepts the definition of an ethnic group outlined above, clearly they cannot be considered one ethnic group. Their origins are from two different lands. Their languages differ. Their customs and traditions are often different from each other. An Oriental Jew would not consider himself Sephardic anymore than a Sephardic Jew would call himself Oriental. Although many Jews from the Iberian Peninsula fled to the Oriental countries following their expulsions from Spain and Portugal, they remained Sephardim.

When Ben Zvi was president of Israel, he wrote to the director of the World Jewish Congress stating:

> "The term 'Sephardim and Oriental Jews' calls for a more accurate definition, because it is possible to confuse and to bring under one heading the Jews who have been speaking Ladino for generations and whose origin is to be found in the Pyrenees, and the Oriental Jews who never set foot upon the soil of Spain. The Jews of this latter type, who go by the name of 'Oriental Jews' -it would be more correct to call them Jews from the Moslem countries- do not

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[4]Eliezer Ben-Rafael, The Emergence of Ethnicity: Cultural Groups and Social Conflict in Israel, (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982), p. 21.

speak Ladino and use various Oriental languages such as Arabic, Persian, Aramaic, etc."[5]

Land of origin is not the only difference between the Sephardim and Oriental Jews. The Oriental Jewish community used three languages with a Jewish dialect: Persian, Arabic, and Aramaic. Sephardi Jews had one major language, that being Ladino, and a secondary language, Italian. All these languages, when written by Jews, often used Hebrew script.[6]

Other evidence can be offered to prove the dissimilarities between the two groups. For example, data from a 1970 study concerning the difference in the net rate of reproduction is greater between the Sephardi Jews and the Oriental Jews than the difference between the Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews.[7]

There exists a difference in opinion as to how much influence the Sephardi Jews had on the Oriental Jewish population when they migrated to these Moslem countries following their expulsion from Spain and Portugal. One view holds that when Jews of Spain settled in the Arab lands, they often became absorbed by the existing population. Eventually this led to their losing any Sephardic self-

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[5]Dr. Isaac I. Schwarzbart, Toward Unity Between Sephardim and Ashkenazim: A Survey of World Jewish Congress Organizational Activities to Attain this Goal,) New York: World Jewish Congress Organization Dept., 1954), p. 2.

[6]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, (Connecticut, Greenwood Publishing Corporation, 1970), p. 25.

[7]Ibid., p. 87.

identity. They became 'Arabized' by the local Jews.[8]

The opposing view suggests that when the Sephardic Jews migrated to the Arab lands they brought with them their rich culture, their 'golden age' learning. Instead of losing their identity to 'Arabic ways', they became the leaders in their communities, influencing the lives of the Oriental Jews.

Neither view can be completely accepted or disregarded. When the two groups merged, there had to have been an exchange of cultures flowing both ways. As one writer suggests:

> "Cultural speaking the linguistic triumph of the Castillian tongue was the most significant happening that occurred in the transplanted Hispanic world. Except for pronunciation, liturgical reading matter, marriage contractual customs, procedures followed at the slaughtering house..., the 'Sephardization of the native Jews did not go very far or deep in the transformation of the religion which they all professed."[9]

There can be some disagreement regarding the influence each group had on the other, but certain definite distinctions remain. The Sephardim are the descendants of the Jews who were expelled from Spain and Portugal in the 15th Century and later settled in North Africa, Turkey, Asia Minor, Italy, Southern France, Holland, and England. The Oriental Jewish population who formed the bulk of the Jewish communities in North Africa, the Near East, and South and East Asia

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[8]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems, and Solutions, (New York: Shengold Publishers Inc., 1984), p. 17.

[9]Mair Jose Benardete, Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews, (New York: Sepher-Hermon Press Inc., 1982), p. 64.

are the descendants of Jews from Palestine and Babylonia who settled in what are now the Moslem countries. They arrived to these areas before the destruction of the Second Temple.[10]

When one speaks of Oriental Jewry, it is a 'catch-all' name for Jews from a variety of Moslem countries. Each community has its own unique history, set of customs and traditions. The communities, including Jews of Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece, Italy, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, and Yemen often had Oriental, Sephardic, and even Ashkenazic Jews existing almost side by side. The Jews of each community developed their own practices as they learned from the natives of their host countries.

There are certain generalities that can be made when we examine the history and migration of the Jewish people into the different countries listed above. Since the Jewish people's homeland is only a reality for a short fragment of time during their long existence, it has been necessary for Jews to seek other countries where they could lead safe lives. When Jews settled in a country, they would select a land where they could support their family and live in safety. Unfortunately, the political situation

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[10]World Jewish Congress Organization Department, Remarks on the Sephardic Jews Throughout the World and the Importance of their Revitalization for the Renaissance of the Jewish People, (New York: 1950), p. 1.

often changed, forcing the Jews to either flee from persecution or live in fear.

The longer the Jews lived in these host countries, the greater the differences grew between the various Jewish communities.

> "Political circumstances prevailing in the Middle Ages were responsible for the fact that the Franco German Jews came under the influence of Palestine through Italy as intermediary, while Spanish Jewry was linked mainly through North Africa with Babylonia."[11]

Thus one could logically conclude that much of the different traditions and practices between Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jewry is based on the differences between the Oriental communities of Palestine and Babylonia.

When comparing non-Ashkenazic Jewry with Ashkenazic Jewry, one must be wary not to judge them according to modern Western conditions. Instead it is important to compare what resources they had available to them within their living conditions and how they developed their options.

When we examine the history of the migration of the Jewish people in these lands, we begin to understand these differences. One author suggests that the story of Jacob's sons, the original twelve tribes of Israel which could not get along, was a foreshadowing of the future divisions among the Jewish people.[12] During the time of King Solomon,

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[11]Dr. H. J. Zimmels, Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Their Relations, Differences, and Problems as Reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa, p. 4.

[12]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 15.

Jews emigrated for economic reasons to Yemen, the Arabian Peninsula, Egypt and North Africa. Certainly following the destruction of the First Temple the Jewish people were forced to flee. Many more Jews migrated to Yemen and North Africa. Jewish populations outside of Israel grew over time.

> "By the time of the Roman Empire, the Jews outside of Israel, particularly those in Alexandria and Babylonia, constituted a powerful political entity with almost complete autonomy."[13]

The start of the Christian era began the next great exodus of Jews from Israel. During this period Jews flocked to Italy, Spain and Germany. With these migrations, the beginning of the Oriental, Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities came into existence.

When examining the Oriental community in the earliest stages of the Islamic religion, one finds two major groups. The first group consists of the Persian-speaking Jewish communities of Iran. The second group may be called Arabic Jews. From Iraq to Morocco, numerous Arabic-speaking Jewish communities may be found.[14]

Being a minority in a country during the Middle Ages was often a struggle for survival. For the Jews in countries ruled by Muslims, life was at times easy and rewarding, but most often miserable. Islamic law guaranteed Jews

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[13] Ibid., p. 16.
[14] Bernard Lewis, The Jews of Islam, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 111-112.

the rights to life, property, protection, and the free exercise of their faith. According to the legal documents, Jews only had to pay a special poll tax, the jizya.[15] Although the Arab conquest meant a marked improvement in their legal position compared to the Jew's existence under the Roman Empire, we find that in many periods in the Islamic lands there was a great deal of discrimination against the Jewish people which did cause them much suffering. But one cannot ignore the fact that some Jews did hold public offices under Muslim governments and Jews did become 'Arabized' taking Arabic names and learning the Arabic language.[16]

Jews in the Iberian Peninsula also had periods of greatness mixed with periods of oppression. Shortly after 'the Golden Age of Spain' ending in the 15th century the Jews were forced to leave Spain and escape to a variety of countries in Europe; primarily to the Netherlands, Italy, the Balkans, and to the Ottoman Empire where they were particularly welcome. They settled in Greece, Turkey, Syria, Libya, Palestine, Egypt, and North Africa.[17]

By the 17th Century two types of Sephardic communities evolved. The first was the 'Western Sephardic Jewry' which

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[15]Merlin Swartz, The Position of Jews in Arab Lands Following the Rise of Islam, (Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1970), p. 9-10.

[16]Ibid., p. 14.

[17]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 17.

were Jews who had migrated to the American continent, England, France, Holland, Portugal, Italy and Germany. All of these Jewish communities went through periods of flourishing existence. Most of its members lost their Hispanic heritage but gained other advantages of great validity for contemporary purposes.

The second community was the 'African and East Mediterranean Sephardic Jews' who moved into the Muslim communities. They, unlike the other community, were able to preserve the bulk of their folklore for at least 300 years.[18]

Thus, both the Sephardic and the Oriental Jewish communities experienced times of greatness and times of suffering. As the World Jewish Organization Department suggested in its Remarks on the Sephardic Jews Throughout the World and the Importance of their Revitalization for the Renaissance of the Jewish People in 1950:

> "It was just this climate of oppression and of civil disabilities in which they were forced to live until our day that made these segments of Sephardic Jewry the most enduring and stubborn part of our people."

Therefore, considering the variety of non-Ashkenazic Jewish communities, and the differences between the Oriental and Sephardic communities, the differences between the Ashkenazic Jewish population with the rest of Jewry is not surprising. Since the number of distinctions between Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic Judaism are far too numerous

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[18]Mair Jose Benardete, Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews, p. 110.

to list, below are only a few of the major differences.

One of the first things to stand out is the different pronunciation of Hebrew. Ashkenazic pronunciation developed in Palestine while Sephardic Hebrew speaking developed in Spain. Most likely there was little difference between the two five-hundred years ago, but rather the differences developed over time.[19] Today, Sephardic pronunciation dominates, being the one used and taught in Israel today and in most modern Ashkenazic congregations around the world.

Liturgy is another major difference between Ashkenazic and Sephardic traditions. Some distinctions are as minor as the Sephardim looking down during the Kedusha while the Ashkenazim look up. But there are also major differences such as deciding which Piyyut are read. In a Sephardic prayerbook, while some prayers are original, others are found in the Ashkenazic Siddur.[20] The Reform movement borrowed from both Ashkenazic and non- Ashkenazic traditions in creating their own prayerbook. Many non-Ashkenazic prayers are found in the Gates of Prayer. The Lecha Dodi, recited on Shabbat, is probably the best known non-Ashkenazic prayer.

Other differences include the sequencing of books in the Bible, cantilation practices, methods of exegesis,

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[19]Dr. H. J. Zimmels, Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Their Relations, Differences, and Problems as Reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa, p. 83-84.

[20]Ibid., p. 111.

the Sephardic study of the Palestinian Talmud, and general approach to study. Sephardic practice is to look for the full picture, a more systematic approach, while the Ashkenazim tend to segment and dissect material.[21]

The variety of customs among the Oriental and Sephardic communities also grew richly as they adapted to and adopted from their hosting countries. There was a great divergence in dress and cuisine along with their various education practices and language differences.

In Spain it was tradition that only the head of the household kindled the lights for Chanukah. As a sign of mourning, Sephardic Jews turned their pillows upside down. Only after the Sephardim began the practice of waiting six hours after eating meat before eating dairy products did the Ashkenazim adopt this waiting period.

Sephardim name a child after living relatives whereas Ashkenazim believe this practice to bring bad luck to that relative. The Sephardic tradition permitted a man two wives and allowed girls to declare themselves free from their husbands without a get if they were still minors. No Shadchan existed in the Sephardic world. This job was left to the parents.

During a Sephardic wedding, the groom wears a wreath of olive leaves on his head to serve as a reminder of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple. The person officiating

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[21] Ibid., p. 140-152.

at the ceremony drinks the Kiddish wine with the bride and groom. On the Shabbat before the wedding, a Sephardi groom has a Torah scroll only for him, from which he reads Genesis 24:1-7 describing Isaac's marriage.

During a funeral or while purifying the body, Sephardim blow the Shofar. Also the tombstone is never standing upright but is laid flat.

Non-Ashkenazim Torah scrolls are usually placed in a wood or silver box kept in an upright position at all times. The scroll is not wrapped in a cloth nor placed in an Ark. The scroll is generally shown before reading the portion, not after the portion is completed.

Each community had their own special additional customs. Jews of Aden had the grooms read Megilat Esther since only they had the privilege of cursing Haman and praising Mordecai. Jews of Morocco had all their Shabbat services quietly in their homes in fear of secret police attacking them.[22]

The cuisine generally was very different. Pomegranates were the fruit eaten on Rosh Hashanah. Tradition suggested each pomegranate had 613 seeds (the number of Mitzvot). Chicken which was left over from the Kaporet was the main dish before Yom Kippur services. Oil was used in much of their cooking, especially during the period of Chanukah when it reminded people of the miracle of the oil burning

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[22]David Sitton, Sephardi Communities Today, (Jerusalem: Council of Sephardi and Oriental Communities, 1985) p. 145-165.

for eight days. Dates, which can be found throughout the Mediterranean area, was the main ingredient used to make haroset.[23] From a study of dietary habits of Jews living in Israel, it was found that the lower income Oriental communities had a better overall diet than the poor Ashkenazic community. This was also the situation when comparing the more wealthy Oriental Jew's diet with the wealthy Ashkenazic population. On the whole the diet of the non-Ashkenazic population was closer to the recommended daily requirements. The most successful Ashkenazic group's diet showed a considerable excess in many food types.[24]

Many tenets of Eastern culture found its way into non-Ashkenazic Jewish practices. One could list the general Eastern customs that the Oriental Jews adopted as:

> "1. A greater permeation of everyday life by the aesthetic element.
> 2. An all-pervasive religiosity, including the elements of belief, ritual, and morality.
> 3. A broader outlook on human existence accompanied by a greater detachment from material benefits.
> 4. The primary importance of the extended family as the basic economic and social unit and the subordination of the individual to it.
> 5. The composition of larger social units, not of individuals but of (extended) families."[25]

Thus, the non-Ashkenazic Jew could come from a variety of ethnic groups. He/she could be Oriental or Sephardic.

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[23]"The Sephardim" Keeping Posted, (UAHC Publishers, Jan. 1983), p. 14-15.
[24]Raphael Patai, Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 139.
[25]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 53.

He/she could have lived in almost any country in the world, although if Sephardic, at one point the ancestry would have to be from the Iberian Peninsula. Although practicing Jews, their customs and traditions differ greatly from the Ashkenazic Jewish communities. Today this non-Ashkenazic Jewish community is approximately half of the world's Jewish population. As will be shown below, their contributions and importance to Jewish history cannot be ignored.

B. Non-Ashkenazic Contributions and Contributors

The Sephardic and Oriental Jewish populations and all the many ethnic groups that fall within these titles made numerous contributions to Jewish traditions, practices, and understanding. As one begins to examine the various scholarly works of the great Sephardic and Oriental leaders, it becomes clear that many of the works used today in interpreting the Bible and Talmud come from these great rabbis and scholars. Many of the names are familiar to those who study the traditional text.

These men could be called the pioneers of Hebrew and biblical scholarship in Spain and the Muslim countries. They forged the essential tools and created the materials from which commentaries could later be produced. They incorporated an enormous amount of first rate and original biblical exegesis into their grammars and lexica. From some of their works, such as the works of Ibn Janah, one could possibly construct a line by line commentary to the entire Bible.[26]

Some authors suggest that the teachings in biblical studies and grammar of the Jews from the Iberian Peninsula is unequalled by other Jews. The Sephardi schools were often used as models to be exemplified. Sephardic Jews were the first Jews who took an active part in secular

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[26]R.D. Barnett, The Sephardi Heritage, (New York: KTAV Publishing House Inc., 1971), p. 351.

studies. This occurred following the general Jewish expulsion from Spain. At that time most Jews, like many other peoples, did not recognize the importance of the sciences.[27]

Sephardic Jewry was at one period of time considered the elite among the scholarly society. It was stated that:

> "As long as the momentum of Sephardi cultural-excellence continued, all the important developments in Jewish history were initiated, and all the great achievements attained, by Jews who had been born in Spain or by their descendants. Among these feats can be mentioned the final codification of Jewish law by Joseph Caro; the expansion and popularization of the Kabbala by the mystics of the Safed circle; the most significant advance in philosophy since Maimonides by Baruch Spinoza..."[28]

Thus one begins to realize the advanced studies undertaken and the variety of subjects covered by the Sephardi Jews in the Middle Ages leading into the Enlightenment.

Other writers offer not the Sephardi Jews but the Oriental Jews as being the most advanced, richly contributing to general Jewish heritage. Bernard Lewis puts forth his beliefs, "Of all these Jewish communities (under Islamic influence), the most important by far came to be that of the Ottoman Empire."[29] He supports his statement by emphasizing the importance of the rabbinical responsa within the realm of Jewish sources and specifies those responsa which were

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[27]Dr. H. J. Zimmels, Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Their Relations, Differences, and Problems as Reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa, p. 66.

[28]Raphael Patai, The Vanished Worlds of Jewry, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1980), p. 13.

[29]Bernard Lewis, The Jews of Islam, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 113.

written from a variety of Ottoman cities including Salonika, Istanbul, and Izmir.

If the Jews of the Ottoman Empire were not the greatest contributors to Jewish tradition and knowledge ever, it is possible to argue that they were the most significant Jews of their time. Certainly these Jews had their own Golden period comparable to the Jews of Spain. One can thereby better accept that:

> "The Moslem cultural zenith in the Middle Ages was the time when the Jews in Moslem countries reached the height of their cultural development, culminating in the Golden Age of Hebrew poetry, philosophy and religious literature in Spain, in North Africa, in Egypt, in Baghdad, and in Persia."[30]

The Golden Age goes far beyond the borders of Spain. It was only through the decline of the Arabic culture from the 15th and 16th centuries onward that also marked the decline of Jewish culture in the Moslem countries. It is a mistake to suggest that the Golden Age for Jewry ended with the Expulsion in 1492.

Some specific contributions can be linked only to these Jews of the Sephardic and Oriental communities. The Palestinian Talmud was never neglected by them although it was not used as a resource by the majority of other Jews. The non-Ashkenazim were the first commentators of this important document. The Talmudical college 'Ez Hayyim'

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[30]Daniel J. Elazar, Sephardic Jewry in the United States: A Preliminary Institutional Profile, (Center for Jewish Community Studies, 1978), p. 14.

located in Amsterdam, founded by Saul Morteira in 1637, became famous when its advanced class published their first of many Hebrew Periodicals disclosing their findings on Jewish law.[31]

Jews of these countries contributed to the arts as well as to the law. There existed a talented circle of poets in sixteenth century Salonika and Constantinople. Important printing presses were established throughout the Levant. Also some of the more significant traders and bankers over the last four and a half centuries were non-Ashkenazic Jews.[32]

Although it would be impossible to list all the contributions made or all those who contributed from among the non-Ashkenazic Jewish population to general Jewish learning and culture, one can examine the most significant contributions made by the individuals described below.

As mentioned above, the codification of the law was the forte of the non-Ashkenazic Jews, the last of the codes being the Shulhan Arukh completed by Rabbi Joseph Caro (1488-1575) in Palestine.[33]

Non-Ashkenazic Jewry is responsible for the majority of the material remaining form the Middle Ages. Incunabula,

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[31]Dr. H. J. Zimmels, Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Their Relations, Differences, and Problems as Reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa, p. 64.

[32]Marc D. Angel, Distorted Veiw of the World Sephardic Jewry, (Boston, Mass.: "The Jewish Advocate").

[33]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 15.

printed materials from the 16th Century, is extremely rare. A total of 27 cities are sources of incunabula of which 22 are Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and possibly Turkish.[34] These cities all contained non-Ashkenazic Jewish communities, many of which were involved in the early printing process.

These communities can be credited with far more than just early printed material and Caro's compilation of the Jewish code however. In only the 16th Century the non-Ashkenazic Jews also completed the Bible of Ferrara, published by Abraham Usque. Leon Hebreo wrote his 'Dialogues of Love'. It was the period of the start of mysticism. Financial affairs grew as Don Joseph Nassi demonstrated what one person could do to build a fortune.[35] Throughout the centuries, the non-Ashkenazic Jewish contributions added to all walks of life.

Jewish scholars developed a variety of materials and resources in many non-Ashkenazic Jewish countries. In the Egyptian Jewish community, 70 scholars came together to translate the Bible into Greek. The Greek Bible was originally intended for Hellenized Jews but was used mainly by the Christian population.[36]

Non-Ashkenazic leaders were versatile in their areas of knowledge. Besides the biblical scholars, there were

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[34]Rabbi Mitchell Serels, The Sephardi and Oriental Heritage, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1982), p. 124.
[35]Mair Jose Benardete, Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews, p. 74.
[36]David Sitton, Sephardi Communities Today, p. 84.

physicians, astronomers, mathematicians, mysticists and many other specialists. There were those who were pro-Israel such as Rabbi Yehuda al Kali and Sir Moses Montefiore. There were great philosophers like Rabbi Abraham Ibn Daud, Rabbi Azriel, and Rabbi Meir.[37]

Non-Ashkenazic scholars made many discoveries. Judah ben David Hayyuj (950-1000) was the first to develop the concept of a three letter root in the Hebrew language which he conceived from his Arabic grammar knowledge.[38] Hasdai Ibn Shaprut (925-975) was a physician and a chemist. Samuel Ibn Naghdela (993-1056) with other specialties was also a linguist, a mathematician and a philosopher. Solomon Ibn Gabirol (1021-1069) was a poet and philosopher. Moses Ibn Ezra (1080-1139) was a poet. Judah Halevi (1086-1145) among his many titles was also a poet, a philosopher, and a physician. Abraham Ibn Ezra (1092-1167), another poet, philosopher and physician, was also a grammarian and a Bible commentary writer.[39]

Other great philosophers included Bahya Ibn Paquada (ca. 1050), Rabbi Isaac of Fez (1013-1103), and Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, the RaMBaM (1135-1204). Each of these scholars added not only to Jewish learning, but also greatly increased general knowledge within a variety of sciences. Bahya wrote in Arabic, the language of the people, when he authored

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[37] R. D. Barnett, The Sephardi Heritage, p. 24-25.
[38] Ibid., p. 338.
[39] "The Sephardim", Keeping Posted, p. 3.

The Duties of the Heart. Rabbi Isaac of Fez was the author of a 'revolutionary compendum of Talmudic laws and rulings which was studied in all Jewish communities."[40]

Possibly the greatest mind of all was Maimonides. He was forcibly converted to Islam in his birthplace in Spain, but reverted to Judaism when he was able to flee to the East. His contributions to math, astronomy, medicine, philosophy and Jewish law are only partially reflected in his great works that include the Mishneh Torah and The Guide for the Perplexed. At least one author considered his Mishneh Torah as the "climax of Rabbinic scholarship" among the Sephardim.[41]

Many of these scholars were the product of the great Yeshivas, the tradition of which was started in Spain in Cordova by Hadai Ibn Shaprut in the 10th century. Following him in leading the Yeshivah were such scholars as Rabbi Isaac Ibn Ghiath and Rabbi Ibn Migash. The list of scholars should not appear without also the names of Nachmanides, Rabbi Yona of Gironda, and Rabbi Solomon ben Adreth. Bible scholars included Rabbi David Kimhi, Don Isaac Abravanel, Rabbi Isaac Arama and others.[42]

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[40]Maurice M. Roumani, The Case of the Jews From Arab Countries: A Neglected Issue, (Tel Aviv: World Organization of Jews from Arab Countries, 1978), p. 18.

[41]Dr. H. J. Zimmels, Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Their Relations, Differences, and Problems as Reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa, p. 16.

[42]R. D. Barnett, The Sephardi Heritage, p. 20-22.

As suggested above, many of these scholars were also known for their responsa writing. During the period of the expulsion from Spain and Portugal, few commentaries and responsa appeared, but once the Sephardic Jews settled in Turkey and other Oriental countries, new heights were reached in their writing. For example, Rabbi David Ibn abi Zimra (b. 1479) wrote over 3000 responsa. Although he was born in Spain, much of his work was completed after he had migrated to Alexandria, Cairo, and Safed.[43]

If one examined the codifications completed, one would find the authors were the same non-Ashkenazic scholars listed above. Rabbi Isaac of Fez wrote his Halachot. Maimonides followed with the Mishneh Torah. Rabbi Solomon ben Adreth then completed his work Torat haBayit. After R. Asher moved from Germany to Spain in 1304, and became the Rabbi of Toledo, he wrote Hilchot haRosh. His son then based his work, the Turim, on his father's teachings. R. Joseph Caro, who moved from his homeland in Spain to Safed, then authored his work Bet Yoseph, which was his commentary on the Turim. It also offered his final decisions on law. He could be considered the last of the great non-Ashkenazic codifiers.[44]

Non-Ashkenazic Jewry is generally accepted by Ashkenazim as Jews who have added mostly to the arts of music, dance,

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[43] Ibid., p. 394-396.
[44] Ibid., p. 404-421.

and metal working. It would be a mistake not to add Hebrew poetry to the list of great contributions by the non-Ashkenazic Jewish population. The Oriental group brought to Hebrew many new themes and styles which they borrowed from Arabic, the language of their lands. In fact, some of the great literary works are found originally in Arabic. Moses ben Ezra worked in both Arabic and Hebrew. Both Yehuda haLevi and Maimonides wrote in Hebrew, but when they wished to expound a philosophy, both used Arabic.[45] For those Jews who lived in Muslim countries west of Iran, the Arabic language was not only used by the government and in their literature, but also became the language of their everyday speech. This was the common practice, unlike the Sephardic population who did not accept Spanish as their language but adapted it into Ladino, or the general Ashkenazic populace that created Yiddish as their speaking language.

Non-Ashkenazic Jews authored an abundance of poetry. The great poets, many who are listed above as scholars, included: Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Moses Ibn Ezra, Abraham Ibn Ezra, Yehuda haLevi, Shmuel ha-Nagid, and others. Solomon Alkabetz (1505-1584) wrote Lecha Dodi which is used in Shabbat services today. Non-Ashkenazic contributions in literature continued into the 20th century. Yoseph Hayyim of Iraq (d. 1909) wrote less that 100 years ago

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[45]Bernard Lewis, The Jews of Islam, p. 76.

Ben Ish Hai.[46]

Non-Ashkenazic Jews contributed in many other ways to society. One example would be Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) whose teaching inspired both Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic Jews to study Sephardic practices.[47] One should not overlook the contributions of another non-Ashkenazic Jew, Disraeli, who served as the Prime Minister of England.

Only in the last 50 years has there been a steady decline of contributions from the Jews of the Muslim countries. This has been the result of a massive migration out of the Arab countries since the rebirth of Israel. As one author describes the changes in the Middle East:

> "The withdrawal of the Jews from all Arab countries, and to a lesser extent from the other Muslim lands as well, came about in consequence of the achievement of independence by Israel and by a dozen Arab states. It brought to an end thirteen centuries of Muslim-Jewish coexistence, or more precisely, symbiosis, which had produced the most glorious fruits in all fields of Medieval cultural endeavor."[48]

The Sephardic Jews who migrated to the Muslim countries, and the Oriental Jews who lived in these countries before the Muslim religion came into existence, gave Judaism their own special understanding of the laws, their own interpretations of the Talmud and the Bible. These non-Ashkenazic Jews united the Spanish culture and the Arabic culture with

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[46]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 23.
[47]Dr. H. J. Zimmels, Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Their Relations, Differences, and Problems as Reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa, p. 67.
[48]Raphael Patai, The Vanished Worlds of Jewry, p. 8.

Jewish traditions and customs to create new practices. Only when Israel became a state, and their survival was threatened in the Arabic lands, did the non-Ashkenazic Jews begin to reunite with the various Ashkenazic populations.

C. Sephardim: The Expulsion from Spain and the Marranos

Many a school child can recite the famous line, 'In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue." From that line school teachers begin teaching how Columbus "discovered" America. We know that explorers before Columbus came to America. In Jewish schools our students learn of the expulsion from Spain, also in 1492. This too does not give our students a true picture of the decline of the Jewish people's position in Spain which began even while the 'Golden Age of Spain' allowed many Jews to live in luxury.

One historian states this idea clearly as he explains:

> "There is no hope of ever getting a firm grasp of Judeo-Spanish history unless we reject as too simple the superficial notion that the Sephardic dispersion began the year Columbus discovered America... Jews left Spain on three different occasions."[49]

The notion of one great expulsion leading to one large migration is simply false. There were numerous periods when Jews fled Spain or from one location to another within Spain. Where the Jews settled after their migration, improvements often occurred in the economy. The Jews found themselves welcomed by the authorities of Algiers and other localities. The three major dispersions from Spain were in 1391, 1492, and again at the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries.[50] Still the majority of the original Spanish Jewish populace remained in Spain, although many coverted

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[49]Mair Jose Benardete, Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews, p. 25.

[50]Ibid., p. 26.

or hid their Jewish identity.

The first sizable migration from Spain took place 100 years before the often quoted date of 1492. In 1391 a Jewish emigration from the Iberian Peninsula gave rise to Sephardi communities in Africa, Egypt, and Salonica. This foreshadowed the locations where the Jewish population would settle a century later.[51]

During the period between 1391 and 1492 Jews were often forced to relocate from community to community within Spain. Pressure to separate Jews and Christians was found in official documents. A royal order dated December 28, 1477 authorized the relocation of the Jews to a place, remote from the town of Soria.[52] Many problems followed these inner-state migrations. Often the new location could not accomodate the Jews. One example was when a community of Jews was relocated to the Orense ghetto in 1481. Due to a lack of housing and general crowding, the Jews were forced to move again in 1488.[53] Some communities were forced to move numerous times making settlement an impossibility.

As Jews were persecuted and forced to move from place to place, often losing their wealth and any positions they

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[51] Ibid., p. 27.
[52] Stephen H. Haliczer, 'The Castilian Urban Patriciate and the Jewish Expulsions of 1480-1492", The American Historical Review, Vol. 78, (Virginia: The American Historical Association, 1973). p. 52.
[53] Ibid., p. 53.

had, many Jews chose to convert to save themselves from the suffering and losses. At least one writer suggested that it was this rise of converts, called Conversos, that led to the eventual expulsion. The Christians did not trust the new converts, feared that they were too powerful, and that the Conversos were taking positions away from them. The Conversos, who controlled much of the money and trade, caused jealousy and anger among the general populace.[54] This could be the real reason behind the Inquisition against the converts and the eventual expulsion of the Jews in 1492.

Pressure on Ferdinand and Isabella forced them to issue the infamous document on March 30, 1492 in which the Jews were given three months to depart from Spain. The suggested reasons behind this edict included apostacy and Judaizing. Jews were described as the sworn enemies of Christianity. Clearly the Christians felt threatened by the Jews striving to achieve political unity through the creation of religious harmony.[55] The end result, no matter what reasons were suggested, was a mass emigration of Jews from Spain.

Portugal was often the first country to which the Jews traveled. Upon arrival the Jews were then given a choice to move again or convert. What was originally the

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[54] Ibid., p. 57.
[55] Ibid., p. 36.

Jews of the Iberian Peninsula were now communities of converts in Spain and Portugal, and immigrants in North Africa and the Middle East countries. The largest number of migrating Jews went from Spain to Turkey. Some Jews settled in Italy.

These Jews attempted, and often succeeded, in establishing flourishing communities in Holland, North Africa, Turkey, and later in South America and the United States. Not until the 1920s did Jews begin to return to Spain in numbers. This return continued through World War II as Jews fled from the persecution of the Nazis. Close to eight thousand Jews live in Spain today.[56]

As described above, many individuals chose to convert rather than to leave Spain or suffer anti-Jewish persecution. Many of those who converted certainly accepted Christianity as their religion and forgot their Jewish origin. Many historians suggest the majority of those who converted remained secret Jews, practicing their religion of birth behind closed doors. These 'Conversos' have also been called 'Marranos'.

When examining a variety of historical descriptions of the Marrano people, the answers range from devout Jews forced to hide their religion to devout Catholics that converted from Judaism on their own accord. When discussing a group of people like the Marranos, who numbered into the thousands, it is impossible to put any one label on

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[56]David Sitton, Sephardi Communities Today, p. 198-199.

the group, although it is possible to arrive at certain conclusions about the majority of these people.

Definite statements can be made about these people.

> "They were either Jews who had converted to Christianity or the descendants of these converts. They had first appeared in Spain when large numbers of Jews converted to Christianity following the pogroms of 1391, and the restrictive economic legislation of 1412-1415."[57]

Although historians generally agree to the above statement, there is little agreement among them about the Marranos' true religious beliefs or practices. To clarify the Marranos' 'Jewishness', what follows are the viewpoints of two historians who believe the Marranos should be accepted as non-Ashkenazic Jews and of two historians who believe the Marranos should not be considered as a Jewish ethnic group.

The first historian, Joachim Prinz, in his book entitled The Secret Jews, uses a few examples of the Marranos' Jewishness to prove the people as a whole were secret Jews. If these examples are proven to be correct, then certainly one would have to agree with Prinz that his examples suggest those individual families kept certain ritual Jewish practices alive within their tradition. But this in no way proves that the majority of Marranos were in fact secret Jews.

In one case Prinz describes finding a vase with a secret compartment hidden inside it. Inside the vase he

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[57]Ellis Rivkin, Marrano-Jewish Entrepreneurship and the Ottomon Mercantilist Probe in the Sixteenth Century, (Paper presented at the Third International Congress on Economic History in Munich, West Germany, August 1965), p. 2.

found Jewish ritual objects including Shabbat candlesticks, a kiddish cup, and a havdallah spicebox.[58] This vase was strong evidence that this one family did at one time practice secretly certain Jewish rituals. Prinz further suggests that the Inquisition was final proof of his viewpoint. He offers, if the Marranos were not secretly practicing Judaism, then Ferdinand and Isabella would not have needed to re-establish "the Inquisition to ferret out the new infidels and heretics who had invaded the Church."[59] Prinz estimates the number of Marranos executed to be 30,000. He suspects that approximately 80,000 Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492. These people took almost nothing and went mostly to Portugal. His estimates are that about 10,000 went to North Africa, Italy and Turkey. Another 50,000 he offers, remained and converted.[60] These people were the bulk of the Marranos who kept their Jewishness hidden so they could survive in their homeland.

Prinz does suggest that some Marranos did forget their past Jewish religion. He believes that when anti New-Christian policies and practices arose, wealthier Marranos fled to other countries keeping their Jewishness a secret; but the poorer Marranos forced to remain were also forced to give up their old religion. This Prinz proposes was the

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[58]Joachim Prinz, The Secret Jews, (London: Vallentine, Mitchell, 1973), p. 17.
[59]Ibid., p. 41.
[60]Ibid., p. 54.

minority. The majority remained secret Jews.

Dan Ross echoes Prinz in his beliefs. In his book, Acts of Faith, he writes:

> "It would be a mistake to view Marranos as some sort of organized conspiracy, secretly practicing Orthodox Judaism in clandestine synagogues. Twisted by secrecy and stunted by ignorance, the religion of the Marranos soon bore scant resemblance to Judaism as elsewhere known. For many, it was little more tha a psychological disposition to think of themselves as Jews."[61]

Ross argues that these people strongly believed themselves to be Jewish.

Ross further discribes a business transaction between a visitor to a remote village and a Marrano. The merchant had an item that the visitor needed. On Friday the visitor told the Marrano merchant he did not want it as he hoped to find it less expensive elsewhere. Later the visitor changed his mind and offered to buy it from the Marrano. When the merchant refused to sell it to him (supposedly because it was Shabbat) the visitor offered him even more money for the item. The merchant refused to sell it even above his original price. But after Shabbat, he sold the item to the visitor at his original price.[62]

Using the above story as proof of the Marranos' Jewishness, along with examples of the few Hebrew words they used such as Adonai (God), goyo (goy-non-Jew), entefade (trefe-impure), Ross concludes that although traditional Jews did not accept

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[61]Dan Ross, Acts of Faith, (New York: St. Martins Press, 1982), p. 29.
[62]Ibid., p. 46.

their Jewish identity, he has no doubt that they developed their own form of Jewish religion.[63] In supporting his view he quotes Gerson D. Cohen:

> "Granted that the Marranos created a new kind of Jewish religion for themselves, they still have to be considered a Jewish phenonemon, for they often lived, suffered, and died as Jews."[64]

Ross dismisses the view of traditional Jews who cannot accept Marranos as Jews. He raises the question of who decides their Jewishness. He points ot that often 'the enemy' determines one's religion. This alone would make the Marranos as Jewish as any of the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust.

Historian B. Netanyahu offers a very different viewpoint in his book The Marranos of Spain. From the first section of his book he makes it clear that:

> "the overwhelming majority of the Marranos at the time of the establishment of the Inquisition were not Jews, but 'detached from Judaism', or rather, to put it more clearly, Christians. In seeking to identify the whole Marrano group with a secret Jewish heresy, the Spanish Inquisition was operating with a fiction; and it was driven to this operation by racial hatred and political considerations rather than by religious zeal."[65]

Recognizing that there had to exist a small population of Marranos that attempted to remain Jewish secretly, Netanyahu suggests that this minority, as time passed and the persecution

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[63] Ibid., p. 47.
[64] Ibid., p. 49.
[65] B. Natanyahu, The Marranos of Spain, (New York: American Academy for Jewish Learning, 1966), p. 3.

against them worsened, constantly diminished in size and influence.

What Netanyahu attempts to do is prove his position using the responsa, their philisophic and polemic literature, and the homilectic and exegetic literature. Although he goes to great lengths to prove his argument, below are only three examples of his 'prooftexts' which he convincingly supports.

Examining the responsa of Rabbi Asher ben Yehiel, one finds his statement:

> "...the forced convert is not an outright traitor, as the real convert was considered to be, but he is nevertheless a cowardly deserter; he should realize that he has committed a disgraceful act and his bearing should be one of shame and humiliation; only a long process of repentance through sufferance could obliterate his shame and sin."[66]

This leaves little doubt of the feeling the Jews had towards the Marranos, at least during Asher ben Yehiel's time.

Long before the Marranos, Maimonides offered his views on forced conversions. He clearly believed that the laws were made to live by them, and not die by them. But at the same time he also clarified that forced converts could only be accepted if Jewish practice was kept whenever possible, and that the convert took every opportunity to change his/her situation in order to resume the Jewish religion. That included moving to a country where they could return to

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[66] Ibid., p. 13.

Judaism when given the chance.[67]

Isaac bar Sheshet Perfet, the Ribash, escaped from Valencia to Algiers in North Africa. His responsum echoed Maimonides' viewpoint with the idea that given any chance the Marranos should leave for a country where they could be religiously free. Because many Marranos did not take advantage of possible opportunities to leave, he too questioned their Jewishness. He also stressed that time was against the Marranos. The longer they were away from Judaism, the more they would forget their past religion.[68]

Even Rabbi Simon ben Zemah Duran (Rashbaz) who began with a strong belief that the Marranos were secret Jews, over a period of time came to propose that they could not be considered Jewish. In his Responsum III 312 he went so far as to suggest that wine, touched by Marranos during its transportation, should not be considered kosher.[69]

Netanyahu summarized his position when writing:

> "...the rabbinical authorities of Spanish Jewry considered the Marranos not as crypto-Jews, but as gentiles, and consequently, they considered the returners not as penitents but as proselytes."[70]

Netanyahu points out that anti-Christian polemics directed towards the Marranos, and dated to 1396, suggested the Christainization of the New Christians long before the start of the Inquisition. He further proposes that the

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[67] Ibid., p. 15.
[68] Ibid., p. 28.
[69] Ibid., p. 42.
[70] Ibid., p. 72.

polemic literature teaches us:

> "that the forced converts of 1391 were subjected to an increasing and rapid Christianization-and that the converts of 1412-1415 went over to Christianity with a broken faith in Judaism, or with no faith in Judaism at all."[71]

The homiletic and exegetic literature offers not only support to the above, but adds another dimension in the relationship between the Marranos and the Jews. Abravanel, in his writings, suggested that the Marranos were the enemies of God; that they followed no commandments. He suggested that they sought to destroy Judaism in order to prove their acceptance of their new religion and safeguard their position in society.[72]

Throughout his book, Netanyahu supports his position with the literautre of the rabbis living before, during, and following the period of the Inquisition. His conclusion can only be that only a small minority of the Marranos attempted to hide any form of Jewish practice. Most Marranos eventually became completely non-religious or Christian, both in practice and in belief.

The last historian, Dr. Ellis Rivkin, agrees with most of Netanyahu's findings that the Marranos were not Jewish. In two of his articles, How Jewish Were the Marranos and Marrano-Jewish Entrepreneurship and the Ottoman Mercantilist Probe in the Sixteenth Century, Rivkin attacks the Jewishness

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[71] Ibid., p. 121.
[72] Ibid., p. 180.

of the Marranos from a variety of positions. The question of using the Inquisition as proof of their Jewishness is carefully explained in the first article listed above. He first proposes that:

> "anti-Conversoism subsequently spread throughout Spain in conjunction with intense economic, political, and social crisis."[73]

He suggests that the Inquisition was used to take away the money and power that the Marranos had accumulated since their conversions. It also removed any doubt that the Marranos were loyal Christians. His discussion of how the process worked could easily be explained as how a minority leads a majority. Through fear, neighbors turned in each other and admitted to lesser crimes (even though they were innocent) to save themselves. Claims of neighbors' secret Jewish practices or ones own mild observances were used to save oneself from threat of certain death.

This entire process snowballed until all Marranos were considered secret Jews and therefore suffered anti-Jewish persecution. Rivkin therefore suggests:

> "the Marranos were as Jewish as the Inquisition needed them to be, (and) as an historical reality, the New Christians were not, with perhaps some individual exceptions, Jewish at all prior to the devastating work of the Inquisition..."[74]

To further support his claim, Rivkin points to the

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[73]Ellis Rivkin, How Jewish Were the Marranos, (Paper presented at Conference of Association for Jewish Studies, Harvard University, October 1973), p. 3.
[74]Ibid., p. 7.

fact that the Marranos intermarried, became involved in the Church, and even added to the already prevalent anti-Semitism. That they could obtain such power and wealth prior to the Inquisition further supports the view that they were not in any way secret Jews. More evidence of their loss of Jewish identity was seen when the Marranos were given the opportunity to emigrate and the majority selected Christian lands in which they settled.

In his second article Rivkin underscores the fact that the Marranos, when given an opportunity to return to Judaism, selected places to settle according to where they could best strengthen their economic position. When in 1507 the royal decree freed the Potuguese Marranos to leave the country and to buy and sell property,

> "they welcomed the decree not as an opportunity for leaving Protugal to embrace Judaism in the Ottoman realms, but as a sign of the monarch's trust in the permanence and sincerity of their Christian affiliation."[75]

Only after further persecution, and a rise in anti-Marrano feeling, did the Marranos begin to return to Judaism. This return was more of a fleeing from more persecution and a seizing of an economic opportunity in the Ottoman Empire than it was a change in religious beliefs. The Marranos would have an economic advantage over the Jews since they had knowledge of international trade due to their greater freedom of movement between countries.

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[75]Ellis Rivkin, Marrano-Jewish Entrepreneurship and the Ottoman Mercantilist Probe in the Sixteenth Century, p. 6.

If the Marranos wanted to take advantage of this situation within the Ottoman Empire, they needed to return to Judasim. This return then was primarily an economic move. One classic example is shown in Rivkin's description of Don Joseph Nasi's return to Judaism.

> "(in 1555) the co-administrator of the Mendes fortune, Don Joseph Nasi, took up residence in Constantinople and publically embraced Judaism. Suleiman made clear his personal underwriting of the alliance by according to Don Joseph direct access to this person; by granting him the city of Tiberias (1561); by allocating to him the farming of taxes and custom dues; by bestowing upon him monopolistic privileges..."[76]

Clearly the economic factors involved in this return to Judaism could be considered the primary cause for the 'return'. Why else would Don Joseph Nasi wait so long before taking the opportunity to accept the Jewish religion?

For our purposes, can we accept the Marranos as another ethnic group within the realm of non-Ashkenazic Judaism? I would have to agree with Netanyahu and Rivkin's conclusions that the vast majority of Marranos were not Jewish either before or after the Inquisition and the expulsion from Spain in 1492. Some Marranos could be Jews practicing their religion secretly, but by far the vast majority of Marranos could not and should not be considered Jewish. Although they might call themselves Jewish, certain minimal knowledge and/or practices needed to be observed for even the most liberal Jews to accept them as Jews. Their being

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[76] Ibid., p. 18.

'accused' of being Jewish in the Inquisition did not prove their Jewishness. For our purposes, we cannot include them as non-Ashkenazic Jews.

D. Non-Ashkenazic Jewry in Islamic Lands

To better understand the non-Ashkenazic Jewish people, it is important to examine their life styles, customs, traditions, and history. Since the number of non-Ashkenazic communities makes it impossible to study every community in depth, what follows is a summary of five non-Ashkenazic Jewish communities found in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon (which will be considered one communitiy), Turkey, and Yemen. Each country is presently under an Islamic government. Certain generalities can be made about Jews living in all the Arabic countries. These observations will be made after examining the Jewish communities in the five communities listed above.

IRAN

The history of the Jewish population in Iran is similar to the history in all the Middle East countries. Jews lived in this area for approximately 2000 years. Historians might disagree as to which decade Jews first settled in Persia, now Iran, but their roots can be traced to the very foundations of Persia during the time of Cyrus the Great, close to 500 years before the beginning of the Common Era.[77]

One historian determined the period of Jewish settlement in Iran to be "since the destruction of the First Temple

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[77]Daniel J. Elazar, The Jewish Community of Iran, (Philadelphia: Center for Jewish Community Studies, 1975), p. 1.

by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BCE."[78] Certainly the reference to large Jewish communities in Persia from the Scroll of Esther in the Bible would support the historians' beliefs that Jews have lived in this land close to twenty centuries.

By the time of the birth of Islamic belief and its rise in this region in 642 C.E., the Jewish populace had become contributing members of society. The rise of Islamic rule forced the Jewish population into second class citizens. Although Jews remained actively involved in commerce, many restrictions were placed on their new way of life. Not until 1258 when the Il-Kahn dynasty came to power, over 600 years after the rise of Islamic rule, did Jews lose their second class status.[79]

For almost 250 years, the Jewish population in this region lived comfortably. But in 1502 with the rise of the Safavid regime who accepted the Shia sect of Islam, the Jews once again were relegated a second class status. As non-believers in the 'true faith', the Jews were considered unclean. In the modern era Persian Jews shared the fate of most of their fellow Jews in Islamic lands; they fell "into the worst and most backward of situations from which they did not emerge until the late nineteenth century."[80]

During this period of time, Persian Jews sought to

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[78]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 47.
[79]Ibid., p. 48.
[80]Daniel J. Elazar, The Jewish Community of Iran, p. 6.

escape the persecution by migrating north and/or east where they renewed the Jewish communities of central and south Asia.[81] Within this period of time thousands of Jews were also forced to convert. Many forced conversions took place during the often brutal reign of Abbas II from 1642 to 1666.[82] Throughout this period of time, approximately 400 years:

> "the Jewish population declined, its economic condition worsened significantly, and it suffered almost total cultural collapse."[83]

Entire communities suffered from the Islamic rulings. In 1839, all the Jews of the town of Meshed were forced to convert in fear of their lives. Unlike the Marranos, they actively remained secret Jews who were later accepted into Palestine as Jews. Meshed Jews since have established communities of their own in Israel, London, New York, Hamburg, and Milan.[84]

In 1865, a Jewish traveler summarized the misfortunes of the Persian Jews in which he listed: (1) Jews were required to live in their own sections of any given town. (2) They had no rights to sell goods. (3) They could not appear in public without risk of suffering a beating or theft. (4) Jews received a punishment whenever a Muslim made a claim against him in a public court. (5) They were

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[81] Ibid., p. 6.
[82] Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems, and Solutions, p. 48.
[83] Daniel J. Elazar, The Jewish Community of Iran, p. 7.
[84] Ibid., p. 23.

considered unclean and were not allowed to go out during rain. (6) Jews were required to give without question to any Muslim who asked him for something.[85] As second class citizens, the Jews suffered terribly under the Islamic rule. The fact that they were required to pay a special tax, called jizya (see A section) was only a minor issue compared to much of their suffering.

In 1906 a constitution was adopted making all people equal. The position of the Jewish population improved only minimally as many towns, run by small Islamic leaders, ignored the new ruling. Following the revolution in 1925, Rezah Shah, father of the modern Shah who fled to the U.S. in 1979, created a new legal status for the Jews giving them the same rights as the Muslim majority.[86]

Although the Jews were still persecuted as they entered the modern period of Persia, by the end of the 19th century they had more rights and more hope than they had experienced the previous 1300 years. Jews supported the new leader of Persia (it became Iran in 1935) over Mohammed Mossadeqh, the Muslim leader. The result was Mohammed Reza Patilavi's support until his own ousting in 1979.

During the period of the Shah's rule, many aspects of the Jews' lives changed. Until the 20th century, the Jewish population had remained relatively isolated from

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[85]Bernard Lewis, The Jews of Islam, p. 181-182.
[86]Daniel J. Elazar, The Jewish Community of Iran, p. 9.

the rest of world Jewry. Under the Shah, Jews enjoyed almost complete protection. Many Jews, realizing their position if the Shah should ever fall, quickly migrated to Palestine. Before 1948, close to 40,000 Jews made aliyah to Palestine.[87] Most Jews realizing the safety within larger cities had migrated within Iran to Teheran. An extremely wealthy Jewish population evolved within the city of Teheran. Although the wealthier Jews would not leave Iran, after 1948 and the establishment of Israel, thousands of Jews moved to Israel.

> "Some 28,000 of the 55,000 Jews who migrated from Iran to Israel between the time of the establishment of the state until the end of 1968 came between 1950-1952 (following pogroms caused by Russian influence...)."[88]

In 1950, there was an estimated 100,250 Jews in Iran; only 250 were considered Ashkenazic Jews. By 1960 an estimated 80,000 Jews were still in Iran, 40,000 living in Teheran alone. But the community lacked true organization or leadership. The wealthy Jews did little to help the other Jews in the community. Most Jews lived above the national average income.[89]

Even with the Shah's protection, anti-Semitism was a most potent force with which the Jews contended. The Jewish community continually supported the Shah to encourage greater protection from him. This led to greater suffering

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[87]David Sitton, Sephardi Communities Today, p. 176.
[88]Daniel J. Elazar, The Jewish Community of Iran, p. 15.
[89]Ibid., p. 28.

following the Shah's fall.

Under the Shah there existed an Iranian chief rabbinate in Teheran. There were also five Jewish schools, a Jewish Hospital, and Jewish youth clubs. Involvement in any of these was minimal at best however. Synagogue attendance was low except on Yom Kippur. The Jews had a Bet Din that handled the marriages, divorces, and matters of inheritance. Outside of the city of Teheran, the Jewish community was weakly organized through synagogues. Cultural activities were virtually non-existent in the Jewish community. There did not exist a single Jewish press in all of Iran.[90]

During the Shah's rule, Iran served as a "preparing station" for Jews fleeing to Israel. This was true both at the end of World War II and again in the 1960s and 1970s as Jews of Arab countries made aliyah. For their monetary needs, the Jews turned to outside help from the United States Jewish Distribution Committee. Little money was given to the general Jewish community from the wealthier Jews of Iran.[91]

In the five Jewish schools the education was weak. They lacked properly trained teachers. Even with these problems, close to half the Jewish students in Iran went to the Jewish schools. There were no Jewish schools of higher learning; nothing was offered past the high school

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[90] Ibid., p. 35-45.
[91] Ibid., p. 84.

level.

The government appointed the principals in the schools. In a number of the Jewish schools, the principal was not Jewish and therefore was mainly concerned with strict compliance of State requirements. Jewish studies were not a priority for them.[92] This problem, coupled with the lack of Jewish education and training of the teachers in these schools, suggested a dim outlook for these institutions.

The end results of these schools were not positive. Most of the students did not acquire a capacity for speaking Hebrew nor a basic mastery of Jewish concepts.[93] The growing tendancy was an increase in the flow of students who entered the secular school system. The secular schools offered a better locality and a higher level of secular studies which the Jewish students would need as they adapted to life in a non-Jewish society where they worked and lived.[94]

In February 1979, the situation changed drastically for the Jews of Iran. Over 30,000 Jews left the country fleeing to Israel or other lands where they were welcomed in the wake of the Islamic Revolution which overthrew Mohammed Reza Patilavi. Many Jews were executed among the thousands who were murdered by the new regime. Several of the murdered were Jewish leaders in the community who were accused of

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[92]Joseph Glanz, A Study on Jewish Education in Iran, (Teheran, 1972) p. 17.
[93]Ibid., p. 53.
[94]Ibid., p. 161.

supporting the old monarch and Zionism (which was probably true).[95]

The new regime reinstated the second class status of the Jewish people. Thus one finds that:

> "The Ayatollah Khomeini, in a widely circulated book written for the guidance of Muslims in ritual and related matters, observes: 'There are eleven things which make (Muslims) unclean: 1. urine; 2. faeces; 3. sperm; 4. carrion; 5. blood; 6. dog; 7. pig; 8. unbeliever; 9. wine; 10. beer; 11. the sweat of a camel which eats unclean things.' In a gloss on #8 he adds: 'The entire body of the unbeliever is unclean; even his hair and nails and body moistures are unclean."[96]

According to Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic regime, Jews were in the same category as urine, faeces, dogs... The Jews moved from a country entering the modern age, into a country that was forcing the Jews back into Middle Age conditions. Conditions for the Jews were critical and changed from day to day.

It is not surprising then when one author described the Jewish culture in Iran as lacking tradition.[97] For centuries Jewish culture and creativeness was suppressed under Iran's anti-semitic policies. But despite the oppressive nature of Iran's government, the Jews of Iran did establish some of their own customs.

The Jewish family in Iran, clearly headed by the father, was a very tight knit group. Many of their practices were

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[95]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems, and Solutions, p. 50-51.
[96]Bernard Lewis, The Jews of Islam, p. 34.
[97]Joseph Glanz, A Study on Jewish Education in Iran, p. 15.

based on unproven superstitions. As described below, life cycle events each had their own special customs. Pregnant women were fed whatever they wanted in fear of miscarriages. When a male child was born, the mother and baby were required to remain in the bed, protected by knives, amulets, and friends until the eighth day and the brit milah. At the Shabbat service prior to the brit milah, the father was called to the Torah and afterwards showered with seeds and candy. The night before the brit milah, all close friends and family members would recite psalms and then immerse themselves in a mikveh just before the ceremony.[98]

The wedding ceremonies were equally special and unique. Brides could be engaged at the early age of 9 or 10 by their father's handshake. Following a one-two year engagement the ceremony would begin. Two days prior to the wedding the bride went to the mikveh (usually for her first time). The next day the groom sent the bride henna powder which the women rubbed on her. On the day of the wedding the groom went to the mikveh while his friends ate sweets that the bride sent to them. The groom fasted. The groom would send the bride her wedding dress just prior to their joining at the ceremony. After the wedding, the community escorted the bride to the groom's new home.[99]

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[98]Devorah and Menahem HaCohen, One People: The Story of the Eastern Jews, (New York: Sabra Books, Funk and Wagnalls, 1969), p. 28.

[99]Ibid., p. 30.

When a death was about to take place, relatives of the dying man were called to his bedside to ask his forgiveness. Mourners scratched themselves and tore their own hair immediately following the death. Forty-one men of the community participated in the purification rites. Each poured a cup of water over the body and then broke the cup above the head. Groups gathered in the deceased person's home for a year following the death to study sacred text in his memory.[100]

Holidays also carried their own special customs. Shabbat was an important day each week even among the poor Jewish families. The menu was constant on Shabbat. It included fried fish, rice pudding, and dumplings of chopped sour grass and bits of meat. On the Sabbath day cholent was eaten. During Havdalla, members of the household laughed merrily to induce merriment for the week to come.[101]

With the approach of Passover, the Iran Jewish community together boiled dishes for kashrut purposes. Meals proceeding the holiday were more like snacks. At the Seder, the afikomen was given to the son by the father. If the child could keep it throughout the meal without having it taken from him then he received a prize. If a sibling stole the afikomen, the 'thief' was allowed to ask one person to sing and dance in order to earn its return.[102]

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[100] Ibid., p. 30.
[101] Ibid., p. 32-33.
[102] Ibid., p. 33.

On Selichot before Rosh Hashanah, fasting was common. Many fasted during much of the ten days of Teshuvah. On Rosh Hashanah, fish was eaten as a sign of fertility, as was a lamb's head to represent the top and not the bottom for a sweet year. Kapara served as an atonement offering on Yom Kippur. Men used roosters and women used hens (2 hens and 1 rooster for a pregnant woman) after which Psalms were read all night. For sukkot, sukkah-building was a community affair. There was little notion of Chanukah other than the recitation of the prayers and kindling of the candles on the menorah. Purim was the festival of the year. The Fast of Esther was observed as was the reading of the Megillah with noise makers used when Haman's name was heard. The holiday ended with a traditional burning of Haman in effigy.[103]

Persian Jews, among the first non-Ashkenazic Jews to migrate to Palestine, found life in their new home difficult. It was foreign to their basic practices and beliefs. Quoting one immigrant, "In Iran I was Jewish; in Israel I'm Iranian."[104] Iranians had struggled throughout their history in Iran. In Israel they took pride in their ethnic identity enjoying Persian plays and forming their own close communities.

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[103] Ibid., p. 34-36.

[104] Studies in Israeli Ethnicity After the Ingathering, Alex Weingrod, editor, (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1975) p. 243.

Iranian Jews refused to forget their history, or who they were.

IRAQ

Iraq has the distinction of being the oldest Jewish Diaspora. In 721 BCE the destruction of the Israel by Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, led to the settlement of the 'ten tribes' of Israel in the northern part of Mesopotamia (ancient Iraq).[105] If the above statement is correct, then Jews have lived in this region just over 2,700 years. Over this long period of time the Jewish population of Iraq has made numerous contributions to general Jewish history.

> "The intellectual achievements of Babylonian Jews were so overwhelming that for almost a thousand years they enjoyed a cultural hegemony over the whole Jewish people. After the compilation of the Mishna in Palestine in about 200 (Common Era) and until the end of the Geonic period (1038) the most important religio-legal works, destined to become the basic building blocks of the Jewish cultural edifice for all times, were produced in Babylonia."[106]

This statement can be understood when one recognizes the significance of the academies and their leaders which were located in Iraq (Mesopotamia and Babylonia prior to 634 CE). The most respected academies were those of Sura and Pumbedita. Their strength reached high levels of influence

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[105]Raphael Patai, The Vanished Worlds of Jewry, p. 142.
[106]Ibid., p. 143.

and prestige from the seventh to the eleventh centuries.[107] The Babylonian Talmud and the writings of the Geonim that led these schools are considered by many as the greatest legal and literary contributions made to Judaism. They represent the foundations of the Jewish legal system.[108]

The work of the Geonim, which covered more than five centuries, offered more than the legal foundations to Judaism. They also created a profusion of religious, ethical, philosophical, linguistic, midrashic, historical, and poetic works. Jewish education was at a higher level in Iraq than in any other Jewish community.

Similar to the other Jewish communities within the Middle East region, following the rise of the Islamic religion, the Iraqi Jews' conditions worsened. In Iraq they too became second class citizens. The most oppresive period of time occurred in the 14th century when anti-Jewish sentiments rose to such a level as to force many Jewish leaders to convert to Islam. Looting of Jewish property was another problem during this period. The end of the 14th century found most of the Jews of Baghdad fleeing from the city where much of the persecution took place. Close to 50,000 Jews migrated north into the Crimea and settled in southern Russia.[109]

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[107]"Iraq", Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 8, (Jerusalem: The Macmillan Company, Keter Publishing House, Ltd., 1971).
[108]David Sitton, Sephardi Communities Today, p. 39.
[109]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 53.

In 1534 when the Ottomans entered Baghdad, the position of the Jews improved. They again had freedom of religion and their rights to live without persecution were restored. Jews were even allowed to attend state schools. Unfortunately, the Jewish population's good fortune did not last until the present day.

The beginning of the 20th century saw further unrest within this region. Following the Young Turks revolution in 1908, the Jewish population was forced to either serve in the army or pay extremely high taxes. Jewish suffering returned to Iraq. Relief came to the Jews from 1917 to 1920 under British occupation of Iraq. Under the British Mandate (1921-1932) Jews were even allowed to hold high ranking positions. Jews from this community began to participate in Zionist activities.

In 1929 officials in the Iraqi government restricted Zionist activity. Then in 1932 when Iraq attained independence, the government began to openly act against the Jews. Hebrew schools were closed and the Jews lost any positions of importance they might have earned. Arab riots broke out following uprisings that occurred in Palestine. In 1935, just three years after Iraq's independence, Zionist activity was declared illegal. Anti-semitism grew to such a level that in June 1941, pogroms in Baghdad left hundreds dead and thousands injured.[110]

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[110] Ibid., p. 54.

Following these riots, many Jews migrated to Iran and to Palestine. The mass migration did not begin until 1950. Jewish emigration was not allowed until the Iraqi government opened their borders due to American pressure. Between 1950 and 1951, close to 125,000 Iraqi Jews were brought to Israel in operation 'Ali Baba' (also called operation 'Ezra and Nehemia'). It was an airlift which dwarfed in comparison the more famous 'magic carpet' airlift of the Yemenite Jews (see Yemen section).[111]

Jews were forced to leave all their assets behind as they left Iraq. By the end of 1951 only 6,000 Jews remained in Iraq. In 1969 eleven Jews were executed when they were accused of Zionism. By 1973, an estimated number of only 400 Jews remained from the once greatest Jewish diaspora.[112] The new immigrants in Israel found the external circumstances of their lives in Israel changed radically. Although there were jobs available, these Iraqi Jews who had mostly lived in cities, found themselves living on Moshavs and in small towns. They had to make numereous adjustments.

Over the span of 2,700 years, Iraqi Jews developed their own customs and practices. Iraqi Jewish education during this period was most impressive. From Talmudic times until the 13th century Iraq was either the main center,

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[111]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 121.

[112]David Sitton, Sephardi Communities Today, p. 45.

or a main center of Jewish learning. From the 13th to the 20th centuries, although there were no Yeshivot, there existed some heders, some elementry Hebrew schools in Iraq.[113]

Due to the long history of the Jews within the region, they were more assimilated with their Arab neighbors than any other Jewish community in the Middle East. These Jews spoke Arabic both on the street and in their homes, unlike the Jews of North Africa and surrounding Middle Eastern countries. Their language differed from the Arab natives only in pronunciation, syntax, and some vocabulary.[114]

Their customs were in some ways similar to the Iranian Jews. The Iraqi couple married at a young age, often the daughter being engaged to her first cousin (her father's brother's son). Following the marriage the bride moved in with her husband's father's family. Divorce was extremely rare. In 1950-51, of all the women who emigrated to Israel, only .8% were divorced. Only 7.6% of the women worked. The males were the primary and usually the only wage earners.[115]

When a dignified guest visited a home, the mother of a Jewish Iraqi household sprinkled the guests with water and kernels of wheat to wish them good fortune and prosperity.[116] When a child was to be welcomed into a home, it too was considered a big community event. Pregnant

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[113]Raphael Patai, The Vanished Worlds of Jewry, p. 149.
[114]Ibid., p. 145.
[115]Ibid., p. 151.
[116]Devorah and Mehahem HaCohen, One People: The Story of the Eastern Jews, p. 12.

women ate honey and drank wine to give the unborn child good character. At the birth, amulets filled the room to serve as protection from the evil eye. For a boy, at his circumcision a special chair on which the baby was placed was covered with silk, flowers, myrtle branches and a pair of Torah crowns.[117]

In time of death, the Kaddish was first said before the burial. Women did not attend the funeral, but stayed home and wailed for the deceased. A tombstone was set on the eighth day. Mourners wore black clothing for an entire year following the death. Relatives of the deceased were given special cookies during the first eight days of Av in atonement for their loved one's sins. On Chanukah, relatives to whom the deceased owed a debt ate pastries made from flour and sugar. Each act was based on their superstitious belief that the above would help the deceased.[118]

The Jews of Iraq have almost completely disappeared. It is questionable how many Jews live in Iraq today. It is certain that there are very few Jews left in what was once one of the greatest of Jewish diasporas.

SYRIA AND LEBANON

The two countries, Syria and Lebanon, will be examined as one community. Throughout much of their history the

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[117] Ibid., p. 16-17.
[118] Ibid., p. 18.

Jewish community within their borders could be considered one ethnic group. It is difficult to determine the length of time Syria and Lebanon have been a location for a Jewish diaspora. One author suggested these countries were the location of the most ancient Jewish community, approximately 3000 years ago. At that time however, this region was considered part of the Israelite nation and therefore not a Jewish diaspora. One can safely state that Jews have lived within this region for thousands of years.

Much of the history of this region was one of suffering for the Jews. The region was an important area as a trade route both by land and by sea. Therefore:

> "For eight centuries, until the occupation of Syria by the Ottomans (1516), the Jewish community suffered, mainly because the country was attacked and occupied by various armies."[119]

The worst period for the Jews was during the occupation and destruction of Syria by Tamevlane in 1400. During this period thousands of people were massacred, including Jews. It was the largest instance of persecution against Syrian Jewry. The few who survived were mostly poor artisans, craftsmen, and peddlers.[120]

Although no period could be considered a 'Golden Age', during the four centuries of Turkish rule in Syria and Lebanon the Jewish population lived in relative peace.

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[119]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 56.

[120]Ibid., p. 56.

The Turkish rule made no linguistic impact on the Jews. They spoke the same language as their neighboring Arabs, Arabic. The Jews also remained largely Arabized in names, customs, and behavior as well.[121]

The situation for the Jews in this region improved further with the migration of Sephardi Jews exiled from Spain. The Spanish Jews brought in their own culture and strong Jewish identity. Many rabbis and scholars were among the new immigrants. Although not all historians agree to what extent Sephardi Jews affected the native Jewish population, changes did occur. One author suggests:

> "The Sephardim assumed the role of leadership of Syrian Jewry, while assimilating to the native Jews culturally and linguistically, and adopting their Judeo-Arabic dialect."[122]

Wealthy Jews of Aleppo established numerous Yeshivot during the 16th and 18th centuries. Damascus was converted into a center of higher Jewish learning. Living conditions generally improved for most of the Jewish population. Under the Ottoman Empire, emigration was the result of poverty, not persecution.[123]

With the increased flow of Jews into Palestine and the unrest created there, anti-Semitism began to grow in Syria. In 1840 anti-Jewish sentiment appeared in a blood libel claim. The French Mandate began in Syria in 1920.

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[121] Raphael Patai, The Vanished Worlds of Jewry, p. 140.
[122] Ibid., p. 139.
[123] Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems, and Solutions, p. 57.

This permitted renewed Zionist activity. Jews became more confident in their safety and the Jewish migration out of Syria to the United States and Lebanon slowed. In 1936, following Syria's gain of partial independence, Jewish persecution again increased. New waves of emigrants left Syria, mostly moving to Palestine. In 1945 Syria received its full independence. In 1947, pogroms tore through Aleppo. Although emigration became illegal, some 30,000 Jews left Syria between 1947-1963, most traveling to Israel. When the United Nations resolved that Israel would become a state many Syrian Jews suffered; businesses were burned down and their homes were destroyed.[124]

Jews were used as the scapegoats for Syrian mobs after the United Nations partition of Palestine. Jews were randomly wounded and killed. Their synagogues were destroyed. New restrictions were placed on the Jews including a curfew, limiting their traveling to four kilometers from their homes within a specific period of the day only and loss of most business rights. Jews were forbidden to travel between cities without special documents. They were not allowed to work for the government, in banks or in any public offices. Tourists were not allowed any contact with the Jewish populace. Jewish doctors and professionals were allowed to work only for Jewish clients. They were not allowed to drive or have telephones. Jews were not

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[124]Ibid., p. 58.

given new space within the cemetaries. The Jews were not allowed to leave the country for any reason.[125] The penalty for Jews attempting to emigrate to Israel was death. Jews were jailed in Damascus for suspicion of Zionist activities. Many Jews were arrested and tortured. The community existed mainly on the support from the outside, mostly from American relatives. Despite such obstacles, most Syrian Jews succeeded in leaving the country.

In Lebanon, Jewish communities were spread throughout many small towms. The largest Jewish community was located in Beirut. In 1850 approximately one thousand Jews could be found within the city. This population figure increased as Jews fled to Beirut from Syria and Turkey, areas where persecution against Jews was growing. In Lebanon, Jews had equal status. They enjoyed religious freedom and were free to enter any occupation or to travel. A majority of the native Jews in Beirut, a commercial port, were wealthy merchants.[126]

By 1958, closer to 10,000 Jews were in Lebanon. In 1958, as many internal wars erupted within Lebanon, the conditions for the Jews began to worsen. Jews began to flee into Israel. Wars in 1975 and 1977 brought about the migration of almost the complete Jewish population from Lebanon. The emigrants were permitted to take their

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[125]David Sitton, Sephardi Communities Today, p. 56.
[126]Ibid., p. 59.

property with them, but once they left they were not allowed to return.

Before the persecution began, many contributions were made by the Jews of this region. A French Jew built the railway between Damascus and Aleppo. The Syrian National Bank was established by a group of Jews from Egypt. The first French newspaper in Syria after World War I was also established by Egyptian Jews.[127]

The Jews of Lebanon and Syria were in general religiously conservative and observant. The women differed in their customs from city to city. In Aleppo and Beirut the women went about unveiled, similar to the Christian women. But in Damascus they wore veils and robes whenever they were in public, like the Mulsim women.[128]

During different periods, Jewish education was stressed within the community. A traditional education in both countries was often represented by 'old-fashioned' Kuttabs, Hebrew Schools, where the emphasis was on learning basic Hebrew in order to read the Bible and the Siddur. Near the end of the 19th century, many small Yeshivot could be found in Aleppo. In 1939, close to 2,000 Jewish students studied in the Alliance schools in Syria. Almost 1,000 Jewish children studied in these schools in Beirut. This

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[127] Ibid., p. 75.
[128] Raphael Patai, The Vanished Worlds of Jewry, p. 141.

accounted for approximately half the Jewish school-age children.[129]

In Syria, the population fell rapidly as persecution worsened. Today the number remains around 4,300. In Lebanon, the Jewish population first began to rise as Jews fleeing other countries entered Lebanon which served as a refuge. Beirut became the only city within Lebanon in which Jews continued to reside following the internal wars described above. Today only approximately 400 Jews remain in Lebanon. The Jews in both these communities continue to suffer under terrible conditions. Any hope in rebuilding Jewish centers in these two countries would seem impossible. The 3,000 year history of Jewish presence in this region is coming to an end.

TURKEY

The Jewish population in Turkey, in many ways similar to the Jewish populations in the countries discussed above, had one very unique difference. Their customs and traditions changed radically after the Sephardi Jews entered their communities at the end of the 15th century. The strong Sephardi culture overpowered the Oriental culture already in existence.

Before the Ottoman occupation of Turkey in 1326, the Jewish population in Anatolia, Turkey suffered under the

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[129] Ibid., p. 141.

Byzantine rule. The Ottomans mostly permitted the Jews to live in peace. They allowed the Jewish population to care for themselves without governnmental interference. The Ottomans even welcomed into Turkey the Jews who were expelled from Spain. There the Jews found freedom and an equal status. Schools were opened to them and they were able to avoid the army by paying a penalty tax. Not until the 19th century did the Jews of Turkey again suffer enough discrimination to push them to emigrate.[130]

A slow process led to the downfall of the Jewish population in Turkey. As one author described the Jews of Constantinople:

> "The Jewish community had fallen from its ancient glory. When the Jews of Spain, banished from their country, came to establish themselves in large numbers in Turkey, they obtained high positions at the Sublime Porte, and their descendants occupied for a long time an important place in the State. Little by little they were deposed by the Greeks and Armenians. The latter pushed themselves slowly to the high postions in the Administration and monopolized commerce while the Jews day by day became poorer and more wretched."[131]

If one accepts this explanation, the Jews who held positions of authority lost them through their own actions and not through the persecution that was prevalent in so many of the other Middle Eastern countries.

Before their downfall however, the Jewish population in Turkey enjoyed almost what could be called a 'Golden Age'. This would explain why so many of the Jews who were

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[130]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 51.

[131]Mair Jose Benardete, Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews, p. 141.

exiled from Spain traveled and settled in Turkey. "Certainly a great number of Jews from Europe also found a refuge from persecution in Turkey."[132]

The immigrants from Spain brought with them great scholarship and leadership. Following their migration, Yeshivas were started in Istanbul, Izmir, and Adrianople. These cities became respected in the Jewish community as places of higher learning. One historian described the Jewish population of Turkey as the most creative in the Middle East between the 16th and the 19th centuries.[133]

A French traveler in Turkey wrote in 1681:

> "They (the Jews) are so skillful and hardworking that they make themselves necessary to everybody. The other eastern nationalist like the Greeks and the Armeanians, etc. do not have this talent and cannot equal their skills."[134]

Evidence suggested that the Jewish communities in Turkey lived most peacefully without a threat of persecution against them. They might have been the only Jewish community living under such positive conditions in the entire Middle Eastern block.

In pre-modern Turkey, the Jewish community followed its own laws on most matters and certainly the Jews adiministered their own affairs within the limits imposed by the Ottoman authorities. In 1839 even a chief rabbinate

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[132]Bernard Lewis, The Jews of Islam, p. 136.
[133]Adina Weiss, The Jewish Community of Turkey, (Philadelphia: Center for Jewish Community of Studies, 1974), p. 107.
[134]Bernard Lewis, The Jews of Islam, p. 140.

was reestablished within Turkey. All synagogues came under the control of the High Rabbinical Court.[135] But by the end of the 19th century, Jews began to leave Turkey for Egypt, Palestine, and the Americas.

In 1909, military service became obligatory for Jews. From 1918 to 1922 the Greeks ruled most of Turkey. The Jews remained faithful to the Turks and after the Treaty of Lausanne the Jewish population as well as all minorities were assured their personal status as provided by the law. Also the present borders were set. This did not change the Jewish population's poor economic conditions. Many more Jews migrated to Palestine.[136]

Although the Jews through the treaty had earned special treatment as a minority, most renounced the special status fearing problems that might result from this 'specialness'. The end result was many anti-Jewish laws were created. Examples would be: no religious marriages were allowed; no Hebrew teaching was permitted; clergy were not allowed to have beards; and synagogues were closed. Anti-semetic attacks began to occur.[137]

Between 1919 and 1948 close to one sixth of the Turkish Jews emigrated to Palestine. During World War II Turkish officials allowed the Jewish Agency to use Turkey as an escape route for European Jewish refuges into Palestine.

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[135]Adina Weiss, The Jewish Community of Turkey, p. 130.
[136]Ibid., p. 110.
[137]Ibid., p. 111-112.

From 1950 to 1960, the Democrat Party in Turkey bettered Jewish life, and even reopened synagogues that had been closed as a result of the anti-Jewish laws created a half century earlier. Hebrew was permitted to be taught in Jewish schools again. Jews continued to emigrate at a high rate. From 1948 to 1970 approximately another 53,000 went to Israel.

The Jews living in Turkey today remain proud of their history. They:

> "trace their status and character as a community back to the 15th century when the Ottoman Turks completed the destruction of the Byzantine Empire and opened their borders to Jewish refugees from Spain and Portugal."[138]

The chief rabbinate remained in control mostly in Istanbul. From 1931 to 1951 there existed no chief rabbi (as no individual could be found for the job). Since 1953 there have been two chief rabbis in Turkey. They supervise marriages, divorces, deaths, births, kashrut needs, and deal with Jewish education. There also exists a Jewish community council which deals with the community's secular needs. Although only seven or eight of its thirty members are active, it does most of the fundraising and charity work for the Jewish populace. It keeps a strong tie with the religious councils to aid community adhesiveness.[139]

There are six Jewish clubs functioning in Turkey,

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[138] Ibid., p. 105.
[139] Ibid., p. 132-133.

five which are located in Istanbul. Within the clubs the Turkish language is spoken. The clubs usually offer a discotheque, a Jewish oriented library, and sports facilities. Some offer classes in Hebrew, Israel, folk dancing and similar subjects. The Jewish community, however, is losing its Jewish identity.

There are only 2 Shohets in all of Istanbul and none in Izmir. Since the custom of the community is a tremendously high dowry when a girl marries a Jewish man (ie.-10,000 Turkish pounds) there are few Jewish marriages. Still in Istanbul there remains close to 33,000 Jews. A rabbinic seminary that was reestablished in 1955 still functions as do four Jewish primary schools.

Since the beginning of the 1950s the Jews have had freedom to practice their Judaism as they desire. Despite this religious freedom, the population has not grown in size. Of the approximately 35,000 Jews living in Turkey, close to 95% are non-Ashkenazic. In a 1955 census, 64% of the population considered Ladino their mother tongue.[140] Today the Jews find equality and good living conditions. Their situation seems secure. Until or unless there are drastic changes in Turkey, specifically in Istanbul where most of the Jews reside, the Jewish population will probably remain content there.

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[140]"Turkey", Encyclopedia Judaica, Volume 15.

YEMEN

Like the other Middle East countries examined above, there has been a Jewish presence in Yemen for over two thousand years. History records the first significant Jewish migration to Yemen during the period of the last days of the First Temple. One historian suggested that about 75,000 Jews heeded Jeremiah's message (from the Bible) and headed south toward Arabia. If this historian's research was correct, the Jews were welcomed and invited to settle when they reached Yemen. Not long after, the Jews had become the country's artisans and craftsmen, flourishing as a separate community within Yemen.[141]

> "During the 5th and 6th centuries C.E., there is evidence that Jews lived in Yemen and that the Himyer tribe that governed the country converted to Judaism with their King, Duo Nowwas. No doubt Jews lived there prior to Islam rule. From the Genizah in Cairo we find documents showing Yemenites who supported the Babylonian Yeshivot."[142]

As was the case with Jews of other Islamic countries following the rise of Islamic belief, the conditions under which the Jews lived worsened drastically. The Jews were allowed to remain in Yemen following the Muslim occupation, but now as second class citizens. For over 1,000 years, from 897 to 1960, the Zaydi-Shiite sect ruled over Yemen.[143]

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[141]Charlotte Bock, Shana Goldfinger, L. Goodhard, Jewish Survival: The Tale of Three Communities, (Baltimore: Baltimore Board of Jewish Education, 1980), p. 11.

[142]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 60.

[143]Ibid., p. 60.

The Shiite sect of Islam was traditionally more intolerant than the Sunni Islam and consequently the life of the Yemenite Jews was more difficult than in the Sunni countries. The Jews were often "humiliated, humbled, oppressed, brought low and kept there".[144] For the Shiites, the Jews were at a second class level, strictly discriminated against. Many rules dictated how the Jew was to stay in his lower status level. Jews were forbidden to carry weapons or to ride horses and camels. Orphans were by law immediately converted to the Islamic religion. Synagogues were dug into the ground as they were built to assure that the mosques had a higher position. Jews were required to wear special clothing and Muslims had priority over them in all situations in any public place.[145]

In Europe it was not uncommon to find Jews expelled many times from their homes. Only one similar instance was recorded in Muslim history regarding the Jewish population. In 1678, the Jews of Yemen were ordered to accept Islam or leave the territory. It appeared that the Imam attempted to render Yemen a pure Muslim state. The Jews left en masse, and settled in a small village called Mauza at the shore of the Red Sea. By 1681 the Jews were permitted

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[144]Raphael Patai, The Vanished Worlds of Jewry, p. 164.
[145]Eliezer Ben-Rafael, The Emergence of Ethnicity: Cultural Groups and Social Conflict in Israel, (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982), p. 26.

to return to their homes.[146]

Although as second class citizens their lives were never easy, overall the Jews were secure in their situation. In the 18th century, one Jew was appointed minister of finance by Imam Al-Makdi. Usually the Jews only suffered when the Muslims fought among themselves.[147]

With the rumors of rebuilding a Jewish state, by the end of the 19th century Yemenite Jews began to migrate to Jerusalem. These poor people had no means and therefore struggled in their short but difficult migration. Some literally walked. Many of the Yemenite Jews were able to travel to Palestine using funds sent to them by Sephardic Jews already in Palestine. The first wave of immigrants that reached Palestine from Yemen came in 1881-82. They numbered only about 200 total Jews. By 1885 almost 450 Yemenite Jews lived in Palestine.

Persecution in Yemen did not increase, but the rumors spreading about the wonderful life in Palestine encouraged the second and third aliyahs of Yemenite Jews to flow into Palestine. Between 1919 and 1948 approximately 16,000 Jews migrated to Palestine (about one third of the Yemenite Jewish population).[148]

As the Yemenites settled into their new lives in Palestine

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[146]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 20.
[147]Eliezer Ben-Rafael, The Emergence of Ethnicity: Cultural Groups and Social Conflict in Israel, p. 26.
[148]"Yemen", Encyclopedia Judaica, Volume 16.

they were labeled as primitive 'stone aged' Jews. Separated from the rest of Jewry for over 1000 years, they had established their own customs and religious practices. They were not easily acculturated. Yemenites were found to be hard workers however and quickly replaced the Arabs as the major group of physical laborers. They followed their strong biblical beliefs including "In the sweat of thy countenance shalt thou eat bread."

Following the establishment of the State of Israel, the majority of the remaining Yemenite Jews migrated to Israel.

> "Enthusiasm among the Yemenite Jews was enormous. They arose form every remote hamlet, formed caravans, and moved toward gathering places. In no case were Jews ready to miss the opportunity of the return to the Holy Land though it is true, their enthusiasm was further encouraged by Arab hostility which grew ever more intense with the development of the Middle East conflict."149

Operation 'Magic Carpet' hurried the process of bringing the Yemenite Jews into Israel. Between 1949 and 1950, 430 flights carried 48,818 Yemenite Jews to Israel.150 Yemenite Jews moved to temporary camps on the border of Aden where the planes picked them up. The trip to these camps and the camp conditions while waiting for the plane were both difficult and dangerous. Many deaths caused much suffering before the people entered the Holy Land.

149Eliezer Ben-Rafael, The Emergence of Ethnicity: Cultural Groups and Social Conflict in Israel, p. 30.

150Edward Geffner, Sephardi Problems in Israel, (Jerusalem: The World Sephardi Federation), p. 9.

The rides on the 'giant eagles' left only a small presence in Yemen, home to a large Jewish diaspora for over 2000 years. Today only approximately 200 Jews remain living in Yemen.

The Yemenite Jews found a very different world in Israel than the one they left in Yemen. They moved from an eastern culture to a predominately western society.

> "On March 1, 1950 the Yemenite Jews constituted over 10% of the total Jewish population of Israel, about 1/3 of the combined total of all the Sephardi and Oriental Jewish communities in the country. Theirs (Yemenite) is also the most significant cultural contribution rendered by a non-Ashkenazic community to the nascent culture of new Israel."151

The Yemenites have a strong belief in the coming of the Messiah. With this belief and little else they arrived to Israel. They were rich in centuries-old colorful traditions and customs, learning and industriousness, but lacked any real material possessions.

The Yemenites often had to turn to the help of other Jews to support them upon their arrival. The Sephardic Jews generally were open to helping them. One Sephardi Jew would give a Yemenite family free housing while another would give them money to pay their taxes and immediate expenses.152 Problems arose however when the Yemenites began to sense the Sephardim were trying to change their

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151 Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p.193.

152 The Sephardi and Oriental Jewish Heritage, Isaacher Ben-Ami, Editor, p. 160.

traditions. Eventually the Yemenites were able to earn their own keep.

In Israel, in a 1963-64 census, no less than 60% of the Yemenites were placed in a 'poor' or 'near poor' category.[153] Although not wealthy people, the Yemenites were the best organized group among all the Oriental Jewish communities in Israel. The Organization of Yemenite Jews in Israel was founded in 1923. Also there existed a Rabbinical Council of Yemenite Jews, the Organization of Yemenite Women, and two youth groups in Tel Aviv: Organization of Yemenite Youth and Organization of the Sons of Judah.[154]

Despite their depressed economic and social conditions, the Yemenite Jews had much in which they could take pride. They contributed greatly to Israel's economic growth by massively participating in blue-collar, low income work. The Yemenites had a work ethic which taught them physical labor was good honest work, and that they should take pride in their manual labor. Shame only came to those who did not work.

In Yemen they had labored in specialty trades including metal working, wood working, leather working, clothing, earthenware, food, book production, and a variety of other services. Other than a handful of Jews living in San'a,

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[153]Eliezer Ben-Rafael, The Emergence of Ethnicity: Cultural Groups and Social Conflict in Israel, p. 99.

[154]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 210.

the population was very poor. In Israel there was little need for this type of labor, though some specialists in silver work and jewelry managed to make a living out of their artistic talents. Some musicians were also very popular once their traditional music was adapted slightly to a western scale.[155]

Their education in Yemen was extremely limited. Boys were taught Hebrew reading for Torah and the Siddur, usually by their fathers. Boys learned the Torah by mainly memorizing it. If a book was available, many students sat around it, creating the situation where some students learned to read upside down or sideways only. Lucky boys who showed exceptional educational ability also got to study the works of Maimonides and the Talmud. The youth grew up in a traditional style, always with their heads covered and with strict observance of the Shabbat.

The girls were completely illiterate. They learned how to care for a house, kosher cooking, and embroidery from their mothers. No modern Jewish school was ever established in Yemen. Few, if any Yemenite Jews, learned how to write; there was no need for it.

Superstition was commonplace among them. Various names of God were written on amulets or whispered in certain circumstances. Over time they established their own unique customs and practices. They were very religious and the

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[155]Ibid., p. 214.

least assimilated of all the Oriental Jews in Israel. They gave much thought to mysticism and were susceptible to false messiahs. They also had a deep fear of the 'evil eye'. Many, almost 50%, became involved in the Chabad movement. Material possessions meant very little to them due to their strong religious beliefs. Many Yemenite Jews had bare rooms and old furniture in their houses. They had gone without in Yemen and few changed their living conditions drastically in Israel.

Until recently, the girls were married at an early age, between 11 and 15 years old. Boys were a little older when married, usually between 16 and 19. During the wedding the bride wore an extremely ornate dress. As one writer described the event:

> "The fully caparisoned bride in her fantastically lavish attire, in which she could move only with great difficulty, looked like a gold-encrusted living statue."[156]

The young couple moved in or were under the supervision of the groom's father, although it was the bride's father who paid for the wedding.[157] In Yemen, when edicts forced orphans to convert to Islam in 1921 and 1925, Jewish parents often married off their children at an even earlier age, girls aged 8-9, boys aged 12-13, to assure their religiosity if the parents should die.

Shabbat was of the utmost importance. Preparation

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[156]Raphael Patai, The Vanished World of Jewry, p. 169.
[157]Eliezer Ben-Rafael, The Emergence of Ethnicity: Cultural Groups and Social Conflict in Israel, p. 28.

began on Wednesday each week. On Friday morning the men went to the Mikveh. They wore Talit special only for the Sabbath. Women often wore their wedding dresses. Fruits and roasted beans, special treats, began the Shabbat dinner and all feasts. On the eve of Rosh Hashanah the feast included beets symbolizing the defeat of Israel's enemies, pomegranates which signified hope of the many opportunities to perform mitzvot, and fish heads which denoted leadership.

Succot nights were spent in the succah. On Hoshanah Rabba a shofar was blown between every hakafot. Purim preparation began two months before the actual date when the children would begin studying the scroll of Esther. An effigy of Haman was paraded about and then hidden away until the following year. Although no noise makers were used, the reading of the scroll ended with the community chanting 'Cursed be Haman and blessed be Mordecai' three times. This was always followed with a huge feast.

Passover was carefully observed. Matza was made each day of the holiday. The women also prepared over thirteen types of haroset. No cup of Elijah was used, but a seder was held in Hebrew with explanations being made in their vernacular.[158]

Every holiday and Shabbat included much singing in Hebrew and Arabic and often dancing. Although this was

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[158]Devorah and Menahem Hacohen, One People: The Story of the Eastern Jews, p. 146-148.

was mainly enjoyed by the men, occasionally the women participated as well. The dancing was done separately. As one writer observed:

> "In contrast to the lively, graceful, leaping, exuberant and accelerating style of the men's dances, those of the women were characterized by quiet dignity and restraint, and by slow strictly limiting movements. Drums, copper trays and empty tin cans only were used for rhythmic accompaniment."[159]

The Yemenite Jews were poor only to those who examined them from a western background perspective. Their culture and traditions filled their lives with much happiness and satisfaction. Among these 'poor uneducated Jews' were indeed some true artists. Rabbi Shalom Shabazi, born in 1619, could be considered the greatest of Yemen's Jewish poets. He wrote in Hebrew, Arabic, and Aramaic. Other Yemenite scholars wrote either in Hebrew or Arabic commentaries to the Bible, the Mishnah, Massoretic studies, glosses on the Code of Maimonides, philosophical treatises, responsa, fine Hebrew poetry, and even travelogues and histories.[160] Although lacking in material wealth, the Yemenites when living in Yemen, and today while living in Israel, lead rich fulfilling lives culturally and spiritually.

General Overview

All five of the Jewish communities described existed for hundreds of years in Middle Eastern countries both

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[159] Raphael Patai, The Vanished Worlds of Jewry, p. 169.
[160] Ibid., p. 169.

before and after the rise of Islamic belief. Each community experienced discrimination and suffering and managed to prosper and even grow over time. Whether treated as second class citizens or given special privileges, each community developed their own unique traditions and practices that can add to our understanding of Jewish observance and spirituality.

If one could examine in depth the variety of Jewish ethnic groups in all the Middle Eastern and North African countries, it would become clear that these people have added, and continue to add, tremendous amounts to Israeli and Jewish culture. Only because of the limited amount of time does this work not explore the rich culture of the other non-Ashkenazic Jewish ethnic groups which would include the countries: Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece, Italy... Only when one realizes the numbers of Jews that are a part of non-Ashkenazic Jewry and all that they offer to Judaism can one fully appreciate their true importance.

E. Non-Ashkenazic Jewry in Israel

There has always been a non-Ashkenazic Jewish presence in the region which is now Israel. Actually, until the middle of the 19th century, the majority of the Jewish population in Palestine were non-Ashkenazic Jews. By 1880, the population had changed significantly with the majority of the country being Ashkenazic Jews.[161] This was the result of both World War II and the modern Zionist movement.

What is suprising then is that:

> "The fathers of political Zionism were two Sephardic Jews. R. Yehudah Bivas (Died in Hebron in 1857) and his student R. Yehudah Alkalai (1798-1878) of Yugoslavia were the first to advocate the creation of a Jewish army to establish a Jewish state in Eretz Yisrael."[162]

This message did not reach the majority of the Jewish population in the Muslim states until much later.

In 1918, of the estimated 56,000 Jews of Palestine, 33,000 or 58.9% were considered of Ashkenazic background; 11,000 or 19.6% were Sephardic Jews who had arrived in Palestine via Turkish lands, North Africa, or Italy; and 12,000 or 21.5% were Oriental Jews. This latter group never had ancestors who lived in Europe, but settled in the countries of the Near and Middle East hundreds, if not thousands, of years ago.[163] Then between the years of 1919 and 1948, close to one-third of the Jewish populations

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[161]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 35.
[162]Ibid., p. 37.
[163]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 63.

of Yemen and Syria, and approximately one-sixth of the Jews of Afghanistan, Turkey and Kurdistan made aliyah to Palestine.[164] They came both with the hope of building a Jewish State and of fleeing economic and/or anti-semitic conditions.

The Jewish majority in Israel did not convert back to the non-Ashkenazic population however. Jews from Eastern Europe poured into Palestine as they escaped the growth of anti-semitism led by Nazi Germany. By the time Israel became a country, the non-Ashkenazic population was reduced to a minority of about 15% of Israel's complete Jewish population.[165]

Before 1948 the immigration from Muslim countries was mostly voluntary, idealistic, and almost insignificant compared to the flood of Ashkenazic Jews. Following World War II, due to the Nazi destruction, the major source for Jewish migration to Israel was the Muslim countries. By that time however, the Ashkenazi Jews could claim undisputed leadership in founding the State of Israel.[166]

The position of the Jews in Arab countries quickly deteriorated as Arab frustrations mounted with the creation of Israel as a country. Jews began to flee their Muslim

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[164]Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 39.
[165]Ibid., p. 36.
[166]Maurice M. Roumani, From Immigrant to Citizen: The Contribution of the Army to National Integration in Israel, (Israel: Foundation for the Study of Plural Society, 1979), p. 22.

homelands. For some the pull of religious beliefs brought them to Israel. For others, Israel was chosen because they could not find another suitable country willing to accept them and give them shelter. For the non-Ashkenazic populace:

> "The combined effort of two factors-the socio-economic pressure and the religious-national enthusiasm-resulted in a desparate wish to emigrate to Israel, and in a succession of overt and covert efforts to translate the wish into reality."[167]

At the time of Israel's formation, there were over 800,000 Jews living in the Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa regions. By 1976, most of the Jewish communties had ceased to exist within these countries, leaving behind only a few thousand Jews in all of the Islamic countries combined.[168]

Four years following the establishment of the State of Israel, the bulk of the Middle Eastern Jewish immigration came from Yemen, Iraq, North Africa (including Egypt) and Turkey. From just Yemen and Iraq alone close to 170,000 Jews migrated during this period.[169] From 1948-1951, one survey showed that 687,739 immigrants entered the new state of Israel.[170] By 1951, approximately 40% of the Jewish

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[167]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 70.

[168]Maurice M. Roumani, The Case of the Jews From Arab Countries: A Neglected Issue, (Tel Aviv: World Organization of Jews form Arab Countries, 1978), p. 1.

[169]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 70.

[170]Maurice M. Roumani, The Case of the Jews from Arab Countries: A Neglected Issue, p. 9.

population in Israel was non-Ashkenazic. If one included Arab and Druze communities, over 50% of Israel's entire population consisted of non-Western elements. In 1950-1951, almost all the Kurdish Jews (19,000 from Iraq; 8,000 from Iran; and about 3,000 from Turkey) migrated to Israel. Non-Ashkenazic Jews arrived in such large numbers that their presence could not be ignored.

The city of Safed became a non-Ashkenazic city.

> "Just as Salonica was preferred by Sephardic Jews because it was excluded from the centers of strife, so Safed was chosen because it was most distant from populous cities. Sephardic Jews deliberately looked to this city on the hills of Palestine. Safed became a city of Sephardic saints and scholars."[171]

There were many reasons that the non-Ashkenazic population chose to move to Safed. It was in close proximity to the birth and deathplace of the 'father of Jewish mysticism'. Its remoteness from danger spots in the Middle East made the Jews secure. They felt it was a healthy climate in the hills of the upper Galilee. Finally, it was also within the circuit of the trade routes; thus it would be a good location for businesses.[172]

The ingathering of non-Ashkenazic Jews was almost complete. To clarify by using a table outline, by the early 1970s, the migration of these Jewish communities was: Algeria-13,000 migrated to Israel (most went to France)
Egypt-29,325 migrated to Israel (only 700 now in Egypt)

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[171]Mair Jose Benardete, Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews, p. 79.
[172]Ibid., p. 80.

Iraq- 129,292 migrated to Israel
Libya- 35,666 migrated to Israel (only about 20 remain)
Morocco- 253,000 migrated to Israel (20,000 remain)
Syria and Lebanon- 10,402 migrated
Tunisia- 46,000 migrated to Israel
Yemen and Aden- 50,552 migrated to Israel.[173]

Although this table does not include all of the countries from which non-Ashkenazic Jews fled to Israel, one does get some understanding of the large numbers of Jews entering the new state.

The non-Ashkenazic population found an unprepared, westernized country waiting for them as they entered Israel. Most of the immigrants found themselves placed in transit camps filled with huts and tents. New immigrants often stayed more than eight months in these poor conditions. Their shelters were flooded or completely destroyed with the rains of winter. In 1951, about 256,000 immigrants were still living in temporary housing. By 1959, only two camps remained with only 3,000 individuals living under these poor conditions.[174]

Once the immigrants left the 'temporary camps', it did not necessarily mean their conditions greatly improved. Many obstacles stood in the way of the non-Ashkenazic Jew in Israel. In Palestine, before the Ashkenazic Jews had become a majority, the housing, food, and basic living

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[173]These figures are taken from two sources. Maurice M. Roumani, The Case of the Jews from Arab Countries: A Neglected Issue; and Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions.

[174]Maurice M. Roumani, The Case of the Jews From Arab Countries: A Neglected Issue, p. 19.

conditions were all based on the eastern/oriental traditions found throughout the Middle East. But with the establishment of the State and the majority of the population swinging to the Ashkenazic populace, the living conditions became completely westernized, forcing the non-Ashkenazic Jews to make major changes in their lives.

The non-Ashkenazic Jews generally lived in communities outside of the major cities. Often they were found in the older towns or in new settlement areas in the Negev or the Galilee where they had to learn and develop new agricultural techniques completely foreign to them. Israel had neither the money to help them, nor available jobs in areas which non-Ashkenazic Jews were already trained.

The new immigrants had to learn Hebrew, a language with which most of them had little, if any, background education. Very close ties were formed within their communities as neighborhoods were formed. The government assigned housing to the poor immigrants resulting in the poor being kept with the poor and the wealthy living in the more expensive areas.

The Sephardic Jews maintained an intermediary position between the Oriental immigrants from the Muslim countries and the Ashkenazic Jews. This is reflected when one finds that:

> "32% of them lived in those quarters of the city which had an absolute Ashkenazic majority; another 32% in those quarters in which there was an absolute Oriental majority; and the remaining 36% lived in quarters

> in which they held the balance between the Ashkenazic and the Oriental Jews."[175]

Although the Sephardic population acted somewhat as a buffer between the East and West, (i.e. the Oriental and the Ashkenazic populations), many problems remained with the non-Ashkenazic Jew's attempt to integrate into Israeli society.

Israeli authorities predicted that the Oriental immigrants would be able to quickly adapt and disperse themselves among the many places, roles, and social positions Israel had to offer. This failed to happen however. The modern Israeli life was foreign to the Oriental culture. It asked these immigrants to give up much of their traditions in order to integrate. It demanded assimilation more than integration, something the non-Ashkenazic population was not willing to do.[176]

The non-Ashkenazic population was asked to be farmers, one of the ideals of Zionism, but totally foreign to them. They were almost completely politically illiterate in a country that demanded political knowledge to assure advancement. They had no background in socialist ideology, a basic Zionist principle. They had traditional religious beliefs in a secular-oriented society. They could not communicate their needs in Yiddish or Hebrew, the two languages used in running the country. They spoke either Spanish,

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[175]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 94.

[176]Studies in Israeli Ethnicity After the Ingathering, Alex Weingrod, Editor, p. 52.

Arabic, or Aramaic.

> "The strain under which the Oriental Jewish immigrant labors until he accomplishes the cultural change demanded of him is much greater (than the Ashkenazic immigrant). He too has to undergo social changes, but in addition he has to find his place in a culture many of whose main features were completely unknown to him before his arrival to Israel."[177]

The end result was that ethnic differentiation became a central issue. Many Ashkenazic Jews looked upon the non-Ashkenazic population as 'being primitive and lacking culture'. The title 'Oriental Jew' became an ethnic category which carried negative connotations. Lice infesting a segment of the Ashkenazic populace was called a biological occurance, whereas lice in the non-Ashkenazic community was called a cultural phenomenon.[178] This is one of many different types of prejudices the non-Ashkenazic Jewish population faced.

The problem was not limited to a small segment of the population, but was found throughout the country. Golda Meir, while Prime Minister of the country, used the terms "we" and "us" for Israel and Israelis, but "them" when referring to Oriental Jews, as if the latter were not really Israeli in the same way as Ashkenazic Jews.[179]

In Israel, the majority of the non-Ashkenazic Jews make up the working class, have relatively poor educational

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[177]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 281.
[178]Studies in Israeli Ethnicity After the Ingathering, Alex Weingrod, Editor, p. 151.
[179]Edward Geffner, Sephardi Problems in Israel, p. 15.

credentials, and low per capita income. In 1970 a survey found that 72% of the families in Israel requiring social assistance were of Asian or African origin. An extremely high 87% of all youngsters who are referred to probation officers come from this same background.[180] In January 1971, a group of non-Ashkenazic youth in Jerusalem handed out pamphlets claiming anti-Sephardic discrimination practices by the government. They held numerous demonstrations, many without permits. In one demonstration in Jerusalem, when they did have a permit, the demonstration became violent with fighting and claims of police brutality.[181]

These non-Ashkenazic youth called themselves the Black Panthers, a name they selected for its recognition with fighting for human rights. It was an outgrowth of the frustration they felt at the lack of support they were receiving from the government. Most of the group were Jews from Morocco in their twenties and thirties. They had suffered second class citizenship under Islamic rule and did not wish similar status in Israel. Due to their lack of organization, poor communication, and unstructured leadership, the Black Panthers never received the support that they needed to significantly change their situation.

This problem was made even more serious by the negative

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[180] The Sephardim in Israel: Problems and Achievements, (Jerusalem: Council of the Sephardi Communtiy, 1971), p. 14.

[181] Avraham Shama and Mark Iris, Immigration Without Integration: Third World Jews in Israel, (Massachusetts: Schnekman Publishing Company, 1977), p. 146.

outlook or lack of solution to the situation. Poverty usually breeds poverty, and each generation found itself worse off than the previous one. Their housing situation was poor and overcrowded. Many were undernourished which resulted in health problems. The combination of these problems led to poor education. (The students had no place to study, no place to find peace, and could not stay healthy.) With little education, the job market was closed to them. The end result was low paying manual labor jobs amd more problems for the next generation.

An improvement in the education of non-Askenazic youth was the only possible way to improve the situation. The statistics clarified the problem. About 70% of those who started elementary school were of non-Ashkenazic background. Only 16% who finished high school came from the same background. The drop out rate was extremely high for this population. Sephardim made up only 4% of the University graduates. A majority of these non-Ashkenazic Jews who dropped out before completing high school were functionally illiterate.[182] This problem hurt all of Israel.

> "As the percentage of Sephardim in the population grows, the education level of the population as a whole drops because the government refuses to deal realistically with the problems of educating the poor and the disadvantaged."[183]

One reason for the high percentage of students leaving

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[182]Edward Geffner, Sephardi Problems in Israel, p. 26.
[183]Ibid., p. 27.

school was a child in High School or college could not earn money and help pay for family needs while at the same time studying. The children in these families became the 'bread earners' instead of students. A secondary reason was cultural based. In many non-Ashkenazic families it was regarded as unnecessary to give girls any formal type of education at all. Many of the girls were therefore sent to work beginning at a young age, or were assigned chores in their own houses to help their mothers.

A further problem was the public schools' curriculum.

> "School syllabuses lead every Israeli child to believe that the Sephardim have no history, no literature, no culture."[184]

In the schools, Jewish history was European Jewish history. There was more about Arab history than non-Ashkenazic Jewish history. Chaim Nachum Bialik of European origin was studied, but Maimonides with a Sephardic background was generally ignored.[185] Many of the non-Ashkenazic population insisted on separate schools for their children. They believed (with good reason) that public schooling meant the elimination of all their traditions from the lives of their children. For many this fear has been realized:

> "The Oriental half of the Yishuv has been so thoroughly Westernized that, in many cases, its younger generation knows of the traditional Middle Eastern culture of

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[184] Danger Jewish Racialism, Council of the Sephardi Community of Jerusalem, (Jerusalem: Alfa Jerusalem Press Ltd., 1965).
[185] Avraham Shama and Mark Iris, Immigration Without Integration: Third World Jews in Israel, p. 130.

its fathers and grandfathers only from hearsay, if at all."[186]

Only slowly are improvements in the situation being made. At the university level, from 1969 to 1974, a 3% increase in the percentage of non-Ashkenazic students hints at progress. This small increase may be the result of both the social improvement of numerous Oriental families and their willingness to consider higher education as a natural process for their children. Also the establishment of a variety of special programs for the socially underprivileged pupils at various levels in schooling has aided in the numbers.[187] Generally however, much improvement is still needed.

Since both school and army participation were the only mandatory institutions, and since the schools were not making many effective changes, leaders in Israel looked towards the army to improve the situation for the non-Ashkenazic Jews. The hope was that in the army all facets of the Israeli population would come together in life and death situations which hopefully would erase any differences in background. To some extent this did indeed happen. The army described itself as serving two purposes in bettering the non-Ashkenazic population conditions:

"1) Introducing modern technology skills to its non-European recruits; skills needed in the civilian sector. 2) Inculcating and stressing ideals and aspirations

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[186]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 383.

[187]Eliezer Ben-Rafael, The Emergence of Ethnicity: Cultural Groups and Social Conflict in Israel, p. 62.

> characteristic of the dominant Ashkenazic (European) culture, while down playing Sephardic culture."[188]

When one realized the age of the recruits, the length of time they were required to remain in the service, and the resources available, the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) was probably the best equipped for the task of integration. One found that both the army and the non-Ashkenazic soldiers benefited from this program of vocational training. Their training was used by the army and then was adapted to serve in civilian employment once they were discharged.

The army offered special elementary education classes to those who were found lacking in educational background. Much of this training was designed to impart to the non-Ashkenazic soldiers the 'pioneering spirit' of Israeli society; including its culture, history, and the functions of its political and economic institutions.[189] The army also offered special encouragement and support to non-Ashkenazic soldiers who chose to try and become officers. The low numbers and lack of success suggested this program was not effective.

The IDF attempted to equalize the differences in education between the Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic population. Generally it failed however. The majority of non-Ashkenazic soldiers were too far behind already in their education

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[188]Maurice M. Roumani, From Immigrant to Citizen: The Contribution of the Army to National Integration in Israel, (Israel: Foundation for the Study of Plural Society, 1979), p. 2.

[189]Ibid., p. 73.

to handle any advanced course offered to become officers. The army had raised their level of education and productivity, but not nearly to the level of the general Ashkenazic populace. The gap in the education had not been closed despite the IDF improvements.

For the last ten years education has been a primary concern of the Sephardic Council in Jerusalem. To combat the problems they have set up a scholarship fund, opened a school for Sephardic rabbis, opened a school for Sephardic cantors, and have established the Institute for the Study of Sephardic and Eastern Jewries. They hope to combat the lack of awareness of non-Ashkenazic history and culture within the schools.

The Sephardic Jewish Council is overseeing major changes including the reconstruction of four synagogues important to their history. The synagogues are: Rabban Yoachanan Ben Zakai Synagogue, the Islambulus Synagogue, the Eliyahu Hanavi Synagogue, and the Emtzai Synagogue, all of which were destroyed during the Six Day War.[190] The Council has also established a Women's Association to educate Oriental and Sephardic Jews in modern technology.

Until the 1980s, the non-Ashkenazic population had no political power due to the divisions within the community. It was based on lack of trust. Jews of Iran did not trust

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[190]Sephardic Council in Jerusalem, 10 Years of Activity and Achievements 1971-1981, (Jerusalem: 1981), p. 11.

Jews of Iraq who did not trust Jews of Turkey, etc. Slowly this problem is disappearing. As the non-Ashkenazic population lives together, often within close proximity to one another, their attitudes are changing. They have begun to realize the power they have in population size.

Today the non-Ashkenazic Jews are the majority, between 55% and 60% of the Jewish population in Israel. The government is still dominated by the Ashkenazim who are much more politically sophisticated, but that too is beginning to change. In 1975, Israel elected its first non-Ashkenazic president, Yitzhak Navon. As conditions slowly improve for the non-Ashkenazic populace, as they receive a better education and more support, and as their numbers continue to increase, more policies will be changed. For the first time in over 1000 years, the non-Ashkenazic Jews will not be second class citizens in the Middle East, controlled by others, but responsible for their own fate.

F. Non-Ashkenazic Jewry in the United States

Non-Ashkenazic Jews have been living in the United States since the very beginning of European settlement in America. In 1654, a group of twenty-three Sephardic Jewish refugees from a Portuguese colony in Brazil established the first Jewish community in what would become the New York area. It was the first of many waves of non-Ashkenazic Jews which migrated to the United States, the most recent arrivals coming in the late 1960s and early 1970s.[191] During the first 200 years of Jewish immigration to this country, although small in actual numbers, the Jews became wealthy and influential and had very important roles in the growth of commerce and trade in the United States.

One surprising development was the control of the small non-Ashkenazic Jews over the soon much larger Ashkenazic Jewish populace. It was not until large contingents of Ashkenazic Jews arrived in the 1840s and 1880s that the early non-Ashkenazic minority became engulfed by them and their practices.[192]

During the early part of the Jewish community's existence, the Ashkenazic Jews wanted to be part of the non-Ashkenazic community. This explains why in New York from 1654-1825 there was only one synagogue, Shearith Israel, which was

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[191]Daniel J. Elazar, Sephardic Jewry in the United States: A Preliminary Institutional Profile, (Center for Jewish Community Studies, 1978), p. 2.

[192]Joseph M. Papo, "The Sephardic Community in America", Reconstructionist, p. 13.

based on non-Ashkenazic traditions. The non-Ashkenazic practices met the needs of the Ashkenazic community.

The majority of the non-Ashkenazic Jews found in the United States are of Turkish or Balkan origin. One historian described two basic divisions within this community which he called Western Sephardic Jews and Levantine Sephardic Jews. The Western Sephardic Jews are those Jews originally from the Iberian Peninsula, many whom he believed were Marranos that returned to Judaism. He suggested this group dwindled both in size and influence with few congregations remaining. The Levantine segment are also Spanish Jews, but consists of those who refused to convert and migrated to Turkey, North Africa, and parts of Europe. This group continues to have a strong following with many cultural influences on the general Jewish populace including influences on folk music, poetry, and dance, in many of the aesthetics.[193]

This historian further suggested that it was the Western Sephardic Jews' acceptance of secularism that encouraged the Ashkenazic Jews to follow their traditions in Shearith Israel and not begin their own congregation. One example of the Western Sephardic Jews' acceptance to secularism was the practices of Shearith Israel's leader from 1768-1816, Gershom Mendes Seixas. He was said to have worn western

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[193]Rabbi Marc D. Angel, The Sephardim of the United States: An Exploratory Study, (New York: Union of Sephardic Congregations, 1974), p. 78-79.

dress and quote at times from the New Testament.[194] Whether or not this was the reason, clearly the Ashkenazic population accepted the non-Ashkenazic practices as their own when they first arrived to the United States. They involved themselves in Shearith Israel while letting the smaller non-Ashkenazic minority be the controlling segment of the Jewish population.

By 1730, the Ashkenazim outnumbered the non-Ashkenazim in the United States. Intermarriage was common as the two groups were receptive to each other and generally respected one another. By the end of the 18th century, the earlier waves of non-Ashkenazic immigration had ended. They spoke a variety of languages. Most common languages of the non-Ashkenazim were Judeo Spanish (Ladino), Greek, and Judeo Arabic.

For the first half of the United States' history, the non-Ashkenazic Jews were the most important segment of the Jewish immigrants. As one historian described their importance:

> "Until the Civil War their congregation remained among the country's leading synagogues but subsequently they began to retreat into themselves, leaving communal and institutional domination to the Ashkenazim. Their last major impact on the American Jewish scene was the founding of the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1886."[195]

The beginning of the 20th century was the beginning of

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[194] Ibid., p. 83.
[195] Daniel J. Elazar, Sephardic Jewry in the United States: A Preliminary Institutional Profile, p. 4.

new waves of non-Ashkenazic Jewish immigration to the United States.

The majority of the non-Ashkenazic Jews migrating in this second wave continued to come from the Balkan region. This group is still the largest non-Ashkenazic populace in the United States today. There were two major reasons for this second wave of migration. First, these Jews were fleeing persecution and suffering as a result of the revolt of the Young Turks in 1908, the Turk-Italian War, and the 1912-1913 Balkan War against Turkey. Secondly, these Jews had heard the success stories and tales of untold fortunes that could and were being made in the United States. Between 1908-1914 10,033 Levantine Sephardim entered the United States.[196] This number did not include the thousands of Jews from the other Middle Eastern and North African countries.

Most of these immigrants settled in New York City. Some went South or to the West Coast. The Jews already living in the United States tried to assist the new immigrants. The Hebrew Immigrant Shelter and Aid Society (HIAS) was created to help put the sick into hospitals, take the newcomers through customs, and help with translations and similar types of assistance. Although most of the second wave of immigrants settled in New York, they divided themselves into various segmented groups within a variety of neighborhoods

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[196]Rabbi Marc D. Angel, The Sephardim of the United States: An Exploratory Study, p. 87.

according to their land of origin and traditions. They tried to recreate in their neighborhoods the societies which they had left behind.

With the large numbers of non-Ashkenazic Jews all living in the United States they tried to organize themselves. In 1912 they formed the Federation of Oriental Jews of America. Due to a lack of interest and the differences between the various Oriental groups, it disapated. In 1924 the Sephardic Jewish Community of New York was created to try and unite the Ladino speaking population. It lasted nine years before also disappearing. In 1928 committees from Shearith Israel of New York, Mikveh Israel of Philadelphia, and Shearith Israel of Montreal met and formed the Union of Sephardi Congregations. From it came the Sephardic Prayer Book (edited by Dr. Pool) and hopes for a united future. Over the years it too lost its influence and became inactive. The Central Sephardic Jewish Community of America was the last major non-Ashkenazic organization to appear, which was started by Dr. Nissim J. Ovadia. Its goals were to engage in communal activities, promote Sephardic group organization, help individual members of the Sephardic community, create cooperation between all U.S. Sephardic communities, help run Sephardic Jewish schools, work on youth development programs, and publish a Ladino paper

and a Sephardi Journal in English.[197] Each organization was somewhat successful, usually for a short period before interest waned or the group completely dwindled to non-existence.

Many non-Ashkenazic Jewish periodicals came and went. One example, "La America", filled with news editorials, essays, poetry, fictional stories, and more was printed from 1910-1923. "Sephardic Home News" was a monthly newsletter with approximately 10,000 subscribers. Communities put on plays in Ladino. The non-Ashkenazic population had established itself.

One could argue that the most successful organization for helping the immigrants was congregation Shearith Israel in New York. It aided the poor by helping them to find jobs, start their own Talmud Torah, and establish themselves. Members of Shearith Israel often labeled the new immigrants 'Orientals', a title they did not appreciate. But much more good than ill will came out of their association with the wealthy Sephardim, and the poor immigrants felt in debt to Shearith Israel.[198]

By 1939, there were close to 75,000 non-Ashkenazim living in the United States. The children of the second wave of immigrants underwent the same Americanization process

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[197]Joseph Papo, "The Sephardic Community in America" Reconstructionist, p. 14.

[198]Rabbi Marc D. Angel, The Sephardim of the United States: An Exploratory Study, p. 102.

as the Ashkenazic population. Most of the coffee houses in New York, which served the needs of the immigrant generation as a haven for the non-Ashkenazic settlers, have disappeared. This could be considered the price of integration and acculturation. The third wave of non-Ashkenazi immigrants was the result of these Jews fleeing from the Holocaust. Many of these immigrants formed a non-Ashkenazic community in Detroit. A fourth wave of immigrants appeared in the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s in wake of the decolonization of the African and Asian countries. The last wave of non-Ashkenazi immigrants came in 1973 from Israel following the Yom Kippur war. These immigrants came hoping to find their fortune in the U.S.

Although most lived in New York, non-Ashkenazic Jews also established vibrant communities in other cities, especially coastal cities. There was a problem of cooperation among the non-Ashkenazic communities that encouraged their division.

> "The tendancy of the Sephardim to set themselves apart from other Spanish Jews other than their fellow townsmen was indeed at the bottom of the creation of organizations of an exclusive nature. No matter where he established his residence, the Spanish Jew hastens to reconstitute the streets of his native city, transferring there his language, his customs, his culinary habits, his worries and quarrels."[199]

Thus one finds in almost every community where the non-Ashkenazic Jews settled, a division among themselves which prevented a stronger, more supportive and cohesive society.

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[199]Mair Jose Benardete, Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews, p. 166.

As one examines the non-Ashkenazic population within New York, it is clear that it is by far the largest and the most complicated of all the communities. The majority of these immigrants were town dwellers in their respective countries, and the anonymity of a large urban center attracted them like other immigrants before them. In 1964, Yeshiva University founded a Sephardic Studies Department to serve as a center for education and information pertaining to the non-Ashkenazic heritage.[200] New York continues to be the largest center of non-Ashkenazic Jewry in the United States.

Second only to New York City, Los Angeles has a large non-Ashkenazic population with an estimated 12,000-14,000 residing within the greater metropolitan region.[201] The first non-Ashkenazic Jews to migrate to L.A. came from Turkey, Balkan States, Salonika, and the Island of Rhodes. They are also a tightly organized community. They are spread out among four major congregations. Few are active in the community. Synagogue attendance, the major factor keeping the non-Ashkenazic Jews involved within the community, has dropped in recent years.

The first non-Ashkenazic Jews to migrate to the West coast settled in Seattle, the third largest Sephardic community in the United States. They were mostly from the Island

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[200]Daniel J. Elazar, Sephardic Jewry in the United States: A Preliminary Institutional Profile, p. 36.
[201]Ibid., p. 14.

of Rhodes and Turkey, arriving at the beginning of this century. Among the immigrants to settle in Seattle were families from Egypt as well.[202] One historian suggested that their arrival to Seattle was the result of three Jews from Turkey and one from the Island of Rhodes coming to Seattle and finding success in the fishing industry. They in turn sent letters to their relatives encouraging them to migrate resulting in 1,500 Jews immigrating between 1904-1912.[203]

A second historian supports this account writing:

> "Responding to the opportunities for development of the Pacific Northwest shortly after the turn of the century, Ladino speaking Jews from Turkey and the Isle of Rhodes came to Seattle. The first to arrive found a climate to their liking and Greek non-Jews who made them feel at home. They sent for their relatives and the migration began."[204]

At first they were not welcomed by the existing Ashkenazic Jewish population. The new immigrants could not speak Yiddish and therefore their Jewishness was questioned. Over time, they became accepted by the Ashkenazic Jews as well. The end result is a non-Ashkenazic Jewish population in Seattle numbering between 3,000-4,000 individuals. Today, they represent close to one-third of the entire Jewish community in Seattle.

Non-Ashkenazic Jews brought with them to the U.S. a

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[202] David Sitton, Sephardi Communities Today, p. 355.
[203] Ibid., p. 356.
[204] Daniel J. Elazar, Sephardic Jewry in the United States: A Preliminary Institutional Profile, p. 42.

few basic customs and traditions. Over time, these customs and traditions have been forgotten or lost. Although non-Ashkenazic Jews tend to be traditionally religious, their attendance at services has declined as described above. Although the majority of the non-Ashkenazic Jews spoke Ladino or Arabic when they first arrived, the third and fourth generation children in the United States speak only English with knowledge of few words from their ancestors' original language. Intermarriage between Ashkenazim and non-Ashkenazim has become commonplace. Many non-Ashkenazic Jews have even begun to follow the Ashkenazic traditions, especially those who have intermarried.

Certain customs remain common practice. The non-Ashkenazic Jews still tend to name their children after living relatives. Certain cuisine practices have remained intact such as serving hardboiled eggs, bolemas (spinach or eggplant and cheese turnovers), or borekas (pastry filled with eggplant or potato and cheese) on Shabbat.

Only in a few communities such as Seattle, Atlanta and New York do the non-Ashkenazic Jews have special Jewish day schools for their children. Most of these children now attend a community Jewish day school or public schools.[205]

Today there are over 150,000 non-Ashkenazic Jews living in the United States. From Syria alone there are 20,000

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[205]Rabbi Marc D. Angel, The Sephardim of the United States: An Exploratory Study, p. 120.

Jews in the New York area. One can find a non-Ashkenazic community in almost every major city in the country. With few Jews remaining in the Middle Eastern countries where the majority of non-Ashkenazic Jews originated, there will be no new waves of migration to the United States. What began as a population of twenty-three people over 330 years ago resulted in numerous large and vibrant communities which have added to the culture and traditions of the general Jewish population in the United States.

G. The Non-Ashkenazic/Ashkenazic Relationship

Difficulties have arisen ever since differences between the traditions and practices of the various Jewish communities have been noted. As each community established their own customs, they formed their own personal beliefs about Judaism and how it should be followed. Differences in another's practices were therefore seen as being anti-Jewish, or at the very least anti-traditional Jewish observance. Thus conflicts arose between Ashkenazic Jewry and non-Ashkenazic Jews over their different traditions and customs.

Attempts have been made to combine both non-Ashkenazic and Ashkenazic traditions into one code of practice. Joseph Caro's works, the Bet Yoseph and the Shulhan Arukh were such attempts. The Isserles glossary actually divided non-Ashkenazic practices and Ashkenazic practices. Each group used only certain segments of the glossary to define their own laws and legal systems.[206] The most positive element of these works was the adhesiveness it brought within Ashkenazic Judaism and also within non-Ashkenazic Judaism. It did not successfully combine the groups, but strengthened both populations.

Because of these legal differences and disagreement between their practices and customs, throughout history

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[206]Dr. H.J. Zimmels, Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Their Relations, Differences and Problems as Reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa, p. 56.

the relationship between the two groups has been tense at best. Some of the differences in practice are minor. For example, Ashkenazic Jews wear Tefillin during mid-festival days while the non-Ashkenazic Jews generally do not. But a simple difference such as this one has brought about claims against each other and their 'true' religious belief. Disagreements about which law code to accept and practice, be it Rambam's Mishneh Torah or R. Jacob's Arba Turim, have caused huge rifts between the communities.

Over time each group has demonstrated some willingness to accept the other. In England in 1784, in a non-Ashkenazic congregation, the leaders of the synagogue made the decision that Ashkenazic Jews could be called to the Torah if they were relatives or friends of people who were celebrating a special event. To lessen this statement of acceptance, the publicized statement concluded with the idea that these Ashkenazic Jews were not to be considered members of the community.[207]

As mentioned above, time was an important factor in each group's acceptance of the other. Marriages between the non-Ashkenazim and Ashkenazim at one time was highly disapproved by the congregation authorities. By the middle of the 19th century in England, these marriages became frequent enough to rarely attract attention. In 1842,

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[207]Albert M. Hyamson, The Sephardim of England, (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1951), p. 171.

in a decision by the elders of a Sephardic congregation, they decided that Ashkenazic men who married Sephardic women from their congregation could be accepted as members of their congregation if they applied for membership within six months of the wedding.[208]

In Palestine, and later Israel, problems have always existed between these two communities which have been forced together within this small area for so long. Bitterness developed when in 1853 and again in 1862, the Ashkenazic Jews tried to establish their own kosher butcher in Palestine and failed. Only in 1867 when more Ashkenazic Jews were entering the country did they finally succeed.[209]

Clearly a problem existed. The difficulty was finding a workable solution allowing the two segments to live together.

> "Already in 1902 the 'Yemenite Jewish Edah' was created to deal with Ashkenazi and Sephardi in Jerusalem because of the development of bad relations between them. Up until this day, there is a Yemenite periodical, Afikim, and it is always filled with readers' complaints about anti-Yementie feeling among Ashkenazi, and some even decry collective discrimination."[210]

There have been and remain many barriers for the integration of the non-Ashkenazim and Ashkenazim in Israel. The difference in language has always been a basic problem Children of each group are sent to different schoools which prohibit

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[208] Ibid., p. 303.
[209] Norman A. Stillman, The Jews of Arab Lands: A History and Source Book, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979), p. 365.
[210] Eliezer Ben-Rafael, The Emergence of Ethnicity: Cultural Groups and Social Conflict in Israel, p. 84.

their accepting one another. Both communities keep separate Bet Dins, religious courts of law, which keep the groups apart. After Israel's statehood was declared in 1948, segregation became more defined as the non-Ashkenazim and Ashkenazim divided themselves into separate neighborhoods.

Certain prejudices have added to the problems. Many non-Ashkenazic groups have a darker skin tone which is often a point of discrimination. Among the more traditional non-Ashkenazic Jewish population, clothing is a major difference, although today the majority of both the Ashkenazic and less traditional non-Ashkenazic Jews wear western style clothes. Differences in traditions in prayer are obvious, but are not often a point of discrimination since rarely do the two groups pray together. Still, among all the social cleavages dividing Israel's society, the rift between the Ashkenazi and non-Ashkenazi groups is seen as one of the most acute, if not the most acute.[211]

When one examines Israel's demography and certain aspects within the society, the discrimination becomes most apparent. In a survey of 340 seventeen-year-olds, 58% of the Ashkenazic youth said they would not marry a Sephardic Jew. Only 17% of the Sephardic youth would not marry Ashkenazic Jews. The greater prejudices seem to come from the Ashkenazic population.[212]

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[211] Ibid., p. 146.

[212] Heskel M. Haddad, Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions, p. 136.

As described in the section on Israel, the State takes a similar approach in discriminating by not including Sephardic Jewish history in the schools when teaching general Jewish history.

One finds large differences within the field of employment in Israel as well.

> "German (Ashkenazic) Jews have about 27 times as many professional people as the Moroccans. (936 verses 35). The general and unmistakable impression one gains after comparing the occupational structure of the two communities is that the Germans show a definite trend to concentrate on the 'higher' occupational brackets, while the Moroccans are characterized by a strong preponderance of the 'lower' occupations." (Although both groups worked equally in the fields of their choice when living in their countries of origin.)[213]

The non-Ashkenazic Jews find themselves disadvantaged in most of their ventures in Israel.

Due to the non-Ashkenazic Jews' general inability to break into the higher professions (controlled by the Ashkenazic population) and succeeding in Ashkenazic terms, they are labeled by the Ashkenazic Jews as being unstable, driven by emotions, impulsive, unreliable, and incompetent. They are accused of habitual lying and cheating, laziness, boastfulness, violent with an uncontrolled temper, superstitious, childish, unclean, primitive and lacking culture. In response the non-Ashkenazim label the Ashkenazim as irreligious, impious and godless, bad and evil, obsessed

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[213]Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations, p. 92.

with punctuality and efficiency, inferior, and second-rate.[214]

Clearly the gap between the East and West cultures peaks in Israel. The Orthodox Ashkenazic Jews serve in a position of intermediary between the modern Western Ashkenazic group and the tradition-bound non-Ashkenazic Jews. Both groups are somewhat accepting of them, although not in complete trust of their practices.

In modern Israel the situation has slowly begun to improve. The Six Day War in 1967 could be seen as the beginning of the acceptance of each group by the other. Many Ashkenazic Jews commented favorably on the battle performance of the non-Ashkenazic Jews.[215] This has led to some fundamental changes in relationships between the two communities. Having seen one another fight together for survival has brought about trust and appreciation of the others' importance. The non-Ashkenazic Jews have begun to feel more a part of society and the Ashkenazic Jews are more accepting and more positive about their place in Israel.

Since their differences began, Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic Jews have misunderstood each other. When the non-Ashkenazic Jews were the majority in such communities as Salonica, Constantinople, Amsterdam, London, New York,

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[214] Ibid., p. 314.
[215] Maurice M. Roumani, Faces of Change in the Middle East, p. 53.

and in Palestine during the past centuries, they looked down upon the Ashkenazic Jews and their lack of tradition. Now that the latter has control (although no longer the majority in Israel) and the power is theirs, the non-Ashkenazic Jews have to be dependant on them. As a whole, the Ashkenazic Jews have finally come to accept the non-Ashkenazic Jews and even at times have given a helping hand to their 'downtodden brethren'.[216]

In summary, there appears to be a growing adhesiveness between the two communities. In the United States the communities have often helped one another, or at least not hindered each others' progress in the communities. In Israel, acceptance has been seen slowly coming from both the Ashkenazic and the non-Ashkenazic Jews. Not since the beginning of Jewish history have the Jewish people lived together in one community. As Jews become united in countries such as the United States, Israel, and other communities around the world, they must recognize the richness of each others' cultures and traditions. The often 'hidden' non- Ashkenazic Jewish population adds to the strength and vitality of our Jewish society.

216Mair Jose Benardete, Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews, p. 164.

Chapter II

TEXTBOOK ANALYSIS

A. Using Textbook Analysis

In the previous chapter we have examined some major issues concerning non-Ashkenazic Jewry. It is the purpose of this thesis to determine how non-Ashkenazic Jewry is portrayed, if at all, in textbooks used in North American Reform Religious Schools. In order to explore this question I will use a method known as textbook analysis.

The analysis of school textbooks is a valid method for determining classroom studies for a number of reasons. The textbook itself serves as the basic tool used during much of our intellectual life in school. The very term 'text' means a literary composition which is woven together (as in textile). The texts are basic books on a subject; a point of departure as one delves into a field of study.

The National Association of Textbook Administrators defines a textbook as:

> "printed instructional material in bound form, the content of which is properly organized and intended for use in school curricula."[1]

Textbooks are written with the sole purpose of being used as educational tools. They reflect the perceived needs and wants of the community as understood by the publishers.

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[1]Claude C. Warren, "Adopting Textbooks" The Textbook in American Society, John Y. Cole and Thomas G. Sticht, Editors, (Washington: Library of Congress, 1981), p. 43.

Most often the textbook will reflect the practices and studies within the classroom. Shirly Jackson describes the findings of a national survey taken in 1976. In the survey it was found that 95% of classroom instruction and 90% of homework time were structured by the materials the teachers were using and not by the teachers themselves.[2]

Teachers do vary in their approach to using textbooks. Some might assign certain sections of a text, suggesting that only parts of the book are valid or important. Other teachers might assign complete books, not discriminating against any part of the original text. In some locations in the United States, teachers are held accountable for teaching concepts which are included within the textbooks. Looking at the textbooks generally can tell us three things:

1. the complexity of the subject matters covered
2. readability level of the materials students have encountered
3. what subjects have been covered and the approach to the subjects[3]

Clearly a textbook is not written to make the author wealthy. A novelist need not spend the time researching the material in a book yet often makes much more money. Also it is not easy to get a textbook published. It usually must be approved by an education board, by teachers, by principals, and pass tests using it in selected classrooms.

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[2]Shirly Jackson, "About Publishers, Teachers and Ready Achievement", The Textbook in American Society, p. 9.
[3]Sue Dueitt, "Textbooks and the Military", The Textbook in American Society, p. 36.

Those running the education program determine the majority of what is taught in the schools by the process of choosing the textbook to be used. Once selected, the few textbooks chosen can be seen as a guide to the school's curriculum.

> "A recent National Science Foundation study shows that the dominant instructional tool continues to be the conventional textbook, and that the long-time, big bestsellers continue to dominate the market."[4]

In the religious schools, the importance of the textbook does not diminish. Further studies have found that religious school textbooks:

> "inevitably stress the distinctiveness of the particular faith, particularly in a pluralistic society where diverse religious and cultural groups must assume for themselves the responsibility of transmitting their own heritage. Emphasis on the unique history, values and beliefs of the ingroup is necessary in order to help separate it from the surrounding community, but it may encourage a defensive or polemic attitude toward the others."[5]

This I would suggest may be the problem that we will find in the Reform Religious Schools in North America. These schools, started and run by Ashkenazic leaders, stress Ashkenazic heritage. The schools emphasize Ashkenazic history, values, and beliefs and usually completely ignore non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

To prove this I will use a textbook analysis, examining textbooks published by three major publishing companies

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[4]Frances G. Fitzgerald, "Textbooks and the Publishers", The Textbook in American Society, p. 49.

[5]Bernard D. Weinryb and Daniel Garnick, Jewish School Textbooks and Intergroup Relations: The Dropsie College Study of Jewish Textbooks, p. 15.

and suppliers to Reform Religious Schools in North America. This study will concentrate on the textbooks for the above mentioned reasons, and because the textbooks are more accessible to measurable content analysis and reflect to a certain extent the preoccupations of these religious schools.

B. Analyzing Reform Jewish Religious School Textbooks

For the purpose of this study, it was necessary to identify a representative sample of textbooks used in teaching basic Judaism and/or history in North American Reform religious schools. I surveyed fifteen religious school educators from Reform congregations asking them to identify the five major textbook publishers their school has used during the past twenty years. The three publishing companies included on the list of every educator were Behrman House Publishers, KTAV Publishers, and UAHC Publishers. I then generated the textbooks for the analysis by examining their catalogs of textbooks for use in the religious school setting. Textbooks were gathered from the library of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, the Valley Temple library, and the library of the Bureau of Jewish Education in Cincinnati.

In an attempt to cover a wide range of material, I gathered textbooks for both upper elementary grades and junior high school level students. A total of 33 textbooks written and published during this century were used.

Gathering of Data:

In addition to bibliographic information, each textbook was analyzed to determine if the following criteria existed:

a. Was the term Sephardic Jew used?
   If so, how was it used?

b. Was the term Oriental Jew used?
   If so, how was it used?

c. Did the text teach non-Ashkenazic customs and/or traditions? If so, what customs and traditions (sociological aspects including prayer, language differences, relgious observance, living conditions...)?

d. Were non-Ashkenazic Jewish scholars (Rabbis, Poets, Philosophers) described? Were they identified as non-Ashkenazic Jews?

e. Were there descriptions of the history or experiences of non-Ashkenazic groups? If so, how did these descriptions compare to the sections on Ashkenazic Jewry?

Each textbook was carefully examined to determine whether any of the above criteria appeared within the text. What does appear in the textbooks concerning non-Ashkenazic Jewry is summarized on the following pages.

Analysis of Data:

Each textbook is categorized according to the publisher and listed in alphabetical order by the author of the book. Each textbook has also been given a specific code to simplify the charts that follow the analysis. The code is B1, B2, B3... for each Behrman House published book; K1, K2, K3... for each KTAV published book; and U1, U2, U3... for each book published by U.A.H.C. Publishers.

The tables at the end of this chapter contain tabulated information to each specific criterion listed above. Through the individual analysis of each textbook and by examining the tables, I expect to find that the majority of materials used in North American Reform religious schools do not include much, if any, information on non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF TEXTBOOKS

BEHRMAN HOUSE PUBLISHING COMPANY

B-1. Bamberger, David. My People: Abba Ebban's History of the Jews.

B-2. Bamberger, David. A Young Person's History of Israel.

B-3. Butwin, Frances. The Jews of America: History and Sources.

B-4. Dimont, Max I. The Amazing Adventures of the Jewish People.

B-5. Elon, Amos. Understanding Israel.

B-6. Gersh, Harry. When A Jew Celebrates.

B-7. Kenvin, Helene Schwartz. A History of America's Jews: This Land of Liberty.

B-8. Kubie, Nora Benjamin. The Jews of Israel: History and Sources.

B-9. Levin, Meyer and Toby K. Kurzband. The Story of the Jewish Way of Life.

B-10. Levin, Meyer and Toby K. Kurzband. The Story of the Synagogue.

B-11. Levinger, Elma Ehrlich. Great Jews since Bible Times.

B-12. Levinger, Rabbi Lee J. and Harry Gersh. The Story of the Jew.

B-13. Rosenthal, Gilbert. The Many Faces of Judaism.

B-14. Rossel, Seymour. Journey Through History.

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KTAV PUBLISHING COMPANY

K-1. Karp, Deborah. Heroes of American Jewish History.

K-2. Karp, Deborah. Heroes of Jewish Thought.

K-3. Karp, Deborah. Heroes of Modern Jewish Thought.

K-4. Learsi, Rufus. The Jews in America: A History.

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF TEXTBOOKS (continued)

K-5. Samuels, Ruth. Pathways Through Jewish History.

K-6. Stern, Shirley. Exploring Jewish History.

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UAHC PUBLISHING COMPANY

U-1. Borowitz, Eugene B. Understanding Judaism.

U-2. Eisenberg, Ariel and Hannah G. Goodman. Eyewitnesses to American Jewish History. Volumes 1-4.

U-3. Gamoran, Mamie G. The New Jewish History. Books 2 and 3.

U-4. Grand, Samuel and Tamar. Jews in Distant Lands.

U-5. Gumbiner, Joseph H. Leaders of Our People.

U-6. Lurie, Rose G. American Jewish Heroes.

U-7. Miller, Milton G. and Sylvan D. Schwartzman. Our Religion and Our Neighbors.

U-8. Rossel, Seymour. Israel: Covenant People, Covenant Land.

U-9. Segal, Abraham. One People: A Study in Comparative Judaism.

B-1

Bamberger, David. My People: Abba Eban's History of the Jews, vol. 2, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1979, 247 pages.

a. The term Sephardim was used.
Defined as Jews of Spain now living in the Muslim countries.

b. The term Oriental Jews was used.
Defined as Jews from Asia and North Africa.

c. This text offered little information concerning non-Ashkenazic customs and traditions. It mentioned their use of Ladino and Arabic as their major languages. Little of their modern lives was described within the text.

d. Only one non-Ashkenazic scholar was described.
The text identified Maimonides as one of the greatest Jewish philosophers who was originally from Spain.

e. There were few descriptions of the history and experiences of non-Ashkenazic Jewry. These descriptions included a short section on the 'Golden Age of Spain', the Marranos' experiences, a blood libel in Damascus, and a map containing population figures of Jews found in Muslim lands and their migration to Israel. Also the text mentioned Operation Magic Carpet taking Yemenite Jews to Israel.

Only four of the 26 chapters contained information about non-Ashkenazic Jewry. The text was clearly biased, delving more deeply into Ashkenazic Jewish life. At the start of one chapter the text stated, "All of us today are in some way the heirs of Eastern European Jewry." This suggests the stress toward Ashkenazic Jewry in the text.

B-2

Bamberger, David. A Young Person's History of Israel, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1985, 150 pages.

a. This term was not found within the text.

b. The text used three terms to describe these Jews. Oriental Jews, Eastern Jews, and Jews of the Muslim world were used interchangeably.

c. The text offered no information on non-Ashkenazic customs or traditions. The one sentence suggesting their living conditions described non-Ashkenazic Jews as being primitive, suggesting they had never seen something as modern as a flush toilet.

d. Only two non-Ashkenazic Jewish scholars were mentioned within the text. Both Isaac Luria and Joseph Karo were identified as scholars whose origins were from Spain.

e. Little information was given about the history and experiences of the non-Ashkenazic Jewish population. In one sentence the text described the expulsion from Spain in 1492. Also Operation Magic Carpet, which took the Jews from Yemen to Israel, and Operation Ali Baba, which took Jews form Iraq to Israel, were briefly described. Only a small percentage of the book's vast information concerned non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

B-3

Butwin, Frances. The Jews of America: History and Sources, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1969, 148 pages.

a. The term Sephardim was used.
Although it was defined within the text as Jews from the Iberian Peninsula, the other references in the text were of Jews of Spain only.

b. This term was not found within the text.

c. The text described one custom of the non-Ashkenazic Jew. In one sentence the text discussed Ladino as a common language for the Sephardim. In this same book, an entire chapter was given to the discussion of Yiddish as a Jewish language.

d. Maimonides was the only non-Ashkenazic scholar identified within the text.

e. The text described the 'Golden Age' of Spanish Jewry and the expulsion from Spain. Of the 148 pages, information regarding non-Ashkenazic Jewry was found on only a few pages. Jews described within the text were generally only Ashkenazic Jews.

B-4

Dimont, Max I. The Amazing Adventures of the Jewish People, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1984, 176 pages.

a. The term Sephardi Jews was used. It was defined within the text as Spanish and Arabic Jews.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within the text.

c. The customs and traditions of non-Ashkenazic Jews were limited to a description of the languages commonly used by them; Ladino, Hebrew, Spanish, and Arabic. Also one sentence within the text referred to 'sophisticated Sephardi Talmudists' although no names were given.

d. Joseph Caro was the only non-Ashkenazic Jewish scholar described and identified as a Sephardi Jew within the text.

e. A map with arrows describing the migration of the Jewish population following their expulsion from Spain was one of the few items included within the text offering non-Ashkenazic history. Only two of the twelve chapters in this textbook included any information about non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

B-5

Elon, Amos. Understanding Israel, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1976, 246 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew appeared once within the text. It was not defined, but was used in a sentence comparing Sephardic Jews with Ashkenazic Jews.

b. The term Oriental Jew appeared three times within this text. It was defined as Jews of Arab countries.

c. The only description of non-Ashkenazic Jewry was a negative statement suggesting that Oriental Jews are less educated than Ashkenazic Jews. This text did not teach any non-Ashkenazic customs or traditions.

d. Maimonides was the only non-Ashkenazic Jewish scholar mentioned within the textbook. He was not identified as a non-Ashkenazic Jew.

e. References to the experiences of the non-Ashkenazic populace were extremely limited. When describing their migration to Israel the text states, "immigrants included primitive, half literate masses from the shoddy market places of the Middle East and North Africa."

Only four of the 30 chapters in this textbook included any experiences of the non-Ashkenazic Jews.

B-6

Gersh, Harry. When A Jew Celebrates, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1971, 256 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jews was used within the text. The text defined Sephardic Jews as those Jews now living in the East and those originally from Spain.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. A few customs and traditions were listed within the text. The book included the non-Ashkenazic custom of naming a child after a living relative. It also stated that Sephardic Jews recite Yizkor only on Yom Kippur.

By far the majority of traditions and customs within the text were Ashkenazic-based. For example, the text offered a recipe for Haroset using the Ashkenazic tradition of apples, nuts and wine. No mention was made of the non-Ashkenazic mixture using dates as one of the base ingredients.

d. No non-Ashkenazic scholars were described in the text.

e. The text mentioned in passing only two historical events that were significant to non-Ashkenazic Jewry. The first was a custom resulting from Jewish lifestyle during the 'Golden Age' of Spain. The second event mentioned was the expulsion from Spain which the text states began on the 9th of Av.

Clearly the text was oriented towards Ashkenazic Jewry. Only rarely did it mention other Jews, and then usually in passing or as a special contrast to the 'regular' Ashkenazic Jews.

B-7

Kenvin, Helene Schwart. A History of America's Jews: This Land of Liberty, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1986, 213 pages.

a. The term Sephardi was used within the text. The term was used as descendants of families from Spain and Portugal.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text. The text did describe Syrian Jews however.

c. This textbook described some non-Ashkenazic customs and traditions. It taught that Sephardic culture is different from Ashkenazic culture. It described the various languages Sephardic Jews use or have spoken including a medieval form of Spanish and Judeo-Spanish (also called Ladino).

Another example of the text teaching non-Ashkenazic Jewish traditions was its explanation of the Sephardi rituals for Tu B'shvat.

d. The text concentrated mainly on Ashkenazic Jews when listing individual Jews as important contributors to American society. The text included one man, Jacob Rodriguez Rivera, who was described as an important American Jew originally from Spain.

e. There were descriptions of historical aspects and experiences of non-Ashkenazic Jewry. One section discussed the Inquisition. The text described the first Jews in America who were Sephardim. It reported the anti-semitism these early Jewish settlers experienced.

The text also described the experiences of Jews migrating to America from Turkey. The text suggested the deteriorating conditions in Turkey led to their migration.

Although this text explored non-Ashkenazic experiences more greatly than most texts examined, there remained still an imbalance of materials leaning heavily towards Ashkenazic Judaism.

B-8

Kubie, Nora Benjamin. The Jews of Israel: History and Sources, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1975, 128 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew was not found within this text.

b. The term Oriental Jew did appear in the text. In a section of the text the term was defined as those Jews of Eastern background who were unskilled in Western ideas and business. This was the section of the text describing the Black Panther movement in Israel.

c. Little information was offered regarding non-Ashkenazic customs and traditions. The text described the Hebrew spoken by the Yemenite Jews as being the closest modern Hebrew to biblical Hebrew. The text also stated that, "Jews of Arab lands did not have an easy life."

d. Only one non-Ashkenazic Jewish scholar was described within the text. Maimonides was identified as a famous medieval Jewish doctor. His non-Ashkenazic status was not mentioned.

e. One paragraph in the entire book included information about the Inquisition and the expulsion from Spain. Also a second paragraph located elsewhere in the book described the Yemenites arrival to Israel.

I would place the percentage of non-Ashkenazic coverage in the book at less than 5%. The book might better be titled "The Ashkenazic Jews of Israel".

B-9

Levin, Meyer and Toby K. Kurzband. The Story of the Jewish Way of Life, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1959, 192 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew was not found within this text.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. Within the text only one reference was made to non-Ashkenazic traditions. An example of this was found in a description of the life of a 'typical' Jewish family. "While the men studied in Hebrew, the women used the Yiddish language." Clearly this could not refer to non-Ashkenazic Jews who never spoke Yiddish.

d. Two non-Ashkenazic men were described within the text. Maimonides, who was not identified as a non-Ashkenazic Jew, was called a great scholar. Judah Halevi was described as a great Jewish poet from Spain.

e. There were some descriptions of non-Ashkenazic experiences. One map detailed Jewish life in Spain from 700-1100. Also there were descriptions of the Arab wars against the Jews, the Inquisition, and the expulsion from Spain. Although the textbook is 192 pages, it described the 'Golden Age' and the Inquisition in two pages.

Although the book went into great detail over the many migrations to Israel, only one sentence was used in describing operation Magic Carpet bringing the entire population of Yemenite Jews to Israel.

The lack of information concerning the non-Ashkenazic Jewish population is clarified when one compares the space given to Ashkenazic Jews to the space allocated in the book to non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

B-10

Levin, Meyer and Toby Kurzband. The Story of the Synagogue, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1957, 191 pages.

a. The text discussed Spanish Jews on two of its pages.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. One sentence was found within the text describing the non-Ashkenazic custom of placing the Bima in the center of the synagogue. However the drawings in the book depicted the Bima in the front of the sanctuary with Ashkenazic Torah scrolls.[1]

d. Three non-Ashkenazic Jewish men were described within the text. Yehuda Halevi was identified as a famous Spanish rabbi. The textbook identified Solomon Ibn Gabirol as a famous Spanish Jewish poet. The last individual described was Maimonides. The text described him as a doctor, writer, and philosopher. He too was identified as having Spanish origins.

e. Within the text appeared a map showing the 'Golden Age' of Spain. It was found in the one chapter dealing with non-Ashkenazic Jewish history. Other than this single chapter, no information was given. Not one sentence appeared in the text stating that the first American congregation was founded by Jews from Spain.

This textbook from the "Jewish Heritage Series", like all the Heritage Series books, was greatly lacking in its presentation of materials concerning non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

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[1]Ashkenazic Torah scrolls can be distinguished from Sephardic scrolls by their construction. Sephardic Torah scrolls can stand upright in their hard casing. Ashkenazic scrolls are covered with a cloth mantel and will not remain upright unless held. The drawings were clearly those of Ashkenazic Torah scrolls.

B-11

Levinger, Elma Ehrlich. Great Jews since Bible Times, New York: Behrman's Jewish Book Shop, 1928, 160 pages.

[Note that this textbook was printed almost 60 years ago. I selected this book in order to get some idea if recognition of non-Ashkenazic Jewry was greater back then or similar to the textbooks published today.]

a. The term Sephardic Jew was not used.
The text included stories concerning Jews from Spain.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. No non-Ashkenazic customs or traditions were taught in this textbook.

d. Four non-Ashkenazic Jewish scholars were included within this text. Judah Halevi was identified as a great Jewish poet from Spain. Abraham Ibn Ezra was described as a writer who was born in Spain. Maimonides was recognized within the book as a great doctor originally form Spain. Also Nachmanides was similarly described as a doctor of medicine and of Jewish law.

e. Although this textbook used a 'storybook' approach in teaching history, one narrative did reflect a period of time when Spain was the center of Jewish learning. The story described a 'good period' for Jews in Spain. The term 'Golden Age' was mentioned.

Another story described the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and the Inquisition. Although these stories lacked much factual information, they offered the reader a general understanding of these events.

Although this text included some information on non-Ashkenazic Jewry, the great majority of the material concentrated primarily on Ashkenazic Jewry.

B-12

Levinger, Rabbi Lee J. and Harry Gersh. The Story of the Jew, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1964, 288 pages.

a. The term Sephardim appeared frequently within the text. No definition was given, but it was used as opposed to Ashkenazic Jewry. The term included in its usage all of Oriental Jewry as well as Jews from the Iberian Peninsula.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. Certain non-Ashkenazic cultural conditions were included within this text. One section described these Jews as being unchanged through many centuries. Another paragraph described the high levels of medical knowledge and literary growth obtained by the Jews during the 'Golden Age' of Spain. It suggested that during this time, Spain was the center of Jewish learning.

d. This text identified numerous non-Ashkenazic men, describing and identifying them. Maimonides was called the greatest Jew of the Golden Age of Spain. The text further described Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Bahya Ibn Pakuda, Judah Halevi, Abraham Ibn Daud, and Joseph Caro, all as significant Jews of Spanish origin.

e. Included within the texts were descriptions of certain experiences of non-Ashkenazic Jewry. These included a chapter on the Golden Age of Spain, the settlement of the first Jews in America (who were Sephardic), and a section on the Inquisition.

This text was among the best in giving equal information about both Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic Jewry. Although the term Oriental was not used, included within the book was a significant amount of information about the Jews of the Islamic countries.

B-13

Rosenthal, Gilbert. The Many Faces of Judaism, edited by Seymour Rossel, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1978, 159 pages.

a. The term Sephardim was used within the text. It was defined and used as Spanish and Portuguese Jews.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. Certain aspects of non-Ashkenazic culture and traditions were described within this textbook. Sephardim were identified as economically poor. They were also described as traditionally religious, observing Jewish rituals in an Orthodox fashion. The text also mentioned that the earliest synagogues in America practiced Sephardic customs.

d. Only one non-Ashkenazic Jewish scholar was described within the text. Maimonides was called a Jewish scholar. His non-Ashkenazic heritage was not mentioned.

e. This text included two sections concerning the history of the non-Ashkenazic Jew. It described the Sephardim as the first Jewish settlers in America. There was also a paragraph on their expulsion from Spain.

Although certain segments of non-Ashkenazic Jewry's history were briefly described, the text lacked much information regarding most aspects of non-Ashkenazic Judaism.

B-14

Rossel, Seymour. Journey Through Jewish History, Book Two, New York: Behrman House Inc., 1983, 160 pages.

[Note that I only examined Book Two. Book One was mostly biblical Jewish history and therefore covered information on Judaism prior to the division and contributions of the non-Ashkenazic Jewish people.]

a. The term Sephardic Jew was used within the text. The text defined it as Jews of Spain, Italy, North Africa, and Asia.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. Sections of this text taught non-Ashkenazic customs and traditions. Development of their religious practices due to their living under Muslim rule was discussed. The text described their living conditions and the great academies of advanced learning developed by non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

The growth of Marranos in Spain was described as was information about Ladino, the language of the Sephardim. A section taught about the Jews of Yemen and their craftsmanship.

d. Two non-Ashkenazic Jews were described within the text. Samuel Ibn Nagrela and Maimonides were both identified as important non-Ashkenazic Jews who contributed to all of Jewry with their wisdom.

e. Much of the important periods within the realm of non-Ashkenazic Jewry's experiences were described within this textbook. The book detailed the 'Golden Age' of Spain and what happened to non-Ashkenazic Jews both prior to and following this period. The Inquisition was described. The first Jews to arrive in America were identified as non-Ashkenazim. Their situation was also described.

This text offered much information about Sephardim and their experiences. Although the text almost completely ignored Oriental Jewry, it offered an almost equal balance between Ashkenazic Jewry and Sephardic Jewry.

K-1

Karp, Deborah. Heroes of American Jewish History, New York: KTAV Publishing House Inc., 1972., 155 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew was used within this text. No definition was given for the term, but it was used for Jews of Spain.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. Two non-Ashkenazic traditions were described in the text. They were the non-Ashkenazic practice of naming their children after living relatives and their Orthodox observance of Jewish traditions within their synagogues.

d. Although the non-Ashkenazic Jewish scholars described within this text were not as well known as Maimonides or some of the other great Jewish scholars mentioned in other textbooks, four men were listed who were significant contributors to bettering non-Ashkenazic Jewry's living conditions.

Isaac Abravanel was identified as a Jew from Spain who served as an advisor to the King and Queen. He tried to save Jews from being expelled in 1492. Luis de Torres, Columbus's interpreter, was identified as a Marrano in the text. Asser Levy, one of the leaders of the first Jewish settlers in America, was described as a Sephardic Jew who fought for the Jews' rights. Also Judah Touro was described as a philanthropist non-Ashkenazic Jew whose name adorns the oldest Synagogue building still standing in America.

e. There were descriptions of non-Ashkenazic Jewish experiences within the text. One section described the events leading up to both the Inquisition and the expulsion from Spain. Another section described the migration of the Sephardic Jews following their expulsion. Forms of anti-semitism specifically against non-Ashkenazic Jews were also described within the text.

Although the text did not offer much information about non-Ashkenazic culture, it did balance equally the historical information about both Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

K-2

Karp, Deborah. Heroes of Jewish Thought, KTAV Publishing House Inc., 1965, 176 pages.

a. The term Sephardi Jew was used within this text. It was defined as Spanish Jews.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. Two aspect of non-Ashkenazic culture were described within this textbook. First the text described the influence of the Islamic rule over many non-Ashkenazic Jews leading to the emphasis placed on song, poetry, and Middle Eastern architecture. This was followed by a short section describing Ladino as the language of the Sephardi Jews.

d. Numerous non-Ashkenazic scholars were mentioned in the text. In each case their non-Ashkenazic heritage was included in their description. Those individuals described included: Judah Halevi, Maimonides, Joseph Caro, Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Abraham Ibn Ezra, Abraham Ibn Daud, Isaac Abrabanel and others.

e. There were descriptions of non-Ashkenazic experiences and important periods in their history. One section examined the 'Golden Age' of Spain. The Inquisition, the growth of Marranos, and the expulsion were included in another section of the text. This section concluded with an explanation of Jewish migration following the expulsion.

Clearly there were informative sections on Sephardic Jews. But the lack of material on Oriental Jewish history and the great stress on Ashkenazic Jewry overshadow the inclusion of these few sections on 14th and 15th century Spain.

K-3

Karp, Deborah. Heroes of Modern Jewish Thought, New York: KTAV Publishing House Inc., 1966, 227 pages.

a. The term Sephardi Jews appeared in the text. It was used as a synonym for Spanish Jewry.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. The only non-Ashkenazic custom described within this textbook was the difference of language between Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews. The text stated that Sephardic Jews used Ladino as their primary language, and when using Hebrew, they used a different pronunciation than Ashkenazic Jews.

d. Four non-Ashkenazic scholars were identified within the text. Judah Halevi, Maimonides, Hasdai Ibn Shaprut, and Samuel Ibn Nagdela were all described as non-Ashkenazic scholars.

e. Important periods of history and experiences of non-Ashkenazic Jews were included in the text. The text described the Inquisition and expulsion of Jews from Spain; discussed the blood libel in Syria; and identified the first Jewish settlers in America as non-Ashkenazic Jews.

Of Karp's three textbooks, this one contained the least information about non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

K-4

Learsi, Rufus. The Jews in America: A History, New York: KTAV Publishing House Inc., 1972, 422 pages.

[Note that this book would be too advanced to be used with students who were not adults. I chose to include this more challenging book to see if teaching non-Ashkenazic Jewry was integrated into more advanced texts.]

a. The term Sephardim was used in this text. It was defined as Jews of Spain and Portugal.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. Very little was included within this text about customs or traditions of non-Ashkenazic Jews. Certainly non-Ashkenazic customs and traditions were not given any importance.

d. In one paragraph, Shmuel HaNagid, Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Yehuda Halevi, and Maimonides were all listed as the greatest Spanish Jewish scholars of all time. It was the only paragraph where non-Ashkenazic Jews were identified and not just mentioned in passing.

e. The book contained descriptions of the expulsion and Inquisition. Also included were short sections on the Marranos and the early non-Ashkenazic Jewish settlers in America.

As detailed and thorough as this book appeared, it did not include the bulk of material on non-Ashkenazic Jewry. It could be used as a source on Ashkenazic Jews in America, but should not be considered as complete as its title suggests.

K-5

Samuels, Ruth. Pathways Through Jewish History, New York: KTAV Publishing House Inc., 1970, 404 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jews appeared many times in the text. It was defined as Jews who were descendants of Spanish Jews.

b. Although the term Oriental Jew was not included within the text, many references were made to Arabic Jews, Yemenite Jews, and similar non-Ashkenazic Oriental populations.

c. This text stressed the outcome of non-Ashkenazic Jews living under Muslim rule for hundreds of years. The text described how non-Ashkenazic Jews adopted many customs and traditions of their Arabic neighbors into their own practices including clothing, speech (Arabic), and food.

d. Many non-Ashkenazic Jewish scholars were identified within this text. An entire chapter was used in describing Maimonides. Also identified as great non-Ashkenazic leaders were: Joseph Caro, Samuel Ibn Nagrela, Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Moses Ibn Ezra, Abraham Ibn Ezra, Isaac of Fez (Alfasi), Judah Halevi, and others. Each individual's special qualities were listed including their being of non-Ashkenazic origin.

e. Many descriptions of the history and experiences of the non-Ashkenazic Jews were included in the text. An entire chapter described Jews of Spain during the 'Golden Age'. Sections also contained information about Jews in Arab lands, migration of Sephardic Jews after their expulsion from Spain, and the non-Ashkenazic Jews who were the first Jewish settlers in America.

This textbook, although one of the older ones still available, was the most complete in integrating non-Ashkenazic Jewish studies with Ashkenazic Jewish learning. Its one major area of weakness was the lack of descriptions of the culture and customs of the non-Ashkenazic population.

K-6

Stern, Shirley. Exploring Jewish History, New York: KTAV Publishing House Inc., 1979, 111 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew was used within the textbook. It was defined as Jews from Spain as well as Jews in other countries who followed traditions started by Spanish Jews.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. The text included some non-Ashkenazic customs and traditions. The customs included special foods eaten and the practice of naming their children after living relatives. Traditions also included constructing a synagogue with the Bima in the center, and speaking Ladino or Arabic depending on their background. The text also described Spanish Jews as being well-educated, with a great appreciation for music, poetry, and scientific knowledge.

d. Five non-Ashkenazic scholars were included within the text. Hasdai Ibn Shaprut, Yehuda Halevi, Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Maimonides, and Moses Ibn Ezra were all identified as scholars in their special fields. Each also was identified as being a non-Ashkenazic Jew.

e. This text examined certain experiences in the history of non-Ashkenazic Jewry. It included a section on the Golden Age of Spain and the suffering of Spanish Jewry both before and after that period. The text described the Inquisition and the migration of the Jews following their expulsion from Spain. The text also included material on the important role played by non-Ashkenazic Jews in America's development.

The only information completely missing from this textbook was the life of the non-Ashkenazic Jews in the Islamic world between the expulsion from Spain until the establishment of the State of Israel.

U-1

Borowitz, Eugene B. Understanding Judaism, New York: UAHC, 1979, 232 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew was not found within this text.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found within this text.

c. Only one non-Ashkenazic cultural fact was included within the text. The statement that Ladino was a Jewish language was found in this textbook.

d. Although Maimonides was described as the most important Jewish thinker of the Middle Ages, his non-Ashkenazic heritage was not included. No other non-Ashkenazic scholar was mentioned.

e. There were no examples of non-Ashkenazic Jewish experiences coming from their long history. All examples given in this text were of Ashkenazic Jewry.

U-2

Eisenberg, Ariel and Hannah G. Goodman. Eyewitnesses to American Jewish History, New York: UAHC,
Volume 1 (1492-1793), 1976, 86 pages.
Volume 2 (1800-1875), 1977, 148 pages.
Volume 3 (1881-1920), 1979, 177 pages.
Volume 4 (1915-1969), 1982, 205 pages.

[Note that Volume 1 was subtitled: Colonial Period and Sephardic Immigration; Volume 2: German Immigration; Volume 3: Eastern European Immigration; and Volume 4: The American Jew. All the information listed in the criteria below are from the first and last volumes. Volumes 2 and 3 contained no information for our purposes.]

a. The term Sephardic Jew did appear within the text. It was defined as Spanish Jews.

b. The term Oriental Jew did not appear in any of the volumes.

c. None of the volumes taught non-Ashkenazic customs or traditions.

d. Luis de Torres, Columbus's interpreter, was the only non-Ashkenazic Jew mentioned within these volumes. He was described as a 'probable Marrano'.

e. Only the first volume contained any description of experiences of non-Ashkenazic Jews. It described how the suffering of the Jews in the Inquisition affected Jews in America as well as in Spain. This was not explored in depth however.

Although the four volumes together were more than 600 pages, they contained little information about non-Ashkenazic Jewry. Outside of the first volume which dealt somewhat with Sephardic Jewish migration to America and the Inquisition, no other pertinent information about non-Ashkenazic Jewry was offered.

U-3

Gamoran, Mamie G. The New Jewish History, New York: UAHC,
Book Two, 1956, 273 pages.
Book Three, 1957, 357 pages.

[Note that Book One was not used as it included Jewish history from biblical times until the period of the Maccabees. This period was before the split of Jewry into Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic groups. Books Two and Three are combined under the critera listed below.]

a. Only book three used the term Sephardic Jew in the text. It was used to mean Spanish or Portuguese Jews.

b. Neither book used the term Oriental Jew. Both books did describe Jews of specific Muslim countries however.

c. Book Two listed many non-Ashkenazic customs and traditions. Included in the text was a listing of the typical work performed by non-Ashkenazic Jews in Muslim countries (goldsmiths, weavers, traders...); how a typical non-Ashkenazic wedding became a festive event for the entire community; and how great scholarship was stressed. Book Two also described the jobs performed by Jews in Spain, and the importance placed on poetry by these Jews.
Book Three discussed the wealth and important positions held by many Jews in Spain but did not go into detail about their customs.

d. Both books listed non-Ashkenazic scholars and identified their non-Ashkenazic heritage. Those listed in the two books included: Hasdai Ibn Shaprut, Maimonides, Samuel Ibn Nagdela, Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Yehuda Halevi, and Joseph Caro.

e. Certain descriptions of the experiences of non-Ashkenazic Jews during their history were included within the text. Book Two taught that over one million Jews lived under Muslim rule, and that Muslims had created many discriminatory laws against the Jews. This book also had a chapter that included information on the Inquisition, the expulsion, and the 'Golden Age' of Spain.
Book Three examined the migration of the Spanish Jews following their expulsion. It also discussed Marranos both living in Spain and after they migrated to other countries.

Although both books contained information on non-Ashkenazic Jewry, the great majority of material concerned Ashkenazic Jews only.

U-4

Grand, Tamar and Samuel. Jews in Distant Lands, Teacher's Guide, New York: UAHC, 1977, 63 pages.

[Note that this is not a textbook but a teacher's guide. Also included in the criteria below is information found in the Jews in Distant Lands packet that includes newspapers, filmstrips, and cassettes on Jews in various countries.]

a. The term Sephardic Jew was used both in the guide and in the packet. In the newspapers it was used as opposed to Ashkenazic Jewry. In the teacher's guide there was a short explanation of the term, defining it as Jews of Spain and Portugal.

b. The term Oriental Jew did not appear in the text or guide.

c. The text taught certain non-Ashkenazic customs and traditions. When examining Jews from Ethiopia the text described them as having a primitive background. Associated with this primitive background were 'exotic religious customs' including a seven day wedding feast for the community.
The section on Jews of Iran described the Jewish schools within the Jewish ghettos where only the men were allowed inside the school.
When describing the Jews of Spain, the teacher's guide mentioned that Ladino was the language they used. If one examines both the guide and the newspapers together, many customs were described.

d. No non-Ashkenazic scholars were described either within the packets or in the teacher's guide.

e. Each Jewish community examined had some information about its history. Since certain non-Ashkenazic communities were included in this packet of texts, some of their experiences were described. These included the growth of Marranos, the Inquisition and its effects on Jews in Spain, Mexico and the Caribbean Islands, and Jewish migrations to a variety of countries.

Those sections on non-Ashkenazic Jews offered much information about their experiences in the country. The major problem with the teacher's guide and packet was its narrow focus on only a few countries. It would have to be expanded greatly to fully accomplish what its original goals may have been; to teach about the many different groups around the world.

U-5

Gumbiner, Joseph H. Leaders of Our People Book II, New York: UAHC, 1965, 261 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew was not used within the text.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found in this text.

c. No concrete examples of non-Ashkenazic customs or traditions were described within the text.

d. Three non-Ashkenazic Jews were identified as important individuals whose origins were Spanish. They were: Luis de Torres-identified as a Marrano; Joseph Nasi-another Marrano driven from Spain during the Inquisition; and Manasseh ben Israel.

e. Found within the book were brief descriptions of historical aspects of non-Ashkenazic Jewry. This included a two paragraph summary of the Marranos, mention of the Inquisition, and a description of the Jews' migration from Spain.

Only three of the 23 stories found within this textbook included any mention of non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

U-6

Lurie, Rose G. American Jewish Heroes, New York: UAHC, 1960, 224 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew was not found in this text.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found in this text.

c. The text did not teach any non-Ashkenazic customs or traditions.

d. Although Asser Levy was described as a great leader among the early Jewish settlers in America, he was not identified as a non-Ashkenazic Jew. No other non-Ashkenazic Jew was described within the text.

e. The one historical fact concerning non-Ashkenazic Jews found within this text was the statement that the first Jews in the United States had a Spanish-Portuguese background.

Clearly this book almost completely ignored non-Ashkenazic Jews as it described "American Ashkenazic Jewish Heroes".

U-7

Miller, Milton G. and Sylvan D. Schwartzman. Our Religion and Our Neighbors, New York: UAHC, 1971, 296 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew was used within this text. The term was defined as Jews of Spanish descent.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found in this text.

c. No customs or traditions that were specifically for non-Ashkenazic Jews was described within this text.

d. The text mentioned four non-Ashkenazic scholars but only identified Maimonides as having a non-Ashkenazic heritage. The other men mentioned included: Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Bahya Ibn Pakuda, and Judah Halevi.

e. The text included certain facts concerning non-Ashkenazic Jewry. The movement of the center of Jewish life to Spain during the 'Golden Age' of Spain was mentioned. Also Jewish persecution was described in the 15th and 16th centuries in countries where non-Ashkenazic Jews resided.

This text also noted that the earliest Jewish settlers to America were escapees from the Inquisition, thus giving them a Spanish background.

In its attempt to cover every major existing religion, this text dismissed many important aspects about Judaism, including the importance of the non-Ashkenazic Jews and the role they played in Judaism's development.

U-8

Rossel, Seymour. Israel: Covenant People, Covenant Land, New York: UAHC, 1985, 248 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew was used within the text. The textbook defined it as Jews from countries around the Mediterranean Sea.

b. The term Oriental Jew appeared within the text. It was defined as Jews from Arab lands.

c. Some non-Ashkenazic customs and traditions were taught within this text. The text explained that Sephardim spoke Ladino. It discussed that many non-Ashkenazic Jews lived among Muslims and learned many of their customs. The text described how Oriental Jewish children often worked to allow their fathers to take time for prayer and study. The text also mentioned that in Israel, special schools were created to give Sephardic children a chance to learn the Western education that they were lacking.

d. Maimonides was the only non-Ashkenazic scholar identified in the text. Although he was identified as the greatest Jew in the Middle Ages, his non-Ashkenazic heritage was not included.

e. The text included some information about historic events significant to the non-Ashkenazic people. These included describing Operation Magic Carpet which brought Yemenite Jews to Israel, the Iraqi Jews' migration to Israel, and the tent cities in which the Sephardic Jews lived upon their arrival to Israel.

Other than completely covering the migration of non-Ashkenazic Jews to Israel, the text concentrated mainly on Ashkenazic Jewry.

U-9

Segal, Abraham. One People: A Study in Comparative Judaism, New York: UAHC, 1982, 160 pages.

a. The term Sephardic Jew was not found in this text.

b. The term Oriental Jew was not found in this text.

c. No non-Ashkenazic customs or traditions were taught within this textbook.

d. One non-Ashkenazic scholar, Solomon Ibn Adret, was identified as a rabbi from Spain. All other people named within the text were Ashkenazic Jews.

e. The text contained no descriptions of the history or experiences of non-Ashkenazic groups.

Of all the books analyzed, this book contained the least amount of material concerning non-Ashkenazic Jewry.

C. Analysis of Findings

The following three graphs are included in order to clarify what criteria are found in each of the books examined. All the information in the graphs was extracted from the previous 29 pages. The graphs are divided by the three publishing companies. Each graph contains the list of books on the left side and the five criteria as the base. A "Y" indicates the specified criteria was found in that specific book. A "N" indicates the criteria was not found within the specified textbook. In order to give a 'yes' or 'no' response, the criteria have been more exactly defined as:

a. Did the term Sephardic Jew (or Sephardim or Sephardi) appear in the textbook?

b. Did the term Oriental Jew appear in the textbook?

c. Were two or more non-Ashkenazic customs and/or traditions described within the text?

d. Were three or more non-Ashkenazic scholars identified within the text and identified as non-Ashkenazic Jews?

e. Were two or more historical experiences of the non-Ashkenazic Jews included within the textbook?

Following these graphs is a chart comparing the textbooks of the three publishing companies, Behrman House Inc., KTAV Publishers, and UAHC Publishers. The questions then asked include:

-Which publishing company's textbooks integrated non-Ashknenazic Jewry into their texts?

-Which textbooks included all the criteria (a-e) listed above?

-Which textbook contained few or none of the criteria? The answers should inform the reader which textbooks if any should be used when integrating non-Ashkenazic Jewry into our religious school studies.

Behrman House Inc. Graph

	a.	b.	c.	d.	e.
B-1	Y	Y	N	N	Y
B-2	N	Y	N	N	Y
B-3	Y	N	N	N	Y
B-4	Y	N	Y	N	N
B-5	Y	Y	N	N	Y
B-6	Y	N	Y	N	Y
B-7	Y	N	Y	N	Y
B-8	N	Y	N	N	Y
B-9	N	N	N	N	Y
B-10	Y	N	N	Y	Y
B-11	N	N	N	Y	Y
B-12	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
B-13	Y	N	Y	N	Y
B-14	Y	N	Y	N	Y

Criteria

From this graph we find that ten of fourteen Behrman House books, or 71%, contained the term Sephardic Jew in its text. Only four of fourteen, or 29%, used the term Oriental Jew. Close to 43% described two or more non-Ashkenazic customs and/or traditions. Only 21% listed three or more

non-Ashkenazic scholars and identified them. A positive finding was that 93% included two or more non-Ashkenazic historical experiences. One statistic cannot be ignored. Not one of the fourteen books by Behrman House which were examined contained all five of the criteria used in examining these textbooks.

KTAV Publishing House Inc. Graph

	a.	b.	c.	d.	e.
K-1	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
K-2	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
K-3	Y	N	N	Y	Y
K-4	Y	N	N	Y	Y
K-5	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
K-6	Y	N	Y	Y	Y

Criteria

From the KTAV Publishing House Inc. graph we find that 100% or all of their books included the term Sephardic Jew, listed three or more non-Ashkenazic scholars and identified them, and contained two or more non-Ashkenazic historical experiences.

Not as positive, none of these books, 0%, mentioned Oriental Jewry. Close to 66% described two or more non-Ashkenazic customs and/or traditions.

Although when looking at the percentages, KTAV books contained the most information concerning non-Ashkenazic Jewry, again not one of their books contained all five criteria used in examining the books.

UAHC Publishers Graph

	a.	b.	c.	d.	e.
U-1	N	N	N	N	N
U-2	Y	N	N	N	N
U-3	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
U-4	Y	N	Y	N	Y
U-5	N	N	N	Y	Y
U-6	N	N	N	N	N
U-7	Y	N	N	N	Y
U-8	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
U-9	N	N	N	N	N

Criteria

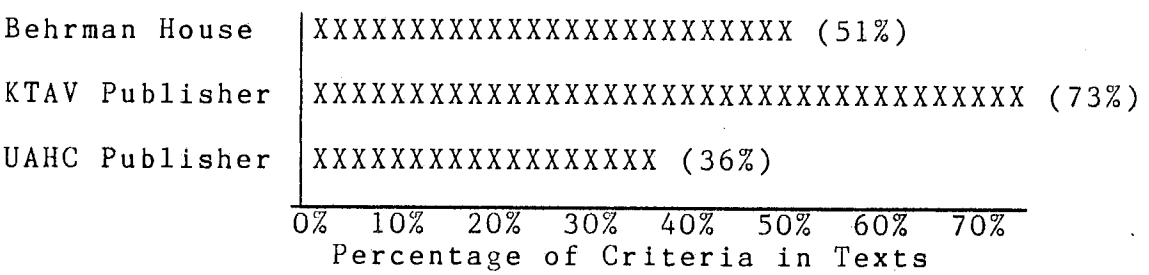
The percentages on the UAHC graph are lower that the first two graphs. Only 56% of the textbooks mentioned the term Sephardic Jew or described two or more non-Ashknenazic historical experiences. Just 33% of the books taught two or more non-Ashkenazic customs or traditions. A low 22% of the textbooks listed three or more non-Ashkenazic scholars and identified them. Only one of the nine texts, or 11%, used the term Oriental Jew.

Again none of the texts included all five of the criteria. Three of the nine textbooks, U-1, U-6, and U-9 did not include any of the criteria in them.

When all three companies are compared with each other, it is found that KTAV books on the average included the most information about non-Ashkenazic Jewry. Second to KTAV, Behrman House textbooks contained on an average half

the criteria which was searched for in determining if the books integrated non-Ashkenazic studies into their texts. UAHC books on the average contained about one-third of the criteria within their texts. The following is a graph giving the average percentage of criteria found in all the books combined for each publishing company.

Comparative Graph



None of the books examined contained all five criteria which should be included in a text that integrates non-Ashkenazic Jewry into its Jewish studies. Three books contained no information about non-Ashkenazic Jewry and another three contained only one of the five criteria that pertained to non-Ashkenazic Jewry. KTAV books contained the most information about non-Ashkenazic Jewry, but even their books contained an average of only 73% of the non-Ashkenazic material required in an integrated textbook.

Therefore, if one wished to include non-Ashkenazic Jewry in their Jewish studies, none of the books examined would completely fulfill their need. The analysis suggests that to properly integrate non-Ashkenazic studies into our Reform North American Religious Schools new texts must be written and most likely new curricula.

Chapter III

Towards an Integrated Curriculum

The conclusion of the Textbook Analysis chapter stated that a new curriculum was needed in order to integrate non-Ashkenazic Jewish studies into the Reform religious schools. To facilitate the creation of such a curriculum, this chapter will include a teacher-in-service program, introducing the idea to the teachers, and two lesson plans to serve as paradigms of such an integrated curriculum. The first lesson plan will be a two hour class for primary students examining a Jewish holiday. The second lesson plan, also two hours in length, will teach a life-cycle event for intermediate level students.

A. A Teacher-in-Service

This teacher-in-service should be given no later than at the end of a school year to allow teachers an entire summer to become fully familiar with (and help develop) a new curriculum before being asked to teach it to their students. Since it is the end of the year, the teachers should know each other and the school director. Therefore no introductions will be necessary. Optimally the teachers should have a few weeks notice about the teacher-in-service and be notified as to what topic will be discussed so that they can prepare. Also it should be made clear to the

teachers that it will be a working in-service which will last approximately two hours.

Begin the in-service by handing out paper and pencils and asking each teacher to write their definition of the term non-Ashkenazic Jew. Allow them a few minutes to write a one-sentence definition. (The term Ashkenazic should not appear in this definition!) Compare definitions and develop one that is acceptable to the entire group. The definition should include: Jews whose ancestors came from the Iberian Peninsula and Jews whose origins are from the Middle Eastern and African countries. At this point also discuss the difference between Sephardic Jewry, Oriental Jewry, and non-Ashkenazic Jewry. Sephardic Jews are Jews who originate from the Iberian Peninsula; Oriental Jews are Jews from countries mainly under Muslim rule in the Middle East and in North Africa; and the latter includes both of them.

Ideally, a guest who is a non-Ashkenazic Jew (ie.-a rabbi from the local Sephardic synagogue) could then give an overview of non-Ashkenazic Jewry. If a non-Ashkenazic Jew is not available, with a little research the director of education could give this overview. It should take only 15 minutes. Material to be covered should include an outline of significant non-Ashkenazic historic events (ie.-the great Rabbinic schools, the Golden Age of Spain, the Inquisition and expulsions from Spain, the migration

of Sephardic Jews into the Oriental communities, the early Jewish inhabitants in America, and the migration of Oriental Jews to Israel). Also a list of some of the great non-Ashkenazic scholars/rabbis should be handed out and discussed. The list should include Maimonides, Judah Halevi, Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Moses Ibn Ezra, Rabbi Isaac of Fez, Hasdai Ibn Shaprut, David Kimhi, Don Isaac Abravanel, Solomon ben Adreth, and Joseph Caro. Their contributions to society, or at least a statement about why we recognize their names today should be included. This list is by no means complete but should give the teachers a taste of the depth of knowledge and contributions non-Ashkenazic scholars gave to Judaism.

Following this short overview, review the present curriculum the school is using. Have each teacher spend five minutes looking for the information just covered in the overview in the lessons and textbooks from which they are presently teaching. Having copies of their lesson plans available to them would aid in this process. Discuss with the teachers the lack of non-Ashkenazic material in their lessons, making it clear to them that it is not their fault. With these activities concluded, suggest that it is time the school integrated non-Ashkenazic studies into their classrooms. (Approximately 40 minutes will be used in completing the above activities.)

Divide the teachers into two groups, teachers of the primary grades and teachers of intermediate students.

Hand out the paradigmatic lesson plans entitled "A Primary Lesson on Purim" and "An Intermediate Lesson on Jewish Weddings" which follow this in-service. After letting each group read over their lesson plan, ask the two groups of teachers to formulate goals and objectives for an entire unit on either Jewish Holidays or on the Jewish life cycle. If a guest speaker is available and can stay another thirty minutes, he/she could work with one group while the director of education works with the other group. Give the teachers about 20 minutes (stop sooner if the teachers are really struggling or if they finish early) to complete as many goals and objectives as possible. Have the two groups share their ideas with each other. To stimulate discussion, ask:

1. Do the goals cover completely what they really want to teach the students?
2. If the students master the objectives, will the goals be met?
3. Do the goals and objectives integrate Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic studies?
4. Why are these goals important?

Following the discussion, give the teachers a short coffee/tea/bathroom break. There should only be about 45 minutes left to work so try to keep the break down to a couple minutes!

Once the teachers have assembled, have a ten minute brainstorming session with them on, 'How else can we integrate non-Ashkenazic Jewish studies into our curriculum?'.

Ideas could include learning some Sephardic or Oriental Jewish songs during song sessions. If the school has Chugim or specialty workshops, the students could make a non-Ashkenazic dish in cooking or perform a play about non-Ashkenazic Jews. Non-Ashkenazic guests could be invited to visit the school or field trips could be planned to the local non-Ashkenazic congregation. Students could learn some non-Ashkenazic Jewish folk dances if they have dancing. Hopefully the teachers will think of these and many more themselves. Only if they are having difficulties coming up with ideas should the person running the teacher-in-service offer the above ideas.

Make sure all the ideas are recorded. For the next five to ten minutes develop a few of the ideas with them. What teachers would want to work on X project? How could the school facilitate X idea? It is not too early for teachers to begin planning special programs and activities for the upcoming school year.

During the rest of the session, the teachers need to learn what sources they can turn to for information. A list of resources should be handed out to them which should be reviewed as a group. On the list there should appear a list of local educated non-Ashkenazic Jews who could be called by the teachers. (ie.-the local Sephardic Rabbi, non-Ashkenazic members of the congregation, a non-Ashkenazic kosher butcher, cantor, mohel...) Also a list

of reading sources should be included. This list can be developed from the bibliography following this chapter, but should definately include:

Angel, Marc. The Sephardim of the United States: an Exploratory Study.

Hacohen, Devora and Menahem. One People: The Story of the Eastern Jews.

Haddad, Heskel M. Jews of Arab and Islamic Countries: History, Problems and Solutions.

Patai, Raphael. Israel Between East and West: A Study in Human Relations.

Patai, Raphael. The Vanished Worlds of Jewry.

Encyclopedia Judaica. Various articles including Sephardim, Iraq, Egypt, Yemen...

Also one of Maurice Roumani's books from the bibliography would help the teacher whose class is studying non-Ashkenazic Jewry in Israel. The books listed above are by no means the only sources available. These are listed since they are easy for the teacher to use and could be most helpful in their preparations. When reviewing these books, it would be helpful to either have copies at the teacher-in-service or tell the teachers where they can be borrowed or bought. (The Temple library would be improved if the Temple could purchase them!) Teachers may also suggest sources with which they are familiar (both textual and individuals in the community).

If possible, conclude the workshop with the teachers by serving a Sephardic or Oriental lunch (or at least a snack). One possibility is serving a variety of dips/salads

including Hummous, Eggplant Salad, Tahina with pieces of pita bread. For those more industrious, serving a dish like Couscous (a combination of veal, chicken, eggplant, zucchini, chick peas, carrot, raisins, and rice cooked in a spicy tomato sauce) will certainly give the teachers a taste of Oriental Jewish culture.

During the snack/lunch after the in-service, encourage the teachers to ask any questions they have concerning the material covered during the workshop. It might also be possible to establish teacher work groups at that time which will meet during the summer on the new curriculum. Teamwork will make the process of rewriting curriculum and lesson plans much easier and more efficient. At all times incorporating this new material into the curriculum should be presented as both challenging but rewarding.

B. A Primary Lesson on Purim

The following lesson plan is to serve as a paradigm of how to integrate non-Ashkenazic studies into a religious school curriculum. This lesson would be used as the first session for a unit on the holiday of Purim. It is written for a second grade class. This lesson plan would require approximately two hours of classroom time, the amount of teaching time given to Sunday school teachers in a typical religious school setting.

The lesson plan includes goals, objectives, activities, and a question guide for leading a discussion. Although a teacher would be able to take this lesson and teach it without any alterations it is recommended the lesson be adapted to fit the needs of each specific class. At the end of each lesson plan is a list of additional ideas for activities which would add to the students' learning. These activities go beyond the stated objectives of each lesson plan. They would not detract, but add to the students' overall understanding of the material. All materials needed for the class that could be reproduced follow the lesson plan.

Goals of the Purim Unit:

1. To teach the students the basic story found in the scroll of Esther.

2. To instill in the students an understanding that there exists many different types of Jews, and their differences make them special.

3. To enrich the students' knowledge about non-Ashkenazic Jews' observance of Purim as well as their Ashkenazic observance of Purim.

Objectives for the Lesson Plan:

By the end of the unit on Purim, the students will:

1. explain in their own words that we celebrate Purim because Mordecai and Esther saved themselves and other Jews from evil Haman who thought people who were different were bad.

2. correctly describe how Esther and Mordecai are different from the students and why this makes them good or special.

3. when given a list of Purim customs, identify which customs belong to Ashkenazic Jews and which customs are of non-Ashkenazic origin.

4. when given pictures of Jews celebrating Purim, correctly select the pictures of non-Ashkenazic Jews.

Activities:

Set Induction: As the students enter the classroom, the teacher should be reading aloud from the Scroll of Esther chapter six. Each time he/she (he from now on for simplicity) reads Haman's name, he uses a gragger, a noise maker. Once the students are all settled and their attention is focused on the teacher's unusual behavior, he should ask them:

1. When do we read this story I was just reading?

2. Why do we use noisemakers when reading this story?

3. Can any of you tell me what happened in this story?

The entire set induction should last no more than eight minutes including two minutes of reading the story and six minutes of questioning.

First Activity: Read an abbreviated story of the Scroll of Esther to the students. (story attached) It is a good practice with students this age to pause after every paragraph and make sure by asking questions that the students understood what was just read. Sample questions would include:

1. Was King Ahasuerus Jewish?
2. Why did the King want to honor Mordecai?
3. Why did Mordecai refuse to bow down to Haman?
4. Do you think Haman was good or bad? WHY?

Reading the story should take no more than 15 minutes.

Second Activity: After reading the story, list on the chalkboard the following names: Mordecai, Esther, King Ahasuerus, Haman. Under each name, list with the class all the bad things that person did in the story and all the good things he/she did. Then ask them:

1. How did Mordecai and Esther relate to (get along with) each other?
2. How did Mordecai relate to Haman? Why do you think they didn't get along with each other?
3. How did Mordecai and the King relate to each other?
4. How did Esther and the King relate to each other?
5. How did Esther and Haman relate to each other?
6. How did the King and Haman relate to each other? Why did their relationship change?

Develop the questions with the students answers. 'Why' is an important addition to the questions. Stress the importance of the relationships found within the story.

It was the personal feelings of these individuals that dictated the outcome of events. Use the chalkboard, drawing arrows to the names, thus linking them, to help clarify for the students what relationships are being discussed. Depending on the students alertness, this discussion should last no more than 10-15 minutes.

Third Activity: This next activity takes approximately 40 minutes. Begin by showing the students pictures of non-Ashkenazic Jews dressed in their holiday clothing (if the teacher can get slides or pictures they would be better than the few black and white pictures attached). Then hand out the outlined drawing of two Oriental Jewish women and ask the students to use their crayons to dress them in holiday outfits for Purim. (Give them about ten minutes for coloring before collecting them.)

Next explain to the students that Esther, from the Purim story, was also an Oriental Jewish woman, who might have looked like one of the women in the pictures. Discuss how Esther might be different from the children. Question the students:

1. Did Esther or Mordecai eat the same types of food that we eat, like hamburgers? (No!)
2. Did they wear the same type of clothes that we wear, like jeans? (No!)
3. What would it be like if we always ate the exact same food and dressed in the exact same outfit every day? (Boring!)

Discuss with the students how exciting, good, and special differences are in our life. Make sure the students realize how terrible life would be if everything was the same. Hold up some of the drawings and ask the students how they would feel if all their drawings looked alike. How would they like to use only one color on all their drawings? Tell the students what makes drawing fun is using all the different colors!

Take the students to a reading area (if one exists) and read to the students the book The Triplets by Barbara Seuling. (New York: Houghton Mifflin/Clarion Books, 1980) It takes only five minutes to read it aloud. Discuss with the students (another five minutes) how unhappy the triplets were when everyone thought they were all alike. Underscore the triplets' happiness when their family recognized how they were each different and special.

Return to the table area and tell the students they are now going to review the story about Purim. Suggest that Haman was a bad man because he thought people who were different were bad. Haman did not know that differences were good. Since Mordecai and Esther were Jewish, a different religion from Haman's own religion, he did not like them.

The King however saw differences as being good. When he saw Esther, he liked how she was different and therefore married her. He was a good person since he realized differences are good.

For the remaining few minutes before the first hour ends, discuss with the students:

1. Do you know anyone different from you? (Blacks, non-Jews...)

2. Do you know any Jewish people who are different from us? Falashan Jews? Sephardic Jews?

3. How should we think about these people who are different from us? Shouldn't we think of them as being good since they are different?

At the end of the discussion half of the two hour class period should be over. Give the students a short break!

Fourth Activity: This activity should take about 30 minutes. After the break hand back the drawings they did and discuss the colorful outfits the non-Ashkenazic Jews wear for celebrations. Suggest that many non-Ashkenazic Jews have darker skin than most American Jews. Remind them that because non-Ashkenazic Jews look different than us, we should remember to think of them as being special. And that is good, not bad!

Remind the students that non-Ashkenazic Jews are Jewish as well and celebrate Purim also. Tell the students that they celebrate Purim differently than we do however. List with the students on one side of the chalkboard how the students celebrate Purim. This list should include: reading the Scroll of Esther, dressing up like Mordecai, Esther, Haman or the King, eating hamentaschen, and giving food to the poor. On the other side of the chalkboard list

for the students how some non-Ashkenazic Jews celebrate Purim. This list should include: reading the Scroll of Esther, fasting for one day, memorizing the Scroll of Esther, girls snipping off a lock of hair and throwing it in a well (with a prayer for Queen Esther to bless them with beauty), and giving food to the poor.

Discuss with the students the similarities in the two lists. Ask the students what they think of the non-Ashkenazic customs that are different from their customs. Tell the students you want to try one of the non-Ashkenazic customs. Take the story read during the first activity and from the beginning, give each student one sentence to memorize. (Have these sentences already written on separate cards that you can distribute to the students.) Once all the students have a sentence, ask them to read the sentences aloud in the proper order. Then ask the students to spend the next five minutes individually reading/saying the sentence over and over as they try to memorize it. Finally line the students up in order and have them try to say their sentences without using their cards. (Be prepared to help each student successfully complete each sentence.)

Discuss with the students how difficult it must be for the Yemenite children who memorize whole sections of the scroll of Esther in Hebrew! Stress how much these children study and the importance they place on learning

the Bible. Tell the students that these children also like to dress up as one of the characters from the story. End this activity with discussion on how the Yemenite children may be like the students in the class and how they might differ.

Fifth Activity: This last activity, with only about 10 minutes left, serves as a review for the students and a way the teacher can evaluate if they have learned the material. Ask the students to sit in a circle. Going around the circle ask each student to say something about either Purim or about Jews from countries near Israel. This can continue as long as the students do not wander from the subject and have more answers. As soon as the students have stopped suggesting ideas, have them clean up the classroom! Class dismissed.

Notes: For teachers who have more than two hours, or who can take more than one class session teaching this material, added activities could include:

- -song session learning Purim songs (including a non-Ashkenazic Purim song)
- -arts and crafts with the students making noisemakers
- -Have the students make hand puppets of the Purim characters and make a puppet show telling the Purim story.
- -make hamentashen and eat them

-have the students on butcher paper create a scene from the Purim story (drawing the characters to look like Persians!)

Materials attached include an abbreviated scroll of Esther, pictures of non-Ashkenazic Jews, and a handout for the students to color in the non-Ashkenazic festive clothing.

Sources for the Teacher:

Hacohen, Devora and Menahem. One People: The Story of the Eastern Jews, New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1969.

Patai, Raphael. The Vanished Worlds of Jewry, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1980.

The Abbreviated Scroll of Esther

Now it came to pass in the days of King Ahasuerus, who ruled over all of Persia, over one hundred and twenty seven communities, that in the king's city named Shushan, that he made a special feast for all the princes and people of his lands. Now he planned a special feast, which was to last for one hundred and eighty days!

And once the party began, people enjoyed themselves, eating and drinking more than they had ever had before. And the castle where the King lived and where the party took place was beautifully decorated with all types of ribbons and material in many bright colors. And all who were there enjoyed themselves tremendously.

Now the queen, who was named Vashti, at the same time made a huge party for the women in the royal castle which belonged to her husband King Ahasuerus. And on the seventh day of these great parties, the King called to Vashti, telling her she must dance for all the men and show them her beauty. But Vashti was too busy with her own party with the women and refused to come as the king demanded.

So the king grew angry and told Queen Vashti to leave his castle and his lands. And Vashti left, leaving the king alone and sad.

But the king's advisors had a great idea. They held a special beauty pageant for the king. King Ahasuerus was to be the judge and the winner would become his new

bride. All the most beautiful women in Persia entered the pageant. Among the women was a beautiful young woman named Esther. Esther, who had never even seen the king before, was afraid of what might happen. Therefore her Uncle Mordecai went with her to the castle to keep her calm. Esther won the contest and became the new queen.

While Mordecai was still in Shushan, he overheard two men plotting to kill the king and steal his treasures. Mordecai hurried and told the king's guards who stopped these two men from hurting the king. The guards wrote down all that Mordecai had done into the king's record book.

After these things King Ahasuerus gave Haman, one of his advisors, a promotion, (a raise) making him in charge of all the people in the land. Haman was the king's manager! Haman then demanded that whenever a person saw him, they were required to bow down.

A little while later, Mordecai was walking along and happened to meet Haman. Haman told Mordecai to bow down to him, but Mordecai refused. Mordecai said, "I will not bow down to any man; because I am a Jew, only before God will I bow." Haman was very upset. How dare someone like Mordecai not bow down before him. He decided to make sure that no one would ever refuse to bow before him again. He decided to destroy all the Jews that were in the land of Persia.

Haman went to King Ahasuerus and told him, "There is a group of people scattered throughout your kingdom who are different from everyone else. They do not listen to me, but follow their own beliefs. Please King Ahasuerus, let me get rid of them for you and they will never trouble us ever again." The king listened to Haman and decided that whatever Haman wanted to do with these Jews was okay. The king did not know the Jews and therefore decided he might as well get rid of them.

The king's letter writers then sent messages all around the kingdom telling everyone that on a certain date all the Jews would be gathered together, the things they owned would be taken from them, and then they would either leave the kingdom or be killed.

Later that night the king could not sleep. He decided maybe if he read something he might fall asleep. He asked that his record book be brought to him. As he was reading, he found the section about how Mordecai had saved his life. The king asked his guards, "What honor have we done for Mordecai who saved my life?" When the king found out that nothing had been done to honor Mordecai, he decided to have Haman help him honor Mordecai.

The next morning the king called for Haman. He asked Haman what should be done for a man the king wishes to honor. Haman, thinking he was the one the king wished to honor, told the king, "For the man the king wishes to

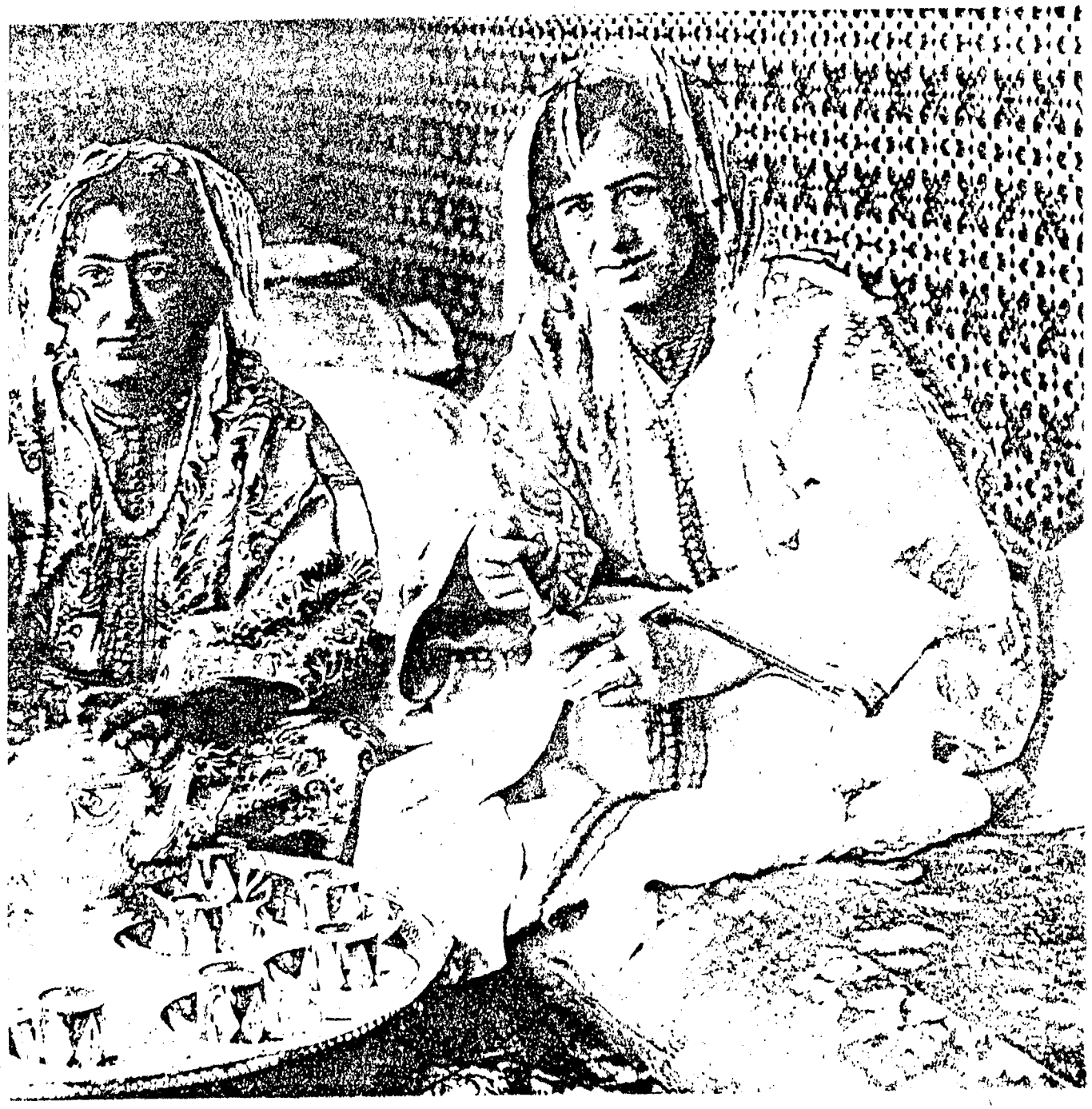
honor, let him be dressed in some of the king's finest clothes, and have him placed upon the king's best horse, and have him led through the streets by one of the king's advisors who will call out, 'this is the man whom the king wishes to honor!'"

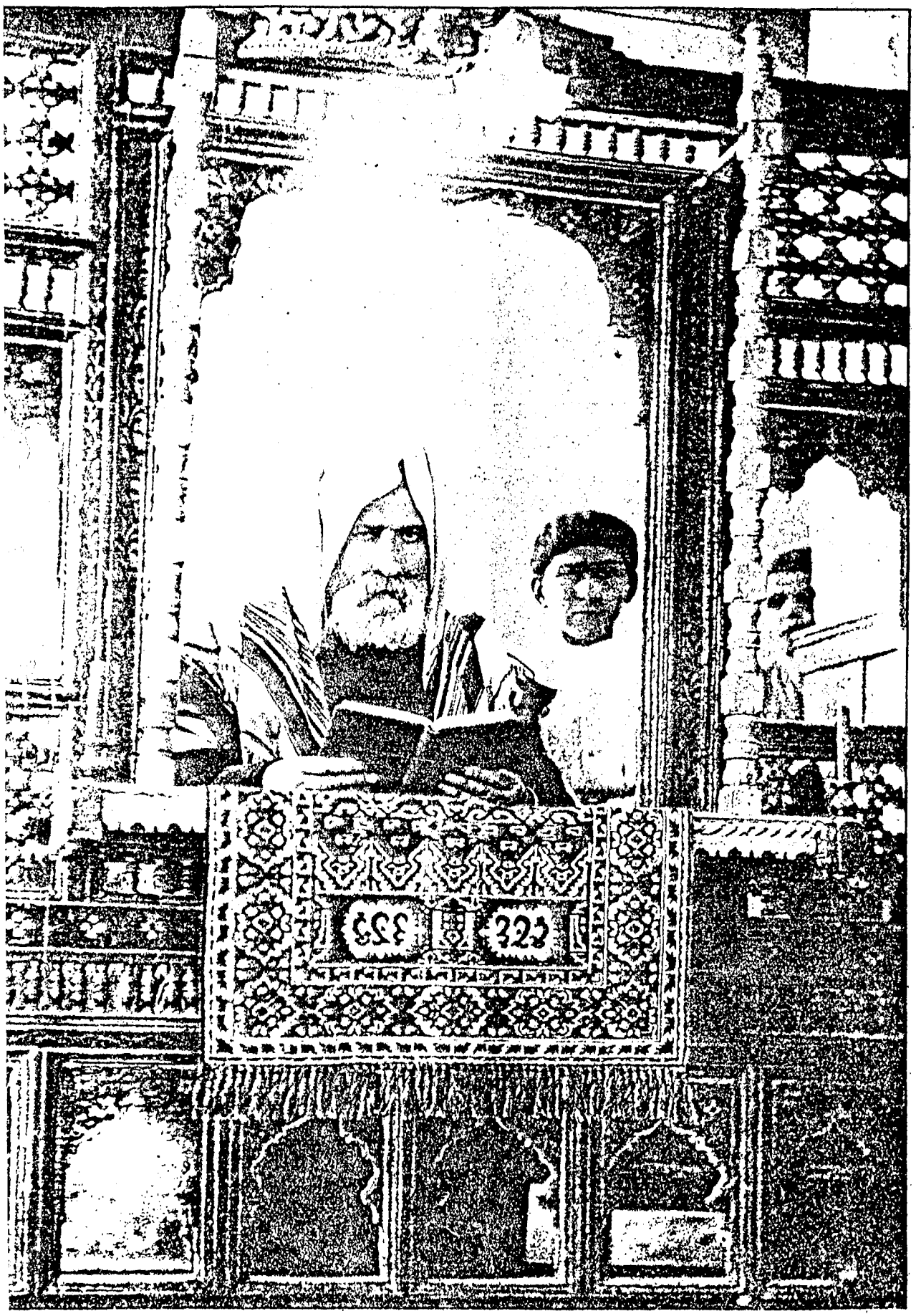
Then the king told Haman to get Mordecai and do all these things for Mordecai. Haman was very upset but was forced to do as the king commanded him.

Then Queen Esther, who was also very upset since she had seen the letters saying all the Jews would be killed, made a special meal for the king. At this meal the king was so happy he told Esther she could have whatever she wanted. Queen Esther told the king she was Jewish and that Haman planned to kill her, and to kill her Uncle Mordecai, and to kill all the Jews.

When the king found out that Jews were not bad people, but were good people like his queen and like Mordecai, the man who had saved his life, he decided that it was really Haman who was the bad man. When the day came when Haman had planned to kill the Jews, instead of the Jews being killed, Haman was killed. Then the Jews and all the people of Shushan could live in peace. And King Ahasuerus, and Queen Esther, and Mordecai lived happily ever after.

On this and the following three pages are pictures of non-Ashkenazic Jews in their traditional clothing. Color slides or pictures would be more useful if the teacher can obtain them.





With your crayons, dress these non-Ashkenazic Jewish women in their colorful holiday clothes. Then put your name below.

C. An Intermediate Lesson on Jewish Weddings

The following lesson plan is to serve as a paradigm of how to integrate non-Ashkenazic studies into a religious school curriculum. This lesson would be used for a class study on weddings. It is written for a sixth grade class. This lesson will require approximately two hours of classroom time, the amount of time given to Sunday School teachers in a typical religious school setting.

The lesson plan includes goals, objectives, activities, and when appropriate, a question guide for leading class discussions. Although a teacher would be able to use this lesson and teach it without any alterations, it is recommended that the lesson be adapted to fit the needs of each specific class. At the end of the lesson plan is a list of additional activities which would add to the students' learning. These added activities go beyond the stated objectives of this lesson. All materials needed for the class that could be reproduced follow the lesson plan.

Goals of the Wedding Unit:

1. To teach the students what makes a wedding Jewish.
2. To give the students a general understanding of what prayers and customs are used in the Jewish wedding and the meaning behind them.
3. To teach students the different Jewish traditions regarding non-Ashkenazic Jewish weddings.

Objectives for the Lesson Plan:

By the end of the unit on Jewish weddings, the students will:

1. explain in their own words the meaning of arusin and kiddushim.

2. list four things that make a wedding traditionally Jewish. Their list may include: hupa, breaking a glass, a ring ceremony with the vow Harei at..., ketubah, 7 brachot, and a rabbi officiating.

3. accurately contrast the differences between an Ashkenazic and a non-Ashkenazic wedding.

4. correctly summarize the 7 brachot, and express which of the blessings are most meaningful to them.

Activities:

Set Induction: Have in the classroom as the students enter: a hupa, glass almost completely wrapped in white cloth, a kiddish cup, a ketubah, and a wedding ring (or rings). Once the students are settled in their seats, ask them what all these items have in common. Once the class has established the fact that all the items are used for a Jewish wedding continue with the first activity.

First Activity: Give each student a copy of the wedding ceremony which is attached to this lesson plan. The teacher should guide the students through the ceremony, noting the two different sections, (arusin and kiddushim) and what each contains. Discuss with the students each part of the ceremony, emphasizing the importance of each part, and the meaning behind the prayers! Use the items from

the set induction as visual aids in discussing the traditional wedding service. List the main contents on the chalkboard following the pattern:

Arusin	Kiddushim
-prayer welcoming the couple	-ring ceremony
-first Kiddish	-reading the Ketubah
-blessing for entering the Hupa	-7 Brachot (& second Kiddish)
	-breaking the glass

This activity, including the explanations and discussion should take approximately 30 minutes.

Second Activity: This activity should take approximately twenty minutes. Divide the class into groups of three students each. Have each group turn to the 7 Brachot. Tell the groups they have ten minutes to order the blessings from most important to least important. (Or from which ones they think are most meaningful in a wedding ceremony to the blessings they feel are not needed in the ceremony.) Tell the students they must be prepared to explain why they chose that specific order. Once the groups have finished ordering the blessings, bring the groups together and have each group take turns explaining which blessings they felt were most important and which ones they felt were least important. Always ask the students WHY?! Make sure each group gets a chance to present their decisions.

*If the students normally get a break during class, this would be the best time.

Third Activity: This activity should take approximately 40 minutes of class time. Following their break, divide the class into six groups and give each group a description of one of the non-Ashkenazic weddings which are attached to this lesson plan. Inform the groups that they should carefully read the customs of the non-Ashkenazic wedding they have been given and then prepare a presentation for the rest of the class. The presentation can be a skit, a mural or drawing of some kind, a short story, a news report, or even a song, but it must somehow teach the rest of the class the non-Ashkenazic wedding customs described on their handouts. Tell the students they have only 20 minutes to prepare these presentations, each of which can last no more than three minutes maximum. While the students are preparing their presentations, make sure they are constantly reminded how much time they have remaining. (If necessary give the groups five extra minutes preparation time.)

Then allow each group to present their skit, news report, song... to the rest of the class. After all the presentations are given, discuss with the class these non-Ashkenazic Jewish wedding customs. Questions for the discussion should include:

1. What customs are unique to the Jews of X country?
2. What might be the significance or reasoning behind this custom? How might this custom have been started?

3. Which of these customs might you want to include in your own wedding? Why?

4. Which customs do you think are 'pagan' or outdated? Why?

Make sure at least ten minutes are left for the concluding activity.

Fourth Activity: This last activity serves both as a review for the students and a way the teacher may evaluate the students' grasping of the material covered in class. Ask for three volunteers. Explain to the volunteers that they will be role playing a meeting between a couple who wishes to get married and their congregational rabbi. The rabbi has just asked the couple what kind of wedding ceremony they want on their wedding day. The three students should role play the couple and the rabbi discussing their answer. (To include more students, two students can play the couple and two students could role play being the rabbi and the assistant rabbi!) Let as many students take turns role playing this situation, answering this question until the school period ends. Class dismissed.

For teachers who have more than two hours, or who can take more than one class session teaching this material, added activities could include:

-the class planning a mock wedding, including invitations, selecting or writing the ceremony, making a hupa...

-writing their own Ketubah after studying both traditional and modern Ketubot

-seeing a movie of a traditional Jewish wedding

-speaking with the rabbi about their congregation's wedding traditions

Materials attached include a wedding ceremony, and six separate handouts containing descriptions of various non-Ashkenazic weddings.

Sources for the Teacher:

Goldin, Hyman E. Hamadrikh: The Rabbi's Guide, New York, 1939.

Hacohen, Devorah and Menahem. One People: The Story of the Eastern Jews, New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1969.

Rabbi's Manual, Edited and Published by Central Conference of American Rabbis, New York, 1961.

MARRIAGE SERVICE

Rabbi

Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord; (we bless you out of the house of the Lord.)

בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְיָ.
בֵּרַכְנוּכֶם מִבֵּית יְיָ:

Serve the Lord with gladness; come before Him with singing.

עִבְדוּ אֶת־יְיָ בְּשִׂמְחָה.
בֹּאוּ לְפָנָיו בִּרְנָנָה:

O God supremely blessed, supreme in might and glory, guide and bless this bridegroom and bride.

מִי אַדִּיר עַל הַכֹּל. מִי
בָּרוּךְ עַל הַכֹּל. מִי נָּדוֹל
עַל הַכֹּל. יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־הֶחָתָן
וְאֶת־הַכַּלָּה:

Address by Rabbi may be delivered here.

This ceremony is called in our tradition Kiddushin, which means consecration. Join me, therefore, in affirming our faith in life's holiness by reciting the ancient words:

(*Bridegroom and bride*): Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who dost sanctify Thy children by the holy covenant of marriage.

The Rabbi lifts up the wine cup and says:

כּוֹס יְשׁוּעוֹת אֶשָּׂא וּבְשֵׁם יְיָ אֶקְרָא:

I will lift up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord.

Drink from the cup of life together. Be united by the joys you will taste together. Be strengthened by the burdens you will bear together.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן:

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, our God, Ruler of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

The wine is offered to the bridegroom and bride.

Rabbi

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ מְקַדֵּשׁ עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל יְדֵי (חֻפָּה וְ) קִדּוּשִׁין:

May God, who hears your first prayer as you enter upon marriage, receive the prayers you will offer together in all of life's experiences throughout your days. With faith in our God who sanctifies life, dedicate yourselves each to the other by answering in the presence of this company:

(*To bridegroom*): Do you ..... take ..... to be your wife, promising to cherish and protect her, whether in good fortune or in adversity, and to seek together with her a life hallowed by the faith of Israel?

(*To bride*): Do you ..... take ..... to be your husband, promising to cherish and protect him, whether in good fortune or in adversity, and to seek together with him a life hallowed by the faith of Israel?

Arusin ends here.
Kiddushim begins.

(*To the bridegroom*): As you place this ring upon the finger of your bride, repeat the words which hallow every Jewish marriage:

הֲרֵי אַתְּ מְקֻדֶּשֶׁת לִי בְּטַבַּעַת זוֹ כְּדַת מֹשֶׁה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל:

With this ring be thou consecrated unto me as my wife according to the law of God and the faith of Israel.

(*To the bride*): And you ..... (place this ring upon your bridegroom's finger as a token of wedlock and) say unto him these words:

הֲרֵי אַתָּה מְקֻדָּשׁ לִי (בְּטַבַּעַת זוֹ) כְּדַת מֹשֶׁה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל.

(With this ring) be thou consecrated unto me as my husband according to the law of God and the faith of Israel.

In the presence of this company as witness you have spoken the words and performed the rites which unite your lives. I, therefore, declare you ..... and you ..... husband and wife, married in accordance with the laws of the State of ..... and according to the tradition of our Jewish faith.

And now I ask you and all your dear ones here to bow your heads in reverence. Silently let us pray that God will bless your home and help you to achieve your highest hopes.

Pause for silent prayer

כתובה

ב___ בשבת ___ לחודש ___ שנת
חמשת אלפים ושבע מאות ו___ לבריאת
העולם למנין שאנו מונים כאן___

אמר מר___
בן___
ו___ החתן
למרת___
בת___
ו___ הכלה
הוי לי לאשתי כדת משה
וישראל ואני אוקיר
ואכבד אותך כדרך
בני ישראל המוקירים
ומכבדים את נשיהם
באמונה וביושר

הכלה___
בת___
ו___ אמרה
ל___
בן___
ו___ החתן
הוה לי לאישי כדת משה
וישראל ואני אוקיר
ואכבד אותך כדרך
בנות ישראל המוקירות
ומכבדות את בעליהן
באמונה וביושר

החתן והכלה הבטיחו זה לזה לשאוף
להשיג את המטרות הבאות משך חייהם
המשותפים להגיע לגילוי לב הדדי אשר
יאפשר להם להשתתף בשלימותם את מחשבותיהם
הרגשותיהם וחוויותיהם

להיות ערים ופתוחים האחד לכל צרכי השני
לשאוף להגיע להגשמה הדדית של צרכי השכל
הרגש הגוף והנפש לנצור את נחלת
היהדות ועם ישראל בביתם בחיי משפחתם
ובקשריהם החברתיים

הנשואים האלו אושרו גם כן על ידי השלטונות
האזרחיים ב___

והכל שריר וקיים

עד___ עד___
החתן___ הכלה___
הרב___

On the___day of the week the___day of___
Five thousand seven hundred___since the creation
of the world as we reckon time here in___

The bride___
daughter of___
and___
promised___the groom
son of___
and___
You are my husband according
to the tradition of Moses and
Israel I shall cherish you
and honor you as is customary
among the daughters of Israel
who have cherished and
honored their husbands in
faithfulness and in integrity

The groom___
son of___
and___
promised___the bride
daughter of___
and___
You are my wife according
to the tradition of Moses and
Israel I shall cherish you
and honor you as is customary
among the sons of Israel
who have cherished and
honored their wives in
faithfulness and in integrity

The groom and bride have also promised each other to strive throughout their lives together to achieve an openness which will enable them to share their thoughts their feelings and their experiences

To be sensitive at all times to each others needs to attain mutual intellectual emotional physical and spiritual fulfillment to work for the perpetuation of Judaism and of the Jewish people in their home in their family life and in their communal endeavors

This marriage has been authorized also by the civil authorities of___

It is valid and binding

witness___ witness___
bride___ groom___
rabbi___

The above ketubbah is the one commonly used by the Conservative movement.
It is a sample of an equalized ketubbah.

. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן:

. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַכֹּל בָּרָא כְּבוֹדוֹ:

: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם יוֹצֵר הָאָדָם:

: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת־ אָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ. בְּצֶלֶם דְּמוּת תַּבְנִיתוֹ. וְהִתְקִין לוֹ מִמֶּנּוּ נִין עֲדֵי עַד. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ יוֹצֵר הָאָדָם:

:.שׂוֹשׂ תָּשִׂישׂ וְתָגֵל הָעֲקָרָה. בְּקִבּוּץ בָּנֶיהָ לְתוֹכָהּ בְּשִׂמְחָה. רוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ מְשַׂמֵּחַ צִיּוֹן בְּבָנֶיהָ:

. שַׂמֵּחַ תְּשַׂמַּח רֵעִים הָאֲהוּבִים. כְּשַׂמֶּחֱךָ יְצִירְךָ בְּגַן עֵדֶן קֶדֶם. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ מְשַׂמֵּחַ חָתָן וְכַלָּה:

: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא שָׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה. חָתָן וְכַלָּה. גִּילָה רִנָּה. דִּיצָה וְחֶדְוָה. אַהֲבָה וְאַחֲוָה. וְשָׁלוֹם וְרֵעוּת. מְהֵרָה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִשָּׁמַע בְּעָרֵי יְהוּדָה וּבְחוּצוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם. קוֹל שָׂשׂוֹן וְקוֹל שִׂמְחָה. קוֹל חָתָן וְקוֹל כַּלָּה. קוֹל מִצְהֲלוֹת חֲתָנִים מֵחֻפָּתָם וּנְעָרִים מִמִּשְׁתֵּה נְגִינָתָם. רוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ מְשַׂמֵּחַ חָתָן עִם־הַכַּלָּה:

7 Brachot

1. Praised art Thou O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has created the fruit of the vine as a symbol of our humn joy. Amen.
2. We abound in blessing and my all created humn souls reach for a greater glory. Amen.
3. We abound in blessing as we daily discover the source of our Creator and our ever groving lives. Amen.
4. We abound in blessing man, woman were created that they might live and love and so, perpetuate life. Amen.
5. We abound in blessing being permitted to share in each other's joy. Amen.
6. We abound in blessing for hope of all people when we see the closeness of one man and one woman. Amen.
7. In the cities of Judah and the courtyard of Jerusalem let the sounds of joy and the sounds of happiness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride be heard. Be greatful for the force that allows us to over-come separateness so that man and woman may be joined together. Praised art Thou O Lord, who rejoices with the bride and groom, and the happiness they bring together. AMEN.

יְבָרֶכְךָ יְיָ וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ:

יָאֵר יְיָ פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וִיחֻנֶּךָּ:

יִשָּׂא יְיָ פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם:

May the Lord bless thee and keep thee.

May the Lord cause His countenance to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee.

May the Lord lift up His countenance unto thee and give thee peace. Amen.

Family life began with the engagement bond, or *kiddush henzi* (sacred ties of matrimony, arranged by the two sets of parents). The marriage was consummated at the age of thirteen to fourteen, but in some localities it even took place when the boys were ten or eleven.

Once the parents had their eyes on a young damsel, they would send emissaries to her parents to commence negotiations. The emissaries, usually a man and a woman, would first investigate the nature and character of the potential bride, to see whether she would suit the young man. If their report was favorable, they would be sent back to discuss the "price" with the parents. Once an agreement was reached, the two fathers would get together to talk terms in the greatest detail. The groom's father would undertake to supply the bridal vestments, five gold pieces and a silver belt, as well as the silken wedding gown.

The bride's parents, who wished to raise the bride in everyone's esteem, would begin by naming an outrageous price which was eventually pared down to a reasonable figure. This done, the grooms's parents would hold a feast for the town's dignitaries, headed by the rabbi and the *dayan*. The formal feast would begin with the father's dispatching to the bride's father, through some of the notables present, a "down payment", along with delicacies and slabs of sugar. The bride's parents would welcome them, and the *t'naim* (terms and conditions) would be written, executed and witnessed right then and there. This done, the emissaries would be fed well and would then return to the home of the groom, singing lustily along the way.

The women would hold a party of their own, and the groom would hold a "stag" for his bosom friends, the main feature of which was a popular troubador who sang about heroic deeds as well as ballads popular in the country at the time. The young people would punctuate the merriment with pistol shots fired into the air.

Every evening thereafter and until the wedding itself, the young men would visit their friends, along with an instrumental trio called *zuranu* and consisting of a drum and pipes. The bride's girlfriends would, at the same time, gather about her in a circle and sing love songs. On the second and third days, the girls would accompany the bride to the homes of female relatives for the parting good wishes. The bride would be dressed in rags, and the relatives would give her gifts. If their route took them past the groom's home, his friends would sally forth and "drive off" the party with bits of straw and sand.

A few months following the engagement, the girl's parents would invite the groom to their home. He would come laden with gifts, which he deposited in a large bowl placed on the table for the purpose. The young lady would be brought in for a formal "meeting with the engaged," at which point the young men who accompanied the groom would stretch themselves out on the floor and pretend to be asleep.

Wednesday was the accepted day for weddings among Caucasus Jews. On Sunday, ten days before the wedding, friends of the groom would be sent with roast meat and hardboiled eggs to the bride's home. They were met by the bridesmaids, who pelted them and "caused them to retreat in disgrace." This custom, which was very popular with the young people was repeated through Thursday. That afternoon the bridesmaids would deck the bride out in her wedding dress and then go out to accept the offering from the young men. That night the bridesmaids slept in the bride's home while the groom's attendants slept in his home.

The "best man," usually a lad of ten, was appointed on the Sabbath preceding the wedding, and he remained at the groom's side until the ceremony. That Sabbath was spent in high spirits.

On Sunday, the parents of the groom dispatched two emissaries to invite everyone to the wedding Moslems as well as Jews in the area.

The fourth day, the day of the wedding, was a fast day for the young people. In the afternoon the rabbi and relatives of the groom would come to the bride's home to appraise the clothes and ornaments which she had gathered. Her family would attempt to raise the value of the dowry, and in the ensuing argument the rabbi would act as mediator. The father of the bride would then add gifts twice the value of the sum he had received for his daughter.

Prior to the wedding ceremony, bride and groom would be taken to the respective bathhouses. The groom's head would then be shaved, and he would be decked out in his wedding finery. His exit would be greeted by his friends with pistol shots. In Kuba and Daraband it was customary for them to come up to the groom, kiss him on the forehead and slip a few coins into his pocket. On his way home he would be met by girls carrying baskets with red apples on their heads, among which there stood out small tree-like figures with burning candles for branches: the girls would dance around him to the rhythm of little drums until he reached his home. The same ceremony attended the return of the bride to her home, where older women were waiting to braid her hair; the bride would weep loudly to the very end.

Now came the time for the bride to bid farewell to the home of her parents. She would kneel before her mother and ask for forgiveness for any pain that she might have caused her. The mother would lift her from the ground, kiss her on the forehead and bless her. Then the procession to the canopy would begin. The groom went through the same procedure, but his escort to the wedding canopy consisted of a troop of his "best men," often mounted on horses and disporting themselves with pistol shots fired into the air.

Where the bride came from another village, a special mission, composed of nine men and nine women, would leave the groom's village, on the day prior to the wedding, to fetch her. As they would be leaving, the groom's relatives would pour pitchers of water in the wake of their carriages, in blessing. When they returned, with the bride and her entourage, the the groom's friends, arrayed in their full weaponry, would gallop back to announce their arrival. The bride would be on horseback, her steed decked out with the finest equine embellishments. As she entered the village, the groom's brother would catch hold of the horse's bridle and lead it into the village, while holding a lighted candle in his other hand.

At the entrance to the bridegroom's home, the bride would be met with a bowl of honey, into which she dipped her fingers and then anointed the *mezuza*, the doorposts and the threshold.

The wedding procession to the synagogue was led by singers and musicians, followed by the bridal party. The palms of the attendants were painted red.

The canopy was set up in the yard of the synagogue. The *dayan* read the *ketuba*, translating it into the vernacular, then pronounced the traditional seven Benedictions. The groom betrothed the bride, then flung a glass to the ground, as the audience shouted *"Nakke sa'at" (mazal tov)."* On their return, the newlyweds would be pelted from the rooftops with rice, raisins, nuts and flour, so that, by the time they reached their destination, their clothes were white.

The wedding feast would begin with the scattering of dried radishes among the guests, who were seated on mats. The main dish was "waani"—chunks of breast of lamb, garnished with raisins, onions, garlic and milled horseradish, covered with a thick layer of rice and fat. As the guests ate, they were blessed, each in turn, by the rabbi.

Wedding gifts were showered on the couple at a special *"natar"* (gift) feast. The young husband, flanked by dignitaries of the community, would keep his eyes on the ground. Two of his friends would keep passing on to him glasses of wine, and he would hand a glass to each guest who came up to tender his gift. A scribe, sitting at the young man's left, listed the gifts and the names of their respective donors. This accomplished, the young man and his friends would stroll outside until evening, the time for *sharm wako*, the unveiling of the bride's face.

The husband and his closest friends would enter the bride's room and formally ask the bridesmaids to reveal the young wife's features. The couple was then left alone for a brief hour, after which the two joined the other guests for merriment until the morning hours.

The seven days of the marriage feast were highlighted with the husband being called to the Torah to read the Scriptural passage: " . . and Abraham grew old." The bride would bring a box of snuff, which the sexton then proceeded to distribute among the worshippers.

As of his Bar Mitzvah, celebrated in much the same fashion as in other Oriental Jewish communities, the young lad became a man, ready to help his father earn the family bread and to become the object for matrimonial negotiations. His bride was, in all likelihood, nine or ten years old. Their engagement was marked by a mere handshake—by the fathers of the couple—and usually lasted a year or two, during which the bride and groom exchanged gifts on every holiday. A special reception was given to the groom by the parents of the bride, and he would arrive carrying a large tray of wood or copper, laden with sweets artistically arranged and decorated with flowers. The bride, veiled, sat in a corner, while her family entertained her chosen one.

Two days before the wedding, the bride was led to the bathhouse for ritual immersion. On the following day, the groom sent the bride henna powder for her hands and feet, which the women rubbed on her limbs while chanting and singing. Early on the day of the wedding, the groom was escorted to the bathhouse; when the young man and his entourage returned, they partook of sweets sent by the bride—all except the groom, who was fasting. The bride, in the meantime, donned her wedding dress, sent to her that very morning by the groom.

The wedding ceremony over, the guests split into two groups—the men and the groom in one chamber, the women and the bride in another—for the wedding feast, until late into the night, when the entire assemblage escorted the bride to the home of her husband.

Marriage was held to be the cornerstone of life, and the Jews of Iraq and Kurdistan gave it even more attention than anywhere in the diaspora. The custom of marrying girls off at the age of eight or nine was changed by the rabbis (to a minimum of thirteen) because the long periods between engagement and marriage often led to a change of heart on the part of the parents—and a broken engagement, like marriage, called for a formal divorce. Engagements were set at a maximum of one year. In Kurdistan, this period was extended for fathers of the groom who needed more time to raise money for the dowry.

The rabbis also limited the amount of the dowry that the father of the bride could demand. This did away with the practice of using the bride as a means of building up the family fortune. Restrictions were also placed on the value of the gifts that tradition bade the bride and groom to exchange. In time, other changes came about: modern formats of life began to bring young people together, and the consent of the parents became secondary; when the parents of the bride objected, the groom "kidnapped" his beloved and the reluctant consent usually followed.

At the wedding, the festivities were enhanced by the performance of the musicians; it was considered a bad omen for the young couple if no musicians were present. The Kurdish Jews, hungry for bright spots in their drab lives, made the most of the wedding festivities. The preferred day for the ceremony was Wednesday, the fourth day of Creation, when the celestial luminaries were fashioned. The exact date was selected by lot. The nuptials took place in the home of the bride, to which the groom was led with much pomp. The bride, her fingernails painted with henna and adorned with ornaments from head to foot, sat in a separate room, but her presence was made known by the tinkling of the little silver bells set into her hair. A golden nose ring completed her attire.

The ceremony was basically the accepted ritual (in Baghdad, a piece of linen listing the items taken to the husband's home was held up while the *ketuba* was being read). The wedding was preceded by the *sheva berachot* ("seven blessings") week, during which the bride remained in her home and put the finishing touches to her trousseau; the groom was permitted to drop in to see his in-laws, but he had to send word ahead, so as to allow the young bride time to hide. At the end of the week, the two were led forth from their respective homes; as the two contingents met, a loaf of bread, brought by the bride's entourage, was broken above their heads. In some districts of Kurdistan, the bride was led astride a beribboned horse, preceded by a band of musicians and a torch parade. Friends and relatives of the bride gathered on the rooftops along the route and pelted her with nuts and kernels of wheat, symbols of fertility. When the whole party reached the home of the couple, a sheep was slaughtered as "atonement for groom and bride." The bride's family then returned, while the groom's relatives sat down for the festive meal.

The splendor of the wedding was in sharp contrast with the drab life that the young wife led afterwards. Her entire existence was subordinated to her husband's will. She ate separately, usually after her husband was finished with his meal. Feasting, for her, meant whatever delicacies the husband chose to leave. When the couple went visiting, the wife walked a few steps behind her husband. The husband never impaired his dignity by helping his wife in her household duties although he did the marketing. Rarely, if ever, did the woman venture beyond the confines of the Jewish Quarter. She spent most of her days knitting, weaving rugs and doing embroidery.

Young men were ready for marriage at eighteen nd girls at thirteen. The match, evidence on "have a ook day" notwithstanding, was arranged by matchmakers or the women. Engagements were usually held n *maimona* night. The groom came to visit the bride, receded by a basketful of viands. He was then introuced to her formally, although the two may have met ach other previously. The marriage terms were written nd the wedding date, on a Wednesday night, was set.

One week before the wedding, friends of the groom ame to his home and scattered sweets in the corners or the youngsters to find (*tatzlil*). A festive meal folowed, in the course of which the groom presented his riends with new handkerchiefs, presumably to weep nto over the responsibilities he was about to assume. A ew days later the groom sent the bride some henna for ainting her finger and toenails; whatever she did not se she gave to her girl friends on Friday night, "farevell night," for which she wore her wedding dress, of ilk or some other expensive fabric. On Saturday night, he bride's parents gave a dinner for the family, to which the groom was also invited. The bride, hair anging loose, was led into the room, and all the others ose to greet her. As the music played on, the women pplied cosmetics to her face and did her hair. The inner ended with each of those present giving the ather of the bride a gold coin.

Another family repast was held on Sunday. For his occasion the groom sent a basket containing roiled lamb's liver, lung and heart. The bride ate the eart, first dipped in sugar—symbol of a "sweetheart" nd a good life to follow. Later in the evening the groom rrived with his musicians, carrying a trayful of spice, white veil, a bottle of spirits, four eggs, a small mirror nd a pitcher full of sweet water. The bride donned the hite veil, at which the groom gave her a small basket f white sugar.

The night before the wedding, "rest night," the ride went to bed early in order to be fresh for the ext day. At that very moment the groom was enterining his friends, each of whom was called upon to ontribute to the expenses of the wedding, each according to his means. The sums and the names of the donors were noted down carefully in a special family journal; as each of the donors had occasion to hold a celebration, the groom was obligated to return to him the sum he had contributed towards the wedding. In case the groom refused, he could be called to a religious tribunal and forced to make the payment.

Shortly before the wedding ceremony, the bride went forth from the home of her parents, accompanied by her maids and the musicians, while the master of ceremonies sang and danced before her all the way to the groom's house. The groom ascended to the roof of his domicile, carrying a pitcher filled with water; he poured the water out into the street and threw down the pitcher, smashing it, in comemoration of the destruction of the Temple. The bride responded by throwing and smashing one egg against the outer wall of the house and another against the inner wall, in the same symbol of remembrance.

Under the canopy, the groom stood during the ceremony, while the bride sat, veiled. The best man read the *ketuba*. Following the benediction, bride and groom drank from the glass, which was then smashed against the ground, wine and all, as the groom recited: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand be forgotten."

In the hill communities, weddings were held en masse on the day preceding Succot eve. On the second day of the festival, all the new husbands and their friends gathered at the town well for the "grooms' race." The newlyweds ran about for a good hour and were later escorted home. The ceremony symbolized, in concrete fashion, the verse, "And He, as a groom emerging from under his canopy, would as a man of valor rejoice to run his course."

A wedding turned the *mellah* into a huge caterer's establishment. The brides were rarely even twelve years old. There was no engagement ceremony, merely an understanding between two sets of parents. The bride and groom exchanged gifts, particularly on Purim and Passover. Two days before the wedding (usually held on a Wednesday), the groom appeared before the rabbinical court to obligate himself to care for his future wife, while the father of the bride did the same with regard to the dowry. Everyone then proceeded to the bride's home to view the clothes and ornaments she would be taking to her husband's home.

A traveler describing a Jewish wedding in Tangier had this to say: "The steer for the feast was slaughtered in the yard of the bride's home (a ceremony attended by all the invitees) . . . As they left, each placed a coin on the steer's head; this was called *siman tov* ("a good sign") and given to the ritual slaughterer. As the bride went forth from her father's home, an egg was broken above her head. Preceded by fife and drum, she arrived at her home as though deaf and dumb, as she pretended to be while being decked out, then under the canopy, until she went forth and lay on her bed, a statue of stone . . ."

The bride's attire was prepared with the care given to the robing of a queen for the coronation ceremony. On her head she wore a maze of colorful kerchiefs, deftly twisted and knotted to form a tall turban. Her bridal gown was "the great dress", worn for the *chupah* only and bequeathed by mother to daughter down the generations. Fashioned out of brown velvet, embroidered with gold and silver thread and studded with semi-precious stones, it flared out from the waist down. Its long sleeves were of puffy, light material, as was the fashion of Spanish queens.

Before the ceremony, the women tinted her eyelids, did her hair in two braids, as was the custom, painted her face, drew odd symbols on her forehead, nose and under her lips to ward off the evil eye, and tinted her hands with henna . . . Following the ceremony, a relative raised the bride aloft on a chair, without her batting an eyelash.

The ceremony was held on a raised platform set up in the house, rather than in the open air. The canopy itself was topped with a large silver crown. Before the rites, a master of ceremonies exhibited the gifts tendered to the couple and called out the names of the donors. The "Seven Days of Feasting" after the ceremony began with a sumptuous meal for everyone, including the poor, as amateur poets vied with one another in singing the praises of the newlyweds.

If the bride was underweight (not unusual for brides of nine or ten), she was fed bread and water to fill out her figure. The young couple invited all the members of the family to a fish dinner, symbolizing the hope for fertility.

A wife was selected for a Jewish young man in Salonika by his father, after due consultation with his friends and an examination of the bride's family tree. The groom was permitted to have a say in the selection—he could state that he considered his father's choice impeccable. The traditional formula was for the father to say, "Come near, O my son, and kiss my hand, for you are about to wed." (During the past half-century, young people have achieved much greater freedom in their choice of marital partners).

The formalities began with the "acquaintanceship gathering," arranged by the parents of the bride. As the groom and his parents were seated, the troubador hired for the occasion sang, "How radiant is the face of the gracious bride," at which the bride came in, kissed the hand of her future mother-in-law, and proceeded to receive the gifts which the groom's contingent had brought. At the start of each new month, until the wedding, the young couple exchanged sweets.

The bride began to prepare her trousseau months before the wedding. Somewhat later, her relatives and neighbors gathered at her home for "wool washing day." The wool that she had prepared for making blankets was washed and dried with much pomp and ceremony, then it was converted into blankets by a craftsman.

On the Saturday night before the wedding, the bride's companions gathered at her home to cheer her up, now that her period of maidenhood was at an end. The next morning, her relatives gathered for the *ashugach*, the appraisal of the trousseau; this done, the trousseau was boxed and sent to the home of the groom.

For the wedding the bride was decked out by her friends with a long, trailing white gown embroidered with gold thread, a white scarf which covered her figure and a veil in the form of a coronet of artificial flowers. The mother of the groom then arrived to present a precious ornament, the gift of the groom. The bride's father and brothers, holding her arms, led her behind the groom's mother, as relatives and neighbors showered the entourage with sweets. As the group came to the home of the groom, the young man himself met his bride at the entrance, holding in his hand a plate laden with sweets, rice and gold coins, which he poured at her feet—a sign of good fortune.

Now the bride was led to her seat under the canopy. For the ceremony, a prayer shawl was held above the heads of the couple. The marriage contract was read out, customary benedictions were pronounced and the groom then broke the traditional glass. The gathering then sat down to a festive wedding meal, which was highlighted by the "Flower Dance," executed by two women to the hand-clapping accompaniment of the guests.

On the following day, the young wife appeared wearing a *kuffaya*, which distinguished the married from the unmarried women. Appropriately, this was "kuffaya day." The last of the "seven days of festivity" following the wedding was called "fish day"; the young husband brought large fish which he placed in a copper basin on the floor in the middle of the room, and his young wife jumped across the basin three times—symbolizing their hope for many sons—to the applause of the gathering. The fish was cooked and eaten and washed down with suitable beverages.

CONCLUSION

Since early Jewish history the Jewish people have been located in countries around the globe. Over hundreds of years, these Jewish groups have adopted new customs and established different traditions, as they adapted to living in these various countries. A large Jewish population assembled in France, Germany, and Eastern Europe. They were given the title Ashkenazic Jews. Although the term 'Ashkenaz' appears three times in the Bible meaning either a descendant of Japhet or a northern people, it most likely originated from an older Iranian language in the form of 'Ashkuza'. Not until medieval rabbinical literature was the term Ashkenaz used for the people of Germany. It then evolved a broader connotation denoting all of Eastern European Jewry.

Today, Reform Judaism in America mainly finds its roots stemming from these Ashkenazic Jews. The North American Reform religious schools, when teaching Jewish History, religious customs and traditions, instruct their students almost solely on Ashkenazic Jewry. Rarely is the enormous non-Ashkenazic Jewish population examined within the religious school setting.

From the first chapter of this work we find that there exists an important population of Jews, significant in size, which have been labeled non-Ashkenazic Jews. They

include Sephardic Jews and Oriental Jews. Choosing the term non-Ashkenazim over the more commonly used term Sephardim was not simply a random selection. As I clarified in the first section of Chapter One, only Jews whose origins are from the Iberian Peninsula are properly identified as Sephardic Jews. Jews from all the Oriental countries who are not descendants of Sephardic Jews and have never lived in Spain or Portugal themselves are not Sephardic Jews. In this thesis I neither wanted to ignore their proper identity nor their uniqueness. As one compares Oriental traditions with Sephardic traditions, their differences are clarified. Because of the importance of both the Sephardim and the Oriental Jews, I chose to include both ethnic groups and identified them as non-Ashkenazic Jews.

Today more than fifty percent of Israel's population are non-Ashkenazic Jews. Non-Ashkenazic Jews were the first Jewish settlers to arrive to America. There presently exists non-Ashkenazic communities in almost every major city in America. The contributions non-Ashkenazic Jews have made to Judaism has been tremendous. Much can be learned from their history and the traditions and customs non-Ashkenazic Jews have established.

That information pertaining to non-Ashkenazic Jewry is rarely taught in North American Reform religious schools can be seen from Chapter II of this thesis. The wealth of information which our students can learn by including

studies of non-Ashkenazic Jewry in our schools must not be ignored. Thus the next step in the process has been to create materials that can be used within the religious school setting. Ideally, these materials should be fully integrated with the 'regular' Ashkenazic studies already being taught within the classroom.

One cannot understate the importance of fully integrating these studies. If students are simply given one 'unit' or a 'session' on non-Ashkenazic Jewry, not only would it be impossible to learn even a portion of the information about this Jewish populace, but it would suggest to the students that these people are not really important in their religous studies. Only by consitently integrating non-Ashkenazic studies into the curriculum will the students realize these people are a significant populace within the Jewish people as a whole and that many of our traditions are based on non-Ashkenazic practices.

Ideally, to aid in the process of teaching a integrated curriculum a textbook would be used. However, as seen from the textbook analysis section found in Chapter II, no book containing sufficient information about non-Ashkenazic Jewry has been published, at least not by three of the leading publishers used by North American Reform religious schools.

Due to time restrictions, a worthy project such as creating a fully integrated textbook containing both Ashkenazic

and non-Ashkenazic Jewish studies could not be included within this thesis. In hopes of starting the process of integrating religious school curricula, Chapter III included a teacher in-service which introduced such a curriculum to teachers to be used in a Reform religious school setting. Chapter III also included two lesson plans, one for a primary grade and one for an intermediate grade to serve as paradigms of integrated classroom studies. I would highly encourage any school and any teacher to use the material included in this work to aid in introducing an integrated curriculum into their schools.

When dealing with religious school education, it is easy to fall into the pattern of teaching what was taught the previous year (or years). This thesis does not mean to question the quality of studies presently taught in the classroom, but only suggests that more learning can be realized through the inclusion of non-Ashkenazic studies within the established curriculum. The improvements made in religious school studies during the past ten years are obvious when one examines the various curriculum established in religious schools throughout North American Reform Congregations. The new curriculum developed by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and Central Conference of American Rabbis entitled "To See the World Through Jewish Eyes", is just one example of the great strides taken in improving Reform religious schools during this past decade.

These improvements must continue.

To quote the beginning of the song "Greatest Love of All" written by Michael Masser and Linda Creed:

> "I believe the children are our future;
> Teach them well and let them lead the way.
> Show then all the beauty they possess inside.
> Give them a sense of pride..."

The future of Reform Judaism can be found in our Reform religious schools. It is our duty to teach our students to the best of our ability. This would include teaching them the beauty found in both Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic Jewry. They possess both of these traditions through Jewish history. Let us give them a sense of pride about their complete heritage. Reform North American religious school students should learn about all Jewry has to offer.

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