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FROM THE JEWISH IDEAL OF DEMOCRACY TO THE REALITY OF
JEWISH SURVIVAL -- TIME FOR FEAR, TIME FOR COURAGE:
A PORTRAIT OF JEWS THRIVING UNDER DICTATORSHIP.

RABBINIC THESIS WRITTEN BY SERGIO R. MARGULIES

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for ordination

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Referee, Professor Dr. Jacob R. Marcus

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Abbreviations

AJYB - American Jewish Year Book

JPS - Jewish Publication Society

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DIGEST

The purpose of this thesis is to attempt to analyze and to understand the response of Brazilian Jewry to the political environment of the nineteen-seventies, a decade during which Brazil was ruled solely by the military. This period in Brazil was, simultaneously, a time of tremendous economic prosperity and a time of little or no political freedom. One question we will try to answer in this thesis is how the Brazilian Jewish community could thrive under such a restrictive dictatorship. We will also try to understand the moral dilemma of a minority which could not challenge the ruler without threatening its own survival.

To provide reliable answers to the above-mentioned questions, it was necessary to study both the initial formation of Brazilian Jewry and the prevailing political realities of the nineteen-seventies. Thus, the first chapter will focus on a brief survey of Jewish history of Brazil. This chapter will cover all the periods of Brazilian Jewish history, from the first discovery of that country by the Portuguese to the last great waves of migration after World War II, emphasizing especially the consolidation of the Jewish community in the nineteen-sixties. The research was based on secondary sources.

A different approach was taken in the research for the second chapter. This chapter studies the political panorama of the nineteen-seventies, for which most of the information

was obtained from contemporary sources of the period.

The third chapter focuses on the response of Brazilian Jewry to the political situation in the 1970's. The source material for this chapter is taken chiefly from Brazilian Jewish newspapers. Naturally, consideration must be given to the fact that under a military regime all media of communication were subject to censorship, but still those newspapers constitute a valuable source of information.

The last and fourth chapter describes the participation of Jews in the political, economic, cultural, and religious life of Brazil. The data for this chapter was obtained from surveys and studies published by Brazilian sociologists and historians.

In short, the above-described outline seeks to provide in the first two chapters the background needed to comprehend the subject being surveyed in the third and fourth chapter, namely, Jewish life in the nineteen-seventies in Brazil.

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORY OF JEWS IN BRAZIL

I. TOWARD A STUDY OF BRAZILIAN JEWISH HISTORY

A. Chronology

When does Jewish history in Brazil begin? What is the relation between Brazilian Jewish history and General Brazilian history? The historian Nachman Falbel of the Brazilian Jewish Archives, proposes dividing Brazilian Jewish history into several distinct historical periods, noting that those periods must be placed in the context of a more general Brazilian history. (1) Here follows the chronology suggested by Falbel:

1 - Colonial Period (1500-1808)

- 1500-1591/5 -- Settlement of the first New-Christians in Brazil.
- 1591/5-1624 -- From the first visit of the Inquisition to the Dutch Conquest.
- 1624-1654 -- Dutch Period
- 1654-1774 -- From the expulsion of the Dutch and the beginnings of inquisitory persecutions to Pombal's policy toward the Inquisition.
- 1774-1808 -- From the end of the inquisitorial persecutions to the arrival of the Portuguese royal family in Brazil.

2 - Imperial Period (1808-1889)

- 1808-1822/48 -- From the harbor opening and the arrival of the first Jews to the great migratory wave of Moroccan Jews.
- 1848-1889 -- From the migratory wave of Western European Jews to the Proclamation of the Brazilian Republic.

3 - Republican Period - (1889/1960)

- 1889-1914 -- Colonization of agricultural settlements sponsored by the Jewish Colonization Association in southern Brazil.
- 1914-1933 -- Immigration of Eastern European Jews.
- 1933-45 -- Immigration of German Jews.
- 1945-1957 -- Immigration of Holocaust survivors and Hungarian and Egyptian Jews.
- 1957-60's -- Consolidation of the Jewish communities.

B. Sources

After becoming acquainted with the framework of Brazilian Jewish history, one must ask what sources are currently available and what surveys may have already been made in this field.

A careful analysis of the bibliography related to Brazilian Jewish history reveals that almost all of the studies focus on the colonial period. (2) This fact led Professor Nachman Falbel to conclude that "the History of Jews in Brazil, from the Imperial Period to the present days still needs to be written." (3)

A more detailed study of the Imperial and Republican period will demand a great deal of time and effort since the documents are widely scattered, and the Jewish community in Brazil has never taken seriously the establishment of historical archives. This lack of awareness of the necessity for historical preservation is due to the fact that "the

community is relatively young and formed mainly by immigrants who as newcomers were essentially worried with survival and support."(4) In addition to that, the unstable economic situation that country has been passing through in the last twenty years comprise severely the financial support of the small but existing archives, such as the Brazilian Jewish Archive in Sao Paulo and The Marc Chagal Institute in Porto Alegre.

However, the studies already made are sufficient for the attempt in the first chapter of this thesis to compile the history of Brazilian Jews.

II. BRIEF HISTORY OF JEWS IN BRAZIL

A. Colonial Period

The discovery of Brazil by the Portuguese was the result of the European economic development at the end of the Middle Ages, and the maritime expansion led by Portugal during the 15th century. (5)

The first Portuguese expedition that managed to arrive in India was led by Vasco da Gama. He left Lisbon in 1497 and returned in 1499. Due to its success, a new expedition was organized under the command of Pedro Alvarez Cabral. (6) On his way to India, he stopped in a land which would later be named Brazil. Whereas some historians (7) say that the Portuguese landed by chance on Brazil, the majority of

scholars believe (though no actual proof is available) that Portugal wanted to establish their own foothold in the Americas lest Spain control all the new lands. (8)

In addition to commercial expansion, this was a period in which the Inquisition was active in Portugal. The Portuguese Inquisition was different from the Spanish Inquisition. In Portugal "the entire Jewish population was forcibly converted to Catholicism in 1497." (9) If this were indeed the case, it is then "highly probable that the companions and the crew of Pedro Alvares Cabral included several new Christians," (10) though historical sources only verify the presence of one converso among Cabral's crew: Gaspar da Gama.

Historians disagree regarding the origin of Gaspar da Gama, (11) but in all likelihood he was born in Poland, from which he fled in the 1450's. (12) After a long series of travels, he arrived in Goa, India, where he met the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama, who promptly imprisoned him. (13) Actually, Vasco da Gama himself benefited from Gaspar da Gama's knowledge of India's rivers. (14) Gaspar da Gama participated usefully in many expeditions, including the one commanded by Pedro Alvares Cabral. Though a baptized Christian, Gaspar da Gama became the first recorded person of Jewish descent to land on Brazil's shores. (15)

Upon his return to Portugal, Gaspar da Gama suggested to another Jew by birth, Fernando de Noronha, that the new country of Brazil should be a "refuge to persecuted

Jews."(16) Fernando de Noronha was a rich man and enjoyed a high reputation with the Portuguese Crown, (17) so, after accepting da Gama's suggestion, it was not difficult for him to persuade Dom Manuel, king of Portugal, to allow New Christians to "colonize and exploit the newly discovered land."(18) Moreover, most Christians preferred to adventure in India, and Brazil would not remain an uncolonized possession of Portugal. (19)

The first colonizers initially began exporting Brazilian wood to Portugal, (20) but they soon found the cultivation of sugar cane to be much more profitable. "A large number of the 120 engenhos [sugar plantation and mills] that existed in Brazil in the year 1600 belonged to New Christians,"(21) and about 60% of the sugar mills in the state of Bahia were owned by Jews. (22)

Persecuted in Portugal, Jews were naturally attracted to Brazil, both by the opportunity of accumulating wealth and by the religious freedom exercised there; (23) Jose de Anchieta, the first bishop in Brazil, effectively managed to keep the Holy Offices out of that country. (24)

The situation would change in 1580 when Portugal lost her independence to Spain. At that time, the bishop of Bahia (capital of Brazil) was given inquisitorial powers by the Holy Office in Lisbon. "Jesuits [in Brazil] were empowered to assist the bishop in preparing proceedings against heretics and in extraditing offenders to the tribunals of the Inquisition in Lisbon."(25) One inquisitor, Heitor Furtado

de Mendonca, was in Brazil between 1591-95. (26) Other inquisitors were sent in 1618 and 1646; in this last visitation, many "judaizers" were burned or imprisoned. (27)

Jews and New Christians living in Brazil hoped that their situation would improve with the arrival of the Dutch. This hope was initially frustrated when the Dutch failed to conquer the state of Bahia in 1627, but it was renewed when they invaded and conquered Pernambuco in the northeast of Brazil in 1630. There they remained until 1654. During this period the Jewish communities thrived and flourished. (28)

The Dutch guaranteed the free practice of religion, a liberty which further drew Jewish refugees from Portugal, Spain, and France. (29) These refugees, because of their knowledge of languages, could easily climb the social ladder. (30) The growing and thriving community hired a rabbi, Isaac Aboab da Fonseca from Amsterdam, who became the leader of the congregation Tsur Yisrael in Recife and so the first rabbi in the Americas. (31) The newly established communities "were modeled after that of Amsterdam with their Talmud Torah called Etz Chaim, charity organization and cemetery." (32)

The prosperous social and economic situation achieved by Jews under the rulership of Johan Maurits (1637-1644) engendered envy. Protestant clergymen eager to propagate their own faith stimulated the prejudice. However, whenever

Dutch-Brazilian Jewry was exposed to any kind of danger or ill-treatment, Amsterdam Jewry acted quickly on their American brethren's behalf. (33) In addition, the Dutch authorities considered the Jews to be reliable allies, while other Christians were viewed as Portuguese sympathizers. (34)

The dissatisfaction of Catholics, combined with a bad harvest season, furthered for rebellion and a subsequent Portuguese attempt to recover the lost territory. This warfare between the Portuguese and the Dutch lasted for nine years ending with the capitulation of the latter in 1654. Since Jews had heavily financed money the Dutch, (35) the Dutch defeat was traumatic for Jews. Some Jews who managed to survive the war had to flee the country to avoid being sent to Lisbon and judged as traitors. (36)

In the 18th century, the Jewish situation worsened dramatically. Although there was no tribunal of the Holy Office in Brazil, those who were accused of being judaizers were arrested and sent to Lisbon where approximately 500 New Christians were put in the prisons of the Inquisition. Many of these were women and others born in Brazil, including even priests, such as Padre Manoel Lopes de Carvalho (37) and Antonio Jose da Silva, one of the most famous martyrs of the Brazilian Inquisition.

Antonio Jose da Silva was a playwright, a descendant of a converso family who kept the rites of Judaism secretly. Although his father had excellent political connections, his mother was taken by the Inquisition and sent to Lisbon in

1713. (38) Da Silva's father moved to Portugal in order to prove that his family faithfully observed the Christian traditions, but his efforts were futile. The scene of his mother being tortured was forever imprinted in da Silva's memory, and as a college student he frequently expressed his hatred of the Inquisition in his plays. Fearful of Da Silva's growing influence, the inquisitors imprisoned him as well in 1737. He was later sentenced by the Tribunal of the Holy Office and died in an auto-de-fe. (39)

Jewish life in Brazil would return to normal in the 1770's when the Inquisition ended its activities. This event was brought about by Marques de Pombal (40) who successfully managed to convince the King of Portugal, Dom Jose I, to abandon the old distinction between New Christians and Old Christians. (41) Pombal further sought to reduce the Church's power and to eliminate the smuggling in Portugal's colonies. Giving the Jews freedom they would not need to be involved in the illegal trade. (42)

B. Imperial Period

Due to Napoleon's invasion in 1808, the Portuguese Royal family was forced to seek refuge in Brazil. At that time, Great Britain was an ally of Portugal, and both countries had signed an agreement that guaranteed complete religious freedom to all British citizens who lived in Portugal's possessions. (43) Influenced by Pombal's policy toward the

Inquisition, religious freedom was granted to all citizens living in Brazil, a right which was actually confirmed when Brazil declared her independence from Portugal. As an independent country, Brazil had to promulgate her own constitution, the Constitution of 1824 stated that Catholicism was the official religion of the Empire, though all religions were allowed to be professed privately. (44) An article published in a Brazilian newspaper in 10/1/1865 corroborates the new constitutional law: "the Israelites who live in this city [Rio de Janeiro] celebrated yesterday the kippur, the day of repentance, in a private lounge." (45)

This atmosphere of freedom and tolerance further encouraged immigration Brazil, so desperately needed in order to develop its economy. (46) Thus, it is only after independence that Brazil experienced a genuine Jewish immigration. (In the colonial period, except for Dutch Brazil, the immigrants were primarily Marranos and New Christians). The first great wave of Jewish immigrants came from Morocco and settled in the Amazon areas. (47) These immigrants founded Temple Essel Abraham in 1826 and Temple Shaar Hashemayim in 1828, both in the city of Belem. (48)

The new emperor, Dom Pedro II (1841-89), continued to follow his father's policy supporting the immigration. Dom Pedro was also a philo-semitic, studying Hebrew and translating into French some of the Hebrew liturgical poems. (49) Regarding the Jews, he openly declared, "I will not combat the Jews, for from their race the God of my

religion was born."(50)

Dom Pedro II's policy continued to attract Jews who saw in Brazil a country full of opportunities. Sephardim from Africa, Syria, and Arabia settled in north and northeastern Brazil, whereas Western European Jews from Alsace and Lorraine settled in the southeastern regions. (51) These immigrants had arrived independently, unsponsored by any Jewish organization. (52)

A systematic Jewish immigration to the New world was beneficial in the last decade of the nineteenth century since Russian Jews were also forced to leave their country due to the 'russification' promoted by Tzar Nicholas II. (53) German Jews who did not want Western Europe to be invaded by a huge wave of Eastern European Jews, sought to settle them as farmers in Brazil. This attempt did not work out, due to an unexpected military coup that installed the republican system in Brazil in November of 1889. (54)

C. Republican Period

The end of the Imperial Period and the beginning of the Republican period brought transformations to the Brazilian economy. Slavery was outlawed, necessitating a new kind of economic system in order to participate in worldwide capitalism. (55) To replace slave labor, immigrants were once more welcome. A proposal to relocate the displaced Russian Jews was adopted, and the London-based Jewish

Colonization Association (ICA), "purchased a large fazenda in Rio Grande do Sul."(56)

The first colony founded by ICA was that of Phillipson. (57) Surprisingly very few came but "the promise of housing, schooling, medical assistance, and religious freedom, combined with a continued deterioration of the social and economic situation for Bessarabian Jews eventually did encourage a few hundred candidates,"(58) and in 1904 the first families arrived. More families came in the subsequent years, but outmigration grew steadily. Additional subsidies did not solve the problem.

TABLE 1-A

PHILLIPSON'S JEWISH POPULATION

Year	Phillipson's Jewish population
1904	267
1905	285
1906	272
1907	not recorded
1908	299

Source: Arquivo Historico Judaico Brasileiro - Sao Paulo
(Brazilian-Jewish Historical Archive)

In spite of all the difficulties, the ICA decided to establish a new colony in 1908, which would be called Quatro Irmaos. Again the problems multiplied, and many immigrants ended up leaving Quatro Irmaos as well. (59)

After World War I, the ICA colonies were options considered only by those immigrants who did not manage to

enter the United States, Canada, or Argentina, and even those who did settle there saw them as an initial move toward the urban centers of the state of Rio Grande do Sul. (60)

Throughout the 1920's and early 1930's Brazil was an important center of Jewish immigration since it was the only option left after Argentina, Canada, the United States, and South Africa imposed immigration quotas. (61) In addition, the industrial economic growth provided a perfect environment for the new immigrants; "to Jews encountering economic restrictions in Eastern Europe, Brazil's developing economy must have appeared attractive." (62) Most of the newcomers worked as peddlers, (63) but aided by Jewish loan societies, these Jewish peddlers gradually became shop or factory owners. (64)

In the first years of the 1930's German Jews fleeing from the Nazi regime arrived in Brazil. Unlike the Eastern European Jews, they were not peddlers, but skilled workers. These immigrants founded their own synagogues, Congregacao Israelita Paulista (CIP) in Sao Paulo, Associacao Religiosa Israelita (ARI) in Rio de Janeiro, and Sociedade Israelita Brasileira (SIBRA) in Porto Alegre. (61)

The comparative ease with which Jews had customarily entered Brazil would be discontinued due to the economic crisis of the 1930's. A shrinking economy and high rates of unemployment led the Brazilian government to adopt restrictive policies to discourage further potential

immigrants. (66) This anti-immigration policy was reinforced by President Getulio Vargas with the promulgation of a new, more nationalistic constitution in 1934. (67) The sentiment against Jews was notable in the statements of government personnel. The Minister of Foreign Relations Oswaldo Aranha stated that Judaism "is capable of sending this civilization into an abyss," (68) and the Federal Police Chief, Filinto Muller sent a Jew, Olga Benario, back to Nazi Germany. (69)

The situation only got worse when President Getulio Vargas inaugurated an authoritarian regime called Estado Novo, New State, in 1937. On one hand, the ideology of the New State satisfied the nationalistic immigration policy; but on the other, it was impossible to deny the entry of all Jews seeking refuge in Brazil due to North American pressure. "Nationalist rhetoric could not be ignored. Yet growing U.S. power in the country demanded attention. The Vargas government had to satisfy opposite camps, a task that led Vargas to create and apply contradictory policies in divergent manners." (70)

Because of this international pressure, some Jews were allowed to enter the country during the Estado Novo Period (1937-45), but only under certain conditions, namely, that visas were granted only to capitalists, scientists, and skilled workers. (71) Some immigrants were thereby used to improve Brazil's international image, such as the Austrian-Jewish novelist Stephan Zweig who wrote the propagandist book Brazil: Land of the Future in return for a life-saving

visa. (72) The Jewish community in Brazil founded relief organizations to welcome the immigrants, (73) but it must be said that the newcomers lived in a constant state of uncertainty and insecurity due to Vargas' ambiguous policy toward Jews and his sympathy for the Axis formed by Germany, Italy and Japan. (74)

The first breakthrough came in late 1944, when Viriato Vargas, the President's brother, granted an interview favorable to Zionism to the weekly Jewish journal Aonde Vamos?. (75) On October 29, 1945, Getulio Vargas was overthrown by a military coup. Free elections took place, and the country was once again governed by a democratically elected President and Congress. A new constitution was promulgated in 1946, which guaranteed equal rights to all native-born citizens. (76)

The post-World War II government admitted a total of six thousand displaced persons in 1947. (77) The size of the Jewish community was estimated at the beginning of the 1950's as 120,000 out of a general population of over 42,000,000. (78) The majority of these lived in big cities (Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo), and made their living in commerce. (79) The potential for integration was complete, and gradually the Jews began to hold offices. Horacio Lafer was the atate Treasurer (1951-53), (80) Salo Brand was elected as Congressman in 1950 (81) as was Aarao Steinbuch in 1954. (82)

In that year Joao Cafe Filho "became the first

president of Brazil to salute the Brazilian Jews on their holidays." (83) The next president, Juscelino Kubitschek, continued the liberal policy of Cafe Filho toward the Jews, allowing Jewish refugees to enter Brazil. In 1956-7 more than 2,500 refugees from Hungary, Morocco, and Egypt arrived in Brazil. (84) Between 1957 and 1959 more immigrants came: 2,900 from Egypt, 700 from Hungary, 380 from Eastern Europe, 180 from Syria and Lebanon, and 1,000 from Israel. (85) Another 1,000 immigrants, most of them from Egypt, landed in Brazil between 1959-60. (86) All of these immigrants were assisted by Jewish relief agencies. It was estimated that another 6,000 arrived during the same period without getting any aid. (87)

In the nineteen-sixties, a new generation of professionals, born in Brazil, emerged. (88) The economic improvement of the community was reflected in the construction of Community Centers and synagogues. (89) Several new congregations were established and old ones were expanded, but there was a tremendous shortage of rabbis: "There were only about ten or eleven rabbis in the whole country." (90) Rabbi Henrique Lemle of Rio de Janeiro reported that he needed to travel around the country extensively to assist the small Jewish communities in northern Brazil. (91)

The participation of the Jews in Brazilian life was expanded from economics into politics. Jews held positions

in the army. In 1962 "three Jewish army my officers were promoted to general -- Isaac Nahon, Aaron Benchimol, and Rafael Sippin." (92) In 1964 Waldemar Levi Cardoso was the first Jew to become a four-star general of the Brazilian army. (93) In the 1962 national elections, Emanuel Waismen was elected to the Federal Congress and Aarao Steinbuch to the Senate, and others were elected to the state legislatures and city councils. (94) The number of Jewish representatives in the chamber of deputies increased to six in the national elections of 1966. (95)

The economic and political participation in Brazilian life was paralleled by the improvement of the educational level. Whereas 90% of the Jewish University students were Brazilian born, only 85% of them had parents who were born in that country. (96)

The situation of Brazilian Jewry in the 1960's can be characterized by two phenomena. First, the end of the Jewish migratory waves to Brazil, and, second, the complete Jewish integration into the life of that country. Jews felt themselves as Brazilian citizens and while they wanted to keep their own traditions alive, they flatly rejected the old customs of the immigrants. (97) The only event that could threaten the stability and normality achieved by the Jewish population was a military coup which, in fact, occurred on March 31, 1964. Although the army imposed a dictatorship, Jewish life remained essentially unchanged; "projects were continued and completed." (98) As a result of the aggressive

and modernizing capitalism created by the new government, "an exceptionally prosperous class of Jewish entrepreneurs developed." (99) Thus, not surprisingly, the establishment of the Jewish community supported the military regime "as allies and supporters of the ruling oligarchies." (100) This support was not free of contradictions and tensions: how can members of a religion that demands human rights idly tolerate repression? How could the Jewish community support a regime that took pro-Palestinian positions and sold military weapons to Arab countries, presumably for use against Israel? But, on the other hand, how could they not side with a system that allowed Jews to become some of the wealthiest people in Brazil? These issues and dilemmas had to be dealt by the Brazilian Jewish community in the nineteen-seventies.

III. NOTES

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IV. APPENDIX

TABLE 1-B

JEWISH IMMIGRATION TO BRAZIL (1840-1942)

Year	Number of Immigrants
1840-1880	500
1881-1900	1,000
1901-1914	8,750
1915-1920	2,000
1921-1925	7,139
1926-1930	22,296
1931-1935	13,075
1936-1939	10,600
1940-1942	6,000

Source: Jacob Lestschinsky, "Jewish Migrations, 1840-1956" in Louis Finklestein, The Jews: Their History, Culture, and Religion, Vol. 2 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. 1554.

TABLE 1-C

JEWISH IMMIGRATION TO BRAZIL (1938-1947)

Year	Number of Immigrants
1938	530
1939	4,601
1940	2,416
1941	1,500
1942	108
1943	11
1944	6
1945	120
1946	1,485
1947	2,637

Source: Leonard Dinnerstein and David Reimers, Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration Assimilation, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), pp. 163-165.

Note: Figures do not include illegal immigrants.

CHAPTER 2

BRAZIL IN THE 1970'S

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The international economic crisis of 1929 had a tremendous effect on Brazil. Prior that time, the Brazilian economy had been based on the exportation of agricultural products, mainly coffee, but in the early 1930's the price of coffee dropped dramatically. (1) The Brazilian economy was destabilized, and needed to be restructured completely; industrialization now became a necessity. Since such drastic economic reorientation necessarily involves corresponding political changes, the old Brazilian rural oligarchy was replaced by a new emerging urban and industrialist class, (2) represented by a new president, Getulio Vargas. Vargas wanted to industrialize the country in order to create an urban worker class, (3) but these reforms could not be implemented without hardship, and Vargas was challenged by leftist parties. In order to eliminate these opponents and to enhance his power, Vargas established a dictatorial regime with fascist tendencies, the Estado Novo, New State, in 1937. (4)

The participation of Brazilian troops fighting against the Nazi-fasci axis in World War II led to a paradox. Abroad, Brazil was viewed as a pro-democratic states but, internally the government operated under an authoritarian regime. Such contradiction left Vargas with no option but to abolish the New State, to allow free organization of

political parties, and to call for democratic elections. (5) As a result Eurico Dutra was elected president in 1945. He continued to encourage industrialization, and although personal freedom was guaranteed; he outlawed the Communist Party. (6) New presidential elections were held in 1950 and Getulio Vargas won democratically, (7) only to die by his own hand four years later. The Vice-President, Cafe Filho, held the presidency until 1955 (8) when Juscelino Kubitschek was elected. Kubitschek further accelerated the industrialization of the country opening Brazilian economy to foreign investments. (9) The president elected in 1960, Janio Quadros, resigned one year later for undetermined reasons. The army prevented the Vice-President Joao Goulart from succeeding to the presidency because of his connections with labor unions. (10) To avoid a major crisis in the government, a compromise was reached with the installation of a parliamentary system; Goulart would be the president in title but not in function. (11) The experiment was unsuccessful and exposed Brazil to an great economic crisis. Claiming to restore order, the army assumed power in a coup in 1964. (12)

General Castelo Branco was chosen to be the new president (1964-1967). (13) He outlawed all political organizations and disbanded all the parties except two, which were allowed to continue, i.e., the pro-government Alliance for National Reform (ARENA), and the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB) which attracted anti-government

politicians. (14) In 1967, a new general was chosen president, Costa e Silva, but Silva's mandate was shortened due to a stroke in 1969. Since Silva's vice-president was a civilian, he was denied the constitutional right to succeed his predecessor, a military man. Instead, the army closed the congress and installed General Emilio Medici as the Brazilian president in October of 1969. (15) In this manner, Brazil, ruled by a powerful military government, entered the decade of 1970's. In this new decade, the pattern continued, for during that period Brazil had three different presidents, all of them generals, i.e., Emilio Medici, Ernesto Geisel and Joao Figueredo.

II. MEDICI'S GOVERNMENT

A. Domestic politics

Emilio Medici continued his predecessors' policy of limiting the power of the legislative system. The decisions of the congress were subject to the will of the Executive office. (16) If a congressman raised a particular issue without governmental permission, he could have his mandate canceled. (17)

The government controlled not only the political system, but the media, cultural life, colleges, and civil institutions as well. This control was justified as being necessary to guarantee national security. (18) Censorship was severe. No newspaper, book, magazine, play,

painting, or movie could be made available to the public without being subjected to censorship. (19) The Minister of Justice, Alfredo Buzaid, justified the censorship "as a necessity to preserve public morals, not allowing the social thread to be weakened by the invasion of international communism." (20) Some daily newspapers, such as O Estado de Sao Paulo and weekly magazines, such as Veja, protested the replacement of censored articles with poems and culinary recipes. (21)

After the military coup of 1964, many communists and socialists were forced to go underground. Inspired by the Cuban Revolution, they saw in guerrilla resistance the only effective option to oppose the government. (22) The guerrilla groups employed three main strategies. First, the kidnapping of ambassadors and diplomats in order to exchange them for political prisoners; secondly, robbing banks to finance their organizations; thirdly, spreading the doctrines of the revolution through rural guerrillas. (The two main foci of rural guerrilla activity were in poor areas, the Valley of Ribeiro in the State of Sao Paulo and in the region of Araguaia in the north of the country). (23)

As the guerrillas' actions became more intense, the government reinforced the organs of repression, eventually succeeding in defeating the guerrillas. (24) Thus, the guerrilla activities that began in 1969, and climaxed the following year, were brutally suppressed by the military forces in 1971. (25) Even after the defeat of the so-called

terrorism, the government continued the repression, arresting anyone suspected of subversive activities, including intellectuals, writers, scientists, artists, and politicians. These were arbitrarily arrested and tortured. (26)

The Church raised its voice in protest of the violation of human rights. The National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB) dedicated the year of 1972 to the analyses of Brazil's political, social, and economic situation. (27) In 1973 the CNBB published the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Some priests were imprisoned and even tortured because of to their political activism and attempts to make the population aware of the abusive dictatorship. (28)

B. Economic Performance

Despite the Church's lack of support for the despotic rulership, the government was popular among enterprenuers and middle classes, (29) because the economy grew tremendously and the inflation rate was kept relatively low for a Latin American country. (30) It was the "Brazilian miracle" as governmental officials boasted, "no country as large as Brazil has grown or has been growing so much without raising inflation." (31)

TABLE 2-A
INFLATION AND GROWTH

Year	Inflation	Growth
1969	25.4%	9.3%
1970	20.2%	9.0%
1971	19.3%	11.3%
1972	15.5%	10.4%
1973	15.1%	11.4%
1974	35.5%	9.4%

Source: Helio Silva, Governo Medici (Sao Paulo: Editora Tres, 1975), p. 185.

As Table 2-A shows, the government could not maintain the fast growing pace and low rate of inflation after the international oil crisis of 1973. The oil shock of November of that year quadrupled the price of petroleum. Since at that time Brazil was relying on imports for over 80% of its oil consumption the country's total import bill rose from US\$ 6.2 billion in 1973 to US\$ 12.6 billion in 1974, and the trade balance changed from a slight surplus in 1973 to a deficit of US\$ 4.7 billion in 1974."(32) The inflation went up and some adjustments were necessary. It was the end of the "Brazilian miracle." How to run the country in this new situation was a challenge to be faced by the next president, General Ernesto Geisel.

III. GEISEL'S GOVERNMENT

A. Domestic politics

Geisel's goal was to prepare the country for democracy. He wanted to boost the so-called "political opening," through a gradual relaxation of schemes of control and censorship. In fact, six months after Geisel was installed free elections were held for state legislatures and the Federal congress. Although only candidates from MDB and ARENA could run, they were allowed to express their opinions freely. (33) Unexpectedly, the opposition party MDB won the elections in the urban centers. Afraid of losing control of the political process through these defeats, Geisel manipulated the 1976 municipal election campaign. (34) In 1977 he closed the congress and decreed that 1/3 of the senators would be chosen by the government. (35) Thus, regardless of the results of the 1978 elections the government candidates would still consist of the majority in the congress.

The promised movement toward democracy was far from being achieved. Although the censorship was loosened and official torture became less frequent, it was evident that "the Geisel government, like its predecessor has resorted to cassations (an Anglicized version of the Portuguese term) and suspensions of political rights in order to discipline the congressional opposition and to resolve political disputes." (36) In addition, the army-controlled security

apparatus still operated with impunity as the Herzog affair revealed.

The Herzog affair

On October 24th, 1975, agents of the army's security agencies (DOI/CODI) ordered the Jewish-born journalist Vladimir Herzog, who worked in the Public Broadcasting System of Sao Paulo, to appear at the DOI/CODI's offices by the morning of next day, which he did. (37) Surprisingly, at the end of that day -- 10/25/75 -- the army command released a note saying that Vladimir Herzog had been asked standard questions and admitted to working on behalf of the Communist Party. Later -- the release continued -- while alone in his cell, he hanged himself with his belt. The official report stressed that an autopsy confirmed the suicide. (38) The corpse was sent to the Chevra Kadisha society which performed the ritual of taharah (purification of the body). The Chevra found no trace of suicide, but did observe marks of torture. (39)

Disbelief in Herzog's suicide engendered a popular commotion. Herzog's funeral was attended by many journalists, politicians, students, and even the Cardinal of Sao Paulo, as well as by the agents of the Federal Police. (40) A week after Herzog's burial, an ecumenical service took place in the central cathedral of Sao Paulo. The service was attended by 8,000 people and conducted by the cardinal of Sao Paulo, Dom Evaristo Arns, Reverend James Writh and Rabbi Sobel. (41)

Two weeks after Herzog's death, the journalist Rodolf Konder declared that he had also been at DOI/CODI on the same day Herzog was found dead. At that time he had noticed that Herzog, like any other prisoner in detention, was not wearing a belt. Moreover, Konder said, he had heard Herzog's cries of pain due to the torture. (42) To complicate the matter, in January of 1976, a labor worker accused of subversion was also found dead in the DOI/CODI prison, and the army said he had also killed himself. (43) The repetition of the excuse motivated Herzog's widow Clarice to go to the court in order to prove that her husband had not committed suicide.

In 1978 Judge Marcio de Moraes concluded that the government was indeed guilty for illegally arresting Herzog, torturing him, and faking his autopsy. It remained undertermined whether Herzog had indeed committed suicide, but the government was unable to prove his death was self-inflicted. (44) Although the judge acted independently, certainly the extensive press coverage and the government's failure to influence his decision was a proof that the country was finally taking steps toward democracy. (45)

B. Economononic Performance

Just after his installation as president in March of 1974, Geisel had to cope with rising of inflation, the oil crisis, and the international Trade deficit. "With the oil shock of November 1973, Brazil entered a new phase in its

development. Instead of engaging in an austerity adjustment to cope with the dramatic decline in the country's trade, the government [under Geisel's administration] opted for a growth policy that resulted in substantial change in the economy, in a resurgence of inflation, and in a rapid expansion of the country's international debt."(46)

TABLE 2-B
BALANCE OF PAYMENTS (millions of US\$)

Year	export	import	Balance
1973	6,199	6,192	+ 7
1974	7,951	12,641	- 4,690
1975	8,670	12,210	- 3,540
1976	10,128	12,383	- 2,255
1977	12,120	12,023	+ 97
1978	12,659	13,683	-1,024

Source: Werner Baer, The Brazilian Economy: Growth and Development (New York: Praeger Publisher, 1989) p. 98.

TABLE 2-C
INFLATION IN GEISEL'S ADMINISTRATION

Year	Inflation
1974	33.8%
1975	30.1%
1976	48.2%
1977	38.6%
1978	40.5%

Source: Werner Baer, The Brazilain Economy: Growth and Development (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1989), p. 149.

The rise of the inflationary rate and the trade deficit as seen in the tables 2-B and 2-C, did not impel Geisel's

administration to make the necessary adjustments to slow down the economic growth. (47) Rather, the economic policy was to keep the growth, if not actually at the same level of Medici years, at least at a substantial level. The GNP grew an average of 4.1% a year during Geisel's administration, (48) but this growth was only possible because the government counted on the excess of money in the international market due to flow of petrodollars. (49) Thus, the economy was artificially sustained on external loans. The national eagerness for petrodollars and its vulnerability to economic threats from the Arab states (50) forced Brazil to reshape her foreign relations policy.

C. Foreign Relations

The new foreign relations policy forged by Minister Azeredo da Silveira was known as "responsible pragmatism". (51) By means of this policy, Brazil would act independently according to its own interests. In Minister da Silveira's words: "Brazil would not have an alignment that does not represent the defense of its own interest, and would not ally itself automatically to the United States either." (52) Brazil's former ambassador in Washington added, "we have to think big and plan on a grand scale ... In a word: the primordial objective of the Foreign Policy of Brazil is the neutralization of all external factors which might limit its National Power." (53) It is not surprising that diplomatic maneuvers under this new policy gave rise to numerous

conflicts in the relationship between Brazil and the United States, which had supported the coup of 1964. "Although U.S.-Brazilian diplomatic relations have been mostly positive since 1964, there has been an increasing number of points of tension and conflict on which Brazil has prevailed during this period [1970's]. Among these have been ... Brazil's pro-Arab policy in general and its anti-Zionism vote in the United Nations in particular, Brazil's support for the MPLA [Cuban and Russian sponsored Movement for the Liberation of Angola] in Angola, and perhaps most significantly, the Brazil-West Germany accord on nuclear reactors."(54)

Among all the conflicts above-mentioned none caused more concern than the nuclear agreement between Brazil and West Germany, signed on June 27, 1975. This agreement declared that West Germany would transfer nuclear technology to Brazil and build nuclear reactors, in exchange for which Brazil would sell uranium to West Germany. (55) The American pressure was tremendous on Brazil to suspend the agreement, and sub-secretaries of state were sent to Brazil. The American government prohibited certain Brazilian products from being sold in the American market and accused the country of violating human rights. (56) President Carter had "singled out Brazil as an international violator of his standards of human rights and had criticized nuclear proliferation as dangerous and unnecessary."(57) Despite all the threats and pressures, the agreement was carried out asserting the determination of Brazil's government to defend

its own interests. That same nationalistic ideology led Brazil to "consider that it was its obligation to guarantee the sovereignty of the State and to explore all natural resources in the Brazilian territory to the country's best interests." (58) Brazil declared that the ocean waters and soil of the ocean up to an extension of 200 miles was Brazilian national territory, and not international, as the United States wanted them to be. (59)

Geisel's diplomacy was also known as "entrepreneur diplomacy". (60) It was not without reason that Brazil sought closer relationships with the newly independent African countries, mainly the ex-Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique. (61) The Brazilian government's goal was two-fold; first, to have "closer associations with the larger oil-producing countries, namely, Angola, Nigeria, and Gabon," (62) and second, to enhance the market opportunities. It from this perspective that one should understand Brazil's quick recognition of the Cuban -- and Russian -- sponsored government of Angola. Paradoxically, whereas domestic communists were unscrupulously persecuted, in international affairs such ideological views were overridden by economic interests.

The "entrepreneur diplomacy" also motivated the Brazilian vote against Zionism in the United Nations in 1975. The economic crisis Brazil faced after the oil shock and the need of a continuing supply of oil led Brazil to look for a new and constructive relationship with the Arab countries,

one that would not remain without consequences for the openly sympathetic attitude of former Brazilian governments toward the state of Israel. (63) Under many pressures, Brazil could not maintain a neutrality in the Arab-Israeli conflict and ended up voting in favor of the United Nations resolution which equated Zionism with racism. (64) Minister Azeredo da Silveira tried to appease the Jewish community, "we have not voted against Zionism but against racism," (65) and the Brazilian ambassador to the United Nations Sergio Correia da Costa added, "the Brazilian vote is not, and could not in any hypothesis be understood as an act of hostility to Jews or Judaism. It is merely a repudiation of racism and racist conceptions." (66) Despite all the official attempts to explain that vote, the real reason was given off the record. President Geisel believed that an international pro-Arab support would increase the relationship with those countries and bring economic benefits to Brazil. (67) In conclusion, there was a clear relationship between economic pressure and "the pro-Arab shift in Brazil's foreign policy since 1974, which culminated with Brazil's vote against Zionism in the 1975 UN General Assembly." (68)

IV. FIGUEIREDO'S GOVERNMENT (1979-1985)

A. Domestic politics

"At the beginning of his mandate in 1974, President Geisel announced his intention to liberalize his regime.

However, his rule did not bring about any dramatic changes; in fact, he exercised the discretionary powers available to him under Institutional Act No. 5 (AI No. 5) as often as his predecessors. This waiting period was necessary to allow the concept of democratization to develop so that the goals of the executive could be assimilated by all levels of government (states and municipalities) as well as by the state machinery (bureaucracy, police, etc.) and by the ruling elite. President Geisel abrogated AI No. 5 in June 1978 and transferred power to General Figueiredo in March 1979. General Figueiredo [had a goal]: Political liberalization."(69) In his installation he promised to "make of this country [Brazil] a democracy."(70) Two decrees were enacted in order to fulfill this promise, namely, amnesty for political prisoners and exiles, and reform of the political system allowing the free formation of parties. In order to understand these two decrees one must bear in mind that Figueiredo's conception of democracy was shaped by the military doctrine of national security, as he stated, "All the arbitrariness must be abolished [but I do not believe] in democracy substantially liberal."(71) Thus, both the decrees mirrored a limited conception of democracy.

The amnesty was partial; whereas many political prisoners were released and exiles were allowed to return to the country, some were still denied such rights. (72) It outraged the opposition, clergymen, intellectuals, and

artists, who organized committees demanding a broader and more general amnesty. (73)

This political reformulation eliminating the only two legally recognized parties, the governing ARENA and its opponent MDB. The government permitted the formation of any other party including the Communist. (74) This strategy was aimed at breaking up the opposition forces, while at the same time boosting liberalization. In fact, such a strategem was successful "the opposition is divided into five factions while the governing party has remained united despite strong internal dissensions." (75) This political artifice guaranteed the governing party a majority in congress in the election of 1982. Nevertheless, the victory was not complete since the opposition parties obtained a combined total of 25 million votes, while the governing party received only 18 million. (76) The growing opposition was a reaction to the failure of the economic system. The economic growth could no longer be artificially sustained; the foreign debt was dreadfully high, and salaries lost their power of purchase as the inflation skyrocketed.

B. Economic performance

The economic policy followed by Geisel's administration in expanding foreign borrowing successfully sustained the economic growth for a few years, but it left the economy more vulnerable to future shocks. (77) Thus, when the second oil crisis occurred in 1979, the country was completely

unprepared. To complicate the matter further, "there was a dramatic rise in world interest rates in reaction to the tight internal monetary policies of the United States. As most of Brazil's debt had been contracted on a flexible interest-rate basis, a rise of world interest rates automatically increased the cost not only of new borrowing but also serving the outstanding debt." (78) Since a drastic adjustment was unavoidable, the government tolerated a recession, forcing a decline in the GNP and the per capita real income. (79)

C. Foreign Relations

The weakened Brazilian economy and its dependence on the Arab oil supply made Brazil more vulnerable to Arab political pressure. The Minister of Mines and Energy Cesar Cals confirmed that "Brazil is under tremendous pressure from the petroleum exporters to have the oil supply guaranteed." (80) In May of 1979, Iraq's vice-president visited Brazil, asking that country to open an official diplomatic office for the Palestinian Liberation Organization. (81) To complicate matters, the entrepreneurial class and left wing oriented groups were strongly inclined to grant Iraq's request, the first because of the possibility of increasing trade with Iraq, the latter for ideological sympathy for the PLO. (82) Undoubtedly, the PLO's lobby was very effective; in November, 1979, more than fifty congressmen requested President Figueiredo to allow

the PLO's representation to be officially recognized. (83) Despite all the internal and external pressure, such permission was problematic for Figueiredo's government. There was a great difference between supporting Palestinian causes in the international forums and allowing the PLO's office to be established in Brazil. First, this could introduce the conflict into Brazil's borders, and compromise the peaceful co-existence between Brazilian Arabs and Brazilian Jews. Secondly, the PLO was known to have trained terrorist groups all over the world and the presence of the organization could be interpreted as an incentive to resurrect the guerilla faction. Finally, only two other Latin American countries had allowed the installation of the PLO's diplomatic office, i.e., Cuba and Mexico. In fact, the Foreign Relations Ministry simply postponed a final decision, and the office was never officially installed in Brazil. The Brazilian diplomatic corps chose a compromise; internationally, Brazil supported the formation of a Palestinian state recognizing the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people; domestically, she declined to tolerate a branch of the PLO's office. (84)

V. CONCLUSION

The military coup in March 1964 was justified in order to bring order to the chaotic Brazilian economy. The army had the twin goals of lowering the inflation and promoting

economic growth. These goals, were in fact accomplished in the first years of military administration. Nevertheless, the economic model proved to be very vulnerable. During the Figueredo administration, inflation skyrocketed and the economy faced the worse recession in Brazilian history. In this sense, the army's initial goals failed. Indeed, Figueiredo was the last general to hold the presidency. At the end of his mandate the populace went to the streets to demonstrate for democracy and free presidential elections. While free elections did not happen, the next president, Tancredo Neves, who died just before his installation was a civilian chosen by the congress. The vice-president, Jose Sarney, also a civilian, assumed the presidency, bringing an end to more than twenty years of dictatorship.

The economic model implemented by the military administrations is questionable, due to the unfair distribution of wealth it had promoted. Indeed, it was cheap labor that facilitated the growth: "the availability of a large unskilled labor pool has helped the government to enforce a low wage policy (by repression when deemed necessary), thereby strengthening Brazil's export position by keeping labor costs down." (86)

The period surveyed in this chapter thus witnessed many issues that directly concerned the Jewish community, such as the anti-Zionist vote at the United Nations, the request for permission to establish an office for the PLO, and the Herzog affair. In addition to those problems,

Brazilian Jewry now had to learn how to live in a country ruled by a dictatorship, how to deal with the dilemma of being beneficiaries of a unjust economic model. Certainly, these dilemmas were not easily dealt with, but as the next chapters will show, Brazilian Jewry learned, not only how to cope, but even how to thrive in these situations.

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CHAPTER 3

**FACING THE CHALLENGE: THE RESPONSE OF BRAZILIAN JEWRY TO
THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE 1970'S**

I. INTRODUCTION

In the 1960's Jewish immigration to Brazil practically ended. In the same period a generation of Brazilian Jews was born and educated according to the customs of that country. The dreams of immigrants were fulfilled since this new generation could be participating citizens with all rights and profess their faith freely. The seeds of anti-Semitism of the 1930's had not grown. There was no prejudice that prevented Jews from integrating into the life of the country. Even the turmoil of the coup in 1964 did not affect Jews and their organizations. They could thrive and achieve high rank in the social pyramid. Thus, it is not surprising that good relations with the authorities were maintained, and the organized community spared no efforts to manifest its contribution to Brazilian society. (1)

Nevertheless, economic difficulties and foreign pressures shook the stable condition of Jews. Whereas their status and freedom were not put at stake, the situation showed that they were not as safe as they thought they were and that they could also be victims of the country's troubles. Thus, the 1970's was a time of mixed feelings. On one hand, Jews praised Brazil, and on the other hand, they could not bow to all government decisions. This was a complicated matter since the government was a dictatorship and did not welcome disagreements and protests.

How Brazilian Jewry balanced their pride of being

Brazilians with their Jewishness and responded to the political environment is the subject of this chapter. The sources are the main Brazilian Jewish newspapers and magazines, namely, Jornal Israelita, Revista Aonde Vamos?, Revista Shalom, Revista Brasil-Israel, Resenha Judaica, and Comunicacao. (2)

- a. Jornal Israelita -- a weekly newspaper published in Rio de Janeiro between 1944 and 1984. Although it was a private enterprise, Jornal Israelita was considered the official newspaper of the Jewish community of Rio de Janeiro. It was founded by Jacob Kutno. After his death in 1972, it continued to be run by Isaac Amar and then by the shopowner Wolf Gryner, but the newspaper lost its importance among Rio de Janeiro's Jews and ceased to be published.
- b. Aonde Vamos? -- a weekly magazine published in Rio de Janeiro between 1943 and 1974. It was edited by Aaron Neuman who struggled to keep an independent position despite community pressures. After Neuman's death in 1973, Aonde Vamos? was edited by Leao Padilha for a short period, and ended publication due to financial difficulties.
- c. Brasil-Israel -- a bimonthly magazine published in Sao Paulo between 1949 and 1989. It was founded by Bertha Kogan who aimed through this magazine to promote the State of Israel.
- d. Resenha Judaica -- a biweekly newspaper founded in 1969 in

- Sao Paulo. It is the official newspaper of the Jewish community being sponsored by the largest organizations of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, as well as by local Federations. It is edited by the journalist Oscar Nimitz.
- e. Shalom -- a monthly magazine founded in Sao Paulo in 1965 by Eliahu Chut and Raul Wasserman. Later it was owned by Patricia Fingerman. Shalom is characterized by its independent editorial board that numbers prominent intellectuals in its membership.
- f. Communicacao -- a newsletter published by the Jewish Federation of Sao Paulo.

II. BRAZILIAN JEWS -- PROUD CITIZENS

A. Patriotism

In September 1972, Brazil celebrated the 150th anniversary of her independence from Portugal. It was a moment enthusiastically commemorated in the whole country and proudly boosted by the military government of President Medici. The Jewish community decided to participate in the events in order to show its "pride of being authentic Brazilians." (3) Religious and social organizations joined these efforts, regardless of their ideology in order to make clear that Jews are united as Brazilians. (4)

The Jewish community used this celebration to remember how the country had been generous to Jews since her independence, "for no other group of the country the

proclamation of independence on September 7th, 1822, was so meaningful as it was for Jews who lived as crypto-Jews, with no freedom."(5) Brazil was also remembered as the only South American country which had fought against the Nazi-Fascist Axis sending troops to Italy in 1944, and for having effective participation in the Declaration of Partition of Palestine in 1947 when the United Nations was presided over by the Brazilian Oswaldo Aranha. (6) In addition to that, the celebration of 150 years of independence was an occasion to recall that Jews are not only thankful for the opportunity given by Brazil, but that they also contributed to the development of the country in industry, trade, agriculture, finance, education, science, literature, journalism, arts, politics. The president of the Jewish Federation of Rio de Janeiro said in the legislative house of that city, "Brazilian Jews participate in all sectors of Brazilian life with devotion and love for the land."(7)

In 1977, on the 155th anniversary of Brazilian independence, the main Jewish newspaper, Resenha Judaica, for the first time published a supplement in commemoration of that event. As the editor-chief, Oscar Nimitz explained: "traditionally we have been publishing a supplement on Yom Haatzmaut and Rosh Hashana ... however, the most important day of our country deserves to be remembered every year."(8)

In the same spirit, the Jewish Federation of Sao Paulo sponsored a religious service in honor of the 155th anniversary of Brazilian independence with many civil and

military authorities in attendance. (9)

B. Relationship with authorities

The relationship with civil and military authorities was maintained on a high level. The Jewish community was highly respected by the government. Every Rosh Hashanah, politicians and authorities sent messages to the Jewish community.

Throughout all of his administration President Medici sent a Rosh-Hashanah message which was regularly published in Jewish magazines and newspapers. Essentially, Medici's messages wished peace and happiness to Jews, stressing their integration and contribution to the country. (10) The same courtesy was continued by President Geisel. Nevertheless, Geisel's messages did not have the same warmth as Medici's -- they were formal wishes of peace and prosperity, and did not stress the participation and contribution of Brazilian Jews to the country. (11)

Ministers of state, mayors, governors, the president of the Congress also greeted Brazilian Jews during the High Holidays, always emphasizing the importance of Jews to the country. As the Governor of Sao Paulo, Paulo Egydio Martins, wrote, "On the day that the Jewish community of Sao Paulo celebrates Rosh Hashanah, I extend my hands to all its members, with warm and deep admiration ... [the Jewish community] has been offering the best of themselves, contributing to our development. In the arts, politics,

science, trade, agriculture, and industry, the presence of Israelites ... is remarkable."(12)

The relationship with authorities was not reduced to greeting exchanges. Since the Brazilian Jewry is Zionist-oriented, efforts were not spared in urging important officials to visit the State of Israel.

During Medici's administration, many ministers visited Israel. In 1970, the Minister of Interior, Costa Cavalcanti, visited that country. Upon to his return to Brazil Cavalcanti lectured to Jews on his visit and praised the State of Israel, "Israel, involved in her task to develop technologically, became an industrial society, without losing her beauty and magnificence."(13) Cavalcanti's visit also resulted in concrete economic agreement: Israel would sell agricultural technology to Brazil. (14)

In 1972, the Minister of Education and Culture, Jarbas Passarinho, visited Israel and also was astonished at Israeli agricultural technology and the possibility of its use in Brazil territory. (15) In 1973, the minister of Foreign Relations, Gibson Barbosa, visited Israel, and signed treaties of scientific and technological cooperation between the two countries. (16) Barbosa's visit was reciprocated by Abba Eban, Israel's Minister of Foreign Relations who came to Brazil in September of 1973. (17)

The authorities also attended the celebration of Yom Haatzmaut organized by Jewish organizations. For instance, the commemoration of the 27th anniversary of Israeli

independence marked the presence of the Minister of Interior, Rangel Reis, the Minister of Labor, Arnaldo Prieto, and the governor of Rio de Janeiro, Faria Lima. (18)

Even after the Brazilian anti-Zionist vote in United Nations assembly in 1975, Jewish organizations sought to continue to keep their relations with authorities on a high level. In November 1975, the Minister of Education, Ney Braga, was honored with a medal for human solidarity by the National Commission of Human Rights of B'nai B'rith. (19) In 1976 the vice-Governor of Sao Paulo, Manoel Ferreira Filho, visited Israel. (20) The Minister of Education, Ney Braga, and the governor of Sao Paulo, Paulo Egydio, participated in the inauguration of the Hebrew Day School I.L. Peretz in September, 1976. (21)

C. Jewish Hospital Albert Einstein

In order to document the contribution of the Jewish community to the society, a major community enterprise was carried out, namely, the construction of a Jewish Hospital in Sao Paulo. The Hospital was named after Albert Einstein. Actually the idea of building a Jewish Hospital goes back to the end of 1950's, but only a decade later were funds available for its construction. (22) It was inaugurated on July 28 1971, by President Medici and many other governmental authorities. On the inauguration's plaque is written "this hospital, symbol of the integration of the Israelite community in Brazilian life, was inaugurated by President

Emilio Garastazu Medici."(23) Throughout the years many authorities visited the Hospital: in 1975, the commander of the Second Army, General Dilermando Monteiro, the chief of Federal Police, Romeu Tuma, the President of the Tribunal of Justice, Dentil do Carmo Pinto; (24) in 1977, the Minister of Health, Paulo de Almedia Machado, the Governor of Sao Paulo Paulo Egydio Martis, the commander of the Second Army, General Dilermando Monteiro, the mayor of Sao Olavo Setubal; (25) in 1979, the President Joao Figueiredo. (26)

D. Interfaith dialogue

Relationships with civil and military authorities was not enough if Jews wanted to be accepted as integrated citizens of the country. An interfaith dialogue needed be carried out. This task was performed by liberal rabbis. First, by Rabbi Pinkus and Rabbi Lemle, both refugees from Nazism and founders of Liberal synagogues in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, respectively. Later this effort was continued by Rabbis Henry Sobel and Roberto Graetz, both ordained at Hebrew Union College working in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, respectively. Due to their work "It has become quite an established practice for graduation ceremonies to include service in which priests, pastors, and rabbis join."(27) Surely more had to be done to promote interfaith dialogue. With this in mind, Rabbi Henry Sobel asked a priest and a pastor to come to a Seder at the Congregacao Israelita Paulista (CIP) in 1976. At his suggestion, they spoke about

the Last Supper stressing the importance of the Seder for the Gospels. On another occasion, a roundtable discussion, "Religious Education in the Era of Technology," was organized by CIP. (28)

Among the lay leadership, important in Jewish-Christian dialogue was Hugo Schlesinger, a Polish-born survivor of the Holocaust. Together with Father Humberto Porto, he was president of the Council for Christian-Jewish Brotherhood. (29) That Council aimed to open the doors of understanding among religious leaders, and to promote courses about issues relating to both religions. National issues were also addressed in the Council's meetings. In 1973, there was a convention on the question of human rights. This issue was very delicate for Jews who wished to keep good relations with the dictatorial government, but by debating within a context where Christians leaders were present, they were shielded. (30)

The good relations between the two leaderships was shown when a demonstration of solidarity for Soviet Jews was organized by the Jewish Federation of Sao Paulo and was supported by the Archbishop of Sao Paulo Dom Evaristo Arns, Father Humberto Porto, and Reverend Saulo Silva. Moreover, an ecumenical service for Soviet Jews were held in the Chapel of Colegio Sion, a Catholic school in July, 1978. (31)

E. Social Action

In a country which reveals wide social gaps throughout

various levels of society, social action is an important element in reaching out to non-Jews as a way to show that the Jewish community is concerned about the country's problems. Although, Jewish organizations had this issue in mind, "many Jewish leaders are very fearful of taking a more active role concerning questions of social justice. The Jewish community has never taken a vocal stand, neither had it voiced concern about the eighty percent of Brazil's population living at a bare substance level."(32) Still, Brazilian Jewry which was among the wealthiest of the country (see chapter four, p. 83) organized campaigns for the needy, specially in times of calamity and tragedy.

In 1975, Jewish institutions and organizations, donated money to reconstruct houses of victims of floods in Recife. (33) Together with their donation the following message was sent to the governor of Pernambuco, Moura Cavalcanti, "Jews have also been participating in the decisive moments of the Northeast. In the beginning, we planted sugar cane ... later we brought Israeli technicians to solve the problems of drought and create irrigation projects. Now, when a calamity happens in the state of Pernambuco, once more Jews show their solidarity with local and national authorities, collaborating in order to diminish the pain of those who are unsheltered by the flood. We are offering food, clothes, drugs, and an amount of money to repair lost houses."(34)

In 1976, the organization Na'mat-Pioneer Women, made a

donation to an association for the protection of poor mothers and children. (35) In 1976, 1997, 1978, Na'mat collaborated with a center that trained poor children to have work skills. (36) This initiative was praised by many authorities. (37)

In a new flood in 1979, this time in the states of Minas Gerais and Espirito Santo, the B'nai B'rith collected food and clothes to assist the victims of the calamity. (38)

III. BRAZILIAN JEWS -- PROUD JEWS

As much as Brazilian Jews wanted to be good citizens of the country, they cherished their own heritage. Two causes mobilized many Brazilian Jews during the 1970's, namely, the situation of Soviet Jews and the State of Israel.

A. Soviet Jews

In beginning of 1971, Jewish Youth movements and the Jewish Federation of Sao Paulo organized a demonstration against the trial which had condemned two Jews to death in Leningrad because they tried to flee to Israel. More than a thousand people attended the demonstration. In support of the demonstration, Jewish shopkeepers closed their stores for fifteen minutes. The concern for the situation of Soviet Jews and the unfairness of the trial led the IBRADIU -- the Brazilian Institute for Human Rights -- to support the cause of Soviet Jews. (39)

In 1974, the Jewish Federation of Rio de Janeiro promoted a night of solidarity with Soviet Jews. The event

was marked by the presence of many intellectuals, the president of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, Austragesilo de Athayde, and Minister Luiz Gama Filho. On that occasion, speakers mentioned the lack of human rights in Soviet Union, the suffering the Kremlin was inflicting upon Jews, and demanded freedom for those who wanted to emigrate to Israel. (40)

On August 27, 1978, the Jewish Club "A Hebraica" of Sao Paulo organized a commemoration remembering the extermination of Jewish writers and poets that took place during the Stalin period in 1952. Writers, intellectuals and the Dean of the respected University of Campinas, Zeferino Vaz, attended the event. (41)

The situation of Soviet Jews also mobilized politicians and religious authorities. In 1978 State Deputies of Sao Paulo expressed their concern with the situation of Anatoly Sharansky, who in the words of State Deputy Dulce Salles was unjustly sentenced to forced labor. (42) In the same year the Council for Jewish-Christian Brotherhood held a public and ecumenical service in solidarity with the refusniks Anatoly Sharansky and Alexander Ginzburg. (43) To increase even more the awareness of the situation of Soviet Jews a Brazilian Committee for Soviet Jews was founded. This committee organized a convention in Rio Janeiro in December of 1978. The convention was distinguished by the presence of Carlos Abranches, president of the Committee of Human Rights of Organization of American States. After the sessions, a

public manifesto was approved, "We proclaim that the individual rights of Soviet Jews should be protected, so that they may opt for their own destiny freely." (44)

B. The State of Israel

The unexpected Yom Kippur War left the Community astonished and angry. As soon as the news of invasion arrived, the Jewish Federation of Sao Paulo decided to organize a public event in the Jewish Club A Hebraica, Night of Peace. More than six thousand people attended the event, among them many non-Jewish personalities, such as show hosts Flavio Cavalcanti and Hebe Camargo, movie director Walter Khoury, actors Dionisio De Azevedo, Carlos Zara, Bibi Vogel, Armando Bogus, Adriano Reis, Eva Wilma and John Herbert, the president of The Trade Federation of Sao Paulo, Jose Papa Jr. the president of Accountant Tribunal of Sao Paulo, Jose Julianelli, the president of the House of State Deputies of Sao Paulo, Jaco Carolo and, the mayor of Sao Paulo, Miguel Colassuano. (45)

In Rio de Janeiro the Jewish Community also organized an effort -- in solidarity with the invaded State of Israel -- with prominent Jewish leaders and politicians present. (46)

The massacre of Israeli children in Maalot in 1974 also outraged the Jewish community which expressed its solidarity with the State of Israel in a demonstration in Sao Paulo attended by a thousand people. (47)

IV. BRAZIL: THE PARADISE THAT NEVER WAS

As noted above Brazilian Jews could exercise all rights as citizens and were proud of this condition -- they were proud of being citizens of a country which had opened her gates to immigrants and allowed them to contribute to the country's general welfare. This patriotic attitude plus the important positions Jews held furthered a positive relationship with civil and military authorities. Also, Jews were able and eager to express their Jewishness and embrace Jewish causes. There was no conflict between their Brazilian citizenship and Jewish identity, and this seemed to be well understood by various sectors of Brazilian society. Nevertheless, it would be an exaggeration to say that Brazil was a safe haven for Jews. Indeed, problems existed in large numbers; anti-Semitism was a tangible preoccupation, and the praised relationships with governmental authorities were many times at stake.

A. Anti-Semitism

Throughout the 1970's there had been isolated anti-Semitic incidents. In 1971, Mein Kampf was illegally published (the minister of Justice Alfredo Buzaid had outlawed this publication), (48) the Jewish cemetery of Sao Paulo was profaned. (49) In general, these acts were not seen by the organized Jewish community as real threats to Jewish life in Brazil. Nonetheless, after the Yom Kippur

war and the oil shock of 1973 anti-Semitism increased. The anti-Israel attitude in intellectual circles was stronger than in former years. (50) Left-wing oriented publications and newspapers identified Israel as an imperialist country. "Even during the Israeli independence anniversary celebrations some dailies, chiefly the Rio Tribuna da Imprensa, and weeklies, mainly the Rio Opinioao and Pasquim, engaged in an anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist propaganda campaign using against the Jewish state the well known accusations of militarism, fascism, and others." (51) In addition to this, the Arab League office in Rio de Janeiro published anti-Israeli pamphlets and books. (52) Israel, and by association Jews, were blamed for the higher prices of gasoline and therefore for the recession and inflation.

Indeed, this bad image of Israel had a negative impact on Jews. The left-oriented groups used the following formula: Israel is a fascist state. Israel is the Jewish state. Jews, therefore, are fascist. The military government is fascist and supported by CIA just as Israel is. Jews are connected to fascism also in Brazil. On the other hand, military and right-wing groups thought: we have to please the Arabs. Jews are the enemies of Arabs, therefore, Jews are against the country's interest. Jews feared their situation -- anti-Semitism came from the left and from the right. Swastikas were painted on Jewish organization offices in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Rio Grande do Sul; windows of

synagogues were deliberately broken. (53) The local federations of Brazil convened in August of 1978 to discuss the problem of increasing anti-Semitism. They requested the intervention of the authorities. The government and Federal Police gave guarantees that anti-Semitic manifestations would not be tolerated and they would do everything to find those who violated public order. However no serious action was taken. (54) In two international incidents Brazilian-born Jews were victims of anti-Semitism and did not count on any governmental support. First, the soccer team Botafogo of Rio de Janeiro (one of the most important soccer teams of Brazil) was invited to play in Saudi Arabia in 1978. The physician of the team, Mendel Zalcberger, who used to accompany the players to the games was denied permission to enter that country because he was Jewish. (55) Second, The Vice President of Iraq, Taha Ma'arof, refused to land in Rio de Janeiro -- the first stop in most international flights to Brazil -- in his visit to Brazil in 1979 because the mayor, the industrialist, Israel Klabin was Jewish. (56) Indeed, Klabin's industries were placed on the Arab Blacklist. (57)

B. Anti-Zionism

When the motion that Zionism equals racism was proposed to be voted on in the United Nations in October of 1975, it was expected that Brazil would follow the traditional policy of neutrality and absent herself from the vote, as she had done in previous motions against Israel. (58) At any rate,

the Jewish Confederation sent a message to the Minister of Foreign Relations that Brazilian Jewry "relies on the fact that the government would not disrespect the traditional justice of Brazil, since the condemnation of Zionism is also an affront to Jewish communities scattered all over the world."(59)

When the Brazilian ambassador to the United Nations voted favorably on the motion that equated Zionism with racism, a dilemma was faced by the Jewish community: on one hand, they could not quietly accept this position; on the other hand, to raise the voice in protest meant to challenge the dictatorship. To comfort the Jewish community the authorities repeatedly stressed that the vote was against racism not against Jews (see chapter 2, p. 40). Nevertheless such declarations did not appease the anger of Jews.

On 29 November 1975, the Jewish federation of Sao Paulo organized a night of gratitude to Oswaldo Aranha, the Brazilian chancellor, who twenty-eight years earlier had presided at the United Nations General Assembly which approved the Partition of Palestine. Six thousand people attended the event, among them the vice-governor of Sao Paulo, Manoel Ferreira Filho, the mayor of Sao Paulo city, Olavo Setubal, the leader of MBD, Congressman Ulysses Guimaraes, and regional president of ARENA, Claudio Lambo, and many state and municipal secretaries. Clearly, the event was intentionally organized to protest the Brazilian position at the United Nations and to show the historical link that

united the state of Israel with Brazil. However, to avoid complicating matters the night was focused on paying honor to Oswaldo Aranha and the issue of Zionism was touched only superficially. (60) Only the son of Oswaldo Aranha made a clear statement: "I do not understand the Brazilian policy toward Zionism." (61)

On December 1, 1975, President Geisel received for an interview the president of the Jewish Confederation, Benno Milnitzky, the president of the Jewish Federation of Rio de Janeiro, Eliezer Burla, and the president of the Jewish Federation of Sao Paulo, Heinz Katz. The leaders of the Jewish community expressed their concern about the vote in the UN equating Zionism with racism and the tension it engendered among Brazilian Jewry. In response, President Geisel, though he did not discuss Brazil's position on the United Nations resolution, stressed that "no activity of the organized community, either Zionist-oriented or fund-raising, or any other will be restrained ... and the government will not allow the dissemination of anti-Semitism." (62)

Despite all the distress and fear, Brazilian Jews learned that they were not alone, "120 Brazilian intellectuals, among them the writer Erico Verissimo, signed a statement published in O Estado de Sao Paulo, O Globo, and Jornal do Brasil, the country's major newspapers, refuting the resolution that equated Zionism with racism." (63) These newspapers also wrote editorials condemning the Brazilian

position, "The Brazilian vote is not only unjustifiable, but also politically incomprehensible;"(64) "Brazilian foreign policy has engaged in the spirit of neo-anti-semitism;"(65) "The policy of Zionism is not racist ... anti-Semitism is racism."(66)

C. Herzog Affair

The death of Wladimir Herzog (see chapter 2, pp. 34-35) in the prison of the National Security Agency outraged all of society. University faculty and students, journalists, intellectuals, and members of the clergy participated in a series of demonstrations in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre, Belo Horizonte, and in Brasilia, the capital. With the notable exception of Rabbi Sobel, the Jewish community remained silent. (67) In an interview one day after the funeral Rabbi Sobel declared to the press that "the synagogue supported human rights as strongly as the [Catholic] church, and that the Jews were as disgusted and distressed with Herzog's death as all other Brazilians."(68) In addition to that, Rabbi Sobel explained why Wladimir Herzog was not buried next to the cemetery's walls, "he did not commit an aggression against anybody nor against himself."(69) Clearly, Sobel's statement challenged the government's version that affirmed that Herzog had killed himself.

Rabbi Sobel suffered much pressure from the lay leadership to keep himself out of this issue since it could complicate the situation of the community vis-a-vis the

government. (70) Nevertheless in the ecumenical ceremony held one week after Herzog's death Rabbi Sobel said that he was not there only because a Jew had died but because a man had died, "as a rabbi I am not only worried with Jews, but with all human beings and with human rights for all the people, from all the faiths, races, and colors." (71) The criticism of Sobel by Jewish community members and leaders increased; these can be best summarized as follows: it is easy to be brave when you have an American passport (Sobel is American-born, and went to Brazil after being ordained). (72) Even when Herzog's widow, supported by national organizations of journalists and lawyers, went to court to prove that Herzog had not killed himself, the community asked Rabbi Sobel not to get involved. (73) The omission and fear of the community were related by journalist, Fernando Jordao, who wrote a book about the affair -- Dossie Herzog: prisao, tortura e morte no Brasil, editora Global -- watering the seeds of anti-Semitism. (74)

D. PLO'S Diplomatic representation

In 1979, the administration of President Joao Figueiredo suffered many pressures to allow the PLO to open its diplomatic office in the capital of Brazil (see chapter 2, pp. 43-44). At that time, the PLO was an enemy of the State of Israel. For Brazilian Jewry, the installation of a PLO office in Brazil was viewed with fear and apprehension. It was not a question of Israel's diplomacy, but also the

existence of Jews in Brazil, since the PLO could easily instigate anti-Semitism. Brazilian Jews asked: first an anti-Zionist position at UN, now a possible installation of a PLO office in the capital of the country, what will be the next governmental step against Jews? Rabbis Henry Sobel and Daniel Kripper protested vehemently against the possibility of installation in the country. (75) In order to calm the Jewish community, President Joao Figueiredo visited the Jewish Hospital Albert Einstein in June of 1979 when the Center of Nuclear Medicine was inaugurated. (76)

On July 11, 1979, the president and vice-president of the Brazilian Jewish Confederation, Jose Meiches and Mario Black, respectively, the President of the Jewish Federation of Sao Paulo, Jayme Pasmanik, and the President of the Jewish Federation of Rio de Janeiro, Eliezer Burla, met President Joao Figueiredo and handed him the following message:

" ... deeply worried with development of the negotiation for the installation of an office of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in this country, the Brazilian Jewish Confederation [and local Jewish federations], that represents Brazilians of Jewish faith, expresses a justified fear about the insecurity that such installation may bring ... Since its creation, that organization practices crimes and acts of terrorism ... We express our confidence that the installation of the PLO office would not be allowed, nor the activities of its representative person ... [they] aim to destroy a 400 year tradition of fraternal relationship

between Brazilians of Arab and Jewish roots..."(77)

Nonetheless, the appeal of the Jewish community did not have any positive effect. On September 26, 1979, the Minister of foreign Relations, Saraiva Guerreiro, recognized PLO as official representative of the Palestinian people. (78)

Everything indicated that the next step would be the installation of PLO's office in Brasilia. Authorities of Arab countries arrived to Brazil to pressure Brazilian government. (79) In order to counterbalance the pressure, the B'nai B'rith of Brazil invited the international president of that organization, Jack Spritzer to interview President Joao Figueredo in November, 1979. (80) The B'nai B'rith as the largest Jewish organization in the United States was seen as a powerful lobby which had direct connections with the US government. (81) On December 4th, 1979 the Jewish community of Sao Paulo organized a demonstration against the installation. (82) The fact is that the Ministry of Foreign Relations postponed a final decision and in 1982 decided not to make an agreement with the PLO's diplomatic representation in Brazil. (83) This decision might have been taken because of PLO's links with revolutionary groups all over Latin America, "the PLO trained Nicaraguan Brazilian, and Argentine guerrillas in its camps in Lebanon, South Yemen, and Lybia."(84)

V. CONCLUSION

Brazilian Jewry tried to stay away from the political events of the country such as the military coup of 1964 and the military government decisions as long as they did not affect directly the community. Moreover, as long as Jews could run their cultural, educational and religious activities there was no reason for the organized community to be involved in political life of the country. Nevertheless, the succession of the events forced the community to take a more active position. Sometimes it was courageous enough to challenge the government's decisions; other times, fearfully, it preferred to remain silent. Also, the Community's decisions were not exempt from contradiction, e.g., to demand human rights in Soviet Union but not in Brazil.

To complicate matters, Brazilian Jewry had to deal with two forces, the military government and the civil society. Whereas it refrained to be engaged in the Herzog affair due to fear of the military government, it was seen by the civil society as a coward. If anti-Jewish attacks could be originated from both sides; on the other hand, support also came from both sides. Jewish causes and institutions were defended by authorities, non-Jewish intellectuals, and religious leaders. Doubtless, it was not easy for Brazilian to counterbalance all the forces. However, Brazilian Jews learned how to deal with the complicated Brazilian environment of the 1970's, thriving socially, economically,

educationally, culturally, and religiously.

VI. NOTES

- (1) Samuel Malamud, Contribuicao Judaica ao Desenvolvimento Brasileiro nos 150 anos de Independencia, (Rio de Janeiro: Federacao Israelita do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, 1972), p. 3.
- (2) About Jewish Press in Brazil see Hugo Schlesinger O Hebreu oct/nov, No. 162/163, pp. 163-163. Sergio R. Margulies "Historia da Imprensa Judaica no Brasil," (Rio de Janeiro, Pontificia Universidade Catolica do Rio de Janeiro, 1985).
- (3) Jornal Israelita (Rio de Janeiro), 19 March, 1972.
- (4) Jornal Israelita, op. cit.
- (5) Revista Aonde Vamos? (Rio de Janeiro), 31 Aug-7 Sept., 1972.
- (6) Revista Aonde Vamos?, op. cit.
- (7) Malamud, op. cit.
- (8) Resenha Judaica (Sao Paulo), Aug., 1977.
- (9) Comunicacao (Sao Paulo), 8 Sept., 1977.
- (10) Revista Brasil-Israel (Rio de Janeiro), Sept/Oct., 1970, p. 5. Revista Brasil-Israel, Sept./Oct., 1971, p.5. Revista Brasil-Israel, Aug./Sept., 1973, p. 3. Revista Aonde Vamos?, 20 Sept., 1971, p. 14. Revista Aonde Vamos?, 11 Sept., 1972., p. 20.
- (11) Revista Brasil-Israel, Sept./Oct., 1974, p.1. Revista Brasil-Israel, Sept./Oct., 1977, p. 7.

- (12) Revista Shalom, Sept, 1977, p. 152.
- (13) Revista Aonde Vamos?, 17 Sept, 1970 p. 22.
- (14) Revista Brasil-Israel, Sept./Oct, 1970 p. 21.
- (15) Jornal Israelita, 16 Jul. 1972.
- (16) Revista Aonde Vamos?, 8 Feb., 1973, pp. 12-15.
- (17) Resenha Judaica, 1st fortnight, Sept, 1973.
- (18) Resenha Judaica, 1st fortnight, May, 1975.
- (19) Resenha Judaica, 1st fortnight, Nov., 1975.
- (20) Resenha Judaica, 1st fortnight, May, 1976.
- (21) Revista Shalom, Sept. 1976.
- (22) Revista Shalom, Nov. 1977, pp. 15-16.
- (23) Revista Brasil-Israel, Sept./Oct., 1971 p. 31.
- (24) Resenha Judaica, 2nd fortnight, July, 1976.
- (25) Revista Shalom, Nov., 1977, p. 29.
- (26) Revista Shalom, June, 1979, p. 32.
- (27) Walter Rehfeld, "Brazil," AJYB (Philadelphia: JPS, 1976). Vol. 77, pp. 281.
- (28) Rehfeld, op. cit.
- (29) Resenha Judaica, 1st fortnight, Feb., 1975.
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- (31) Comunicacao, 20 Jul., 1978.
- (32) Rochelle Saidel, "Death and Democracy in Brazil," Reform Judaism Magazine (Fall 1987), p. 5
- (33) Comunicacao, 31 July 1975.
- (34) Comunicacao, 7 Aug., 1975.
- (35) Comunicacao, 19 Feb., 1976.
- (36) Resenha Judaica, 1st fortnight, Feb, 1977.
- (37) Comunicacao, 2 Feb, 1978.

- (38) Resenha Judaica, 19 March, 1979.
- (39) Revista Shalom, Jan, 1971 pp. 24-25.
- (40) Resenha Judaica, 1st fortnight Oct., 1974.
- (41) Comunicacao, 30 Aug., 1978.
- (42) Comunicacao, 28 Sept., 1978.
- (43) Resenha Judaica, 1st fortnight Aug., 1978.
- (44) Comunicacao, 21 Dec., 1978.
- (45) Resenha Judaica, 2nd fortnight Nov., 1973.
- (46) Ibid.
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- (48) Revista Aonde Vamos?, 22 July, 1971 p. 14.
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- (51) Marcos Margulies, "Brazil," AJYB (Philadelphia: JPS, 1974-1975), Vol. 76, p. 380.
- (52) Margulies, op. cit.
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- (58) Revista Aonde Vamos?, 16 Dec., 1971, p. 26.
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- (61) Revista Shalom, Dec. 1975.

- (62) Resenha Judaica, 2nd fortnight Dec. 1975.
- (63) Fingerhann, op. cit.
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- (69) Ibid.
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- (74) Revista Shalom, June, 1979, p. 8.
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CHAPTER 4

THE PARTICIPATION OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN BRAZILIAN LIFE

I. INTRODUCTION

The history of Jewish immigration to Brazil is a history of success. The immigrants who came without knowing the local culture in most cases with no possessions managed to achieve top rank economically, politically and culturally. Two factors contributed decisively to the growth and improvement of the community: first, the developing Brazilian economy; and second, the immigrants' efforts to provide their children with the best level of education possible. The dilemma of being beneficiary of a dictatorial system did not prevent the generation born in Brazil from fulfilling the immigrant parents' dreams. In fact, Jews managed to participate actively in all sectors of Brazilian life. This conclusion was reached after a survey of the following aspects of Brazilian Jewry: demography, economic situation, educational level, and religious life. It was also carried out through a brief survey of Jews who had achieved distinguished participation in Brazilian society.

It must be considered that the data available are in many instances limited; i.e., whereas surveys were made in Sao Paulo, Porto Alegre, Curitiba, and Belo Horizonte, none have been made in other cities where Jews live. In addition, each of the three surveys used a different methodology so that we may not have accurate comparison. In spite of these problems, the data available do serve our purpose in studying

the participation of Brazilian Jewry in that country's society. Finally, such a study would not be complete if we had not endeavored to compare the economic and social situation of Jews vis-a-vis the Brazilian population as a whole.

II. DEMOGRAPHY

In the 1970's the Jewish population of Brazil was estimated to be between 150,000 and 155,000. The community was (and still is) concentrated in the large urban centers as follows: 85,000 in Sao Paulo; 70,000 in Rio de Janeiro, 10,000 in Porto Alegre; 2,400 in Belo Horizonte; 1,300 in Salvador; 1,000 in Curitiba; 1,000 in Niteroi; 1,000 in Santos; 1,000 in Recife; 1,000 in Belem; 500 in Manaus; 350 in Campinas. (1)

Surveys made in Sao Paulo, (2) Curitiba, (3) and Porto Alegre, (4) reveal that average Jewish family size was between 2.5 (in Curitiba) and 2.7 (Sao Paulo and Porto Alegre) children per couple. The natural growth of the Brazilian Jewish community is 0.8%, whereas the Brazilian population's natural growth is 3.15%. (5) Therefore, the overall number of Jews as a percentage of population in Brazil has been reduced throughout the years.

TABLE 4-A

JEWISH POPULATION IN BRAZIL

	Brazilian population	Jewish population	% of Jewish population in Brazil
1970	90,840,000	150,000	0,166
1979	118,650,000	150,000	0,126

Sources: Leon Shapiro, "World Jewish Population," AJYB (Philadelphia: JPS, 1971 and 1981), Vols. 72 and 81, p. 477 and p. 287.

Since the end of the 1950's, there has been no Jewish migratory wave to Brazil. Nevertheless, in the 1970's a small number of Jews fleeing the more repressive regimes of Uruguay, Argentine and Chile found refuge in Brazil. (6) Some of them returned to their homeland as soon as the political stability was restored. Most of these Latin American immigrants did not seek aid from Jewish relief agencies. On the other hand, the small number of immigrants who came from Lebanon and the former USSR did seek community assistance. (7) The number of Jewish immigrants did not change the structure of the community nor change the Jewish population. Actually, the number of immigrants counterbalanced those who made aliyah to Israel. (8)

III. ECONOMIC SITUATION

Between the end of World War II and the middle of the 1970's, the Brazilian economy has grown and developed. This enormous growth did not favor the majority of the population

which remains extremely poor. Wealth was concentrated in a few hands. (9)

Jews managed to belong to the high strata of society. "Undoubtedly, Jews participated in the process of economic growth and industrialization out of proportion to their number within the population." (10) Thus, the social pyramid of the Jewish community is diametrically opposed to the social pyramid of the Brazilian population as a whole.

TABLE 4-B
SOCIAL PYRAMID OF BRAZILIAN JEWS

Social Class	Brazilian Population	Brazilian Jews
Lowest	62.2%	1,5%
Lower Middle Class	17.0%	10.9%
Middle Class	10.8%	8.8%
Upper Middle Class	6.9%	30.2%
High Middle Class	3.1%	27.3%

Sources: Henrique Rattner, Tradicao e Mudanca, (Sao Paulo: Atica, 1977), p. 46. Sylvia Hewlett, Brazil and Mexico, (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1982), p. 319.

It is clear that Jews, after arriving in Brazil as immigrants, succeeded in climbing the social ladder, and situated themselves in the upper ranks of that society. "On the evidence of data about the peculiar occupation structure of Jewish community, corroborated by additional information about education level, housing and land ownership in urban areas, travel overseas, and general consumption

patterns, we may assume that almost 2/3 of Brazilian Jews belong to the elite."(11)

A. Housing

Brazilian Jews live in the metropolian areas of great urban centers. They tend to concentrate in certain neighborhoods: (12) in Sao Paulo, in the neighborhood of Bom Retiro; (13) in Porto Alegre, in the neighborhood of Bom Fim; (14) and in Curitiba, in the neighborhood of Batel and Reboucas. (15)

This concentration in certain neighborhoods is explained by the necessity the first immigrants had to live together and maintain their style of life. (16) The social rise of the generation already born in that country changed this tendency. They moved to better areas (17) as there was no need to keep alive the old landsmannschaften; now it was important that a new social status be achieved. (18) Since the Jewish institutes, organizations, schools and synagogues founded by the immigrants are located in the old neighborhoods, new ones will have to be built. Indeed, such constructions have already happened in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, (19) but not in Curitiba or in Porto Alegre where the distances do not represent a problem.

The majority of Jews own their own homes. 59% of the Jewish families of Sao Paulo, (20) 85.3% of Jewish families of Porto Alegre, (21) and 85.3% of Jewish families of Belo Horizonte (22) own their houses or apartments. This

percentage is extremely high in a country where no credit line is available to purchase homes; thus in order to acquire one's own home, one has to possess a substantial sum of money.

B. Occupational strata

According to the Brazilian national census of 1970, the majority of the working population is employed as agricultural or manual workers, only a minority in liberal professionals or as businessmen.

Table 4-C

OCCUPATION STRATA OF BRAZILIAN POPULATION

Occupation strata of Brazilian population	%
1. Middle and Upper Strata	15.0%
a. Employers	1.9%
b. Self Employed with Own Commercial Establishment	0.2%
c. Independent Professionals Semi-Professionals	0.7%
d. Dependent Professionals	2.6%
e. Managerial Personnel	2.6%
f. Employees, Sales Personnel, Auxiliaries	7.0%
g. Employers in Agriculture and Extrative Enterprises	0.1%
2. Lower Strata	80.7%
a. Wage Workers	21.9%
b. Rural Workers	14.2%
c. Own-Account Workers and Unpaid Family Workers	50.6%
3. Others	4.3%
TOTAL	100.0%

Source: Statistical Abstract of Latin America, (Los Angeles: University of California, 1976), Vol 17, p. 155.

The occupational level of Jews differs substantially from that of the Brazilian population. The professional and business activities held by Jews mirror their high economic level. If only 1.5% of the Brazilian workers are employers, this percentage is much higher among Jews, as it is the percentage of the so-called blue-collar professionals. On the other hand, due the fact Jews live in urban centers, agricultural occupation is not even a category in the surveys made.

TABLE 4-D
OCCUPATION LEVEL OF JEWS

Occupation	Sao Paulo	Porto Alegre
Employees	15.66%	16.8%
Crafts and autonomous business	0.87%	7.2%
Executives autonomous business	5.35%	1.0%
Liberal professionals	26.76%	34.3%
Employers	35.62%	21.9%
Retired	5.81%	not available
Others	9.93%	11.0%
Total	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Statistical Annuary of the Jewish Community in Sao Paulo (Sao Paulo: Jewish Federation of the State of Sao Paulo, 1978). Anita Brumer, Como Somos? - Censo da Comunidade Judaica do Rio Grande do Sul (Porto Alegre: Federacao Israelita do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul, 1993), pp. 39-40.

IV. EDUCATION

During the 1970's elementary education was not available for all Brazilian children. In the whole country, 76.2% of them were enrolled in elementary school, and not all of

them managed to finish. Moreover, only 35.6% of those who began elementary education go to high-school. This level of drop-outs is explained by the impossibility of low-income families to support their children for such a long period of time.

TABLE 4-E

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT OF BRAZILIAN POPULATION

Grades	as % of Population
Elementary school	76.2%
High School	35.6%
College	6.6%

Source: Statistical Abstract of Latin America, (Los Angeles: University of California, 1976), Vol 17, p. 120.

There is a reasonable difference between the percentage of school enrollment in the country as a whole and that of the southeast region. This region is Brazil's richest area and this doubtless make possible a higher level of school enrollment, so that 90% of children attend elementary school. (23)

The table below reveals that school enrollment among Jews is not only higher than that of the Brazilian population as a whole, but it is also higher than that of the non-Jewish population of the southeast region where the majority of Brazilian Jews live.

TABLE 4-F

School Enrollment Among Jews of Sao Paulo		
Grades	Male	Female
elementary school	100%	100%
high school	82%	78%
college	78.6%	52,0%

Source: Henrique Rattner, Tradicao e Mudanca
(Sao Paulo: Atica, 1977) p. 72

V. DISTINGUISHED JEWS IN BRAZILIAN LIFE

It can be seen from the discussion above that Jews managed to occupy a high rank in Brazilian life, being distinguished by their outstanding economic and educational level. It is worthwhile to see which Jews, as individuals, have been notable by their outstanding contribution to the economy, science, culture and politics of Brazil throughout the 1970's. Due to the limited character of this thesis we will only consider those who were alive after the 1950's.

A. Entrepreneurs

a. Klabin - The Klabin family is originally from Lithuania. The patriarch of the family, Mauricio Klabin arrived in Brazil in 1887 when he was 27 years old. Penniless, he began a small business selling cigarettes; then he worked in a printing business which he later bought. Constantly improving, he founded a paper factory in 1909. Mauricio died in 1923 and the business continued to be run by his cousin Wolf (1890-1957). Currently, the Klabin's

enterprise includes factories for paper, and construction material among others, and it is run by Wolf's sons, Armando, Daniel and Israel. Besides being an industrialist, Israel Klabin was chosen Rio de Janeiro's mayor in 1979/80. After holding this position he became president of the state-owned Bank of Rio de Janeiro. (24)

b. Leon Feffer - Russian-Born, he arrived to Brazil in the 1920's. He began as a peddler, soon became a shop-owner, and managed to start an industry of cellulose. Due to his initiative, Brazil does not need to import that raw material anymore. He is the honorary consul of Israel in Sao Paulo. (25)

c. David Kopenhagen - Lithuanian-born, arrived in Brazil in 1925 at the age of 29 and penniless. He succeeded in founding a chocolate factory and a store-chain named after his surname. He was president of the Brazilian and Maccabi Confederation. He passed away in 1967. (26)

The three above-mentioned entrepreneurs came from Eastern Europe between the end of last century and first two decades of the present century. Two factors were decisive for the success of their endeavors. First, they began their businesses when the Brazilian economy was booming; second, they arrived with no money and had no skills (although Kopenhagen was a physician he was not allowed to practice medicine). They were left with two options, either to be a low-paid worker or to try to start their own business.

Different, however, was the situation of German Jews. When they arrived in the 1930's, the Brazilian economy was not growing and did not favor the creation of new business. Moreover, as skilled workers they preferred to be employed as professionals than to go into the world of business. Siegfried Adler is, however, an exception to that rule. Running away from Nazi Germany in the 1930's, he founded a toy factory "Estrela" (star), which became the largest toy factory in all of Latin America. His endeavor is continued by his son Mario Adler, a committed Jew active in the Jewish Hospital Albert Einstein and in the Liberal synagogue of Sao Paulo, CIP. (27)

B. Literature

a. Clarice Lispector - Born in the Ukraine, arrived in Brazil in 1927 at the age of two. Her first book "Perto do Coracao Selvagem" (Close to the Wild Heart) was published when she was 19 years old. Twenty more books would be published throughout her career as a writer. Lispector is considered one of the most important Brazilian authors and her books are obligatory reading in the high-schools of the country. She passed away in 1987. (28)

b. Moacyr Scliar - Brazilian-born in 1937; most of Scliar's novels are about or related to Jewish life. The background of the plots is the life of the Jewish neighborhood of Porto Alegre where he grew up. (29)

c. Paulo Ronai - Born in 1907 in Hungary, where he was

a high-school teacher and translator. He went to Paris to complete his studies in literature. There Ronai was caught by the Nazis and sent to a concentration camp. Due to his knowledge of Portuguese and to previous translations of Brazilian poems to Hungarian, the Brazilian Ministry for Foreign Relations acted on Ronai's behalf, releasing him from the Nazis. He arrived in Brazil in 1941. His literary work is distinguished by the translation of many novels and stories from French, Hungarian, Russian, German and Latin to Portuguese, educational books, and dictionaries. He passed away in 1992. (30)

d. Anatol Rosenfeld - A refugee from Nazism, went to Brazil in 1937 where he initially worked as a peddler. Later he worked on the Jewish newspaper Cronica Israelita, taught German literature, and wrote articles about literature for the daily newspaper "O Estado de Sao Paulo". Died in 1973. (31)

e. Otto Maria Carpeaux - Born in Austria in 1900. Fleeing from the Nazis, he arrived in Brazil in 1944. Carpeaux wrote an eight-volume history of western literature, and with Ronai and Rosenfeld shaped the Brazilian intelligentsia. (32)

C. Journalism

a. Herbert Moses - Brazilian born, son of an Austrian father and American mother, was one of the founders of the newspaper "O Globo" in 1925. This newspaper became one the four most important Brazilian daily newspapers. (33)

Moses was president of the Brazilian Press Association between 1931 and 1965. He died in 1972. (34)

b. Samuel Weiner - In the 1930s, he founded a magazine "Diretrizes" aiming to fight against the fascism and the New State of Getulio Vargas. The federal government sent Weiner to exile in 1942. After Vargas's fall, Weiner returned to Brazil and interviewed the ex-president. The interview was a watershed in Brazil's politics since it predicted Vargas' return to politics. In fact, Vargas was elected president in 1950 and invited Weiner to create a daily newspaper, "Ultima Hora" (Last Hour), supported by the government. "Ultima Hora" was a revolution in the Brazilian press due to its design and quality. When Vargas killed himself in 1954, Weiner was prevented from running "Ultima Hora" and was put in jail. He was released by president Juscelino Kubitchek and recovered the ownership of "Ultima Hora". In 1964 the military dictatorship forced Weiner to leave the country. He was allowed to return in 1967, but "Ultima Hora" had many financial problems that obliged Weiner to sell it and he made his living as an employed journalist. Died in 1980. (35)

c. Alberto Dines - Son of Ukranian immigrants, Dines is Brazilian-born. He worked on many magazines and newspapers. In 1962 he became the editor-chief of "Jornal do Brasil", one of the four most important newspapers of Brazil. He held this position until 1973, when he was fired due to political pressure. Then he became director of "Folha de Sao Paulo" and was the first journalist to learn the Brazilian vote in the

United Nations against Zionism in 1975. In the last years, he wrote two biographies about important figures of Brazilian Jewish History, i.e., Stephan Zweig and Antonio Jose da Silva. (36)

d. Boris Casoy - Born in Sao Paulo in 1941, he was the press assistant of Secretary of Agriculture for Sao Paulo, press assistant of Sao Paulo's mayor, political editor for the daily newspaper "Folha de Sao Paulo", and its editor-chief since 1977. (37)

e. Adolfo Aizen - Aizen brought some of the famous American cartoons to Brazil, e.g., Flash-Gordon, Popeye, Tarzan, Superman, among others. He also initiated the publication of Brazilian cartoons. In order to make the history of Zionism better known, he published a biography of Theodor Herzl in cartoons; however he complained that this publication was not welcomed by the Hebrew day-schools and Jewish institutions, as he said "out of 10,000 issues only 20 were sold." (38)

f. Marcos Margulies - Polish born, survivor of the Holocaust, went to Brazil in the 1950s. Margulies produced many award-winning movie documentaries. He was the editorial director of the orthographic vocabulary of the Portuguese language, produced and directed a weekly series about World War II for Brazilian TV, wrote eighteen books, many of them about Jewish History and Israeli issues. Passed away in 1982. (39)

g. Helio Thys - Son of immigrants, Thys writes the texts

of the most listened to radio show in Rio de Janeiro "Haroldo de Andrade", and has written seven novels. (40)

h. Adolph Bloch - Born in Russia in 1908, Bloch left that country in 1921 and went to Brazil. He began as a typographer and in the 1950s already owned sophisticated graphic equipment, and published many weekly and monthly magazines. In 1983 he founded a national television broadcast "TV Manchete. (41)

h. Abrahao Koogan - Born in the Ukraine, went to Brazil as a child in 1920. He founded two publishing houses, "Editora Guanabara" in 1939, and "Editora Delta" in 1952. They have published books on literature, science, and encyclopedias. Koogan also published the first Encyclopedia Judaica in Portuguese in 1967. (42)

i. Senor Abravanel - Son of immigrants, is nationally known as Silvio Santos. He is a paradigm of the "self-made man". He began selling products in the streets of Sao Paulo, then hosted a TV show, opened a chain of stores, and in 1979 he received governmental permission to begin his own television network. Nowadays Santos's network is the second most important in Brazil. (43)

D. Arts

a. Lasar Segall - Born in Lithuania in 1891, moved to Germany to study art. In 1929 he settled in Brazil. His painting influenced decisively the development of art in Brazil. Among his numerous paintings there are many about the

tragedy of Nazism. He passed away in 1957. A museum was founded to preserve Segall's work. (44)

b. Carlos Scliar - Born in one the ICA colonies in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Maria, in 1920. Currently, Scliar lives in Porto Alegre and is one the best well-known artists and painters of Brazil. (45)

c. Walter Lewy - Born in Germany in 1905, emigrated to Brazil in 1937. Lewy became the pioneer of surrealism in Brazilian art. (46)

d. Fayga Ostrower - Polish born, moved to Germany from where she ran away, finding refuge in Brazil. She has illustrated books written by important Brazilians authors, such as Aluizo de Azevedo, Graciliano Ramos, and Jorge Lima. Her pictures were shown in many Brazilian and international museums. The Brazilian Senate and the Ministry for Foreign Relations have sponsored pictures drawn by Ostrower. (47)

e. Felicia Leirmer - Born in Warsaw in 1904, arrived in Brazil in 1927. Her paintings were selected among the best by the Ministry of Foreign Relations and represented Brazilian art in many Latin American countries. (48)

f. Moyses Baumstein - Born in Sao Paulo in 1931, physicist, mathematician, and artist, Baumstein introduced the art and techniques of holography in Brazil. (49)

E. Music

a. Isac Karabtchevsky - Born in Sao Paulo. In 1962 he joined the Brazilian Symphony, becoming its head conductor in

1968. It is due to Karabtchevsky's efforts that classical music became popular in Brazil. (50)

b. Henrique Morelenbaum - Born in Poland, arrived in Brazil as a child. He was the conductor of the municipal symphony of Rio de Janeiro, the vice-president of Interamerican Council of Music for the American States Organization, conductor of Israelita Rio de Janeiro's choir, and head professor of music in the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. (51)

F. Cinema

a. Leon Hirszman - Son of immigrants, born in Brazil in 1937, movie director and producer. Among his best known movies are "Sao Bernardo" based on the book written by Graciliano Ramos, and "Eles Nao Usam Black-Tie" (They do not Wear Black-Tie), which was awarded many international prizes. (52)

b. Silvio Tendler - Brazilian-born in 1950, movie director. Most of Tendler's are about Brazilian history. (53)

G. Science

a. Jose Goldberg - Son of Bessarabian immigrants, born in 1918. When he was 30 years old he became the youngest member of the Brazilian Academy of Science and head of the physics department of the University of Sao Paulo. In the 1970s he was the President of the Brazilian Society for the Progress of Science, and used this position to challenge the nuclear

agreement between Brazil and West Germany. In 1985, Goldberg became the dean of that university. In 1989 he was chosen as Minister of Education, a position he resigned when ex-President Collor was found involved in corruption schemes. (54)

b. Leopold Nachbin - Son of immigrants, born in 1922 in Recife. A mathematician, he was a college professor in Brazil, Chicago, Princeton, California, Texas, and the Sorbonne. He founded the Brazilian Center of Physics Research and when the Latin American Academy of Science was founded in 1983, Nachbin was elected a member. (55)

c. Mario Schemberg - born in Recife in 1914, Schemberg taught in the University of Sao Paulo between 1936 and 1969, being forced to retire by the military government. He also worked in the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. One of his theories was developed by Japanese and Chinese scientists who won the Nobel Prize. (56)

d. Fritz Feigl - Chemical engineer, born in Vienna, in 1891. He ran away to Belgium in 1938 from which he fled in 1940 due to the Nazi invasion. Then, on his way to the United States he stopped in Brazil and was invited to teach in local universities. He created a new method in chemistry that made possible the invention of the stenography pen. Passed away in 1971. (57)

H. Politics

a. Jose Meiches - Son of Bessarabian immigrants, born in

1926 in Sao Paulo. Meiches was municipal secretary of Sao Paulo (1965-69), state secretary of Sao Paulo (1971-75). (58)

b. Jose Mindlin - Industrialist, son of Russian immigrants. He was State Secretary of Culture , Science and Technology of Sao Paulo between 1975-6. (59)

c. Mauro Knijnik - Grandson of immigrants who went to the Colony of Phillipson, born in 1940. Knijnik was state secretary for Rio Grande do Sul between 1979-1983. (60)

d. Alberto Goldman - Brazilian-born, member of the party opposed to the military rulership. He was elected state legislator (1970-1974 and 1974-1978), federal deputy (1978-82), named State Secretary for Sao Paulo (1982-1986) and Minister of Transport (1992-94). (61)

e. Horacio Lafer - Son of Lithuanian immigrants who arrived in Brazil in the 1890s. Born in 1900, Lafer was Federal Deputy (1934-1937, 1946-1950, 1954-1958), Minister of Finance (1950-1953), Minister of Foreign Relations (1959-1961). Died in 1965. (62)

f. Arao Steinbruch - Grandson of immigrants, born in the Jewish Colonization Association Colony of Phillipson, moved to Porto Alegre and then to Rio de Janeiro. One of the founders of the Brazilian Labor Party. Steinbruch was subsequently elected councilman, state legislator, federal deputy and senator. In 1969, his political rights were cancelled by the federal government. Allowed to return to politics in 1980, he founded a small party and was elected councilman for Rio de Janeiro. Died in 1991. (63)

g. Salomao Malina - Brazilian-born, fought in World War II in the Brazilian army. After WW II, Malina was an active member of the Communist Party. When the army took power in 1964 he had to live in secret. His life only returned to normality in 1979 when political freedom was restored. (64)

h. Mauricio Graboïs - Brazilian-born in 1912; member of the Communist Party was elected federal deputy in 1945. In 1948, the government outlawed that party and Graboïs lost his seat in Congress. In the second half of the 1960s, he participated in guerrilla actions against the military government and was killed in one of them. (65)

i. Arnaldo Niskier - Born in Rio de Janeiro in 1935, was the Secretary of Science and Technology of the state of Rio de Janeiro twice, (1968-1972 and 1979-1983). Niskier is also a journalist and writer. He has written more than twenty books, most of them about education. He was the first Jew to be elected to the Brazilian Academy of Letters. (66)

j. Saul Raiz - Son of Polish immigrants who arrived in Brazil in 1928. Raiz was Curitiba's director of city planning, state secretary of Parana, and Curitiba's mayor (1975-79). (67)

k. Jayme Lerner - Architect, urbanist, Lerner was Curitiba's mayor two times, 1970-74 and 1979-83. (68)

l. Mauricio Schulman - born in Curitiba in 1932, Schulman was Secretary of state of Parana (1971-74), head of national housing and banking (1975-79), and president of the

state-owned national electric company (1979-1980). (69)

I. Army

a. Waldemar Levy Cardoso - Born in 1900, became the first Jewish general in the Brazilian army in 1954, and held its highest position in 1964. He died in 1983. (70)

b. Abraham Ramiro Bentes - General of the Brazilian army for the region of Amazon. He wrote three books about Jews in the Amazon. (71)

c. Other Jewish generals of Brazilian army: Aarao Benchimol (1912-1983), Moyses Chahon (1918-1981), Mauricio Kicis (1911-1979), and Samuel Kicis (1913-1984). (72)

VI. RELIGIOUS LIFE

The Jewish communities in Brazil have many religious, educational, relief, social, cultural, and Zionist organizations. The local Federations are the umbrella which unified all organizations. Most of these organizations were founded by immigrants who aimed to preserve the ideologies and approaches they brought to the new land. Gradually, as the generation born and grown in Brazil took the leadership, past ideologies have been replaced by new ones. The ethnically organized synagogues are being reshaped and have to be oriented based on a religious approach, i.e., liberal, conservative, or orthodox.

Historically, the synagogue as an institution has

always been central in Jewish life. The synagogue has been assuring the continuation of Judaism as beit ha-tefila, beit ha-midrash and beit ha-kneset. Although the synagogue is also relevant for Brazilian Jewish life, its importance is over shadowed by Jewish clubs and Hebrew day schools. If the first are only a meeting-place, the latter aim to guarantee the perpetuation of Jewish knowledge.

A. Education

In order to understand the role of Jewish education in Brazil, it is important to have an overview of the Brazilian school system. The majority of schools in Brazil is public, "6% of primary schools in Brazil were private while the majority were public. In Rio de Janeiro, on the other hand, 25% of the primary schools were private while 74% were public. On the secondary level the picture changes completely. Throughout the country 59% of the schools were private while 41% were public. In Rio de Janeiro 78% of the secondary schools were private while the rest were public." (73) The data available (74) allow us to conclude that 1) in the great centers, there are more private schools than in the rural areas due to the population income; 2) only those families who can sustain their children for a long time can give them secondary education; 3) low-income families would rather have their children enter the labor market than send them to secondary schools; 4) the majority of high income families do not send their children to public

school; 5) "The expansion of the private schools reinforces the stratification of Brazilian society, since only children from the middle and upper classes are able to afford the fees for such schools;"(75) 6) since the majority of Jews belong to the middle and upper classes, they tend to send their children to private schools. In choosing a private school, a Hebrew day school is highly considered since they follow the curriculum of secular schools, but include courses on Judaism and provide a known social environment. In Sao Paulo there are 12 Hebrew day schools (hereafter H.D.S.) in Rio de Janeiro 6, in Belo Horizonte 2, and Porto Alegre, Curitiba, Manaus, Recife and Belem have 1 each. The data concerning enrollment is from Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. (76)

Table 4-G
ENROLLMENT IN HEBREW DAY SCHOOLS

Grades (age groups)	Number of children in Sao Paulo's H.D.S.	% of Jewish children Sao Paulo's H.D.S.	Number of children in Rio's H.D.S.	% of Jewish children in Rio's H.D.S.
Kinder- garden (-2/6)	1,383	50.0%	1,104	39%
1st / 4th (-7/10)	1,873	50.4%	1,155	50.0%
5th / 8th (-11/14)	1,433	38.5%	1,209	54.0%
2nd grade (-15/17)	340	9.1%	591	41.0%
TOTAL	5,029	26.5%	4,059	46.0%

Sources: David Schers, Brazilian Jewry: The Jewish School System in Rio de Janeiro (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1980), p. 43. Henrique Rattner, Tradicao e Mudanca (Sao Paulo: Atica, 1977), p. 66. Revista Shalom (Sao Paulo, Oct. 1974), pp. 25-28.

According to Table 4-G, in Rio de Janeiro in relative terms 46% of the Jewish population of school age attended Jewish day-schools; in Sao Paulo only 26.5%. There is a high level of drop-out in the 2nd grade due to the "desire to avoid 'self-segregation'." (77) For unexplained reasons the level of drop-out is substantially higher in Sao Paulo, but in both cities more than 50.0% of Jewish children currently attend the elementary level of education.

A more definitive analysis of Jewish education in Brazil must consider not only the number of students enrolled in the H.D.S. but the quality of their learning as well. "From around a third of school hours in the elementary classes down to 10% in the high schools are devoted to Jewish studies." (78) This amount of time is not well used since "the situation in Jewish teaching is critical ... There are not enough teachers with a good level of Jewish learning, the didactic systems employed are generally not efficient in performing the complex role of transmitting Jewish culture and identity." (79) If one would ask why nothing is done to change this situation the answer is: "Jewish schools must succeed in providing, as primary function, a level of study which will lead their students into the university. The Jewish segment of the curriculum is not relevant to this aim, thus its part within the Jewish schools is at the same time important and yet secondary." (80)

Nevertheless, it must be said in favor of the efficacy

of Jewish education that 1) the students who attended Jewish schools have much more favorable attitudes towards Judaism and Israel than those who have not attended them, (81)

2) "There is a demonstrable relationship between the Jewish education and marital patterns: the higher the degree of Jewish education, the greater the observed tendency toward endogamous marriage; the lower the degree of Jewish education, the greater the observed tendency toward mixed marriages." (82)

B. Synagogue

Due to the particular character of the Brazilian educational system, the synagogue lost its role as the provider of Jewish education. The children are only sent to the synagogues in the years prior to their bar/bat-mitzvah. Surely, those who do not attend H.D.S. and therefore lack knowledge of Hebrew need more time for training than those who attend H.D.S. In both cases the primary function of such training is to enable the child to be bar/bat-mitzva. The synagogues are not a place to socialize either. The Jewish clubs are better prepared to carry out this function. To the synagogues is left the function of being Houses of Prayer. However, as we observe in the tables followed below, the attendance at religious services is very low.

TABLE 4-H

Attendance at synagogue in Sao Paulo	Includes sabbath services, High Holidays, and life- cycle events
Never	11.1%
three times a year	36.1%
between 4 and 11 times a year	31.4%
12 times a year	5.7%
more than 12 times a year	15.7%

Source: Henrique Rattner, Tradicao e Mudanca (Sao Paulo: Atica, 1977) pp. 86-87.

TABLE 4-I

Attendance at synagogue in Porto Alegre	Sabbath services	Rosh-Hashana	Yom Kippur
Never	71.2%	27.7%	18.0%
Sometimes	21.6%	22.1%	17.4%
Regularly	7.2%	50.2%	64.6%

Source: Anita Brumer, Como Somos: Censo da Comunidade Judaica do Rio Grande do Sul (Porto Alegre: Federacao Israelita do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul, 1993), p. 52.

TABLE 4-J

Attendance at Synagogue in Curitiba	
Always	2.4%
Never	7.5%
High Holidays	90.1%

Source: Regina Gouvea, A Comunidade Judaica de Curitiba -- 1889-1970 (Curitiba: Universidade Federal do Parana, 1980), p. 34.

TABLE 4-K

Attendance at Synagogue in Belo Horizonte	
All Sabbath Services	6.9%
All Jewish Holidays	21.0%
Rosh Hashanah	41.3%
Yom Kippur	66.5%
Memorial Services	26.9%
Occasionally	36.0%
Others	15.0%
Does not Attend	12.7%

Source: Jacques Levy and Leon Menache,
A Comunidade Judaica de Belo Horizonte (Belo Horizonte:
 Federacao Israelita do Estado
 de Minas Gerais, 1986), P. 12

The synagogues in Brazil are not the center of Jewish life. Even their religious function does not arouse interest, other than the High Holiday period. The synagogues are considered providers of life-cycle events. One reason for this phenomenon is that the synagogues, other than the liberal ones, were unable to face the challenge of adapting themselves to the new generation born in the country. The Brazilian born Jews prefer to participate and take the leadership of other institutions such as, H.D.S., Jewish hospitals, and Jewish Clubs. (83) Moreover, the synagogues do not seek to invest in rabbis. Once more, the exception is the Liberal synagogues which hired young assistant-rabbis to attract the youth. (84)

VII. CONCLUSION

During the years of the military regime, Jews as a whole managed to flourish economically and socially. (85) Not only that, overall, Brazilian Jews are among the wealthiest of the country. Thus, some may hastily conclude that Jews must have supported the political repression. (86) Nevertheless, whereas many Jews did support the dictatorship, others did not. In this sense we find Jews in the whole range of political life, even among the guerrillas. The misconception remains that generally Jewish organizations were led by big entrepreneurs who were beneficiaries of the economic system. Indeed, such leadership did not attract young people who was influenced by progressive and opposing ideas. "Being far more politicized in Latin America than in the United States, the universities offer a challenge that is both dangerous and potentially rewarding. The issues which engage students have to do with national concerns -- economic development, political reform, redistribution of wealth, and identification with the Third world." (87) Thus, "the paradox of making a good life under an authoritarian regime disturbed many members of the Jewish community and led to increasing intergenerational dissent and tension." (88) The presence of Reform rabbis ordained at Hebrew Union College, such as Rabbi Henry Sobel and Roberto Graetz, counterbalanced this tension. Due to their endeavors, Jewish religious life in Brazil for the first time "stood forth as an ethical

command rather than a ritual obligation."(89) Nevertheless, their efforts were somehow limited by the fact that sports clubs "have become the primary Jewish institutions, often attracting more communications than the synagogues."(90) More than a faith, Judaism for Brazilian Jews is an ethnicity. In a country that promotes separatism through economic classes, this ethnicity is not only seen as justifiable, but also as a protecting shield that guarantees the status quo achieved.

VIII. NOTES

- (1) Rafael Fish, "Brazil," AJYB (Philadelphia: JPS, 1972), Vol. 73, p. 442.
- (2) Henrique Rattner, Tradicao e Mudanca (Sao Paulo: Atica, 1977), pp. 27-28.
- (3) Regina Gouveia, Comunidade Judaica de Curitiba 1889-1970 (Curitiba: Universidade Federal do Parana, 1980), p. 102-105.
- (4) Anita Brumer, Como Somos? - Censo da Comunidade Judaica do Rio Grande do Sul (Porto Alegre: Federacao Israelita do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul, 1993), p. 10.
- (5) Henrique Rattner, op. cit., pp. 32-33.
- (6) Revista Shalom, April 1971, p. 5.
- (7) Patricia Fingerman, "Brazil," AJYB (Philadelphia: JPS, 1977), vol. 78, p. 355.
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- (10) Henrique Rattner, op. cit., p. 189.
- (11) Henrique Rattner, "Occupational Structure of Jews in Brazil: Trends and Perspectives." (Jerusalem: no pub., 1973).
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- (13) Ibid. p. 35
- (14) Anita Brumer, op. cit., pp. 25-27.
- (15) Regina Gouvea, op. cit., p. 70.
- (16) Henrique Rattner, Tradicao e Mudanca, op. cit., p. 34.
- (17) Anita Brumer, op. cit., p. 25. Regina Gouvea, op. cit., p. 70.
- (18) Henrique Rattner, Tradicao e Mudanca, op. cit., p. 35.

- (19) Henrique Rattner, Tradicao e Mudanca, op. cit., p. 35. Interview with Rabbi Nilton Bonder, Congregacao Judaica do Brasil (Rio de Janeiro), 1989.
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- (21) Anita Brumer, op. cit., p. 30.
- (22) Jacques Levy and Leon Menache, A Comunidade Judaica de Belo Horizonte (Belo Horizonte: Federacao Israelita do Estado de Minas Gerais, 1986), p. 5.
- (23) Manual do Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatistica (Rio de Janeiro: IBGE), censo 1980.
- (24) Egon and Frieda Wolff, Participacao e Contribuicao de Judeus ao Desenvolvimento do Brasil (Rio de Janeiro: no pub., 1985), pp. 44-50, 137-138. Egon e Frieda Wolff, Guia Historico da Comunidade Judaica de Sao Paulo (Sao Paulo: Editora B'nai B'rith, 1988), pp. 53-61.
- (25) Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Participacao, p. 53.
- (26) Ibid. pp. 54-55.
- (27) Ibid. pp. 58-59. Egon and Frieda Wolff, Depoimentos: um perfil da coletividade judaica brasileira (Rio de Janeiro: no pub., 1988), pp. 65-67.
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- (29) Ibid. pp. 78-79.
- (30) Ibid. pp. 157-159. Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Depoimentos, pp. 108-110. Revista Veja (Sao Paulo, 12/9/1992), pp. 118-119.
- (31) Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Participacao, pp. 153-154.
- (32) Revista Veja, 12/9/1992, pp. 118-119.
- (33) The other three are: "O Estado de Sao Paulo", "Folha de Sao Paulo", "Jornal do Brasil".
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- (36) Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Participacao, pp. 154-155. Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Depoimentos, pp. 27, 95-99.

- (37) Ibid., pp. 155-156. Ibid., pp. 84-85. Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Guia, p. 107.
- (38) Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Participacao, pp. 161-162.
- (39) Revista Shalom, Sept. 1975, p. . Revista Shalom, June, June 1975, p.
- (40) Revista Shalom, June 1975, p.
- (41) Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Participacao, pp. 162-163.
- (42) Ibid., pp. 164-165. Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Depoimentos, pp. 63-65.
- (43) Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Guia, p. 109.
- (44) Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Participacao, pp. 89-90.
- (45) Ibid. pp. 91-92.
- (46) Ibid., pp. 93-94. Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Depoimentos, pp. 92-94.
- (47) Ibid., pp. 94-95. Ibid., pp. 106-107. Revista Shalom, Sept. 1976, pp. 89-90.
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- (62) Wolff and Wolff, op. cit., Participacao, pp. 121-127.
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- (76) Patricia Fingerhann, op. cit., AJYB, pp. 354-355.
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- (79) Ibid., p. 30.
- (80) Ibid., p. 69.
- (81) Ibid. p. 181. Henrique Rattner, op. cit., Tradicao e Mudanca, p. 66.
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CHAPTER 5

FROM THE JEWISH IDEAL OF DEMOCRACY
TO THE REALITY OF JEWISH SURVIVAL

I. AND NOW WHAT?

The Jewish element is present in the whole history of Brazil since the discovery of that country by the Portuguese. In the first three centuries of Brazilian history, this element was covered by the label of Marrano or New Christian. Even though they were a small percentage of the country's total population, the presence of Marranos in all political and social movements was remarkable. "There was no political movement in the Colonial and Imperial period which had not the participation of the New Christians." (1) Despite the problems they had with the Inquisition, Brazil was still a haven and refuge for those Jews by birth exiled by the Inquisition in Europe.

From the 1820's on, Jewish immigration changed its character. The immigrants did not hide their faith, but they also sought Brazil as a safe haven, a new country where anti-Semitism was unknown and a country full of opportunities for social and economic growth. Indeed, Brazil has proved to be the land dreamt of by immigrants. There they could prosper, and there religious freedom was granted. The immigrants who had chosen Brazil as their country and the new Brazilian born Jewish generations had every the reason to consider Brazil as their eternal land. There was no reason why Brazil's Jews could not "count on a long, and strong, future." (2) Nevertheless, the fact is that Brazil's Jews feel that their situation in the country is unstable and uncertain. (3)

Although the past and even the present had not provided a basis for such fears, there is apprehension regarding the future. It might be that the source of this anxiety resides in the country's own instability. Latin America in general and Brazil in particular have not really repaired their political and social system. (4) Just as Brazil remains in a state of uncertainty, Brazil's Jews are in a similar state of uncertainty. This situation led the community to adopt a double standard on the question of human rights, democracy, and social justice during the years of political repression. The organized community fought certain battles, but deliberately avoided others. Due to this double standard the survival of Judaism was at stake. How can Judaism survive when ethical issues are abrogated? How can Judaism be lived with integrity when the fight for human rights and democracy was not a high priority? And how can one be Jewish if not acting justly? Indeed, fear for the future could justify the passivity of the Jewish community. However, this attitude did not remain without consequences. They were two-fold. First, forgetting the Jewish ideals of democracy (5) and social action are more than an ethical dilemma, the identification of young generations to Judaism was endangered. Second, the community was put in a dangerous position when democracy and free organization of parties were restored in the 1980's. Jews were seen by emerging political forces as a group that did not share the country's problems and did not fight for their solution. (6) But again,

these threats did not compromise the physical and economic survival of Brazilian Jews. However, it remains to be answered if spiritual survival is not going to be affected as well. So far, Brazil has allowed Jews themselves to answer this question.

II. NOTES

- (1) Anita Novinsky, Resenha Judaica, 2nd fortnight, Aug. 1977.
- (2) Jeffrey Lesser, Pawns of the Powerful: Jewish Immigration to Brazil, 1904-1945 (New York: University of New York, 1989), p. 283.
- (3) Jeffrey Lesser, op. cit.
- (4) Henry Sobel, Resenha Judaica, 2nd fortnight, Aug. 1974.
- (5) Judaism and Human Rights, ed. Milton Konvitz (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1972).
- (6) Mauricio Waldman, et al, Politica das Minorias -- O Caso dos Judeus no Brasil (Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto, 1988).

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