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THE HISTORY OF THE EAST EUROPEAN JEWS IN THE UNITED STATES

FROM 1650 TO 1881

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I. INTRODUCTORY

1. The Term "East European Jew"

Before the history of a group can be written there must be certainty about the boundaries which set off this group from others. In the case of the East European Jews in the United States especially a clear definition has to precede the research, for the term "East European Jew" and the more or less synonymous expressions "Ostjude", "Russian Jew", "Polish Jew", and the colloquial, derogatory "Kike" are used in their different meanings to designate groups of people which are not identical.

The term "Polish" is applied to those Jews who follow the Minhag Polen in their prayers, i.e.all Jews who live in or come from any country in Europe east of the Elbe River. This includes, besides Poland and Russia, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, and the Eastern part of Prussia with Berlin. It excludes the Russian Hasidim who follow the Nussah Ari.

The term "Ostjude" as it is in use among the German Jews is applied to all Jews coming from the East, i.e. Russia, Poland, Galicia, Hungary, including even the formerly German provinces of Posen and West-Prussia, and sometimes Upper Silesia.

"Polish" in its geographical and political meaning designates today a territory which, although a historical unity, was divided among Russia, Prussia, and Austria in the time with which this essay is concerned. There was therefore no unity in the cultural and political history of the Jews living in this territory. The term does not include the Jews living in Russia proper.

"Russian",on the other hand, used in the same sense, excludes

those parts of the modern Republic of Poland which during the nineteenth century practically formed a political and cultural unit with Russia.

It was not without reason that the expression "Kike" was listed among the synonyms of "East European Jew". The Kike is the American Jew who culturally and socially forms a class apart from the "Sephardic Jew" and the"German Jew". While those Jews who came from the Prussian provinces of Poland and from Bohemia, Hungary, and Galicia associated themselves very closely with the assimilated German settlers, those who came from the Russian provinces of Poland and from Russia proper, remained in a group for themselves. It is this group to which the term "East European Jews" will be applied in this essay. As the whole territory in which these Jews lived before their migration to America was under Russian government in the time dealt with, the expression"Russian Jews" will be used as a shorter synonym.

2. The Material

Little has been written about those Russian Jews who came to this country before the big stream of East European immigration started in 1881. The time from the late forties to the seventies of the past century is usually called the period of German immigration. The historians who wrote about this epoch were concerned with the Bavarians and the "HinterBerliners" (from the province of Posen) who left their homes in the reactionary years after the revolutions of 1848 and 1849. They also mentioned the immigrants from Galicia and Hungary who arrived in great numbers during those decades.

but they neglected the East European Jews who were a minority among the Jewish immigrants of that time. Even those works which are concerned solely with the subject of the East European Jews in the United States do not include data prior to 1881. They either omit the influx of Russian Jews in the previous years or merely mention that a small number of individuals from Russia and Poland immigrated before the organized mass immigration began in 1881.

The reason for this silence of the historians is obvious. Compared to the size of the group of East European Jews in the United States, the small vanguard which reached these coasts before the great invasion of the eighties appears to be unimportant. It does not seem worth the work which would be necessary to collect the material from the scarce sources, for hardly any facts about the Russian Jews in America before 1881 have been published. Systematical statistics of immigration, listing the immigrants accord according to their denominations were not kept . There were prectically no Russian congregations whose histories or archives could furnish the bulk of facts necessary for a reliable history. The histories of the old Reform congregation furnish ce very little material; for the Russian Jews very seldom associated with Reform circles. Besides, the depreciatory attitude of the German Jews toward the "Kikes" may have caused some chroniclers to omit the birthplace behind the names of members of their congregations who came from Russia and to be silent about Russian Jews who might have settled in their town without being members of the German congregation. The histories of communities suffer from the

same deficiency. The fact that the early Russian immigrants settled only in small numbers, that they formed only "minyanim" and not "congregations", entitled the historians to be silent about their existence. Most satisfactory in this class of sources are the histories written by East European Jews in Hebrew or Yiddish. For the authors could base their statements on the descriptions of old immigrants,and they wrote for a reading public who were vitally interested in the story of their fellow countrymen.

Even a study of the Jewish press of this period cannot reveal a complete picture of the early East-European community. The papers give ample reports in the times when the public interest is focussed upon the problem of immigration. But they are silent in the intermediate years. Many of the newspaper notices are misleading. If they mention a Polish congregation it may be an East European one. But more likely it is a congregation with Minhag Polen the members of which come from Posen and perhaps from Berlin. The names of people mentioned are no evidence whatsoever. Many names which look Russian have their origin in Posen,and their bearers may have lived in Berlin or Hamburg before their migration to America. On the other hand, Russian Jews often changed their names before the immigration officer, because the original names were too hard for American tongues. Thus hardly a name with Russian sound can be found among the first members of the first East European congregation of New York.

Much source material which has not been touched may exist in the files of the local courts of the American cities. These files con-

tain the names and countries of origin of the persons who have taken out citizenship papers in these cities. There still would be the task to find out who of these Russian immigrants was Jewish.

This essay does not claim to be a comprehensive study of the subject . It is mainly a collection of the facts which can be obtained from the historical works and the source material in the library of the Hebrew Union College,Cincinnati. The collection can be increased immensely by studies in the archives of the Jewish congregations and institutions and of the courthouses of the American cities. Besides,further material can be found by the reading of other periodicals than those mentioned in the bibliography.

II. CAUSES

FOR THE EMIGRATION OF JEWS

FROM EASTERN EUROPE

Migrations of peoples look alike throughout the millennia of human history. A people becomes needy in its dwelling place. The cause may be famine, overpopulation, oppression. While the masses cling to their homes, a courageous minority, driven by their spirit of adventure as much as by their need, go out to seek a new country for settlement. If they succeed, they send word back to their people. If the pressure of need in the old settlement and the attractive power of the new land are strong enough to overcome the element of inertia in the people, the masses begin to move. The people migrates following the path which their vanguard has discovered.

It is strange that in a people to whose name the word "wandering" is a usual attribute this element of inertia should be as strong or even stronger than in other peoples. Yet with the Jews this is a fact. More than necessity, greater evils than famine or oppression must come over this people before its masses start to migrate. A few, more active and impatient than the majority, may leave their homes for a better dwelling place. The multitude, however, stick to the place in which they have settled, and unless they are driven away or unless life becomes completely impossible they do not move.

1. The Jews in Russia

In the beginning of the nineteenth century Russia had within her borders the largest Jewry of the world. The Jews formed large communities in the villages and towns of the Western and South-Western provinces of the Empire. They populated whole villages. In their ranks all branches of trade and commerce were represented.

There were but few farmers. As a distinct group they had the privilege of self-government for their communities (kahal). Yet being a separate class they were also subject to special legislation which was more likely to bring deprivations than privileges. As a minority distinguished from the people at large by their different customs they were easily to become the target for any outburst of anger or aggressiveness of the majority.

In the second decade of the nineteenth century laws began to be pressing upon the Jews. In 1827, Nicholas I. issued an ukase which demanded twenty-five years of military service of Jews, starting at the age of twelve. (1) This was the first of a series of laws the purpose of which was nothing less than delivering Russia from the Jews. There is no need of repeating here the phrase of the three means of extinguishing the Jews, which is so often quoted. The Czar's laws tried to set into practice the famous theory. It is true the way of mass emigration was still barred by a decree which prohibited emigration for all Russian subjects. Yet every attempt was made to bring the Jews either into the pale of the church or into their graves.

The conscription laws were to take the Jewish youths out of the Jewish environment. The officers and chaplains in the army had the task to lead them to baptism either by education or by force. The cruelty of the conscription laws even increased after 1850. The reforms of Alexander II. abolished the most severe rules of Jewish conscription (1856). (2) While in the first part of his reign this monarch showed much tolerance toward the Jews, in his

latter years a reaction began. The law of 1874 establishing general military service seemed to be the first legal enactment which imposed upon the Jews equal obligations with their fellow-citizens. But the law was enforced on the Jews more strictly than upon the Gentiles. (3)

The legislation which restricted the Jews economically developed along similar lines. In the same year in which Nicholas I. issued the conscription ukase, a decree commanded all Jews in the villages and village inns of the government of Grodno to be transferred into the towns. The Jews were to be expelled from the city of Kiev. This regulation was followed by other measures restricting the Jews to the pale of settlement. (4) The statute of 1835 reaffirmed "the inviolability of Russian territory against the penetration of the Jews".(5) In 1840 more expulsions followed. The mobility of the Jewish merchant and artisan was restricted, the burden of taxation increased. (6) Another ukase (1843) decreed that all Jews living within fifty versts along the Prussian and Austrian borders were to be transferred into the interior of the frontier governments. (7)

Along with these restrictions , which were to endanger the economic existence of the Jews and to cause their slow starvation, laws were issued to enforce assimilation upon the Jews. They were to be cut off from their Jewish education and their Jewish customs and to be driven to secular schools, to baptism and intermarriage. The existence of the Jews as a distinct group was to cease. In 1836 censorship of Jewish books was introduced. All Jewish printing presses outside of Kiev and Wilna were closed. (8)In1840 Jewish autonomy was abolished.

The Kahal administration disappeared. Secular schools for the Jews were installed. They were to replace the traditional institutions of Jewish learning, the Cheder and the Beth Hammidrash. (9) In order to render the process of assimilation more efficient and more systematical, the Jews were "assorted" into five classes according to their wealth. (1851) The first four classes which seemed fittest for assimilation were privileged, whilst the fifth, the proletariate, was oppressed by Draconian laws. (1o) At the same time customs which distinguished the Jews from their environment were prohibited. Fines were inflicted upon bearers of long coats, peies (curls at the ears), and sheitels (artificial hair of women). (11) This policy of assimilation fitted well with the "enlightened" ideas of Alexander II. While he released part of the pressure of the economic and military legislation in the first years of his rule, he launched a new fight against "Jewish separatism", outlawing all customs which kept the Jews from "fusing with the Gentiles". (12)

Part of the Jews eagerly seized the idea of assimilation. There was a hunger for secular knowledge in the Ghetto, especially among the wealthy Jews. The crown schools were frequented more and more. Notafew of the young Jews embraced Christianity in order to climb to a higher social rank. Even within Jewry the assimilationist tendencies gave rise to a new movement. The Haskalah, the enlightenment, was the product of secular culture blended with Jewish nationalism. It brought a renaissance of Hebrew literature, and it awakened in the Jewish youth an active spirit which was destined to become an important social factor.(13) The Haskalah pioneers were looked upon as

dangerous enemies by the exponents of both Rabbinism and Ḥasidism. The ideas of both these religious movements gave such inner support to the orthodox Jews that they were able to bear the political and economic pressure from the outside. The way of Rabbinism was steady occupation with and strict adherence to the orthodox beliefs and rituals. Ḥassidism by its mystical conception of God and the world drew its followers into a life apart from the every'day reality. The active attitude of the young Haskalah, which faced the issues of the day rather than seeking an escape, had to appear heretical to the Orthodoxy. (14)

The conditions of the Jews were not alike in all the Russian provinces. The economic situation was worst in Lithuania. For the country was poor and its inhabitants uneducated. Perhaps it was just this difficulty of making his living which made the "Litvak" intellectually superior and more active compared with the Jews of other parts of the country. (15) In Southern Russia the conditions were better than in the rest of the provinces. (16)

2. The Jews in Poland

Although the Kingdom of Poland was annexed by Russia, it was governed separately. Therefore the history of the Jews of Russian Poland differs in some details from those of their Russian coreligionists.

The methods used by the government in their policy toward the Jews were in general the same ones as those applied in Russia - forced enlightenment and economic pressure. Already in the twenties

of the nineteenth century the Kahals were dissolved and replaced by Congregational Boards which had only religious functions. By taking secular administration and jurisdiction out of the hands of the Jews the government intended to further assimilation. A rabbinical seminary was founded in Warsaw which was to train rabbis who favoured assimilation.

The Warsaw Jews - though first rejected by the Polish aristocrats - took an active part in the Polish insurrection of 1830-1831, and they were heavily punished by the Russian government by conscription and severe taxation. (Laws of 1843 and 1845)
In 1862 an ukase gave more rights to the Jews - the Czar expected to make the Jews his allies in the midst of the anti-RRussian Polish population - yet at the same time it prohibited the use of Yiddish and Hebrew.

In the revolt of 1863 the Polish Jews hardly took part. Therefore the retributions had no serious consequences for them. (17)

3. The Economic Crisis

In the years 1867 and 1868 there were complete crop-failures in the West-Russian provinces. The reform legislation of Czar Alexander II had shaken the economic stability of the Russian Empire. Thus the repeated bad harvest with its threat of famine precipitated the country into a serious crisis.

The Jews were hit particularly hard by this situation. The laws of the previous period had limited their right of settlement to the Western provinces, the very part of the country in which the famine was raging. It is true, in 1865 an ukase allowed Jewish artisans to

settle in any town of the Russian Empire. Yet it was hard for a Jew to obtain the passport which was necessary for traveling. And the slightest transgression of the strict conditions which limited the permission of settlement caused the loss of the passport. Thus it was practically impossible for a Jew to live outside of the Pale.

Within the Pale the Jews were restricted to the towns. Thus Jewish merchants and artisans were crowded in the towns. They were dependent completely upon the country population who were both their customers and the furnishers of their food. In a time of crop-failure the farmers were unable both to buy and to fulfill pending business obligations. While the small crop may have been sufficient for the farmer's own use, he probably brought little food to town. Of the little, the Jew received what the Gentile left for him. Therefore the Jew was doubly damaged by the famine - he had less means with which to buy, and he found less food for sale.

Furthermore the Jew had to count with a new competitor just in this critical time. Alexander's reform had abolished the serfdom of the tenant farmers. Many of the farmers moved from the villages into the towns where they settled as shopkeepers and skilled laborers. At first the service of the Jews may have been preferred to theirs, but soon their competition was felt, especially by the Jewish artisans.

Not only that business in general was bad in these years, in many of the towns the trade was cut off to a considerable extent. For the traffic concentrated in those towns which were touched by the railroads, that new means of transportation. In the towns apart from

the iron tracks commerce was crippled. Despite all these losses the burden of taxation which had been heavy already in prosperous times had not decreased.

Such was the situation of the Russian Jews since the late sixties, none to cause envy, even without political persecutions. (18)

4. Persecutions

Russian history is not poor of records which tell of acts of force against the Jews. As to Jewish persecutions the barbarous Empire of the East does not fall short of the civilized nations of Central Europe. Pogroms took place as early as 1113. In that year Vladimir Monomakh of Russia hesitated to accept the throne of Grand prince. In their excitement the inhabitants of Kiev killed the Jews who lived in that city. (19)

Nor did early governments leave the Jews the choice between baptism, starvation, and emigration. Thus between 1533 and 1584 Ivan the Terrible had thousands of Jews drowned because they refused to accept Christianity. (2o)

Hardly any difference can be detected between these early times and the nineteenth century. Throughout the reign of Nicholas I. ritual murder trials were launched against the Jews in many places. The police supported the anti-Semitic accusers. The Jews were persecuted, their synagogues closed and worship forbidden in the course of the trials. (21) The slightest violations of the cruel laws and even the mere semblance of a Jewish uprising against the régime was suppressed by bloody persecutions. (22)

The Jews who lived under the more enlightened ruler Alexander II.

were by no means more fortunate. In 1869 the governor of the Province of Bessarabia ordered the expulsion of all Jews who were not registered as residents on October 27, 1856. (23)

On Easter 1871 a Jew in Odessa was accused of a crime against the Christian church. (24) The Greek and Roman populace of Odessa started to destroy Jewish houses and shops, and only on the fourth day the massacre was stopped by the government. (25)

In 1875 two-hundred Jewish families were expelled from Courland.(26) In 1878 anti-Jewish riots took place in Kalisch (Russian Poland).(27) This record of persecutions makes no claim of completeness.

The political and economic pressure mounting since the beginning of the century, poverty and starvation increasing with every decade, persecutions endangering the lives of the Jews, the point where the static element in the people was outbalanced by their desire to migrate was not yet reached in the late seventies. The masses were now in a state of unrest. Already the vanguard left to find new dwelling-places and their message came back telling of a more prosperous country on other shores. However, the need had to reach its climax, the persecutions had to grow unbearable before the mass migration began in the early eighties.

III. IMMIGRATION

OF EAST EUROPEAN JEWS TO THE UNITED STATES

1. Immigration before 1869

During the whole "German Period" there was no mass immigration of Jews into the United States, with the sole exception of the first organized Russian immigration in the early seventies which shall be mentioned later. The "Achtundvierziger", the liberals who could not stand the narrowness of the reactionary Germany of the middle of the past century, did not arrive in organized groups. Although great numbers of German Jews came together on the ships anchoring in New York, although they founded societies and congregations soon after their arrival, each one of them came to the New World on his own initiative. They paid their ship tickets with their own money. In some cases relatives in Germany or already in America may have bought the tickets; but the immigrants never were sent by charitable institutions which made it their task to help masses of people in their migration to their new homes.

The same was true for the immigrants who arrived from Russia at that time. They may have been compelled by need to emigrate more frequently than the Germans. Many of them may have obtained the money for their passage by begging. Many may have arrived on the piers of New York without a penny in their pockets. Yet they left their homes across the ocean on their own, individual choice. Often they were driven by an adventurous spirit, by the desire to see the world beyond the boundaries of the Pale, to find a country where life would not be so hard, where they would have a chance to rise economically and socially.

This immigration of individuals from Russia went on as a small, even stream since the thirties of the nineteenth century. It increased when the Russian conscription laws were extended to Poland (1843) and when the Jews of the Polish provinces felt for the first time the pressure of the Czar's discriminating economic legislation. (1845) The number of immigrants may have been enlarged by refugees who fled from Russia in order to escape the recruit hunters after the new conscription laws of 1850. The ukase of 1862 in Poland and the disorders of the Polish revolt of 1863 caused a new swell of immigration right after the Civil War. (28)

A few years later the situation of the Russian Jews had become critical to such an extent that masses of the oppressed ones left their homes, and for the first time organized group emigration was attempted in order to bring more efficient relief.

2. Organized Immigration since 1869

The plan to organize the emigration of the Jews in order to solve the Jewish problem in Russia was not new. As early as 1846, Isaac Altaras, a merchant of Marseilles who was traveling in Russia, suggested planned settlement of the Russian Jews in Algiers. The project was, however, never set into practice. (29)

When in the late sixties the Jews in the West-Russian provinces were suffering from the economic crisis, they turned for help to their coreligionists in the other European countries. Support was to be brought to the poverty stricken communities in Russia and to those who left the country without money.

The rabbis in the cities near the Russian border under whose

eyes the whole stream of misery passed recognized first the need of an efficient organization of charity. Rabbi Treuenfels in Stettin (Pr.Pommern) and Dr.Rülf in Memel issued appeals to European Jewry describing the great need among the Russian Jews and developing their plans for organized support.(1869)

There was an almost immediate response by the Alliance Israélite Universelle and by the organization of the German Jewish communities (Gemeindetag). Relief committees were created in Hamburg, Berlin, Cassel, Aachen, and many other German cities. A central office in Leipzig administrated the distribution of the financial means. Working committees were instituted in the cities near the frontier: the chief committee in Königsberg (East Prussia) and one in Memel under Dr.Rülf's direction.

Everybody was ready to bring help, yet there was still the problem of how to help. The opinions on this question differed widely, even among the members of the committees. Rülf favoured migration of the Jews from the West-Russian provinces to inner Russia, while Treuenfels saw the solution in organized emigration to America. Finally a meeting of the chief committee in Königsberg, which was composed of members of the Alliance and of the Gemeindetag drew up the following working plan (October 1869):

The means collected in France and Germany were to be used

a) for settlement in the interior of Russia

b) for emigration from Russia

1) of children, primarily orphans, who were to be given into the care of families

(B) 2) of young people, who were to be given training in a trade or a scientific education

3) of working men and families to America.

Emigration first caused many difficulties. Most of the Jews did not want to leave Russia, and the orthodox rabbis, even in Germany, objected against the Committee taking children out of their orthodox environment and giving them a liberal education. Besides a Russian law prohibited the emigration of subjects of the Czar..

Therefore more emphasis was laid on settlement of the Jews in Russia proper. Land was to be bought, mostly in the Southern provinces, on which the Jews should be placed as farmers.

The Russian Jews had only a very restricted right of owning land. Jewish land ownership was practically impossible. Only in rare exceptions individual Jews were permitted personally to engage in agricultural work and to lease land. In 1862 the Jews received the privilege to purchase land; but prohibitions abrogated this right since 1864.

Yet Jewish agricultural colonies in Russia were not without precedents. The Russian government itself founded several of these colonies. In some cases Jews were compelled to settle on these government farms, but every time the plan was discarded before it was completely carried out. These attempts were made in Novorossia (near the Black Sea) and Siberia in 1836, and ten years later in Ekaterinoslaw.(30)

The Committee addressed several petitions to the government

in behalf of the project of colonization. They were not answered. Articles in semi-official papers, however, led to the conclusion that Jewish settlement in the interior provinces was not desired.

Thus the Committee gave more attention to the second point of its program - emigration. It had become obvious that the government would not withhold the Jews from leaving the country. The governor of the West-Russian provinces promised his support in a conference in Vilna (October 1869), and the official press voiced its favorable opinion in the following way: "We have got rid of the Jesuits... Let us not wait to relieve ourselves from the Jews."(31)

The task of the Committee was to gather those who were willing to leave, to select those among them who on account of their physical constitution and their training seemed most fit for emigration. Means of transportation had to be secured to the German ports and from there to the United States. Connections had to be established with organizations in America who would take care of the arriving immigrants.

There was no lack of human material. More people wanted to emigrate than the financial means of the Committee were able to accomodate. Shipping companies cooperated. As early as July 1869 the North German Lloyd offered its support in the transportation of Russian emigrants. Kosher food was provided by this company for the Jewish passengers. (32)

It was, however, not so easy to make the necessary connections with the Jewish organizations in the United States. The American Jewish public did not think too favourably of a Jewish mass im-

migration. There was much prejudice against the East European Jews, and many of their American coreligionists were afraid that new immigrants would only "enlarge the ranks of the Irishmen who are so discredited in the United States".(33) The wish was expressed that the Russians would rather not come, as it was hard for the American Jews to help, and the immigrants would be worse off than in their old homes.(34) Even the appeals of the Alliance that families should accept orphans from the West Russian provinces appearently did not find too warm a response. (35)

It was only part of the Jewish population, however, who discouraged the East European immigration. Others were ready to help. There were enthusiasts who were glad that America again could show itself as an asylum for the oppressed. (36) The Russian Jews who had lived in this country for some time saw that anyone willing to work could find his future here, and in their letters they encouraged their fellow countrymen to come. (37)

The most reasonable opinion was probably the one expressed in an editorial of the Jewish Times: "We recommend the organization of an immigration society.... We do by no means advocate the propriety of extending pressing invitations to the Russian Israelites to settle in America, but we ought to be prepared, to render them effectual counsel and assistance in case they should determine upon casting their lot with us."(38)

Gradually practical help was organized. Probably on account of their close connections to France and the Alliance Israélite, the Jews of San Francisco took action before those of any other city.

Already in September 1869 a meeting was held in B'nai Brith Hall, in order to discuss the problem of East European immigration. A resolution was carried that the immigrants should be assisted. The San Francisco committee remained busy publishing propaganda and collecting money for the cause of immigration. (39)

In New York where help was needed most, the development of an efficient organization was much slower than in the Far West. Still in 187o there were complaints that not much had been done in the United States to supplement the work of the Alliance. (4o) After receiving a letter from Crémieux, the President of the Alliance Israélite, B.F.Peixotto suggested the formation of committees in the greater cities of the United States in order to meet the emergency. (February 187o). On March 2oth, the Society in Aid of Jewish Immigrants from Russia was founded in New York. Its purpose was to support an immigration committee, which seems to have existed before that date. There were meetings in order to get the Jewish population interested in the work for the immigrants and in order to study the problem.

In its annual meeting the Board of Delegates of American Israelites resolved to cooperate with the New York committee and the societies in the West. (187o) From that time on the Board apparently did the most efficient work in assisting the immigrants. They helped the newcomers to live through the first difficulties, housing them, putting the adults to work, and giving the youth an education. In New York a building, furnished and with cooking facilities, was used for housing the immigrants. It accomodated six-hundred persons. Even

an interpreter was provided by the Board to assist the inhabitants of the house in their language difficulties. The most intelligent of the young immigrants were granted university scholarships. Thus in 1874 a student graduated from Philadelphia Medical School with special honours. He was a Russian refugee recommended for a scholarship by the Board of Delegates.

Although they did splendid work, the Board's capability of accomodating immigrants was limited. They required from the European organizations that they should send only small groups of refugees, that they should select only robust, young people who liked to work, that they should not encourage immigrants who intended to make their living by peddling.

Early the danger of the immigrants staying in New York was recognized. Plans were made to distribute them all over the country, especially in the thinly populated farm areas. Thus the crowding of the cities should be avoided. Leon Straus worked out a project of agricultural colonization. In Germany systematical settlement in Nebraska was planned. E.S. Solomon, Governor of the Territory of Washington, worked out a scheme to settle Jews there with the support of the Federal Government. It seems, however, that no project of systematic settlement of immigrants was carried out before the times of mass immigration. City dwellers for centuries, skilled in commerce and in trades, the Russian Jews preferred to live in cities also in the new country.

The number of Jews who were brought to the United States from Russia during this first period of organized immigration cannot

be given exactly. Leroy-Beaulieu, who probably based his figures on records of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, states that this organization transported 5oo refugees to the United States after the crisis of 1869. He does not say, whether this transport was followed by others and whether this number includes the emigrants taken care of by the co-operating German organizations. At any rate, the number 5oo seems to be too small. The asylum of the Board of Delegates alone accomodated 6oo persons, and it is to be assumed that many women and children,who came with the organized transports,and whose husbands and fathers had immigrated previously, did not make use of the Board's facilities. Alone, during the first six months of the year 187o,286 persons were sent to New York. About half of this number, 114 adults and 22 children, traveled in one group which passed Berlin on March 15, and which was shipped from Hamburg on March 19. Another group of fifty can be found on the same way in June 1871. It may therefore be assumed - although no definite proof can be given here - that the groups which were sent to this country perpetually during these two years amounted to 6oo to looo immigrants.

It seems that the Franco-German War of 187o, which split the two co-operating organizations, and which turned away both interest and financial support from the Russian Jewish problem, caused the organized immigration to cease gradually. (41)

3. Statistics

It is impossible to find even approximately the number of East

European Jews who immigrated in the United States before 1881. The Jewish Encyclopedia gives the following numbers:

1821 - 1870	Immigration from Russia and Russian Poland	7550
1871 - 1880	Immigration from Russia alone	41057
	from Russia and Poland	52254
Annual average 1871 - 1880		4100
(1881 - 1890		20700) (42)

L.Hersch, a French writer, who seems to have based his statements on studies of the official statistics, attacks the figures given by the Jewish Encyclopedia as being wrong. Up to the year 1898, he says, we do not know anything exact about this immigration. The numbers of the Jewish Encyclopedia are those of the whole Russian immigration. The fact that in 1899 only 4o % of the immigrants from Russia were Jews shows the discrepancy between the statistics of the Encyclopedia and the true number of Jewish immigrants. (43)

Whether this criticism is relevant or not cannot be decided here. The Jewish Encyclopedia gives as source the statistics kept by the immigration authorities since 1881. These numbers are reported to check with those registered by the United Hebrew Charities since 1884. For the figures pertaining to the time previous to 1881 no source is given. They must therefore be accepted with caution and considered as estimates which probably are too high. (44)

IV. SETTLEMENT

OF EAST EUROPEAN JEWS IN THE UNITED STATES

It is difficult to watch the development of the community of East European Jews in the United States, to trace the paths of their migration from the Eastern ports to the towns in the West. No records tell how many percent of them stayedin the cities where they arrived, and how many left for the interior of the continent. Individually they landed, individually they settled, and individually they changed their place of living. Only a systematical research through the historical records about the Jewish population in the different parts of this country can give us partial information. It may show us when, where, and in what number the Russian Jews appeared in the various places. It may reveal [illegible] their ways of living, their economic and cultural conditions, and their relations to the American and American Jewish environment.

1. The East European Jews in the Various States (45)

a. California

San Francisco

Since early times there was a strict division between "Germans" and "Poles" in San Francisco. Congregation Emanu-El was composed of South- and West-Germans,and Frenchmen, the North-East Germans, Englishmen, and Poles made up Congregation Shearith Israel.

It is very likely that this congregation had Russian members short after its foundation (1850). At any rate, in 1856 its Shohet was a Russian Jew, Isaac Goldsmith. (46)

In 1855,25 members of the "Polish Shool" seceded and founded their own, ultra-orthodox congregation. The only language to be used by the congregants was "the dialect common among the vulgar Russian

and Polish Jews'(47) It is very likely that this congregation is identical with the Shomray Shabbos Congregation which J.J.Benjamin met on his journey through the Far West, five years later. Benjamin reports that this congregation had thirty members, almost exclusively Russians and Poles, that it was orthodox with especial emphasis on Sabbath observance. Services were held in a rented hall on both Saturdays,and Mondays and Thursdays. (48)

The relations between the East European Jews of San Francisco and their German coreligionists are illustrated by an incident which is told by the same writer. A Polish Jew, Moses Minz, a religious man with a big family, well liked in the community, lost his store in one of the conflagrations which were so frequent in the young San Francisco. He asked the German-Jewish charity organization "Eureka" to support him, but he was rejected. A non-Jewish man who was visiting the president of the"Eureka"-Society seeing a needy one denied help because he belonged to a different congregation gave Minz forty dollars. (49) This is probably an extreme case; but the mere possibility that it could happen shows, that not too much love was lost between the "Ashkenasim" and the "Kikes" at that time.

It was mentioned already that during the economic crisis in Russia the Jews of San Francisco took a very vital interest in the destiny of the East European Jews. Yet no information could be obtained whether considerable groups of immigrants were sent to California in the early eighteen seventies.

It is likely, however, that the Russian immigrants, just as the

rest of the newcomers to this continent, were attracted by the fame of the Goldland. One by one they found their way to the Far West, until the mass immigration started there, too, in 1881. (50)

S a c r a m e n t o

No certain evidence could be found for the presence of Russian Jews in Sacramento in the fifties and sixties. Some light, however, is thrown on the question by the following fact. In 1859 a quarrel arose in the Congregation B'nai Israel which consisted of both German and Polish members. The consequence of the quarrel was the secession of the German members and the foundation of the German congregation B'nai Hashalom. It is probably not wrong to conclude from this incident that there was a strong Polish orthodoxy which may have had among its members some immigrants from Russian Poland or Russia. (51)

At any rate, it is known that since 1874 a very famous East European Jew lived in Sacramento. In this year, David Lubin, who came from Russian Poland to this country in 1855, opened a store in Sacramento.(52)

b. Illinois

C h i c a g o

In Chicago no East European Jews can be traced before 1860. At that time Russian immigrants, mostly from Latvia, began to settle in the city. They were extremely orthodox,and none of the existing congregations - Anshe Maarabh (Ashkenasic) and B'nai Shalom (Polish), both officially orthodox - were strict enough for them. Thus they organized a minyan of their own in 1865. Another chevrah of the same type was founded

shortly afterwards. In 1867 the two groups united. Obtaining a charter in the same year, they formed the first East European Congregation of Chicago with the name Beth Hammidrash Haggodol Uv'nai Jacob. They seem to have been actively concerned with Jewish studies. For in the same year they founded a cheder for the study of Mishna and Talmud.

One of the most striking characteristics of the East European Jews is their clannishness. Whereever a sufficient number of Jews from the same village, from the same district or province came together, they assembled to have their own minyan with the identical services as they were used to have in their shool in the Pale.

Such a town group soon separated itself from the Beth Hammidrash Congregation. The Jews of Mariampol seceded because, as the story goes, one of the attendants at the synagogue was seen saying Kaddish while wearing a straw hat. In 1870 this group procured a charter calling themselves Congregation Ohavai Shalom Mariampol.

The Russian Jews were living in the South Side. They made their living as peddlers. They were all very poor.

In 1874 a fire in the South Side caused great damage to the East European settlers. They were completely stripped of all means of support. Therefore the United Hebrew Relief Association raised funds for the needy among the richer Jews. The response to their appeals was, however, cold. The assimilated Jews regarded the Russians as "shnorrers", as undesirable settlers, and an appeal by Rabbi Liebman Adler was necessary to call them to their duty.

After the fire the Russian Jews started to move from the South

Side to the West Side. The Mariampol Congregation was the first to change its place of worship. The other congregations followed.

In 1875 two more Russian congregations are to be found in Chicago. In this year the Congregation Anshe Kenesseth Israel obtained its charter,and the men from the Russian village Shilel got together to found the "Russishe Shool". More of these "Landsmannschaften", besides the Mariampol and Shilel Congregations,may have existed already in these years.

At any rate, in 1879 the number of East European Jews in Chicago was big enough that editing a Yiddish paper seemed to be profitable. Nachman Baer Ettelson and S.L.Marcus founded the "Israelitische Presse", a Yiddish weekly. This periodical appeared, however, only for a short time. (53)

P e o r i a

The development of the Russian congregation of Peoria is very interesting. Because apparently here one of the few instances is found, where the East European Jews came under the influence of Reform Judaism as fast as their more assimilated German-Polish neighbours.

In 1872 "quite a number of orthodox Israelites had gathered largely from Russia, Hungary, and Poland, and being dissatisfied with the Reform ideas of Congregation Anshai Emeth, held services in a hall, and in 1873 purchased a cemetery". A year after this they founded an orthodox congregation with the name Beth Israel.

In 1879, after seceding members of the Reform Congregation had strengthened the ranks of Beth Israel, they built a synagogue. From

this time on the orthodox principles of the congregation seem to have been forgotten. Isaac M.Wise was invited to dedicate the new temple, the Minhag America was introduced, and seven years later Beth Israel united with Anshai Emeth under the leadership of Rabbi Calisch, a graduate of the Hebrew Union College. Although it is possible that part of the Russian Jews left the congregation when Reform tendencies began to assert themselves successfully, it seems that in Peoria Russian Jews went the way of Reform as early as the eighteen seventies. (54)

c. Iowa

In none of the agricultural states East European Jews can be found as early as in Iowa. Long before the Civil War part of the retail business in the farm country was in the hands of Russian Jewish peddlers. These peddlers who carried their packs all over the State used to live together in one place. Therefore while almost no Russian Jews can be found in the cities of Iowa before the Civil War there was a congregation in Keokuk as early as 1855. (55)

K e o k u k

Most of the early Jewish settlers of Keokuk came from Russian Poland. In 1855 it was that the Jewish peddlers of that district gathered for the first time in Keokuk in order to celebrate the Passover festival. At this meeting they resolved to create in their new home the regular institutions of a Jewish congregation - to hire a Shohet, to buy a Sefer Tora, to build a Mikva, to have services according to the Polish Minhag. Thus the organization of the Benevolent Children of Jerusalem

was founded. Committees were appointed for the acquisition of a cemetery, for the formulation of a constitution, for the organization of worship. Later on the name B'nai Israel was adopted.

The congregational life seems to have been harmonious. Although there were South Germans among the leading members there is no evidence of an open split. The relations to the Gentiles were good, as the farmers on their lonely homesteads were dependent on the itinerant businessmen for their merchandise and for the news which they brought along. Yet their vocation kept the Keokuk Jews from being strict observers. On the road, far from their homes it was almost impossible to keep the Sabbath and the dietary laws, and to pray at the appointed times, even though the peddlers were devout Chassidim.

The congregation was, however, not destined to live long. In 1857 the majority of the members - apparently German Jews had immigrated - preferred the Ashkenasik way of prayer. The Chassidim yielded. The congregation finally dissolved in the Civil War. Before that time most of the Russian Jews had already moved away from Iowa to the Eastern States.

D e s M o i n e s

After the Civil War, Russian Jews again began to immigrate in Iowa. Most of them were poor peddlers from the Province of Suwalk (Lithuania). They usually had lived in upstate New York for the first years after their arrival in this country. There, in Rochester, two of their fellow countrymen had established a "peddler supply" and gave them goods on credit. The center of the Russian peddlers was first in Iowa City. Then it moved to Des Moines.

The East European immigrants settled in the East Side of Des Moines. While the Russians in 1855 had formed an almost homogeneous group with the German peddlers of Keokuk, now there was a tremendous contrast between them and the German Jews who lived in the West Side. The early Jewish settlers had made good progress. The poor peddlers had become wealthy resident businessmen. The newcomers had to step into the places left by their German coreligionists. Yet peddling still was a profitable job, and the poor Russians were destined to advance quickly both economically and socially.

In the years 1867 to 1869 many East European Jews arrived in Des Moines. Not all or them were peddlers. One, for instance, Wolf Frank from Sydarg (Poland), who was a shohet, had a boarding house.

In 1869 the congregation B'nai Israel was founded by the East Side Jews. As their vocation kept them away from their homes most of the time they had to restrict themselves to services on yahrzeits, fast- and holidays for the first years. In 1876 the congregation finally obtained its charter,and regular Sabbath services were introduced. Although they had to do away with many of the orthodox customs while they were traveling through the country, the Des Moines peddlers were not afraid of any sacrifice in order to keep their religion strictly when at home. Despite their poverty they hired a chazzan and a shohet. They would not mind if the more assimilated West Side Jews who did not have a shohet in their congregation came and bought kosher meet from the East Side butcher, and thus participated in

their expensive privilege.

Socially, however, the Russian Jews were isolated from both the Gentiles and the German Jews. They lived a retired and quiet life. For one of the chief factors which animate social activities was missing; there were no women. Among all the immigrant groups - perhaps among the Jews more than among the Gentiles - the men came before the women, and they had their wives and brides come after them when they were settled. The consequence of the lack of women was, in most of the Jewish congregations, a high percentage of intermarriages. The Russian congregation of Des Moines was an exception from this rule. There was practically no intermarriage in the East Side. On the other hand social life was paralyzed until later years when women immigrated from Russia in greater numbers. The only festivals which were celebrated by the men of Des Moines were the traditional Hasidic days of joy, Purim and Simchath Tora.

The narrow space in which this group lived together made for a strong feeling of common responsibility. Although they were poor themselves they never denied their help to any newcomer or to fellows who suffered from an accident or bad business.

The peddlers, unlike many of the later immigrants, were peaceful people, sober, and rarely seen in lawcourts. No fights were reported among the peddlers, and no sentence of felony was pronounced against any of them by an Iowa court. Only one case of divorce is known, and that was probably the result of an intermarriage. (56)

d. Louisiana

N e w O r l e a n s

There was no separate Russian congregation in New Orleans before the mass immigration. But it seems that the orthodox congregation had some East European members. At any rate, in 1873 they called Mr. L.Silberstein from Warsaw to serve as their Rabbi and Mohel. This Mr. Silberstein opened a store some years later, as his income from the congregational offices was not very substantial.

Another East European family, the Seiferths from Vashilishok, moved to New Orleans. They were good friends of Rabbi Gutheim, and, probably through Gutheim's influence, a son of the family, Herman J.Seiferth, planned to study at the Hebrew Union College to become a Reform Rabbi. Yet he changed his mind and chose journalism as his life profession.

A b b e v i l l e

In this town an East European Jew settled very early. Sol Wise, born in Russian Poland in 1824 arrived in Abbeville in 1854. He chose the usual vocation of the early immigrants - peddling. Still in 1904 he lived in Abbeville. Although he was no longer able to see his customers with his bundle on his back, he was active as a farmer and as a real estate salesman.

Other Jewish immigrants are not mentioned in these early times by the historical works about Louisiana Jewry. (57)

e. Maryland

B a l t i m o r e

Hardly any East European Jews lived in Baltimore before 1860. There was a congregation with Polish ritual since 1852 which may have had some members whose home had been across the Russian border. In the years between 1860 and 1870 a number of Poles and Lithuanians settled.

In 1865 they founded the Bikur Cholim Congregation. As in so many communities a lack of homogeneity soon caused a schism. A few years after the foundation, members of the Bikur Cholim Congregation dissented and formed the Russian Congregation Benai Israel.

The Russian settlers of Baltimore appearently moved into sections of the city which just had been left by the German Jewish settlers as they were mounting on the social ladder. At any rate, both the East European Congregations worshiped in synagogues which were owned by German congregations formerly. (58)

f. Massachusetts

B o s t o n

Although there were Poles among the Jewish settlers who started to come to Boston in 1842, it is unlikely that there was a considerable number of Russian citizens among them.

In the fifties, however, the immigration of East European Jews must have increased. For in 1861 J.J.Benjamin reports the existence of two congregations of Polish and Lithuanian Jews besides the two old congregations Oheb Shalom (founded 1842) and Beth Israel (1849). Oheb Shalom was made up of Germans, Beth Israel contained the Polish-German and English elements. (59)

g. Michigan

D e t r o i t

A few families of Russian Jews lived in Detroit before the great influx of the eighties. In 1867 the Simon family arrived. A son of this family, Jacob B.Simon, is found later on among the leading Jews of Lansing. Another immigrant from Eastern E u r o p e lived in Detroit for some time in these years, namely Jecheskel Bernstein, a peddler, a dealer of scrap iron etc., who arrived in Philadelphia in 1873 after having gone through his apprenticeship of American life in Detroit. In 1876 Mr.J.Schmansky arrived in the City on Lake Erie. He had spent his first four years in the new country in New York.

It may be assumed that the mentioned individuals were not the only East European Jews who settled in Detroit before 1881. But no evidence could be found for the existence of organizations of Russian Jews in these years. (60)

h. New Jersey

N e w a r k

The first Newark congregation which included Russian Jews was Congregation B'nai Abraham. It was founded in 1858 by Germans, Bohemians, and a few Russians, because the older "Polish" congregation, B'nai Jeshurun, had already accepted a Reform ritual. The new congregation immediately built a synagogue. But their financial means were not as large as they had appeared to be. The congregation had to sell their synagogue and to hold services in a hall.

Since the foundation of Congregation B'nai Abraham the Russians

had shown themselves different from the German and Bohemian members on account of their uncompromising adherence to orthodoxy. In the middle of the eighteen sixties several hundred Jewish families settled in Newark. A high percentage of them were of East European origin. Therefore, when in 1869 a quarrel split the Congregation B'nai Abraham, the Russians were in the majority, and the Bohemian members had to withdraw. The Bohemians consequently organized their own congregation, Ohev Shalom.

Congregation B'nai Abraham remained the only East European organization for the next decade. (61)

i. New York

N e w Y o r k C i t y

New York is the big flood gate of European immigration. In this tremendous sluice the streams of population from across the Ocean gather. They stay for some time, before they spread slowly all over the country, and each of them leaves at least a sample in the huge basin. Thus the statistics of the New York population would be the most sensitive barometer for the immigration from Europe since at least the beginning of the nineteenth century - if we only had some

It is therefore not astonishing that New York was the first city where a considerable number of East European Jews should assemble, and where a Russian congregation was to take birth.

In 1850 there was not even a Russian minyan in New York. In 1852, however, enough immigrants had come from the East of Europe that they could found a congregation. A Mr.Lichtenstein was parnass,

Mr. Joseph Ash - the Rabbi of the Congregation. Starting in June with twelve men, the membership grew to twenty-three in the same year, as some Germans who were dissatisfied with the Reform tendencies of the other synagogues joined the Congfegation. In the beginning they held services in a small room on Bayard Street for which they paid eight dollars rent a month. Before the end of the year they could move to a larger hall at the corner of Elm and Canal Streets which cost twenty-five dollars.

In the first years of its existence the Congregation was not very stationary. Already in 1853 they could be found in a new location at Pearl and Center Streets. In this year they started to pay salaries. Rabbi Ash received two dollars a week for his services, and a Mr.Oppenheim was hired as a beadle. Occasionally Joshua Falk, the famous Maggid, author of a commentary on Pirke Abhoth, preached without receiving recompense.

In 1855 the congregation split for the first time. Rabbi Ash opposed the appointment of Mr. Aaron Friedman as shohet, because a decision of Russian rabbis had declared him unfit for this position. Mr.Middleman, a Talmudic jurist, obtained a permit for Mr.Friedman from Galician rabbis. When Rabbi Ash did not honour this license, Mr. Middleman withdrew. Together with some followers he organized a minyan on Bayard Street. Out of this minyan the congregation of the "Kalwarier", B'nai Israel, originated in 1862.

RabbiAbraham Joseph Ash was a remarkable personality, noteworthy here, because he probably is a typical example of the serious Jewish scholars who came from Russia about that time. Ash was born in

Semyatich, 1813. He came to America in 1852. As he was a Talmudical scholar, he officiated as rabbi in the new congregation without accepting compensation for his services. How he made his living in the first years, is not told. Probably he or his wife engaged in some worldly business, as it was quite usual among Jewish scholars in Russia. Even the two dollars which Ash received every week since 1853 could not be sufficient for him and his family. It seems that our rabbi even found satisfaction in other than scholarly activities. For in 1862 he chose the shirt manufacturing business as his main vocation, and he changed the paid congregational office of rabbi to the honorary one of parnass. When he lost money in his business some years later, he returned to the Congregation as their rabbi. The same process was repeated in 1876, when Rabbi Ash started to import kosher wine from California. In 1879 the business proved to be a failure, and again he became a rabbi.

In 1855 Rabbi Ash became acquainted with a rich Portuguese Jew, John Hart. Hart influenced the philanthropist Samson Simpson and some other friends to donate several thousand dollars to the Congregation for the purpose of purchasing a synagogue. The Welsh Chapel on Allen Street was bought and converted into a synagogue. On June 8, 1856 Rabbi Abraham Rice of Baltimore dedicated the new place of worship.

The Congregation then consisted of 65 members. But soon a new division was to happen. Over trivial matters a controversy arose between Rabbi Ash and Parnass Rothstein. A lawsuit followed, deciding the validity of the election of a new parnass. When Ash

was defeated he left the Congregation with twenty-three followers. They rented a place of worship on Forsyth and Grand Streets, and they named the new congregation Beth Hamedrash Hagodol , to distinguish it from the former Beth Hamedrash. The Congregation received a Sepher Torah, and many books. They purchased a burial ground in the Union Fields Cemetery. They engaged a beadle, Mr.Nathan Meyer, for a salary of seventy-five dollars a year which was increased to one-hundred and fifty dollars later on. Mr.Meyer had an additional income from "religious banquets". These were given in the Schaenk, a buffet in the vestibule of the shool by members who had yahrzeit, and who did not want to fast. After completing a chapter of the Talmud each of the present congregants was treated to a piece of cake and a glass of brandy. The Beadle had an annual profit of seventy-five dollars from this business. Outside of these congregational offices Mr.Meyer had the secular vocation of a glazier.

In this group, too, there arose quarrels. There were Hasidim among them Rabbi Ash, whose ideal was a social form of religion. They wanted services which were but losely restricted by rules as to the way of praying. They wished the whole community to participate in the prayer. They favoured the popular festivals, where the loud joy in the synagogue rose to ecstasy. The other group, led by Parnass Hershfield sponsored a tendency toward Reform with its dignified mode of worship, where every word and every tone by congregation and cantor is prescribed by fixed rules. Their influence caused the engagement of the cantor Warschauer for the holidays in the fall 1861.

On Yom Kippur the tension between the two groups was displayed openly in a fight in the synagogue. The Ḥasidim, concerned about the ease of their lungs and heads, wanted to improve the air in the house of worship by opening the windows. Their opponents were more concerned about the precious voice of the Cantor, and therfore pleaded against the admission of cool air. The service was continued after the discussion, but after the holidays, the Ḥasidim left the Congregation and opened the Ḥasidim Stuebel on Delancy Street, where they held services with the Sephardic Ritual (Nussah Ari). However, the peace was restored. On Passover 1862, the Ḥasidim rejoined the Beth Hamedrash Hagodol.

In the following years the Congregation changed its place of worship several times. In 1865, it moved to the corner of Clinton and Grand Streets. In 1872, they purchased property on Ludlow Street. A synagogue was built which was dedicated on September 27, in the same year.

The truce of the Ḥasidim had not abolished all contrasts from the Congregation. The progressive younger element introduced innovations. They were accepted by the conservatives only after long struggles, even though they were completely unessential, such as secret ballot in the elections of officers, the substitution of the English word President instead of the Hebrew Parnass as the name for the secular leader of the congregation.

On account of their adherence to the strictest interpretations of the Law, the Ḥasidim constituted a distinct group in the Congregation. They had their own shoḥet, they had their own

bakery for mazzoth. They occupied themselves with studies of the Law. Rabbi Ash and Judah David Eisenstein organized for this purpose a Hevrah Mishnayoth and a Hevrah Shas who met after the morning and evening prayer to learn Mishnah and Talmud.

Appearently Beth Hamedrash Hagodol was the most progressive and the most active of the early Russian congregations. They were the first to engage a professional cantor as a permanent official. Up to 1877 the services had been chanted by gifted members who considered this office an honour. Only for New Year and the Day of Attonement cantors had been hired. In 1877 Judah Oberman was installed into this office in the Congregation Beth Hamedrash Hagodol, and he officiated permanently until 1880, when he was followed by Simha Samuelson.

It was also this congregation that originated the project of uniting all orthodox communities of New York under a Chief Rabbi. This plan, which was made public for the first time in 1879, was not realized, however, before 1886 when Rabbi Joseph Jacobs occupied the office of Chief Rabbi. (62)

The Congregation of 1852 and its daughter congregations were not the only organizations of East European Jews in New York. There were many minyanim and hevroth, societies for religious and charitable purposes, most of which were organized according to the "Landsmannschaft"principle, e.g. in 1866 immigrants from the Province of Suvalk (Lithuania) formed the Hevrah Gomle Hassodim l'Anshe Suvalki. They gave assistance to needy members and to newcomers from Suvalk. The purposes of the society soon became more manifold. 1877 they possessed their own shool and they were able to dedicate a Sepher Torah.

In 1872,29 of those small congregations existed in New York, and their

number grew from year to year.

The number of East European Jews who settled in New York previous to 1881 cannot be ascertained with any exactness. Wiernik gives two estimates of the size of the New York Jewish population about 1870. They assume that 70,000 or 80,000 Jews lived in the Metropolis at that time. But they do not tell, how great the percentage of Russians was. That East European Jews formed already a considerable part of the Hebrew population can be concluded from the fact, that businessmen thought it profitable to issue Yiddish and Hebrew publications.(63)

A Jewish printing office existed very early. In 1868 Elijah Holsman, an immigrant from Courland, published "Emek Rephaim" a Hebrew pamphlet against Reform Judaism. In 1877 M.Topolowsky edited a small volume of Yiddish poetry by Jacob Zwi Solel.

There was at least one Jewish book store before 1881, that of the firm Kantorwitz, that furnished the colony with Yiddish and Hebrew reading matter.

Several attempts were made to publish a news-paper for the East European Jews. In 1870 both a Yiddish and a Hebrew paper were founded. "Di Idisher Post", edited by Hirsch Bernstein, an immigrant from Wladislawov, existed only for a short time. The "Hatzofe b'Eretz Hehadash" appeared for five years. It was established by the same publisher. Its editor was for most of the time David Jalomstein, who arrived from Lithuania in 1871. In 1874 a new Yiddish periodical was founded. "Di Idishe Gazeten", edited by Kasriel H.Sarahson (born in Paiser, Russian Poland) appeared first as a weekly.

voicing extremely orthodox ideas. In 1886 a daily edition was established. (Jewish Daily News)

It was in the two decades before 1881 that the East Side of New York started to become what it is today: the Ghetto. In 1850, when the first Russian Jews settled in New York, the East Side was still the exclusive residence of the "aristocracy of Gotham".

The purchase of the Welsh Chapel in 1855 marked the first step in the march eastward. It cannot be found out today what was the reason for this movement; whether this church was bought because it was a suitable building,and the community followed the synagogue; or whether the synagogue was installed in this Eastern site, because the majority of the congregation were already living there.

In the eighteen seventies poor families could already be found crowded in the tenement houses of the growing Ghetto. The house for six-hundred immigrants which was bought by the Board of Delegates for the Russian Jews is only one instance of this kind of settlement. The refugees arrived poor, and these slums were the only place where they could settle in New York. There is no need of devoting any space to a description of the health situation which developed as a consequence of the miserable housing conditions.

The East European Jews of New York, striking the eyes of the rabble by their strange appearances, were the natural victims of anti-Semitism. The bearded street-vendor with kaftan and earlocks persecuted by a host of urchins was part of the every day scene. In 1871, for instance, Russian Jews who went to the River on New Year's Day to make tashlikh were molested - an event fore-

shadowing the attacks of the Irish of later years. (64)

R o c h e s t e r

Rochester must have had some Russo-Jewish inhabitants in the sixties, for in 1867 it was the center from which the peddlers of the Western States operated. A "peddler-supply", a store which provided the poor Russians with their merchandise on credit, was located in Rochester. It is very likely that the owner of this store was a fellow-countryman of the peddlers, and that some of the hawkers, whose field was upstate New York, lived in Rochester proper. (65)

j. Ohio

C i n c i n n a t i

East European Jews settled in Cincinnati in the eighteen-sixties. The majority of those who arrived in the two decades up to 1881 were Lithuanians.

In 1869 they founded the Congregation Beth Tefillah which was joined by orthodox Jews who were dissatisfied with the reformed ritual of the large congregations. The young congregation started its services in a room at the corner of Richmond and Central Avenues. The growing immigration of these years soon enlarged the number of the members so that, in 1871, they had to rent a larger room on Eighth Street, corner of Central Avenue.

In 1877, a second congregation constituted itself with the name of Beth Hamidrash Hagadol. It also was made up mostly of Lithuanians.(66)

C l e v e l a n d

In 1881, J.J.Benjamin reported of some Polish Jews who were not

organized in either of the two old congregations, Anshe Chesed and Tiphereth Israel. They prayed for themselves without possessing a synagogue.

In 1867, a group which obviously contained the element of extreme, uncompromising Russian orthodoxy - perhaps the same as that mentioned by Benjamin - founded the Congregation Anshe Emeth. They worshipped first near the Central Market House, and moved to West Third Street in 1870.

One year after Congregation Anshe Emeth, another Polish orthodox group organized itself. Its name was Beth Hamidrash Hagodol. (67)

k. Pennsylvania

P h i l a d e l p h i a

Besides New York, Philadelphia was the biggest port for Russian immigration. The Russo-Jewish community of Philadelphia developed in a line parallel to that of the New York community.

The early form of communal organization was the hevrah. These societies provided for their members both charitable help and religious worship. Already the Jewish immigrants from Germany had organized themselves in this way. Since 1861, there arose hevroth which were made up of Hungarians, Galicians, Poles, and Russians. The oldest of them was the Hevrah Bikur Holim. Its members came together for Sabbath- and Holiday-services in a rented hall.

The first congregation of East European Jews was the Cracower-Beth Elohim Congregation. It was founded in 1876, and three years later it united with the Cracower Hevrah which existed previously.

Like in New York, the East Side developed to be "Jewtown" many

years after the first Russian Jews had come to the city. The first Jewish settler in the East Side was Jecheskel Bernstein who moved from Detroit to Philadelphia in 1873. Some years before, he had come over from the Lithuanian town Lithendova. After he had become settled in the new country, he longed for Jewish life similar to that "at home". Therefore he sent for his relatives, and they for theirs, and one year later, they had a minyan and could think of organizing a congregation. Finally, in 1877, the first congregation in "Jewtown", the Hevrah B'nai Israel, obtained its charter. It had at that time fifteen members. This congregation held services in the building of the Jewish Educational Alliance. Some years after the foundation, they built a synagogue with facilities for a school on the South West corner of Tulip and East Auburn SStreets.

The Jewish quarter of Philadelphia in the seventies was no better than the New York Ghetto. The sanitation was bad. The streets were so rotten that the children could bathe in front of the houses in the dirty pools which every rain left behind. The settlers of this quarter were peddlers and junk-dealers whose field of business was partly the City itself, partly the villages and farms in the surrounding country.

The number of East European Jews who came to Philadelphia before 1881 is estimated as ranging between two and three thousand, i.e. about one fifth of the Jewish population. (68)

1. South Carolina

C h a r l e s t o n

Although there was no organized group of East European Jews in

Charleston before 1881, a number of individual immigrants could be found in early years. They seem to have been affiliated with all congregations of the City in the same measure, even - strange enough, but perhaps on account of the similarity of the Chassidic Nussach Ari with the Sephardic ritual - with the Sephardic congregation, Beth Elohim.

Evidence for this statement comes from tombstones and marriage notices. On the cemetery of the German congregation, Berith Shalome, 3o tombstones of people who died before 1881 give the birth-places of the deceased. Ten of them show Russia or Russian Poland as the land of origin. On the cemetery of the orthodox congregation, Shearith Israel, which was used from 184o to 1866, three of the interred ones can be identified as Russians. On the Da Costa Cemetery one stone shows Russia as the birthplace of a man who died in 1871, and on the Coming Street Cemetery of the Congregation Beth Elohim we find the tomb of an immigrant from Russia who died in 1879. Among the marriage notices of the Charleston press (The Courier, September 13, 1852) we find one which says that Rev.Mr. Lyons - the Rabbi of Shearith Israel - married Mr. Simon Houseau, of Pouseau, Europe, to Mrs. Dorothea A bramowitch, of St.Petersburg, Russia.

These data, however interesting they are, do not admit any conclusion as to the exact number of East European Jews in Charleston before 1881.

G e o r g e t o w n

One tombstone in the Georgetown Jewish cemetery mentions Russia as the birthplace of a man who died before 1881. Elzas does not report the presence of any East European Jews. (69)

m. Texas

East European Jews may have settled early in Texas. However, the oldest evidence for their presence that could be found is a letter which an immigrant from Russia wrote to the editor of the "Hammagid" in 1876. (7o)

n. Virginia

R i c h m o n d

There were a few East European JJews in Richmond, probably affiliated with the orthodox Polish congregation, Kenesseth Israel.

The documents of the U.S.District Court in Richmond tell,that on "May 24, 1859..... Ash Harris, of Russia, became (a) citizen". His tombstone tells, that he was born in 1826 in Dobrzynsky, that he was married to an English-born woman, and that he died in Richmond in 1893. On the same cemetery there are two more tombstones of men who came from Russia, and who died before 1881. (71)

2. Eminent East European Jews

The East European Jews who came to this country before 1881 were few in number, and they came from a country where talent was not given much chance to develop. Nevertheless there were men in this immigrant group ,who became outstanding figures in American or in Jewish life.

Not all the famous Jews who were born in Russia, and who immigrated to the United States before 1881 belong to this group. Those of them who in their childhood were taken from their Russian ghetto - environment, and who spent their youth and adolescence in the emancipated West European countries have to be disregarded.Although they

may have been vitally interested in Jewish problems and in the welfare of the East European immigrants, they were too closely assimilated to the Central European Jews in the moment of their arrival in America to be considered part of the Russo-Jewish immigrant group. Michael Heilprin, the champion of liberalism, is one of these men. He was born in Piotrkow (Russian Poland) in 1823, but he spent 13 years previous to his immigration (1843 - 1856) in Hungary and partly in France. The painter Max Rosenthal, from whom we have many pictures from the Civil War, is another. (72)

Two men whose cradle stood in the Russian ghetto, and who came to fame out of the very group of early East European settlers were Judah David Eisenstein and David Lublin. Abridged biographies of these men shall follow.

Judah David E i s e n s t e i n

J.D. Eisenstein was born in Meseritz on November 12, 1854. His father, a learned man, taught him early in the fields of traditional Jewish learning. After his father left for America in 1864, his grandfather took the place of Judah's teacher. In 1872, Eisenstein immigrated to the United States. He settled in New York and became a leading member of Congregation Beth Hamedrash Hagodol. Although mainly concerned with Jewish literature, he was busy as a shirt manufacturer from 188o to 1898.

Eisenstein won his fame as a translator from and into Hebrew, as an editor and arranger of Hebrew encyclopedic works and of Rabbinical writings.

David L u b i n

David Lubin was born in Kladowa (Russian Poland) on June 1, 1849.

He grew up under the tutelage of strictly orthodox parents to whom the fact that the little boy was signed with a deep scar by the glowing wick of a Sabbath candle meant that he was chosen by God for a great future. They were right. In 1855 the family had settled in New York. It was not easy for them to keep David at home; for his boundless love of adventure drove him more than once to run away from home and school, whether it was with a Captain who promised to take him around the Cape or with a recruiting officer during the Civil War. When twelve years, Lubin made his living by working in a jeweler's shop in Massachusetts, when sixteen he travelled to California, when nineteen he went to Arizona with prospectors. In 1874, after a visit back East, he opened a store in Sacramento (Cal). He shocked his competitors and his customers by an idea which was completely new in the Far West. He put the prices on each article in his store, legible for everyone, and he prohibited bargaining. First he seemed to fail. But he stuck to his principles, and finally he succeeded.

Lubin was well educated. He was interested in books both Hebrew and English. Although he mastered the English language in speaking and understanding, he kept a peculiar style of writing even in later years. He devoted himself to the study of transportation and farming, and when his livelihood was secured by the success of his store, he turned to the realization of some projects which he had formulated in this field. His chief plan was the organization of an international institute of agriculture which was to further the co-operation between the nations. Washington showed no interest in Lubin's idea. Thus

he went to Italy, in 1906. Victor Emanuel III. made it possible for Lubin to see his institute dedicated in 1908. The Institute in Italy did not realize the reformer's ultimate ideas. David Lubin, however, did not grow tired. He kept on working for peace and co-operation even throughout the World War. On December 31, 1918, "as the bells rung in the New Year which all hoped was to inaugurate a new era of peace and good will among men, David Lubin passed away."(73)

In the following, sketches shall be given of the lives of a few men who were no celebrities; but they had great sucess in business, and as they stand closer to the mass of Russo-Jewish businessmen, their pictures may be better illustrations for the economic life of the early immigrants than those of Eisenstein and Lubin.

Joseph H. C o h e n

Mr Cohen was born in Sapotkin (Suwalk) on February 8, 1865. Nine years later, he came to New York. In the years during which he went to public school he made money by sellin neckware after the school hours. At the samte time he did not fail to obtain a Jewish education at the Talmud Torah. He started his businedd career as a clerk; became an independent merchant; and in 1917, his cloak and suit factory employed over 500 people. J.H.Cohen clung to Orthodoxy all his life. He devoted himself to charity, and the Beth Israel Hospital in New York is very much indebted to him for his self-sacrificeing service.

The life story of Mr. Cohen's brother Louis shows quite similar features. (74)

David Kaa u f m a n

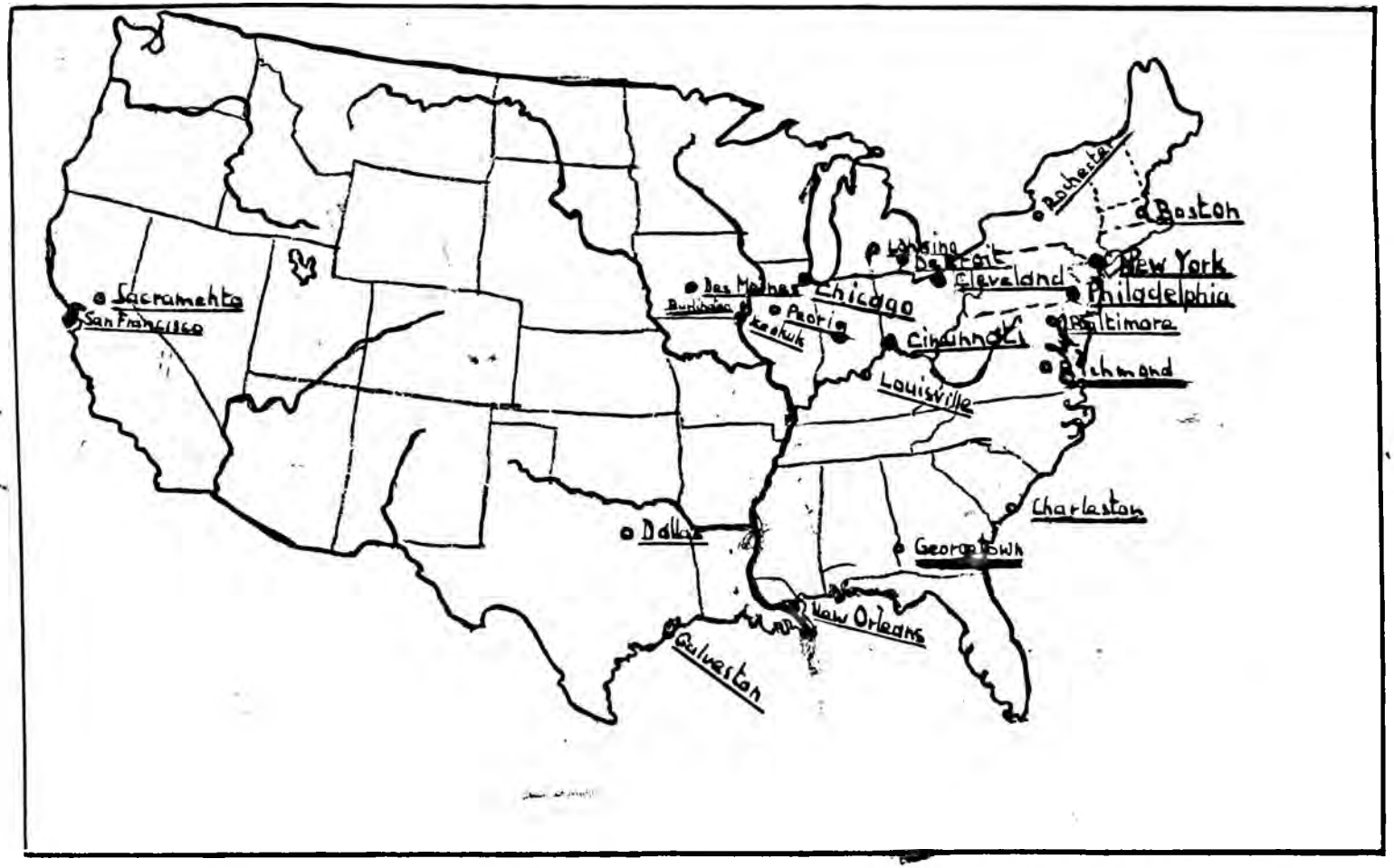
David Kaufman was born in Augustovo (Russia) in 1850. He came

to America in 1868. He started to work as a furrier,but preferring an independent business, he turned to peddling dry goods in New York. Later on he went into the junk business in Newark, N.J. In 1876, he moved to Elizabeth, N.J. and became associated with Hyman Isaac. In 1917, he was one of the largest scrap iron dealers of the UUnited St States. He was affiliated with the first JJewish congregation, B'nai Israel - which is the German, not the Russian congregation - and with the masonic Orient Lodge. He was active in both Jewish and civic causes. In 1913, for instance, he was appointed by Governor Fiedler a member of a committee to go to Germany and urge betterment of conditions of the Jews of the Balkans. (75)

5. East European Jews in the Civil War

The standard work about the Jews in the Civil War, Simon Wolf's "The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier, and Citizen" does not give information about the birthplaces of the Jewish fighters. There is, however, every reason to assume, that the Jewish immigrants from Russia were just as eager as their American- and German-born fellow-Jews to draw the sword for the country which offered them shelter and a hopeful future.

The settlement of East European Jews in the United States.



East European congregation

" " individuals present

Presence of Russian Jews probable

V. LIFE

OF THE EAST EUROPEAN JEWS IN THE UNITED STATES

BEFORE 1881

1. Economic Life

The starting point on the scale of econimic life of the whole group of Jewish immigrants from Russia was the same, with very few exceptions. They arrived in America penniless. The Jews from Germany, Austria, and Hungary were in almost the same situation. Perhaps a few more among them than among the Russians had been able to bring along some savings or a bundle with household supplies. Notwithstanding this, the German Jews had an advantage over the East European immigrants. The majority of the former arrived two decades before the steady stream of immigration from the East started. They found their places in the American world when this civilization was in its most rapid state of construction. Theirs was the chance of a quick rise on the economic scale. The more American life became a solid structure, the more difficult it was for a newcomer to secure a favourable position.

The majority of the early East European immigrants stepped into the positions which the German Jews had filled before. But in the changed economic conditions, hampered by language difficulties and by a lack of helping friends, they were not able to follow their precursors' quick ascent. Only very few ow them rose to high financial and social ranks. They are hardly to be found among the American millionaires and among municipal and governmental officials during the past cantury. (76)

The later the Russian Jews arrived in the States the lower was their economic position. They had to become factory workers, members

of the proletariat, while the German immigrants never left the bourgeois class. They may have settled in the very sections of the large cities where the German businessmen had lived. Good residential sections before - under them they developed into modern ghettos of tenement houses.

The exclusive occupation for the Russo-Jewish immigrants before the seventies was peddling. Right after their arrival in the American port, as soon as they had acquired knowledge of a few English words, they managed to obtain a pack of goods and to start business. Most of them stayed in the Eastern States. There, e.g.in New York and Rochester, successful businessmen founded "peddler supply" houses. They gave their arriving fellow-countrymen goods on credit and a few free lessons in peddling. (77) Gradually the routes of the hawkers extended farther West, and canters rose in the Midwestern States. It was not only for practical reasons that the East European Jews quickly settled as closely as possible to their field of working. They were no friends of nomadic life. Only with a few of them the itinerant vocation became a habit which they did not want to change. For the majority, peddling was an emergency solution, and as soon as they could, they settled down as the owners of stationary stores. (78) In some small towns they acquired land on which they worked as farmers, but their tendency to do business usually made them choose a second vocation, e.g. real estate business. (79)

In the late sixties and in the sefenties,peddling ceased to be a profitable way of living. The trades gained more and more import-

ance for the Russo-Jewish immigrants. City dwellers for centuries, they preferred occupations which made it possible for them to settle in cities also in the new country. Some had been artisans in the communities of the Pale. Others learned a trade, very often glazing, while stopping in England on their way to America.(8o) It was not easy, however, to compete with the skilled artisans who immigrated from Central Europe. Therefore the trades were a very slow path to prosperity for the Russian Jews.

Factory work played only a minor part in the lives of the East European Jews previous to 1881. During the late seventies, the settlers in the large communities, New York and Philadelphia, gradually became connected with the clothing industry. They found work as tailors and pressers in the sweatshops. This occupation which forced the labourers to work under miserable conditions,for an inadequate salary played the chief part in creating the Jewish proletariat in the large cities.

It was also in the garment trade that the Jews became active in the Labour movement. The joy in the freedom which they had missed so much in absolutist Russia made the young Jewish workers eager followers of socialism. Their activeness sometimes tore them from the narrow unpolitical circle of the Russo-Jewish community into the whirlpool of political life. They became agitators for socialist or even anarchist ideas. Although the chief development of the Jewish labour movement falls into the period after 1881, a Jewish Union within the garment industry was organized in New York as early as 1877. (81)

While an insignificant number of Jewish farmers from Russia could be found in the country towns rather early, organized farming became a solution for the economical problem of the immigrants from the East only after 1881 It is true, the agricultural settlement plans of Leon Straus and E.S. Solomon of 1870 were rivived by the Board of Delegates in 1877 and by the Executive Board of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in 1879. (82) They were not realized, however, before the great influx of the eighties. (83)

2. Charity

The philanthropic activities in commection with the East European Jews have to be looked at under two different headings; charity of the earlier Jewish settlers toward the Russian immigrants and organizations of mutual aid among the East European Jews.

The attitude of the Portuguese and German Jews toward the needy East Eruopean immigrants was in general identical with that illustrated in the case of the immigration wave of 1869. (84) Despite the resistance of narrow minded assimilationists, the philanthropic organizations of the Sephardic and Ashkenasic groups carried the main part of the financial burden created by the immigration from Eastern Europe.

Naturally the systematical organization of charitable institutions for the Russian refugees started in 1882. (85) The foundation of the Society in Aid of Jewish Immigrants in New York (1870) was an exception, a spontaneous response to a single emergency situation. (86) However, in all the Jewish communities the poor among the Russian Jews were taken care of by the German Jewish charity organizations.

This was especially true for the large cities where a mass of needy East European Jews accumulated. In the cities on the Atlantic coast the charitable institutions of the Jewish communities were extended for the use of the Russian immigrants, and special collections were organized in times of larger immigration.(87) Outside of housing and feeding the poor, the organizations helped the newcomers by giving them loans. As a rule,the money was used for buying tools for the trade or goods for peddling, for a railroad ticket to the central states, or for a place on a steamer back to Europe. (89)

The East European settlers themselves were also very active in giving help to their needy fellow-countrymen. With them charitable and religious organization had become a unity in the hevroth. These institutions were particularistic. They were independent from each other and from the large Jewish philanthropic agencies.

The way of rendering help, too, was different among the Russian Jews than among the older settlers. They had not the possibility of working with large amounts of money. Therefore charity assumed a very direct and personal system. Newcomers from Europe were taken into the houses of members of the hevrah for a few weeks. They were given their meals and a few lessons in English and in peddling. Finally they were dismissed with a basket of small wares and the good wishes of the whole brotherhood. (89)

3. Cultural Life

As far as secular culture is concerned,the RRussian immigrants

were not in high standing. In Russia a "good education" was the privilege or the wealthy classes. In addition, the orthodox JJews were suspicious of the schools of the Maskilim which gave more than a religious education. They were afraid of seeing their children converted to Christianity there. As the majority of the immigrants originated from the poor classes of Russian JJews, it is not astonishing that hardly any of them knew, how to write his name in Latin script.

This fact does, however, not admit any conclusion as to the general cultural standard of the East European Jew.. As a child in the Pale, he had been taught by the melamed in the heder or by his father. Thus the average Russian Jew who came to America knew at least, how to read his Hebrew prayers and his Yiddish newspaper. Very often his knowledge comprehended the Bible and the Talmud.

In America, too, the Russian Jews at once showed their interest in cultural activities. In the smallest congregation a heder was established which later often grew into Talmud Torah, a well organized daily Hebrew school. The restriction from secular education in Russia had not deadened the interest in it nor the capacity of learning in the Jewish youth. Whenever they entered American public schools or universities, they were to be found among the better students.(90)

The East European Jews in America not only revived their educational institutions of the old country and showed themselves capable of adopting the particularities of the new one, but they

also created a new branch of Jewish culture. The meeting of the Jewish and the American civilizations resulted in a movement corresponding to the Haskalah in Eastern Europe. While the German Jew assimilated completely to the civilization of their environment, both in Germany and in America, the Russian Jews were stimulated by the experience of strange influences to give rise to new cultural values. In America the movement resulted in the early progress of Hebrew and Yiddish literature. The interest in it was vital to the immigrant from the East. Otherwise the many articles in the Russian Jewish papers directed to their American readers could not be explained, and the early creation of Yiddish and Hebrew newspapers, publication houses, and bookstores in New York and Chicago would have been impossible. (91) Yiddish and Hebrew speaking societies, literary associations, clubs for all interests, and last not least, the Yiddish theatre arose in the course of this movement, the beginning of which can be clearly discerned in the period previous to 1881. (92)

The influence of the new environment upon the civilization of the East European Jews was not only felt as a stimulus for new production byt also in changes within the cultural life. The new Yiddish literature wore the stamp of the American scene, and the language itself altered. The Yiddish in use in the American Jewish literature had the tendency of approaching closely to the literary German, more closely even than the language employed by the Maskilim in Russia. (93) At the same time, English words began to creep in and to modify the dialect. This strange

development was a result of the double effect brought about by the language of the German Jewish group on the one hand and that of the American people at large on the other. (94)

In its form and its tools the civilization of the East European Jews showed foreign influences, but in its contents, in its soul it was Jewish. (95)

4. Religious and Social Life

It was not without reason that religious and social life were put together into one heading. In the Pale, and no less among the early East European immigrants in America, the Jewish religion was all pervasive in its power. It gave its contents to civilization, and it shaped the system of charitable institutions; yet nothing was influenced by it as much as social life. There was no social life outside of the congregation, outside of the synagogue. The hevrah formed a close social unity. The meeting place of its members was the shool, the reason for the daily or weekly gatherings - religious worship. It was quite natural that the exchange of news - an important social activity - took place after (or during) the services. Even social events, festivities, banquets, dances, were at the same time religious occurances. They took place at the occasion of holidays, such as Simhath Torah and Purim, or of such family events as B'rith Milah, Bar Mitzwah, and weddings, which also had religious character.

On the other hand, social needs were not without influence upon the institutions of religion. Not only did the services and religious celebrations bear the stamp of social events - they do in every religion, though less than in Hasidic Judaism with its "Third Meal"

and its Simhath Torah Eve - but the very organization of the Landsmannschaften is a consequence of social habits. Insignificant differences in the rituals would not have necessarily caused separation of the immigrants from the various towns and districts. However, the feeling of belonging together, of being used to each other, of sharing the same language, the same customs, and the same memories united the townsmen. It was this social particularism which led immigrants from one town to leave a congregation at the slightest occasion and to make up a minyan of their own.

The religious life of the Russian Jews was not developed in the same form all over the country. From the time on, when they settled in the cities in considerable numbers their way of life became different from that of the peddler in the villages and towns of the farm states.

In the large cities,- New York, Philadelphia, Chicago in first place,- the Russian Jews were able to build their own world. As though they had never left Mariampol or Litvinova or Suwalk, they lived like in a village community, close together, concerned only about their own little affairs and their fellow-Jews. They met in the synagogues at the regular times for services, if not every day, then at least every Sabbath. They were able to obtain kosher food, and they could refrain from working on the Day of Rest. In short, it was possible for them to live as genuine Hasidim without neglecting even the most insignificant part of the Law.

The situation was completely different for those who settled in the country towns. Their fields of working were wide stretches

of farmland. They had no means of getting kosher food. They had to stay on the road all week, and sometimes could not even come home on Sabbath. Even though they returned to their towns on weekends, only in rare cases there was a congregation with which they could pray. The longer this life lasted, the more the habit of and even the feeling for the orthodox way of living vanished among the peddlers. Only the strongest ones were able to stick to their principles, to lead singly their hard lives instead of associating more closely with their American or German-Jewish environment.

The religious leaders of the early Russo-Jewish congregations were hardly rabbis in the modern sense. They had not gone through a systematical education different from that of the rest of the believers. They only had learned more than the others. Their task in the congregation was to decide religious problems and to study with the members. They hardly had to preach sermons, but they were to give good d'raahoth, explanations of Scripture.

The poverty of the congregations prevented them from paying salaries to their ministers. If the rabbis received anything at all, it was never sufficient for the support of a family. Therefore the early Russian rabbis usually had a secular vocation besides, in order to make their living. (96)

Enwrapped in their religious life, the Russian Jews were that group among the Jewish immigrants who assimilated most slowly in the new country. While their German brethren became ardent Americanists, they retained their pious, hopeful love for Zion. While they scarcely made their living, they collected their few spare

pennies in order to send them to Palestine for the poor, especially for the support of aged people of their Landsmannschaft who had gone to the Holly Land to spend there the rest of their days. Out of this religious feeling, political Zionism grew a few decades later. (97)

5. The Relation between the East European Jews and the Groups of Earlier Jewish Settlers

When in the middle of the past century the masses of German Jews settled in this country they were looked at with contempt by the Portuguese Jews who had lived in America for generations. The Germans - i.e. the South Germans - in turn scorned at any Jew who came from any place east of Berlin. While the contrast between the Germans and the "Poseners" and part of the Hungarians and Galicians diminished with the advance of Reform Judaism, that between the Germans and the East Europeans remained almost equally strong since earliest times. (98)

As to their beliefs and customs, as to their economic and cultural conditions the Russian Jews formed a distinct group, different from the earlier settlers. Both the arrogant exclusiveness of the Germans and the self-sufficient particularism of the Russians kept the two groups from mingling in all those places in which a considerable number of East European Jews settled. Therefore in cities like New York and Philadelphia relationships as that between the Russian Rabbi Ash and the Portuguese Jew John Hart were rare exceptions. (99)

However, in places where only a very small number of Russian

Jews immigrated, it was not seldom that they associated very closely with other groups. Mostly, it was the Galician or the Hungarian congregation which was joined by the East European Jews, for in it they found the most familiar type of services and customs. Sometimes even an orthodox German congregation had a few Russian members. In most of the cases, when congregations had become heterogeneous in their membership, they split, as soon as a sufficient number of East European Jews had immigrated, and a minyan could be formed.

In some towns,- e.g.Richmond,Va. and Charleston,S.C. - a few Russian Jews settled very early while a Russian congregation was not organized before the eighties. In such cases it is probable that the Russian settlers amalgamated completely with the older immigrants. (100) This process of assimilation occured with even greater regularity when the offspring of the early East European immigrants, men and women who had been raised in this country, moved away from their parents to a place where no other Russian Jews lived. (101)

Generally it may be said, that when the East European Jews settled in small numbers, and when at the same time they prospered financially, the barrier between them and the other Jewish groups broke down. The Russians mingled with the other Jewish settlers by social intercourse, by intermarriage, and mainly by joining their congregations. They remained in the congregations when these accepted Reform Judaism. When the Russian mass immigration started, they felt more akin to their new associates

than to the poor refugees. They were no longer members of the group of East European Jews.

C O N C L U S I O N S

Increasing economic and political difficulties in the East European countries caused individual Jews to migrate from there to the United States of America since the middle of the nineteenth century. The number of the immigrants was steadily increasing. They came on their own initiative and on their own resources, but in many cases, charity organizations of European and American Jews took care of them. They found occupation as peddlers, as artisans, and later on as workers in the garment industry. They preferred to settle together in the large cities, organized in groups according to their places of origin. Part of them moved to the Western and Southern States where they settled individually or in small groups. While here many of them amalgamated with the larger groups of American Jews, the East European Jews in the cities formed distinct groups with their own religious, social, charitable, and cultural activities. They laid the foundation upon which the gigantic community of Russian Jews in the United States built itself.

The history of the East European Jews in America previous to 1881 is not the independent unit which it seems to be. It is true, it has characteristics which distinguish it clearly from the period after this date; and yet, it is only an introductory chapter to the history of a larger span of time. It is the exposition of a drama which in our days seems to be in its denouement, rapidly giving way to a new play on the stage of Jewish migration.

Notes

The names of Jewish congregations in this essay are spelled in the way given by the sources. Wherever possible the spelling of the charter was employed.

1. Dubnow: History of the Jews in Russia and Poland vol.ii. p.17

2. ibid. pp. 145 ff. and 154 ff.

3. ibid. pp. 198 ff.

4. ibid. pp. 3o ff.

5. Friedlaender: The Jews of Russia and Poland p. 134
Dubnow: Hist. of the Jews in Russia and Poland vol.ii. pp.41 ff.

6. ibid. p.49

7. ibid.p. 62

8. ibid.p. 42

9. ibid.p. 49

1o. ibid.pp. 142 f.

11. ibid.pp. 144 f.

12. ibid.pp. 190 f.

13. ibid.pp. 132 ff. and 175 ff.

14. ibid.pp. 110 ff.

15. Bernheimer: The Russian Jew in the U.S. p.26.
An interesting fact given by Bernheimer is that two thirds of the Russian Jews who live outside of Russia come from Lithuania.

16. ibid.

17. While this is Dubnow's view (cf.Dubnow, op.cit. pp.177 ff.) I.Goldstein (A Century of Judaism in New York, p.177) holds that the 1863 revolt was one of the causes for increased Jewish immigration. Perhaps the unrest of the revolutionary times together with the language clause of the 1862 ukase had this effect.

18. Sources for this chapter:
Meisel: Geshichte vun Iden in Vereinikte Staaten,p.65
Wiernik: Hist. of the Jews in America,p. 255
Allgem.Ztg.d.Jdt. vol.33 "Die Juden in Russland" pp.162-164,and 82 f.
Kaplun-Kogan: Die Wanderbewegungen der Juden, p. 115

19. Margolin: The Jews of Eastern Europe p. 110

20. ibid.

21. Dubnow: op.cit. pp. 72 ff.

22. ibid. pp. 84 ff.

23. Allgem. Ztg.d.Jdt. vol.33 p. 397

24. Meisel gives as reason a blood accusation (op.cit. p.65)
Margolin - the accusation of a Jew for breaking a cross in a church. (op.cit. p.111)

25. Dubnow: op.cit. pp.191 f

26. Allgem. Ztg.d.Jdt. vol.39 p.448

27. HaAsif vol.I. p. 12

28. Sources for this chapter:
Dubnow: op.cit. pp. 105 ff
Jew. Enc. "United States". vol.XII p. 367
Wirth: The Ghetto p.146
Wiernik: op.cit. p. 189
Meisel: op.cit. p. 65
Bernheimer: op. cit. pp. 14 - 26

29. Dubnow: op.cit. p. 69

30. Margolin: op.cit. pp. 61 f

31. Petersburger Börsenzeitung, quoted in Allgem.Ztg.d.Jdt.vol.33 p.963

32. Sources for Chapter 2. up to this paragraph:
Allgem.Ztg.d.Jdt. vol.33: "Die Auswanderung von Juden aus den westrussischen Provinzen", "Wie ist den nothleidenden Juden in Westrussland zu helfen?", and " Die westrussischen Juden". (Pagination to be found in the Bibliography.)

33. Jewish Messenger, quoted from Archives Israélites vol.31 p.103.

34. Hebrew Leader, translated in Hammagid vol.14 p.124

35. cf. Jewish Times vol.2 p. 184

36. Leon Straus in Jewish Times of October 8, 1869 (No.32) p.5

37. cf. Letter of Zvi Hirsch Bernstein in Hammagid vol.14 pp. 196, 204, 212

38. Jewish Times of October 22, 1869 (No.34) p.9
It seems that this view was generally accepted during the following years (cf.the official answer to the Alliance Israélite, Allgem.Ztg. d.Jdt. vol.37 p. 196)

39. Allgem.Ztg.d.Jdt. vol.33 p. 981
Révue Israélite vol.1870/71 p. 190

40. Archives Israélites vol. 31 p.262

41. Further sources for chapter 2. p.2o till end:
Bernheimer: op.cit. p. 366
Wirth: op.cit. p.146.
Leroy-Beaulieu: Les Immigrants Juifs et le Judaisme aux États Unis p.5, Note 1.
Allgem.Ztg.d.Jdt. vol. 33 (Pagination in Bibliography)
Archives Israélites vol.31 pp.262 f and 36o
vol.35 p. 477
Révue Israélite vol. 1870/71 pp. 127, 190, 224, 304, 399, 556
Jewish Times vol.1. No.32.
vol. 2. pp. 73, 101, 201, 184
Hammagid vol.14 p. 219

42. Jew.Enc. "Migration" vol.VIII p.584
"United States" vol.XII p.346

43. Hersch: Le Juif Errant d'Aujourd'hui pp. 17-22

44. More recent writers than Hersch took over the figures of the Jew.Enc. without considering Hersch's criticism. (cf. Goldstein:op.cit. p.177 and Kaplun-Kogan: op.cit. p. 115)

45. There was no information either positive or negative obtainable about the States not mentioned in this list.

46. Dr.Eckman in American Israelite 1856, May 3o (No.47) p. 382.

47. American Israelite 1855, No.5, p. 35.

48. Benjamin: Drei Jahre in Amerika vol.I pp.223 f

49. ibid. pp.225 f.

50. Although no evidence for continual single immigration could be found it is not to be assumed that David Aronson, who arrived in San Francisco in 1876 was the only Russian immigrant in these years. (cf.Hammagid vol.20 pp. 357, 366, 376.)

51. Benjamin: op.cit. vol.II. p.10

52. cf. Levinger: A History of the Jews in the U.S. p. 314

53. Sources for the history of the Eat European Jews of Chicago:
Felsenthal: The Beginnings of the Chicago Sinai Congregation, p.9
Benjamin: op.cit. vol.III p. 113
Eliassof: The Jews of Illinois pp. 299 and 365 f.
Wirth: op.cit. pp.167-179
Wiernik: op.cit. p. 259
Jew.Enc. "Chicago" vol.IV p.24

54. Eliassof: op.cit. pp.370 f
The same source does not mention the existence of Russian Jews before 1881 in the followin Illinois communities:
Joliet
Springfield
Moline
Pontiac
Aurora
Quincy

55. Wiernik (op.cit. p.153) mentions also Burlington as a center of the Russian peddlers.

56. Sources:
Glazer: The Jews of Iowa pp. 188 - 252
Wiernik:pp.cit. p. 153
Of the Jewish community of Davenport, Glazer reports that there was hardly any orthodoxy. In Sioux City, he gives 1868 as the date of the arrival of the first Russian Jews.

57. Sources:
Benjamin: op.cit. vol.I. p. 361
The Israelites of Louisiana pp. 116 f and 137

58. Benjamin; op.cit. vol.I. p. 345
Blum: The Jews of Baltimore p. 28
Jew.Enc. "Baltimore" vol.II. p. 480
Guttmacher; A History of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation pp.26 f.

39. Benjamin; op.cit. vol.III. p. 126
Schindler: Israelites in Boston, chp.II.

60. Sources:
Markens: The Hebrews in America, p. 123
The Reform Advocate, Michigan State Edition, Lansing, p.5,Kalamazoo,p.3
Freeman: Fufzig Yohr Geshichte vun Idishen Leben in Philadelphia, p.13

61. Sources:
Unterman: Newarker Iden pp.29-40

62. Sources:
Eisenstein: The History of the First Russian-American Jewish Congregatio
Wiernik: op.cit. pp. 189-192

63. Wiernik: op.cit. p. 156

64. Wirth: op.cit. p. 148
Wiernik: op.citl pp. 256 - 259
Wiener: The History of Yiddish Literature in the Nineteenth Century p.2
p.216

Meisel: op.cit. p. 66.
Eisenstein: Op.cit.

(64) Fishberg: Health and Sanitation of the Jewish Immigrant Population.
Hammagid vol.11 Hassafah No.27
Archives Israélites vol.31 p. 360
RévueIsraélite vol.1870/71 p. 799

65. cf. Glazer: op.cit. p.235
In Albany, Buffalo, and Syracuse there were congregations with Polish ritual; but the presence of East European Jews in not ascertainedx in these cities. (cf. Benjamin: op.cit. vol.III.pp.124 f. and Markens: op.cit. pp.119 f)

66. Wise: Judaism in Cincinnati, p.36.
I am endebted for a great part of my information to Rabbi Louis Feinberg of Congregation Adath Israel, Cincinnati.

67. Benjamin: op.cit. pp. 121 f
Gries: The Jewish Community of Cleveland,p.6
The Cleveland Jewish Society Book pp. 19, 84.

68. Freeman: op.cit. pp. 10-14
Morais: The Jews of Philadelphia pp. 208-221
Bernheimer: op.cit. p.76
Pittsburgh probably had some East European Jews. (cf.Markens: op.cit. p.109)

69. Elzas: The old Jewish Cemetaries at Charleston S.C.
The Jews of South Carolina
Jewish Marriage Notices

70. Hammagid vol.20 pp. 379 f.
Markens, op.cit. pp. 123 f.

71. Ezekiel and Lichtenstein: The History of the Jews of Richmond pp.122 - 321
Benjamin: op.cit. vol.I. p. 348

72. Levinger: op.cit. pp. 299 - 302
Wiernik: op.cit. pp. 208 - 212
Morais: op.cit. pp. 367 f.

73. Agresti: David Lubin (Quotation from p.348)
Levinger: op.cit pp. 313 -316
Eisenstein: Autobiography
74. Pfeffer: Distinguished Jews of America pp. 82 f

75. ibid. pp. 239 f.
Jew.Enc. "New Jersey", vol.XI p. 241

76. Bernheimer: op.cit. p. 103
Abraham in his list of Jews in Public Offices mentions none of Russian birth.

77. For sources see above, paragraphs on Rochester and Des Moines (pp.45 and 31) One of the leaders of the peddlers in New York was David Zemansky who moved to Chicago,Ill. in 1866 (Wirth: op.cit. p.167)

78. cf. Glazer: op.cit. p. 198

79. It is probable that Mr. Wise in Abbeville,La. (see above p. 34) was not the only instance of a Jewish farmer and busineddman.

80. Eisenstein: Hist. p.68.

81. Levinger: op.cit. p. 294

82. see above p. 22
cf. Proceedings of the Board of Delegates p.26
Proceedingsof the Union of American Hebrew Congregations vol.1. p. 580

83. Hersch: op.cit. pp. 101 - 160
Bernheimer; op.cit. pp.103 f, 256-283
Meisel: op.cit. p.65
Wirth: op.cit.p. 146
Levinger: op.cit. pp. 293 f
Freeman: op.cit. pp.6 f
Glazer: op.cit. pp. 239 f,
Rabbi Treuenfels in Allgem.Ztg.d.Jdt. vol.33 p. 425
Eisenstein: Hist.

84. See above pp. 19 ff.
Besides, cf. case of Moses Minz in San Francisco (p.26) and the appeal of Rabbi Liebman Adler, Chicago (p.28)

85. Goldstein: op.cit. p. 183

86. see above p. 21

87. In New York the work was done by the various organizations which,in 1874, were united in the United Hebrew Charities. (Bernheimer op. cit. p. 70) In Philadelphia the activity for the newcomers appears to havelbeen very strong. For a list of organizations cf.ibid p.76. In Chicago the United Hebrew Relief Association was responsible for the philanthropic work. (ibid.p. 89.)
As an example of a collection for the needy Russian Jews a few numbers shall follow of the gifts in the emergency of 1870:

Portuguese Congregation, N.Y.	250 $	
Congregation Anshe Chesed, N.Y.	100 $	
Received on the appeal of the Jewish Messenger	950 $	(Archives Isr. vol.31
From a concert of Miss Juliet Levy	750 $	pp.360 f.)
Sum total published by the Hebrew Leader	15,000 $	(Révue Isr. vol.1870/71 p.399)

88. Fifty Years of Social Service, U.H.C.of N.Y. p.22
Bernheimer: op.cit. chp.III. pp. 61-100
Wirth: op.cit. p. 173.
For further examples of charitable activities cf. Jewish Times : vol.1, No.30 p.5, vol.2. p. 169, vol. 7. p. 275.
Apparently East European Jews did not play a part in these institutions. It is only later that a Lithuanian immigrant, Jacob Judelsohn (immigrated 1879) can be found active as an organizer of the institutions of the American Jews for the Russian refugees in Philadelphia and New York. (Morais op.cit. p.132)

89. Eisenstein: Hist. p.72

90. cf. p.22. A Russo-Jewish student graduates from the Philadelphia Medical School with honours.

91. cf. Chicago p.29 and New York pp. 43 f.

92. The first Hebrew Language society was that of the Dorshe Sefat Eber, founded in New York, 1880 (Jew.Enc. "United States" vol.XII. p. 370)

93. Wiener mentions Dick as a Russian writer whose Yiddish is strongly influenced by high German. (Wiener; op.cit p. 217)

94. Wiener: op.cit. p. 216:
"Whether they wished so or not, they were rapidly being amalgamated on the one side by the German Jews, on the other by the American people at large. Many tried to hide their nationality, and even their religion, since the Russian Jews did not stand in good repute then. The vernacular was only used as the last resort by those who had not succeeded in acquiring a ready use of the English language."
Regarding the use of Yiddish as an emergency solution of the Jewish language problem can hardly explain the flourishing of the Yiddish literature in America. A larger percentage of the Jewish population than that suggested by Mr.Wiener's words must have employed Yiddish as their language before the development can be understood.

95. Levinger: op.cit. pp. 286 f.
Bernheimer: op.sit. pp. 13, 23 ff, 32
Wiernik: op.cit. p.259
Hersch: op.cit. p. 90
Wiener: op.cit. pp. 216 ff

96. cf. the story of Rabbi Ash, New York, above pp. 38 f. and of Rabbi Silverstein, New Orleans, p. 34.

97. Wirth; op.cit. pp. 147 - 176

(97) Bernheimer: op.cit. p. 15
Glazer: op.cit.
Levinger: op.cit. pp. 289 ff
Eisenstein: Hist. p.72

98. Eliassof: op.cit. p.299
Bernheimer: op.cit. p.13
Goldstein: op.cit. pp. 182 f
Freeman: op.cit. p.11.

99. In many cases the Russian Jews started their American careers as employees of German or Portuguese Jews.(Wirth: op.cit.p.146) But this kind of relation did hardly lower the social barriers between the groups. See also the relations in charitable and social activities and in cultural influences. (V.chps. 2, 3, and 4)

100. An example is Mr. Ash Harris, Richmond Charleston, S.C. who married a woman from London. (p.49) In this case chances are that Mrs. Harris's parents lived in England only on their way from Russia to the United States. However, assimilation occured beyond a doubt in the cases of the Seiferth family, New Orleans (p.34) and Mr. D. Kaufman, Elizabeth N.J. (pp.52 f)

101. An example is Mr. J.B. Simon, the Lansing factory owner. (cf. p.36) who was a leader in the Lansing Jewish community, President of the local chapter of the B'nai B'rith, and a supporter of the Jewish Publication Society. (Reform Advocate, Michigan State Edition, Lansing p.5)

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