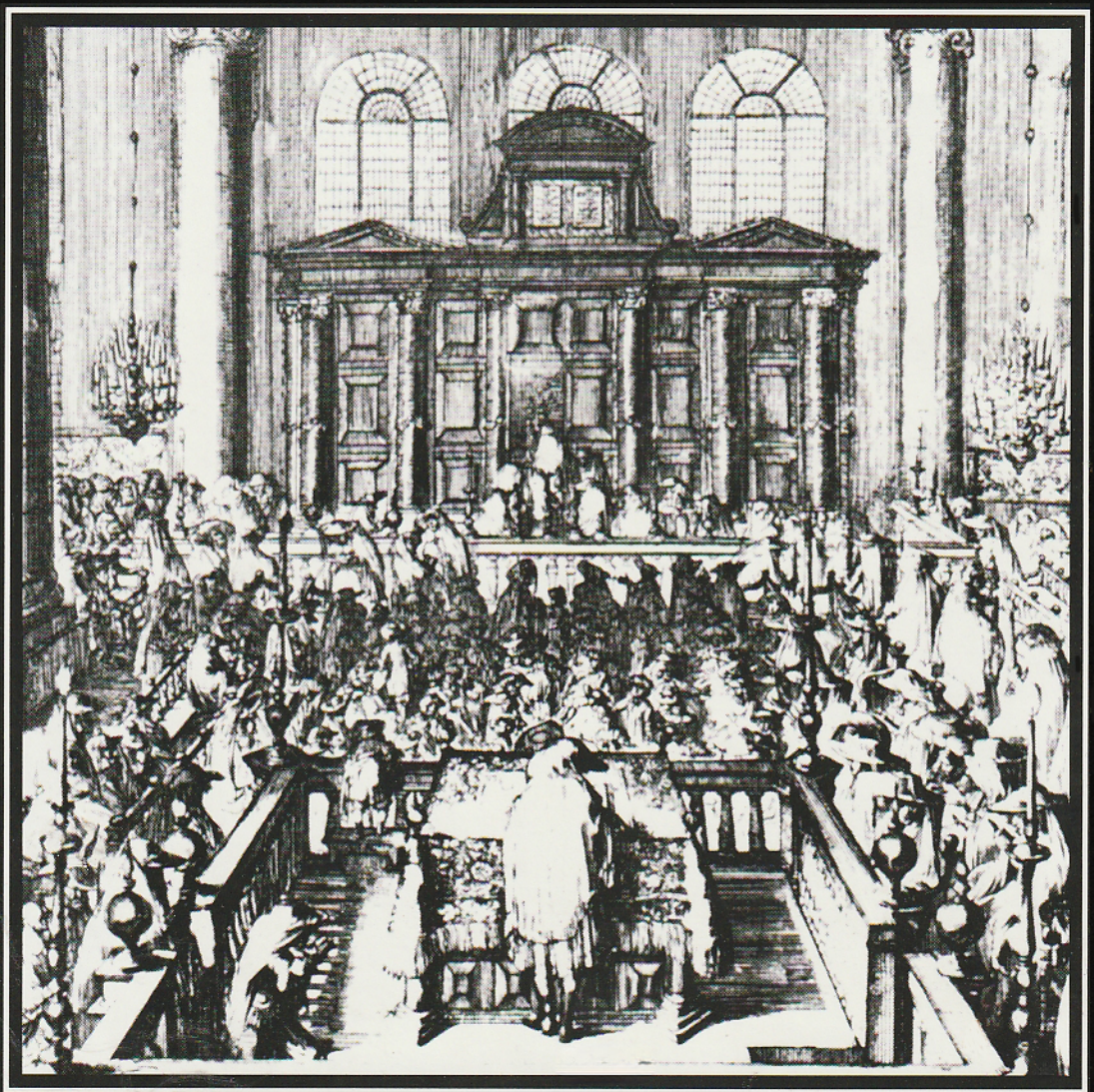
THE SEPHARDI HERITAGE VOL. II

The Western Sephardim

Edited by Richard Barnett and Walter Schwab



THE

SEPHARDI HERITAGE

Volume II

Essays on the history and cultural contribution
of the Jews of Spain and Portugal

Edited by
R. D. Barnett
and
W. M. Schwab

THE WESTERN SEPHARDIM

The history of some of the communities formed in
Europe, the Mediterranean and the New World
after the expulsion of 1492

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GIBRALTAR BOOKS LTD
Grendon, Northants

1989

First published in Great Britain, 1989,
by Gibraltar Books Ltd, Rosehill Farm,
38 Main Road, Grendon, Northants, NN7 1JW

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
The Western Sephardim. – (The Sephardi heritage v.2)
1. Western world. Jews, Sephardic history
I. Barnett, R. D. (Richard David) 1909-1986 II.
Schwab, W. M. (Walter Manfred) 1913- III. Series
909'.04924

ISBN 0-948466-11-1

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Printed by Plaistow Press Ltd,
Church House, Church Street,
Stratford, London E15 3JA

THE SEPHARDI HERITAGE

Volume II

THE WESTERN SEPHARDIM

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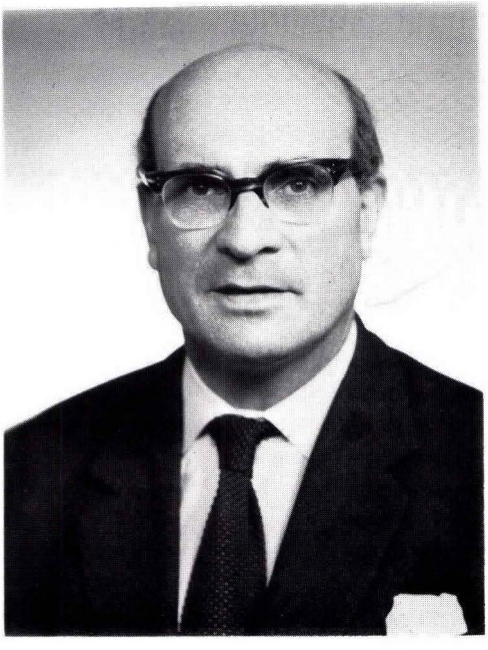
Dedicated to the memory of Richard Barnett,
the originator of this work, who was a mainstay
of Anglo-Jewish scholarship and research.



RICHARD BARNETT 1909–1986
CBE, FSA, FBA

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FOREWORD

Richard David Barnett, the initiator of this volume, passed away on 29 July 1986 before he had time to see the book in print. He was entirely responsible for its planning and for the selection of contributions, which he discussed with the authors concerned. The long delay in publishing this book was caused by financial problems, in spite of his indefatigable efforts to raise the necessary funds to get it under way. Subsequently, technical problems delayed publication still further.

Richard was born on January 23, 1909. He was the only son of Lionel David Barnett, the great Indologist, and Keeper of oriental printed books and manuscripts at the British Museum from 1908 to 1936.

After taking a Classics degree at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and spending two years in Athens with a studentship of the British School of Archaeology, he joined the staff of the British Museum as an assistant keeper of Egyptian and Assyrian antiquities, in 1932.

He had wide-ranging interests and his knowledge of classical archaeology fitted him well for the task of sorting and cataloguing the beautifully carved ivories found by Layard and Loftus at Numrud. Much preliminary conservation treatment of these delicate pieces was necessary, and with the interruption of the war, the *Catalogue*, a mine of information and suggestive ideas, did not appear until 1957.

During the war he worked at the Admiralty and the Foreign Office, and from 1942 to 1946, he served as an RAF intelligence officer in Egypt, Syria, Libya and Turkey. After the war, he played an active part in the founding, in 1949, of the British Institute of Archaeology in Ankara. He also served on the councils of a number of institutes and schools.

Richard Barnett was appointed Keeper of the newly-formed Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities at the British Museum in 1955, and soon launched a program of reorganization of the storage areas under his care. He established departmental conservators to deal with the collections and created a students' room for visiting scholars. At the same time, he pursued a judicious and active acquisitions policy. On the more public side, his major reorganisation of the Assyrian scupture galleries made much better sense of this important collection.

Biblical history was a strong interest to which he often returned in his publications. For many years he served on the committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund and the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem; and he was largely instrumental in founding the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society. He concluded his career at the British Museum by opening an Ancient Palestine Room.

Richard Barnett played an active part in the life of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Synagogue in London, and he achieved a very special

niche in the field of Anglo-Jewish history. He produced many scholarly articles, including no less than seven for the Jewish Historical Society of England, of which he was vice-president and a former president. He also contributed to other learned journals and was deeply aware of the extensive range of unpublished material relating to the Sephardi community in England. His father had already published *El Libro de los Acuerdos* and two volumes of *Bevis Marks Records* and Richard was determined to make other material available. He put the library of Bevis Marks in order; he edited the *Treasures of a London Temple*; he was the prime mover in cataolguing Bevis Marks' valuable collection of silver; he published its burial records, and he also edited the sumptuous catalogue of the Jewish Museum, London.

Richard Barnett was a mainstay of Anglo-Jewish scholarship and research. He added considerably to our knowledge of the history of the community, and especially the Sephardi community with which he was so closely associated. He inspired and encouraged many younger researchers and students to follow in his footsteps and to work in the field of Anglo-Jewish historical investigation, and he always had time to assist and make his own very extensive knowledge and experience available to all workers in this field. He was a kind-hearted and lovable man who made strenuous efforts on behalf of all causes close to his heart — and there were many. He will be missed by all who knew and learned from him.

Richard Barnett passed away almost three years ago and the completion of this volume has been undertaken by me, hopefully, in the way he would have wished. It was originally intended that the volume should be fully illustrated and that it should also contain a glossary of unfamiliar terms as well as an index of Sephardi *responsa*. For a variety of reasons, technical, financial and urgency, it has been regretfully decided to dispense with all these. This volume was first conceived in the early 1970s and the long period of gestation before publication is very much regretted, but is due to circumstances beyond my control. I should like to thank the printers, Plaistow Press Ltd, for their handling of a very difficult manuscript and the translators for their work. I should particularly thank my wife for her forbearance especially when I was engaged in the interminable job of preparing the index.

Walter M. Schwab
March 1989

FOREWORD

This book was originally planned jointly by the World Sephardi Federation and the Jewish Memorial Foundation under the guidance of the late Mr. Ovadia Camhy.

The present volume of the *Sephardi Heritage* represents the outcome of the plan proposed in volume I (1971). This was that, whereas volume I described the Sephardi Jews' life and contribution to civilization, both Jewish and non-Jewish, in Spain up to the time of their expulsion in 1492 and in Portugal in 1497, volume II should dwell on their histories, achievements and contributions in the different countries into which they fled, and with the destinies of which they became intimately associated for the next four centuries.

It is a remarkable feature of Sephardi history how, in spite of their tragic expulsion and persecutions they always retained their Iberian character and their vivid memories of their loved Hispanic culture and background, and managed skilfully to combine it in varying degrees with that of their host country. The continuity of this relatively unmixed tradition — in music and song, in liturgy and ballads, in religious life and communal structure, in language and manners and many other matters has increasingly excited the attention of scholars and students of all kinds; particularly this is so, now that so much of this life has disappeared in the devastation and concentration-camps of World War II or the new emigrations and tribulations caused by the sad conflict between Israel and the Arab World, or simply in the altered circumstances of a changing world. In any case the heroic resistance of the forced converts to Catholicism or New Christians whom some call *marranos* (but whom the Jewish rabbinical authorities described in Hebrew as simply *anusim* 'compelled') has always excited the admiration of all lovers of freedom, for in the background to most studies in the present volume stands the grim shadow of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions.

As we have remarked the name frequently given to these forced converts and their descendants in modern writings and parlance is *marranos*. It never occurs in official Spanish or Portuguese documents and is purely a popular term of insult and malevolence applied in Spain, for in Spanish the word means simply 'pig', though it has been strangely misunderstood and converted by modern Jewish writers into a sort of badge of honour. It implies that the person so described practised Jewish, i.e. anti-Christian and hence to

the Christian Catholic, odious customs, or was a Jew at least in heart. As a pejorative expression, therefore, it is avoided in the present work wherever possible. In addition to other undesirable aspects it is neither scholarly nor exact. The official designation in Spanish and Portuguese Church and state circles for persons of originally Jewish descent was 'New Christian', a term which though racialist in its hinted overtones, does not explicitly take any sides in argument whether the person concerned was a devout Catholic or was an outward Christian yet was a 'judaizer', i.e. in some degree or other a secret practiser of Jewish rites or beliefs *(judaizante)*. The term *converso* (convert i.e. baptised person) is and was sometimes used in the same sense and is adopted by several of the present contributors to this volume. But it suffers again in the present writer's view from lack of precision, since the person or persons referred to might be in fact not a convert or converts himself or themselves but the third, fourth, fifth or sixth generation descendant of one. In the present writer's opinion a more fitting term is 'crypto-Jew' or 'secret Jew' or the like to be used when that is what we mean, or 'New Christian' if we need a broader term, and wish to describe him from his contemporary Iberian point-of-view.

In the present volume, then, the accent is laid on the way the Sephardi Jews, escaping from Spain and Portugal from the end of the sixteenth century till the middle of the eighteenth, not merely carried so much of their culture with them — for in the sixteenth century Spain was one of the most cultured and highly educated nations of Europe — but also became adapted to their new surroundings. Accent is laid today not only on their gradual emancipation but somewhat inevitably on the economic factors of their life, rather than on the artist or scholar — on the banker, the merchant and the financial magnate — these were after all the fields which were conspicuously left to the forced converts or New Christians. In further pursuit of precision it may be noted that there is a certain way in which in this volume the Hebrew terms *Sepharad* (Heb. = Spain) and *Sephardi* (= Spanish) are used: (*Sepharad* is also occasionally used to mean the totality of Sephardim). Here we have taken the term 'Sephardi' specifically to signify a Jew from the Iberian peninsula who openly professes his religion to his co-religionists or others, in contrast to a New Christian who was unable or unwilling to do so.

This present volume has inevitably to be accepted as having partly deviated from its purpose in one respect: it is obviously incomplete. The reason is simply that the subject or angle chosen for development in this volume — the history of the different Sephardi communities in the different countries of their diaspora — proved much too large to be fully covered within its pages in this way; and the observant reader or critic will quickly notice certain obvious omissions. The complex life and history of communities in the cities and states of Italy and Sicily would have merited several articles; Leghorn has to do duty symbolically here for them all.

Again, there is nothing to be found here about modern Central and South America. The important communities of Bulgaria and Roumania lack accounts, here, as do those of Palestine, even Israel. Worst defect of all, there is no article dealing with the history of communities of Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and the Maghreb in general. This is the fault of fate not design. This task was to have been fulfilled by the eminent master of the subject, the late Professor I. Hirschberg of Jerusalem, but he was summoned to his Master before he could carry out his promise, it was then too late to find an adequate substitute. Again, fortunately, we have to be content with his two-volume history of the subject. Many other exciting subjects also come to mind which might have illustrated the distinctive life of the Sephardim by special or fresh articles — their music both popular and *savante,* their ballads and romances, their theatre and popular literature, their books and book production, their liturgy, their religious yearnings both for Cabbalism and messianism (even false messianism), their art, cooking and costumes, even a comparative study of their culture in diaspora as a whole, progressive in several countries, in others remaining backward and stagnant, yet never degenerate. These may all be left perhaps to other hands, perhaps to another volume.

Since the first volume appeared many of the distinguished scholars who wrote the articles therein have passed away: Professors Menéndez Pidal, Israel Révah, Cecil Roth, Millás and others. But the examples and effects of these lives as teachers, stimulators and pioneers remain. Sephardi studies (to use the term broadly) and researches are now well established and taught at many universities and institutes in the U.S.A., England, Canada and France, not merely, as in the 'sixties' limited to Spain. The pioneering effort in that field, the First Symposium of Sephardi Studies held in Madrid in 1962, for example, has been succeeded by the First Congress for the Study of Sephardi and Oriental Jewry, successfully held in Jerusalem in 1978. The work of the Instituo Arias Montano del Proximo Oriente y Estudios Sephardies of Madrid has been supplemented by the creation of the Sephardi Folk Lore Centre, the *Misgav Yerushalaim* in Jerusalem: not to speak of the distinguished work of the Ben-Zvi Institute of the same city on the Ladino dictionary and other projects. The exhibition of Sephardi Bibliography held in Madrid in the National Library in 1959 has been matched by an outstanding exhibition of Moroccan Jewish art and culture held in Jerusalem in the Israel Museum in 1973; and so on. Whereas the first volume was mainly written by senior scholars, the present volume represents the harvest mainly of the work of a younger generation of specialists, in some cases pupils of the former group. There are, however, two notable figures among the present contributors who have passed away, Josef Néhama, the distinguished authority on the great Salonikan Jewry contributed as his legacy his two last essays on the subject for this volume long before it had taken its final shape. This explains the absence of footnotes to them. Flora Levi d'Ancona passed away in 1983

— she was a highly esteemed teacher of Spanish and Italian literature, a painter and pianist. Her essay on the Jews of Leghorn is included in this volume. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation of the unstinted encouragement and generous support I have received from Mr. Eli Nahmias, former President of the World Sephardi Federation; Haham Prof. Dr. S. Gaon and Mr. R. N. Carvalho, World Sephardi Federation; secretaries, Mr. Michael Marchant and Mr. David Avayou, and Mr. Arnold Pins and Mr. Jerry Hochbaum, successive secretaries of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, New York, which made a generous grant to the costs. The planning and selection of authors and subjects and supervision of translations of the essays in this volume and all the preliminary work of editing are my own work, and all errors and deficiencies here have to be laid at my door. The technical work of revising, supervising and editing the texts as well as compiling the index was undertaken by Walter Schwab. The publication has been finally made possible by the generous support of Mr. Tito Benady. Valuable help was also provided by Mr. Eli Nahmias (Paris), Mr. N. Dangoor (London) and Mr. J. da Silva Solis (Amsterdam), and the Regents of the Institute Ets Haim, Amsterdam.

R. D. Barnett (June 1985)

THE SEPHARDIM OF ENGLAND

by

R. D. Barnett

The history of the Jews in England falls into two entirely distinct periods and communities — the mediaeval and the modern. The former phase was that of the mediaeval community; it began with the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 and as with other contemporary communities of France and Northern Europe, consisted entirely of Jews of Ashkenazi stock, those in England living under the king's protection; and it came to an abrupt end when Edward II expelled all Jews from his domains in 1290.

The mediaeval interval; between Expulsion and Re-admission

For a period of three hundred and sixty-five years, no openly professing Jew was to reside in England, or on English soil. The steps which gradually led to the second or modern phase, began elsewhere in a distant corner of Europe — in fact in Spain — issuing out of policies of even greater repressiveness, at the end of the fifteenth century. The establishment in 1492 by the Roman Catholic Church in Spain of a single Inquisition extending over the whole of the country, was combined with the expulsion by Ferdinand and Isabella of professing Jews from Spain and the forced baptism of those who remained behind. Soon afterwards, in 1497, the ban on the Jewish faith was extended to Portugal and Inquisitional tribunals were set up to enforce it both in Spain and Portugal also, and in due course in both the Spanish and Portuguese possessions overseas.[1] This catastrophe involved the overthrow of countless flourishing centres of Jewish life, while the savage persecution of the forced converts which followed lasted for three centuries and represented a major disaster such as the Jewish people had scarcely known since the fall of Jerusalem in ACE 70 and was not to know again till the horrors of Hitler's 'holocaust'; different disasters, indeed, in kind and magnitude, but comparable in effect. The Sephardi Jews and crypto-Jews — such as could escape — set up communities and new centres of worship wherever they could find a haven, particularly in Italy, North Africa, parts of Turkey and later, in the Netherlands and Hamburg.[2] A very few even found their way to England (very soon to become a Protestant country hostile to Spain) and tiny groups formed secret communities there in the reigns of Edward VI, Elizabeth I and

James I, but were ultimately denounced and dispersed (the last expulsion being in 1609), by royal command.[3] But by the time of the Commonwealth a new group of crypto-Jews was already in existence in England.

Readmission: from Commonwealth to Restoration

The upheaval and Civil War in 1649 which temporarily destroyed the rule of the monarchy in England, cost Charles I his head and led to the establishment of the so-called Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell (styled Lord Protector) gave an opportunity to the last of these secret Hispano-Jewish communities which had settled here finally to emerge into the open. For a variety of reasons, the climate of opinion was now much more favourable to the Jews. The adoption of the Protestant Christian religion by the English and the introduction and wide availability of English translations of the Bible and the study of the Hebrew original, especially by the Puritans, combined with the influence of other non-conformists, caused many Englishmen of the new post-renaissance world to look at the problem of the Jews no longer with mediaeval eyes, but in a new light. As fellow-targets of the Spanish Catholic Inquisition's hostility, the Jews enjoyed to a considerable extent the sympathy of the English people. The admission into general society and toleration of the Jews had been already authorised in the Netherlands, Hamburg and parts of Italy. Leaving aside theological discussion, practical arguments could be advanced for bringing them in — their industry and energy, their skill in financial matters, their business acumen, their use in military and diplomatic intelligence in the wars against Spain.

Negotiations were first opened with Cromwell by the learned and cultured rabbi and visionary, Menasseh ben Israel, resident in Amsterdam and the story is by now well known.[4] Cromwell submitted the Jews' case to a specially convened conference of merchants, theologians, lawyers and others at Whitehall late in 1655. Amid a barrage of pamphlets for and against, the conference — rather surprisingly — took the view that no legal bar existed, or for that matter, had ever existed since 1290, to the Jews' return. Thus was the first hurdle overcome, but the general opinion of the conference, especially that of the jealous London merchants, was much against their return. Accordingly, for the present, Cromwell decided to do nothing, and the resident crypto-Jewish community remained silent. But in March 1656, events forced his hand and theirs. War with Spain broke out and ships and properties belonging to one of the secret London Jewish community, Antonio Rodrigues Robles, were seized and sequestrated as enemy property. Robles petitioned the Council of State on March 24th for the restitution of his property on the grounds firstly that he was not a Spaniard, but a native of Portugal, a country not then at war with England, and secondly, that he was a member of 'the Hebrew nation', that is to say, by race and belief a Jew of a family harried by

the Inquisition, who had sought asylum in this country. His petition was supported by six other crypto-Jews of London who now likewise came out into the open, led by a wealthy merchant well known to Cromwell, named Antonio Fernandes Carvajal. The same day that Robles presented his petition, the others ranged themselves behind R. Menasseh ben Israel, presenting another petition, this time to the Lord Protector himself, simply asking for official, but written authority to hold private meetings for Jewish prayer in their houses and to acquire a separate burial place for their dead. The petition was signed by the Jews in their Hebrew, not baptismal names.[5] On the 16th May, the Council of State granted Robles' petition for the restoration of his goods, thereby conceding the principle that a Jew might hold such property. The second hurdle had been passed. There remained the petition to Cromwell, who referred it to the Council of State on March 24th. This body apparently considered it on 24th June, but what it resolved is unfortunately unknown, as the relevant page of their minutes has been found, for whatever reason, to have been torn out.[6] What is virtually certain is that Cromwell himself, while giving no such written assurance as had been asked for, must have given adequate oral authorisation implying support and approval, for in December 1656, the Jews acquired the lease of a house in Cree Church Lane, which was converted into a small synagogue,[7] and in February 1657, leased a parcel of land in Stepney, outside the city, for a burial ground.[8] The congregation, now calling itself *Sahar Asamaim*,[8a] 'The Gate of Heaven' by a poetical reference to *Genesis* 28, 17, was now in being. The moving allusion to Jacob's mystical vision of the Ladder of Heaven and ecstatic exclamation well suggests the emotion and rapturous exaltation of the founders and those who escaped from the lifelong threat of the Inquisition. R. Menasseh ben Israel, however, sick in heart and body, and deeply disappointed by what he considered insufficient concessions to his much larger millenial hopes and dreams, withdrew to the Netherlands to die there in 1657. In the result, the cautious support of Oliver Cromwell proved the only true and prudent safe-conduct for the Jews' cause. He himself died in 1658 and two years later the monarchy was restored. In the ensuing reaction, the jubilant Royalists made a bonfire (metaphorically speaking) of all the legislation of the Commonwealth, yet in the matter of the Jews, there was nothing in writing to reverse or revoke. The tiny community kept quiet and breathed again and soon, by means of a carefully conducted policy and sedulously pursued good public relations, succeeded in winning the protection both of the tolerant Charles II and of his openly Catholic brother and successor, James II. Both monarchs confirmed in writing the position of the Jews, who all might see, in spite of some dangerous threats and actual attacks upon them,[9] were now here and had come to stay, as part of the religious life and commercial fabric of London. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the wealthier foreign members usually became the King's subjects

by endenization,[10] a somewhat costly procedure, being a form of naturalisation granted by the King in Parliament by means of a private bill. In course of time, their children, or those of others, became natives by birth, though still disadvantaged by various discriminatory laws, compared with other citizens.

Meanwhile, the congregation organised itself by drawing up in 1663 a set of prudent laws of self-government, termed *Ascamot*[11] which still form the basis of its constitution and activities. By the end of the seventeenth century, the community had outgrown its little synagogue on the upper floor of the house in Cree Church Lane and in 1701 opened the beautiful House of God in Bevis Marks, which still stands virtually unaltered, a precious example of the Anglo-Dutch synagogal style of Northern Europe and the oldest Jewish house of worship in this country, still in use by a devoted though somewhat dwindled congregation.

The Ashkenazim

Under the aegis of the protection extended by the Crown to the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Community of London, Ashkenazi Jews from Central or Eastern Europe now began gradually to press in and by about 1690, were numerous enough to establish a congregation of their own.[12] Between the two communities, however, there were sharp differences, although, be it noted, there were never any particular quarrels. Except for their religion, the Iberian Jews or *Sahar Asamaim* had little in common with the newcomers and did not mix with them.[12a] They spoke a different language, their pronunciations of Hebrew were mutually almost unintelligible, much of their ritual and practices were different. Certainly, the Sephardim had great advantages over their Ashkenazi brethren. While both had their all too numerous poor to support, the Sephardim included several very wealthy and prosperous merchants, but the Ashkenazim very few! Both had the same civic, legal and social restrictions to contend with, but while the Ashkenazim of Central or Eastern Europe had been repressed and confined for centuries within their medieval ghettoes, in continuing darkness, the Sephardim from Spain and Portugal, by the very reason of their enforced baptism and conversion, had been willy-nilly incorporated into the Christian community of the Iberian Peninsula for over a century and a half and had thereby been able, if not forced, to take a relatively full part in the main stream of southern European life and culture, even though hampered with some severe restrictions. The refugees from Spain and Portugal were thus better fitted, in terms both of education and experience, to initiate with their Christian hosts in this country the long dialogue over readmission, legal and religious toleration and participation in a full cultural life and civil rights, though two more centuries were to elapse before the goal of full Jewish emancipation could be reached by the united efforts of both sections of the community in 1858.

Sephardi social structure and occupations

Apart from their differences of outlook and experience, the leaders of the Sephardim of London were men of substance and from them a 'patriciate' of community leaders was formed which held sway for a century and a half. Most were businessmen — Jews largely being excluded from practising most crafts and professions by the exclusiveness of the City guilds. Instead, the Sephardim of London specialised as shippers and ship-owners, or engaged in importing and exporting as brokers, financiers, bullion merchants and jewellers, but particularly as diamond merchants. Their ranks were interspersed with a few members of the professions and by a sprinkling of medical doctors and surgeons.[13] They could not enter the King's army or the Navy; their favourite and most important quasi-military profession, however, was contracting supplies to the armies, a business which several of them had developed and learnt while in Spain or Portugal. It relied on quick and safe communications and good international credit links, so that bands of bakers and huge trains of bread wagons could be readily marshalled at a given date and spot to feed the hungry troops. At this they were great experts. The first English experience of such work was obtained by the Anglo-Dutch firm of Machado and Pereira, working in 1688 for William III in Ireland. Next, Don Joseph Cortissos worked in Spain in 1705 for the army of the Earl of Peterborough.[14] Solomon de Medina worked with such distinction in supplying the king's armies that he earned a knighthood from the king in 1700, being the first professing Jew to be so honoured From 1707-11, he became the principal contractor to the army of the Duke of Marlborough.[15] Finally, we hear of the family firm of Abraham Prado and David Mendes da Costa working in 1757-8 with Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick in the Seven Years' War.[16] The Sephardim too were prominent among the supporters of the Bank of England at its foundation in 1694.[17] The great financier, Samson Gideon, (1699-1762) became one of the principal financial figures of the country in the XVIIIth century.[18] On the Exchange, twelve places were regularly reserved for the Jews among the brokers, licensed to buy and sell commodities.

Nor were the arts and professions wholly neglected, as far as they were open to them; though they could not practise law or administer it, many Sephardim became notaries and scriveners.[19] A few practised music, or sang and acted in the theatre;[20] but many found a vocation in medicine as doctors or surgeons. Needless to say, all are fields where Jews are now both conspicuous and distinguished. Of these medical men, the earliest might be counted to be the physician to Charles II's queen, Dr. Fernando Mendes, who, however, did not openly re-enter the faith and the community.[21] The leading Sephardi figure in the eighteenth century, however, was Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmento (1691-1762) a prominent practitioner and medical

educationalist, poet and scholar, who was actually for many of his early years doctor to the Portuguese embassy and a friend of Carvalho then ambassador in London, later created the Marquis of Pombal the reformer of Portugal. Dr. de Castro Sarmento was a prolific writer and popularised the use of quinine as a febrifuge in the form of the so-called 'Agoa de Inglaterra' or 'English Water', which he bottled, patented and exported commercially with great success. He and his confrères set up in 1748-9 a *Bet Holim* as a hospital for the congregations's use, with a special ward for expectant mothers and another for the aged. It was the first Jewish hospital of a modern kind to be established in Western Europe, or indeed, anywhere;[22] and still exists, though now only as an old people's Home.

Communal Institutions and Charities

This hospital was set up as a semi-autonomous body, with its own funds, but assisted by a grant from the synagogue. It was, in fact, customary in Sephardi congregations to form small charitable brotherhoods, or *Hebrot*, to carry out basic sacred tasks in furtherance of religious and communal life. Whether the idea of these may possibly have been influenced by the example of rather similar Catholic brotherhoods in Portugal[23] which formed a regular feature of Portuguese life, is hard to say, but likely. Among the Sephardim of London they were self-administering and separately endowed and usually graced with a high-sounding poetical Hebrew name. The oldest was the Burial Society and Society for Visiting the Sick (*Hebra de Bikur Holim y Guemilut Hasadim*) (1663, refounded in 1678)[24] and a society for providing dowries for fatherless girls, called *Mehil Sedaca* ('Cloak of Righteousness') founded by the bequest of Diego Rodrigues Marques in 1675; re-organised in its ultimate form in 1720, it still exists. An orphanage, *Saharé Orah ve Aby Yetomim* ('Gates of Light and Father of Orphans') was founded in 1756, but is now closed. To further the education of the young, a boys' school *Saharé Tikva* ('Gates of Hope') and a girls' school, founded by the bequest of Isaac da Costa Villareal (1731), two *yeshibot*, the *Heshaim* ('Tree of Life') 1664, re-organised in 1690 and *Mahané Rephael* ('Camp of Raphael') 1734; an apprenticing society, *Mahasim Tobim* ('Good Deeds') 1749 and several other bodies were set up, including a Board of Guardians of the Poor, established in 1837. Similar bodies were normally set up by other Sephardi communities of Western Europe as part of their normal pattern of life. We meet, however, in the committee now called the Board of Deputies, founded in 1760, a purely English-inspired body, obviously modelled on the English Board of Deputies of the Christian non-conformists, or dissenters, set up in 1732,[25] in their somewhat similar struggle for emancipation. The occasion of the Jewish Board's creation was the failure of the Jewish Naturalisation Act of 1753, or 'Jew Bill', which was enacted amid a fierce war of pamphlets, but created such an anti-semitic outcry that it was repealed. After 1760, on the Jews'

Board of Deputies, both Sephardim and Ashkenazim came together to represent and protect their cause collectively in the political and civic arena as and when occasion might offer or require; and though it remained quiescent till re-animated by Moses Montefiore, it has become a potent force ever since.

The Inquisition and the Refugees: Wealth and Poverty

Though by nature peace-loving, the London Sephardim joined in the bitter struggle against the might of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisition wherever they could. Even to this day, on *Kol Nidrei*, the eve of the most sacred Day of Atonement, a brief prayer in Bevis Marks Synagogue is still included in Portuguese for 'all our brethren taken by the Inquisition'.[26] The Spanish Inquisition was abolished in 1808 but was later reinstated. It claimed its last victim — not a Jew — in 1826, but was only legally swept away in 1834. The Portuguese Inquisition was abolished in 1821.[26a] Refugees from its remorseless persecutions — men and women of all walks of life and their families — trickled steadily, or at times crowded into London, particularly by sea, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,[27] and were welcomed into the community. Some were wealthy, but the great majority were poor and unlettered, without resources or suitable trades. Considerable numbers who could not be accommodated were helped on their way by grants known as '*despachos*' to emigrate further and settle in 'the Americas' under the British flag, in the islands of Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and elsewhere on the mainland such as Philadelphia or Savannah. The congregation was in fact one of extreme social variety and range. The wealthy members included some who were very affluent and owned opulent country houses,[28] such as that of Alvaro da Costa at Highgate (still extant), Joseph da Costa Villareal at Totteridge and the Prados at Twickenham. The wealthier largely ruled over the poorer members, under a paternalistic system approved by the spirit of the day, but the *yehidim* (subscribers) nevertheless possessed certain powers.[28a]

Other Charities: the Prisoners and the Holy Land

From its inception, the congregation, in spite of its many heavy burdens and anxieties, acknowledged its duties to its suffering and struggling brethren elsewhere and in accordance with a current Sephardi custom, yearly appointed two honorary officers to raise voluntary contributions. The first was the *Parnas dos Cautivos*, whose duty was to ransom prisoners or slaves (particularly those captured at sea by the Knights of Malta and sold in the slave market there.) The other was the *Parnas da Terra Santa*, appointed to assist to maintain, or even often to help rescue from ruin the traditional and

long-established communities and centres of Jewish learning in the Holy Land at Hebron, Safed, Tiberias and Jerusalem. These communities regularly sent out *Shiluhim* (emissaries) in the form of learned and distinguished rabbis to tour the congregations of the western hemisphere in order to raise funds for their home communities. These learned gentlemen, often impressively termed 'ambassadors', usually set out in pairs, one destined to tour the Ashkenazi, the other the Sephardi communities. In those they visited they were received and introduced and cared for by the *Parnas da Terra Santa* who escorted them round to the wealthier members, entertained them and then passed them on their way. This form of proto-Zionistic fund raising continued well into the nineteenth century when it was replaced as antiquated mainly by the more realistic activities of Moses Montefiore.

Sir Moses Montefiore

It was into this climate that Moses Montefiore (1784-1885), the most outstanding figure of the Anglo-Sephardi community and one of the greatest figures of Jewry in modern or in any times, was born. He came from a respected family from Leghorn, his father, Moses Vita Montefiore, an importer of Italian goods, having settled in England in 1754. After an outstandingly successful career in commerce, Moses Montefiore decided at the age of 40 to free himself from business activities and to devote his great energies, capacity for organisation and wealth to philanthropic activities, including first and foremost the welfare of the Jewish people. He began with a decision to make a pilgrimage in 1827 to the Holy Land, accompanied by his devoted wife Judith. It was the first of seven such journeys, each of which then represented a major undertaking — the others being in 1838, 1849, 1855, 1857, 1866 and 1875, the last when he was 90 years old. But this was not all. Assisted unofficially by benevolent British governments, but officially acting as the representative of Anglo-Jewry and of the Board of Deputies, he made a series of often incredibly courageous diplomatic, but quasi-personal interventions on behalf of suffering or disadvantaged Jews in all parts, whether individuals or communities, wherever possible interviewing directly the heads of states concerned. His first serious challenge was the 'Damascus affair' of 1840-1, when seven members of the Damascus Jewish community were imprisoned and tortured, accused in a monstrous revival of a grisly mediaeval charge, of murdering a Franciscan monk and his servant in order to use their blood for the Passover. The accusers were supported by the French consul, Ratti Menton. Montefiore travelled to Alexandria and Constantinople and after obtaining the release of the victims, turned the situation to skilful advantage by further obtaining an authorisation from the Sultan of Turkey that the oft-repeated accusation was groundless and that the Jews should in future receive the same treatment before the law as other Turkish

subjects. Though the rescue of seven Jews from prison, torture and death seems to-day a small matter in comparision with the destructions of six millions or more by Hitler, in its own day it was seen as a portent and a turning point in the history of Jewish suffering, defeated by liberalism and courage. The episode created a world-wide sensation and is still remembered. This is not the place to recite the history of this astonishing man;[29] suffice to say that by his long life and example and labours, he knitted together the differing portions of the Jewish world, Ashkenazi and Sephardi (exempting only the English and German Reform Congregations from his general approval on strictly religious grounds) and led the way in the Holy Land, and Jerusalem in particular, to the improvement of the lot of both communities in a variety of practical ways — by establishing there a school, a settlement and experimental farm and initiating other schemes. They did not all succeed, but to the view-point of the suffering Jewish people in their darkness, his interventions, presence and efforts were a source of hope, stimulation and encouragement like a light at the end of a very long tunnel. Montefiore, a patriotic Englishman but a staunchly observant Jew, was knighted in 1838 after serving his year of office as a sheriff of the City of London and was created a baronet by the Queen in 1846.

Jewish Learning among the Anglo-Sephardim

The Sephardim of London, though generally speaking a community of educated, even cultured men, at times led by distinguished personalities, did not ever succeed in establishing there a lasting centre of Jewish spiritual learning of any note. In the seventeenth century their needs in *Hebraica*, or Jewish works of learning, were usually printed in, and supplied from Holland. The few publications of the rare Anglo-Sephardi authors[30] were likewise printed in Amsterdam. Hebrew printing in England was still in the hands of the two University presses.

One of the earliest *Hahamim*, R. Jahacob Sasportas, appointed in 1664, came from a learned family of Oran and was a staunch opponent of the false Messiah Shabbetai Zevi. But he was scarcely appointed when the outbreak of the Plague caused him to resign and leave. His successor, R. Joshua da Silva, who served from 1672 to 1679, was also a scholarly man who delivered a set of educational sermons on the Thirteen Articles of the Jewish Faith, published after his death, in Amsterdam.[30a] His successor, R. Jacob Abendana, appointed in 1681, was a distinguished Talmudist.[31] He translated the *Mishnah* into Spanish, while his brother Isaac, living at Cambridge, rendered it into Latin (1671) but it was never published. At Oxford he printed a series of *luhot* (calendars) from 1692 — a most useful task. R. Jacob Abendana was followed as *Haham* by a more dubious figure, *Haham* Solomon Ayllon, who officiated from 1689 to 1700. He leaned towards Shabbetaism in his younger

days and never shook off the suspicion of the heresy. It was *Haham* David Nieto, appointed in 1701 from Leghorn at the time of the opening of the new synagogue at Bevis Marks — a distinguished doctor of medicine, astronomer, man of letters and theologian — who transformed the face of Anglo-Sephardi scholarship.[32] Shortly after his arrival he was accused by some persons of having favoured the heretical philosophical views of Spinoza in a sermon, which he afterwards published as *De la Divina Providencia* in 1704.[33] Bitter controversy arose, in which *Haham* Zevi Ashkenazi was called in from Hamburg to adjudicate, and gave his verdict in favour of Nieto. Nieto's enemies were routed and his orthodoxy was proclaimed ultimaely by his publications, *Matteh Dan* (1714), a defence of the Oral Law against current misrepresentation, and *Esh Dat* (1715), an anti-Shabbetaian treatise. He also fought against the Inquisition; indeed, he clearly had some hand in publishing or circulating the anonymous Spanish work entitled *Noticias Reconditas*, in which the odious methods and infamous principles of the Inquisition tribunals were exposed. In a fine engraving, the Haham is shown actually facing a copy of this work.[34] The book itself is by some ascribed to the great Jesuit scholar, Father Antonio Vieyra.[35] Nieto gathered round him a small circle of laymen-scholars and refugees, such as de Castro Sarmento and Daniel Lopes Laguna, who translated the Psalms into Spanish verse.[36] A remarkable lyric poet arose a little later in the person of Dr. Ephraim (or Angelo) Luzzatto (1729-1792) who graduated in Padua, settled in London in 1763 and was appointed physician to the Synagogue's poor from 1779-1782. In 1766 he published in London a volume of poems in sonnet form both in Italian and Hebrew, partly on non-religious themes, thereby showing the ever fresh adaptability of the Hebrew language.[37]

Nieto's successors, however, (who included his own son Isaac from 1751-1756) were small men in comparison and on the death of Haham Moses Cohen de Azevedo in 1784, the post was left unfilled for twenty years. During the interval, the defence of scholarship and orthodoxy was left to an Ashkenazi layman, David Levi, 'the inspired hatter' (1742-1801) who published the first English version of the Sephardi liturgy in 1789-93 and wrote works on theology, grammar and ritual.[38] In 1804, another distinguished scholar of Leghorn was at last appointed in *Haham* Rephael Meldola, who served till his death in 1828.[39] He strove to stem the threatening tide setting away from orthodoxy towards assimilation and Reform, which culminated in 1841, long after his death, in a sad schism depleting the synagogue of Bevis Marks by the loss of important whole families such as the Lousadas, Henriques, Mocattas and others. Meldola's work, *Huppat Hatanim* ("The Bridegrooms' Canopy") (Livorno 1797) on the laws and regulations of marriage, has been reprinted and is still widely read among the orthodox.

A quaint footnote, as it were, to Hebrew literature in England was

contributed in the early eighteenth century by an exotic figure, R. Abraham Belais (1773-1853) 'former Treasurer to the Bey of Tunis', a poetaster who published a stream of doggerel poems addressed to royalty and members of the community on every possible occasion.

No true seminary or *yeshibah* for the training of rabbis ever developed in London before 1852, when Jews' College was founded. This gap was partially created by the obscurantist and persistent refusal of the King's judges in the courts of law to allow charitable bequests to be made in support of teaching Judaism, on the grounds that Judaism was not the official religion of the land and must therefore be deemed a superstition. The synagogue schools and teaching, therefore, had to be financed in other ways. General religious education was provided by these schools, and only for the more advanced by the *Heshaim*. A Hebrew-Portuguese dictionary was published by a teacher, J. Rodrigues Moreira, in 1773 entitled *Kehilat Jahacob*; its successor was by a lady, Abigail Lindo, in the next century.[40]

The cause of popular Jewish education was taken up vigorously by *Haham* Meldola and his son-in-law, *Hazan* D. A. de Sola (1796-1860),[41] called 'the learned hazan', who made a fresh start in Jewish educational methods by pioneering publications in the English language, recognised as the official tongue of the *Kahal* since 1810. He also provided an official edition of the Prayer Book, with English translation, in 1836 (replacing that of David Levi) which lasted well throughout the nineteenth century, until replaced in its turn by that of *Haham* Dr. M. Gaster (1856-1939) at the beginnning of this century. Dr. Gaster was in the line of Nieto and Meldola; a great scholar and orator, devoted to the cause of Zion. The work of de Sola in education was also furthered by the foundation in 1845 of Sussex Hall, 'The Jews' and General Literary and Scientific Institution', presided over by Hananel de Castro (1796-1849), then a distinguished communal leader; but neither it nor he survived for long.[42]

Rabbinical scholarship was renewed in modern times in Anglo-Sepharad in the person of R. Shemtob Gaguin (1884-1953) *Ab Bet Din* of the Congregation from 1920, a learned scion of an old Jerusalem family and last Principal of the Ramsgate College, *Ohel Moshe ve Yehudith*, to preside over it before its reorganisation in 1951. R. Gaguin's *Keter Shem Tob*,[42a] a study of Sephardi customs and *minhagim*, is still very widely acclaimed. At the opposite and contrasting extreme of the scale of religious values and scholarship among the Anglo-Sephardim, we find the important figure of Claude J. G. Montefiore (1858-1938) founder of the Liberal Jewish movement in England, whose writings, preachings and beliefs exerted much influence on Judaeo-Christian theology.

The Anglo-Sephardi Bibliophiles

The Anglo-Sephardim have participated fully in both Jewish and non-Jewish life and culture in the last and present centuries. Their most distinctive contribution has been in the field of bibliophily and the collecting of libraries of fine books and manuscripts. Such libraries were frequently the product of great scholarship, discrimination and learning on the part of their owners, but by making them available to others, they spread opportunities of studying Hebrew and Jewish literature and history to both Jews and non-Jews alike.

The well-known notary and bibliophile, Solomon da Costa Atias (1690-1769) having acquired the fine library of 180 Hebrew books and MSS which had belonged to Charles II, presented it in 1759, accompanied by a letter in Hebrew and a catalogue, to the British Museum, where it became the foundation stone of that formerly uniquely great institution's magnificent Hebrew collection.[43] Some others of his printed books, however, went to the *Heshaim* of the synagogue. A little later in the XVIIIth century, Abraham Ximenes possessed a private library of *Hebraica* which passed into that of the *Heshaim*. Da Costa Atias' tradition was revived by Sir Moses Montefiore, for whom Dr. Louis Loewe, his Oriental secretary and later Principal of Judith, Lady Montefiore College, acquired many manuscripts. The magnificent Ramsgate collection, of MSS and books, afterwards augmented by purchases of books from the Zunz and Halberstam libraries, was deposited by the trustees (the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation) in 1899 on loan with Jews' College, where it still is.[44] F. D. Mocatta (1828-1905), another philanthropist and patron of Jewish scholarship, bequeathed his fine library of *Hebraica* and *Judaica*[45] to the Jewish Historical Society, to be administered by them jointly with University College. Unfortunately, it was almost entirely burnt and destroyed, in common with the rest of the Library of the College, by Nazi bombing in 1941, but was subsequently, after the War, in the main reconstituted and still forms a valuable source of reference and study. *Haham* Dr. Moses Gaster (1856-1939) too, a great *savant*[46] both as Hebraist and folklorist and one of the leading Anglo-Jewish figures of his day, particularly in the field of Zionism, amassed an important library of Hebrew and Samaritan manuscripts which he sold to the British Museum in 1925. He then collected a second library which also, unfortunately, like the Mocatta collection, was mostly destroyed during the second World War by enemy action. What survived was eventually acquired by the John Rylands Library at Manchester. R. David Solomon Sassoon (1882-1942) an eminent member of the great Sassoon dynasty and a distinguished Hebraist and Orientalist, built up in his own lifetime, by his own efforts a magnificent library which became one of the great Jewish libraries of the World. It was rich in unbelievable treasures, both in illuminated and unadorned manuscript material, totalling above 1300 items. Sassoon himself completed its catalogue

in Hebrew in two large volumes in 1930.[47] Its greatest treasures were the Damascus Pentateuch (9th century) one of the oldest Biblical codices in existence, and autograph MS volumes of Maimonides. This library, unfortunately, left England and was reduced by sale and dispersal of some of the finest items in 1975 and shorn still further in 1984. It is much to be hoped that the remainder will be kept intact.

An account of this great phase of Anglo-Sephardi book collecting might well include reference to an outstanding and scholarly bookseller of Ashkenazi origin, Maurice Ettinghausen (1883-1975) who joined the Bevis Marks congregation.[48]

The Contributions of the Sephardim to English Life

The contribution of the Sephardim to the wider world of English life and culture, in fact, is characterised by contrasts in all fields. In the eighteenth century their share in one field was hardly to be counted as culture at all, for it included the prize-fighters, Daniel Mendoza (1763-1836) and Aby Belasco (1769-1824) of whom the Congregation, indeed, thought little, but the country as a whole thought a lot. Mendoza, in fact, greatly improved the standards of boxing, which he raised to an art of self-defence and transformed pugilism into the status of a much respected sport.[49] Nevertheless, the Sephardim patronised the arts and had their portraits painted by the fashionable artists or engravers of the day.[49a] One patron of music, Joseph d'Almeida, had the honour of receiving in his house the infant prodigy, W. A. Mozart, on his London visit of 1764-6.[50] Giacobbe Cervetto Basevi (1682-1783) was a distinguished 'cellist and Solomon Rieti (d. 1768) developed the famous pleasure gardens at Ranelagh.

In intellectual fields, on the other hand, the English Universities being still closed to Jews, the Sephardim achieved some importance only in medicine (see above p.9). In the new age of industrial revolution some entered into engineering and architecture. Joseph Samuda (1811-1844) built one of the earliest iron ships, *The Gypsy Queen*, on the trial trip of which he was killed by the explosion of one of her engines. His brother Jacob (1813-1885) was more fortunate. He invented and built the first atmospheric railway. In the field of architecture, David Mocatta (1806-1882) was well-esteemed and built railway stations.[50a] His monument, however, is the charming synagogue, an architectural jewel, which he designed for Sir Moses Montefiore on his private estate at Ramsgate, Kent, in 1832. His more distinguished contemporary, George Basevi (1794-1845), a pupil of Soane, emancipated himself by baptism. He became architect to Ely Cathedral and also built the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. In a different way and in another sky shone the brilliant David Ricardo (1772-1823) who after great success in the Stock Exchange, laid the foundations of the modern science of

economics and entered Parliament. He became a Unitarian.

It is, in fact, in the field of politics that the Sephardim of England most conspicuously made their mark in the last century and in this. Above all others towers the figure of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield (1804-1881), social reformer, novelist, statesman, twice Prime Minister, father of the modern Conservative Party and one of the builders of the former British Empire. Baptised at the age of 13, he was the son of Isaac d'Israeli, a man of letters of note in his day, who quarrelled with the *Mahamad* of the Congregation and withdrew.[51] The intervention of the Sephardim in Zionist Jewish history was very small but significant. It centred around the person of *Haham* Gaster who not only welcomed Herzl to London in 1895, but took a part in the negotiations with the British Government that produced the famous Balfour declaration.

In more modern times, other lesser but still important politicians of Sephardi birth have been Sir Philip Sassoon (1888-1939), Under-Secretary for Air in 1924-9 and 1931-7, and Leslie Hore-Belisha (1898-1957) — afterwards created Viscount Hore-Belisha — Minister for War in 1937-1940, who in that capacity effectively democratized the British Army in preparation for its great struggle with Hitler.

As the nineteenth century wore on, Anglo-Sephardim — not by any means all members of the Bevis Marks synagogue, made their contributions to science, social work, theology and letters. The universities were now open to all Jews — though the Sephardim did not noticeably hasten to enter their doors. Professor Raphael Meldola (1848-1916) grandson of the *Haham*, achieved much distinction both as a chemist and a naturalist.[52] Professor E. N. da Costa Andrade was an eminent physicist, metallurgist, inventor and historian of science.[53] Sir Francis Montefiore (1860-1935) associated himself prominently with the cause of Zionism and became chairman of the English Zionist Federation. In social work, Leonard G. Montefiore (1889-1961) rendered great services (as did many of the Montefiore and Sebag-Montefiore clan),[54] but all were eclipsed by those of Sir Basil Q. Henriques, J.P. (1890-1961) who devoted his life's work to aiding delinquent youth and becoming a leading authority on reform and social work of all kinds, which he conducted chiefly through his settlement in the East End of London, the St. George's Jewish Settlement.[55]

In letters and literature, the Anglo-Sephardim have always offered a moderate interest and contribution, at least since d'Israeli *père's* day. Their first author after 'Dizzy' (as Benjamin Disraeli was popularly called) was Grace Aguilar (1816-1847) whose novels favouring historical Jewish themes are still read. S. L. Bensusan (1872-1958), journalist and Shakespearian scholar, wrote books about the Essex countryside. Sir Arthur Wing Pinero (1855-1934) was a well-known playwright, Philip Guedella (1899-1944) was distinguished as a historian and biographer, while Siegfried Sassoon

(1886-1967) by his novels and poetry, exerted a marked influence on the post-war attitudes and atmosphere in the direction of pacifism. On the other hand, the soldier-author and novelist, Robert D. Q. Henriques (1905-1967) attained fame and distinction in both fields, those of arms and letters, as well as developing close ties with Israel. As to music, Gerald Finzi (1901-1956), a well-known composer, was Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy of Music. Dr. L. D. Barnett, C.B. (1871-1960), an outstanding Orientalist, specialist in Sanskrit and Indian languages, became Keeper of Oriental Printed Books and MSS at the British Museum from 1910-1936. He joined the Congregation — then a rare honour for an Ashkenazi — in 1909.

On the many other eminent sons of British Sepharad still happily alive for us, following the practice of this volume, it is not possible here to comment. They have not yet become part of history, though they doubtless will. Those who have done so may be thought to be but few in number and less remarkable in comparison with the galaxy of men, brilliant in all fields, originating from the great Ashkenazi fold, who have contributed no doubt more largely in many ways to the splendour of the Anglo-Jewish world in the course of the last century and this; but the Sephardim here were always, and are, numerically far fewer. Nevertheless, considered generally, no European major country since the Reformation — other than Holland, among Protestant Powers — can show a history so generally honourable and a record of liberalism so long and generous towards the Jews as Britain. The history of the Sephardim, since they were admitted into its borders and established themselves under its protection, has been a wholly happy one and they have amply and nobly responded.

The Nineteenth Century

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the position and attitudes of the Sephardim of Britain had considerably changed. They possessed less wealth, but still great, if diminished prestige. But their formerly unchallenged position of leadership, based on their seniority, financial strength, culture and education, had well nigh disappeared. The great days of Anglo-Sepharad were over; their Golden Age belonged to the eighteenth century, not the nineteenth. The Ashkenazim, their numbers ever multiplied by the crowds of refugees fleeing from Russian pogroms beginning in the 1880s, were now far more numerous and their community more centralised and in some ways better led and organised. The Reformers, too, were gaining strength. The mutual social exclusiveness of Ashkenazim and Sephardim was fast breaking down, not least by intermarriage, Sir Moses Montefiore leading the way. In public affairs, by the end of the century Sephardim no longer shared with but gave precedence to the Ashkenazim, though the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Deputies and the Treasurership of the Board of *Shechita* were by

courtesy traditionally voted to a Sephardi.

The Evolution of the Sephardim in Modern Times

The Reformers, seceding in 1841, had drawn attention to the fact that *Ascama* No. 1, forbidding the establishment of any synagogue outside Bevis Marks, was now, with the spreading of the population of London, hopelessly out-of-date and absurd, and proceeded to establish themselves in the West End. Similarly, as a concession to the obvious, an orthodox Branch synagogue of the Sephardim was opened, first in Wigmore Street, W.1, then moved to Bryanston Street and finally in 1896, to Lauderdale Road, Maida Vale, where it still flourishes. Nevertheless, the ironical paradox existed in 1901 when the bicentenary of the opening of Bevis Marks was celebrated with due ceremony, that it was now very largely shorn of its congregational attendances. In this, however, its fate was no worse than that of the Ashkenazi Great Synagogue, or most of the finest City churches, and it has become a symbolic centre, but still with a core of regular worshippers and adherents.

Sephardi Influxes from Various Quarters

London being one of the great natural sea-ports of the Western World and England a traditional haven of spiritual and political freedom, waves of immigrant Sephardim (if we may so broadly interpret the term) have always arrived at constant intervals, some attracted by business prospects, others escaping from their misfortunes or tragedies elsewhere to seek a better life, in both cases able to reinvigorate the community as a whole.

Thus, about the middle of the eighteenth century, an influx from Italy, drawn by trade prospects began, which brought the families of Montefiore, d'Israeli, Modigliani, Sonsino, Supino, Norsa, Franco and others. The last were involved in the extraordinarily lucrative trade which exported Italian coral to India in return for bringing diamonds to London.[56] In 1782, at the time of the great Siege of Gibraltar by the Spaniards, a large part of the Jewish community of the Rock was evacuated to London and many stayed there when the war was over. During and after the Napoleonic Wars, there was a strong flow to London of North African 'Berberiscos' — as the Moroccan and North African Jews were called.

As the nineteenth century wore on, the connection with the Iberian peninsula became increasingly remote and the interpretation of the terms 'Sepharad' and 'Sephardi' was subtly extended to include not merely 'Berberiscos' from North Africa (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria or Libya) who could be natives of those parts, not strictly speaking Iberian Sephardim, but also to describe Jews from the East, Iraq, Iran, India or further afield, whose

customs and *minhag* approximated to that of the Iberians less closely than the 'Berberiscos'. In the 1850s, London life, both Jewish and non-Jewish, was enriched in all senses by the advent of the great family of Sassoon from Bombay and Shanghai. They became a family of brilliant merchants, scholars, authors, statesmen and courtiers, even race-horse owners, this being the fashionable passion of royalty and the very rich English. Outside London, a Sephardi congregation grew up enlarged with settlers from abroad (Corfu, Egypt, Syria) in the important business emporium of Manchester, the heart of the cotton trade, and these worshippers opened a synagogue at Knowsley, Cheetham Hill, popularly known as the 'Haystack' Synagogue. The present synagogue in Cheetham Hill Road, called *Shaaré Tefillah*, was opened in 1874, following the Spanish and Portuguese *minhag* (rite) of London. In 1904 it was followed by the opening of another *Kahal* called *Shaaré Rahamim*, at Withington, partly due to the movement of population. But even this was not enough and another congregation grew up in West Didsbury and opened the doors of its synagogue, *Shaaré Tsedek*, in 1924, mainly filled by settlers from Syria, Iraq and Egypt.

In the course of the first World War, occurred the disastrous fire of Salonika in 1917 and afterwards the break-up of the Turkish Empire and the burning and razing of Izmir by Atatürk's army in 1922; accordingly settlers came from those cities and established a small congregation in Holland Park, London W.11. A smaller congregation grew up of refugees from Bokhara in Turkestan, which had become part of Soviet Russia. Another grew up with immigrants from Iran. Of these groups, only the first were, strictly speaking, Sephardim of ultimately Iberian origin and all preferred their independence to manage their own affairs, though some joined the congregation of *Saar Asamaim*. In the economic field, however, they were of some importance to the country, as collectively they joined in bringing the important Oriental carpet trade to this country.

Memories of their long-distant past in the Iberian peninsula were briefly stirred in 1924-26 when the Sephardim of London and elsewhere were alerted to the discovery that after more than 500 years of persecution by the Inquisition large numbers of crypto-Jews still maintained a secret existence in northern Portugal, and an international committee called the Portuguese Marranos Committee, its centre in London, was set up to support their return to normative judaism through the zealous efforts of a convert, Captain A. C. Barros Basto. But the approach and outbreak of World War II and other factors led to the collapse of the scheme.[57]

During World War II, many served and died in the struggle against Hitlerism and Fascism. History also repeated itself when the fortress of Gibraltar prepared itself for attack and the entire Gibraltarian Jewish community was once more evacuated to London. There were, too, numerous refugees from Italian Fascism, a few of whom remained in London.

In the post-war era of disintegration of the British Empire, a number of families and individuals arrived from languishing or extinguished communities of India, Burma and Aden, leading to the establishment of an Indian congregation, *Ohel David*, at Golders Green, London N.W.11. The Suez Crisis of 1956 and the Arab-Israeli confrontation brought further influxes from Egypt and Iraq.

Anglo-Sepharad after World War II

After the defeat of Germany in 1944, when the world discovered the full extent of the total disaster to Jewry, and the annihilation of the great communities of Sephardim in Holland, France, Italy and the Balkans was revealed, the Sephardim of Britain found themselves in the position of being the only Sephardi congregation left upstanding and intact in Europe. Under the leadership of Asher Benroy and Charles Sebag-Montefiore, the World Sephardi Federation, originally created on a modest scale in 1936, was revived in London with Ovadia Camhy once more as its secretary. This body then set about the urgent task, in conjunction with the Torah Department of the Jewish Agency, of adapting to more modern and urgently important needs the Judith, Lady Montefiore College set up for ten elderly scholars by Sir Moses Montefiore at Ramsgate. In 1951, the college was redesigned and moved to London as a seminary to train young men as *hazanim* and teachers to help serve the, in some cases, still surviving but stricken communities, and other more fortunate. Former pupils of the college now minister to Sephardi congregations in Athens (Greece), Salisbury (Rhodesia), Sydney (Australia) and elsewhere.

In 1978, a radical reorganisation, long discussed but long postponed, was put into effect with the reorganisation of the Association of Sephardi Congregations. This was an administrative union of all Sephardi congregations in England, of whatever origin, who united in acknowledging the rabbinic authority of a single *Haham*, then Dr. Solomon Gaon. The membership of this union consisted of *Saar Asamaim*, with its Lauderdale Road and Wembley branches, the Holland Park, Aden, the Jacob Benjamin Elias and Morocco congregations (Stamford Hill), the Ilford and Wembley (*Neveh Shalom*) congregations, the *Ohel David* Eastern congregation (Golders Green), and the Persian congregation. Members outside London were the two Manchester congregations of Withington and Didsbury (*Shaare Tsedek*). Unfortunately this noble scheme was never carried into effect for various reasons

Notes

1 See I. RÉVAH, 'Les Marranes portugais et l'Inquisition' au XVIe siecle' *Sephardi Heritage* Pt.I pp 479-527.

2 See C. ROTH, *A History of the Marranos*, (Philadelphia 1932).

3 E. R. SAMUEL, 'Portuguese Jews in Jacobean London'. *TJHSE* XVIII pp 171-230. (1957) For the Elizabethan community see L. Wolf 'Jews in Elizabethan England', TJHSE XI pp 1-91.

4 C. ROTH, *A Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, (Philadelphia 1943); L. WOLF, *Menasseh ben Israel's Mission to Oliver Cromwell* (London 1901); L. D. BARNETT, *Bevis Marks Records I: The Early History of the Congregation from the beginning until 1800*, (Oxford 1940); C. ROTH, *History of the Jews in England* (Oxford 1941).

5 The petition is illustrated as the frontispiece (plate 1) of L. D. BARNETT, *Bevis Marks Records I.* It is now preserved in the Public Record Office. Cromwell wrote on it: 'Oliver P 'We doe refere this Peticon to the Consideration of our Councill'.

6 *pace* C. ROTH *The Resettlement of the Jews in England* in *Three Centuries of Anglo-Jewish History*. V. D. LIPMAN (ed) (Cambridge 1960 pp.1-26). Roth made the interesting discovery of the page missing from the Minutes of the Council, but drew quite undemonstrable deductions from the fact of its removal.

7 W. S. SAMUEL, 'The First London Synagogue of the Resettlement' *TJHSE* (1924).

8 Now behind 253 Mile End Road, Stepney, London E.1. The former *Bet Holim* of the Congregation, now acquired by Queen Mary College as a students' hostel, occupies the frontage.

8a This old fashioned form of spelling *sha'ar hashamaim* is due to the inability of the Portuguese alphabet adequately to represent Hebrew letters *shin* and *'ayin*.

9 For the relevant documents see L. D. BARNETT, *Bevis Marks Records I: The Early History of the Congregation up to 1800* (Oxford 1940).

10 See A. S. DIAMOND in W. S. SAMUEL, 'A List of Jewish Persons Endenizened and Naturalised 1609-1709' *TJHSE* XXII (1970); 'Naturalisation of Jews in England' *ibid* XXIV (1974).

11 Published by L. D. BARNETT, *El Libro de los Acuerdos* (Oxford 1931). In Ashkenazi communities such regulations were known as *Takkanot*. Those of London are patterned on those of Venice. The *Ascamot* in the seventeenth century were enforced sternly by the ready threat of *herem*, *'excommunication'*.

12 C. ROTH, *A History of the Great Synagogues,* London 1690-1940 (London 1950).

12a Until 1785 the *Ascamot* forbade intermarriage between a Sephardi man and an Ashkenazi woman.

13 See R. D. BARNETT, 'Anglo-Jewry in the Eighteenth Century' in V. D. LIPMAN (ed.) *op.cit*; G. YOGEV, *Diamonds and Coral* (Leicester1978); M. WOLF,'Foreign Trade of London Jews in the Seventeenth Century' *TJHSE* XXIV (1974).

14 Charles RUBENS, 'Joseph Cortissos and the War of the Spanish Succession,' *TJHSE*, XXIV (1974) pp. 114-150.

15 O. RABINOWITZ, Sir Solomon de Medina (Jew. Hist. Soc. London 1974).

16 C. ROTH, *Anglo-Jewish Letters 1158-1917* (London 1938) letters LXI-LXIII pp. 136-140. Moses Franks, a prominent Ashkenazi, also shared in the trade, contracting for the Army in Jamaica during the Seven Years' War. Similarly, Aaron Hart supplied General Amherst's army at the capture of Montreal in 1760.

17 J. A. GIUSEPPI, 'The Sephardi Jews and the Early Years of the Bank of England' *TJHSE* XIX (1960) pp 53-64.

18 L. SUTHERLAND, 'Samson Gideon: Eighteenth Century Jewish Financier,' *TJHSE* XVII (1953) pp. 79-90.

19 E. R. SAMUEL, 'Anglo-Jewish Notaries and Scriveners,' *TJHSE* XVII (1953) pp. 113-160.

20 A. RUBENS, 'Jews and the English Stage,' *TJHSE* XXIV (1974).
21 See V. D. (LIPMAN), art. 'Mendes' in *E.J.* vol. II Col. 1342-3 with portrait. Also Norman Perry 'Anglo-Jewry, the Law, Religious Conviction and Self-interest (1655-1753)' *Journal of European Studies XIV* (1984) p.17. Strictly speaking, the earliest Anglo-Sephardi doctor might be claimed to be the unfortunate Dr. Rodrigo Lopez, Queen Elizabeth I's physician, executed in 1594. See John GWYER, 'The Case of Dr. Lopez.' *TJHSE* XVI (1952) pp. 163-184.
22 See article by the present writer 'Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmento and the Sephardim in London Medical Practice, *TJHSE* XXVII (1982) pp. 84-113.
23 On such brotherhoods in Portugal see C. R. BOXER, *The Portuguese Sea-Borne Empire 1415-1825*, (London 1969) Ch. XII.
24 The *Hebra* was refounded in 1678. In 1709 it was split off from the *Bikur Holim*, which was refounded on its own by *Haham* Nieto. In 1729(?) it was adapted to become the Society of *Lavadores*, i.e. washers of the dead, under the title of *Mikveh Israel*, which it has retained ever since. (N. J. LASKI *The Laws and Charities of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation of London* (London 1952)).
25 Ormerod GREENWOOD and Bernard Lord MANNING, *Minutes of the Deputies of Dissenters* (1952).
26 *'A todos nossos irmãos presos pela Inquisição.'*
26a Art. 'Inquisition' in C. ROTH (ed) *Standard Jewish Encyclopaedia* (London 1962).
27 R. D. BARNETT, 'Diplomatic aspects of the Sephardi influx from Portugal in the early eighteenth century', *TJHSE* XXV (1977) pp. 210-221.
28 R. DAICHES DUBENS, 'Eighteenth century Anglo-Jewry in and around Richmond, Surrey' *TJHSE* XVIII (1958) pp. 143-170.
28a See LASKI, *op. cit.*
29 Dr. L. LOEWE, *Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore*, 2 vols. (London 1890 reprinted 1984); L. WOLF, *Sir Moses Montefiore: a Centennial biography* (London 1884); P. GOODMAN, *Moses Montefiore* (Baltimore 1925); U. V. NAHON, *Sir Moses Montefiore: a life in the service of Jewry* (Jerusalem 1965).
30 e.g. David PARDO, *Compendio de dinim* (Amsterdam 1689); Yeosuah DA SYLVA, *Discursos Predicaveys* (Amsterdam 1688).
31 For his contributions to learning, see J. M. R[OSENTHAL], art. 'Abendana, Jacob ben Joseph' in *E.J.* vol. I. col. 66.
32 See Israel SOLOMONS, 'David Nieto and some of his contemporaries' *TJHSE* XII (1931).
33 See Israel SOLOMONS, *loc.cit.*; J. J. PETUCHOWSKI, *The Theology of Haham David Nieto: an eighteenth century defense of the Jewish tradition* (New York, 1854).
34 A. RUBENS, *Anglo-Jewish Portraits* (London 1935).
35 Dr. Anita Novinsky kindly informs me that the author in her view was Pe. Lupino Freyre.
36 D. LOPES LAGUNA, *Espejo fiel de la Vida* (London 1720).
37 See (Mrs) R. N. SALAMAN, 'Ephraim Luzzatto (1729-1792) in *TJHSE* X (1922) 85-102. The article by El[ieser] K[AGAN] on him in *J.E.* is full of errors. Luzzatto failed in his post to give satisfaction to the *Mahamad*. (See my 'Correspondence of the Mahamad . . .' *TJHSE* XX (1964) pp. 8-9.) Luzzatto's artistic temperament and loose life most probably — almost certainly — contributed to the briefness of his tenure of his post.
38 See G. L[IPKIND] art. 'David Levi' in *J.E.* vol. VIII, pp. 25-26; J. PICCIOTTO, *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History* (ed. I. Finestein) (London 1956) pp. 219-220
39 R. D. BARNETT, 'Haham Meldola and Hazan de Sola' *TJHSE* XXI (1968) pp. 1-38.
40 Abigail LINDO, *A Hebrew and English and English and Hebrew Dictionary with Roots and Abbreviations*. London 1846.
41 See R. D. BARNETT *loc. cit.*
42 Arthur BARNETT, 'Sussex Hall: the first Anglo-Jewish venture in popular education' *TJHSE* XIX (1960).

43 Israel SOLOMONS, *loc. cit.* Appendix VII 'Solomon da Costa Atias' Gift to the British Museum', *TJHSE* XII (1931) pp. 96-99. It is said that the books had been left by the royal owner with his bookbinder Mears, as Mears' bill was never paid; da Costa Atias found them and bought them from Mears. For his letter, see ROTH, *Anglo-Jewish Letters*, Letter LXVI. It was printed as a broadsheet.

44 H. HIRSCHFELD, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Hebrew MS of the Montefiore Library* (London 1907). The balance of the printed books which were retained in the Ramsgate College till 1951 was transferred on loan to the Mocatta Library in University College.

45 Sir Alan MOCATTA, 'Frederic David Mocatta (1828-1909)' *TJHSE* XXIII (1971), pp. 1-10; R. A. RYE, *Catalogue of the Printed Books and Manuscripts . . . of Frederic David Mocatta* (London 1904).

46 C. ROTH, 'Moses Gaster' *TJHSE* XIV (1940) pp. 247-251; B. SCHINDLER, (ed.) *Occident and Orient. Gaster Anniversary volume* (London 1936); *Gaster Centenary Publication* (1958).

Gaster welcomed Herzl to London, and held at his house in February 1917 an important conference which led to the drafting of the 'Balfour Declaration.' See C. R[OTH], art. 'Gaster, Moses' in *E.J.* VII, col. 332.

47 S. D. SASSOON, *Ohel David: Descriptive Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the Sassoon Library* (Oxford 1932).

48 See M. L. ETTINGHAUSEN, *Rare Books and Royal Collectors: Memoirs of an Antiquarian Bookseller* (New York 1966).

Other distinguished non-Sephardim of note who joined the community have included Dr. Israel Abrahams (1858-1925), historian, Hebraist and university teacher; the Hebraist H. M. Wiener (1875-1929), Biblical scholar and Zionist; Professor H. Hirschfeld (1854-1934), Hebraist and Librarian of Jews' College; A. M. Hyamson, C.B.E., historian and civil servant; Herbert Loewe (1882-1940), Hebraist and University teacher; and Judge N. J. Laski (1890-1969), lawyer and communal leader.

49 Lewis EDWARDS, 'Daniel Mendoza', *TJHSE* XV 73-92; *The Memoirs of Daniel Mendoza* (London 1816).

50 R. D. BARNETT, in V. D. LIPMAN (ed.) *Three Centuries of Anglo-Jewish History* pp. 58-89.

50a His drawings of these stations are preserved in the library of the Royal Institute of British Architects. In 1829-30 he made excellent water colour sketches of Roman frescoes at Pompeii (exhibited at the Society of Antiquaries of London on 25th January 1877). *Proc. Soc. Art.* 2nd Ser. 7, 1876-8 p. 121.

51 For the details see J. PICCIOTTO, *op. cit.* pp. 287-293.

52 James MARCHANT (ed.) *Raphael Meldola* (London 1916). S. A. M(ILLAR), art. *'Meldola, Raphael', E.J.* vol. XI, cols. 1290-1.

53 S. A. M(ILLAR), art. *Andrade, E.N. da C., E.J.* vol II, col. 947.

54 Particular mention might be made of Robert Sebag Montefiore (1882-1915) who though young was already a leading member of the London County Council, when his career was cut short by death on active service in the First World War.

55 L. L. LOEWE. *Basil Henriques — a Portrait* (London 1976).

56 See G. YOGEV, *Diamonds and Coral* (Leicester 1978).

57 Samuel SCHWARTZ, *Os cristãos novos em Portugal no seculo XX* (1935); Lucien WOLF, *Report on the Marranos or Crypto-Jews of Portugal* (London 1926). The last true 'marrano' community now survives only at Belmonte. See Isaac GOTTLIEB, 'Portugal' Marranos — a lost tribe'; *Jewish Tribune* May 26, 1976.

HISTORY OF THE SEPHARDIM IN GERMANY

by

Hermann Kellenbenz

The history of the Sephardim in Germany is mainly the history of the communities which established themselves on the lower Elbe at the end of the 16th century. There were, however, some settlements at other places which preceded the Hamburg, Altona and Glückstadt communities; unfortunately we do not know how far these settlements are to be characterized as those of *christãos novos* (New Christians) or of Sephardim. It seems that the Mendes family were the first to be interested in settling in Germany. After the death of the merchant and banker Diogo Mendes at Antwerp in 1542/43, his heirs planned to settle in one of the big German commercial centres, but in the event decided on Venice. Furthermore, in May of 1545 some *marranos* who intended to move to Italy were arrested near Colmar in Alsace under suspicion of smuggling weapons to Turkey. Their flight gave the Emperor Charles V a pretext for exerting pressure, and in the summer of 1546 Juan Micas, during a stay at Ratisbon, was obliged to conclude an *asiento,* that is, a contract on a loan.[1]

Twenty years later, when affairs at Antwerp, in consequence of the troubles in the Netherlands, reached a crisis, certain Portuguese with their New Christian relatives who had settled in Antwerp, moved to Cologne. Immediately after the events of 1566 we find members of the Pires and Nunes families at Cologne. Other Portuguese arrived after the "Spanish fury" of 1574. In 1578, when Antwerp fell into the hands of the Prince of Orange, the Magistracy of Cologne granted permission to reside to another group comprising the Ximenes, Rodrigues d'Evora and Alvares Caldeira families. Fernando Ximenes and his brother Rui Nunes remained in Cologne, whereas their brother André managed the affairs at Antwerp where he stayed until Alessandro Farnese besieged the town. Then Fernando moved back to Cologne, together with his cousins of the family Rodrigues d'Evora. The firm remained there until 1589, when Fernando Ximenes settled for some time in Hamburg.[2] The firm of "Nicolas e Simão Rodrigues d'Evora" known from its relations with the banker of Medina del Campo, Simon Ruiz, was represented

by the father Manoel and the sons Nicolas and Simão. Leaving Antwerp in 1576, they moved to Cambrai and Paris and then, in the summer of 1578, to Cologne. In 1580 Simão returned to Antwerp, but came again to Cologne in 1585. Meanwhile the father, Manoel, had died in Cologne (1581). After the worst of the crisis of Antwerp was over, the brothers moved back to that town, Simão in 1587, Nicolas the next year.[3] From the circle of the Caldeira family, Rodrigo Alvarez came in 1578 to Cologne where he died in 1582. Among the group of Portuguese at that time established at Cologne we likewise find members of the family Veiga d'Evora, related to that of the Rodrigues d'Evora. Rodrigo da Veiga, brother of Vasco Martins da Veiga d'Evora at Lisbon, came to Cologne from Antwerp in 1585 and returned in 1589. Another of the group was Filipe Dinis, a brother of Jorge Dinis who lived at Lisbon. We meet him in Cologne in 1578. Later on, he returned to Antwerp. In close relations with him was Alvaro Dinis or Samuel Hyac (Jachia), who is to be found at Hamburg under the name of Albertus de Nyes or Denis (Dinis). Diogo Rodrigues d'Andrade, married to Ana Rodrigues, sister of Simão and Nicolas Rodrigues d'Evora, went to Cologne in 1585 and returned to Antwerp in 1589. His brother Rodrigo d'Andrade lived at Lisbon. Manoel Fernandes de Leon, who had two brothers, Simão Ferreira and Gaspar Fernandes de Leon, at Lisbon, is to be found as a visitor to the Frankfurt fairs. Jeronimo Lindo, whose daughter was married to Luis Alvares Caldheira, fell ill in May of 1576. He went to Aix-la-Chapelle in order to take the waters there but died a month later.

All the members of this group of Portuguese who were established in Cologne for some years contributed to make the old imperial town a world-wide business centre, as Antwerp had been. They were as well-informed about the affairs of the East Indies, Africa and South America as about happenings in Spain and Portugal. They engaged in the spice, sugar and jewellery business and were in the circle of the leading bankers. It was due to them — more than to the Italians and Netherlanders who had immigrated to Cologne at that time — that in the 'eighties of the 16th century, Cologne became one of the banking centres at which exchange rates were quoted. As such, it was, for some time, more important than Frankfurt-on-Main.[4]

These Portuguese of the Cologne settlement were all inter-related. They lived as Christians, as Catholics; some, such as the Ximenes and Rodrigues d'Evora families, remained Christians, whereas others returned to the Jewish faith. This decision may have depended, in the first instance, on the attitude of the mother. This is fairly evident in one case. Diogo Rodrigues d'Andrade who for some time lived in Cologne, had a brother Rodrigo d'Andrade who lived in Lisbon, married to Ana de Milan or Millão. Henrique Dias Millão, a near relative of the latter, was burned in 1609 for his Jewish faith. His widow, Guiomar or Abigail Gomes, her daughter Beatrice Henriques and her son-in-law Alvaro Dinis, as well as her sons Paulo de Millão (alias Moses Abensur)

and Manoel Cardoza de Millão emigrated to Hamburg, where they represented a leading group of the Sephardi community. The daughter of Rodrigo d'Andrade and Branca de Millão married Diogo Teixeira who was to be the most famous Hamburg Portuguese Jew in the middle of the 17th century; we shall hear of him later on.

We find Portuguese scattered here and there in Western and Southern Germany. They visited the Frankfurt fairs; unfortunately we have not such complete lists of visitors to Frankfurt as we have to the Leipzig fairs. At the beginning of the 17th century, some Portuguese from Venice tried to settle in Frankfurt but were refused permission by the Magistracy. Then they negotiated with the Landgrave of Hesse about establishing a settlement at Hanau but this, too, they failed to achieve.[5] Some Portuguese Jews lived sporadically on the lower Rhine at Wesel.[6] There, under the rule of the Electors of Brandenburg, a Jewish colony began to acquire some importance. Later on some Sephardi Jews lived at Mannheim.[7] They had their own community with a schoolteacher. But none of these settlements were of such importance as those in North-Western Germany, at Emden and on the lower Elbe, at Hamburg, Glückstadt and Altona.

During the rebellion of the Netherlanders against the Spaniards, Emden[8] was a centre for refugees and a harbour where neutral trade and navigation flourished. Hence it held some attraction for Sephardi emigrants since a small community of Ashkenazi Jews was already established there. A permanent settlement, however, grew rather slowly. In any event, Portuguese such as Manuel Rodrigues Vega, later on a member of the Amsterdam colony, chartered Emden ships and did business with Emden merchants. In 1612, the same year as the Hamburg colony obtained official permission to stay in Hamburg, the Magistracy of Emden negotiated with a group of them and some of them established themselves as traders in spices. In 1649, these "Portuguese" obtained privileges which were written in the Dutch language. In 1705 they were renewed for the single person of Josua Henriques.[9] These privileges were similar to those of Glückstadt which possibly served as a model. In addition, the colony was granted permission to establish a discount bank similar to those in Hamburg and Amsterdam; they were also permitted to participate in the trade of the Greenland Company at Emden. It is obvious that these privileges were intended to serve as "bait", in line with the mercantile policies of that time, in order to stimulate the economic life of Emden which, after the town had been occupied by the troops of the States-General, had begun to decline.

Meanwhile the Hamburg Sephardi colony had developed into the most important in German-speaking countries. It was in about 1580 that scattered adherents of the *gente da nação* appeared on the lower Elbe.[10] The first to be known by name were Heinrich Antonius who, in 1584, is mentioned as a broker, and Fernando Salvador who served as a 'Knecht' with a well-known

merchant of Netherland origin, Johan de Schot. Salvador was an adherent of the Reformed Church and married a sister of de Schot, by this marriage moving nearer to the Reformed colony.

After the union of Spain and Portugal under Philip II of Spain, the latter attempted to get the Inquisition to adopt stronger action against the *gente* who lived in Portugal. Hence a new wave of emigrants left the Portuguese ports in the last decade of the 16th century. The famous Dr. Rodrigo de Castro, who in 1590 was still living in Lisbon, went to Antwerp and thence moved to Hamburg. In 1595 about seven Portuguese families, men, women, children and servants, were living in Hamburg. Two of them, "Ruffernandus" (Ruy Fernandes Cardoso) and "Adrian Consalves" (Ayres Gonsalves) were regarded as Spaniards, the rest being accepted as Portuguese including, apart from Dr. de Castro, Dio Gomes and 'Emanuel Alvers,' whose Portuguese name was probably Manuel Alvarez Caldeira. As the majority of them spoke Portuguese, it became customary to call the whole colony the "Portugiesische Nation" and people continued to speak of "Hamburger Portugiesen" even where the colony had reached an agreement with the Hamburg Magistracy and could safely practise — within their homes — their Sephardi Jewish beliefs.

By the end of the first decade of the 17th century, the Hamburg settlement of Portuguese began to grow considerably. In about 1610 some twenty households, comprising about one hundred and ten persons, may have been living in Hamburg. The colony had now risen to a number where people on both sides, that is both the Portuguese and the Hamburg Magistracy, thought it convenient to negotiate some convention such as the Netherlanders had made with the town of Hamburg. Because of the fact that there were "real Jews" among them the negotiations with the Magistracy and the representatives of the citizens became rather complicated, but on the 19th February 1612 a contract was concluded which gave the Portuguese the right to stay for five years. They were allowed to do such "honest, honourable business" as the other citizens and inhabitants of the town did. They could not, however, secure the right to profess their Jewish faith either openly or secretly. They could not have a synagogue nor perform the ceremony of circumcision in the town.[11] They could bury their dead at Altona, just outside the town in the territory of the Count of Schauenburg "or elsewhere." In civil and criminal affairs the 'nation' was dependent on the courts of the town of Hamburg. As a recompense for these privileges the 'nation' had to pay the *Schoss* (tax) a sum of 1,000 mark *lübisch* every year on St. Lucia's day in December. The contributions of the members of the 'Nation' to make up this sum had to be entered in a list which they had to communicate to the Hamburg Magistracy. The *Schoss* had to be paid in good *grober Münze* (hard cash). When other Portuguese came to Hamburg to take up residence they had to give notice to the *worthaltenden Bürgermeister*. If the senate found

them "well qualified", the sum which they had to contribute for the *Schoss* was agreed. Every one of these newcomers could set up residence within a year's time.

When the first contract was concluded, the number of Hamburg Portuguese with their families and servants may have reached a hundred and fifty, and newcomers arrived from time to time. The contract was renewed for another five years in 1617 and the yearly contribution was raised to 2,000 marks in accordance with the new size of the colony. When the contract was renewed yet again in 1623, a paragraph was inserted stating that the Senate, when consulting the representatives of the foreign nations who lived in Hamburg, would also address itself to the Portuguese. This must be taken as an indication of the relatively good relations that the colony enjoyed with the Senate at the time. As to their religious practises, it was obvious that they enjoyed some tacit toleration; people knew that they could gather together in order to hold their conventicles.

Through all these years until the fifties the colony of the Portuguese grew without further difficulty. This was at the time when Christian IV of Denmark attempted to damage the Hamburg trade by allowing well-to-do members of the Hamburg community to settle at Glückstadt which had recently been founded on the right bank of the lower Elbe. To counteract this policy the Hamburg Senate was interested in retaining the Portuguese by marks of tolerance. It is true that Alvaro Dinis, one of the early representatives of the settlement, was expelled from the town when his activity as a bullion merchant and *entrepreneur* of minting-establishments seemed to be damaging Hamburg's interests. But the danger from Glückstadt passed, especially with and after the war between Christian IV on the one side and the Hanseatic League and the Imperial troops on the other, as a result of which Glückstadt lost its original *élan* and Hamburg remained the centre of the Portuguese.

Like the Amsterdam community, the Portuguese of Hamburg developed a remarkable activity in overseas trade, especially with Portugal and Spain. For some time they predominated in the import of sugar and spices and contributed to the modernization of trade usages. In collaboration with partners in Amsterdam, Antwerp, London and other places they built up trade connections with the Mediterranean as well as with the African and the Brazilian ports,[12] with the East Indies and with the Antilles. At the same time they made contact with the ports of the Baltic and Scandinavia and with inland markets, especially the Frankfurt and Leipzig fairs. Together with Amsterdam merchants, they actively helped the Portuguese to regain their independence from Spain after 1640. Duarte Nunes da Costa at Hamburg and his son, Jeronimo Nunes da Costa, at Amsterdam, worked for the Portuguese as agents and supplied them with military stores. But it is illustrative of the complicated situation within the communities that Lopo Ramires at Amsterdam, a brother of Duarte Nunes da Costa, and Manuel Bocarro (Jacob

Rosales) at Hamburg were supporters of the Spaniards.[13] Beside the Netherlanders, the Portuguese participated in the foundation of the Hamburg Bank in 1619. By 1623, forty-six of them held accounts in it; some of them became financial agents of various North European courts, especially those of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein. After his emigration from Antwerp, Diogo Teixeira became the financial agent of Queen Christina of Sweden.[14] During this time the Hamburg settlement experienced a remarkable period of cultural and spiritual activity, though Amsterdam quickly began to compete with Hamburg, to become the real spiritual centre of the Sephardim in the North of Europe.

The Hamburg community could, however, at least compare itself with those of Venice and Leghorn. At Hamburg, too, the merchant was joined by the physician, the learned rabbi, philosopher, philologist and even poet. And finally, as was the case at Amsterdam, the Hamburg Sephardim could get their books printed at Hamburg itself.

Of the series of Hamburg physicians Dr. Rodrigo de Castro was the most famous. His tradition was continued by two of his sons. Other physicians were Samuel da Silva and his son-in-law, Benjamin Mussaphia, Jechesquel Cohen Henriques and two younger members of the same family, Manuel Henriques and his son Antonio or Samuel. Finally came the da Fonsecas, a family of physicians.

Uriel da Costa from Oporto, whose radicalism went so far that he denied the immortality of the soul, lived for some time in Hamburg. From Hamburg he sent his *Propostas contra a Tradição* ('Propositions against Tradition') printed in Amsterdam in 1616, to the Sephardi community at Venice; this caused his banishment from Hamburg in 1618. After da Costa had moved to Amsterdam, Samuel da Silva published against him his *Tratado do immortalidade da alma* ('Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul') in 1623. Moses Gideon Abudiente, who lived first at Amsterdam and then at Glückstadt, continued his grammatical studies at Hamburg and wrote poems. Representatives of Jewish wisdom were the rabbis Isaac Athias, Abraham de Fonseca and David Cohen de Lara. Athias, a disciple of Isaac Uziel at Amsterdam, was *haham* of the first Hamburg synagogue but moved to Venice in 1622. Isaac Jessurun wrote a treatise on the Divine Providence which was published some years after his death in 1663. R. Jacob Jehudah Leão ('Templo') was interested in Jewish antiquities. Jacob Rosales, physician, was a poet with political interests and author of the *Monarchia Lusitana*. David Cohen Carlos translated the Songs of King Solomon into Spanish. Joseph Frances was later called the 'Hamburg Camões.' The uncle of Moses Gideon Abudiente, Daniel Abudiente, also wrote poems. Much of the activity of these men consisted in writing polemical and apologetical tractates on the content of the Jewish faith, defending it against attacks from outside.

Most of the merchants had a high level of education. Paulo de Millão and

Fransisco Dias de Brito bore the title of *licenciado*. Alvara Dinis is said to have published in 1629 a collection of thirty speeches. The high social standard of various members is underlined by the fact that they could point to noble descent. The Abendanas were related to the rich and noble Portuguese family of Mendes de Brito, and the Teixeiras were proud of their connection with the noble family of Sampayo. The de Castros, too, had noble origins, and two representatives of the family of Abas who, in their Portuguese native country, bore the name of Dias George (Jorge), were ennobled in 1614 by the Emperor Matthias.[15]

These were the outstanding members of a community whose image was stamped by the figure of the merchant. Most of them did not speak German and consequently they, more than other foreigners, were obliged to invoke the assistance of brokers. But by the beginning of the 17th century there were some members who, as a result of their long-standing relations with German merchants, were able themselves to adopt the profession of broker. A decade later there were three or four brokers in the colony and, when the contract was renewed in 1617, the number of brokers officially permitted by the town of Hamburg was settled at four. In time the number of brokers rose and by 1653 there were sixteen.

The Portuguese were proud to be and to be seen to be honourable merchants in accordance with the impression created by the first settlers at Hamburg. They wanted to be treated as a foreign nation enjoying its prerogatives as the Merchant Adventurers, like the Netherlanders and the Italians who had established themselves at the same time in Hamburg. It is true that there were incidents which disturbed the good relations between them and the Magistracy. The latter had banned Alvaro Dinis and his brother-in-law for their activity in minting with the Count of Schauenburg and other princes. Other areas of conflict were provided by the assistance they gave and their business with the Ashkenazi Jews who lived in Hamburg. With the passage of time there emerged remarkable social differences among the members of the community. The rich merchants and jewellers who paid a yearly contribution of about 30 to 80 marks formed the minority at least in about the middle of the 17th century. Out of one hundred and sixteen Portuguese who paid taxes in 1656, fifty-six paid a small contribution of 12 marks or less. Many of them were in the service of the more well-to-do. Others exercised professions such as every community needed that wanted to live according to its own rite, such as baker, butcher, flour-merchant or professions which no guild regulations existed to restrict, such as tobacco spinner. Stone-cutters and goldsmiths were also represented. There were, of course, poor people, too. In 1652 there is mention of more than fifty-two.

In the beginning, the Portuguese lived in different parishes, those of St. Nicolas, St. Peter, St. Catherine. Dr. Rodrigo de Castro lived on "St. Nicolai Karckhoff", others in the region of the Hopmarket, of "Rödings Westersidt,"

the "Steintwiete" and "Dickstrate." Several of them owned houses; however, when the contract was renewed in 1617 they were forbidden to buy houses and land. Those who already owned houses had to sell them. Only Dr. Rodrigo de Castro remained exempt from this regulation.

They held religious services in their homes. In 1617, the Lutheran clergy for the first time protested against them doing so. Some well-to-do families had synagogues in their homes. The Aboab-Faleiros were the first with their synagogue called *Keter Thora* ("Crown of the Law"); another, *Talmud Thora* ("School of the Law"), was installed in 1627 by the Aboab-Cardosos. There was another one as well, called *Neveh Shalom* ("Abode of Peace").

Thus from the beginning there was a division into three groups as at Amsterdam. Different family origins and parentages, and probably a different understanding of certain religious questions, may have lain behind the division into various groups.

Within the circle of the community the Portuguese had Jewish names. Dr. Rodrigo de Castro was David Nehemias or Namias, Alvaro Dinis was Samuel Jachia, his brother-in-law Paulo Millão or Paul Dirichsen was Moses Abensur. Diogo Carlos called himself Joseph Cohen, Fernando Dias with his full Portuguese name Fernando Dias Mendes de Brito, was called David Abendana, the Cardosos and Faleiros bore the name of Aboab. Manuel Bocarro was Jacob Rosales, the Portuguese agent Duarte Nunes da Costa was Jacob Curiel and the two Teixeiras, Diogo and his son Manuel, were Abraham and Isaac Senior. For all of them it was a matter of security to preserve in public life the Spanish and Portuguese names by which they were known among the merchants.[16] There was much arbitrariness in the adoption of names. Sometimes their intention was to mislead in order to make identification impossible. They must have had a terrible fear that the persecutions of the Inquisition might imperil their relatives living in regions under Spanish and, after the Restoration, under Portuguese domination. Several cases are known of renegades, that is those who had re-abandoned their Jewish faith, denouncing members of the Hamburg community to the Inquisition. Hector Mendes Bravo, born in Lagos, South Portugal, who returned to the Jewish faith in Venice, where he adopted the name, David Levi Bravo, lived for some time in Hamburg and Amsterdam before returning to Portugal where he made his denunciation in 1617. In 1641 Gaspar Bocarro denounced his Hamburg acquaintances; in 1644 Diogo de Lima, a son of Henriques de Lima, did the same. In order to guard against this danger, some had several names such as David Franco, who was known in Hamburg business society as Simon Dietrichsen or Dirichsen. When he dealt with Spaniards his firm was called Simon Rodriguez or Simon Ruiz de Malaga. Others had Dutch names such as Lopes Nunes who adopted the business title of "Teunis Smith" or Duarte de Lima who hid himself behind the name of Hendrik van der Boom. Despite their tendency to bear Low-

German or Dutch names they preferred to speak Portuguese or Spanish. Manuel Teixeira preferred to write letters in French. According to their route of migration some of them could write Italian or Dutch. Only few seem to have spoken good German. Jacob Mussaphia wrote to the Holstein-Gottorp Court in German but his business books were kept in Portuguese. Some of them finally abandoned their Portuguese or Spanish names in favour of Jewish names. It is to be supposed that those who did so wished, by finally abandoning their *marrano* names, to show an especially strong devotion to their Jewish faith. Thus we find, from about the middle of the century, the names of Mussaphia, Abensur, Israel, Jessurun and Nehemias.

Until about the middle of the century the colony grew steadily. About 1612, when the first contract was concluded, they numbered forty households with one hundred and fifty persons, more or less. In 1623, forty-six "Portuguese" had accounts at the Bank which recently had been founded. Those who went to Glückstadt, the new foundation of King Christian of Denmark, were few compared with those who arrived, especially during the 'forties, after the Portuguese Restoration and Hamburg became important as a port from which Portugal could be furnished with the material for the defence of its independence, Duarte Nunes da Costa acting as a Portuguese agent. On the other hand Antwerp, where many Portuguese lived, developed a new crisis after the battle of Rocroi and with the blockade of the Scheldt by the Dutch. A favourable circumstance was that the towns of the Hanseatic League concluded a new commercial convention with Spain. During the years up to 1649, thirty-four Portuguese with families and servants immigrated into Hamburg. In 1646, the Hamburg Senate estimated that about a hundred families lived in the town, which might have meant about five hundred persons. This was few compared with Amsterdam, where according to Menasse ben Israel's estimate about four hundred families dwelt. The peak of this immigration to Hamburg may have been reached during the 'sixties. In 1663 Galeazzo Gualdo Priorato, chamberlain of Queen Christina of Sweden, visited Hamburg and found about a hundred and twenty Portuguese-Jewish families which may have corresponded to about six hundred people. Where did they come from? The majority may have emigrated directly from Spain or Portugal. We know from the history of the Portuguese Brazilian Company founded in 1649 how intolerant the Portuguese policy was towards the New Christians, the well-to-do families being obliged to hand over their money to the funds of the company. No wonder the emigration of persons and capital continued! In 1650 the king intervened, forbidding the masters of ships to give passage to Jews wishing to emigrate secretly.[17] Several of the emigrants passed through Antwerp; the Portuguese colony there, it is true, steadily declined, but continued as a whole. Diogo Teixeira lived there for a long time before he took up residence in Hamburg. Another station on the way to Hamburg was the French port of Rouen, where they met with more tolerance

than at Bordeaux and Bayonne, other refuges of *marranos*. Others came from Dunkirk. A greater number passed through Holland, and lively commercial and family relations existed between the community of Amsterdam and that of Hamburg. In Italy, Venice and Leghorn were the places which had the closest contacts with the Hamburg settlement.

A time of crisis began in the second half of the 'forties. There is no doubt that the rising numbers of the colony contributed to greater attention being paid to them by the Hamburg people than in previous years, and probably the sharp pen of Dr. Benjamin Mussaphia irritated the orthodox clergy of the town headed by the pastor of St. Peter's Church, who in 1644 published a book attacking the Jews. In 1649, after Dr. Mussaphia had already left Hamburg, Müller addressed a memorial to the Senate against the Portuguese. There were insults by schoolboys. The Senate attempted to intervene. In the spring of 1650 the Portuguese received new articles which in general repeated the conditions under which they had obtained the right of settlement, but which, on the other hand, incorporated all the points which had formed objects of grievance to their adversaries. Among others, they were forbidden to "make finances" and they were not allowed to have houses registered in their names. Moreover, they were required to live in the "Neustadt" (New Town). Nevertheless they remained house-owners; for Hamburg citizens were found under whose names they could be registered. Thus Juan Frances Brandon, at the end of the 'fifties, sold his house "auf der Herrlichkeit" for 18,000 marks. Samuel Guedes was the owner of four houses situated on the "Mönkedamm." In 1682 the Senate explicitly conceded that the Portuguese might have houses *ad usum et utilitatem* while accepting that they were registered in the names of Christians. The articles of 1697 repeated the stipulations of 1650, but these did not have any real effect.

During the crisis at the end of the 'forties the Portuguese declared that they would be obliged to leave Hamburg if they were not allowed to hold religious services in their houses "in all privacy" in accordance with the contracts concluded with them. From then on the colony was never free from a feeling of insecurity. In 1652 the existing prayer-groups united to form a single *Bet Israel* headed by a board of seven members. Doubtless with this was connected the fact that Diogo Teixeira became a 'resident' of the Queen of Sweden in 1654 and Duarte Nunes da Costa was a 'resident' of the King of Portugal, while others, too, were appointed to the service of princes such as the King of Denmark. This offered them the possibility of obtaining assistance from such potentates in case of danger. The community watched anxiously to ensure that their members gave no occasion for offence to their Hamburg adversaries. Only people of good reputation might be admitted, the merchants must be wary of any activity which was against the prescriptions of the law. In the same way, the community required that the Ashkenazi Jews, living in Hamburg as their servants, should behave themselves properly. For a

short time the Hamburg community was involved in the dissensions over the false Messiah, Shabbetai Zevi. The fact that the Hamburg colony, as well as that of Amsterdam, listened too readily to his prophecies seems to show how difficult it was for them to strike roots in the North despite the good material conditions of life there.

Despite the articles of 1650 the community did not give up hope of constructing a synagogue. Shortly after the articles were published, a site was bought for this purpose but because of public opposition it was sold again in 1652. Diogo Teixeira was especially interested in the plan for a synagogue and gave money towards it. At the beginning of the 'seventies the building was beginning to take shape but in 1673, in deference to the wishes of the Lutheran clergy, it had to be removed. In the 'seventies and 'eighties the community lost several of those men who had contributed to its eminent intellectual character.

During the second half of the 17th century and at the beginning of the following, grave disputes took place between the Senate and the citizens who wished to enjoy more rights. In these disputes the question of the Jewish settlers also played a part, Dr. Mayer, pastor of St. Jacob's Church, being their most eloquent adversary. The tension reached its culmination in 1697, when the Portuguese, who had to pay 4,000 Marks annually for the protection they enjoyed, were obliged to pay a special tax of 20,000 Marks. At the same time, new revised articles were given to them involving a restriction of their liberties. At the same time the Ashkenazi community was officially recognized. Its members, though not so wealthy as the Portuguese, had to pay 30,000 Marks. At the same period grave disagreements broke out between some of the leading families of the Portuguese community which finally led to the emigration of the Teixeira group to Amsterdam in 1698.

In the second half of the 17th century the Hamburg Portuguese increasingly withdrew from the trade with the Iberian Peninsula and the colonies of Spain and Portugal in consequence of the continuous hostility of those countries towards New Christians and suspected Jews. On the other hand, they strengthened their activity with North-Western Europe, the Baltic, Scandinavia and various courts. Diogo Teixeira and his son Manuel traded in jewels, and with their relatives of Amsterdam, the Nunes Henriques, entered into the exploitation of Norwegian copper. Moreover they conveyed the subsidies provided by the Powers of Western Europe to their allies in Germany and Scandinavia.

After the departure of the Teixeira group, the community never regained the prestige it had enjoyed during the 17th century. Disagreements between a more orthodox and a more liberal group continued, entangled with family disputes. In order to prevent the decay of the community it was decided in 1706 that the *Vorsteher* (President) should be elected not for two but for eight years. In 1710 a commission appointed by the emperors settled the disputes

among the Hamburg citizens and the Senate by a *recessus* of the 7th September, of which article 37, besides a special *Judenreglement* (Jewish Settlement), provided a basis for the community which in general renewed the privileges earlier granted to them. The number of Portuguese brokers was raised to fifteen.

The history of the Portuguese Hamburg colony during the eighteenth century is much less dramatic and less interesting than that of the preceding century. There were few signs of spiritual life. Isaac de Cordova for some time had a printing press but later returned to Amsterdam whence he had come. Members of the da Fonseca family were renowned as physicians; the majority of the colony were brokers and merchants. In 1732 the colony was not able to fill the vacant posts of brokers. Consequently five of the fifteen posts were given to Christians. On the other hand there were several wealthy Portuguese merchants. They seem to have dealt particularly in bills of exchange, jewels and colonial goods, but when they tried to arm ships they met with difficulties. With restrictions of this kind on the one hand pressing upon them and on the other with the liberties which were offered them time and again by the Danish kings, the most energetic entrepreneurial representatives of the colony were persuaded to move to domiciles in the Danish Kingdom.

During the occupation by the French troops in 1811 the French authorities imposed a single consistorial organisation. The three Ashkenazi congregations (Altona, Hamburg and Wandsbek) were dissolved; in their place Ashkenazim and Sephardim united to form one congregation. After the end of the Napoleonic era the Sephardi community was restored and only in 1930 was the synagogue, the last Sephardi synagogue in Germany, taken over by the Ashkenazi community.[18].

Several places on the lower Elbe were inclined to offer hospitality to some Portuguese families, because in it they saw opportunities for their economic projects. In 1611, Stade, which belonged to the archbishop of Bremen, concluded a capitulation with a group of Portuguese, but the archbishop refused confirmation.[19] Altona seemed more attractive.[20] A suburb just outside the walls of Hamburg in the territory of the Count of Schauenburg, it had served from time to time as a refuge for those Portuguese who had encountered difficulties in Hamburg. Here in 1611 they were allowed to buy a burial ground at a place called *ufm Heyberge*. One of the Portuguese signatories to the contract was Alvaro Dinis. When he and his brother-in-law Dirichsen *alias* Milão *alias* Abensur got into difficulties in Hamburg the count offered them his protection. However, after the foundation of Glückstadt the attraction of Altona declined and no Sephardi community was founded there. The Jewish settlement which eventually developed there was of Ashkenazi origin. When Count Jobst Herman renewed the privileges for the Altona Jews in 1622, there was only one

Portuguese among them. When the dynasty of the Schauenburg counts died out in 1640, King Christian IV of Denmark inherited the country. He confirmed the Jews' privileges including that of the cemetery. Among those who lived in Altona during the second half of the century were members of the Jessurun and Abensur families whom the kings of Denmark tried to use for their mercantilist policy. With the decline of Glückstadt and the growing hostility in Hamburg towards the Jewish settlement the attraction of Altona grew. The Teixeira group lived there and at Ottensen before they finally migrated to Amsterdam. In 1703, a Sephardi community was founded in Altona probably by thirteen families from Hamburg. But it remained small whereas the settlement of *hochdeutsche Juden* grew in importance. After Altona had been destroyed in 1713 they had to begin anew. At that time they held their services in a hall in the Breite Gasse. Meanwhile they organized a community called *Bet Ya'akob hakatan* ("The little House of Jacob"), later *Neveh Shalom* ("Abode of Peace"). In 1770 a synagogue was built. However the Sephardi community always remained a branch of that in Hamburg.

In King Christian IV of Denmark's scheme of mercantilist projects Glückstadt[21] was intended to become a rival of Hamburg and the Portuguese were to help him. The first persons to obtain a letter of protection in 1619 were Alvaro Dinis and his brother-in-law. In 1622 the king officially invited the representatives of the Portuguese nation in Amsterdam and Hamburg to settle in the new town, promising them liberty of religion and commercial advantages. Several merchants and artisans came. They opened a sugar refinery, a soap factory and salt-works. As a result of the flood of 1625 and the war between Denmark and the Hanseatic League and the Imperial troops Glückstadt suffered heavily. After the peace of Lübeck (1629) the king counted anew on the rise of Glückstadt hoping with the assistance of the Portuguese to expand trade relations with Spain. After granting them new privileges in December 1629 he invited not only the Portuguese of Hamburg, Emden and Amsterdam but even those of France, Portugal and Spain and other Hebrews from the Levant, Italy and Africa. The privileges of 19th June, 1630 were even more liberal than the preceding; they were allowed to build houses and to buy land, they could trade freely in Holstein, Schleswig, Denmark and Norway, they could build ships, have their own school and could print their own books, and outside the town they received a burial ground. Now the community grew; newcomers arrived from Hamburg and Amsterdam, even from France and Salee in North Africa. Among them may be mentioned Gabriel Gomes, agent of the Danish king, Dr. Daniel de Castro, a son of Dr. Rodrigo de Castro, Dr. Benjamin Mussaphia and Philippe Jorge de Brito. The first rabbi was Abraham da Fonseca who later moved to Hamburg. However, neither the Danish East India Company nor the West India Company flourished and, with the Swedish invasion of 1643/4, the town received a new blow — then the two wars of the Swedish King Carl

Gustavus hit the town. During these decades many Portuguese passed through Glückstadt without staying and thus Glückstadt always remained a kind of annexe of the Hamburg community, dependent on it for financial assistance. After the death of Gabriel Gomes the decline continued, even with the renewal of privileges. Towards the end of the century there were only two or three Sephardi families living at Glückstadt. For some time, Moses Josua Henriques, since 1686 factor at a West India and Guinea Company, tried to intensify the overseas relations. Meanwhile German Jews settled and fell into rivalry with the Portuguese. In 1732 prolongation of the privileges was refused with the statement that none of the old Portuguese families were living there any longer.

The synagogue was rebuilt in 1767. By that time the twenty families living at Glückstadt were of Ashkenazi origin. The last rabbi died in 1813. The synagogue was dismantled in 1895.

Duke Frederick III of Holstein-Gottorp entertained relations with several Hamburg Portuguese[22] and when he founded Friedrichstadt on the Eider he intended to settle Portuguese there, in order to make use of their overseas relations in the same way as Christian IV had done; but when he concluded a treaty of commerce with Spain in 1627, the Spaniards made it a condition that *marranos* must be excluded from trading with Spain. Thus Friedrichstadt remained without a community. However, in 1674 Jacob Mussaphia who subsequently played an important rôle in the financial policy of Duke Christian Albrecht, settled in Tönning, a port in Eiderstedt. Later, when Mussaphia had returned to Hamburg, his accountant Jonathan Henriques lived in Tönning.[23]

Notes

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10 H. KELLENBENZ, *Unternehmerkräfte im Hamburger Portugal — und Spanienhandel, 1590-1625* (Hamburg, 1954), pp.242ff.; *idem, Sephardim an der unteren Elbe*, pp.25ff.

11 *Idem, ibid.* pp.31ff.

12 *H. KELLENBENZ, 'Der Brasilienhandel der Hamburger Portugiesen zu Ende des 16. und in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts,' III Coloquio Internacional de Estudios Luso — Brasiliseros* (Lisboa, 1957), *Actas* vol. II (Lisbon, 1960), pp.277-296; *id.* 'Die wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen zwischen Antwerpen und Brasilien in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts', *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial — und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 55 (1969), pp.449-463.

13 *Idem*, 'Dr Jakob Rosales', *Zeitschrift f. Religions — und Geistesgeschichte* 8 (1956), p.345-354.

14 For his family cf. H. KELLENBENZ, 'Das Testament von Manuel Teixeira', *Studia Rosenthaliana* III (1969), p.53-61; *id.*, 'Königin Christine und ihre Beziehungen zu Hamburg', *Analecta Reginensia* 1: *Queen Christina of Sweden, Documents and Studies* (Stockholm, 1966), pp.187-198. *id.*, 'Das Testament von Simon Suarez Dorta', *Wissenschaft, Wirtschaft und Technik, Festschrift Wilhelm Treue* (Munich, 1969), pp.230-244. See also below, pp. 33, 34.

15 *Idem*, 'Tradiciones nobiliarias de los grupos sefardíes', *Actas del Primer Coloquio de Estudios Sefardíes* (Madrid, 1970), pp.49-54.

16 *Idem, A participacão da companhia de Judeus na conquista holandesa de Pernambuco* (Universidade Federal de Paraiba, Depatamento Cultural, 1966).

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THE SEPHARDIM IN SCANDINAVIA

by

Hermann Kellenbenz

I Denmark

In the 17th century, Holstein, though a fief of the Holy Roman Empire, belonged for dynastic reasons to the Crown of Denmark. This facilitated Portuguese access to the Danish Empire, the border of which lay between Jutland and the Duchy of Schleswig which was a fief of the Crown of Denmark. Thus when the king granted new privileges to the Portuguese of Glückstadt in 1630, they were allowed to trade in Denmark. In their suite, of course, came many German Jews from Altona and Wandsbek who also used the opportunity to do business in the Danish territories. However, Frederick III was not as friendly towards the Jews as his father Christian IV, and in February 1651 he issued a decree forbidding all Jews to cross the frontier of the Danish empire without a royal safe-conduct. The reason for that measure was personal resentment against a certain Portuguese, Jacob de Lima; he dropped it when Gabriel Gomes and the Glückstadt Portuguese made their remonstration, and in May of the same year they were exempted from the royal decree. Then the two wars of King Charles Gustavus X of Sweden against Denmark brought the country into trouble and financial difficulty. King Frederick was obliged to call on the Portuguese for financial help and this induced him to extend still further the conditions for admission into Denmark proclaimed in 1651. Thus, in January 1657, the Danish king offered free access to all Portuguese Jews. In common with other foreigners they received the right to frequent "Our Kingdoms, Principalities and Countries". Only when they intended to settle in the country were they obliged to obtain a special safe-conduct.

However, this was insufficient to permit the foundation of a settlement which the strict conditions of Lutheran confessionalism prohibited. The first article of the Royal Law of 1665 obliged the king and his successors to defend the faith against heretics, fanatics and blasphemers according to the Augsberg Confession of 1530. Only when Frederick III was succeeded by his son Christian V in 1670 did a new and more liberal attitude prevail.

His queen, Charlotte Amalia of Hesse, belonged to the Reformed Church and, accordingly, concesssions in favour of the adherents of the Reformed Church had to be made. Immediately after the accession of Christian V to the throne, Gabriel Gomes obtained confirmation of the privileges enjoyed by the Portuguese under Frederick III. In line with the new mercantilist policy pursued by the Prime Minister Peter Schumacher (later Count Griffenfeld) the king, in April 1676, granted free exercise of religion to those towns which, in order to foster their economic growth, had been favoured with such a privilege. For a short time, from 1681 to 1684, the Portuguese had to renounce their privileges, but then one of the sons of Manoel Teixeira, Diogo Teixeira de Mattos, managed to re-assert their rights.

One of the means whereby the Portuguese reached their goal of the right to settle in Denmark was their activity as bankers. In 1664 Gabriel Gomez acquired the "Herrschaft Herzhorn" in Holstein, the de Lima family was offered the estate of Hald near Viborg in Jutland and Manoel Teixeira was obliged to take over the estates of Dragsholm and Saebygaard. The de Lima family had considerable difficulties in making an economic success of Hald and were glad to sell the estate to Gregers Daa in 1703. The Teixeiras, too, managed to sell their Danish properties before they left the Hamburg region in order to move to Amsterdam.

During the favourable situation after the accession of Christian V, mainly German, that is Ashkenazi, Jews sought permission to settle in Denmark. From 1673 a number of Jews settled in Copenhagen as well as in provincial towns, but only occasionally did Portuguese Jews live in Copenhagen. Thus we find Gabriel Milan, probably a son of Antonio Dias Millão, with his numerous family in Copenhagen from 1678 until he was appointed governor of the Danish island of St. Thomas in 1684. For some time members of the Abensur family lived in Copenhagen, where we find mention of Josua Abensur and his brother Moses. In 1687 Samuel de Lima died in Copenhagen, and one of the sons of Manoel Teixeira lived there for some time. In 1695 he was in trouble with the Danish authorities on account of the performance of his religion, for he was arrested when celebrating Passover with some Portuguese. However, soon afterwards he got permission to hold services. At that time only two Portuguese families lived in Copenhagen and Samuel Teixeira himself left the Danish capital. In 1701 the Jewish community of Copenhagen numbered sixteen families, among them three "Portuguese", but a Sephardi community was never established. In 1717, a "Portuguese," Lopes lived in Copenhagen; in 1728 there is mention of another, Isaac Granada, who had enjoyed the right of citizenship since 1702.

II Norway

Under the regulations valid for Denmark it was easier for Portuguese, that

is to say Sephardim, to make trips to Norway than it was for Ashkenazim. The former could refer to the royal declaration of 1657 and 1660, whereas by the law re-issued by Christian V in 1687, the latter were forbidden to enter Norway. Some Portuguese living at Hamburg and Glückstadt, as well as those of Amsterdam, must have had fairly active business relations with Norway. This is especially true for the Teixeira group. In collaboration with the Danish *rentmester* Henrik Müller, the Teixeiras and Nunes Henriques exploited copper mines in the hinterland of Drontheim. When the Müller enterprise ran into difficulties in the 'eighties, the Teixeiras had to take over estates in Jutland and parts of his Norwegian mines. In 1684 Manoel Teixeira is mentioned as one of the principal partners of the Indset mines, but he refused to pay the necessary subsidies in order to keep the works going, a sign that the business he had taken over from Müller was unprofitable. In 1691 the largest owners of the copper mines of Röros were Lorenz Mortensen Angell with fifty-three shares and Teixeira with forty-three. Teixeira had agents to take care of his interests; at the Indset works, Homfred Brugman was his representative, then Magnus Gabriel, with whom he had a long lawsuit, and finally Jens Hansen, who, being himself a partner in the Röros mines, represented Teixeira there until 1703.

III Sweden

In contrast to Denmark, Sweden was less friendly towards the Portuguese, one of the main reasons being that the Swedes were more orthodox Lutherans. Göteborg was founded at the mouth of the Gotaälv in order to open a door for Sweden to participate in world trade (at the same time as Christian IV invited the Sephardim to come to Glückstadt) on the west coast of southern Sweden. Merchants from Scotland, the Netherlands and Germany were invited to settle in the new town, and it was also proposed to include settlers from among the rich Portuguese living at Amsterdam, Glückstadt and Hamburg. In the summer and autumn of 1626 Konrad von Falkenberg, a Swedish functionary, visited Lübeck and Hamburg in order to raise money for the wars of King Gustavus Adolphus. He started negotiations with the Hamburg Portuguese in order to attract some of them to Göteborg. But as the Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna, a leading figure of the time at the side of the king, and a conservative in religious matters, was against the project, in fact it was not realized.

Johan Adler Salvius was diplomatic representative of Sweden at Hamburg from 1631. He had good relations with several of the Portuguese, among them Duarte Nunes da Costa, later resident of Portugal, Dr. Rosales, the agent of Spain, Dr. Dionysius Mussaphia and Cohen de Lara who dedicted his dictionary *Is David* to Adler Salvius. Bur Adler Salvius was not strong enough to force open the way for the Hamburg Portuguese against the

opposition of the Oxenstierna group. The young Queen Christina had good relations with the Portuguese at Hamburg and at Amsterdam. It was probably already in 1645 that the Hamburg physician Benedikt de Castro (Baruch Nehemias) was called to the court of Stockholm to give his advice to the eighteen-year-old queen. The following year he was appointed her physician-in-ordinary. Towards the end of 1651 Dr. de Castro was summoned to Stockholm once more and seems to have stayed there for some time. He used the opportunity to solicit permission for his brethren to trade in Sweden, but how far that permission was used is unknown.

Of much more importance is the relationship of Christina with the Teixeira family. In addition to Dr. de Castro it is possible that the Spanish envoy Antonio Pimentel who arrived in Sweden in 1652, engineered the contact between the queen and the rich banker Diogo Teixeira who had moved from Antwerp to Hamburg in the forties. Before Queen Christina abdicated in 1654, she had appointed Teixeira her banker. When she left Sweden for her great journey through Europe she passed through Hamburg and stayed as a guest in the house of Teixeira. From Brussels Christina appointed Teixeira her resident at Hamburg in 1655, thus showing that she still retained her rights as a sovereign. Later, when Christina came to Hamburg in 1661/62, she was a guest in Teixeira's house. In July 1661 Christina made Teixeira trustee of her appanage with the duty of remitting her a monthly income and paying her debts. After the death of Diogo Teixeira in 1666, his son Manoel was appointed his successor as resident and trustee of the queen. After a second stay in Hamburg from 1666 to 1668 Christina and the young Teixeira never met again but his function as resident and trustee continued until his death. In 1687 she gave Teixeira a general receipt. Teixeira held an important position within the network of merchants who transmitted to Sweden the subsidies of Western European Powers, especially of France.

Another Hamburg Portuguese who had relations with Sweden was Jacob Abensur who visited Stockholm in 1689. In 1707 six Sephardi families from Venice offered Charles XII a payment in return for permission to stay and trade in Sweden for ten years. One of the mediators of the project was Abraham Sarrabia living in Hamburg. But the plan did not materialise.

Some politicians and economists discussed the utility of adopting a policy such as Hamburg had followed towards the Portuguese, including Johan Gyllenstierna who pointed to that city's example and Johan Classon Risingh in his *Tractat om Kiöphandelen* (Treatise on Trade). Johan Silfvererantz submitted a proposal to Charles XII to use the help of the Portuguese in organising a Swedish Levant trade. But as the migratory movement of the Sephardim directed itself increasingly towards other counties, Sweden lost interest in them.

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THE SEPHARDIM OF FRANCE

by
Gérard Nahon

The French settlements within the Sephardi diaspora are all distinguished by being sited in the immediate vicinity of the Iberian Peninsula. From the time of the High Middle Ages onwards Spanish Jews had no doubt crossed over into Gaul to join the first Jewish settlements along the Mediterranean coastline. The first Sephardi immigration movement into France followed the Almohade invasion of Spain. At this period there came into existence at Lunel in Languedoc a coterie of Spanish-Jewish *savants*. One of them, Judah ben Saul Ibn Tibbon, became the ancestor of a distinguished line of translators of Arabic works into Hebrew — mainly on Spanish soil.[1] Relationships between Spanish and Provençal Jews henceforth became continuous: they appear in a rather harsh light during the great controversies that stirred the various communities on the subject of Maimonides's works on the one hand and on the study of philosophy on the other hand.[2] If the Provençals and the Spaniards retained their two distinctive native cultures, in one sector at least — Hebrew poetry from the XIIth to the XIVth century — one can say that their literary output formed a single entity.[3]

The expulsion of the Jews from Spain on 31 March 1492 did not result in an immigration movement into France. It is true that during the months following the fateful decree one hundred and eighteen Jews from Aragon, whose names have come down to us, landed at Marseilles. They had been captured at sea by the captain of a galleon from Nice. The local Jewish community negotiated their release by ransom and undertook to support them for four months.[4] No account is extant of the subsequent fate of this handful of Jews, It so happens that the Jewish community of Marseilles was itself destined to disappear when the Jews of Provence were expelled in 1501.[5]

In Old France the Sephardi communities only emerged much later, for since the expulsion of the 17th September 1394 Judaism was no longer tolerated within the kingdom. Legally the situation was the same as that of Spain. It was Jews converted to Catholicism, the "New Christians", who immigrated into France from the XVIth to the XVIIIth centuries. Their history is linked to that of the *marranos* of the Iberian Peninsula and its

dependencies. To some extent their history is an extension of the history of the New Christians of Spain and Portugal. But the Judaism of these immigrants came to public view in the XVIIIth century, especially in the Jewish communities of Bordeaux and Bayonne.[6]

How did the public authority, in this case the Royal power, bring itself to accept this Jewish presence? How, despite a precarious status, despite Catholic traditions that had been forced on them, despite a distinct isolation from the vital centres of Judaism, could the Sephardim of France maintain — or rediscover — their ancestral identity? How did this handful of men provide such a notable contribution to the civilisation of their adopted land and to the destiny of the Jewish people? Historical research can only provide a partial reply to these questions. We propose to investigate three periods. Firstly there is the *marrano* period of the XVIth and XVIIth centuries. There follows the "golden age" of the Portuguese-Jewish *Nations* in the XVIIIth century. Finally there is the period of the Consistoire and post-Consistoire systems which lasted through the XIXth and XXth centuries until the eve of the Second World War.

I. The marrano Period (XIVth to XVIIth centuries)

When did those New Christians, brought into existence by the Portuguese forced baptisms of 1497, start coming into France? Doubtless after the establishment of the Inquisition in Portugal in 1536. From then on Portuguese newcomers are found to be seeking to legalise their situation by applying for letters of naturalisation, of which large numbers may be found in the Charter Collection at the French Record Office.[7] But are they always New Christians?

Not only did the New Christians come in large numbers to France but they also organised themselves there. In 1550 Francis de Castro, Louys de Berga and twenty-one Portuguese requested from the Chancery of King Henri II a collective document in their favour.[8] The "Letters of Naturalisation and Dispensation" — more commonly known as *Letters Patent* — which they finally obtained in August 1550 were the result of prolonged action by their community, whose precise manoevrings have not been recorded. The *Letters Patent* authorised the Portuguese known as New Christians to enter the Kingdom of France with their families, servants and goods, to trade there as they wished and to enjoy the same rights as other subjects of the king.

To what extent did the grant of these documents encourage more New Christians to come to France? The importance of the documents is brought out by their phrasing. "Among the said Portuguese, known as New Christians, there has arisen a great desire, which grows day by day, to take up residence in this our Kingdom and to bring their wives and families, bearing with them money and chattels, in the manner that has been set forth to us by those whom they have sent hither".[9]

It is clear that these *Letters Patent* were relied upon as fundamental documents of title. Those whom they affected had them renewed by Henri III at Lyons in November 1574. The new document was entitled "Privileges granted by the King to the Spaniards and Portuguese of the city of Bordeaux". It proves that a Jewish community had long existed in Bordeaux. This community was disturbed and anxious for reasons that are not entirely clear. We find that it obtained a second Royal document in its favour, termed a "Guarantee granted by the King to the Spaniards and Portuguese of the city of Bordeaux." Whereas the preceding documents do not make the slightest allusion to the religion of the Portuguese, the *Guarantee* contains a clause forbidding *"any enquiry whatsover into their lives".*[10] An old tradition explains this wording thus: *"the banning of any enquiry into the lives of the Spaniards and Portuguese evidently indicates that they were known as Jews, but that there was no desire to provide the populace with a fresh rod to beat them by criticising ideas with which people were not even acquainted".*[11] As a fact, although there never was any question of granting any toleration to Judaism these Royal documents granted to the New Christians a charter which protected them from any legal challenge. Whether they sought religious freedom (even if only a limited freedom) or whether they were simply in fear of molestation from the Inquisition, the New Christians of the Peninsula now knew that just over the borders of Spain they could find a sure haven.

We still know little about the Sephardim in France during the XVIth century. Should we believe with Szajkowski that the new arrivals, satisfied with the security they found in France, where there were no discriminatory regulations to disturb them, melted into the surrounding population and were quickly lost to Judaism?[12] Or should we hold on the contrary that they secretly set up those family and community arrangements which were later to emerge in the shape of fully fledged communities?

For our part we believe that it is permissible to deduce from what appeared in the full light of day at a later period that these institutions had already been started in a concealed form in the earlier period.[13]

When we come to the XVIIth century, documentation becomes more plentiful. One can outline the geography of the Portuguese communities stretching from St. Jean-de-Luz, near the Spanish border, to Rouen. It includes many places in the South-West, including Labastide-Clairence, Peyrehorade, Bidache, Bayonne, Bordeaux; many towns of the Atlantic coast and the English Channel, including La Rochelle, Nantes and le Havre; and to a certain extent Paris. The major factor to influence the Sephardim in France during the XVIIth century is the emergence of the Judaeo-Portuguese community of Amsterdam. In the first place Amsterdam was the prime destination for New Christians wanting to return to Judaism. Many stopped at a French Jewish settlement before continuing their journey to Amsterdam.

They were replaced by other refugees, for the New Christian emigration from Spain and Portugal continued right through to the XVIIIth century. Furthermore Amsterdam was a source of help of all kinds, both material and spiritual. Finally the Amsterdam community was a powerful factor in re-judaising the French *marranos*.[14] Our French communities appear by name in the registers of the *Santa Companhia de dotar orfans e donzelas pobres*. This pious fraternity, established in Amsterdam in 1615, distributed dowries to candidates chosen annually by lot. Payment of the dowry was conditional on the marriage being with a Jew circumcised *in a land of Judaism*, that is to say in Amsterdam. This condition accounted for a number of potential journeys, and sometimes actual journeys, to the city on the Amstel. On 7th October 1615 the fraternity appointed local correspondents in St. Jean-de-Luz, Bordeaux, Paris, Nantes and Rouen. We may thus be certain that in these towns there existed judaising groups.[15] Thanks to an examination of the notarial documents of Amsterdam that is currently being carried out, we can observe the network of family and commercial relationships which united the New Christian concealed Jews of France with the openly practising Jews of the Netherlands.[16]

Each French community received emigrants from the Peninsula, had its discussions with the local authorities, sent contingents to Amsterdam and returned to Judaism to a greater or less degree.

At the borders of Spain the nearest community was St.-Jean-de-Luz, numbering some two hundred souls. It benefited from the protection of Count de Gramont, Governor of Bayonne and Labourd. As the Spanish agent revealed, this protection was paid for. *"Es a fuerça de doblones que cada día dan al Conde Agramonte y él les defiende"*.[17] A nodal point for all New Christian emigration, St. Jean-de-Luz was the first stage on the route to Amsterdam. Among the Portuguese starting from St. Jean-de-Luz for Amsterdam we find Fernado Nuñez, Jacob Franco, Castello Mendo, the Master of Arts Duarte Nunes Victoria, *alias* Abraham Curiel, his son and other members of his family in May 1618.[18] But a tragedy sealed the fate of this community. On 19 March 1619 a priest was confessing the faithful in the town church. He noticed that a 60-year-old Portuguese lady, Catherine de Fernandes, concealed the host in her handkerchief instead of swallowing it. The priest stirred up the population and had the old lady imprisoned on a charge of sacrilege. Fearing that the prisoner would escape punishment, the populace seized her and thrust her into a barrel filled with tar and straw where the wretched woman was soon burnt alive. In fear of a threat to their own persons, the other Portuguese left St. Jean-de-Luz within a few days.[19]

At Bordeaux the Portuguese colony was protected by Marshall d'Ornano, Governor of Guyenne. Many members, including Fernandès Lopes Lameyra and George Francia in 1670, obtained letters of citizenship.[20] All had their children baptised and their weddings and funerals conducted by the

priest of their parish. Thus we find that a certain Antonio Mendes, who was the local representative of the *Santa Companhia* of Amsterdam, presenting his own son Grimaud for baptism.[21]

At Nantes the Portuguese were divided between judaisers and Catholics. Among the former was to be found Abraham d'Espinoza, grandfather of Baruch Spinoza, the philosopher. The community disappeared in the first half of the XVIIIth century after setting a number of Jews on the road to Amsterdam.[22]

In Paris a little Portuguese colony was led by Carlos Garcia, a perfumer. Its spiritual head may have been Elias de Montalto who originally came to France in the capacity of physician to Marie de Medicis and who had been granted the exceptional privilege of practising Judaism.[23] In a *responsum* he explained that he was entitled to travel in a carriage on the Sabbath.[24] In the course of a debate he developed a reasoned defence — a *"Razonamento"* — of Judaism.[25] Finally it was in Paris that Manoel Fernandès Villareal, Portuguese consul destined to be burned for Judaism in Lisbon on 1 December 1652, lived for a time.[26] According to Richard Simon there was a small synagogue in the French capital at that period.[27]

The XVIIth century Portuguese community at Rouen has been thoroughly studied, mainly from the denunciations against it that were brought before the Inquisition. It benefited from the commercial relations between the Iberian Peninsula and Normandy and from the nearness of the Netherlands. Royal protection was first provided by Henri IV, thanks to Brother Martin — known as Brother Martin of the Holy Spirit. Reports written by Inquisition spies have left details of the community's religioius life, e.g. the reading of Hebrew prayers and of passages from the Ferrara Spanish Bible, the celebration of a Kippur service by a Jewish minister who came from afar, one Amar de Vidas, etc. But when things went amiss for Brother Martin the first judaising group at Rouen started to break up. Nevertheless Rouen's New Christians obtained Royal Letters of Patent on 10 October 1613 and began to organise themselves afresh. A serious crisis shook them in 1638. A Spanish priest called Diego de Cisneros denounced Diogo d'Oliveira and another member of the community as apostates. A case was drawn up by the Rouen officials and brought to court. It was settled by a decree from the King's Council which absolved the accused from guilt providing they paid over the sum of 250,000 *livres*.

This community numbered among its members three poets whose *marrano*-style works were composed in Spanish. João Pinto Delgado published in Rouen in 1627 *Poema de la reina Esther; Lamentaciones del Profeta Jeremias; Historia de Rut; y varias poesias*. When he moved to Amsterdam he adopted the name of Moses and wrote an autobiography which has recently been published by I. S. Révah. António Enríquez Gómez published serveral works at Rouen, including a pamphlet against the

Inquisition entitled *Política angelica* in 1647. His son, Diego Enriquez Basurto, published *El triunfo de la virtud y paciencia de Job* in 1649.[28]

Other New Christian communities developed in France in the XVIIth century. The most important was at Bayonne. Some hostile *échevins* (municipal magistrates) banned its members from residing in the town, so they established themselves in the suburb of Saint Esprit under the protection of the canons who were the local lords of the manor. The Portuguese newcomers rented houses, apartments and shops from the canons and they paid for burial rights. The King's government imposed the *coutume* tax on their merchandise. In December 1858 it granted *Letters Patent* to the Portuguese merchants of Bayonne. Soon the community accepted the influence of Amsterdam, from whence came support, advice and even directives. In 1654 the priest of Saint Esprit obtained a cemetery for them. We know from the records of a case brought by the Toledo Inquisition that burials took place according to Jewish ritual with the priest's consent.[29] Thirty years later Fernando Mendez da Costa and Alvaro Louis "syndics of the Portuguese inhabitants of the said town, acting both for them and for the other Portuguese" acquired the land which to this day is still the cemetery of the Jews of Bayonne.[30] From the beginning of the XVIIth century the community secretly practised Judaism under the direction of a lay spiritual leader, Andrés Lopez Villareal, *"a quien veneraban como rabi y maestro los del arrabal"*.[31] Between 1650 and 1660 prayers were said in the house of Diego Rodrigues Cardoso; their form has come down to us via spies' reports sent to the Toledo Inquisition.[32] Towards 1670 the community secured the services of Rabbi Isaac-Israel Avila. This rabbi affirmed in writing in 1673 that he had solemnised the wedding of Isaque Alvares and Rachel Alvares de Almeda, according to the law of Moses.[33] Henceforth Bayonne was to play a prominent role in the lives of the *marranos* from the Peninsula. The town received the New Christians and gave them their first contact with Judaism, whether they decided to go to Amsterdam, or to settle in the community, or to return to Spain or Portugal. Bayonne also strengthened Crypto-Judaism in these two countries. The Inquisition was not mistaken: as far as it was concerned a trip to Bayonne was a certain sign of the "crime" of Judaism.[34] The case brought against Gonzalo Baez de Pavia in 1654 accurately illustrates Bayonne's role: the accused man confessed to all that he had learnt about Judaism in Bayonne and all that he had practised there.[35]

Three small communities near Bayonne experienced a golden age in the XVIIth century: these were Peyrehorade, Labastide-Clairence and Bidache. Peyrehorade had a cemetery since 6 January 1628. Labastide-Clairence'e cemetery was older still. In the beginning this burial ground was entirely in the *marrano* style: nothing betrayed the religion of the deceased. In 1659 for the first time a biblical forename appears on a tombstone, spelt 'Yahacob' to accord with its Hebrew pronunciation. The Bidache community did not even

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bother about putting on a Catholic mask. For Bidache was a sovereign principality where the King's writ did not run. The Jews of Bidache were able to obtain two princely Orders in 1665 and 1668, in which the word "Jew" appeared in place of the name "Portuguese" which was habitually used to designate them elsewhere in France.[36]

Other New Christian groups stemming from the main *marrano* stream led a precarious existence. We know little of the Toulouse community whose fate seems to resemble that of the Peninsula *marranos*. Perhaps because of the jealously of the native Catholic merchants, the Toulouse *Parlement* enacted on 16 April 1685 that "Roques, Leon, Emmanuel and his boy, Mirande, Loppès-Vandale, Cardozo and Sylva Morena, Jews styling themselves Portuguese merchants, shall be burnt alive and their ashes scattered to the winds." This sentence was passed on those persons *in absentia*, and we do not know what the actual outcome of the sentence was.[37]

At Marseilles, despite their economic value, some Portuguese Jews who arrived from Leghorn were not welcomed. Their Jewish practices were denounced by spies.[38] A rabbinical opinion from Samuel Aboab contains a Marseilles divorce decree, dated 11 April 1676, drafted in Spanish and transcribed in Hebrew letters. The decree bears the signatures of Joseph Vaes Villareal, Jacob de Samuel Nunès Gomes, Abraham Athias, Abraham Tajal and Abraham Delmonte.[39] The community had to go underground as a result of a Royal Order sent on 2 May 1682 *"to make the Jews who have settled in Marseilles leave the Kingdom"*.[40]

It is difficult to set a precise date for the end of the *marrano* period of the Sephardim in France. On the one hand in Bayonne at least, the synagogue was no longer concealed after 1679. Tourists visited it. Madame d'Arblay wrote on 20 February of that year, *"The next day they took me to see the Jews' synagogue in the suburb of Saint Esprit. I saw nothing remarkable in it"*.[41] On the other hand in Bordeaux Portuguese Jews were still being entered in the parish registers until about 1730. In practice towards the end of the XVIIth century the authorities implicitly recognised the Judaism of "the Portuguese". An expulsion order issued on 20 November 1684 is evidence of this. It concerns ninety-three *Jews* of Bordeaux, Bayonne, Bidache, Dax and Peyrehorade.[42] By this reference to them as Jews the existence of others is recognised in these towns. The clearest text on this matter is provided by an expulsion ordered on 28 April 1694 by Jean Baptiste Colbert junior (son of Louis XIV's late Minister) against Jews who came from Martinique. *"The King"*, this document states, *"desires you to expel them and make them leave, allowing them only the time to get transport for their property and to move to that suburb of Bayonne where the King has permitted them to dwell"*.[43] Of the two major communities of France, Bayonne is thus given an official status. This town could best carry out its job in the *marrano* diaspora, which was to further the emigration of the New Christians from Spain. This is what

distinguishes it from Bordeaux. Like Saint-Jean-de-Luz in the early XVIIth century it housed refugees from the Peninsula for a period and prepared them for re-entry into the Jewish community.

II. The golden age of the Portuguese-Jewish "Nations" (XVIIIth century)

This period, which began in the last decade of the XVIIth century for Bayonne and the second decade of the XVIIIth century for Bordeaux, was characterised by an active development of communal institutions, widespread observance of Jewish precepts and sustained contact with the diaspora and the Holy Land. In this respect the Sephardim of France resembled their Sephardi co-religionists of London, for whom the XVIIIth century is also considered to be a golden age.[44] But they differed partly because of their legal status and partly because of their language and function in the Sephardi world. They never really had full freedom of action and their religion was never really recognised by the authorities. Certainly we find that the phrase "Community of the Jewish, or Portuguese, Nation" was applied to the Jewish community of Bayonne on 28 January 1698 in the *Armorial* of Guyenne.[45] But a decree of the King's Council of 21 February 1727 "finds" that, contrary to the laws of the Kingdom of France, "a considerable number of Jews" have settled in Guyenne and Béarn "and even openly practise there the Jewish religion." The decree calls for an inventory of all Jewish property and the seizure thereof.[46] Sensing measures of confiscation and even expulsion, the communities concerned displayed their Letters Patent and undertook to contribute the enormous sum of one hundred thousand *livres*, plus two *sols* per *livre*, to the Crown. Next year they obtained the revocation of the Decree and new Letters Patent, which contained the formula "Jews . . . known and established . . . under the title of Portuguese or New Christians".[47] The truth is that the exercise of the Jewish religion never was authorised and never would be in the XVIIIth century, even in the Letters Patent of June 1776. Nonetheless our communities continued to discuss their problems openly, gaining support for their identity — even though under the *ancien régime* of France they could never get this identity officially recognised. Living next to Spain, often receiving immigrants from Spain, maintaining frequent relations with friends and commercial correspondents in Spain, the French Sephardim spoke Spanish within their communities, differing in this from other Western Sephardim, whose vernacular was Portuguese.[48] Finally, more than in the past, they performed a unique role in the Sephardi diaspora. They provided a Jewish presence at the very gates of the Peninsula and offered a convenient transit route to those Spanish and Portuguese crypto-Jews who wished to come over to a Jewish community.

Our *Nations* in France possessed a form of government whose decisions were regularly entered in a Register. We know little of their inner life except

in the case of the two major ones — Bayonne and Bordeaux. The sole surviving Register — that of Bordeaux — is headed "Register of proceedings of the Portuguese Nation since 1710".[49] The *Nations* had constitutions made from regulations of which some dated back to the XVIIth century. These regulations were assembled and codified at Bayonne on 21 December 1752.[50] In Bordeaux they received royal approval from Louis XV on 14 December 1760.[51] If we turn to Bayonne we find a complicated system in which essential power belonged to the *Syndics*, who were three in number, each successively acting as President for four months a year; and to the Treasurer. The *Syndics*, commonly called the *Parnassim*, chosen from among the better-off members of the *Nation*, were elected on the Sunday before Easter by a *Junta* of thirteen electors. They called meetings and governed the *Nation*: it was their responsibility to distribute help to the poor, to see that the *Nation's* regulations were enforced, to provide for internal policing and to enforce religious observance. Above all, they looked after the assessment and collection of taxes and other dues needed by the Royal and local authorities, and necessary sums for communal life. The *Syndics* and the Treasurer were assisted by the *Junta*, co-opted each year, which met at least once a month. The *Junta* voted on charities and would oversee the accounts: it did not draw up a budget, for this was permanently fixed by the Regulations. It drew up taxation rolls of members of the *Nation*, allotted franchises for meat, unleavened bread and mail distribution, supervised the running of the pious Brotherhoods, administered the main synagogue, issued a ban of excommunication if need be, and appointed an Agent for the *Nation* in Paris. Another assembly of twenty-six members (the current *Junta* and thirteen former *Junta* members) met more rarely. It could amend the proceedings or decrees of the Thirteen. Finally a *General Assembly of the Nation* could be called on great occasions: it consisted of all the former *Syndics* and most of the members of the *Nation*.

A *General Assembly* was held on 10 January 1703. There were present *los ancianos del pueblo y cabezas de familia que componen la mayor parte del lugar*.[52] At the *General Assembly* of 19 April 1789 ninety-seven people took part and signed the Minutes.[53] This system may fairly be termed an oligarchy, for the *Syndics*, recruited from among the richest members, wielded the most obvious power. A royal reform of 1741 increased its collegiate nature. However, it was basically democratic for the major guide-lines were decided only by the *General Assembly*, that is to say by the whole *Nation*. Within the *Nation* there was a very active political life despite the use — sometimes excessive use — of that prime instrument of discipline, excommunication.

The *Nation* employed a certain number of officials: secretaries, a *mande* or communal beadle, ritual slaughtermen, an archivist etc. One of them, the *Nation's* agent who defended their interests at the seat of government, lived in Paris. The first of these known to us, Jacob Rodriguez

Pereira, had invented a method of teaching the deaf and dumb which earned him a royal pension. By using his personal contacts, by judiciously making use of certain public monies in Ministerial corridors, he obtained for them free *Letters Patent* in 1776. He was soon formally recognised by the office of the Lieutenant of Police as the *Syndic* of the Portuguese Jews in Paris; and he acquired a plot of land for a cemetery at La Villette, which was the first modern Jewish cemetery in Paris.[54] After his death in 1780 David Silveyra became agent of the Jewish *Nation* of Bayonne.[55]

The rabbi, who was paid by the *Nation*, did not enjoy any official status, since the royal government looked on the Portuguese Jews as *"New Christians"*. Whereas in Alsace, Metz and Lorraine the rabbi was appointed by the king, in Bayonne and Bordeaux he depended on the goodwill of his lay flock, who led him quite a hard life. One Article in the Bayonne Regulations lays down, *"The rabbi will take no part in the affairs of the Nation and will confine himself to that which concerns his ministry"*.[56] Several rabbis at Bayonne were trained at Amsterdam: Abraham Vaes, Isaac de Acosta, Isaac Abarbanel de Souza. Only one came from Italy, Raphael ben Eliezer Meldola. A spiritual leader with an international reputation, the latter issued authoritative decrees, was the author of several works in Hebrew (including a collection of *Responsa* printed in Amsterdam in 1773) and was called upon to give his approval to books written by rabbis from various countries.[57] His Bayonne predecessors were content to write books in Spanish intended for the general Judeo-Portuguese public, perhaps printed there clandestinely. The first of these books, the *Historia Sacra Real* by Isaac de Acosta, published in 1691, with no indication of where it was printed, was dedicated "al magnifico señor Abraham de la Pena, Parnas Presidente del K.K. [Kahal Kados]" (of Peyrehorade). It is a paraphrase of the Book of Esther, a work that was dear to the hearts of the *marranos*.[58] We owe to the same author the *Vida de Salvacion*, a manual for the sick and dying, which remained in manuscript until 1874, and also *Conjeturas Sagradas sobre los primeros profetas* (Leiden, 1722), a large biblical commentary. Abraham Vaes had published *Arbol de Vidas* (1692), a practical catechism of religious precepts and *Discursos predicables y avisos spirituales* (1710), a collection of sermons. Compared with their Bayonne colleagues the Bordeaux rabbis seem rather colourless. Of Joseph Falcon, who came from Jerusalem, all we know is a rabbinical "approval" he gave to the Algerian Meir Cresques ben Netanael's edition of the *Tashbaz*, which was a collection of *Responsa* of Simon ben Zemah Duran (Rashbaz), printed in Amsterdam in 1739.

Religious life was favoured by the existence of numerous conventicles called *congregas*, or more pretentiously synagogues. In 1755, when passing through Bayonne, the scholarly emissary from the Holy Land, Hayyim Joseph David Azulay preached to *thirteen* synagogues in that town.[59] The Portuguese *Nation* in Bordeaux had at least six synagogues.[60] One must also count the

village synagogues of Peyrehorade and Bidache, and the little Paris synagogue in the Rue des Boucheries.[61] Sometimes private individuals were the founders and owners: they looked after the maintenance and provided for the synagogues in their wills. Thus in his will, written in Spanish and dated 10 September 1756, Moïse Guédes of Bayonne provided legacies for the lighting of his *congrega* and for the payment of its *Hazanim* (cantors).[62] In his will made at Bordeaux on 13 September 1785 Izac Mendès-France declares, "I desire and intend that my said legatees hereinafter named shall pay and distribute on the day of my death the sum of one hundred *livres* to the poor of the Portuguese nation and a month thereafer a further hundred *livres* for the use of the little synagogue which I founded in the Rue des Augustins . . . ".[63] Prayers were recited daily in the various synagogues. At Bayonne morning prayers were recited earlier in one synagogue frequented by the working class "known as the *Faro* which only served a few poor day-workers who needed to say their prayers earlier than the more leisured people, in order not to lose working time".[64]

Religious precepts were observed by everyone. Despite the protests of the *échevins* (municipal magistrates) Jewish shops closed on Saturday. One Friday night (i.e. eve of the Sabbath) at Labastide-Clairence Abraham de Paz refused to countersign the record of an official visit to inspect the wines in his cellar. Again in Labastide-Clairence the supplier of meat had, in his annual contract with the town authorities, to undertake to provide the Jews with cattle for their needs.[65] *Kasher* wine was made at Peyrehorade[66] and Bordeaux. The *Nation* at Bordeaux supervised rabbinical control of *kasher* wine-making. In Bayonne the Jews ate *kasher* cheese imported from Amsterdam.[67]

The two major poles of Judaeo-Portuguese religious observance were charitable works and education. The *Nation* made all sorts of arrangements to ensure the welfare of poor families and took over responsibility for their rent. It kept a register of assisted persons and took steps to distribute meat, unleavened bread and broth to the poor. It paid a retainer to the doctor who looked after them and paid the apothecary for medicines prescribed for them. Pious Brotherhoods completed the *Nation's* charitable activities. These were administered by *Syndics* and Treasurers; the *Nation* controlled their activities. Among the Brotherhoods at Bayonne the *Jebera*, the *Brotherhood for the Sick Poor*, the *Malbis 'arumin* (which provided clothing for the poor), and the *Brotherhood for Female Orphans* (which arranged dowries for them) are the best known. To the local poor there must be added hardship cases from elsewhere who passed through the town and to whom the *Nation* granted aid. But the *Nation's* resources were not limitless and twice it had to get rid of the surplus poor. For this purpose it obtained expulsion orders from the King's Council in 1684 and 1749.[68]

Education, although sometimes entrusted to private teachers, was the

responsibility of the *Talmud Torah* Brotherhood at the elementary level. Its teaching stressed the study of prayers, of religious precepts and of the Bible.[69] At a higher level the Talmud was taught by the rabbi in a *Yeshiba*. Standards were higher at Bayonne, it seems, than at Bordeaux and we find that David Lindo of Bordeaux sent his young son to stay with Jacob Pereira Brandon of Bayonne as a boarder.[70]

In the second half of the XVIIIth century Bayonne and Bordeaux had prayers said for the recovery of Louis V and for the safe delivery of a child to Mary Antoinette when she was *enceinte*. When translated into French and printed these prayers were sent to the Court and were received favourably. The Bordeaux synagogue came near to being officially recognised when on Friday 30 June 1780 Prince de Condé and Prince de Bourbon were present at a service in the Paez synagogue in the Rue Bouhault. The Register of Bordeaux gives a highly coloured account of the event. Does this mean that our *Nation* had won in their struggle against the legal tradition of the Kingdom? Let us say simply that Authority tolerated the Portuguese Jews as such, but only up to a certain point.[71] An examination of Ministerial correspondence on the subject of the *Nations* leads to the conclusion that the royal attitude remained ambiguous.[72] Until the very eve of the Revolution the taxation rolls of the Jewish *Nation* are entitled *"Taxes on New Christians"*.[73]

The explanation of the toleration enjoyed by the Jews would seem to lie in their economic usefulness.[74] This argument is valid for Bordeaux where several Jewish firms fitted out ships, traded with the colonies and practised as bankers, all on a very large scale. One David Gradis (1665-1751) expanded the activities of his firm to England, Canada, and the French West Indies. His nephew Abraham Gradis (1699-1780) further increased the firm's operations in the service of the State. His ships supplied Canada with its needs, in 1748 he founded the *Société du Canada* and during the Seven Years' War he put fourteen ships to sea.[75] The merchant bankers Gabriel de Silva and David Lindo were less fortunate, for they went bankrupt.[76]

The Jewish merchants of Bordeaux invested their profits in town houses and in country estates. But the Jews of Bordeaux were not all well-off. Apart from the poorest classes, there was also a needy class employed in humble capacities in Judeo-Portuguese businesses who lived on the edge of poverty. At Bayonne retail trade was forbidden to Jews — at least in the town. Wholesale merchants traded with Spain, Holland and the colonies. Their businesses covered cocoa, tobacco, textiles, salt, leather and pelts. The trades involved ranged from bankers to dock labourers, including cobblers, locksmiths, wig-makers, barbers, butchers, chocolate-makers, confectioners, jewellers, apothecaries, book-keepers, dancing masters and professional players.[77] The poor had difficulty in finding jobs and the *Nation*, in order to spare them more from their own means, asked for a reduction in taxation. Of course, as at Bordeaux, one finds Jews who enjoyed an honest comfort,

drawing their income from estates they had bought after a successful life in business.[78] But among the really big merchants of Bayonne in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries there were few Jews. An economic decline, more notable than at Bordeaux, became apparent in the last three decades of the XVIIIth century from an emigration of Jews to Pau, Bordeaux or the colonies. The number of synagogues at Bayonne fell to four by 1776 and the *Nation* was considering a further reduction.[79] If it is true that economically the Portuguese Jews were better off than those of eastern France, if they could legally own land and houses, if they were less oppressed by feudal dues, may we deduce from this that the State was favourable to them because of their economic usefulness? Here again we must notice the difference between Bayonne and Bordeaux. The Jewish *Nation* at Bordeaux, numbering one thousand souls at most, set no problem for that city, whereas in Bayonne some 2,500 people, confined to the suburb of Saint-Esprit amounted to one-fifth of Bayonne's population. The *échevins* waged a fierce war against them and the *Nation* was constantly in the throes of legal action against the *échevins*. Nevertheless the real or supposed economic importance of the Jews was one of the factors that made them acceptable; but one must also consider the demographic factors and changes in contemporary attitudes.

The *Intendant* (royal provincial administrator) Dupré de Saint Maur defined the Jewish *Nation* as "a small isolated body".[80] But in fact the *Nation* was part of a bigger whole, that is to say of the Sephardi diaspora. Its membership of the bigger whole was expressed in all sorts of connexions with the communities of this diaspora, primarily with Amsterdam.

Exchanges with Amsterdam were private, communal or rabbinical. Many members of French communities had friends and relatives in Amsterdam with whom they corresponded, to whom they sent merchandise or left legacies in their wills. Sometimes Amsterdam Jews settled in Bayonne or Bordeaux, while others made the journey in the opposite direction. Abraham Lopes Colaso came from Amsterdam to Peyrehorade in 1722, but his brother Benjamin still lived in Amsterdam. In 1720 Francis Roblès, living in Bayonne, bequeathed 300 *livres* to his daughter Judiq de Roblès, wife of David Lopes de Pas, who lived in Amsterdam. In communal matters Amsterdam's role was truly metropolitan. The little communities of Peyrehorade and Labastide-Clairence asked Amsterdam for financial help in acquiring a cemetery or consolidating their ownership of a synagogue. The Jewish *Nation* of Bordeaux used to appeal for help to the pious brotherhoods of Amsterdam. Thus on 21 April 1765 they proposed to send ten or twelve orphans to the Amsterdam brotherhood *Avi Jetomim*. Amsterdam was relied upon in particular to back up the enforcement of discipline within a community. As early as 1684 Bidache sent a plea to Amsterdam to settle a serious internal squabble. In 1740 Bayonne complained to Amsterdam about the doings of an ex-Syndic Jacob Levy. Against clandestine marriages

Amsterdam synagogue had issued a decree which was accepted by all synagogues. This forbade young people, under severe penalties, to give wedding rings secretly without having sought their father's assent. Rabbis in France sought advice from the rabbis of Amsterdam, who would prepare detailed opinions or *responsa* for them. Thus we know of one *responsum* of 24 May 1684 addressed by the Amsterdam rabbi, Jacob ben Aaron Sasportas, to Hayyim de Mercado, rabbi of Bayonne, on a delicate problem affecting the community at Bidache. Towards 1690 the same Jacob Sasportas sent to Isaac da Costa, the officiating Minister at Peyrehorade, a *responsum* about the observance of High Holidays and the Sabbath.

When the rabbis wrote books they turned to their colleagues in Amsterdam for an official "approval". Thus on 15 December 1692 Ishak Abuab de Fonseca approved in this way the *Discursos Predicables* of Abraham Vaes, rabbi of Bayonne. In 1737 David Israel Atias and Isaac Hayyim ibn Dana Brito approved the *responsa* of Raphael Meldola, another Bayonne rabbi, entitled *Mayyim Rabbim*. Admittedly between 1737 and 1742 Raphael Meldola himself approved nine rabbinical works published in Amsterdam. In general Amsterdam had a predominant role to play in re-judaising those *marranos* who came to France and in establishing a communal structure for the *Nations* in France.[81]

During this period relations with the Judeo-Portuguese community in London became ever closer. London Jews came to find themselves wives in Bayonne — as did James de Lemos who married Esther Gomes Ravelo in Bayonne on 28 March 1752.[82] The correspondence of this James de Lemos with his Bayonne brother-in-law, Aaron Rabelo, has come down to us. It provides interesting side-lights on the commercial exchanges between two Judaeo-Portuguese merchants in Bayonne and London.[83] One David Brandon stayed at Bayonne in 1786: in consequence on an adventure he had with a girl called Judice de Silva Valle the latter gave birth to an infant the following year.[84] Sometimes Jews from London took up residence in France. So we find a certain Sarra da Costa Amesquette, residing in Bordeaux in 1734, who had been married in London.[85] Capital provided by London Jews was invested in Bayonne trade: on 7 December 1685 Luis d'Andrade of London partly financed a marine credit business at Bayonne.[86] French communities sometimes asked London for help. Bidache received a small sum for the restoration of its cemetery in 1774. In 1782 Bordeaux, which had appealed to London for the same purpose met with a refusal. In 1779 Jacob Rodriguez Pereira wrote a long letter to London about the formalities to which Portuguese Jews from London had to submit when they passed through Paris.[87] Correspondence on rabbinical questions between London and the French *Nations* was rare, although on 28 May 1722 the English rabbi David Nieto did approve the book *Conjeturas Sagradas* written by the Bayonne rabbi Ishak de Acosta.

With the Portuguese communities that were settled across the Atlantic in the Dutch or English colonies relations were important, particularly with Curaçao and Jamaica. Among the passengers who took ship in Bayonne we find the names of a number of young Jews, Izaac Gutiérez, Abraham Delvalles, Izaac Sossa, David Lopez, Salomon Lopes-Dias, who left in 1770 and 1771.[88] Among marriages solemnised in Curaçao in the XVIIIth century there were several covering individuals from Bayonne.[89] A fair number of these overseas venturers returned to Bayonne after having made their fortunes in the French colonies.

From North Africa families came to settle in Bordeaux. The Algerian rabbi Méir Cresques ben Natanael lived in Bayonne and Bordeaux in 1739.[90] The Moroccan rabbi Isaac Nahon of Tetuan was a member of a *Beth Din* (religious court) sitting at Bordeaux on 25 June 1783.[91]

Then there was one Fernandez Medina who was 'born in Bayonne and at the age of thirty was chosen by the rabbis of the Amsterdam synagogue to be sent to the Levant in order to study the books and language of the Hebrews'.[92] Was he sent to Salonica? We do not know; but this extract from the archives of the Marseilles chamber of commerce shows Amsterdam taking on the role of a mediator in the relationship between the French Sephardi communities and the Sephardi centres of the East.

From the last years of the XVIIth century onwards the Judaeo-Portuguese *Nations* of South West France periodically received the visits of emissaries from the Holy Land. They were learned rabbis sent by the communities of Jerusalem, Safed, Hebron and later Tiberias, to raise money in the West. They received the money accumulated in synagogue collecting boxes earmarked for the Holy Land, they assessed the *Nation* and they received donations and legacies from private individuals. Bayonne's notarial records contain a few references to their stays in the town. On 3 October 1755 Moyses Guèdès, in the presence of Labordette, notary-royal, made an allowance to "the rabbis of that city of Hebron in the Holy Land, who meditate and work ceaselessly on the Law in the College where they study, to help them to suport themselves in the said exercises and meditations." At the foot of the document is the Hebrew signature of the illustrious Rabbi Hayyim Joseph David Azulai (Hida). Another emissary, Abraham ben Asher from Jerusalem, determined the way the funds were to be distributed, as between Jerusalem (11/24ths), Safed (7/24ths) and Hebron (6/24ths). In return these emissaries preached in the synagogues, approved local *Haskamot* (rules), checked a butcher's *Kashrut*, or mediated in marital disagreements. The *Nation* consulted them on difficult points. In 1773 at Bordeaux the emissaries Yom Tob Algazi and Jacob Lebet Hazan had to settle a problem: could Jews take up arms during a riot on the Sabbath when all steps to gain a dispensation from the local magistrates had failed? To carry out his mission the envoy from the Holy Land stayed a long time in the neighbourhood,

lodging in the best house at the expense of the *Nation*. He requested, and usually got, substantial sums. Hence, in the second half of the eighteenth century, when the communities were faced with very severe economic problems, they came to look on these journeys, together with the board and lodging for the emissaries when they arrived, as too costly. They wrote to the Holy Land to ask that no more emissaries be sent: funds would be sent via Amsterdam. Nevertheless these fund-raising rabbis still continued to come on their rounds, which generally turned out to be profitable. Thus the Portuguese *Nations* of France, like many other communities of the diaspora, helped the Jews of the Holy Land to survive. In return the Holy Land, by the action of its emissaries, must certainly have contributed to the re-Judaising of the French *Nations*, who were emerging from the *marrano* stage, and helped their re-integration into the Sephardi diaspora.[93]

Without becoming centres of the first rank in the Jewish world, the Judaeo-Portuguese *Nations* of South West France nonetheless became important foci of Western Judaism.

The French Revolution, when it emancipated the Jews of France, at the same time eliminated the *Nations* which had been built up under the monarchy. But might not these *Nations* have contained the seeds of their own decay? Had their political and moral stability become weakened by the time of the Revolution?

The authority of the *Parnassim* was not accepted without mutterings in Bayonne and Bordeaux. As early as 24 June 1764 twenty-four Bordeaux Jews drew up before a notary a fierce indictment of their administration.[94] There was a similar occurrence at Bayonne — though much later, on the 27 December 1789 — when twelve Jews passed a hostile resolution against their *Syndics*.[95] Did the establishment of the *Nation* consider itself under threat when Bordeaux presented a general plan for the reform of the Jews' status in the Kingdom of France, which demanded the maintenance, indeed the strengthening, of the existing communal arrangements? Under this plan not only would relations with the civil state remain under the control of the *Nation*, but the latter would have the power to refuse any Jew the right of residence in its locality.[96]

On the religious and intellectual plane the situation is less clear. If it is true that their interest was not devoted exclusively to sacred literature (in the inventory of Abraham Lopès Colaso's library one finds law books, novels and pamphlets),[97] if it is true that in Bordeaux the *gabay* Solomon Lopes did not believe in Jewish oral law,[98] if it is true that a Jew in Bayonne corresponded with Father Feyjöo whose works he had read,[99] individual piety does not seem to have been eroded by the Enlightenment. A study of Judaeo-Portuguese wills at Bayonne reveals an increasing externalisation of religious feeling, which shows itself in pious legacies and prayers. In a Bible there was written in 1777 a threat of divine punishment against any finder who did not

restore the book to its owner, the *Hebera* [or *Chevra*] '*Gemilut Hasadim*': '. . . *pues oltramente sera obligado dar cuenta y rason delante el tribunal divinoi.*'[100] But this fervent piety did not affect all Jews. Several took part in the foundation of the Bayonne masonic lodge *La Zélée*. They reached quite high rank in the Lodge before their membership was ended.[101] Epitaphs in the Portuguese cemeteries at Bidache, Labastide-Clairence and Peyrehorade which formerly were only dated by the Hebrew calendar are by now inscribed with both the Hebrew and the Christian dates.[102] Cultural adaptation was certainly taking place in the French communities, but this was not seriously harming their religious identity. The truth is that the factors that were to put an end to the *Nation* came from outside.

The first stage of the liquidation process took place in the spring of 1788 when the Malesherbes Commission started work. Influenced by advancing ideas about the Jews, Louis XVI, after he had issued an Edict in favour of Protestants in 1787, appointed Chrétien Guillaume Lamoignon de Malesherbes, Minister of State, to examine possible reforms in the position of the Jews in France. Malesherbes took advice from Lacretelle, Roederer, Target and in particular from the former *Intendant* Dupré de Saint Maur.[103] He also got in touch with representatives of the Jewish communities of Alsace, Lorraine and the South West. The Bordeaux and Bayonne *Nations* agreed to produce jointly a set of general proposals to improve the lot of Jews in France without encroaching on the privileges of the communities. Abraham Furtado, Salomon Lopès Dubec and David Gradis for Bordeaux and Fonseca for Bayonne took an active part in this work. Duly accredited by their *Nation*, in April 1788 they came to Paris where they met the Jewish delegates from Alsace and Lorraine. They were received by Dupré de Saint Maur and Malesherbes. Before returning to Bordeaux on 3 July Salomon Lopès Dubec and Abraham Furtado submitted a long memorandum to the Minister. Matters went no further because the political situation in the kingdom prevented the Government from following up the recommendations of the Malesherbes Commission.[104] But the Sephardim had had the opportunity of drawing up proposals and they had met the Ashkenazim.

Some Jewish historians have passed severe judgement on the Portuguese who, they say, abstained from any defence of Jewish identity and displayed hostility towards the Ashkenazim. A study of the Bordeaux memorandum and of the delegates' reports to their *Nation* leads to the conclusion that the *Nation* had no intention of renouncing any of its privileges which it considered to be under threat. In other respects the *Nation* wished to retain its identity and not disappear into an assembly in which the Ashkenazim would outnumber and outvote it. In this spirit the Bordeaux delegates, when telling of their meeting with Cerf Berr, the Alsatian delegate, and Berr Isaac Berr, the Lorraine delegate, wrote, "We will however not make common cause with them, so as not to depart from the principles of our *Nation*, which is as

far as possible to remain in that state of separation which has hitherto distinguished it from other Jews".[105]

The second stage of this process was set by the elections to the States General in the spring of 1789. Abbé Grégoire, an ardent defender of the Jews, wrote to Isaiah Bing of Nancy, "On the eve of the States General should you not get together with the other members of your *Nation* to claim the rights and privileges of citizens?" But no new meeting between the Ashkenazim and Sephardim took place. The Ashkenazim were kept out of the primary assemblies which met to nominate the "great electors". But the Sephardim succeeded in getting into the assemblies. As a "corporation" the Jews of Bordeaux were invited to take part in the electoral process. At a meeting of the *Nation* held on 2 March 1789 Messrs. Azevedo senior, David Gradis, Lopès Dubec and Furtado senior were named as representatives. In Bayonne the Christian inhabitants refused to invite them; but the Jews appealed to Baron de Laluque, the lieutenant of d'Albret, the Seneschal, who in turn referred the matter to Paris. A Ministerial letter came back admitting the Jews' claim.[106] The *Nation* called a General Assembly on 19 April 1789, which elected the deputies for the Assembly of the Three Orders, which was due to meet at Tartas: their delegates were Jacob Silveyra, Salomon Furtado junior, Benjamin Nuñes Tavares and Mordecai Lopès-Fonseca. The General Assembly drew up a *Cahier* of "the complaints, demands and remonstrances of our *Nation*", the only *Cahir de Doléances* to have been produced by a French Jewish community in 1789. On the same day the *Syndics* of the *Nation* attended the Christians' assembly in Saint Esprit to assert the *Nation's* right to meet separately.[107] At Tartas on 22 April 1789 the Jewish deputation reached an amicable agreement with the Christians and took part in the elections. Thus from the month of April 1789 the Sephardim had gained *political rights*; and they had no intention of renouncing them.

The third stage of the process of liquidation occurred between 14 August 1789 and 28 January 1790. The Sephardim led a (hopeless) battle to preserve both their *Nation* and their political rights. They rejected the idea of a particular status for the Jews. The Declaration of the Rights of Man, which was being prepared, should apply to them just as it did to other Frenchmen. "It is through liberty for their persons and property that the Jews *of all the provinces* of this Kingdom will become free and useful citizens," they wrote in a letter to Abbé Grégoire.[108] They wanted an *implicit* emancipation, whereas the Ashkenazim wanted an *explicit* text. Nevertheless on 26 August 1789 Ashkenazim and Sephardim sent a joint delegation to the *Assemblée Nationale* to demand a specific law in favour of the Jews. But the Debate in the *Assemblée Nationale* on 23 December ended in an adjournment. The Jews of Bordeaux changed their policy and went over to the Parisian side. They nominated eight deputies who between 4 January and 13 February 1790, got in touch with the Jewish deputies from Alsace and Lorraine and jointly lobbied sundry members of the *Assemblée Nationale*. Noticing that the

Ashkenazim would be satisfied with *civil* rights, the Portuguese deputies Gradis, Georges and Lopèz presented an address to the *Assemblée Nationale* demanding the confirmation of their *political* rights. In the name of the Bayonne *Nation* Silveyra also presented a long address to the *Assemblée*. For Bordeaux as for Bayonne "it was less a question of acquiring than of not losing" something.[109] At the end of a long debate on 27 and 28 January 1790 the *Assemblée Nationale* decreed:

> "All Jews known in France under the name of Portuguese, Spanish or Avignonnais Jews will continue to enjoy those rights which they have enjoyed hitherto."

By becoming "active citizens" (that is to say citizens entitled to be voters or candidates) the Sephardim had won and lost the battle — for their *Nation* disappeared. On 18 February the Jews of Bordeaux recognised this. They wrote in their Register. "As the Jews of Bordeaux can no longer be considered a *Nation*, the Senior Assembly which formerly represented them was forthwith dissolved and the meeting immediately proceeded to set up a Charitable Association.[110] For better or worse the French Sephardim were the first Jews in the world to win their emancipation. Western Jewry was to follow their example and adopt their pattern.

The emancipation of the Jews of France as a whole, decreed by the National Assembly on 27 September 1791, confirmed the disappearance of the *Nation*. The Decree referred specifically to:

> ". . . those Jewish *individuals* who will take the Civic Oath, which will be considered a renunciation of all privileges and exceptions previously introduced in their favour."

When, under the Convention, de-Christianisation was on the agenda, Judaism, both Sephardi and Ashkenazi, was under attack too. In Paris worshippers in the synagogue of the Rue des Boucheries offered their precious ornaments to the Convention.[111] At Bidache the synagogue was converted into a Temple of Reason.[112] At Bayonne the suburb of Saint Esprit, where the Jews lived, declared itself an independent *commune*, took the name of Jean Jacques Rousseau and elected a Watch Committee whose task it was to administer the *commune*. Essentially composed of Jews, this committee acted with sovereign powers from 11 October 1793 to 28 Fructidor, Year III of the Republic (14 September 1794). It looked after provisions and supplies and taxes and the needs of the army and it fought against what it termed religious "bigotry". In the name of this struggle it closed down some churches and some synagogues. Despite the tough wording of its proclamations it pursued a moderate policy: the guillotine was never set up in the Jean Jacques Rousseau *commune*.[113] In some ways this Committee was the final stage of the Jewish *Nation*. After the Terror Ashkenazi and Sephardi communities quietly reverted to their religious and charitable

activities. An account-book of the St. Esprit-lès-Bayonne community shows that a charitable collection was made on 1 Frimaire Year IV (22 November 1795) when two emissaries from the Holy Land arrived (referred to as "Citizens Efraïm Nabon for Hebron, and Abraham Eliezer Levy for Saffec [i.e. Safed]".[114] The Jews of Bayonne were of course following a long-established tradition, but they were also demonstrating by their action that they had become an association which lived — doubtless with some difficulty — on voluntary contributions. The *Nation* which used to exercise a prerogative right to impose taxes on its members had quite disappeared.

After leaving Spanish and Portuguese *marranism* the Sephardim had succeeded in the well-nigh impossible task of establishing in France *Nations* which occupied a prime place in the diaspora. Could they survive without their old organisation that had been blown away by the high wind of the French Revolution?

III. The Consistory and Post-Consistory Period (XIX-XXth century)

Between Napoleon's decree of 17 March 1808 and the Law for the Separation of Church and State of 9 November 1905 French Jewry was governed by assemblies of notables termed *Consistoires*, under the sponsorship of the State.[115] The system continued even when, after 1906, it had lost its compulsory nature. What place did the Sephardim occupy within this framework? There are no specific works on this subject. We can only make a brief survey of the rise of the French Sephardi communities, their outstanding men and women and the distinctive Sephardi contribution which they made. The Jews of France, represented by the Assembly of Notables (26 July 1806 to 6 April 1807) and the *Grand Sanhedrin* (9 February to 9 March 1807) were called upon to define their legal place in modern society. Citizens with full rights, they had to reconcile Jewish law with the law of the State. It is not for us to pass judgement on their achievements, but we would stress that within their assemblies the Sephardim played a role that was quite disproportionate to their numbers in the country as a whole. The experience they had gained before and during the Revolution probably explains their influence. Abraham Andrade of Bayonne and Marcfoy of the same town made striking speeches. Three Portuguese Jews sat on the Commission of Nine, which drew up a draft order of worship. Abraham Furtado in particular acted as Chairman of the Assembly of Notables; he had been a member of the deputation to Paris in 1788. He reported back to the *Sanhedrin* the decisions which the Sanhedrin had to endorse as "doctrinal decisions". He underlined the historic significance of these meetings and read out in French the closing speech of the *Sanhedrin* which Rabbi David Sinzheim had delivered in Hebrew on 9 March 1807. The Consistorial system owed much to the Portuguese Jews.

Officially there was now no distinction between Sephardim and Ashkenazim. In fact two Consistories — those of Bordeaux and Marseilles — were composed of Sephardim. In 1845 the Consistories of Algiers, Oran and Constantine were to join them; and in 1846 came the Consistory of Saint Esprit, which became the Consistory of Bayonne in 1857. In Paris there was a Portuguese synagogue and some Sephardim sat in the Consistory there.

It is not easy to show how under the new system the Sephardim made their national character felt. Perhaps it was that they were the first to assert their presence openly in town. It is certainly a fact that the first monumental-style synagogue — the first "temple" of 19th century France — was opened in Bordeaux on 14 May 1812. In Paris, in order to preserve its liturgy, the Portuguese community built first the Temple in the Rue Lamartine in 1851 and then the Temple in the Rue Buffault in 1877. The Portuguese Jews also took part in the work of a Commission set up in 1865 to evolve a "French ritual" which was to replace both the Ashkenazi and Sephardi rituals. The Ashkenazim made considerable concessions — Hebrew pronunciation, the reading of the Law and the tunes of several prayers were to follow Portuguese traditional lines. But when the amalgamation of the two rituals seemed to be agreed, at a General Assembly held on 16 May 1874 the Portuguese community refused to give its consent to the proposal.[117]

To this liturgical traditionalism the Sephardim added a vigilant eye for Spain. In 1851, learning that a road was going to be laid over the site of a mediaeval Jewish cemetery at Vittoria, the Saint Esprit Consistory intervened as "the leading authority of the Jewish cult in a border province near Spain, and in particular because we retain memories of the land where our ancestors formerly dwelt". Not only did they win their case but the *Ayunta* (town council) of Vittoria admitted the Consistory's moral right over the site.[118] In 1854, when Philippson, the rabbi of Magdeburg, took steps to gain readmission for Jews into Spain, the same Consistory of Saint Esprit mounted a supporting campaign, drawing the attention of the Central Consistory to the matter. The Consistories of Bordeaux and Marseiles followed suit. A petition was presented to the Spanish Cortes. They passed on 28 February 1855 an Article stipulating that no one should be disturbed because of his opinions — which was a prelude to the legal return of the Jews to Spain.[119]

It would be a vain task to draw up a list of famous Sephardim in France in the XIXth and XXth century. The brothers Isaac and Emile Pereire, pioneers in the economic sector, were to the fore in railway construction, they founded the *Société Générale* and the *Crédit Foncier* and they reclaimed the *landes* (sandy moors) of Gascony.[120] Count Saint Simon's principal disciple, Olinde Rodrigues, taught the virtues of a social republic and an association of Capital and Labour.[121] Pierre Mendès-France, that exemplary politician, still gives us food for thought. Camille Pissaro, of Portuguese-Jewish stock from the community of Saint Eustache, rose to become a key figure in French painting.

Some of them also struck out new paths for their Jewish activities. Jacques Altaras, born in Aleppo, settled in Marseilles in 1806 and produced a plan to settle Russian Jews in Algeria.[122] In 1851 Jules Carvallo conceived the idea of an international Jewish organisation. When it was set up under the name of *Alliance Israélite Universelle* in 1860 he became its first President.[123] A Hungarian of old Spanish stock, Max Nordau was the first to support Herzl and took part in founding the World Zionist Organisation.[124]

The Jewish writings of Henri Gradis, including a verse tragedy *Jérusalem* (1883), Benjamin Gradis's *Le peuple d'Israél* (1891) and Hyppolyte Rodrigues's perhaps slightly whimsical writings, which include *Les trois filles de la Bible* (1865), are worthy of study. Hyppolyte Rodrigues had developed a system of religious syncretism conditioned by Christianity without the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus. He is particularly to be remembered as the Perpetual Secretary of the *Société scientifique-littéraire israélite*, predecessor of the *Société des Etudes Juives*, which, before the foundation of the latter, was the focus for the science of Judaism in France. Joseph Salvador, an outstanding historian, produced a fine history of the Jews in antiquity, stressing the cultural and national originality of Judaism in his *La Loi de Moïse, ou système religieux et politique des Hebreux* (1822) and *Histoire de la domination romaine en Judée et de la ruine de Jérusalem* (1846).[125] In quite a different area, that of the novel, Albert Cohen, who came from Corfu, painted a colourful picture of Jewish society at home. He wrote, "I belong to the finest race in the world, the noblest, the dreamiest and the sweetest . . . There are a few great nations. We are the greatest." In 1968 his novel *Belle du Seigneur* earned him the Grand Prix of the *Académie Française*.

During the long period from the establishment of the Consistories to the outbreak of the Second World War the French Sephardi community underwent a change. Its Portuguese population — numbering perhaps 5,000 souls at the beginning of the nineteenth century — had been strengthened by the entry of Algerian Jewry into the French-Jewish stream and by an Oriental immigration at the end of the nineteenth century and in the 'thirties of the twentieth century. Various groups claiming to be repositories of Sephardism appeared in Paris: among these may be mentioned the *Association Amicale Israélite Sepharadite*, the *Jeunesse Sepharadite de Paris*, the *Confédération universelle des Juifs Sépharadim*. These groups organised lectures, conferences and artistic demonstrations; opened a synagogue in Paris with the Spanish Sephardi ritual which was independent of the Consistory. They also launched a periodical *Le Judaïsme sépharadi*, which reflected the intense activity of the time and expounded the value of the Sephardi inheritance in its pages. An American historian has observed in French Judaism "a desire to combine a certain ethnic element with the culture of France".[126] Certainly this desire can be clearly seen among the Sephardim of France. When on 7 May 1938 José Papo, the first officiating Minister of the *Association*

Sépharadite de Paris, gave a recital at the Salle Chopin in Paris, this was more than an artistic event, it was a symbol. Reading through a set of *Le Judaïsme Sepharadi* one senses a fierce desire on the part of the French Sephardim to gather the scattered fragments of their past glories both in France and in the diaspora. While a firmly-held tradition among American historians makes them judge French Judaism of the nineteenth and twentieth century severely, accusing it of secretly harbouring an "ideology of assimilation", it must be noted that the public, literary and artistic record of the Consistory period, as well as the separate specific organisations of the Sephardim, bear witness to the contrary.[127] Rightly or wrongly, the Sephardim saw no difficulty in professing loyalty to France combined with particularist Jewish claims.

A general history of the French Sephardim has not yet been written. Not only are many aspects of the life of the New Christians from Spain and Portugal unknown to us, though it was they who brought into being the various Jewish *Nations* in old France; not only is the inner life of these *Nations* little known, for their archives have largely disappeared; but the enormous bulk of Consistorial records of the nineteenth and twentieth century has not yet been sifted through for its Sephardi content; and above all the literary and artistic output of the Sephardim of France has not yet been studied as a whole. In these conditions it would be premature to draw conclusions covering four centuries of Franco-Jewish history. But it will be observed that in France the Sephardim faced up to a major challenge. Coming to a Catholic realm as New Christians, they created open visible Jewish communities and contributed to the spread of the Western Sephardi diaspora. Quickly appreciating the significance of the onward march of the Jewish people in France, they wrung from it the emancipation of the Jewish people in France. More than the Ashkenazim they believed in the possibility of an official status for Judaism and they contributed much to its organisation. As members of the community they conceived grandiose, even utopian, projects. But it was as realists that they created their own Sephardi groups. If we were to seek a common denominator in the *Parnassim* of Bayonne struggling against the *échevins*; in Jacob Rodrigues-Pèreire occupied in teaching deaf-mutes to speak; in the Consistory of Saint Esprit claiming ancestral rights in Spain; in Hyppolyte Rodrigues outlining a proposed religion for the human race based on the essence of Judaism and the rejection of the essence of Christianity; in Max Nordau being the first to accept the idea of a Jewish state; that common denominator would surely be a reasoned but passionate conviction that one can still achieve objectives that most others consider impossible.

Notes

1 cf. B. Z. BENEDIKT, 'Caractères originaux de la science rabbinique en Languedoc' in *Juifs et judaïsme de Languedoc* (Toulouse, 1977) pp. 159-172.
2 cf. Charles TOUATI, 'Les deux conflits autour de Maïmonide et des études philosophiques', *op. cit.* pp. 173-184.
3 cf. Hayyim SCHIRMANN, *Hebrew poetry in Spain and Provence* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem-Tel-Aviv, 1961-2) Vol. 1, p. vii.
4 Isidore LOEB, 'Un convoi d'exilés d'Espagne à Marseille en 1492', in *Revue des Etudes Juives* (R.E.J.) IX (1884) pp. 66-76.
5 Danielle IANCU-AGOU, *L'expulsion des Juifs en Provence médiévale* (Aix-en-Provence, 1976) (duplicated thesis).
6 There have been several works published on these communities: Louis FRANCIA DE BEAUFLEURY, *Histoire de l'etablissement des Juifs à Bordeaux et à Bayonne depuis 1550*, Paris, year VIII [1800]; Armand DETCHEVERRY, Histoire des Israélites de Bordeaux (Bordeaux, 1850); Théophile MALVÉZIN, *Histoire des Juifs à Bordeaux* ((Bordeaux, 1875, reprinted Marseilles 1976); Henry LÉON, *Histoire des Juifs de Bayonne* (Paris, 1893, reprinted Marseilles 1976); Georges CIROT, *Recherches sur les Juifs espagnols et portugais à Bordeaux*, Part I (Bordeaux, 1908); *idem, Les Juifs de Bordeaux, leur situation morale et sociale de 1550 à la Révolution*, Vol. I (Bordeaux, 1920); Ernest GINSBURGER, *Les Israélites de Bayonne des origines à la Révolution française* (manuscript restored by the author, Archives of the Association Culturelle Israélite, Bayonne, 1969); the author's *Communautés judéo-portugaises du Sud-Ouest de la France (Bayonne et sa région) 1684-1791* (Paris, 1969) (duplicated thesis); Antonio João Simoes SERRA, *Subsidios para a Historia dos Judeus Portugeses em França, 1. A comunidade de Baiona* (Lisbon, 1963) (typewritten thesis).
7 Paris, Archives Nationales. Various registers beginning with JJ 232.
8 cf. Jean BACQUET, *Oeuvres augmentées de plusieurs questions par Claude Ferrière* (Lyon, 1744) II pp. 22 and 82.
9 Arch. Nat., JJ260, No. 239 (174); numerous old editions, cf. the author's *Communautés*, II, pp. 15-21.
10 cf. *Communautés*, II pp. 21-28.
11 *Mémoire d'Abraham Furtado sur l'Etat des Juifs en France jusqu'à la Révolution,* published by Gabriel MOYSE (Paris, 1930), p. 26.
12 Zosa SZAJKOWSKI, 'Population problems of Marranos and Sephardim in France, from the 16th to the 20th century' PAAJR XXVII, (1958) pp. 83-105.
13 cf. Salo Wittmayer BARON, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews: Late Middle Ages and Era of European Expansion*, Vol. XV; *Resettlement and Exploration* (New York, London, Philadelphia, 1973) p. 413.
14 cf. the author's article 'Les rapports des communautés judéo-portugaises de France avec celle d'Amsterdam au XVIIe et au XVIIIe siècles', *Studia Rosenthaliana* X, (1976) pp. 37-78, 151-188; Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Vol. 2 (Jerusalem, 1975) pp. 77-84.
15 I. S. RÉVAH, 'Le premier règlement imprimé de la "Santa Companhia dotar orfas e donzelas pobres",' *Boletim internacional de bibliografia luso-brasileira*, IV (Lisbon, 1963) pp. 650-691.
16 E. M. KOEN & W.-Chr. PIETERSE, 'Notarial records in Amsterdam relating to the Portuguese Jews in that town up to 1639', *Studia Rosenthaliana*, I (1967) pp. 109-115 and subsequent years (in course of publication).
17 Simancas Archives K14533, 25 July 1612, Arch. Nat., Paris, microfilm 21 MI 56.
18 Amsterdam, Gemeente Archief, Not. 2210/608, cf. W.-Chr. PIETERSE, *Livro de Beth Haim do Kahal Kados de Bet Yahacob* (Assen, 1970) p. 185.

19 Several articles on this question, subsequent to that published in *Cinquième Tome du Mercure françois ou suitte de l'Histoire de nostre temps sous le règne du Très Chréstien Roy de France et Nauarre Loys XIII*, (1619) pp. 65-66, up to that of Antonio DOMINGUEZ ORTIZ, '*El proceso inquisitorial de Juan Nuñez Saravia*', *Hispania* (1955) XV, 559-581.
20 Société des Archives Historiques de la Gironde, *Livre des Bourgeois de Bordeaux (XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles)*, (Bordeaux, 1898) pp. 115 and 151; contains other references to Bordeaux Jews.
21 MALVEZIN, *op. cit.*, p. 126; cf. I. S. RÉVAH, 'Le premier règlement . . . ' *art. cit.* p. 660.
22 J. MATHOREZ, 'Notes sur la colonie portugaise de Nantes', *Bulletin hispanique*, XV (1913) 316-339; this study should be much amplified with the aid of data collected in Amsterdam.
23 Jean Marc PELORSON, 'Carlos Garcia et la colonie hispano-portugaise de Paris 1613-1619', *Bulletin hispanique*, LXXI (1969), 518-576.
24 Cecil ROTH, 'Elie Montalto et sa consultation sur le Sabat' *R.E.J.* XCIV (1933) pp. 113-136.
25 Abraham Cohen CAPLAN ed. *Danieillo o respuestas a los cristianos escrito en Amsterdam por Isaac Mendez en el año de 1758*, (Brussels, 1868) pp. 104-132.
26 S. W. BARON, op. cit. XV p. 406.
27 cf. Myriam YARDÉNI, 'La vision des Juifs et du Judaïsme dans l'oeuvre de Richard Simon', *R.E.J.* CXXXIX (1970), p. 183.
28 The Jewish community at Rouen has been studied in depth in Cecil ROTH's major articles 'Les Marranes à Rouen, un chapitre ignoré de l'histoire des Juifs de France' *R.E.J.* LXXXVIII (1929) pp. 113-155, I. S. RÉVAH, 'Le premier établissement des Marranes portugais à Rouen (1603-1607)', *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire orientale et slave*, XIII (1953) pp. 539-552, Haïm BEINART, 'The Spanish Inquisition at work outside the Peninsula', *Proceedings of the fifth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Vol. II (Jerusalem, 1972), pp. 55-73 [in Hebrew with English summary].
29 Julio Caro BAROJA, *Los Judios en la España moderna y contemporanea* (Madrid, 1961) Vol. I, p. 425, Note 68. [This classic work contains very important material from Inquisition sources on crypto-Judaism in Bayonne in the XVIIth century.]
30 Archives of the *Département of Pyrénées Atlantiques*, III E4034.
31 A. DOMINGO ORTIZ, *art. cit.* p. 571.
32 Text published by J. Caro BAROJA, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 350-352.
33 cf. author's article in *Studia Rosenthaliana*, X (1976), pp. 164-165.
34 cf. author's contribution to the Seventh World Congress of Jewish Studies at Jerusalem in 1977, 'Bayonne in the Western Sephardi diaspora (XVIIth-XVIIIth century)' (to be published).
35 David WILLEMSE, *Un "Portugués" entre los Castellanos. El primer proceso inquisitorial contra Gonzalo Baez de Paiba 1654-1657.* (Paris, 1974); cf. author's account in *R.E.J.* CXXXIV (1975) pp. 194-199.
36 The reader is referred to the author's 'Inscriptions funéraires hebraïques et juives à Bidache, Labastide-Clairence (Basses Pyrénées) at Peyrehorade (Landes), Rapport de mission', *R.E.J.* CXXVII (1968) pp. 223-252, 347-365; CXXVIII (1969), pp. 349-375; CXXX (1971) pp. 195-230. For the Yahacob Carvallo inscription see 1968 article, p. 357, No. 8.
37 Z. SZAJKOWSKI, 'An Auto-da-fè against the Jews of Toulouse in 1685', *J.Q.R.*, Vol. XLIX (1959), pp. 278-281.
38 A. CRÉMIEUX, 'Un établissement juif à Marseille au XVIIe siècle, *R.E.J.* LV (1908) pp. 119-145.
39 Samuel ABOAB, Debar Shemuel (Venice, 1702) No. 361, fo. 92.
40 cf. Robert ANCHEL, *Les Juifs de France* (Paris, 1946), pp.142-143.
41 Mme. D'AULNOY, *Relation du Voyage d'Espagne*, Vol. I (Paris, 1691) p. 8.
42 Arch Nat. E 1824. The text is in the author's *Communautés* . . . II, pp. 2-7.
43 Abraham CAHEN, 'Les Juifs de la Martinique au XVIIe siècle' *R.E.J.* II (1881) p. 112.

44 R. D. BARNETT, 'The correspondence of the Mahamad of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregations of London during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', T.J.H.S.E., XX (1964) p. 33.

There is a similar appreciation of Brazilian crypto-Judaism in the XVIIIth century by Anita NOVINSKY, 'Jewish Heresy in Colonial Brazil in the light of new documents', *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, (Jerusalem, 1975) Vol. II, p. 113.

45 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. fr. 32.206, fo. 965.

46 Arch. Nat. E 2042, fs. 9 & 10, cf. *Communautés* . . . II, pp. 63-66.

47 cf. *Communautés* . . . II pp. 33-38.

48 While the language of literature and of community documents was Spanish, many Jews in Bayonne and Bordeaux only spoke and wrote in Portuguese in the XVIIIth century.

49 Preserved in the Departmental Archives of the Gironde in Series J. cf. our 'Notes sur les régistres des délibérations de la Nation Juive Portugaise de Bordeaux 1710-1790', *R.E.J.* CXXIX (1970) pp. 239-243. An edition of the Register by Mr. Simon Schwarzfuchs is being published.

50 The text will be found in H. LÉON, *Histoire* . . . op. cit. pp. 141-151. cf. A. DEGERT, 'Règlement des Juifs de Bayonne', *Revue de Gascogne*, 53rd year, new series XII (1912) pp. 347-368.

51 Register op. cit., No. 279 fos. 65 V° to 66 V°.

52 David ben Raphael MELDOLA, *Sefer Dibrei David* (Amsterdam, 1755) no. 73, fo. 161; cf. S. SCHWARZFUCHS, 'Notes sur les Juifs de Bayonne au XVIIIe siècle *R.E.J.* CXXV (1966) p. 356.

53 Departmental Archives of Pyrénées Atlantique, III E 348.

54 Ernest LA ROCHELLE, *Jacob Rodriguez Péreire, premier insituteur des sourds-muets en France, sa vie et ses travaux* (Paris, 1882); the author has published two unpublished letters of Jacob Rodriguez Péreire to Amsterdam in our article cited above at Note 14, pp. 183-187; the earlier letter, addressed to London, has been published in English by Dr. R. D. BARNETT, *art. cit. supra*, Note 44, pp.33-35; cf contribution by Mrs. Renée NÉHER to the Seventh World Congress for Jewish Studies (Jerusalem, 1977), 'Jacob Rodrigues Péreire (1715-1780): an inadequately appreciated pioneer in the intellectual process of Emancipation among French Jews'.

55 On this man's career there is little available other than the article by Ernest GINSBURGER 'Le Pont de l'Adour — David Silveyra', *Bulletin de la Société des Sciences, Lettres et Arts de Bayonne*, new series, No. 36 (1940), pp. 185-195.

56 H. LÉON, *Histoire* . . . p. 147.

57 cf. the article of Mr. S. Schwarzfuchs cited above at Note 52. To the list of Meldola's approbations quoted in our article (Note 14, p. 151) there should be added the work of Jacob HABIB b. SALOMON, *'Eyn Ya'aqob* edited by Salomon Jequthiel ZALMAN BEN JACOB (Amsterdam, 1740).

58 The reader is referred to the author's article 'L'Historia Sacra Real d'Yshak de Acosta', *Mélanges André Néher* (Paris, 1975), pp. 331-345.

59 R. Hajjim Josef David AZULAI, Ma'gal Tob ha-shalem. Itinerarium 1753, 1794, ed. by Aron FREIMANN, Jerusalem, 1934, p. 37.

60 G. CIROT, *Recherches* . . . p. 178.

61 cf. author's 'Papiers de la communauté des Juifs portugais de Paris de 1785 à 1790'. *R.E.J.* CXXIX (1970) pp. 46-49.

62 Archives of the *Département* of Pyrenées Atlantiques, II E 4672 No. 11. On this synagogue cf. our article 'Le substrat matériel de la vie profane et religieuse d'un Juif portugais à Saint-Esprit-lès Bayonne au XVIIIe siècle', *R.E.J.*, CXXX (1971) pp. 317-326.

63 This will was drawn to my attention by President Mendès-France to whom I am glad to express my thanks here.

64 Departmental Archives of the Gironde, C 3662, *Nation portugaise, synagogues, discussions. Extrait.*
65 Communal archives of Labastide-Clairence BB 6, fo. 301; see, e.g., the lease of 11 April 1703 in BB 2 fo. 77 V°. On Kasher meat in Bordeaux cf. Jean CAVIGNAC, 'Le coin de l'archiviste. Une boucherie cachère à Bordeaux au XVIIIe siècle', *Euroviande*, No. 94 (March-April 1976) pp. 37-46.
66 cf. article by W.-Chr. PIETERSE, 'Abraham Lopes Colaso en zijn zoon Aron kooplieden te Amsterdam en Bayonne van ca. 1700 tot 1774', *Studia Rosenthaliana*, VII (1973) pp. 1-7.
67 cf. author's article in *Studia*, pp. 152-153 and pp. 160 n. 306.
68 cf. author's *Communautés* . . . I, pp. 497-519; and G. CIROT, *Recherches* . . . pp. 85-99.
69 op. cit. pp. 74-75.
70 Departmental Archives of the Gironde, 7 B 1595.
71 G. CIROT, *Recherches* . . . op. cit. pp. 84-85.
72 cf. the author's 'Dépêches des Secrétaires d'Etat des Affaires Etrangères et de la Religion Reformée concernant les Juifs' (1727-1765), *Michael*, IV (1976) pp. 187-247.
73 Archives Nationales H 1164. See in particular the rolls for 1790. In the same folder there is the following note: "From the hand of the Garde des Sceaux, 27 December 1784: It must be noted that the Jews of Bayonne are not known or tolerated under the name of Jews, but are known — in accordance with the edicts and declarations of Henry II and Louis IV — only as New Christians or Portuguese, Spanish and Avignon merchants. In law they are termed *Marchands portugais espagnols et avignonais connus sous le nom de Nouveaux Chrétiens.*"
74 cf. on this point Arthur HERTZBERG, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews* (New York, London, Philadelphia, 1968), p. 28.
75 cf. JEAN DE MAUPASSANT, *Un grand armateur de Bordeaux: Abraham Gradis (1699-1780)* (Bordeaux, 1917).
76 Their papers, which were seized by the authorities, are now preserved in the Gironde archives in the *Fonds des Négociants*. cf. Françoise GITEAU, *et al.*, Departmental Archives of the Gironde, *Répertoire Numérique du Fonds des Négociants (7b 1001 à 3154)*. (Dir. André Betge-Bresetz, Bordeaux, 1960) pp. 20-21,32-35.
77 List garnered from notarial deeds in Bayonne.
78 On properties cf. H. LÉON, *Histoire* . . . pp. 400-428.
79 cf. the author's note 'Une déliberation de la "Nation Portugaise de Saint-Esprit" relative aux synagogues (1776)', *R.E.J.* CXXIV (1965), pp.424-427.
80 Letter dated 30 October 1783, Departmental Archives of the Gironde, C126.
81 The reader is referred to our article (see note 14 above).
82 cf. the author's article 'Démographie des Juifs Portugais à Saint-Espit-lès-Bayonne (1751-1787): âge au marriage, fécondité, famille', *Société des Lettres, Sciences et Arts de Bayonne*, No. 132 (1976) p. 181.
83 Departmental Archives of the Landes, IV B 376, No. 39: we intend to publish these letters.
84 Arch. com. Bayonne, GG supplement "Israëlites" 15 (3), No. 1006 in the edition we are currently preparing.
85 cf. the author's article (see Note 14 above) doc. XX p. 175.
86 Departmental archives, Pyrénées Atlantiques, III E 4093.
87 cf. R. D. BARNETT, *T.J.H.S.E.* XX, 1964, pp. 10-19.
88 Arch. Nat. F5B 30 & 38.
89 I. S. & S. A. EMMANUEL, *History of the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles* (Cincinnati, 1970) II pp. 849, 890, 893, 914, 985, 1001.
90 cf. *supra* p.12.
91 Register (see Note 49 above), No. 54, fo. 132.
92 Archives of the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce, AA art. 2, 3 February 1723, cf. Jonas WEYL, 'Les Juifs protégés français aux Echelles du Levant et en Barbarie sous les règnes de

Louis XIV et Louis XV d'après des documents inédits tirés des archives de la chambre de commerce de Marseille', *R.E.J.*, XIII (1886) p. 284.

93 The reader is referred to the author's article 'Les émissaires de la Terre Sainte dans les communautés judéo-portugaises du Sud-Ouest de la France au XVIIe et au XVIIIe siècle'. *Studies in the History of the Jewish People and the Land of Israel*, III (Haifa, 1974) pp. 145-178; 'Les émissaires de la Terre Sainte dans les communautés du Sud-Ouest de la France au XVIIIe siècle, *Journal des communautés*, No. 543, 22 February 1974.

94 Z. SZAJKOWSKI, 'Conflicts within the Sephardic communities of France', *H.U.C.A.*, XXXI (1960); reprinted as *Jews and the French Revolutions of 1789, 1830 and 1848* (New York, 1970), pp. 267-280.

95 Departmental archives of Pyrénées Atlantiques, II E 4238 No. 198.

96 cf. G. CIROT, 'Les Juifs de Bordeaux, leur situation morale et social de 1550 à la Révolution' (suite) XIX, Appendix: 'Ce que désiraient les Juifs à la veille de la Révolution', *Revue historique de Bordeaux et du département de la Gironde*, XXXII (1939) pp. 60-66.

97 Communal archive service of Amsterdam, Archief Weeskamer K. 18. Boedel papers.

98 AZULAÏ op. cit., Note 59, p. 114.

99 Benito Geronymo FEYJÖO Y MONTENEGRO, *Cartas eruditas y curiosas*, III (Madrid, 1774) pp. 85-118.

100 Library of the *Association Culturelle Israélite de Bayonne*.

101 Robert POUPEL, 'Notes sur la Franc-maçonnerie bayonnaise au XVIIIe et XIXe siècles', *Bulletin de la Société des Sciences, Lettres et Arts de Bayonne*, pp. 27-41.

102 cf. Note 36.

103 Pierre GROSCLAUDE, *Malesherbes, témoin et interprète de son temps* (Paris, 1961) II, pp. 631-649.

104 The documents have been published in an article by Z. SZAJKOWSKI, 'The delegations of the Jews from Bordeaux to the Malesherbes Commission (1788) and to the National Assembly (1790). New documents for the history of the Emancipation of the Jews of France' [in Hebrew], *Zion* XVII-XVIII (1952-1953) pp. 31-79.

105 *Ibid.* p. 56. For a discussion of this problem we would refer to our paper contributed to the international colloquium on the Jews in the history of France, Haifa University, 17-18 March 1975: 'Sephardim and Ashkenazim in France: the winning of Emancipation (1789-1791)' (to be published). There are some very useful thoughts in Mme. Ruth NECHELLES' paper 'L'Emancipation des Juifs 1787-1795. Aspects intellectuels et politiques' in *Les Juifs et la Révolution française. Problèmes et aspirations*. under the general editorship of Bernard BLUMENKRANZ and Albert SOBOUL (Toulouse, 1976), pp. 71-86. Above all the authoritative work to be consulted is David FEUERWERKER, *L'émancipation des Juifs en France de l'Ancien Régime à la fin du Second Empire* (Paris, 1976).

106 Maurice LIBER, 'Les Juifs et la convocation des Etats Généraux', *R.E.J.*, LXIII (1912) pp. 185-210; LXIV (1912) pp. 89-108; 244-277; LXV (1913) pp. 89-133 LXVI (1913) pp. 161-212.

107 François DELPECH writes on the subject of the Portuguese Jews: "They could have drawn up lists of detailed grievances but they did not do so, in order not to stir up the resentment of their opponents." See 'La Révolution et l'Empire' in *Histoire des Juifs en France*, General Editor B. BLUMENKRANZ, (Toulouse, 1972), p. 276. In fact the Jews of Bayonne did draw up a *Cahier* of grievances: the unpublished Minutes of the General Assembly make this clear. (Departmental Archives of Pyrénées Atlantiques III E 3484).

108 *Lettre adressée à M. Grégoire par les députés de la Nation juive portugaise de Bordeaux le 14 août 1789.* Bibl. Nat: Ld ^{184}5 29.

109 *Adresse présentée à l'Assemblée Nationale par le député des Juifs espagnols & portugais, etablis au Bourg Saint-Esprit-lès-Bayonne.* Bibl. Nat: 8° Ld^{184}50.

110 Arch. dép. Gironde, I. *'Répertoire extraite des Régistres des délibérations de la Nation Juive Portugaise de Bordeaux.*

111 cf. our article (Note 61 above).

112 LÉON, *Histoire* . . . pp. 165-166.

113 Ernest GINSBURGER, *Le comité de surveillance de Jean Jacques Rousseau Saint-Esprit-lès-Bayonne, Procès-verbaux et correspondance 1793 — 11 octobre 20 fructidor An II* (Paris, 1934).

114 My attention was drawn to this Register by M. Georges Weill, whom I am glad to thank here.

115 On the *Consistoires* cf. Phyllis ALBERT, 'Le rôle des Consistoires israélites vers le milieu du XIXe siècle' *R.E.J.* CXXX (1971), pp. 231-254, and particularly the same author's duplicated thesis *The Jewish Consistory of France 1830-1870* (Brandeis University, 1973).

116 The majority of the documents are in the collection edited by Diogène TAMA, *Organisation civile et religieuse des Israélites de France et du Royaume d'Italie, décrétée par son Majesté l'Empereur et Roi, le 17 mars 1808; suivi de la collection des actes de l'Assemblée des Israélites de France et du Royaume d'Italie, convoqué à Paris en 1806 et de celle des Procès-Verbaux et décisions du Grande Sanhédrin convoqué en 1807, lesquelles ont servi de base à cette organisation* (Paris, 1808). This problem is examined in depth in the thesis of Frances MALINO-HOFFMAN, *Abraham Furtado and the Sephardi Jews of France: a Study of Emancipation during the French Revolution and Napoleonic Era* (Brandeis University, 1971).

117 I have here made use of the unpublished work of Chief Rabbi Paul BAUER, *Centenaire du Temple Buffault des origines de la communauté portugaise à nos jours.* (To be published).

118 H. LÉON, *Histoire* . . . pp. 219-222.

119 *Ibid.* pp. 351-362, cf. Haïm AVNI, *Contemporary Spain and the Jewish people.* (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, 1975) [in Hebrew] pp. 17-21.

120 The most recent work on the Péreires is the 3rd-cycle thesis of Louis V. CAVIGNAC, *Les frères Péreire et la construction des chemins de fer en Espagne, la participation française actuelle aux chemins de fer espagnols* (Paris, Institut hispanique, 1970).

121 Among the numerous publications of Olinde RODRIGUES, one may cite his *Projet de Constitution populaire pour la République française* (Paris, 1848).

122 B. WEINRYB, 'Quel fut le but du voyage d'Altaras en Russie? Actes des archives de Varsovie', *R.E.J.*, XCV (1939) pp. 172-178.

123 André CHOURAQUI, *L'Alliance Israélite Universelle et la Renaissance juive contemporaine* (Paris, 1965) pp. 19-29.

124 Anna & Maxa NORDAU, *Max Nordau — L'homme — le penseur — le sioniste* (Paris, 1948); see also the typed Master's Thesis of Colette TOUITOU-BENITA, *L'activité sioniste de Max Nordau de 1914 à 1923.* (Strassbourg, 1972).

125 cf. Paula E. HYMAN, 'Joseph Salvador: Proto-Zionist or Apologist for Assimilation?' *J.S.S.* XXXIV (1972), pp. 1-22.

126 P. E. HYMAN, *The Jews in Post-Dreyfus France, 1909-1939.* (Duplicated thesis, Columbia University) 1975, p. 479.

127 We are thinking especially of the book by Michael R. MARRUS, *Les Juifs de France à l'époque de l'affaire Dreyfus; l'assimilation à l'épreuve*, translated into French by Micheline LEGRAS, (Paris, 1972); it is noteworthy that the author considers that only one group — that of Bernard Lazare — resisted the policy of assimilation. For the background of Bernard Lazare (whom M. R. Marrus does not note as being Sephardi) cf. *Le judaïsme sepharadi*, III (1934) p.140.

THE SEPHARDI JEWS OF AMSTERDAM

by
Wilhemina Chr. Pieterse

This paper starts where Prof. I. S. Révah's study about the *marranos* and the Inquisition ends.[1] As is known, the *marranos* from Portugal formed the nucleus of the first Jewish community in Amsterdam. The earliest known official document concerning one of them, Emanuel Rodrigues Vega, is dated 1595.[2] One or two will no doubt have arrived in Amsterdam before that year, as for instance there appears in the betrothal certificate or banns of Rafael Cardoso, dated 10th March 1607, mention of the fact that he was born in Lisbon, was twenty three years of age and had already lived in Amsterdam for fifteen years. He must therefore have arrived as an eight-year old in 1592, probably accompanied by adults.[3]

Inspection of banns documents in Amsterdam confirms the arrival of *marranos* in Amsterdam from Portugal. Of the sixty eight persons who entered into a contract of marriage before 1620, fifty came from Portugal. Another four came from Spain, four from Antwerp, two from the Balkans, two from Amsterdam, and in six cases no country of origin is mentioned. During the period 1635-1639 the nature of the figures was quite different. Of seventy four parties who wanted to get married, there were only thirty five from Portugal, fourteen from France, thirteen from Holland (twelve from Amsterdam, one from Rotterdam), five from Spain, two from Antwerp, two from Italy, two from South America and one from Hamburg. In the period from 1671 to 1675 there is again a great change to be seen in the countries of origin of Port(eighty seven from Amsterdam, one from Rotterdam, one from Middleburg), twenty one from Spain, eighteen from Portugal, fourteen from France, eight from Italy, eight from South America, six from Antwerp and one from London.

The coincidence of a number of events leads to the conclusion that the *marranos* came to Amsterdam at the end of the 16th century. In Portugal the opportunity to emigrate had been somewhat eased and in accordance with article 13 of the Union of Utrecht (1579) freedom of conscience was applied in Holland. Moreover it was at just about this time that Amsterdam began to develop as a centre of international trade. Most of the *marranos* who came there were engaged in commerce and hoped to improve their business and to be freed from the oppression of the Inquisition.

Fear of that tribunal will undoubtedly have been the main reason for their flight from the Iberian Peninsula. In order to conceal their identity from the Inquisition, and to avoid bringing trouble to their families and to their business associates who remained, they gave themselves false names, so-called aliases. Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel carried on business under the name of Manuel Dias Soeiro. Joshua Habilho is better known as Duarte Fernandes.[4] The writer Joseph de la Vega, author of *Confusión de confusiones* (1688) in which he describes the nature of the exchange and its habitual manipulations, called himself Joseph Penso Felix *alias* Alvaro Felix *alias* Philisberto Fortunato *alias* Alvaro Bommelman. From this last *alias* it appears that even Dutch family names were used as aliases. Other such examples are Abraham Idanha *alias* Balthasar Van der Cruys and Samuel Dias *alias* Michael Smit. Often the whole or part of a Jewish family name was translated into Dutch and used as an *alias:* Abraham de Luna Montalto *alias* Abraham Hogenberch and Manuel Vega *alias* Manuel van de Vlakte. Sometimes only the Jewish forename was altered, for example David *alias* Bento Osorio, Abraham *alias* Pedro de la Faya.[5] An *alias* could also pass from father to son. After the death of Abraham Israel Henriques *alias* Francisco Vaz de Leon, his son Jacob, who carried on his father's business, took over the *alias*.[6] Even business houses were carried on under assumed names. It is known from a document dated 1671 that Francisco Rodrigues Gutierres and Antonio Gutierres Gomes carried on business under fifteen different names.[7]

Occasionally in spite of all precautions the Inquisition traced the *marranos*, even to Amsterdam. This happened when Hector Mendes Bravo, after having lived as a Jew in Amsterdam and Hamburg, returned to Portugal in 1616 to return once again to Catholicism. There he brought to the notice of the Inquisition all those Portuguese Jews who had crossed his path in Amsterdam.[8]

The Amsterdam magistracy was well-disposed towards the *marranos*. They were not obliged to wear a badge and there was no compulsory creation of ghettos. Yet from the moment that they established themselves in Amsterdam restrictions were laid down. They could buy citizenship, but it gave them no right to join the guilds and it could not be passed on to their children. On openly adopting Judaism in Amsterdam, they experienced difficulties in obtaining a burial ground and in the building of a synagogue. In general it can be said that they found more opposition from the Christian burghers who feared their competition, and from the board of the Reformed Church who were angry that the government of Amsterdam should be more tolerant towards the Jews than to the Catholics.[9]

Initially Alkmaar (1604), Haarlem (1605) and Rotterdam (1610) showed some interest in admitting the *marranos*, but this came to nothing, though much later, in 1645, a congregation was established in Rotterdam. Finally

Amsterdam became the largest Portuguese-Jewish community in the Netherlands, although it did appear likely at the end of the 17th century that the rising Portuguese-Jewish congregation at the Hague would surpass that of Amsterdam. At the beginning of the 18th century many rich Jews such as the jeweller Manuel Levy Duarte and the brokers Isaac de Pinto and Francisco Lopes Suasso moved to the Hague. At that time this congregation was richer and more dignified than that of Amsterdam, but this phase was of short duration and it never became larger than the Amsterdam community.

The Rise of the Congregations

The *marranos* who settled at Amsterdam at the end of the 16th century were far removed from Judaism. Most of them had maintained a few Jewish customs, but real knowledge of Judaism was strange to them. Their desire to settle there was more likely due to the wish to be freed from the oppression of the Inquisition than a call to embrace the old religion, as might be supposed from the legend of Maria Nunez. The first religious assembly seems to have taken place in the spring of 1602 under the direction of Uri-ha-Levi, an Ashkenazi Jew from Emden where a small group of Portuguese Jews arrived on their way to Amsterdam. Thither he later went in order to stand by them with his knowledge of Judaism when a congregation was founded.[10] This first congregation named *Bet Jahacob* (House of Jacob) first met in a house in the Jonkerstraat near the Montelbaanstoren and after having made use of various other locations from 1614, met in the house "Antwerpen" by the Houtgracht, now known as the Waterlooplein.[11] This congregation was refused permission to establish a cemetery within the area of Amsterdam, so the deceased had to be buried in a place called Groet near Alkmaar, about 40 kilometres from Amsterdam. Not until 1614 did the congregation *Bet Jahacob* and the meanwhile growing congregation *Neve Shalom* ("Abode of Peace") purchase some land in Ouderkerk by the Amstel, a small village quite close to Amsterdam. This cemetery is still in use and is at present being restored and forms the subject of a study.[12] The supervision of *kasher* meat was immediately taken in hand,[13] education was organised through the society *Talmud Torah*[14] and the sick were looked after by *Bikur Cholim*. Very early in 1615 the society *Dotar* was founded with the object of providing dowries for Portuguese-Jewish girls. Membership was open to Sephardi Jews all over the world.[15]

The date and reason for the establishment of the congregation *Neve Shalom* are still somewhat obscure. We are better informed about the foundation in 1618 of the congregation *Bet Israel* ("House of Israel"). Certain members of *Bet Jahacob*, such as members of the families Farar and Curiel and R. Saul Levi Morteira who had rationalistic inclinations, encouraged a schism, with the result that the smaller, cabbalistically inclined group under

the leadership of R. Joseph Pardo and the merchant Bento Osorio founded a new congregation *Bet Israel*. In such a short time religious feeling had run so high that it could bring about a division in the then small community, so much so that in addition to the rabbis in Brest (Lithuania) and Salonika, even the Amsterdam magistracy joined in the efforts to restore peace and order.[16]

After 1622, however, the Portuguese community of Amsterdam tended to take united action in the three congregations. A "College of delegates" from the three congregations was set up with the major objective of obtaining money by means of a tax on the turnover of the combined membership, the money to be given to needy Portuguese Jews to pay for their journey to a foreign country. They also exercised supervision over the sale of meat. They arranged for the training and appointment of *Kasher* butchers. After 1630 they also took in hand the administration of the cemetery. In 1633 the delegates stopped members from using the Jewish names which they had adopted in the Netherlands when sending letters to Spain, and forced them to use their aliases, under pain of excommunication.[17] The nature and industry of the delegates in this "college" foreshadowed the beginning of the final union of the three congregations in 1639.

In addition to the aforementioned Rs. Joseph Pardo and Saul Levi Morteira, the rabbi and printer Menasseh ben Israel above all impressed his stamp on the Sephardi community of Amsterdam. Next to his own works, of which the *Conciliador* is the most well-known, many edifying works by other writers also issued from his press. Thus in 1627 there appeared a book of daily prayers composed by Dr. Ephraim Bueno and Abraham Sarphati.

The art of poetry was also practised by the incoming Portuguese Jews. One poet, Rehuel Jesurun, wrote a play *Dialogo de los siete montes* which was performed in 1624 in the Synagogue *Bet Jahacob*. In 1632 the delegates decided that no more "performances" were to be held in the synagogues, and such presentations probably never occurred again[18] Although there was no mention of a compulsory ghetto, most of the Portuguese Jews originally lived in the then newly extended part of Amsterdam called Vlooyenburg. The majority were merchants and were usually referred to as "Merchants of the Portuguese nation over here", but were not very influential. Few Portuguese Jews were involved when the East India Company was founded. During the first decade of their stay in Amsterdam they invested much in their own business which was directed mainly towards the Iberian Peninsula and Brazil. In the years 1609 and 1611 merely twenty-four and twenty-eight Portuguese Jews respectively joined the Exchange Bank *(Wisselbank)* out of a total of seven hundred and thirty-one and seven hundred and eight account-holders. In those years there were a bare ten Sephardim amongst the three hundred and twenty large account-holders of that institution, but in 1620 the situation altered. It could be that the twelve-year interval had had a good influence on business conditions with the Iberian peninsula. In 1620 one hundred and six

of the twelve hundred and two account-holders with the *Wisselbank* were Portuguese Jews, though only twelve of them had large accounts. They did not have much money to invest and their share in the West-India Company was consequently slight. From the ledger of the 200th capital assessment it appears that amongst the six hundred and eighty five who received the highest assessment (that is, persons with capital of f1.25,000 or more) only six Portuguese Jews were included, namely Bento Osorio, Cristoffel Mendes, Manuel Duarte, Thomas Nunes Pina, Jan de Pas and Andre d'Azevedo.[19]

Although the guilds were in general closed to Jews, there was the occasional exception, the guild of brokers being one of the few open to Jews, so the vocation of broker, which plays such an important part in trade, could have been practised by Jews after 1612. The first two Portuguese Jews to be sworn in as brokers were Estevão Cardoso and Manuel Lopes Nunes. They could only operate if at least one of the parties in a transaction was Jewish. In this same year their number was increased to ten.

Another vocation that could be freely practised by Jews in Amsterdam was that of medicine. Their names were recorded in the *Series Nominum Doctorum* of the *Collegium Medicum*. They were allowed to treat Jewish as well as non-Jewish patients. The case of Dr. Joseph Bueno who was called to the sickbed of Prince Maurice in 1625, is familiar.[20].

The congregation Talmud Torah from its foundation (1639) until the building of the Synagogue (1675)

Although the three congregations had carried out various communal duties together since 1622, they had not yet been willing to unite. But on 28 Adar 5399 (3 April 1639) the union of the *Bet Jahacob*, *Neve Shalom* and *Bet Israel* congregations took place. On that day a statute containing forty two articles was approved by the members of the communities.[21] The rabbi of *Bet Israel*, David Pardo played an important part in the creation of the new congregation called *Talmud Torah*. By allowing each congregation to sign a separate copy of the original deed, he gave the leaders of each of the three communities the impression that they were the first to have placed their signatures to the deed creating the *Talmud Torah* congregation. As a consequence of this edict all officials including the rabbis remained in office. The synagogues of *Bet Jahacob* and *Neve Shalom* were sold and that of *Bet Israel* was to be enlarged and serve the whole of the new congregation. Following the rule of the sister congregation in Venice, it was agreed that there should be only one Portuguese-Jewish congregation in Amsterdam. As regards finance, the rule concerning the *Imposta* remained in force. Members were assessed for a compulsory contribution *(finta)* according to their means and the rest of the congregation's income was derived from various voluntary contributions *(nedabot)*. There were also fines which were levied on members

in connection with infringements of the regulations and these helped to increase the synagogue's funds. The day-to-day administration was in the hands of seven *parnassim*, of whom one acted as treasurer. They were nominated from the following institutions: *Bikur Cholim* (care of the sick), *Talmud Torah* (learning), *Ets Haim* (Seminary), *Terra Santa* (support for the poor in the Holy Land) and *Cativos* (release of prisoners). The *mahamad* or collectivity of *parnassim* was extremely powerful. Nobody might oppose their decisions, or protest either orally or in writing. Nobody might summon a co-religionist before the law without first asking the *mahamad* to nominate arbitrators with the agreement of both sides. Only if both parties could not reach an agreement, were they allowed to proceed. In the domestic regulation of 1639 the power of the *mahamad* was extended still further. Among other things, any disobedient member of the congregation was bound to ask forgiveness from the *theba* (reading platform in the synagogue) and nobody was allowed to print books without permission of the *mahamad*. Disobedience was punished by fines or, in more serious cases, by excommunication.

The advent of the union may also have possibly been connected with the fact that the Ashkenazi Jews, of whom an increasing number had gradually settled in Amsterdam, had their own congregation after 1635. Perhaps the Sephardim wanted to show themselves to this group of Jews as one united congregation. At any rate, they stood by the Ashkenazim and later the Polish Jews, both in giving advice and in action. They took upon themselves the care of the poor and allowed them to use the cemetery at Ouderkerk. Later, in 1642, they were helpful in providing monies for the Ashkenazi burial ground at Muiderberg.[22]

As has been said all the rabbis were retained in office by the congregation *Talmud Torah*, namely David Pardo, Saul Levi Morteira, Menasseh ben Israel and Isaac Aboab. The last-named left for Brazil in 1642. Two of the three who remained did not get on well together. The orthodox Morteira who was probably the most influential, clashed repeatedly with the more liberal Menasseh ben Israel. The *mahamad* was frequently forced to intervene and in 1654 both rabbis were even suspended for a few months. In that year Aboab returned from Brazil and was immediately re-appointed as rabbi. Morteira who had served the Portuguese Jewish community for about forty years was content to give fewer lessons and sermons and to accept a smaller salary. In September of 1655 R. Menasseh ben Israel left for England, though in the spring of that year he had delivered a sermon criticizing the *parnassim* for allowing a *mahamad* to appoint its successor. After the death of David Pardo in 1657 and of Morteira in 1660, the college of rabbis was made up with Dr. Isaac Naar and Moses Raphael d'Aguilar.[23]

The *parnassim* of that period often had to make very important decisions. One of these has provided material for discussion to this day. On

the 27th July 1656 they excommunicated Baruch de Spinoza. At a time when the Sephardim of Amsterdam still knew from close range the horrors of the Inquisition they could not allow a young member of the congregation to vilify their newly-regained faith. Already Uriel da Costa had suffered a similar sentence and in the same year as that in which Spinoza was excommunicated, so was Dr. Juan de Prado, who it is generally understood exercised considerable influence on Spinoza's ideas.[24]

In 1665 and 1666 the Jewish community of Amsterdam was greatly excited by the appearance of the long-awaited "Messiah" Shabbetai Zevi, born in Smyrna in 1616, who had announced that he would release the Jews in 1666. Belief in this supposed Messiah was mostly to be found in cabbalistic circles in Amsterdam. The suitably named R. Dr. Isaac Naar hastened to meet him, but learned in Italy that Shabbetai had become converted to Islam in order to save his life. Naar never returned to Amsterdam but remained in Leghorn as rabbi. Many letters of homage were written to the "Messiah" both from Amsterdam and from various academies. After his apperance the priestly blessing was pronounced in the Amsterdam synagogue on every Sabbath as well as on festivals, a custom in existence even to-day.[25]

In 1670 the Del Sotto family caused considerable disturbance within the Portuguese congregation. In 1670 Jacob del Sotto died, and it was generally known that the *parnassim* had been appointed as executors of his will. The widow when cited in court by the *parnassim* announced that it had been a secret will, which she had burnt at the request of her husband four days before his death. The *parnassim* were not satisfied with this explanation and a major lawsuit ensued. All the property in the house of the deceased was seized and the *parnassim* threatened that anybody who gave evidence in favour of the widow would be excommunicated. However, the widow had put herself in the wrong by holding divine service in the house of the deceased. This was forbidden by a regulation of the congregation, as there could be but one Portuguese-Jewish congregation in Amsterdam. Furthermore, the next-of-kin had bought a piece of land in Ouderkerk on the Amstel adjoining the congregation's burial ground, and used it as a cemetery. In 1671 a compromise was reached whereby, amongst other things, it was agreed that the next-of-kin would give up three-quarters of their land to the *parnassim* who would attach it to the *Bet Haim*. It is still not quite clear what happened to the remaining quarter of the Sotto land, which must eventually have come into the hands of the *parnassim* since it is now a part of the burial ground, but still known as the Sotto land.[26] Samuel del Sotto stated in his will in 1726 that he wished to be buried in the *Bet Haim dos Sottos*, in a grave covered by a white marble stone.[27] This tombstone has not been found in the cemetery, nor is it known who was to have made it, as indeed is the case of the majority of tombstones in Ouderkerk. At certain periods the congregation seems to have employed a stonemason. In a resolution dated 23rd Tebet 5535 (26

December 1774) the *parnassim* announced that after the death of the stonemason Huybert and discussion with the city architect De Witte, they had taken Leendert Viering into their service.[28]

The highlight in the development of the congregation was symbolised by its magnificent synagogue whose first four cornerstones were laid in 1671. These honours were sold to the highest bidders, namely Moses Curiel *alias* Jeronimo Nunes da Costa (fl.800) the representative of the King of Portugal, David Imanuel de Pinto (fl.550) head of the *Yeshiba de los Pintos*, Joseph Israel Nunez *alias* Antonio Alvarez (fl.510) a jeweller of Parisian descent, and Imanuel de Pinto (fl.450). On the second of August 1675 the building was consecrated in the presence of the Burgomaster and aldermen. When Prince William III visited the synagogue in 1690, he was astonished to find that the pillars beneath the galleries were made of wood. When the *parnassim* explained that they had experienced difficulties in obtaining stone from Germany and Italy, the prince helped them to obtain stone from England and Ireland. Thus in 1691 the wooden pillars were replaced by others of stone. A member of the House of Orange had visited the synagogue of the Portuguese Jews in Amsterdam even earlier. In 1642 Prince Frederick Henry visited the old synagogue, on which occasion R. Menasseh ben Israel delivered an address of welcome. Throughout the centuries the Portuguese Jews have been supporters of the House of Orange. This may help to explain the many visits paid to their synagogue by members of that house.[29]

In 1732 the synagogue *Mikve Israel* was built in Curaçao after the style of that in Amsterdam. Not only were the plans of the building imitated, but the organisation of the Amsterdam congregation was followed by many Sephardi communities in the Netherlands and in other places such as Recife (Brazil), Curaçao, Surinam, New York, London, Hamburg, Bayonne etc.

The various *Yeshiboth* (schools of learning) bristled with activity in a wide range of literary and other edifying studies. The oldest society which occupied itself with the study of the Holy Law was *Reschit Chochma* ("The beginning of wisdom") founded in 1629 by R. Saul Levi Morteira. In 1644 a similar society was formed on the initiative of and financed by Isaac Pereira. The most important seat of learning other than the *Talmud Torah* and *Ets Haim* was the *Yeshiba de los Pintos*, which was brought from Rotterdam to Amsterdam in 1669. The society *Torah Or* ("Law is Light") which was started by Abraham Pereira and Dr. Ephraim Bueno in 1656, did not concern itself solely with the study of the Law, but was also concerned with the study and practice of literature. But literature was more especially studied in the so-called academies, the chief of which were *Academia de los Sitibundos* (founded 1676) and the *Academia de los Floridos* (founded 1685).

The art of printing Hebrew books, which had been introduced into Amsterdam by R. Menasseh ben Israel, also faced new challenges. Menasseh found a competitor in Emmanuel Benveniste who came to Amsterdam from

Venice in 1640 and started a printing and publishing house. About sixty-five works were produced by his press of which his edition of the Talmud, during the years 1644-1648, was the most important. The notable thing about this edition was that various matters which had previously been forbidden by the censor, were once again included.[30] Benveniste's firm existed until 1659. At that time Joseph Athias gained considerable recognition for the publication of his Bibles, of which according to his reckoning in 1687 more than one million were printed for England and Scotland. Next to Athias stood the firm of David de Castro Tartaz, who had started as a printer with Menasseh ben Israel. On his press was printed in Spanish the *Gazeta de Amsterdam*, which existed till the end of the 17th century, and aimed at providing news especially business news for the various groups of *marranos*.

In the history of Jewry in the middle of the 17th century the Portuguese Jews of Amsterdam played a notable part. Thus when Cromwell wanted to legalise the return of the Jews to England for reasons of promoting trade, he directed his enquiries to R. Menasseh ben Israel.The total number of Portuguese Jews having deposits with the *Wisselbank* and the treatment of their accounts point to the fact that the business of the Portuguese Jews in the second half of the 17th century was held in high esteem in spite of the decline in trade with Brazil in 1654. It appears too from the account books of the Netherlands East India Company that they also played an important part in it during the same period. The most significant measure of their good standing is in the ledger of the 200th capital assessment of 1674. This shows that the very rich among the Portuguese Jews were still the exception although the middle income group was larger than in the above-mentioned assessment of 1631. In 1674 245 Portuguese names occur but only six of them possessed more than fl.100,000; namely, Antonio Lopes Suasso (fl.231,000), the widow Abraham Gil Lopes Pinto (fl.130,000), Isaac de Pinto (fl.125,000), Solomon Salom Dias de Pas (fl.117,000), the widow of David Curiel (fl.117,000), and David van Isaac de Pinto (fl.100,000). Six were assessed for capital between fl.50,000 and fl.100,000, amongst whom was Jacob del Monte with fl.87,000. Compared with the huge capital of the numerous Christian merchants and governors (Burgomaster Corver fl.400,000, Jan Deutz fl.360,000) these amounts are not very large, but because there were many small owners of capital amongst the Portuguese Jews, their average prosperity was higher than that of the rest of the population of Amsterdam, who made frequent allusions to wealthy Portuguese merchants.[31]

The Congregation Talmud Torah from the building of the Synagogue till the Revolution (1795)

The development of the congregation continued even after the building of the synagogue. Few organisational changes were required. Many practised

the study of the Law and the Portuguese Jews also engaged in cultural pursuits.

When R. Moses Raphael d'Aguilar died in 1679, Jacob Sasportas was appointed next to the ageing R. Aboab as head of the highest department of *Ets Haim* and Selomoh d'Oliveira was appointed as head of the second highest department. After the death of Aboab in 1693 at the age of 88, Sasportas became rabbi and d'Oliveira succeeded him in *Ets Haim*. The vacancy left by d'Oliveira in the training-school was filled by the cabbalist Selomoh Ailyon.

R. Ailyon was *Haham* of the congregation from 1700 till his death in 1728. He ran into numerous difficulties and had many opponents, amongst them his Ashkenazi colleagues Zevi and Moses Gages who published the minor work *Sefat Emet* in 1707 without permission of the *parnassim*. Ailyon had a beneficial influence on the development of the training school *Ets Haim* and guided many pupils, two of whom succeeded him, namely R. David Israel Athias and R. Isaac Haim Abendana de Britto.

After the death of Athias in 1753, Abendana de Britto was placed in sole charge of the rabbinate. After his death in 1760 some years were spent in finding a successor who had to be brought from abroad. Eventually the choice fell upon R. Selomoh Salem from Belgrade who happened to be in Amsterdam in 1762 for the printing of his book *Sjoné Halachot*. During his period in office, the congregation was twice shaken by thefts of synagogal ornaments, especially in 1777 when the loss was considerable. Part of it was recovered though damaged, but the thief must have melted down the beautiful tankard embossed by Adam van Vianen, which was presented to the congregation in 1694 by the jeweller Manuel Levy Duarte and his wife when they left for the Hague. Commissioned by the *parnassim*, the brothers Peirolet made a new jug which was ready in 1780.[32]

After the death of *Haham* Salem (1781) his place was taken by David Cohen d'Azevedo who died in 1792. The office then passed to his son Daniel Cohen d'Azevedo.[33] During his period of office the struggle between the supporters of the House of Orange and the "patriots" took place (1787) and the United Netherlands Republic ceased to exist (1795).

These events were described from Portuguese-Jewish point of view in the chronicle of David Franco Mendes (1713-1793).[34] The writer of this chronicle is really best known as a poet. Both he and Isaac Cohen Belinfante could be considered pupils of Moses Haim Luzatto (1707-1747), who brought new life into Hebrew poetry.

In the middle of the 18th century the Portuguese Jews established a Spanish theatre in which operas were also performed. Female roles were taken by men because no women were allowed to appear on a Jewish stage. These performances were held in private. This was not really permitted, for according to a state ordinance of 1683, no foreign artists were allowed to

appear in Amsterdam either inside or outside the playhouse. This prohibition was associated with the fact that the revenue from the playhouse was earmarked for the Orphanage and the Old Age Home. Competition from private companies was feared as it could reduce the takings of the playhouse.[35]

As far as is known, the oldest written synagogal music, set down by the hand of Abraham de Casseres, dates from the 18th century. He composed numerous works, including the music for the special poem which was sung in 1726 at the opening of the Portuguese-Jewish congregation in the Hague.[36]

Another unusual art-form in which the Portuguese Jews excelled, was calligraphy in which Jacob Gadelha was a master.

Joseph Penso de la Vega (1650-1693) was a notable man of letters during the latter part of the 17th century. At the age of 17 he wrote a Hebrew drama entitled *Asire ha-Tikvah* (Prisoners of Hope). He also occupied himself by writing Spanish prose and verse. However much he may have benefited from his rabbinic training, he became a merchant just like his father and three brothers. His knowledge of the nature of the stock-exchange was immortalised in his book *Confusion de confusiones* (1688). This was the first book which had the stock-exchange and its associated practices as its theme, and was to remain the only book on the subject for very many years. It is written in the form of a discussion between a philosopher, a merchant and a stockbroker. Joseph Penso de la Vega brought this book to the attention of Duarte Nunes da Costa, the eldest son of Jeronimo Nunes da Costa,[37] representative of the King of Portugal in Amsterdam. The extensive international connections maintained by the Portuguese Jews combined with their skill in grasping opportunities in business rendered them especially suitable as diplomatic representatives. Apart from many members of the Nunes da Costa family (known in the synagogue as Curiel), the Belmonte family also produced many diplomats. It is also known that Moses Machado, the army's quartermaster under William III, was frequently sent on diplomatic missons. Isaac Lopes Suasso was made Baron d'Avernas le Gras in 1696 in view of the many diplomatic services he had performed for Charles II of Spain.[38] Of his son the story is told that he loaned William III two million guilders for his expedition to England without security or proof. He is alleged merely to have said: *If you are successful, I know that you will repay me, and if you are unsuccessful, I agree to lose it.* Evidence of the truth of this story has never been given.

From the above it appears that the Portuguese Jews not only occupied themselves with trade but often mixed in intimate court circles where they acted as diplomats, purveyors to the army and, above all, as money-lenders.

Although at the beginning of the 18th century the Sephardim were still carrying on business with the Iberian peninsula and Italy, especially with the West Indies, they gradually paid more attention to the speculative sphere of

share-dealing. Wealthy stock-brokers of that time were the families Teixeira, Suasso and de Pinto. Aaron de Pinto dealt in shares even during the time of William III. His son David followed in his father's footsteps and left fl.802,000 when he died in 1751. In addition to a large house in the Breestraat, he owned a country house, Tulpenburg by the Amstel near Ouderkerk. The best-known member of the family was undoubtedly Isaac de Pinto (1717-1787), son of the previously mentioned David. He was engaged in share-dealing just like his ancestors, but with less success. According to the Amsterdam chronicler Bicker Raye, the business house of Pinto had to suspend payments and the family estate of Tulpenburg had to be sold. Isaac's interests were not only devoted to share-dealing although he had written an important book about it entitled *Traité de la Circulation et du Crédit* (1771). In this book he proclaims the advantages of credit and defends the issuing of national loans especially that of England. Apart from this study, Isaac de Pinto's fame is based on other writings which dealt with a variety of social problems as well as with economics.

A useful measure of the prosperity of the population of Amsterdam in the middle of the 18th century is obtained from the personal assessment statement of 1742 assessing the inhabitants whose annual income was more than fl.800. Of the three thousand Portuguese Jews then resident in Amsterdam, two hundred and eighty three were assessed. Of these one hundred and eleven had an annual income between fl.800 and fl.1,000; sixty-seven between fl.1,000 and fl.2,000; seventy-four between fl.2,000 and fl.5,000; twenty-two between fl.5,000 and fl.10,000, and nine between fl.10,000 and fl.50,000. Unlike the previously mentioned capital assessments of 1631 and 1674 the assessment in this instance was based on annual income and not on capital. Vaz Dias calculated that an average amount of fl.1.63 would have had to be paid for each of the two hundred and forty thousand inhabitants of the city. For the three thousand Portuguese Jews however, the amount was fl.6 a head. For the Ashkenazi Jews he arrived at a figure of fl.0.32, from which it appears that the prosperity of the Portuguese Jews was greater than that of the rest of the population and much greater than that of their Ashkenazi co-religionists.[39]

The results of the assessment list of 1742 do not appear to indicate such a serious economic decline as that which occurred in about 1770. In the periodical *De Koopman* of that year a plan was mooted for bringing new life into the business dealings of the Portuguese Jews with Spain, Portugal and Brazil.

One crisis should be mentioned, which occurred in the years 1772-1773, affecting in general the Jews more than the Christians. The blow fell mainly on exchange dealing and share-transactions in which a large number of Jews were engaged, and who in consequence tried to develop their businesses in Hamburg or London. Included amongst them was the father of the well-

known English economist David Ricardo, who had established himself in London.

When war broke out with England a few years later, it had grave consequences for the profits of the East India company in which a large number of Portuguese Jews were shareholders. The economic set-back was felt not only in Amsterdam but also in Surinam where many Portuguese Jews had established interests.

About 1773-1776 Dutch Jews tried to emigrate to Essequibo and Demerara the former British Guiana, but their plans did not materialise. These places feared the arrival of too many needy Jews, while in Amsterdam it was feared that once the Jewish merchants were settled there, they would ship their goods direct to various countries without Dutch intervention. Eventually passports were issued only to those who were willing and able to buy or to establish a plantation.

Things were difficult for capitalists, but the middle and working-classes had to face even harder times. From the first population census taken in 1795, it emerged that 18,200 Ashkenazi and 2,800 Portuguese Jews lived in Amsterdam. However, the returning officers made the following proviso: *"In the Jewish neighbourhood the population density in some places is so great, every dwelling including the attic has so many occupants, that none of the aldermen of the wards would dare to declare that no people and especially no children had been overlooked"*. From information obtained some years later it was estimated that 54% of the Sephardim and 87% of the Ashkenazim were receiving assistance.[40]

From Revolution to the Chief Synagogue (1815)

As already mentioned, the Portuguese Jewish community of Amsterdam was a fervent supporter of the House of Orange and of the rulers of Amsterdam. They were often shielded by them, especially from the guilds. When the "patriots", assisted by French troops, gained the upper hand in 1795 and proclaimed the Republic of Batavia, the Jews regarded the prospect for the establishment of equality of justice with scepticism. Hardly a single Jew participated in the society *Felix Libertate*, established in February 1795, whose goal was the social and cultural emancipation of the Jews. Opposition to the introduction of equal citizenship, laid down in the *Rights of Man and Citizen*, was found not only on the Christian side, but also amongst the Jews themselves. They were afraid that the social advantages of equality would not outweigh the damage to their religious life.

Similarly, owing to the opposition of the rabbis of the Jewish congregations, it was not until 2nd September 1796 that a decree was promulgated stating that no Jew could be excluded from any of the rights associated with Dutch citizenship merely because he was a Jew.

The Ashkenazi community had a serious confrontation with the Society *Felix Libertate* and this ended in separation. The patriotically-minded members founded the congregation *Adat Jeshurun* in 1797, but a reconciliation and reunion took place in 1808. Members of the Portuguese congregation were somewhat indifferent to the freedom and equality given to them against their wishes. On 10 July 1798 Isaac da Costa Athias became a member of the National Assembly and was the first Portuguese Jew to take his seat on a board. At that time the Jews in general were not yet prepared to involve themselves for the fatherland. This was commoner during the reign of Louis Napoleon (1806-1810).[41]

In general the king took account of the wishes of his Jewish subjects. Thus a number of weekly markets were changed from a Saturday to another day of the week. He also made known his wish that the Ashkenazi and Portuguese communities should be fused into one. Dr. Immanuel Capadoce, one of the first Jews to be knighted by Louis Napoleon, was able to use his influence to prevent this union, though references were subsequently made to the unification. However, it never got beyond a combined Upper Consistory and the mutual relationship between the two communities was laid down in the so-called "Concordaat of 1810", which in the main is still in operation. The king took another decision which did not meet with approval. On 10 July 1809 he ordered the Ashkenazi community to use a Dutch instead of the Hebrew Bible. A similar ruling was never addressed to the Portuguese congregation.

Another royal decision of significance for the Portuguese Jews was that of 8 July 1809 when reference was made to the establishment of a Jewish corps. An earlier attempt to bring the Jews under arms had come to nothing, although a number of them had volunteered in 1799 when the English invaded north Holland. Now rabbis received instructions to encourage the young men to take up military service, and on Sabbath, 5 August 1809 *Haham* Daniel Cohen d'Azevedo gave a sermon to that effect. In addition there appeared from the hand of Moses Cohen Belinfante of the Hague a document entitled "*Encouragement for the Dutch Jews to follow what is to them a new career, namely, military service*" in which he recalled the military exploits of the Portuguese Jews in the West Indies. Yet all this was of no avail and orders were given for the formation of a Corps. Boys were gathered from different orphanages including the boys's orphanage *Aby Jetomin* belonging to the Portuguese congregation. This Jewish Corps, assembled with so much trouble, was disbanded on 2 May 1810. It is a point of purely historical value that Holland was the first country to allow Jews to join its army.

The annexation of Holland by France in 1810 had significant consequences. The reduction by one third of the national debt resulted in the loss of two thirds of the income of the charitable institutions with which the Portuguese congregation was so well endowed. Furthermore, conscription

was introduced in 1811 which meant that lots were cast annually amongst men in the 20-year age group for military service. It was usual during 1811-1812 for each person summoned to be registered, to adopt a family name. This was particularly important for the Ashkenazim who still frequently made use only of patronyms.[42]

At this time of great poverty Jewish education struggled. A *Society for General Welfare* started to occupy itself with the reform of Dutch education, but did not extend its activity to Jewish children since it was a Christian institution. The Jewish children could not even attend the "public" schools as they were of a Christian character. Some well-to-do Portuguese Jews, however, did send their children to the public schools as they taught secular subjects. At that time junior and higher religious education was provided free by *Ets Haim*. In 1814 the Portuguese Jewish poor school was founded in which social subjects were studied. In 1820 in agreement with *Ets Haim* it also provided junior religious education at its own expense.[43]

After the return of Prince of Orange in 1813, who was proclaimed king in 1815, the whole of the French organisation was abolished by the resolution of 26 February 1814. In agreement with the *Concordaat*, an Advisory Committee was appointed under the chairmanship of the Chief Commissioner for Home Affairs. The following members were included: one each from the Portuguese congregations in Amsterdam and the Hague, one from the Ashkenazi congregations in Amsterdam, the Hague and Rotterdam and one from the erstwhile separatist congregation in Amsterdam. On 12 June 1814 it was decided that the Jewish community should be organised in twelve Chief Synagogues, which included the Portuguese congregations of Amsterdam and the Hague. The Portuguese congregations of Maarsen, Naarden and Vreeland were dependent upon the Amsterdam Chief Synagogue. Over all these the Chief Committee for Jewish Affairs was supreme. The following Portuguese had seats on that committee:- Dr. Immanuel Capadoce, I. J. Teixeira de Mattos and M. Salvador from the congregation in the Hague. A separate Portuguese Jewish membership was not introduced. (This was not formed until 1870 when it was decided to abandon state interference in Jewish religious affairs). On 8 June 1815 the "Chief Synagogue" started work, its main leadership being the original government of *parnassim*. One of their first duties was to announce the new regulations which had been authorised by the Secretary of State on 14 April 1814. The first *parnassim* were chosen by the king, afterwards by the Great Synagogue Council, which consisted of members of the Committee for Jewish Affairs, *parnassim* and elders, namely ex-*parnassim*. Even the choice of a chief rabbi rested with the Great Synagogue Council. The Council could meet only at the behest of the *parnassim* to consider very important matters such as alterations to the regulations, the supervision of accounts and accountability. Daily management rested with the *parnassim*. Their duties included the preparation of

estimates, the arranging of sermons, the allocation of seats in the synagogue and the maintenance of religious ceremonies. The *abattoir* was under the supervision of a representative committee from the Ashkenazi and Portuguese congregations.[44]

From Chief Synagogue to Ruin (1940)

The rabbi, Daniel Cohen d'Azevedo who had witnessed all these changes, died suddenly in 1822. A successor could not be found in the Netherlands. The sad outcome can be read in the minutes of the Synagogue Council. In April 1826 a suitable candidate was thought to have been found in the person of Judah Aron Acohen Sikly living in Bordeaux, but in December of that year the *parnassim* had to announce that something had unexpectedly gone wrong. In the following year R. Abraham Belais offered himself for the post. He had been dismissed from his post as rabbi in Nice, so that he too did not appear to be the right person. They got much further in 1828 with Ephraim Abraham Arditty from Trieste. In his case the breakdown occurred over learning. He failed the examination which he had to undergo in Amsterdam, but when he had gained enough knowledge after one year, and his appointment had already been announced, he refused because he could not reconcile himself to the conditions attached to his office. In 1835 Haim Solomon Abulafia from Leghorn offered himself as chief rabbi but his offer was not pursued as they were not willing to submit an already ageing rabbi to an examination. In 1836 a namesake, R. Jehisquel Eliezer Abulafia who had retired from Tiberias was in Amsterdam. He, too, was anxious to obtain the post of chief rabbi but in his case the matter fell through because of the excessively demanding customs of the service in Amsterdam and because of the prescribed dress. Gradually the congregation became wary of considering foreign candidates so when in 1856 Abraham Toloso was proposed, the matter was not pursued. The straitened financial position of the congregation also played a part in the problem. Understandably, the *parnassim* became disheartened and their efforts to find a chief rabbi ceased. Eventually in 1866 a committee to fill the vacant office of chief rabbi was appointed,[45] but even then it was not until 1900 that Isaac son of Judah Palache, who had been rabbinical assessor since 1888, was appointed. Thus after all it was a Netherlander who had received his education in the training school of *Ets Haim*. When he died in 1926 the thought of appointing a foreigner was once again considered, but in 1928 the matter was settled by appointing two rabbis, Dr. B. I. Ricardo and E. M. Francès to constitute the chief rabbinate. This position persisted until the second World War which ended the life of the congregation.

There were few administrative changes during this period. As has already been mentioned, the Portuguese-Jewish Synagogue Council came

into being in 1870 of which the Chief Committee was the head. By a change of rule in 1921 it was decided that in future council meetings should be public and the right to vote for members of that body should be open to all subscribing members including women, and should not be restricted to those whose annual incomes were in excess of fl.2000.

In 1872 a notable reorganisation in *Ets Haim* took place by the inclusion of secular studies in the curriculum. Although there were many able teachers associated with *Ets Haim*, the absence of a qualified rector to bring about such a reorganisation was apparent. Good direction of *Ets Haim* was of great significance to provide for the training of successors to the already ageing rabbis, David Lopes Cardozo (1852-1900) and Eleazar Aron Vaz Dias (1852-1885). The vice-principal of the Dutch-Jewish Seminarium, A. Van Loen, was appointed as rector of *Ets Haim*, and designed a curriculum suited to the new requirements. He remained at the Portuguese institute of learning for 11 years, and when he left for Groningen as chief rabbi in 1888, he left behind in Amsterdam two young men who had completed their studies, both of whom later became chief rabbis, the previously mentioned Isaac son of Judah Palache who succeeded him as rector and Aron Rodrigues Pereira who was to be called to the Hague.

About that time *Ets Haim* came into possession of the magnificent library which had been built up by David Montezinos (1828-1916) who in 1866 had succeeded his father Raphael Montezinos as librarian of *Ets Haim*. Raphael Montezinos had been a rabbi of the congregation from 1852 to 1866. His son had also received his education at *Ets Haim*. He attained the grade of *Maggid* (preacher) and was for many years connected with the "Poor" school as a teacher and later at the congregation's religion classes. He did not pursue his theological studies, but directed his attention to the history of his congregation and to that of the Jews in general. He collected not only books but also prints, including many portraits. His library was especially known for its excellent collection of Spanish and Portuguese *Judaica*. He had no children and when his wife died in 1889, he decided to present his library to *Ets Haim* on condition that it bore his name, *Livraria D. Montezinos* and that it should be open to the public at certain specified times. There was a ceremonial opening on 9 April 1891. The donor remained as librarian until his death.

It is due to David Henriques de Castro (died 1898) that the many valuable tombstones in the burial ground at Ouderkerk may still be viewed. In the 60th year of the nineteenth century he began to map out the cemetery and to raise those stones which had sunk into the ground. Many were later restored to their original positions, but through him the best part of one thousand were permanently raised, restored and prevented from sinking once more. He may justly be considered a pioneer in this work, for as a result of his efforts the restoration of the cemetery has once again been taken in hand.[46]

A namesake of the above-mentioned, the chemist Daniel Henriques de

Castro (died 1863) was a well-known art-collector as well as an artist himself. He practised the little known art of glass engraving. Other well-known artists of a somewhat later date included the painter Joseph Teixeira de Mattos (1893-1938) and the sculptor Dr. J. Mendes da Costa (1863-1939).

Concerning literature it can be said that after emancipation, Spanish was entirely replaced by Dutch. Isaac de Pinto still wrote in French and Portuguese, but members of *Felix Libertate* debated in Dutch, and the literary society of the Portuguese Jews called *Concordia Crescimus* used Dutch not Spanish. The well-known Isaac da Costa was a member of that society. Although he later converted to Christianity, it can be said that he was the only Portuguese-Jewish poet of the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century there came into being a group of Jewish romantic writers who were moved by the social changes which had taken place at the end of the nineteenth century. The Portuguese representative of this group was Israel Querido (1874-1932). Among other things, he devoted his attention to the world of the diamond workers from which group he himself had originated.

There was also a number of industrialists among the Portuguese Jews of the nineteenth century. Natan Dias Brandon (died 1875) ran a candle factory which later became the Royal Netherlands Wax-candle factory. As in former times, there were also many printing firms in the hands of Portuguese Jews such as that of Jacob Bueno de Mesquita which had previously belonged to the firm of Belinfante and De Vita. This firm printed the prayer books according to the Portuguese rite, and also the Jewish weekly paper *Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad* which is still being produced. During the years 1867-1875 its chief editor was J. A. Mendes Chumaceiro who was a rabbi of the congregation from 1866 to 1900.

The most important personality to appear in the Portuguese congregation during the middle of the 19th century was Dr. Samuel Sarphati (1813-1866) who devoted his life to the improvement of Amsterdam's economy. He encouraged the building of houses for the working and middle classes, as well as the establishment of factories, schools, banks and hotels. The Palace of Popular Diligence (burnt down in 1929) showed what industry could produce. Sarphati also occupied several posts in the Portuguese congregation. He was a long-serving member of the Synagogue Council of which he was president in 1855. He was a great supporter of separate Jewish education for which reason he had unsuccessfully tried to keep in being the "Poor" school. In 1870 this school was changed into a religious school so that general education had to be found in the public schools. When Sarphati died in 1866 he had not been able to bring all his plans to fruition, but he had a worthy successor in A. C. Wertheim, who at the funeral at Ouderkerk encouraged those present "*to follow the example of the deceased and to help to bring to a conclusion that great work which he had started.*" Wertheim kept his word.[48]

The greatest problem which the Netherlands had to combat in the

nineteenth century was poverty, to which the Jews were no exception. Judging from the figures of, say, 1849, they were the most seriously affected. Of the 110,245 members of the Reformed Church 18,792 were in receipt of alms, a good 17%. This percentage applied also to the Roman Catholics of whose 49,611 souls, 8,556 were in receipt of relief. The percentage among the Jews was much higher. Of the 22,426 Ashkenazim 12,263 were being assisted. The Portuguese Jews were still worse off. Of 2,447 members, 1,727 were on poor relief — 63%. Although figures never disclose the whole truth, the conclusion must be that one can speak of the impoverishment of Amsterdam's Jews especially that of the Portuguese Jews. The reasons for this poverty must be sought in the eighteenth century or even earlier. As Jews were kept outside the guilds, they were mainly channelled towards business. This received a terrible blow towards the end of the eighteenth century by the collapse of the two Companies. During the French occupation two more blows fell which hit the Portuguese Jews with particular severity, the reduction by one third of the national debt and the Continental System.

During Sarphati's lifetime the economic life of Amsterdam somewhat improved, to which the growing diamond industry especially made some contribution; and particularly during the time of de Kaap (about 1870-1875), many Jews once again enjoyed well-paid work. Even so most Jews still lived in poor circumstances and in bad homes, which the Law of Residence of 1902 tried to improve. In 1910 and 1926 respectively, the two densely populated Jewish districts of Uilenberg and Marken were redeveloped. Most of the inhabitants moved to new homes in the Transvaal neighbourhood, but they were not able to enjoy their new dwellings for long, since the Germans soon drove them out.[49]

For some time it appeared that the Portuguese Jews would be exempt from deportation. It had been argued scientifically that they were not really Jews, but in 1944 they were taken away. On a percentage basis the number of Portuguese Jews who became Nazi victims was very high, since they believed for a long time that they would be spared, and therefore made no attempts to escape.[50]

Associations, Institutions and Care of the Poor

From the very foundation of the Portuguese congregation in Amsterdam, much thought had been given to the care of the poor. When the Ashkenazi Jews came to Amsterdam after 1630, the Portuguese Jews also concerned themselves with their welfare. From a decision made on 16 July 1628 it is known that they received something over and above the customary 6 *schellingen*. It was also customary to give fare money *(despachos)* to the poor to enable them to leave for other countries. In 1628 it was decided that the final destination should not be nearer than Greece, Tunis or Turkey. A

quarter of the money allocated was paid on departure, a quarter in Italy and the rest at the selected place of destination.[51] In later years refugees who arrived in Amsterdam were frequently sent further on. Documents dated 1656 make mention of one hundred and seventy Polish Jews, who fled from Lithuania to Amsterdam and, having been clothed, fed and cared for by the Portuguese Jews, were shipped to Germany.[52] There existed a society whose object was to provide financial assistance to Ashkenazi and Polish co-religionists. The first mention of this society *Abodath-ha-Chesed* ("Work of Loving-Kindness") was made in 1683 by Daniel Levi de Barrios, the poet-historian, who himself made use of the assistance of the Portuguese congregation in the period 1676-1701. During this latter year his weekly payment amounted to fl.3.[53]

Isaac de Pinto, already mentioned, addressed himself to the question of those receiving outdoor relief from the Portuguese congregation. In his *Reflexões politicas* he stated that the members of the congregation could not possibly raise more funds, even though the number of needy was constantly increasing. The highest amount distributed was fl.6 per month and this he considered to be absolutely inadequate. He saw the transportation of the poor to the colonies as the only remedy. Proof that this scheme was adopted is found in the congregational archives in *Registro dos despachos* in which are noted those payments made between 1759 and 1814 to enable members to depart, mostly to Surinam.[54]

In spite of all the measures taken it was still not possible to conquer poverty after the end of the eighteenth century. Apart from the congregation's hand-outs the many societies that tried to alleviate need in a variety of areas, were still not in a position to alleviate the social distress.

Only some of these societies have been mentioned since there were more than one hundred of them in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and ten more were added during the nineteenth century.[55]

Among the institutions were literary societies, schools and also orphanages, old-age homes and hospitals. Alongside were institutions which concerned themselves solely with financial matters, such as the pension funds for widows of the teachers of *Ets Haim* ("Tree of Life"), founded on the 100th anniversary of the society *Asuta de Chabraja*, which granted assistance to sick teachers of *Ets Haim*. The association *Honen Dalim* ("Compassion for the poor") was founded in 1625 and probably existed until 1690. The aim of this society was to provide interest-free loans. It is likely that this work was taken over by the congregation through the *misva de Emprestimo* and later in 1855 by the Loan Fund.

Nevertheless most of the societies occupied themselves with the study of the Law, Divine Service or charity, or with a combination of these three pursuits which have ever been the pillars of Judaism.

Of about fifteen societies which were devoted exclusively to the study of

the Law, one was founded in 1643 by Saul Levi Morteira and named *Keter Torah* ("Crown of the Law"). A frequently-met combination was that of study of the Law and charity. *Mishne Torah* ("Repetition of the Law") (before 1765) also distributed bread. *Oneg Sabbat* ("Joy of the Sabbath") (1700) distributed bread once a week, and also provided oil for the Sabbath lamps. *Hanagath-ha-Nearim* ("Repose of the Young Men") (1790) combined study of the Law with the distribution of shirts.

A number of societies devoted their attention to the deceased. Of these the Burial Society *Gemelut Hassadim* (1639) was the oldest. In 1705 subdivisions developed from these societies. *Abodath-ha-Kodesh* ("Work of Holiness") was given the duty of carrying the deceased to the barge, since initially the journey to Ouderkerk was made by boat on the Amstel. *Mismereth-ha-Bayith* ("Observance of the House") saw to the placing of the coffin on the bier. Moreover, *Hesed Wëemet* ("Loving-kindness and Truth") was established in the same year and its duty, according to Jewish custom, was the washing of the deceased and placing the body in the coffin. From the time of the formation of the congregation there existed a ladies' society, *Tachrichin* which made shrouds for the needy. *Eben Jecara* ("Beloved Stone") came into being in 1733 and its aim was to place tombstones over the graves of the poor.

Some societies engaged solely in works of charity. *Vestiaria dos Talmidim* founded in 1639 provided clothing for the necessitous pupils of the lower school. *Meil Sedaca* ("Cloak of Righteousness") (1735) distributed coats to needy persons of good character. *Esrat Nashim* ("Help of Women") provided needy women with shoes and stockings and *Cobah Jeshua* ("Helmet of Salvation") distributed hats and wigs. *Atse-ha-Maaracha* ("Wood of Arrangement"), founded before 1700, provided the poor with firewood during the winter months.

Shomerim-la-Boker ("Watchers for the morning") founded in about 1666, combined the three elements of study, the Law, worship and charity, in its objectives. Early morning services were held, and these were followed by studying the Law and by care of the poor.

Just before the Second World War about fifty such societies and institutions were still in existence, but now there are only a few, namely *Ets Haim*, *Dotar*, the boys' orphanage *Aby Jetomim*, the girls' orphanage *Mazon Habanoth* ('Food of the Daughters'), the old-age home for men, *Mishkenet Zekenim* ("Dwelling of the Old") and *Matsebet Aben* ('Pillar of Stone'). From 16th September 1800 this last organisation had as its main object the placing of a tombstone over a deceased member's grave, for a monthly contribution of fl.o.10. Later, in 1856, the brotherhood whilst preserving its name, became a burial fund for members of the congregation.

Concluding Remarks

It is evident that the Sephardi Jews of Amsterdam were engaged in many religious and secular affairs. It may perhaps be of interest to look at the size of this group which brought into being all those things that have been previously described. Some figures, such as the census of 1795, have been quoted but reliable figures became available only after 1830.[56] Before that time we have only estimates or incidental remarks from contemporaries. There must have been two hundred Portuguese Jews in Amsterdam in about 1610. This number increased to about a thousand in 1630, to about eighteen hundred in 1655 and two thousand five hundred in 1675. In 1743 there were three thousand in Amsterdam and their numbers fluctuated around this figure until about 1860. There was then a sizeable increase to about six thousand five hundred in 1910 after which the numbers decreased to three thousand seven hundred and ninety eight in 1941. Of these about five hundred were still alive in 1945 and they carried on the congregation under the leadership of Chief Rabbi S. Rodrigues Pereira (1945-1969).

Boekman devoted attention to some typical Jewish matters such as marriages between blood relations and mixed marriages. With reference to this he concluded in 1936 that for the most part 'the Portuguese Jews after three generations were children of Dutch-Jewish mothers'.[57] These mixed marriages are to be explained by the fact that the social differences between Ashkenazi and Portuguese Jews had disappeared. There was no further mention of the language barrier. The last rabbis to preach in Portuguese were Jacob Ferrares who became *Haham* of the Hague in 1842, Aron Mendes Chumaceiro who was appointed *Haham* of Curaçao in 1860, and David Lopez Cardozo. Their sermons were actually delivered in Dutch in 1843.[58] Only the prayer for the Royal Family is still recited in Portuguese. The administration of both the congregation and its institutions also had to be carried on in Dutch. It was not until 1870 that all books in Holland came to be written in Dutch. Portuguese completely disappeared as a spoken language at about the same time, though some Portuguese expressions are still known to many members of the Portuguese congregation.

Notes

Abbreviations: **B and F** = **H. BRUGMANS and A. FRANK,** *De geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam 1941).

G.A.A. = Gemeentearchief Amsterdam

Inv. = W. Chr. PIETERSE, *Inventaris van de archieven van de Portuguese-Israelietische gemeente te Amsterdam 1614-1870* (Amsterdam 1964).

1 I. S. RÉVAH, 'Les Marranes portugais et l'Inquisition au XVIe siècle', *Sephardi Heritage I, p. 479-526.*

2 *E. M. KOEN, 'Notarial records in Amsterdam relating to the Portuguese Jews in that town up to 1639', Studia Rosenthaliana*, I (1967) nr. 1, p. 111.

3 E. M. KOEN, 'The earliest sources relating to the Portuguese Jews in the municipal archives of Amsterdam up to 1620', *Studia Rosenthaliana*, Vol. IV (1970) nr. 1, p. 39.

4 E. M. KOEN, 'Duarte Fernandes, koopman van de Portugese Natie te Amsterdam', *Studia Rosenthaliana*, II (1968) nr. 2, p. 180.

5 References to these, the above and succeeding aliases unless otherwise mentioned are found in the collection of aliases in the municipal archives of Amsterdam. The collection was started by A. M. Van Dias and is still being added to.

6 G.A.A. Not. Arch. 960, map a, 20 November 1643, not. Baddel.

7 G.A.A. Not. Arch. 2903 p. 393, 11 Mei 1671, not. P. Padthuijsen.

8 J. MEIJER, *Encyclopaedia Sefardica Neerlandica* (Amsterdam 1949), 1, p. 78.

9 W. Chr. PIETERSE, 'De Amsterdamse magistraat en de Portugese Joden in de zeventiende eeuw', *Ons Amsterdam*, jrg. 25 (1973) nr. 3, pp. 83-87.

10 W. Chr. PIETERSE, *Daniel Levi de Barrios als geschiedschrijver van de Portugees-Israelietische gemeente te Amsterdam in zijn* 'Triumpho del govierno popular', (diss., Amsterdam 1968) pp. 43-70.

11 See for the synagogues of *Bet Jahacob*, *Neve Shalom*, and *Bet Israel*, J. F. van AGT, *Synagogen in Amsterdam* (The Hague, 1974), pp. 8-17.

12 The restoration and historical description is being carried out by *the Institution for the Maintenance of Jewish Cemeteries in the Netherlands*. See further W. Chr. PIETERSE, *Livro de Bet Haim do Kahal Kados de Bet Yahacob* (Original text with introduction, notes and index) (Assen, 1970).

13 E. M. KOEN, 'De vleesvoorziening van de Portugese Joden te Amsterdam sinds het begin van de zeventiende eeuw', *62e jaarboek* (1970) *Amstelodamum* pp. 37-48.

14 M. C. PARAIRA and J. S. DA SILVA ROSA, *Gedenkschrift uitgegeven ter gelegenheid van het 300-jarig bestaan der onderwijsinrichtingen Talmud Tora en Ets Haim* (Amsterdam 1916).

15 W. Chr. PIETERSE, *350 jaar Dotar* (Amsterdam 1965).

16 J. D'ANCONA, 'Komst der Marranen in Noord-Nederland. De Portuguese gemeente te Amsterdam tot de vereniging (1639)';B and F, pp. 228-239.

17 Inv. nr. 13 pp. 103-104.

18 W. Chr. PIETERSE, *Daniel Levi de Barrios . . .*, pp. 68-69.

19 J. G. VAN DILLEN, 'De economische positie en betekenis der Joden in de Republiek en in de Nederlandse koloniale wereld'; B and F, pp. 561-566.

20 I. VAN ESSO, Bzn. 'Het aandeel der Joden in de natuurwetenschappen in de Nederlanden', B and F, pp. 649-679; *id., Het consult van Dr. Jozef Bueno aan het ziekbed van Prins Maurits van Oranje* (Amsterdam 1965).

21 For the original text of this regulation see W. Chr. PIETERSE, *Daniel Levi de Barrios . . .* Appendix 14, pp. 155-167 and further A. WIZNITZER, 'The merger agreement and regulations of congregation *Talmud Torah* of Amsterdam (1638-1639)', *Historia Judaica* XX (1958) part 2, pp. 109-132.

22 A. M. VAZ DIAS, 'Nieuwe bijdragen tot de geschiedenis der Amsterdamsche Hoogduitsch-Joodsche Gemeente', *Bijdragen en Mededeelingen van het Genootschap voor de Joodsche wetenschap in Nederland* IV (1940) pp. 153-181.

23 J. D'ANCONA, 'De Portugese Gemeente "Talmoed Tora" te Amsterdam tot 1795'; B and F, pp. 270, 275-277 and 283.

24 I. S. RÉVAH, *Spinoza et le Dr. Juan de Prado* (Paris-The Hague 1959). See further for documents concerning Spinoza: A. M. VAZ DIAS and W. G. VAN DER TAK, *Spinoza me cator et autodidactus. Oorkonden en andere authentieke documenten betreffende des wijsgeers jeugd en diens betrekkingen* (The Hague 1932).

25 J. S. DA SILVA ROSA, *Geschiedenis der Portugese Joden te Amsterdam, 1593-1925* (Amsterdam 1925), pp. 86-88; I. MAASRSEN, 'De responsa als bron voor de geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland', *Bijdragen en mededeelingen van het genootschap voor de Joodsche wetenschap in Nederland*, V (1933) pp. 124-127.

26 I. MAARSEN, *op cit.* pp. 124, 125, 143 and 144. Inv. nos. 520 and 915. A chronological list of extracts from about 100 documents of these numbers has been compiled by S. van Rooy. This list is available at the G.A.A.

27 Inv. no. 829 part no. 2.

28 Inv. nr. 28 p. 93.

29 J. F. VAN AGT, *op cit.* p. 36-53; J. MEIJER and D. H. DE CASTRO, *De Synagoge der Portugees-Israelietische gemeente te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam 1950).

30 See for the censorship imposed by the *parnassim* of the Portuguese-Jewish congregation of Amsterdam, I. S. RÉVAH 'Les écrivains Manuel de Pina et Miguel de Barrios et la censure de la communauté judio-portugaise d'Amsterdam', *Tesoro de los judíos sefardies* VIII (Jerusalem 1965).

31 J. G. VAN DILLEN, *op. cit.* pp. 566-570; A. M. VAZ DIAS, 'Over de vermogenstoestand der Amsterdamsche Joden in de 17e en 18e eeuw', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, LI (1936), pp. 165-176.

32 According to the Resolutions Book of the Congregation (Inv. no. 20 p. 178) the jug was presented under the following conditions *que o ditto pratto e jaro servira nas festas seguientes a saber: em Rosasana, Kipur, Pesach, Sebuot e Sucot e que se lhe deitara miseberach e a sua molher Constancia Levy Duarte e por sua morte escava no primeio dia de Pesach e nas asurot de seus desententes havra de sahir ditto pratto e jaro*. See further W. Chr. PIETERSE, 'Diefstal in 1777', *Habinjan*, 17e jaargang (1964) no. 3 p. 79.

33 See for the rabbis of the period 1675-1795: J. D'ANCONA, *op. cit.* pp. 290-305 and J. S. DA SILVA ROSA, *op. cit.* pp. 109-112.

34 L. and R. FUKS, 'A Portuguese Chronicle on the events in Holland of 1787 by David Franco Mendes', *Studia Rosenthaliana*, VII (1973) nr. 1, pp. 8-39.

35 J. S. DA SILVA ROSA, *op. cit.* p. 104.

36 J. D'ANCONA, 'De Portuguese gemeente "Talmoed Tora" te Amsterdam tot 1795', B and F, pp. 299-300.

37 *Confusion de confusiones* by Joseph DE LA VEGA, reprint from the Spanish text with Dutch translation, introduction and commentary by Dr. M. F. J. SMITH, translation by Dr. G. J. GEERS (The Hague 1939).

38 J. S. DA SILVA ROSA, *op. cit.* pp. 99-101.

39 A. M. VAZ DIAS, *op. cit. Over de vermogenstoestand . . .*, pp. 165-17. W. F. H. OLDEWELT, *Kohier van de Personele Quotisatie te Amsterdam van het jaar 1742* (Amsterdam 1945).

40 J. G. VAN DILLEN, *op. cit.* pp. 583-595.

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44 Inv. nr. 126.

45 Inv. nr. 1042 p. 240, 271, 285, 291, 293, 296 and 302; nr. 1043, pp. 4, 9, 14, 32, 76 and 84; nr. 1044, p. 178; nr. 1045, p. 136.

46 See note 12.

47 J. MELLKMAN, 'Literatuur van de emancipatie', in *Catalogus van de tentoonstelling Mokum en Mediene* (Amsterdam 1971), pp. 33-35; J. A. VAN PRAAG, *Los Sefarditas de Amsterdam y sus actividades* (Madrid 1967).

48 A. S. RIJXMAN, *A. C. Wertheim 1832-1897, een bijdrage tot zijn levensgeschiedenis* (diss., Amsterdam 1961) pp. 297

49 S. KLEERKOPER, 'Hed Joodse proletariaat in het Amsterdam van de 19e eeuw', *Studia Rosenthaliana* I (1967), nr. 1, pp. 97-108, en nr. 2, pp. 71-84; ID., 'Het Joodse proletariaat in het Amsterdam van de eerste helft van de twintigste eeuw en zijn leiders', *Studia Rosenthalian* III (1969), pp. 208-233.

50 J. PRESSER, *Ondergang, de vervolging en verdelging van het Nederlandse Jodendom 1940-1945* ('s-Gravenhage 1965) part II, pp. 72-83.

51 J. D'ANCONA, 'Komst der Marranen . . .', B and F, pp. 260-261.

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53 W. Chr. PIETERSE, *Daniel Levi de Barrios . . .*, pp. 143-145.

54 J. D'ANCONA, 'De Portugese gemeente Talmoed Tora'; B and F, pp. 300-302; Inv. nos. 978-979.

55 J. M. HILLESUM, 'Vereenigingen bij de Portugeesche en Spaanische Joden te Amsterdam in de 17e en 18e eeuw', *Jaarboek Amstelodamum* I (1902), pp. 169-183; W. Chr. PIETERSE, *Daniel Levi de Barrios . . .*, pp. 92-132; Inv. pp. 11-20; N. S. CALISCH, *Liefdadigheid te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam 1851).

56 E. BOEKMAN, *Demografie van de Joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam 1936). For demographic information concerning the Portuguese Jews of the 18th century, see S. HART, 'De Joden in Amsterdam in de 18e eeuw: Historisch-demografische notities', *Habinjan*, 22e jrg (1969), nr. 3, pp. 306-307.

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THE TRADE OF THE "NEW CHRISTIANS" OF PORTUGAL IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

by
Edgar R. Samuel

Two early 17th century publications summarise the position of the New Christians in Portuguese trade. Both were pleas addressed by them to the representatives of the Spanish Crown asking, in the interests of Spain and of Justice, for relief from persecution and from legal and social disabilities for those descendants of the forcibly converted Jews. One is Martim Gonzales de Celorico's *Alegación* of 1619[1] — a lawyer's plea on behalf of the *Gente de la Nacion Hebrea* — the "people of the Hebrew Community" of Portugal. The second is Duarte Gomes Solis's *Discorso sobre los commercios de las dos Indias* of 1622. Their contents tally with a bitter complaint of a Portuguese archbishop — almost certainly the Archbishop of Lisbon — of 1602 about the sharp rise in prosperity of the New Christians at a time of inflation, dearth and misery in the late 1590s.[2]

The Licenciate Martim Gonzales de Celorico was a Portuguese Old Christian of *fidalgo* family living in Castile, where he was Judge of Confiscated Goods for the Toledo Inquisition. He was also a shrewd and observant writer on the defects of the Spanish economy.[3] His special plea for his New Christian clients is based on inside information and an exceptional grasp of economic essentials.

He states that the New Christian artisans are cloth workers. Their lesser merchants are wholesale stockists of silk, cloth and spices. They export Indian cloth and other Portuguese products to Castile and import in return the silk of Toledo, Granada and Valencia. They farm the ecclesiastical, seigneurial and royal revenues in Portugal, and are quite irreplaceable in that function.

The New Christians are the only men of affairs (*hombres de negocio*) in all Portugal (he ignores the foreigners) and the only people in Lisbon and India who follow the trade of merchant. (He disregards the royal officials, clerics, married soldiers (*casados*) and native merchants who also engaged in trade in India). The revenue from their trade sustains what is left of the Portuguese *Estado de India* and without them it would be totally lost. The New Christian men of affairs in Lisbon send factors of their own community to the East Indies to trade at Goa and Cochin on their own account.[4]

It is interesting to note that a Polish nobleman, Christopher Pawlowski, also reported in 1596 that all the merchants of Cochin were New Christians.[5]

Moreover the most successful man in the trade between Macao and Japan, Lopo Sarmento Carvalho[6], came from a Bragança family, (Rodrigues Carvalho), several of whom became the subject of *processos* by the Coimbra Inquisition.[7]

Celorico continues by saying that those in Lisbon and Oporto have also sent members of their community as correspondents to Brazil to buy sugar and to farm the royal brazilwood monopoly. When the Inquisition arrested all the Oporto New Christians in 1618, it caused the total cessation of Oporto's trade with Brazil.

He adds that the New Christians of Lisbon together with others in Seville run the slave trade from Angola, Cape Verde and San Tomé to the Americas in their own ships by means of their correspondents in Cartagena and Mexico, who are also Portuguese New Christians. Celorico does not say that the *assentistas* (contractors) also exported English and French cloth in the slave ships nor that the slave trade was really carried on by sub-licencees, but he does say that without them America also would be lost!

Celorico further remarks that the New Christian merchants trade and communicate with Flanders, France, Italy and all Europe where they have their correspondents to whom they send Portuguese produce and from whom they import and without them the trade would fail.[8]

Clearly no other Spanish or Portuguese merchants possessed this useful chain of agents and factors which persecution and the collapse of Antwerp had established and which trade nourished. Like all great merchants of the seventeenth century the Lisbon New Christians bought their colonial products in the colonies near their source of supply and shipped them for sale as near as possible to their ultimate markets. This was true of spices, brazilwood, silver, sugar, tobacco, pearls and diamonds.

Duarte Gomes Solis, the author of the other memorial, was a New Christian himself. He had gone out to India twice during the sixteenth century as the factor of his father-in-law Heitor Mendes de Brito, a great Lisbon merchant. Duarte Gomes Solis makes some perceptive remarks on the hostility of the Portuguese gentry towards the New Christians, which he describes as a vehement and hereditary hatred.

> *"If some sustain a hatred for Jews, others sustain it for rich and powerful merchants. Thus the two causes of hatred combine, for the nobility (*la nobleza*) cannot bear to suffer that those who entered Portugal poor and in base occupations should have risen so far by their industry, while the nobility has to struggle desperately to maintain itself at all. So they placate themselves by holding all to be sham Christians (in which the populace, hearing the arguments of the preachers, is less restrained) and they use their power to compass their ruin and in consequence the necessities (of life) in Portugal increase even more."*[9]

This is clear contemporary testimony that the persecution of the New Christians was closely linked with the class tensions resulting from the effects of the great price rise, and it is noticeable how in the famine years from 1594-1600 the rise in grain prices and famine was closely linked with the arrest of New Christians and holding of *autos da fé* (see table p.114).

Duarte Gomes Solis also repeats Celorico's argument:-

> *"The Kings of Portugal are lords of the sea in Africa and Guinea and of the Conquest, Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, India and Mina and the life blood of all this is commerce, which is only sustained by the merchants of Hebrew descent, by whose industry it flourishes and without them all the trade would be lost, because the Old Christian gentry do not esteem merchants and do not have the industry of those of Hebrew descent."*[10]

Of course, the New Christian campaign, to which Duarte Gomes Solis's book was a contribution, produced a violently hostile reaction among the Old Christians ranging from the demand of the Portuguese bishops that New Christians be prevented from giving large dowries with their daughters and be totally excluded from trade[11] to Vicente da Costa Mattos's anti-Jewish book of 1621.[12]

As Professor Braudel has pointed out, the great era of the Portuguese New Christian merchants is the period from 1595 to 1620.[13] After that the Inquisition and the Dutch gradually wrecked their trade and scattered the richest of them. The suspension of the Inquisition and the General Pardon of 1605, according to Duarte Gomes Solis, did great economic damage to Portugal by stimulating a massive emigration of New Christians from Portugal to Castile, Leghorn, Venice, Amsterdam and Hamburg.[14] The arrest of the Oporto New Christians in 1618 also caused a considerable migration of established and experienced merchants to Amsterdam.[15] But during the whole first half of the 17th century, Portugal was their economic centre of gravity and the Jews of Amsterdam, Hamburg and elsewhere were mainly engaged in marketing the products of the Iberian empires and were largely financed by bigger men in Lisbon and Seville.

In 1655 Menasseh ben Israel wrote in his "Humble Address" to Cromwell:

> *"The Jewish Nation dwelling in Holland and Italy trafficq's with their own stock, but also with the richest of many others of their own Nation, friends, Kinds-men and acquaintance, which notwithstanding live in Spaine, and send unto them their moneys and goods, which they hold in their hands, and content themselves with a very small portion of their estate, to the end*

they may be secure and free from danger that might happen to them, in case they should fall under the yoke of the Inquisition; whence not only their goods but often times also their lives are endangered."[16]

Most of the Jews who had left Spain in 1492 had gone to Portugal.[17] Many of them had gone on to Morocco, Turkey and other countries but the number remaining in Portugal after the forced conversion of 1497 was large. The New Christians of Portugal were estimated in 1542 by their agent in Rome, Mestre Jorge Leão, at "60,000 souls".[18] If his figure is accurate, this would have been about 6 per cent of the Portuguese population.

This is of the same order of percentage as the Jews of Poland who formed about 5 per cent of the Polish population at the end of the 16th century, although of course Portugal was only a tenth of the size of Poland.[19]

The New Christians, like the Jews of Poland, were often criticised for outbreeding their neighbours, and there must have been something in the accusation. Since the demise of the Dead Sea Sect, Jews have never admired celibacy, and the New Christians married off as many of their daughters as possible as soon as they could, and put few of them into the religious orders. Indeed the laws of John III forbade them to do so.[20] In 1624 the Inquisition reported that they numbered 200,000 or 10 per cent of the Portuguese population.[21] Some historians, notably Professor Révah, have accepted this figure, though I feel it is so high as to be quite fanciful and that even at that time they could hardly have numbered much more than 60 or 70,000 at the most. Nonetheless, the New Christian proportion of the Portuguese who emigrated at times of persecution was higher still.

The widespread European belief that all Portuguese were of Jewish descent was founded on the fact that, during the 16th century, virtually all the Portuguese outside the Peninsula, in towns like Bordeaux, Venice, Antwerp and London had been New Christian refugees, most of whom were crypto-Jews by religion too.

The Portuguese New Christians were artisans, often very poor, professionals, petty traders, merchants and tax farmers. The trade of *arrendador* or farmer of seigneurial revenues which the Jews of Spain took with them into Poland[22] and Turkey they also brought to Portugal. The list of trades they followed is long. It included potters, weavers, basket-makers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, tanners, silversmiths and barbers, music masters, fencing masters, pilot and soldiers. There was a wide gulf between their rich and poor.

The forced conversion had freed them from the restrictions of the *Judiaría*. The New Christians had risen in society during the 16th century. Many became lawyers, apothecaries and physicians and merchants. 15th century Portugal had been a feudal country with a backward economy. Its peasants and fishermen were illiterate, ruled by a formidable military

aristocracy and guided by churchmen recruited from these classes and sharing their outlook. Only the Jews had had a commercial tradition combined with literacy. Many of them had settled in Lisbon which was not only the country's capital but enjoyed a legal monopoly of both African and Indian trade throughout the 16th century. The New Christians had thus been able to participate in Lisbon's commercial prosperity and especially in her trade with other European ports, most notably with the Portuguese spice staple at Antwerp.

A sizeable New Christian colony had grown up at Antwerp early in the 16th century and its members had profited by their experience there. By the end of the century, the New Christian merchants of Portugal had mastered the techniques pioneered by the Italians in book-keeping, arbitrage and financial organisation, and their leading men had qualified to be numbered among the great merchants of Europe. Indeed they had become the first Jewish merchant group ever engaged in international trade on a large scale, perhaps the only one before the Age of Oil.

Because of the bankrupt state of the Spanish royal exchequer, after the union of the Castilian and Portuguese crowns in 1580, and because of Philip II's policy of farming out the Crown's trading monopolies, they were able to replace the Augsburg and Italian houses in their dominant role in the European trade of Lisbon and in the farming of the gold, pepper, brazilwood, slave trades and other royal monopolies, as well as in Portuguese tax and customs farming.

At the start of the 17th century, all the big Lisbon merchants were apparently of Jewish origin, but that does not mean that they were all secret Jews. To take the four best-known families — the Rodrigues de Evora and Ximenes Aragão families seem to have become sincere Roman Catholics[23], but there is no evidence that the Gomes Elvas family were. Heitor Mendes de Brito, who was apparently the grandson of Diogo Mendes[24], the great Antwerp merchant of the early 16th century, must have been a secret Jew for his son, Fernão openly professed Jusaism in Hamburg.[25]

The arguments advanced by Celorico and Gomes Solis seem to have impressed the Count-Duke de Olivares who ruled Spain under Philip IV, for, in 1627, impelled partly by the bankruptcy of the royal exchequer and the failure or withdrawal of some of its Genoese financiers, he encouraged the Portuguese New Christians to settle in Spain and to participate in the farming of the thousand and one Spanish duties, taxes, monopolies and *asientos*.[26] This activity, as in the case of their ancestors the Castilian Jews of the 15th century, brought the New Christians a brief period of opportunity, of riches and honours, but also much long-term unpopularity among both the people and the nobility of Castile. The Portuguese colony in Seville grew to something like a quarter of the population, including large contingents of both seafarers and New Christians and many also settled in Madrid.[27]

In the Spanish West Indies, in Buenos Aires, Chile, Peru, and Mexico as well as in the Canary Islands, Portuguese New Christian communities settled and were able to practise a measure of Judaism within their homes without molestation.[28]

Indeed the foundation of the Jewish community in England was a side effect of Olivares's policy. During the latter part of the Thirty Years' War, especially after the fall of Breisach in 1638, the silver required to pay the Spanish troops in Flanders was shipped from Spain by way of Dover in English ships, subject to a seignorage charge on minting an agreed percentage into coin.[29] The business was handled by Genoese and Portuguese contractors. Antonio Fernandes Carvajal, who later founded the London Jewish community, came to London from Rouen in about 1635 and acted as the agent of one of these contractors,[30] Francisco Lopes Franco, a member of a prominent Brazilian New Christian planter family.[31]

These bullion handling commissions have given Carvajal a spurious reputation among certain historians[32] as a capitalist of vast wealth and as a financier of Cromwell. He was, however, only an ordinary if able merchant, and the wealth he handled as a commission agent belonged to King Philip IV of Spain.

To return to Madrid, the most striking success story of the New Christians at Philip IV's court is that of Don Manuel Cortizos y Villasante, who by the favour first of Olivares and then of the king and by his own ability attained a remarkable position. He farmed the wool taxes,[33] bought the offices of receiver of the Council of Finance, Secretary of the Council of Audit, and the Secretary of the Cortes of Castile and Leon and became a *protégé* of the King and a Knight of the Order of Calatrava. One of his sons was made a Viscount,[34] while two others were living as Jews in Amsterdam.[35]

In Spain, under Olivares, the domestic economy suffered severely from the piling of taxation onto the necessities of the poor so as to finance the King's wars in a period of commercial recession. A class of tax farmers, tobacco monopolists and office holders, grew rich while the gentry and people suffered very severe privations. Many of these new rich were Portuguese New Christians and the instrument of vengeance used by the nobility was the Inquisition. However not only the tax-farmers of Madrid were struck down by it, but Portuguese New Christians in every walk of life and in all parts of the Spanish Empire were arrested, racked, robbed and sometimes burnt. The persecution started with the rebellion of Portugal in 1640, increased with the fall of Olivares in 1642 and reached its height in the 1650s after the death of Philip IV.[36]

The separation of Spain and Portugal in 1640 also disrupted the Portuguese trading system, especially the valuable slave and contraband trade to Mexico and Peru. The trade between Lisbon and Seville, the inland trade with Castile, the trade between Brazil and Buenos Aires, the overland route

from the river Plate to Potosí which had been established by the New Christian Bishop Frey Fransisco de Vitoria, O.P., in the 1580s,[37] and the trade between Macao and Manila were also disrupted. War with the Dutch hit at the security of all seaborne commerce and destroyed the Portuguese slaving monopoly. The Dutch West India Company captured many Brazilian sugar ships, seized Pernambuco and then captured Luanda in Angola.

At Fr. Antonio Vieyra's suggestion two Lisbon New Christians, Duarte da Silva and a member of the Rodrigues Marques family, financed the royal fleet with which Salvador Correia de Sá drove the Dutch from Angola and Bahia. In 1649, a trading company was formed chiefly with New Christian capital and granted monopolies of a good slice of the Brazil trade in return for providing convoys on the Spanish pattern, and the Inquisition's right to confiscate the estates of its victims was temporarily suspended.[38]

In Brazil, the New Christians seem to have formed about a fifth of the white population, at least in Bahia and the surrounding area known as the *Reconcavo*. The social tensions between Old and New Christians were far less extreme there than in Portugal, for colonial society was a fairly open one — for whites. There were New Christians among the planter *élite* of *senhores de engenho* and among share croppers as well as among supervisory personnel in the sugar engines and considerable intermarriage took place. In the first half of the 17th century, New Christians in Bahia were not excluded from the inner circle of municipal government nor, most of the time, from the exclusive *Misericordia* charity, as was the case in Lisbon and Oporto. Among merchants in Brazil, the New Christians bulked large.[39]

The sugar trade in the early 17th century was an open one in which many small merchants and ships' masters from Faro, Oporto and Viana engaged. Some big proprietors such as Salvador Correia de Sá even exported their own sugar in their own ships to agents in Lisbon. However the big New Christian traders and syndicates in Bahia, Pernambuco or Rio de Janeiro could afford to supply slaves and refining equipment on credit to planters and thus buy their crops in advance. Many also had relatives in Hamburg or Amsterdam to whom they could send sugar direct. This connection the Old Christian merchants lacked, so once again many New Christians of humble origin grew rich in Brazil and they came to take a large share of the sugar trade, even before the formation of the monopolistic Brazil Company in 1649. So did some Old Christians, but in the merchant community of Lisbon in the 1650s the New Christians outnumbered them by two to one.[40]

Historians have viewed the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions in three ways. To old-fashioned Catholic historians the Holy Office was a necessary spiritual police force which kept Christian Spain free from the corrupting influences of heresy and infidelity and welded the diverse population into a single nation. To liberal historians, among whom Lea[41] and Herculano[42] are notable, its motivating force was religious bigotry and its effect was to inflict

suffering on the minds and bodies of innocent people for no rational purpose, while at the same time retarding the intellectual and economic life of the Peninsula, so as to cause poverty, backwardness and social subordination to an ignorant clergy.

Jewish historians, such as Cecil Roth and I. S. Révah have tended to adopt this liberal analysis and to add to it a sense of outrage at the martyrdom of the Jewish victims of the Inquisition for refusing to abandon their Faith.

The third attitude to the Inquisition is the Marxist interpretation, which is exemplified by Dr. A. S. Saraiva,[43] and also to a much lesser degree by Dr. H. Kamen.[44] This sees the New Christians as a rising bourgeoisie and the Inquisition as the class weapon of a declining feudal aristocracy. The persecution is seen as a reactionary resistance to the inevitable bourgeois revolution.

Such an approach has led Prof. F. Mauro[45] to assume that the entire Portuguese bourgeoisie could be classified as New Christians and was so classified by the Inquisitors. Dr. Saraiva carries this argument so far as almost to deny the existence of crypto-Judaism as a religion, let alone as a powerful force in Portuguese society.

I personally cannot accept the old fashioned pro-Inquisition view that the persecution of the New Christians was necessary in any sense to preserve the Catholic Faith or to unify Spain. The Papal States, Venice and Poland were not less Catholic or united because they allowed their Jews a measure of religious freedom. Social freedom encourages assimilation and this works out in practice in favour of the majority. In any case, as Fr. Antonio Vieyra expressed it, Judaism was not an infectious heresy.[46]

The fears of the Old Christians were often paranoic and irrational, as in the humourless acceptance of a forged letter alleged to have been sent to the New Christians of Portugal by their 'Pope', the prince of the Jews in Constantinople, ordering them to make their sons doctors, lawyers and priests so as to murder and rob Old Christians and subvert their Church in revenge for the expulsion of the Jews from Castile.[47] The repeated attempts to ban intermarriage show the same attitude of fear.

Both the liberal and the Marxist view of the Inquisition seem too simple on their own, yet both contain elements of truth which are helpful in analysing a complex phenomenon. The truth seems to me to consist in a combination of the two interpretations.

As Duarte Gomes Solis succinctly expressed it: *"If some sustain a hatred for Jews, others sustain it for rich and powerful merchants, thus the two causes of hatred combine."*[48]

The Portuguese Inquisition was certainly, as it professed to be, an instrument for narrow-minded religious coercion, but it was also the instrument of a reactionary class on the defensive. In the persecution of the 17th century, the second element was perhaps the predominant one.

A. J. Saraiva has shown that it is misleading to regard every person burnt at the stake on a charge of Judaising as a Jewish martyr. Some were not Jews at all. The Portuguese Inquisition never admitted to a mistake. It obtained almost all its evidence by secret denunciations and by the intimidation, disorientation and torture of its prisoners. No-one could hope to get out except by pleading guilty and denouncing others and, as Dr. Saraiva has shown, more than one man burnt for Judaism was simply a political enemy of the Inquisitors or a supporter of John IV. Some were the victims of malice or of the desperation of others and of their own confusion, chosen to entertain the Lisbon crowd.

Nonetheless, Judaism was a religious force in Portugal and one which attracted a few Bible-reading, spiritually disillusioned Old Christians, who in other countries might have become Protestants. It remained the inner religion of many New Christians and among the victims of the *autos da fé* were doubtless many genuine crypto-Jews who suffered for their religion.

The key question is why persecution flared up and intensified from time to time. For much of the period from 1540 to 1770, the Portuguese New Christians could live and prosper, providing they conformed to Catholic practice, did not proselytise and kept their Jewish practices a secret.

The persecution of the 1540s seems to have aimed both at enforcing conformity and at preventing social ascent and assimilation. The persecution of the 1590s seems to have arisen primarily out of economic distress and class tensions and secondarily perhaps out of a need to re-man the galleys and to placate the mob. In the 1640s the issue was complicated by the Inquisitors' deadly hostility to John IV and his supporters. Nonetheless the impression given is that the steam behind each of the 17th century persecutions of the New Christians in Portugal was the paranoia of a landowning class which felt itself to be threatened.

The kings of the House of Bragança had less control over the Portuguese Inquisition than their Hapsburg predecessors. John IV engaged in a fierce power struggle with the Inquisition but he lacked the necessary support of the Papacy, which refused to recognise him as king. After his death, the weak monarchy lost all control over this spiritual arm of the Crown and during the 1660s the Inquisition proceeded to decimate the Portuguese merchant class, moved partly by zeal for the Catholic Faith, partly by a desire to remove a latent threat to their livelihood, largely by class hatred — and also no doubt out of pure greed, for what the Inquisitors took they kept. More and more of the trade and shipping of Portugal passed into the hands of English and Dutch merchants. Even the refugee Portuguese Jews of London and Amsterdam took to using English and Dutch factors in Lisbon.[49] More Portuguese capital was invested with Amsterdam agents. Throughout the 1660s, and especially in 1674, when the Inquisition was suspended for a brief period by the Pope, on Fr. Antonio Vieyra's initiative, a massive emigration of successful

Portuguese merchants took place, most of whom joined the open Jewish communities in Italy or the North.

The *émigré* Portuguese Jews took with them to Leghorn, Venice, Nice, Bordeaux, Bayonne, Bidache, Rouen, London, Amsterdam, Hamburg, Curaçao, Jamaica, Martinique, Barbados and New York a command of mercantile technique, particular skills and experience and often adequate trading capital. Their network of Portuguese-speaking communities was itself a trading asset but they were never again the commercial force that their forbears had been in Lisbon under Philip II and III.

The Portuguese Jews in London claimed with some truth to have transferred the uncut diamond trade from Goa and Lisbon and Madras and London,[50] just as their cousins had moved much of the cutting industry from Lisbon and Antwerp to Amsterdam.[51]

Whereas New Christians were excluded from the municipality of Goa, Jews were invited to serve on the Corporation of Madras and of course they enjoyed full religious freedom there too.[52] The Portuguese Jews introduced a sweetened chocolate industry to Bayonne[53] and leather-working and silk kerchief manufacture to Bordeaux, where they became important wine exporters.[54] They also brought the manufacture of coral for the Indian market to Leghorn,[55] and many useful skills, from sugar refining and tobacco spinning to army provisioning, to the Netherlands.[56] In the West Indies they transferred their experience from Portuguese Brazil to French Martinique, Dutch Curaçao and British Jamaica and Barbados, including their connections in contraband trade with the Spanish Main.

Amsterdam, Hamburg and Livorno all profited by the growth of their Portuguese Jewish communities, especially in their earliest years. The Portuguese Jews of these cities became the only Jews in Europe to live freely among the Christian population, wearing the same sort of clothes as their neighbours. In this and in other ways they synthesised their strong attachment to Judaism with a European cultural tradition. Politically they opened the gates of the Ghetto for the other European Jews. Spiritually and socially their religion was much more a part of their private than of their public life and they tended to separate one from the other. They were the first modern Jews.

Not all Portuguese New Christians were crypto-Jews, but Judaism exercised a powerful attraction for those who had experienced the cruelty and avarice of the Holy Office. The former English chaplain in Lisbon, Rev. Michael Geddes, records an interview he had at some time between 1690 and 1714 with a man in London who had been brought up as a Catholic in Portugal but had been converted to Judaism by his experience in the prisons of the Inquisition.[57] There must have been many like him. There were however many striking instances of loyalty to Judaism based on inner conviction and tradition rather than outside pressure.

In Safed there is a synagogue founded in honour of Isaac Aboab, the last

Sage of Castile, who settled in Oporto in 1492 and died there in 1493. It contains a Torah scroll which he brought with him out of Spain.[58] Its history is apparently as follows: one of Isaac Aboab's great grandsons, Duarte Dias Henriques, who farmed the Crown monopoly for exporting slaves from Angola between 1607 and 1614[59] and probably participated in other such contracts, used to maintain two *Yeshiboth* in the Holy Land, one in Jerusalem and the other is Safed, through the agency of his brother *Haham* Immanuel Aboab and of Immanuel's daughter Gracia who lived in Jerusalem.[60] Clearly that scroll had remained in Oporto throughout the 16th century before being shipped to Safed by Duarte Dias Henriques and his brother.

The fact that so many Portuguese emigrants came into the open as Jews indicates the strength of secret Judaism among the New Christian of Portugal, though it must have been eroded steadily as time went by, especially in the more open societies of Brazil and of colonies such as Macao. Dr. Anita Novinsky's study of the New Christians of Bahia in the 17th century shows that they remained a tightly knit social group, with a strong sense of community and racial pride. With some exceptions, they had little veneration for the Catholic priesthood and for Christian belief, but a very minor or negligible attachment to Judaism.[61] In Portugal this may have been the attitude of some of the richer Lisbon merchants, but for many of the New Christian people at large, crypto-Judaism was the religion of their hearts and hearths and the true faith by which they hoped for salvation. By the 18th century many New Christians knew little or nothing of Judaism. But the Inquisition served to propagate it among its victims, and crypto-Judaism continued as a minority religion in many towns in Beira and Traz-os-Montes long after the Inquisition had been stopped.[62]

The persecutions of the New Christians of Portugal are puzzling. Their Judaism was a fairly open secret. For most of the time they could live in peace so long as they conformed to Catholic practice and did not propagandize. But then, there would be sudden outbursts of hatred and harassment, partly but by no means solely based on religious hostility. The social tensions of the 1590s with rapid inflation, famines and dearth are easy to understand. The burning of a few crypto-Jews acted as a lightning conductor for popular discontent in Portugal just as the execution of Anabaptists or the burning of witches did in other countries. But the later persecutions are different. One has the impression that what really frightened the Portuguese clergy and nobility was not Judaism but the threat that economic advance and social mobility would destroy their own ascendancy over the backward and deferential agrarian society which they ruled. It was not surely by accident that the nobility allowed Portugal's trade to fall into foreign hands rather than permit the enrichment of their own New Christian merchants to go unchecked.

In 1601 and 1605, at the end of the age of spices, the New Christians

bought royal protection. To some extent this continued during the age of sugar, under the Hapsburgs and John IV. However this protection was withdrawn in the 1660s.

The commercial self-sufficiency of the Lisbon New Christians was remarkable. At a time when the merchants of Seville had become commission agents financed by Dutch and German *entrepreneurs*, the New Christian merchants were still able to finance their own trade to India and Brazil, as well as that carried on by their agents in Hamburg, Amsterdam, Venice and Leghorn. But Lisbon had no banking system, other than mutual credit between merchants. This was singularly vulnerable to the arrest by the Inquisition of a big man such as Duarte da Silva.[63] When the Crown was weak, it did not take long for the Inquisition to smash Portugal's only major group of indigenous merchants.

The heaviest persecution of the New Christians was to come in the 18th century. By this time, the Inquisition had slipped out of the control of the Crown and had become partly the avenging hand of the Portuguese landowning class, whose younger brothers managed it, partly the instrument of an entrenched and racist bigotry, and partly a law unto itself.

The Age of Gold has similarities with the late 16th century. Once again New Christian merchants would be able to make rapid fortunes in trade and tax farming. Their success was to be terribly avenged.

NOTES

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12 Vicente DA COSTA MATTOS, *Breve discorso contra a heretica perfidia do Judaismo* (Lisbon, 1622).

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15 RÉVAH, *op.cit.*, p.298.

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18 *Corpo Diplomatico Portugues contendo os Actos e Relacòes Politicas e Diplomaticas de Portugal com as diversas potencias do mundo desde o seculo XVI até os nossos dias* (Lisbon, 1874) Vol 5, p.159. The hearth tax was paid by only 5,298 Jewish contributors, which suggests a population of under 30,000. Maria José PIMENTA FERRO TAVARES, *Os Judeus em Portugal no Seculo XV* (Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1982), p.74.

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20 RÉVAH, op.cit. p.313.

21 J. LUCIO D'AZEVEDO, *op.cit.*, Appendix 14, p.471.

22 The Polish word *Arrendator* to describe a Jewish farmer of a seigneurial monopoly suggests that the trade, like the word, came from Spain. See art. Arenda — *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1972) Vol.3.

23 Antonio BAIÃO, *A Inquisição em Portugal e o Brazil: subsidios para a sua historia* (Lisbon, 1906) p.212 quotes a denunciation of the Antwerp New Christians by Baltasar da Costa in 1585. "All the Portuguese New Christians of Antwerp are Judaisers, except the House of Ximenes, the House of Rodrigues, relations of the Ximenes and Luis Anriques of Oporto".

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28 This is clear from the *processos* of those arrested after 1640. For those in the Canaries, see Lucien WOLF, *Jews in the Canary Islands* (London, 1926); for Peru: — Lucia GARCIA PROODIAN, *Los Judios in America* (Madrid, 1960) and for Mexico: Seymour B. LIEBMAN, *A Guide to Jewish References in the Mexican Colonial Era 1521-1821* (Pennsylvania, 1964).

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31 Anita NOVINSKY, *Cristãos Novos na Bahia* (São Paulo, 1972) Appendix 8, p.187.

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36 Elkan ADLER, *Auto da Fé and Jew* (O.U.P., 1908) gives a list of Autos.
37 C. R. BOXER, *Salvador de Sà and the struggle for Brazil and Angola (1602-1686),* (London, 1952) pp.75 and 81.
38 C. R. BOXWE, "Padre Antonio Vieira S. J. and the Institution of the Brazil Company in 1649" *Hispanic American Historical Review* XXIX, 1949. This statement which is based upon one by Fr. António Vieyra, needs to be corrected. The contractors who financed Salvador Correia de Sá's fleet were: Duarte da Silva, Manuel Rodrigues da Costa, Gaspar Dias de Mesquita and Jeronimo Gomes Pessoa. Cristavão Rodrigues Marques was mainly involved in army contracts of the 1650's (David Grant SMITH, *The Mercantile Class*, p.420).
39 Anita NOVINSKY *op.cit.* David Grant SMITH *op.cit.* gives good evidence that Old Christians were in the majority among the major merchants of Bahia, whereas New Christians were in the majority among the major Portuguese merchants of 17th century Lisbon. On the other hand, the New Christians formed a much higher proportion of the population in the more sparsely populated South of Brazil. Dr. José GONÇALVES SALVADOR, *Os cristãos novos e o Comercio no Atlântico Meridional* (Livraria Pioneiro Editora, São Paolo, 1978, p. 380) reckons that at the end of the 17th century two thirds of the white populations of Rio de Janeiro, São Vicente and Espirito Santo were New Christians. See also his *Os Cristãos-Novos Povoamento e Conquista do Solo Brasileiro (1530-1680).* (Pioneiro, São Paulo, 1976, pp. 45-68).
40 See the analysis of the directorate of the Brazil Company in David GRANT SMITH — "Old Christian Merchants and the Foundation of the Brazil Company", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, May 1974.
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49 The will of Diego Marques of London in 1675 shows him using English merchants as his factors in Lisbon. Carl HANSON's Chapter, *"The New Christian Challenge to the Established Order"* gives an excellent explanation of the persecution of the 1680's (*op.cit.* pp.70-108).
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52 W. J. FISCHEL, "The Jewish merchant-colony in Madras (Fort St. George) during the 17th and 18th centuries: a contribution to the economic and social history of the Jews in India." *JESHO* Vol. III, No. 1.
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54 T. MALVÉZIN, *Histoire des Juifs de Bordeaux* (Bordeaux, 1875) pp.138 & 180.

55 Joseph SALVADOR (Pseud. *Philo-patriae), Further Considerations on the Act to Permit Persons professing the Jewish Religion to be Naturalized by Parliament in A Second Letter from a merchant in Town to his Friend in the Country* (London, 1753).
56 See BLOOM, *op.cit.*
57 *Michael GEDDES, Miscellaneous Tracts* Vol I (London, 1702).
58 See "Safed", *Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York, 1904).
59 Frederic MAURO, *Portugal et l'Atlantique* (Paris, 1960) p.162.
60 Isaac de Matityahu ABOAB, MS genealogy in the possession of Mrs. A. E. Capadose: "A dita Gracia Aboab governava 2 yesibot que tenha Duarte Diaz Henriquez hua em Ierusalaim e outra em Safet."
61 Anita NOVINSKY, *op.cit.*
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63 Antonio BAIÃO, *Episodios dramaticos da Inquisição Portuguesa* (Rio de Janeiro, 1924).

FAMINE & PERSECUTION IN NORTHERN PORTUGAL

DATE	PRICE OF WHEAT IN BRAGANZA (reis per alqueire)	REMARKS	No. OF PROCESSOS OF COIMBRA INQUISITION
1590	60		7
1591	100		62
1592	—		1
1593	70		93
1594	100	Famine	—
1595	100		185
1596	130		5
1597	150		11
1598	280	Famine	133
1599	—		295
1600	60		7
1601	70	New Christians buy permission to emigrate	120
1602	110		123
1603	100		3
1604	—		25
1605	105	New Christians buy a General Pardon	78
1606	140		5
1607	130		26
1608	200		15
1609	—		2
1610	50		39

Sources:— Fredéric Mauro — "Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVII siècle" (Paris, 1960) p.380.
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(Completed May 1977)

THE SEPHARDI COMMUNITIES OF THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN ISLANDS

by Marc D Angel

The communities of Sephardi Jews in the Eastern Mediterranean islands form an interesting and significant segment in the over-all mosaic of Jewish history. Fernand Braudel has written that the numerous islands of the Mediterranean are more important than is generally supposed.[1] Historically, they served as vital links in the commercial and cultural networks of the greater land masses in Europe, Asia and Africa.

Jews had lived in these islands since antiquity. In the First Book of Maccabees (15:22-23), we find that in c.142 B.C.E. Simon, son of Mattathias, had recently been chosen by the Jews as High Priest and sent a delegation to Rome to affirm an alliance. In reply, Lucius, Consul of the Romans, wrote a letter to the kings and to the countries asking that they refrain from harming the Jewish people. This letter was sent — among other places — to the islands of Samos, Rhodes, Cos, Crete and Cyprus. The implication is that Jews were living in these places at the time.

Through the course of the centuries, the small Jewish communities shared the fates of the islands. They witnessed the rule of various governments, the battles between Christianity and Islam, the struggles for control of the sea.

Before the arrival of the Sephardim

Rhodes

Jewish life on the islands long pre-dated the arrival of large numbers of Sephardim and it is helpful to understand the context in which Sephardi communities emerged in them. The case of the community of Rhodes is a good starting point.

The Knights of St. John conquered the Island of Rhodes in 1307. The Order governed the island until 1522. During the Order's rule, the Jews enjoyed many rights although they were also subject to some discrimination. In general, the Jews were loyal to the government of the Knights of St. John.

Their faithfulness was manifested, for example, in the war of 1480 when the Turks laid siege to Rhodes. The Turkish forces concentrated their attack on the southern perimeter of the city wall which enclosed the Jewish quarter. They launched a continuous barrage of cannon balls and stones, ultimately succeeding in breaching the Rhodians' defence. Many Jewish homes were demolished and the Turks fought their way into the Jewish quarter. But just as they were on the verge of victory, they began to flee in terror. The people of Rhodes had defended their city courageously, and the Jews were praised for their contribution to the victory. Even the Jewish women were commended for their efforts on behalf of the defence.[2]

The Rhodians believed that their victory over the Turks was a miraculous example of divine intervention. This feeling was shared by the Jews as well as the Christians. Meshullam of Volterra, a Jewish traveller who visited Rhodes in May 1481, reported the Jewish version of the battle.

> 'And one day, according to their words, more than ten thousand Turks climbed the wall and cast the Grand Master from the wall. God confused them so that they struck their own brothers and relatives. Their hearts became faint. And God was an aid for them (the Rhodians) . . . They built two churches in the low parts of the said wall, one on either side of the synagogue, where the miracle had occurred for them. The Greeks wanted the Grand Master to remove the said synagogue, but he paid them no heed, because the Guardian of Israel neither sleeps nor slumbers.'[3]

R. Obadiah of Bertinoro left the following account in a letter, dated late in 1487:

> 'The Jews told me that the Turks entered the city and began to attack the people, and the land was defeated before them. They reached the entrance of the synagogue and there did God confound them. And wonder of wonders they saw in this. They rushed away of their own accord and fled and ran and would kill one another by sword. They stumbled but no one was chasing them. And since this miracle occurred at the synagogue, the Grand Master seized it in these times and built upon it a large church as a memorial; and to the Jews he gave another building as a replacement. And when I was in Rhodes he designated for them one hundred ducats from the city's revenues to build and decorate the new synagogue.'[4]

The conflicting reports concerning the fate of the synagogue in the accounts of Meshullam and Obadiah can easily be resolved. A probable explanation is that the Grand Master had originally allowed the Jews to keep their place of worship but at some point prior to Obadiah's arrival, he was swayed to convert it into a church. Once having made that decision, he tried to placate the Jews by giving them another building and funds to repair and beautify it.[5]

The aftermath of this war found all Rhodians suffering severe hardships. Felix Fabri, a Christian pilgrim, stopped in Rhodes shortly after the Turks withdrew their forces. He noted that the city was seriously damaged. The streets were full of stones and cannon balls. There were shortages of supplies,

and prices were high. When Fabri's ship left Rhodes, it took some inhabitants of the city who wished to leave the island, including "some Jews who had fought bravely during the siege."[6]

R. Obadiah of Bertinoro found that only twenty-two Jewish families lived in Rhodes in 1487. They were all poor, most earning their living in the vegetable and herbs trades. They had no meat or wine, since they had no *shehitah* and they did not make their own wine. Their scrupulous religious observance led them to refuse all wine produced by non-Jews.

In spite of their poverty, the Jews of Rhodes formed a noble group. Obadiah remarked that he had never seen the equals of the Jews of Rhodes anywhere. They were all handsome, intelligent, cultured and well-mannered. They honoured their fellow-men, they were humble and gentle in their language. Even the hard-working labourers dressed neatly. They were clean. They appeared as children of a king. Obadiah added that there were no women in all the earth more beautiful than the women of Rhodes. Their beauty, moreover, was matched by their industry. The Jewish women helped their husbands by earning money by their handiwork which they did for the officials of the land. The women even worked at home during the night hours. The officials of Rhodes were friendly with the Jews, a fact which caused jealousy and anger among the Greek population of the city.[7]

The expulsion from Spain in 1492 was a major catastrophe for world Jewry, as was the formal elimination of Judaism in Portugal in 1497. Expulsions from Naples and other localities made the lot of the Jews a sad and wandering one. R. Joseph Shaltiel, son of Moses Ha-cohen wrote in Rhodes in 1495:

> 'I think that the suffering which the Jews have found in all the kingdoms of Edom from 5250-5255 (1490-1495) constitute a period of sorrow for Jacob from which he will be saved; these are the pains that will usher in the Messiah.'[8]

But, unfortunately, his optimistic prognosis did not come to pass. Indeed, the wave of intolerance spread through Rhodes itself. During the first years of the sixteenth century, the Grand Master, Pierre d'Aubusson, called for the expulsion of Jews from the domains of the Knights of St. John, a decree which was unanimously approved by the council of Knights. The edict stipulated that all Jews who accepted baptism could remain in Rhodes. A number of Jews became converted under pressure. Others left the island. Still others were tortured and met the death of martyrs.[9] Public Jewish life came to a halt.

When after the expulsion decree, the Knights captured ships which happened to be carrying Jewish passengers, the captives were brought to Rhodes as slaves. An eye-witness estimated that there were between two and three thousand Jews in Rhodes — this after the Jews had been expelled![10]

In 1522, the Turks again launched an attack on Rhodes, this time

meeting with success. The Turkish victory was particularly welcome to the Jews of Rhodes. Elijah Capsali the famous rabbi, doctor and author of Candia, viewed the Turkish conquest of Rhodes as part of the messianic drama leading to redemption. He described the event as a marriage between Rhodes — the bride — and Sultan Suleyman — the groom.[11]

After the war, many of the Jews in Rhodes left the island to return to their native lands. When a number of these exiles arrived in Candia, they brought with them diseases which they had contracted during the period of the siege. A serious epidemic broke out, which was finally brought under control through the efforts of R. Elijah Capsali and others.[12]

Meanwhile, the Jews who had remained in Rhodes rejoiced at their liberation. They rushed to the synagogue and prayed in it openly as Jews for the first time since the expulsion edict at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Capsali described the situation as follows:

> 'On that day all the Turkish slaves in Rhodes were liberated for the Sultan had so stipulated with the Rhodians that they not be killed. Also, many Jews were in Rhodes as slaves, and they escaped by God's mercy. Moreover, all the Jews who had been converted at the time of the expulsion from Rhodes — whether by force or from free will — all returned to their original faith They opened the synagogue which the gentiles had closed . . . '[13]

The sixteenth-century Sephardi historian Joseph Ha-Cohen, indicates that the period following the Turkish conquest of Rhodes witnessed an influx of Jews to the island: "*In those days Suleyman the Turk sent many Jews to live in Rhodes and they reside there securely to this day.*"[14] A tradition reported by R. Raphael Yitzhak Israel (d. 1902) of Rhodes states that a certain Jewish artisan had advised Suleyman how to conquer the Knights in the war of 1522. In gratitude for this advice, the sultan invited Jews to settle in Rhodes. Only some poor Jews initially responded to this invitation. They came first from Salonika, and then from Smyrna, Constantinople, Jerusalem and other cities.[15] Whether or not this tradition is completely accurate, it is clear that this period marked the origin of the Sephardi community of Rhodes which was to flourish until the Nazis destroyed it in 1944.

Crete

The Venetian rulers and the Greek populace were both hostile to the Jews. During the war of 1538-1540 when Turkish forces attempted to conquer Crete, Jews were accused of aiding the Turkish cause. In fact, many Greeks invaded the Jewish quarter but, fortunately for the Jews, were turned away by Venetian forces. The Jews designate this day, Tammuz 18, as a local *Purim*, since they were grateful for their providential salvation.[16]

The arrival of the Sephardim created mixed emotions among the native Jews. On the one hand, they respected the culture and pride which the

Sephardim brought with them. They worked to help the Sephardim adjust to their new situations. Elijah Capsali wrote that in Candia the Jews did innumerable things to assist the incoming Sephardim and raised large sums of money on their behalf.[17] The same was true in the other places where the exiles arrived.

But on the other hand, the Sephardim posed a challenge to the existing communities. The newcomers were accustomed to certain rituals and customs of their own and they expected the native Jews to adopt them. There is evidence of clashes between the two groups almost everywhere when Sephardim came in significant numbers. In Rhodes, for example, the groups seem to have had a conflict concerning laws and customs governing *shehitah* (ritual slaughter of animals).[18] In Candia, too, the adjustment of the two groups to each other led to disagreements and ill-will.

R. Moses Capsali of Constantinople wrote to the native Romaniote Jews of Candia, urging them not to let the Sephardim prevail in their efforts to change the customs and procedures of that city. He stated that the rabbis of Candia had been outstanding scholars who were blessed with divine insight. They had followed the rulings of the Talmud as explained by the *tosafists*, particularly Rabbenu Tam (R. Jacob B. Meier c 1100-1171). The Sephardi newcomers tended to follow the interpretations and rulings of Spanish rabbis. R. Capsali indicated that the Sephardim in Constantinople also tried to overwhelm the native Jews, but that the Romaniotes had successfully held their ground.[19]

R. Elijah Mizrahi, also of Constantinople, wrote to Candia on behalf of the native Jews. A certain Sephardi doctor in Candia had been acting as though he were a rabbinical scholar, asserting his authority over the community and acting as a communal leader. R. Mizrahi told the community not to pay heed to this would-be sage.[20]

Some of the Sephardim who came to Crete and other places had been baptised while still living in the Iberian Peninsula. Thus, in case of dispute with non-Sephardim, the latter would sometimes angrily call the Sephardim *meshummadim* (apostates). Rs. David Ibn Zimra, Josef Caro, Israel ben Meir and Moses Mitrani wrote to Candia insisting that no one may call Sephardim *meshummadim*, since it is sinful to use this epithet. It antagonizes the Sephardim and drives them away from the faith rather than bringing them closer to it. The rabbis ruled that anyone who used this derogatory term was to be excommunicated *(nidui)* for one day and was to agree never to use the term again. Anyone who refuses to such an agreement was to remain excommunicated until such time as he did agree.[21]

Although such frictions existed during the first generation, the more numerous Sephardi Jews came to dominate the cultural and religious lives of most of the communities in which they settled. Within fifteen years of the Turkish conquest of Rhodes, for example, a communal decree was published

in the Spanish language.[22] Since it concerned an important industry among the Rhodian Jews — the production of wine — it is significant that the language of the Sephardim was used. Even if the non-Sephardim did not then use Spanish as their daily language of communication, certainly within a generation it became the universal language of the Jews of Rhodes.

Size of Jewish populations

(a) Rhodes

The influx of Sephardim to Rhodes after 1522 brought a considerable increase to the Jewish population of the city. A traveller, A. Thevet d'Angoulême, visited Rhodes in 1552 and observed that the majority of the city dwellers were Jews.[23] Another traveller, Carlier de Pinon, made the same observation in 1579.[24] Although these statements seem to be exaggerated, it is fair to say that the Jews were numerous enough to be conspicuous.

Still another traveller, Louis Deshayes Courmenin, passed through Rhodes in 1621. He reported a population composed of 1,200 Turks, 200 Jews and the remainder consisting of Greeks.[25] In the mid-eighteenth century, a question to R. Ezra Malki indicated that the Jewish population of the city was quite small. Many of the tax-payers had reportedly emigrated.[26] In the mid-nineteenth century, R. Raphel Isaac Israel estimated that there were three hundred Jewish families in Rhodes.[27] Elkan Adler, who travelled through Rhodes at the end of the nineteenth century, reported a Jewish population of 3,500 people.[28] In 1900, the leaders of the Jewish community of Rhodes claimed a population of 3,600.[29] Writing in 1935, the historian Abraham Galante estimated 5,000 Jews in Rhodes.[30] These figures are not easily reconciled, but it seems fair to state that the population did increase considerably during the course of the nineteenth century. The first decades of the twentieth century witnessed a substantial migration from Rhodes, especially among younger Jews. Searching for economic and cultural advancement, hundreds of Rhodes' Jews left for the United States, and points in Africa and Europe. When the Nazis deported the Jews of the island in 1944, there were about 2,000 victims.[31]

The Jews of Rhodes lived in their own quarter near the port. The oldest synagogue building, constructed during the decade following the war of 1480, was known as the *Kahal Kadosh Gadol* or *Kahal Grande* ('Great Synagogue'). Another congregation, established no later than 1570 and known as *Kahal Kadosh Shalom* or *Kahal de Shalom* ('Congregation of Peace'), built its own synagogue structure by the end of 1577, perhaps earlier. In the courtyard of the synagogue, there still stands a water fountain which was used to wash the hands of the *cohanim* prior to their giving the priestly blessing. The fountain contains an inscription dated Kislev 5338 (1577). Apparently this

was built at the same time as the synagogue building or some years later.[32] The building of *Kahal Kadosh Shalom*, which still stands today, underwent general repairs and renovations in 1840/41 as is evidenced by various inscriptions.

In 1865, a synagogue was established through the generosity of Count Abraham de Camondo of Constantinople. Another small synagogue, founded in the latter part of the nineteenth century, was known as the *Kahal Kadosh Tikkun Hasot*.[33] A number of smaller *midrashim* also held religious services and classes.

(b) Chios

The island of Chios was under Genoese rule (1346-1566) during the period of the Spanish expulsion. The Jewish community was always quite small. It has been estimated that under Turkish rule (1566-1912), the Jews numbered approximately two hundred souls. Following the Balkan wars of 1912, the community disintegrated and, when the Nazis reached the island, they deported the few Jews who were not Turkish citizens.[34]

The Jewish quarter was within the city fortress and had one small synagogue known as the *Baal Ha-Turim* ('Master of the Codes'). It was named after R. Jacob ben Asher (1270-1340), author of the classical legal code, *Arba' Turim*. The illustrious rabbi, according to tradition, was shipwrecked with his students while near Chios, but reached the island. When he died, he was reputedly buried in the Jewish cemetery of Chios and his supposed grave became the object of pilgrimage among Jews in the area. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Jewish quarter was severely damaged by an earthquake. The synagogue was burned down in 1888. A small, new synagogue was built outside the old Jewish quarter and was known as *Mahzikei Torah*.[35]

(c) Cos

The island of Cos, like Rhodes, was under the domination of the Knights of St. John during the period of the Spanish expulsion of Jews. As in Rhodes, the Jews of Cos were expelled in the early years of the sixteenth century. When the Turks conquered Rhodes in 1522, they also took control of Cos. The tiny Jewish community of the island was closely tied to and dependent upon the greater community of Rhodes. By the late nineteenth century, the Jews of Cos numbered no more than forty families. By 1910, the community disbanded because there were very few Jewish families still residing on the island. World War I and the war for Turkish independence led some Jews from Anatolia — fearing the effects of war — to flee to Cos. The community was, however, severely damaged by an earthquake in April 1933. The sole

synagogue of Cos was destroyed in this calamity. The Italian authorities (Cos was under Italian control from 1912) contributed to the rebuilding of the synagogue. The small community met its end with the deportation of the Jews in 1944 by the Nazis.[36]

(d) Lemnos

A tiny Jewish community existed on the island of Lemnos during the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1904, there were ten families and several single people, totalling sixty-two Jews. They had come from Rhodes, Chios and various cities in Turkey. The community had no synagogue building but worshipped in the home of one of their leaders. In 1912, the Jews of Lemnos left the island, fearing the aftermath of the Balkan wars which brought the island under Greek rule.[37] Other islands of the Dodecanese also had tiny communities of Jews or several individual Jews who settled in them for commercial purposes.[38]

(e) Crete

In Crete, before the arrival of Sephardim, Greek-speaking Romaniote Jews were dominant during the Venetian period (1204-1669). In 1481, Meshullam of Volterra found six hundred Jewish families and four synagogues in Candia.[39] Jewish communities also existed in Canea, Rethymnon and Castel Nuovo.

A census in 1627 listed the total Jewish population of Crete as 1,160 out of 192,725 inhabitants of the island. Eight hundred of these Jews lived in Candia. In the early years of the Turkish period (1669-1898), only one synagogue may have remained open, although another synagogue was also operating later. By the end of the nineteenth century, only one synagogue was functioning. The Jewish population, which occupied a beautiful section of the city, declined steadily during the Turkish period. Canea (modern Greek 'Khaniá') became a major centre of Jewish population on the island.[40]

The only synagogue structure in Crete to have survived World War II is in Canea. It is known as *Kahal Hayyim* ('Congregation of Life'). Another Synagogue, *Kahal Shalom*, was inaugurated in 1880 and was reportedly the first synagogue to be opened in Crete in three hundred and ninety-three years.

The community of Rethymnon had its own synagogue in the early years of Venetian rule. However, no trace of it exists and its exact location is unknown. In 1739, a traveller found six or seven Jewish families residing in Rethymnon. In 1881, a census counted thirty-one Jews there.[41]

A census in 1900 placed the number of Jews on the island of Crete at 726 persons, all of whom lived in Canea.[42] The Jews spoke Greek as their main

language. The community was destroyed by the Nazis in June 1944.

(f) Cyprus

In medieval times, Jewish communities existed in Cyprus in the cities of Nicosia, Famagusta, Paphos and Limassol. From 1489-1571 Cyprus was under Venice. R. Moses Bassola travelled through Famagusta in the early 1520's and found twelve Jewish householders there. He described them as being contentious and lax in the observance of religious laws governing the usage of wine.

The Jews were originally from Sicily. Rabbi Bassola praised the beautiful synagogue of the community.[43]

Elijah of Pesaro visited Famagusta in 1563 and also praised the beauty of the synagogue. He found twenty-five Jewish householders — of Sicilian, Levantine and Ponentine origins. *"Among them there is hatred, jealousy, strife and enmity."* He also reported that the only Jews on the entire island resided in Famagusta.[44]

During the sixteenth century, a problem arose concerning a damaged and desolate synagogue in Famagusta. The members of the community wanted to erect some commercial buildings on the site and the question arose: is it permissible to use the holy site of the synagogue for a commercial venture? R. Jacob Berab answered in the affirmative, as did R. Mosheh Alashkar.[45]

After the conquest of Cyprus the Turks attempted to resettle Jews from Safed on the island in 1571. Sultan Suleyman issued a *firman* in October 1576, ordering that a convoy of Jewish colonists from Rhodes be resettled in Cyprus. Whether or not the Jews actually were moved there is not definitely known.[46] However, towards the end of the sixteenth century there were few Jews living on the island.

During World War II, Cyprus was a refuge for Jews fleeing the Germans. The British, who controlled the island, deported "illegal" immigrants from Palestine and transferred thousands of them to Cyprus. Their total number from 1946-48 was about 51,500. When the State of Israel was established, they were released and most migrated to the Jewish homeland. In 1951, there were only one hundred and sixty-five Jews on the island, living in Nicosia, Larnaka, Limassol and Famagusta. By 1970 there were only twenty-five Jews on the island and practically no communal life.[47]

Education and culture

(a) Rhodes

With the arrival of Sephardim in Rhodes following 1522, the Jewish

community developed a good educational system. Apart from elementary education a *yeshibah* for higher rabbinic studies also flourished. When *K. K. Shalom* was founded by 1570, it joined *K. K. Gadol* in supporting the community's *yeshibah*.[48]

When R. Moses de Bossal came to Rhodes in the mid-seventeenth century as chief rabbi, he found that the Jewish schools were thriving. Indeed, his responsibilities concerning the academies and his many students were so time-consuming that he found little time to put the text of his lectures into writing.[49] During the eighteenth century, the community could boast outstanding rabbis and teachers, and the island of Rhodes was an important centre of Jewish learning in the area.

By the nineteenth century, however, a general deterioration in the state of education was apparent. A French traveller, Victor Guérin, visited Rhodes in the 1850's and found twenty pupils, all boys.[50] The students graduated by the age of twelve (sometimes earlier), and learned to read, write, do some arithmetic, and also studied the principles of Judaism. They squatted on the floor around their teacher — who also sat on a mat with his legs crossed — and recited their lesson together in a loud voice and quick cadence. The teacher was equipped with a long flexible wand which served as a threat to troublesome children. There was no school for girls, so that Jewish women — like their non-Jewish counterparts — could seldom read or write.

The general cultural decline created some paradoxes. On the one hand, there were many unlearned Jews whose entire education was derived from old-fashioned *hebroth* where they learned only the rudiments of reading and writing. The average Jewish household had few books — perhaps some prayer books, Bibles, *mishnayoth* and Judaeo-Spanish publications. On the other hand, the community was still able to maintain relatively high-quality *yeshiboth*. Abraham Galante reported that at the beginning of the twentieth century, Rhodes had five *yeshiboth*, three of which were frequented only by rabbis.[51] The community produced its own functionaries and provided these needed public servants for other Sephardic communities.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, several attempts were made to establish modern schools. They included instruction in Turkish and/or French as well as Hebrew. These attempts met with failure and were opposed by the traditionalists of the community. However, in 1889 Abraham Galante, with several other progressive Sephardi educators, founded a modern school. In 1901, the school was expanded and came under the aegis of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*. An *Alliance* school for girls was opened in 1902.[52] The *Alliance* schools dramatically improved the educational conditions for the Jewish children of the city.

Prior to the establishment of these schools, the educational picture in Rhodes was far from satisfactory. According to a report issued by the leaders of the Jewish community in February 1900, ninety-two students were

attending the community *Talmud Torah*: four hundred attended the poorly-run elementary-level schools known as *meldars*: and one hundred and fifty did not attend school at all. Of the ninety-two students in the *Talmud Torah*, forty-eight attended at no charge due to poverty. Classes were thirty-nine hours per week, plus two hours of reading Psalms on Saturday afternoons.[53]

The *Alliance* schools also stimulated changes in the existing schools in the city. By 1914, it was rare to find a single school-age child who was not enrolled in a school.[54]

(b) Chios

The Sephardi communities of the other islands were not able to match the record of Rhodes in education and scholarship. In Chios, we find that they lacked a rabbi for a period during the sixteenth century. Some of the members of the community wished to hire a rabbi, while others objected. Could the community force the dissenters to accept a rabbi? Rs. Isaac Barkey and Hayyim Shabbethai ruled in the affirmative.[55] Many community members in Chios had complained about the poor quality of the school and therefore developed a system of grade levels, but the general educational system remained mediocre. By 1894, a modern school was established through the generosity of several Jewish philanthropists from London. The school taught subjects including Hebrew, Turkish, Greek and French. About eighty boys and girls attended the school.[56]

(c) Cos, Lemnos

The small Jewish communities in Cos, Lemnos and other islands provided only the most elementary education for their children.[57] Students might attend the communal *Talmud Torah* until aged twelve and then quit school in order to gain employment.

(d) Crete

The Jews of the island of Crete had an illustrious history by the time of the arrival of the Sephardim. The Capsali and Delmedigo families, in particular, had produced many scholars. However, during the Turkish period (1669-1898) the community's educational level declined significantly.[58]

Communal Organization

(a) Rhodes

The Jewish community of Rhodes organized itself on the lines of the

Sephardi communities of the Ottoman empire. A study of this community sheds light on the basic communal-life patterns of the Sephardim of the area in general.

Normally, it was the practice of Jewish communities to appoint one individual to deal with the Ottoman officials. He was known as *kâhya*, a term meaning "superintendent," but also used to describe various types of office-holders in the Ottoman empire.[59] The *kâhya* was a powerful figure since no other Jew could deal directly with the government without his express consent. The institution of the *kâhya* was advantageous for the government since it knew whom to contact when it wished to communicate with the Jewish community. It was also helpful to the Jews. It prevented dissident Jews from bringing their feuds and grievances to the government and thus protected the Jews from a treasonable coreligionist.

However, a *kâhya* had so much power, that he might become arrogant and unresponsive to the wishes of the members of the Jewish community. He was also subject to criticism whenever something went wrong in the relationship between the government and the Jews.

In some cases, the *kâhya* so alienated the Jewish community that he was forced out of office. This occurred in Constantinople during the rabbinate of Elijah Mizrahi (c. 1450-1526) and in Salonika at about the same period.[60] During the sixteenth century, the Jews of Rhodes experienced a similar crisis. Their *kâhya* had acted irresponsibly and had actually caused damage to the community in general and to some individuals in particular. The Jews of Rhodes issued a communal ordinance *(haskamah)* forbidding anyone to serve as *kâhya*. Three individuals were appointed to serve as *parnassim* in lieu of a *kâhya*. However, this innovation did not work out as planned. One of the three *parnassim* had asserted his authority to the point where he alone was dealing with the community's affairs *vis-a-vis* the government. After three months in office, it became clear that two of the *parnassim* were merely figureheads while the third was acting as *kâhya*. Although the Jews of Rhodes seemed satisfied with their new *de facto kâhya*, they were concerned lest they be in violation of their *haskamah*. R. David ibn Zimra responded to the community's dilemma, indicating that the *de facto kâhya*, if fully trusted, could remain in office. However, if there was any suspicion that he might cause harm to the community as the previous *kâhya* had done, then he must be removed.[61] The *haskamah* had been issued in order to protect the community from a capricious *kâhya*. The present situation was within the intention of that ordinance.

The internal affairs of the community were governed by officials, often called *parnassim*.[62] Their responsibilities were essentially administrative. They oversaw the institutions of the community, seeing to their proper functioning and adequate financing. They also punished individuals who did not comply with communal laws. In Rhodes, it seems that the *parnassim*

deferred to rabbinic authorities in matter of Jewish law and did not have wide judicial powers.[63]

Sephardi communities in the Ottoman empire generally had a religious leader known as *haham* or *marbits torah*, who served as the authority in matters of Jewish law.[64] During the sixteenth century, we find no specific reference to any individual who served in this capacity in Rhodes. Since the community was the home of various rabbinic scholars, it would seem likely that one or more of them served as *halakhic* authority for the community. The office of chief rabbi in Rhodes began to develop clearly in the seventeenth century. By the eighteenth century it had become well-established and can be easily traced to modern times. The rabbis of Rhodes will be discussed in greater detail below.

Communities adopted rulings and ordinances *(haskamoth)* applicable to their local needs. Some of the early ordinances of Candia have been preserved and published.[65] Those of Rhodes and other islands have not survived in complete form, but must be culled from *responsa* or from the writings of individuals who had access to *haskamah* records.

A *haskamah* could be instituted at the request of the rabbi, *parnassim* or individuals within the community. Where the community had a *haham*, his approval had to be secured before a *haskamah* was considered to be valid.[66] Once accepted, the *haskamah* was binding upon all members of the community. A *haskamah* would usually describe the problem it was trying to solve, present its resolution and provide a threat of excommunication or heavenly retribution for violators. The *haham* and *parnassim* would normally sign the document.

One of the complicated problems in the workings of *haskamoth* is whether the majority of the community can pass an ordinance over the objection of a dissenting minority. This problem has a long history and has been the subject of much rabbinic discussion.[67] The few *responsa* dealing with this question in Rhodes do not reveal a clear-out position. However, it is clear that no *haskamah* could be passed if it was aimed against one specific person, even if everyone but that individual agreed to it. In the eighteenth century, R. Elijah Israel wrote that in matters which deal with a needed improvement for the general community, the majority could pass a *haskamah* over a minority. However, in matters involving taxes, a unanimous decision was required.[68] In this way, individuals were protected from a barrage of taxes levied against them by the majority of the community.

The communal treasury of the Jews of Rhodes was known as the *kolel*. Each synagogue also had its own treasury. The funds of the *kolel* were used, for example, to pay the communal taxes to the government, to pay the salary of the chief rabbi, to make gifts to the messengers from Palestine, to dispense welfare in cases where synagogue funds were inadequate. The synagogue treasuries supported the synagogue officials, the maintenance of the

synagogue buildings, and the welfare of needy congregants.[69]

The *kolel*'s funds were derived from taxes assessed by officials known as *maarikhim*, appointed by the *parnassim*. Each of the *maarikhim* was required to take an oath that he would be scrupulously honest in his work. The *maarikhim* would proceed to estimate the economic value of the Jewish heads of household. Those whose net worth fell below a certain figure were exempted from taxes due to poverty. The *maarikhim* would post the names of the taxable individuals along with their estimated worths on the synagogue doors for fifty days. Anyone who disagreed with the estimate of his worth was entitled to protest and have his estate re-assessed. After the fifty-day period had passed, each individual was taxed an amount based on his established worth. This procedure took place every three years, usually after the Passover holiday.[70]

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the community's tax system faced several major problems. The *kolel* had been paying the annual *haraj* tax to the Turkish government on the basis of one hundred and five heads of household, though the actual number had increased well beyond that figure. The *kolel* was not permitted to tax Jews of foreign nationalities. As the number of foreign consulates in Rhodes increased, a growing number of Jewish employees came with them. The latter refused to pay any taxes to the *kolel*. The chief rabbi of Rhodes, Abraham Halevi, negotiated a compromise whereby the foreign Jews would pay one half of the *haraj* and *kapitanlik* (head or poll-tax).[71] In the course of time, nearly half of the Jews of Rhodes had been able to obtain credentials as foreign nationals. The taxable income of the community sank rapidly.

In 1840, the sultan sent an official to Rhodes to make a census of the population. He counted all the Jews — native and foreign. The *haraj* was then collected from each individual Jew rather than from the *kolel*. The Jews of foreign nationality protested and were finally exempted from paying these taxes. This arrangement continued for about ten years, at which time the sultan reverted to the previous method of collecting the taxes from the *kolel*. However, the sultan expected to have the *haraj* paid on the basis of the names that had been recorded by his officials — a list which included foreign Jews. Thus, the *kolel* was made responsible for the foreign nationals even though the latter refused to pay. R. Michael Jacob Israel ruled that the foreign nationals had to pay their shares of taxes along with all the other Jews of the city. He criticized their selfishness and thoughtlessness since their behaviour tended to undermine the welfare of the entire Jewish community.[72]

Aside from raising revenue from the income tax, the *kolel* also derived income from the sale of *hazakoth* (licenses to work in certain businesses, buildings, etc.). The *gabella* was a sales tax on certain items such as meat, wine and cheese. During the eighteenth century, a sales tax was instituted on *ethrogim*. An inheritance tax was also established. Several attempts to add

other taxes met with failure.[73]

The tax problems of Rhodes were related to the depressed economic conditions during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from which all the communal institutions suffered.

(b) The other communities

Crete, Chios

During the Venetian rule (1204-1669), the community of Candia was headed by a *condestablo* elected by the notables. He appointed *hashbanim* (accountants) who managed the financial affairs. These offices correspond to those of *parnas* and *maarikhim* in Rhodes and elsewhere. Under Ottoman rule, the communities in Crete were organised in a similar way to that in Rhodes. The head of the community was known as *parnas*.[74]

During the sixteenth century, the Jews of Chios appointed rabbinic judges from Constantinople to exercise authority over their community in matters of Jewish law. However, certain individuals did not heed the decisions of these judges. R. Yehiel Bassan, originally of Rhodes, informed the Jews of Chios that the judges had the power to enforce compliance with their rulings. They could invoke the *herem* (excommunication) or even go to non-Jewish authorities for help if necessary.[75] The community of Chios and those of the other Dodecanese islands were essentially organized along the lines of the community in Rhodes.

Legal status of Jews in the Ottoman empire

Jews had many rights and privileges under Ottoman rule, but were also subject to various legal disabilities. These stemmed from the distinction that Moslem governments made among the various groups of population.[76] Idolaters were forced to convert to Islam. The so-called *'peoples of Scriptures'* (Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians) were tolerated and were called *dhimmis*. They were given the basic freedoms of life, religion and property. In turn, they were compelled to pay special taxes known as *haraj*. The poll-tax was imposed on *dhimmis* in order to humiliate them. It also served as payment in lieu of military service.

The evidence of a *dhimmi* was not accepted against the evidence of a Moslem. A Moslem could not be given a death penalty for killing a *dhimmi*. *Dhimmis* were required to be recognizable by their clothing and were not permitted to ride on horseback or to carry weapons. Although they had the right to repair their houses of worship, they were not allowed to build new ones unless they first obtained permission from the government. These disabilities, though not always strictly enforced, served to keep non-Moslems

in a subservient position in society.

A community of *dhimmis* was known as a *millet* (literally 'nation'). *Millets* were headed by the patriarchs or rabbis. The government generally dealt with a *millet* rather than an individual. This system allowed much inner autonomy for each *millet*. The Jews, for example, were able to govern themselves according to their own laws and for the most part were not subjected to external governmental interference.

The Jewish communities of the Ottoman empire maintained their own judicial systems to the maximum extent possible. This extended not only to religious ritual matters, but also to commercial and general cases. In Rhodes, for example, bills of sale were drawn up by scribes who observed the traditional Jewish legal procedures. Although documents drawn up in the non Jewish courts were also deemed valid in land transactions, the Jews urged members of their community only to use the Jewish scribes and courts.[77]

During the sixteenth century, the Jews of Cyprus were subject to a law that required all wills of dying people to be written by non-Jews. Part of the reason for this rule was that there were no Jews on the island qualified to draw up a legal document.[78]

Aside from the religious aspects of requiring Jews to be subject to Jewish law and courts, there was also a practical consideration. Non-Jewish courts were held in suspicion by Jews. Dishonesty and bribery could easily subvert justice. Any Jew who brought a co-religionist to a non-Jewish court or who turned a fellow Jew over to non-Jewish authorities without very good reason was considered blameworthy.[79]

Relations with the non-Jewish population

(a) Rhodes

In general, the Jews lived peacefully among their non-Jewish neighbours. Jews were daily involved with non-Jews in business, and there is also evidence that members of the various religions mixed socially.[80] During the eighteenth century, two Jewish women in Rhodes worked as singers at non-Jewish parties, a practice condemned by the chief rabbi.[81] During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, closer relationships among the members of the groups developed: yet the Jews also suffered various humiliations and calamities.

Conscious of their tolerated status in society, the Jews were careful not to cause trouble or confusion to the non-Jews. R. Moses Israel of Rhodes, in a sermon in 1719, insisted that Jews be extremely honest in their business dealings with non-Jews, not only on moral grounds but in order to avoid bringing discredit on the Jewish people.[82] In the latter half of the nineteenth century, R. Rahamim Hayyim Judah Israel of Rhodes ruled that Jews should be silent and dignified in their synagogues on Shabbat *Zakhor* and Purim,

when noise and celebration had been normal. Among the reasons given was the desire not to give non-Jews a bad impression of the Jews.[83]

Sporadic attacks occurred against Jews and their property. In some cases, Jews were actually murdered.[84] In 1840, the Jews of Rhodes suffered a nightmarish blood libel.[85] The case followed the historic pattern. Some Greeks charged that a poor Jewish peddler had kidnapped a Christian child. The peddler was imprisoned, and under duress, accused other Jews in the community as accomplices in the crime. On Purim eve, the police entered the Jewish quarter and arrested ten Jewish leaders, including R. Michael Jacob Israel. The victims were imprisoned and tortured. The Bey of Rhodes ordered severe measures against the Jews in order to gain a confession. He had the Jewish quarter blockaded: for three days no food was permitted to enter. An attempt to smuggle a dead body into the Jewish quarter was thwarted by the vigilance of some Jews.

Sir Moses Montefiore and Adolphe Crémieux interceded with the sultan to release the Jews in Rhodes and in Damascus, where a blood libel was simultaneously under way. The sultan issued a *firman* in which the charges of the blood libel were dismissed as false. It seems, though, that the ten prisoners in Rhodes had been released prior to the issue of the *firman*. R. Michael Jacob Israel preached a sermon in Rhodes on the Sabbath before Passover in which he blamed Jewish sins for the persecutions they had suffered. On the last day of Passover, the Bey of Rhodes received an order from the Grand Vizier to protect the Jews. This led to great rejoicing in the community. Songs were composed in honour of this occasion and the day was commemorated as the "Purim" of Rhodes.[86]

(b) Crete

During the sixteenth century, the Jews of Crete suffered from repressive measures. They were slandered and subjected to false accusations. In 1567, the patriarch of Constantinople wrote to the Greeks in Crete asking that they be kinder to the Jews. Giacomo Foscarini, who ruled the island from 1574-1577, was harsh to Jews and Greeks alike. Jews were not allowed to employ Christians. Jews who had come to Crete from other places were suspected of being spies for the Ottoman empire and were restricted to the Jewish quarter.[87] A letter of Elijah Capsali describes the practice in Candia of forcing Jews to serve as executioners.[88] This unpleasant task was a symbol of the inferior status of Jews. The situation of Jews in the island under Ottoman rule was generally good. However, a blood libel was raised against the Jews in 1873, but was suppressed through the efforts of the French consul.[89]

(c) The other islands

The Jews of Chios lived relatively peaceful lives while under Turkish domination. However, the Greek population harboured strong anti-Jewish feelings. From time to time, these feelings erupted into actual violence. In 1821-22, there was a Greek revolt against Turkish domination. Since Jews naturally sided with the more benevolent Turkish government, the Greeks became particularly hostile to them. In 1864, the Jews were again subject to violence at the hands of the Greeks. In 1892, the Jews were accused of the ritual murder of a Christian child. The charges were ultimately dropped when the child who was supposedly murdered was found to be alive and well. During the course of the Turko-Greek war of 1897, the Jews of Chios sided with Turkey. The Greeks organized a boycott against the Jewish merchants who sold their goods in Greek villages. These merchants were supported by Jewish charity until the war ended and relations became more satisfactory.[90] Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a Jew was elected president of the municipality, a fact which would indicate good relationships among the various sections of the island's population.[91]

The Jews of Cos were accused of ritual murder in 1850 but the charges were proven to be false. In 1887, the Greeks of Lemnos accused the Jews of ritual murder but in this case also the Jews were proven innocent. The Jews of the island of Chalki suffered from the fanaticism of the Greek populace. They were attacked especially around the Easter holiday. The Greeks were so oppressive that they did not allow the Jewish dead to be buried on the island; instead, the bodies had to be transported to Rhodes for burial. Towards the end of the nineteenth century a blood libel was raised against the Jews of the island of Calymnos. The Jews of Rhodes demanded that those who had instigated the false charges be punished; and they were.[92]

Economic life in Rhodes

The Jews were obviously subject to the rises and declines in the general economic situation of the Mediterranean area. The case of Rhodes serves as an illustration.

When the Sephardi community of Rhodes began to develop in the first half of the sixteenth century, the Ottoman empire was reaching the peak of its expansion. The general economic conditions were favourable: the situation in Rhodes, partly due to the island's excellent location, was particularly good. The Jews shared in the city's prosperity.

The Jews of Rhodes were active in the wine trade. A *haskamah* of 1537 was issued in order to control aspects of wine production. The ordinance required that grapes be brought into the city by Jews and be pressed and poured near the homes of the Jewish wine-makers. Only Jewish labourers

were to be involved in the production of wine. Any wine not prepared according to the rules of *haskamah* was to be considered ritually unfit for Jewish consumption. The *haskamah* also prohibited wine imported from Candia, Chios, Nicosia and elsewhere unless it was known that the wine had been made in strict accordance with Jewish law.[93]

In the Ottoman empire, manufacture was often in the hands of Jews and Christians. Jews were especially involved in the textile industry and, in the sixteenth century, developed major centres in Constantinople, Salonika and Safed.[94] Rhodes, too, had a busy textile industry which included the participation of Jews, who were engaged in importing and exporting textile goods. The port of Rhodes was an important link in international trade.[95] The Jews worked individually and in partnerships. Agents would travel to other cities and would buy and/or sell according to the wishes of the businessmen in Rhodes. The *responsa* literature of the sixteenth century reflects a commercially active and sophisticated Jewish population in Rhodes.[96]

The Jews of the island also worked as shopkeepers and local merchants dealing with various types of merchandise. They were active in the labdanum and sulphur industries.[97] The wide range of economic endeavours and the apparent prosperity reflected the wide availability of opportunities.

However, when the period of Ottoman expansion and domination began to wane during the seventeenth century, the subsequent economic decline affected the Jews along with everyone else. Their livelihoods were not tied to the land but depended on the flow of goods and services. When this flow dwindled, so did their economic base. The economic decline of the Ottoman empire was related to an over-all deterioration in the apparatus of Ottoman government. The fall in professional and moral standards pervaded the entire society.[98] The process of deterioration is evident from the Turkish archives. In the sixteenth century, the archives reflect efficient management. In the seventeenth century there was growing neglect. By the eighteenth century the apparatus had collapsed. Trade was stagnating. The expansion of European trade and the increased importance of the Atlantic Ocean diminished the Ottoman empires's share of markets. The seventeenth century witnessed the ruin of many Ottoman merchant princes.[99]

By the eighteenth century, the masses of Jews were impoverished. Under the chief rabbinate of Ezra Malki (d. 1768) in Rhodes, the community's funds were insufficient to provide for the native and visiting poor.

> 'The screaming has increased in the markets and on the streets, and anyone who hears the words of the visiting poor and the curses which they curse and the screams which they scream, the hair on his head will stand up on end.'[100]

When the traveller, Claude Savary, passed through Rhodes in the late eighteenth century, he noted that the people of the city were in despair.[101] He also stated — perhaps exaggerated by his anti-Turkish bias — that the people

of the city were ripe for rebellion,

During the period of decline through the eighteenth century, Jews in Rhodes were still involved in the wine industry. Sea-trade, especially with Alexandria, Smyrna and nearby islands, continued. Jews worked as peddlers in the villages outside the city and also as shopkeepers in the city.[102] The nineteenth century found conditions growing progressively worse. When Alphonse de Lamartine visited Rhodes in 1832, he noted an "air of indolence" in the city.[103] This observation was echoed by other travellers.[104] Comments by Jews of the period indicate the severity of the situation. A letter to R. Michael Jacob Israel stated that *"poverty has increased in our city Rhodes, and the Jews have become very poor. They scream for food and livelihood and they are not answered."*[105] That business was slow is indicated by R. Hezekiah Shemtob Kodron who urged the Jews of Rhodes to devote time to study and repentance during the Ten Days of Repentance, since they had nothing better to do with their time anyway. "And what with the fact that in our city there is not so much business, the shopkeepers sit in the shop idly."[106]

If conditions were grim, there were still some bright spots. A banking house was established in 1819 by a Rhodian Jew, Bohor Alhadeff. The company later became known as Salomon Alhadeff's Sons and grew into one of the most important commercial houses in the Levant with branches in several cities. Other houses of commerce were established by Jews of Rhodes. These businesses offered opportunity for financial growth to the owners and to young Jews in search of employment.[107] But these business ventures were exceptions to the general rule. R. Raphael Isaac Israel stated in the mid-nineteenth century that of the three hundred Jewish families in Rhodes, half were extremely poor.[108] At the turn of the twentieth century conditions were as bad if not worse. A report on the Jewish community, dated February 21, 1900, gave the following data: The occupational pattern of the Jews of the city could be divided into five categories: (1) thirteen businessmen, of whom two or three were relatively well-off; (2) thirty families of modest means who earned livelihoods as small merchants and grocers; (3) seventy-seven families whose income was derived through manual labour; (4) twenty employees in businesses who earned very little; (5) two hundred and eighty families who were in poor and miserable conditions. These included one hundred and eighty street porters, fifty boatmen and fifty domestic labourers.

When the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* school for boys opened in 1901, the majority of students had to be subsidized.[109] Leon Semach, director of the school, wrote that fourteen boys attended school without shoes, dressed in rags. Sixty-three students paid no tuition due to poverty. Forty of them were so poor that their daily lunches consisted of one piece of dry bread.[110] The situation, happily, was to improve as the twentieth century advanced.

The economic conditions of the other islands were similar to those in Rhodes. The Jews of the islands were linked together economically as well as socially.

Scholarship, rabbis, authors of Rhodes

The Sephardi community of Rhodes could boast of rabbis and scholars in its midst from the first years of its establishment. Among the leading rabbinic figures during the sixteenth century was Judah Ibn Verga, a good friend of the famous R. Joseph Caro. Ibn Verga's son, Samuel, was a scholar in his own right and carried on a correspondence with R. David Ibn Zimra.[111] R. Hayyim Bassan of Rhodes composed a number of *responsa*, most of which were destroyed in a fire in Constantinople while in the possession of his grandson, R. Elijah Alfandari.[112] His son, Yehiel Bassan, became a leading rabbi in Constantinople and authored a volume of *responsa*. R. Hayyim Alpoal also lived in Rhodes during this period and was a teacher of Yehiel Bassan.[113]

The first reference by name to a chief rabbi in Rhodes occurs early in the seventeenth century. By 1614, the two congregations appointed R. Moses Ha-Cohen as their religious leader. A respected scholar and judge, he was to devote his time to studying and teaching the Torah and was to have the final authority in all matters of Jewish law. He left Rhodes sometime after 1618/1619 as a result of communal dissension and went on to Damascus and then to Egypt. He died at a ripe old age in 1652/53.[114]

Later in the century the community appointed R. Moses de Bossal as chief rabbi. He came to Rhodes from Safed at the age of twenty-five. He found a thriving academic life among the Jews of Rhodes, as he indicates in the introduction to his volume, *Yismah Mosheh*.[115] During his tenure in Rhodes, his community — along with much of the Jewish world — was shaken by the advent of the pseudo-Messiah, Shabbetai Zevi. R. Hosea Nantua, an avid believer in Shabbetai Zevi's authority, referred to the Sabbatean prophecy which was "in Smyrna, Chios, Rhodes, Germany, Morea (Greece) and Morocco."[116]

R. Moses de Bossal's son, Solomon, a follower of Shabbetai Zevi, testified that Zevi visited Rhodes in 1662, staying at the home of the chief rabbi for one month. He studied the Zohar with some of the scholars of the community. During one of these classes, at which twelve men were present, Shabbetai Zevi reportedly took twelve small sticks and wrote the name of one of the twelve men on each of them. He then drilled a hole at the top of each stick and tied them together with a string. Upon his command, the sticks stood up on the table, broke the string that bound them, and each went to the person whose name had been written on it. Shabbetai Zevi made those present take an oath not to reveal that he was destined to redeem Israel.[117]

When he ultimately converted to Islam in 1666, much of the Jewish world was left in a state of shock and despair. The messianic bubble had exploded. Yet, there were believers who followed him into Islam, including Solomon de Bossal. However, it seems that he returned to Judaism some years later in Italy.[118]

The extent of damage caused to the community of Rhodes by the misplaced messianic fervour is not clear. The published writings of Rhodian rabbis during the decades following the *débâcle* are silent in regard to Shabbetai Zevi. It may be assumed, though, that the despair and disillusionment left traces in the community as well as the communities in Chios, Crete and other islands for generations to come.

Turning now to the rabbinic leadership in Rhodes after R. Moses de Bossal, we find that R. Hayyim Algazi served the community towards the end of the seventeenth century. He composed a book of *responsa* and enjoyed the reputation of being a worthy scholar.[119]

Rabbinic scholarship in Rhodes was greatly enhanced by the appointment of R. Moses Israel as chief rabbi. He had been serving as a messenger of the Holy Land, wandering from city to city to raise funds for the communities in *Eretz Israel*. When he came to Rhodes in 1714, the community urged him to remain in the city as their rabbinic leader. He was persuaded to accept the post, and — after returning to the Holy Land for a short time — took office in 1715. The Jews of Rhodes had required their new rabbi to take an oath never to leave the island, but to remain as their rabbi as long as he lived. However, in 1727, after twelve years' service, R. Israel again wanted to become a messenger for the Holy Land. The leading rabbis of Constantinople annulled his vow, and permitted him to leave Rhodes.[120]

But these twelve years were eventful for the Jews of Rhodes and their influence was felt throughout the course of the community's subsequent history. Not only was Moses Israel an internationally known rabbinic authority whose presence in Rhodes could not help but increase the community's importance; but he was also a dedicated and tireless teacher. He guided the rabbinic studies of numerous students and helped Rhodes to become a leading centre of scholarship in spite of its relatively small Jewish population. R. Israel's own children and grandchildren were to play an outstanding role in the religious leadership of the community for all future generations. Their numerous books testify to their erudition. That an island in the Mediterranean with so small a Jewish community was able to boast so many scholars and authors must be counted as one of the amazing phenomena of Jewish history.[121]

Among the rabbis who served Rhodes after the departure of R. Moses Israel and who published works of rabbinic scholarship were Ezra Malki, Moses ben Elijah Israel, Yedidiah Samuel Tarica and Hayyim Tarsa.[122] Among the nineteenth century rabbinical authors in Rhodes were Hayyim

Judah Israel, Michael Jacob Israel, Hezekiah Samuel Tarica, Raphael Isaac Israel, Rahamim Hayyim Judah Israel and Rahamim Franco. R. Reuben Elijah Israel was the most important rabbinic figure in Rhodes during the twentieth century.[123] In December, 1928, a rabbinical college was established in Rhodes by decree of the Italian government. The college attracted students from throughout the Sephardi diaspora and provided teachers and rabbis for many communities.[124]

Crete

None of the other Jewish communities of the islands could match Rhodes in the area of rabbinic scholarship. Although the communities in Crete could boast of excellent scholars throughout the sixteenth century, the quality was generally not maintained during the Ottoman period (1669-1898) or subsequently.[125] The community of Chios employed rabbis through the course of its history, but none achieved the stature of their counterparts in Rhodes.[126]

Cyprus

During the sixteenth century, the traveller, Elijah of Pesaro, passed through Famagusta. He indicated that the Jews of that city were spiteful, deceitful and full of needless hatred. But though he found that the Jews were not completely pious, he did find one R. Eliezer Ashkenazi living among them. This rabbi was a scholar of stature; he could speak twelve languages; he was versed in secular as well as religous wisdom; he was weatlhy, kind and generous. But rabbinic scholarship was never prevalent in Cyprus, and R. Ashkenazi was an exception to the general rule.[127]

Role of women

The Jewish women of the Ottoman empire more or less shared the same social status as other women in their societies. Essentially, they filled their roles as wives and mothers, leaving business and communal affairs to the men. By the nineteenth century, forces of modernization somewhat altered the women's traditional role. With the rise of better education for girls, the twentieth century witnessed further changes in the social status of women.

Until modern times, marriages were contracted by parents rather than by the children. It was not uncommon for daughters to be promised away at nine or ten years of age. They were usually married between the ages twelve and sixteen; if they were still unmarried after that age, the family would consider the situation problematic.[128] By the latter half of the nineteenth century, the average age of marriage had increased. This trend continued into the

twentieth century.

Jewish communities would pass ordinances from time to time in order to improve the condition of women. For example, the Jews of Candia issued a decree in the latter part of the sixteenth century forbidding women from going to the cemetery during a funeral. The reason for this ordinance was that Jews going to the cemetery would often be mocked, insulted and even stoned by non-Jews. Each funeral brought dread and even fear into the hearts of Jews. Thus, in order to spare the women the anxiety and actual threat to physical well-being, the community's men undertook funeral responsibilities themselves.[129] The Jews of Rhodes, as another example, adopted several local *haskamoth* to govern the rules of the *ketubah* (marriage contract).[130]

Some women did engage in business successfully through the course of the centuries. We find an affluent Jewish business-women in Rhodes during the sixteenth century.[131] During the eighteenth century, a Rhodes woman shared the responsibilities of her husband who was a medical doctor.[132] During the nineteenth century, women began to change their style of dress and gradually came to disregard ancient practices e.g. they appeared in public without a head covering, or wore short-sleeved dresses.[133] With the improvement of educational conditions for girls, the process continued.

The Holy Land

The Jewish communities on the islands had special ties with the Holy Land. Pilgrims often stopped in Rhodes, Chios or Candia on their ways to and from Israel, bringing news and other information. Messengers from the Holy Land would travel to the various Jewish communities in search of funds and the islands would be natural stopping points. Many of the rabbis of the island communities had close personal ties with the Holy Land and could not help but share their enthusiasm with their co-religionists. Moreover, Jews from these communities left to settle in *Eretz Israel* throughout the centuries and helped maintain the Jewish presence there. Early in the twentieth century, R. Reuben Elijah Israel of Rhodes was preaching for a revival of the Hebrew Language and the re-establishment of the Jewish people in *Eretz Israel*. When a formal Zionist movement was launched, Jews from Rhodes and the other islands supported it.[134]

Transitions in the twentieth century

One of the important phenomena which affected the Sephardi communities of the Levant was the large scale migration to the United States and elsewhere during the first decades of the twentieth century. The demographic changes led to economic, social and psychological changes. The closely-knit, religion-oriented communities underwent gradual changes. The increased

desire for material success and individual freedom led to subtle but steady breaks with the traditional community framework. Migration was a manifestation of the new *Zeitgeist*.[135] Jewish emigrants to the U.S.A. from Rhodes established new communities in Salisbury, Elisabethville, New York, Atlanta, Montgomery, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Portland (Oregon). Other groups could be found in Israel and cities in Europe and South America.

Various wars led to changes in control over the islands, another aspect of the changing life patterns of the Jews. In 1912, Greece and Italy were the two powers who divided control of the islands. The Italian government was particularly anxious to spread Italian language and culture to its new possessions. During the 1920's, the Jewish schools of Rhodes adopted Italian as the language of instruction. After living almost four centuries under Ottoman rule, the Jews were now becoming Europeanized — more specifically, Italianized.

Destruction

The long histories of the Jews of the Eastern Mediterranean islands came to tragic and abrupt ends. The forces of Nazi Germany exterminated the Jews of the islands in 1944. Very few survived the holocaust. Sephardi communities, born as a result of the expulsion of Jews from Spain, now died in the gas-chambers of German concentration camps and as a result of Nazi savagery.[136]

Jewish life flourished on these Mediterranean islands for many centuries. Now, all that remains are plaques, monuments, tomb-stones, and a very few living Jews. As the quiet waves of the Mediterranean wash onto the shores of these islands, we may be inclined to fear that their former Jewish communities will be forgotten in the steady rhythm of history. But the Jewish people does not forget. And the Mediterranean Sea is itself our witness, as its waves dance along the shores of the land of Israel.

Notes

1 F. BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean*, Vol. 1 (New York, 1972), p.148.
2 L'Abbé de VERTOT, *Histoire des Chevaliers Hospitaliers de St. Jean de Jerusalem*, Vol. 3 (Paris, 1737), p.107. See also, J. LUDEWIG, *Reliquia Manuscriptorum*, Vol. 5 (Frankfurt, 1723), pp.290-299 for a Latin account of the resistance in Rhodes, dated November 18, 1480.
3 A. YAARI, (ed.) *Masa Meshullam Mivolterra* (Jerusalem, 1948), p.44.
4 A. YAARI, (ed.) *Iggrot Eretz Israel* (Tel-Aviv, 1943), p.111.
5 This explanation would be in consonance with the discussion of Joshua STARR, *Romania* (Paris, 1949), p.87.
6 Felix FABRI, "The Wanderings of Felix Fabri," *Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society*, Vol. 7 (London, 1897), pp.31-32.
7 See note 4.
8 Quoted by Gershom SCHOLEM, *Sabbatai Sevi* (Princeton, 1973), p.18, note 13.

9 For details about the expulsion of Jews from Rhodes, see M. LATTES (ed.) Elijah CAPSALI, *Likutim Shonim Misefer Debei Elijahu* (Padua, 1869), p.47. See also Joshua STARR, *op. cit.*, p.89; *Life of the Renowned Peter d'Aubusson* (London, 1679), p.418: Abraham GALANTE, *Histoire des Juifs de Rhodes, Cos, Chios, etc.*, (Istanbul, 1935), p.9. Hereafter, this work will be referred to simply as "Galante."
10 J. STARR, *op. cit.*, p.90
11 Charles BERLIN, *Elijah Capsali's Seder Eliyyahu Zuta*, (Ph.D. Thesis, Harvard University, September, 1962). See Vol. 2, p.529.
12 *Ibid.*, pp.530-532.
13 M. LATTES, (ed.) *op. cit.*, p.47.
14 Joseph HA-COHEN, *Emek Habackah* (Jerusalem, 1956), p.71.
15 Israel's statement is recorded in Ludwig FRANKL, *Yerushalaymah* (Vienna, 1859), p.82.
16 Elias ARTOM and Umberto CASSUTÖ, (eds.), *Sefer Takanoth Candia* (Jerusalem, 1943), pp.118f; Joshua STARR, "Jewish Life in Crete under the rule of Venice." PAAJR., Vol. 12 (1942), 65-69.
17 M. LATTES (ed.) *op. cit.*, p.18.
18 RASHDAM Y. D. Nos. 40 and 42. For problems in North Africa, see André CHOURAQUI, *Between East and West* (Philadelphia, 1968), pp.89f.
19 ARTOM and CASSUTO, *op. cit.*, p.43.
20 RE'EM, No. 66 See also ARTOM and CASSUTO, p.150, where the community of Candia in 1577 invalidated any rabbinical decree issued outside of Candia.
21 ARTOM and CASSUTO, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-8.
22 RASHDAM Y.D. no. 53.
23 Quoted in Paul GRUNEBAUM, "Les Juifs d'Orient d'après les Géographes," *R.E.J.*, Vol. 27 (1893), 135.
24 'Relation du Voyage en Orient de Carlier de Pinon (1579),' *Revue de L'Orient Latin*, Vol. 12, 370.
25 *Voiage de Levant* (Paris, 1645), p.356.
26 *'Ein Mishpat'* H.M., no.10.
27 L. FRANKL, *op. cit.*, p.83.
28 Elkan ADLER, *Jews in Many Lands* (Philadelphia, 1905), p.156.
29 In a report found in the archives of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris, 3rd folio, on Rhodes.
30 GALANTE, p.82.
31 Events of the 20th century will be discussed later in the essay.
32 RASHDAM Y.D. no.127. I saw the fountain inscription myself.
33 GALANTE, p.27.
34 *Ibid.* pp.145-6; RASHDAM, E.H. no.88: For the history of the Jews of Chios, see P. ARGENTI, *The Religious Minorities of Chios* (Cambridge, 1970). Hereafter cited as "ARGENTI."
35 GALANTE, p.146; ARGENTI, p.196.
36 GALANTE, pp.161f.
37 *Ibid.* p.168.
38 *Ibid.*, pp.169f. GALANTE discussed the Jewish presence in the islands of Metellin, Cassos, Castellorizo, Halki, Patmos, Calymnos, Symi, Carpathos, Leros and Myssiros.
39 A. YAARI, (ed.), *Masa Meshullam Mivolterra, op. cit.*, p.82.
40 Information for this and subsequent discussion on Crete is drawn from Zvi ANKORI, "The Living and the Dead: A Story of Hebrew Inscriptions in Crete," *PAAJR.*, 38/39, (1972), 5-100: and Joshua STARR, "Jewish Life in Crete under the Rule of Venice," *PAAJR.*, Vol. 12 (1942), 59-114.
41 ANKORI, *op. cit.*, p.15f, 18. For a discussion of a problem concerning a synagogue in Candia in the sixteenth century, see RADBAZ, Vol. 2, no. 1, 178; and *Abkat Rokhel*, No. 65.

42 STARR, *op. cit.*, p.94.
43 A. YAARI, (ed.), *Masot Eretz Israel* (Tel-Aviv, 1945/6), p.132.
44 *Ibid.*, p.186, 188.
45 BERAB, no. 5: and ALASHKAR, Mosheh, no. 55.
46 Bernard LEWIS, *Notes and Documents from the Turkish Archives* (London, 1952), pp.29-30: Uriel HEYD, *Ottoman Documents on Palestine* (Oxford, 1960), pp.167-8.
47 *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 5, pp.1182-3.
48 BASSAN, Yehiel, n. 99.
49 *Yismah Mosheh,* introduction.
50 Victor GUÉRIN, *Voyage dans l'Île de Rhodes* (Paris, 1856), p. 67.
51 GALANTE, pp.34, 46.
52 *Ibid.*, p.50. A letter dated November 16, 1904, in the file of Leon Sémach in the archives of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris, gives information about the establishment of the school for boys. A letter by Sémach, dated May 22, 1902, gives information about the founding of the school for girls.
53 This report is found in the last portfolio on Rhodes in the archives of the Alliance in Paris.
54 Letter of Léon Mehrez, dated January 1, 1914, in his file in Alliance archives.
55 *Torat Hayyim*, Vol. 3, nos. 29, 30.
56 GALANTE, p.151: ARGENTI, p.197.
57 GALANTE, pp.165, 168.
58 See Joshua STARR's article, "Jewish Life in Crete . . .," *op. cit.*, p.95, note 110.
59 H.A.R. GIBB, and H. BOWEN, *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. 1, part 1 (London, 1950), p.60, note 3.
60 RE'EM, no. 15: I. S. EMMANUEL, *Histoire des Israélites de Salonique* (Paris, 1936), pp.151f.
61 RADBAZ, Vol. 1, no. 906. The office of *kâhya* seems to have been filled by *parnassim* or rabbis in later generations.
62 See for example, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, no. 582; Vol. 2, no. 1,241; RASHDAM, Y.D. no. 53 in the text of the *haskamah*.
63 RADBAZ, Vol. 2, no. 1,241; and Vol. 1, no. 937.
64 Meir BENAYAHU, *Marbits Torah* (Jerusalem, 1953).
65 ARTOM and CASSUTO, *op. cit.*
66 RASHBA, Vol. 4, no. 185.
67 The discussions derive from a text in *B. T.*, Babba Batra, 8b. See BASSAN, Yehiel, no. 98; and *Shulhan Aruch,* H.M., 231:28.
68 *Uqat Eliyahu* no. 23; *Ein Mishpat*, H.M. no. 10.
69 *Yad Yemin* O.H. no. 2.
70 GALANTE, p. 20. See also, Simon MARKUS. 'Misei Hakehillah Upinkas Haarikhah Berodos.' *Sefunot*, Vol. 1, 282f.
71 *Yad Yemin*, H.M. no. 25.
72 *Ibid.* See also, O.H. no. 2.
73 Ein Mishpat, H.M. no. 10; *Dibrey Mordecai* no. 12, and p.66a; GALANTE, pp.22, 45. For taxes that could not be instituted see *Uqat Elijahu*, no.23; *Batey Kehuna*, Vol. 2, no. 17.
74 *Ba'ey Hayyey*, Vol. 2, H.M. no. 92.
75 BASSAN, Yehiel, no. 114.
76 H. A. R. GIBB and H. BOWEN, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, part 1, pp 20f; and Vol. 1, part 2, pp. 207-261; ARGENTI, p.149f. Subsequent discussion is based on these sources.
77 RADBAZ, Vol. 1, nos. 29 and 923.
78 *Abkat Rokhel*, no. 75.
79 RADBAZ, Vol. 1, nos. 29, 582.
80 *Shenoth Yamin* pp. 3a, 112a.
81 *Mosheh Yedabber*, p.57a.

82 *Apey Mosheh,* p.22b.
83 *Ben Yamin, responsum* 1.
84 For example, see Y. S. TARICA, *Kidesh Yedid* (Salonika, 1804), p.55a, where the rabbi of Rhodes eulogizes his son who was murdered in an attack by non-Jews.
85 GALANTE, pp.89-91; Lucien WOLF, *The Life of Sir Moses Montefiore* (New York, 1881), pp.22-26; Paul GOODMAN, *Moses Montefiore* (Philadelphia, 1925), pp.64-69.
86 *Shenoth Yamin*, pp.130b f. GALANTE, pp.141-143.
87 J. STARR's article, *op. cit.*, 70-71, 73.
88 S. ASSAF, 'Talyanim Yehudim' *Tarbitz*, Vol. 5 (1934), 224-226.
89 *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 5, p.1090.
90 GALANTE, p.154.
91 *Ibid.*, p.152.
92 *Ibid.*, pp.166-7, 169, 172-3, 175.
93 RASHDAM, Y.D. no. 53.
94 F. BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean*, Vol. 1 (New York, 1966), pp.436-437.
95 TZALALON, Yomtob, no. 184.
96 For example, RADBAZ, Vol. 1, nos. 30, 270, 923, 928, 946; Vol. 2 no. 1, 209; RASHDAM, H.M. no. 154; *Tumat Yesharim*, no. 75; *Aholey Ya'akob* no. 131; GALANTE, no. 117.
97 *Sha'ar Yehoshua', no. 20; BASSAN, Yehiel, no. 98; TRANI, Joseph H.M. end of no. 99.*
98 Bernard LEWIS, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London, 1961), p.23.
99 *Ibid.*, pp.31-2; GIBB and BOWEN, *op.cit.*, Vol. 1, part 1, pp.36-7.
100 *Ein Mishpat*, H.M. no. 10.
101 Claude SAVARY, *Letters on Greece* (London, 1788), pp.85, 90f, 103.
102 Economic activities in the 18th century are described in the following *responsa; Uqat Eliyahu*, nos. 24, 27; *Ein Mishpat*, H.M. nos. 9, 10, 14, E.H. no. 2; *Dibrey Mordecai*, nos. 11, 19, 24, 25; *Mosheh Yedabber* pp.51a, 75a; *Hayyim Shenayim*, nos. 7, 25.
103 A. de LAMARTINE, *Pilgrims to the Holy Land* (Philadelphia, 1838), p.76.
104 M. MICHAUD and M. POUJALAT, *Correspondence d'Orient,* Vol. 4 (Paris, 1834), p.26; C. T. NEWTON, *Travels and Discoveries in the Levant*, Vol. 1 (London, 1865), pp. 138-9.
105 Yad Yemin, O.H. no. 2.
106 H. S. KODRON, *Pithei Teshubah* (Vienna, 1888), p.11.
107 GALANTE, pp.60-61.
108 L. FRANKL, *op. cit.*, p.83.
109 In archives of the Alliance in Paris.
110 Letters dated September 24, 1902, February 12, 1902, and August 13, 1903 in Leon Sémach's file in archives of the Alliance.
111 *Abkat Rockel*, nos. 86, 89, 100; RADBAZ, Vol. 1, nos. 904, 936, 945, 948, 949, 1,016.
112 Joseph KOVO, *Gib'ot 'Olam* (Salonika, 1784), no. 34.
113 *Ibid.*
114 See *Sha'ar Yehoshua*, no. 2. The text of the contract indicates the name of Moses Ha-Cohen. See also BASSAN, Yehiel, no. 75; and David CONFORTE, *Korei Hadorot* (Lemberg, 1865), p.119. Solomon ROSANES, *Korot Hayehudim Beturkiah Veartsot Hakedem* (Sofia, 1938), Vol. 3, p.131 and ARGENTI, p.188 state that Ha-Cohen left Rhodes for Chios some time before 1615. The testimony of Conforte would refute that assertion.
115 (Smyrna, 1680).
116 G. SCHOLEM, *Sabbatai Sevi* (Princeton, 1973), p.491.
117 A. FRIEMANN, *Inyanei Shabbatai Sevi* (Berlin, 1912), p.97. See also ARGENTI, pp.166f.
118 SCHOLEM, *op. cit.*, pp.176-7, note 189.
119 *Beney Hayyay* (Constantinople, 1712).
120 *Mas'at Mosheh*, Vol. 1. Y.D. no. 8.
121 For a discussion of the amazing Israel family of Rhodes, see Simon MARKUS, *Toledot Harabbanim Lemishpahat Israel Berodos* (Jerusalem, 1935).

122 Ezra MALKI wrote *Ein Mishpat*; *Einot Mayim* (Salonika, 1811); *Malki Bakodesh* (Salonika, 1749); *Shemen Lamaor* (Constantinople, 1755). Moses b. Elijah ISRAEL wrote *Mosheh Yedabber* and *Shearith Israel* (Salonika, 1827). Among the works of Yedidiah Samuel TARICA are *Amar Yedid* (Salonika, 1806); *Kidesh Yedid* (Salonika, 1804); *Helko shel Yedid* (Salonika, 1805). Hayyim TARSA's volume of responsa is *Hayyim Shenayim*.

123 Simon MARKUS, *op. cit.*; M. D. GAON, *Yehudey Hamizrah Be-eretz Israel*, Vol. 2 (Jerusalem, 1938), under the names of the rabbis mentioned. Also, H. S. KODRON, *op. cit.*, p.31. Also, M. D. ANGEL, "The Pirkei Abot of Reuben Eliyahu Israel," *Tradition*, Vol. II (Spring, 1971), 92-98.

124 GALANTE, pp.48-49. I am indebted to the late Dr. Marcus Breger, of blessed memory, who provided me with much information about the rabbinical college. Dr. Breger taught in the college and was exclusively empowered with the right of ordaining rabbis.

125 RADBAZ, Vol. 2, no. 1, 344 for reference to the "sages of Candia;" and Vol. 2, *Takkanoth Agunah*, section 26, for reference to the "rabbis of Candia."

126 GALANTE, pp.147-8.

127 A. YAARI, *Masot Eretz Israel* (Tel-Aviv, 1945/46), pp.188, 190f. Cecil Roth's article in *Sefunoth*, Vol. 8, p.292, indicates that a R. Yomtob ben Parachi lived in Famagusta in 1505.

128 See for example, Hayyim Algazi, *op. cit.*, p.82a; *Kol Eliyahu*, E.H. no. 15; *Mosheh Yedabber*, p.29b; GALANTE, p.65 — all for Rhodes. For early marriages in Chios, see *Dibrey Riboth*, no. 378; RASHDAM, E.H. no. 207. For Candia, see RADBAZ, Vol. 1, no. 1,006; ALASHKAR, Mosheh, no. 83. For Nicosia, TRANI, Joseph, Vol. 1, no. 40.

129 ARTOM and CASSUTO, *op. cit.*, p.150.

130 *Uqat Eliyahu* no. 26; *Mas'ar Mosheh* Vol. 1, E.H. no. 30; *Mosheh Yedabber*, p.43a, no. 5.

131 BASSAN, Yehiel, no. 38.

132 *Ein Mishpat*, E.H. no. 2.

133 *Shenoth Yamin* p.126b.

134 Israel's views are expressed in a sermon found in a small manuscript in the possession of Mr. Morris Israel of Seattle, pp.315a, 316a, 354a. See also GALANTE, p.42.

135 For a discussion of Sephardi migration to the United States early this century, see Marc D. ANGEL, "The Sephardim of the United States: An Exploratory Study," *American Jewish Yearbook*, Vol. 74 (New York and Philadelphia, 1973), pp.84f.

136 For detailed information about the extermination of these communities see Abraham GALANTE, *Appendice à Histoire des Juifs de Rhodes etc.* (Istanbul, 1948); Hizkiah FRANCO, *Les Martyrs Juifs de Rhodes et de Cos* (Elisabethville, 1952); Raul HILBERG, *Destruction of European Jews* (Chicago, 1961); Joseph NEHAMA, *In Memoriam: Hommage aux Victimes Juives des Nazis en Grèce* (Salonika, 1949). For a complete history of the Jews of Rhodes, see Marc D. Angel, *The Jews of Rhodes: The History of a Sephardic Community* (New York, 1978).

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF GIBRALTAR

by Tito Benady

First Attempts at Establishing a Community

The city of Gibraltar was founded in the year 1160 and for the first three centuries of its existence it was mainly under Moslem rule. At first under the emperor of Morocco and after 1374 it was part of the Nasridic kingdom of Granada. There is evidence of a Jewish community in Gibraltar during that period, though not much is known about it. In 1462, Gibraltar was captured by the Castilians and became a fief of the Duke of Medina Sidonia. In 1473 there were severe pogroms against the New Christians, or *conversos,* of Andalusia; most of whom owed their Christian status to the mass conversions that had followed the persecutions of the previous country. In 1474 the Duke of Medina Sidonia arranged for the settlement of some 4,000 *conversos* from Cordova and Seville in Gibraltar, where they would be safe from attack and persecution by the Old Christians of Andalusia, amongst whom they had hitherto lived. This settlement flourished for two years but in 1476 the duke became worried that the *converso* inhabitants might hand Gibraltar over to King Ferdinand of Aragon (who was married to Isabel of Castille, the duke's feudal liege); he entered the town with his armed followers, ostensibly whilst on his way to attack Ceuta, and expelled the *conversos.* A *converso* presence may have persisted until the eighteenth century, but the Jewish community of Gibraltar can only be traced back to the Rock's capture and severance from Spain in 1704, during the War of the Spanish Succession.[1]

Charles II, king of Spain, died in 1699 without issue, and willed his throne to the Duke of Anjou, a grandson of Louis XIV of France. Britain, Austria, Holland, Savoy and Portugal, formed an alliance and went to war with France and Spain in order to prevent a feared merger of the crowns of the two countries. This threatened the formation of a kingdom so powerful that it would irretrievably endanger the balance of power in Europe. In the summer of 1704 a large combined Anglo-Dutch fleet was cruising off the south and east coasts of Spain, and for want of better opportunities, attacked and occupied the thinly garrisoned city of Gibraltar. The capture was made in the name of the Archduke Charles of Austria, the pretender to the Spanish

throne, who was supported by the allies. The subsequent counter-attack by the Franco-Spanish forces failed and the theatre of war moved to Valencia, Barcelona, and Portugal. Gibraltar situated at the extreme south of the rugged and inhospitable province of Andalusia was unsuitable for the allies to mount an invasion of the Castilian homelands, and it became a quiet backwater, of interest only to the English, who had been hankering after it for three quarters of a century. The main part of the garrison was English and so was the money that maintained it. In 1707, Queen Anne appointed an English officer, Colonel Roger Elliot, as governor.

After 1705 Gibraltar was not attacked again during the remainder of the war, and the main problem that concerned the governor was obtaining supplies. Gibraltar was declared a free port, first in the name of the pretender and subsequently by Queen Anne. Arms, ammunition, and salted foods, were sent out from England, but fresh foods and building materials had to be obtained elsewhere. They could be procured from Faro in Portugal or Leghorn in Italy, but the difficulties of navigation and the hazards presented by the Spanish and French cruisers during the long sea crossings were such, that the most convenient place to obtain supplies was the nearby port of Tetuan in northern Morocco. The trade of Tetuan was in the hands of Spanish speaking Jews who soon became involved in the lucrative trade with Gibraltar, and they settled in the town in some numbers; as did their European correspondents, mainly Jewish merchants from London and Leghorn, who controlled the Morocco trade. There were also some *conversos* from Portugal, who took this opportunity to slip out of the cruel grasp of the Portuguese Inquisition, in order to revert to the ancestral faith, which they had practised in secret for centuries.[2]

The position of the Moroccan Jews in Gibraltar was equivocal in two ways. For a century the Barbary pirates had been preying on English shipping, and even at times on the English coast, in spite of frequent truces and treaties, which, included substantial bribes to leave British ships and subjects alone. There was therefore a latent hostility among the English, and in particular in the Royal Navy, for the inhabitants of the Barbary states. Added to this, Gibraltar was still *de jure* a part of the Spanish dominions, and would continue so until the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713; thus any Jews on Spanish soil were in a peculiarly sensitive situation. However the Jews in Gibraltar had Moses Benatar[3], the treasurer of the Emperor of Morocco, as an interested party in their affairs, and this gave them very important and influential support. Benatar had started life as a jeweller and later became merchant and financial adviser to the emperor Mulay Ismael. After 1705 he conducted the bulk of his mercantile operations with Europe through Gibraltar, and became the advocate of a pro-British policy at the Moroccan court.[4] His agent, Samuel Halevy Ben Sephat, lived in Gibraltar for a number of years, and his main London contact was Moses Mocatta, who also lived in

Gibraltar for a time, though he appears to have returned to London in 1717. In any case, the service given by the Jews as bankers, merchants, and artisans, was so important to the garrison of Gibraltar that the governor could not afford to dispense with them.

Elliot and some of the subsequent governors ran the civilian affairs of the garrison very much in their own personal interest. Elliot imposed heavy licence fees on all merchants in Gibraltar; *'any person that kept a Shop, Tavern, or sold goods openly they were obliged to pay to Major Bucknall [the Town Major], if they were Spaniard 1 Pistole per month; if Genoese a Moeda of Gold per month, and if Jews 2 Moedas of Gold per month'*; but there was money to be made, and the Jews arrived in some numbers. Within a few years they numbered 300 and formed half of the civilian and trading population of Gibraltar. Elliot became rather greedy and *'Thought fitt to raise a large sum from the Jews, there was an order on the church door with the names of 4 or 5 at a time, ordering them immediately to leave the Towne; which they not being willing to do, were obliged to raise two or three Moedas of Gold each man for leave to stay, which was paid to Major Bucknall'*.[5] This and other extortionate practices annoyed Benatar, thouigh as a Moroccan official he must himself have been well versed in the not so gentle of extortion.Presumably his business began to be affected and he retaliated by imposing a partial blockade of Gibraltar. The chief military engineer of the garrison had to go to Morocco to re-establish the flow of building materials which he needed for the fortifications. He was handed a letter from the emperor when he arrived in Tetuan in which we can discern Benatar's hand, for it stated that *'the Emperor having received complaints of the Moorish Jews in Gibraltar, would not allow timber, lime, and bricks &c., for the fortifications, until the Queen made it a free port as well for Moors as for Jews'*.[6]

The many complaints against Elliot made by civilians at Gibraltar, both Jews and Spaniards, led to his replacement and the appointment of military inspectors in 1711 to look into all aspects of the garrison's affairs. Lord Portmore who commanded the British Army in Portugal made a visit to see for himself. A new governor was appointed, but Brigadier Stanwix was no more popular than his predecessor and in 1713 Portmore was appointed governor. Portmore was too senior a man to be expected to stay long in a small and unpopular outpost like Gibraltar, so he governed the place for the next seventeen years through a succession of lieutenant-governors and commandants and only visited the fortress under his command whenever there appeared to be a real crisis brewing.

Gibraltar by this time had become a busy port, trading with the whole of the western Mediterranean, but particularly with Morocco. The town, which had 5,000 inhabitants at the time of its capture, was laid in ruins by the siege of 1704-1705. This deterioration was furthered by the members of the garrison, always short of fuel to cook their salt rations, taking the timber from

damaged buildings to use in their cooking fires. The few buildings that remained standing could scarcely accommodate the garrison, and the civilian population of about 600, of which a third were Jews. The army inspectors calculated that 70% of the rents collected by the governor came from Jews. The leading European Jews in the fortress at this time were the Cardozo brothers, who had come from Portugal, and Isaac and Phineas Netto, the two sons of R. David Nieto of London; otherwise the bulk of the Jewish residents were from Morocco, though there are references to Jews from Leghorn. Moses Mocatta of London, the correspondent of Moses Benatar, was an occasional visitor if not a permanent resident. In 1713, Jacob Diaz Arias (he sometimes gave his first name as Manuel) who was born in London, moved to Gibraltar '*with great quantities of merchant goods . . . by encouragement of the Earl of Portmore*';[7] for the British government was trying at the time to settle Gibraltar with people from England who, they thought, would be more reliable than the miscellaneous pack of foreigners who had flocked to the place.

This attempt by Britain to alter the ethnic balance of the civilian population of Gibraltar was to be repeated several times during the following century, and was always part of official policy, but it was to prove singularly unsuccessful. Life on the Rock was very confined and at times singularly unpleasant. The civilians were all the time under military discipline which directed every facet of their daily lives, from the colour they painted the outside of their houses to the times that they were allowed to be out of doors. This was something that people from England would not take to kindly; but the Moroccan Jews who were used to conditions, which, if less strict, were more savage and unpredictable, did not find these conditions so unbearable, and they settled down to a reasonably even tempo of life in Gibraltar. They practised their religion freely and had their own synagogue.

An interesting and as yet unresearched chapter of this Jewish settlement was the reappearance of Spanish *conversos* who wished to revert to Judaism. The research by Derek Davis in the archives of the Inquisition in Malta shows that they were refugees from a secret Jewish community in Seville.[8]

The number of houses occupied by Jewish merchants, who had spent considerable sums repairing them to make them habitable after the combined ravages of the bombardment and of marauders, annoyed the army officers, newly arrived in the garrison, when they compared them to the quality and state of their own quarters. Some men had even been killed when their barracks collapsed. There was also a number of '*poor English*' who were encouraged to go and settle in Gibraltar by a proclamation made in Queen Anne's time, who found the cost of living very high. In addition they found it impossible to compete with the Genoese, Spanish, and Jewish hawkers, artisans, and labourers, who were already there. In 1713 a formal combined petition was presented to the British government to remedy their problems by reducing the number of foreigners in the place. The lieutenant-governor was

recalled to London, but the affair blew over.

However events were afoot on a wider stage that were to challenge the position of the Jews in Gibraltar. The peace negotiations which had started in 1711 came to fruition with the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. Britain obtained some important advantages under this treaty. The most important were the cession of Gibraltar and Minorca by Spain. The cession was made most reluctantly but Britain tenaciously held on to the two most important gains she had made during the war. Spain, however, refused to allow her sacred soil to be polluted by non-Christians and in Article 10 of the treaty a condition was imposed that Britain was not to allow '*Jews or Moors to reside or have their dwellings in the said Town of Gibraltar*'.

Lord Lexington, the British ambassador in Madrid, immediately sent instructions to Congreve, the lieutenant-governor in Gibraltar, ordering him in the name of the British government to apply the provisions of the treaty strictly and get rid of the Jews. Congreve started discussions with the commandant of the Spanish forces at the frontier in order to alter his supply arrangements and obtain fresh foodstuffs from Spain, but the Spanish peasants who sold vegetables and meat to the garrison could not resist the lucrative temptation to invest the money they obtained in tobacco to smuggle back. Several were shot and the frontier remained closed. As he still depended on Morocco for essential supplies, Congreve was hardly in a position to expel the Jews, who controlled this trade, but some steps had to be taken and Congreve reduced their number.

The important merchants were however allowed to stay. Their names in 1717 were Jacob (Manuel) Diaz Arias, Moses Mocatta, Isaac Cardozo Nuñes, Immanuel Senior, and Isaac Netto, from Europe; and Samuel Halevy ben Sephat, Solomon Benamor, Joseph Bibas, Abraham Benamara, Reuben Curiose, Yehudah Azuelos, Samuel Faxima, and Samuel Sananes, from Morocco.

Congreve was relieved as lieutenant-governor in 1716, by Colonel Stanhope Cotton who travelled out to Gibraltar via Madrid, and took this opportunity to improve relations with Spain. The following year there was a considerable relaxation of the tension at the frontier. The Bishop of Cadiz made a pastoral visit to Gibraltar with a substantial retinue, and a Spanish consul was appointed.[9] These contacts highlighted the presence of the Jewish merchants, and that they had a synagogue in the Calle Juan de Sierra — though Cotton denied that this was a public building. Vice-admiral Charles Cornwall, who commanded the Straits squadron, now took a hand in the proceedings. He stopped the transhipment of brimstone and other munitions of war which Benatar had bought for the emperor, basing himself on the argument, which was not unjustified, that these would be used by the Barbary corsairs against British ships. He also accused Cotton of accepting a substantial bribe from the Jews which the lieutenant-governor vehemently

denied. With his pro-British policy now in ruins, Benatar was out of favour at the Moroccan court and he had to buy his way back into the emperor's good books by paying him substantial sums, totalling 75,000 pieces of eight. The Jews were finally, if not permanently, expelled in February 1718 and Morocco retaliated by imposing a ban on all trade with England and Gibraltar.

The Community is Established

The good relations with Spain, on which the garrison of Gibraltar depended for supplies, did not last long. When the British government found that the Spanish prime minister, Alberoni, was intent on a programme of conquests in Italy they formed an alliance with France, Austria and the Netherlands, against Spain. Admiral Byng was sent out with a fleet to stop the Spanish conquest of Sicily, by force if necessary, and he destroyed or captured the Spanish fleet at the Battle of Cape Passaro in July 1718. With part of her army in Italy and the rest having to cope with a French attack across the Pyrenees and a British descent on Vigo, Spain was not in a position to attack Gibraltar, but the frontier was again closed and supplies were no longer available from that source. This created an opportunity which was quickly seized by the Jewish merchants who had been expelled five months before, and had mostly gone to Tetuan. They returned to Gibraltar with their clerks and labourers and resumed their role as suppliers to the garrison. Even the coming of peace did not jeopardise their position, for the British authorities were reluctant to rely entirely on Spain for supplies, as events had shown how quickly they could be interrupted.

The resettlement of the Jews in Gibraltar was formalised two years later. In September 1720, Captain Charles Stewart R.N. was sent out with a squadron to the Strait, with instructions to negotiate a new treaty with Morocco, and to occupy himself with the ever recurring chore of ransoming the crews of British ships that had been captured by Moorish pirates during the period of hostilities which started in 1717. Much to his surprise he found that instead of having to deal with the Basha of Tetuan alone as he had been led to expect, he had also to deal with Benatar. John Windus who accompanied the ambassador described him as '*A Jewish Merchant, who had been often employed in the former treaties, and was a person more artful and interested than any other in the country, and chiefly to be considered, in regard, he had it more in his power to make the negotiations successful or defeat it as he had done that of others.*'[10]

But Benatar did not defeat the negotiations, and the new treaty was concluded in January 1721. The treaty was signed by Stewart on behalf of the king of England, and Basha Hamet Ben Ally and 'His Imperial Majesty's treasurer, Moses Ben Hatar, a Jew' on behalf of the emperor. There are 14 articles in all, which established peace and amity between both countries, and

provided for the appointment of consuls and the maintenance of peaceful trade. In some of the articles we can descry Benatar's hand. Article 7 gives English merchants the right to settle and trade with Morocco, and concludes with the words *'and that the subjects of the Emperor of Fez and Morocco, whether Moors or Jews, residing in the dominions of the King of Great Britain, shall entirely enjoy the same privileges that are granted to the English residing in Barbary.'* This effectively neutralised the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht, without even mentioning Gibraltar. It gave the Jews rights of settlement on the Rock in the eyes of the laws of England, though obviously in contradiction to Britain's commitments under Utrecht.

Other articles reinforced their legal position. Article 9 provided full capitulation rights. All disputes between British subjects in Morocco were to be judged by a British consul, and Moroccan subjects in British possessions would have their domestic disputes judged by one of their number. *'A Moor for the Moors, and a Jew for the Jews.'* Article 13 even provided a measure of tacit naturalisattion to the Moroccan Jews of Gibraltar, *'And as it has pleased Almighty God, that by His Majesty's arms, the island of Minorca, and city of Gibraltar, Are now His Majesty's possessions and are become part of His Majesty's dominions; it is therefore agreed, that every person sailing in ships or vessels, whether, Spaniard, English or otherwise, fishing in boats or vessels, living or residing there, shall be esteemed as his natural born subjects, upon producing proper passes, from the governors or commanders in chief of those places.'* We shall find that none of the Moroccan Jews who settled in Gibraltar bothered with naturalisation procedures. All they needed was to get permission from the governor to settle in Gibraltar, and they at once acquired all the rights of natural born subjects. What is more, as in order to leave Gibraltar residents needed a written permit, this served as a passport which showed their status and was used as a safeguard, which British consuls and even the Spanish authorities respected.

After Stewart had called at Lisbon to collect in Spanish silver the agreed ransom for the English sailors held captive in the emperor's dominions, he returned to the Bay of Tetuan from where he was to proceed to Mekenes to finalise the arrangements agreed under the treaty. Windus was witness to Benatar's absolute authority over the Moroccan Jews, and his despotic behaviour whenever he got into a rage. Samuel Halevy Ben Sephat, his factor in Gibraltar, had apparently transgressed in some financial matter. When he met him Benatar ordered him to be strangled *'Upon which the Jews, and some blacks belonging to the Emperor, immediately ran to him, pulled him off his mule, and in an instant stript him of his clothes, and whipt a rope round his neck, which they began to draw; and in that manner bringing him nearer to us, pale and gasping, he cried out to the ambassador to intercede for him. . . . after Ben Hatar had reviled and threatened him, he ordered that he should be carried to prison, where (as we afterwards heard) he was daily bastinadoed, as well for*

the fault he had committed, as to make him discover all his effects, which Ben Hattar seized on for his own use'.[11] Such was the barbarous usage of the empire of Morocco, and follows the pattern of behaviour set by Mulay Ismael himself, who is known in history as the bloodthirsty. Benatar was also to suffer a hard fate himself. After being a favoured courtier for many years, and having been made *nagid* (leader) of all the Jews of Morocco in 1723, following the death of his father-in-law, Moses Maimaran, he fell out of favour. He was threatened by Moulay Ismael with being baked alive, and was repeatedly dragged to the door of an oven, but each time he was temporarily reprieved and returned to his cell. He died in prison shortly after.[12] Benatar thus passed out of the history of Gibraltar, but his efforts had been crowned with success and the Jews were now back to stay, permanently.

In the absence of both the governor and the lieutenant-governor, the command devolved in 1721 on Colonel Hargrave who took great interest in the formation of a large and active trading community on the Rock, as his private income from licences and harbour dues paid by ships that called depended on the amount of commercial activity. He gave every encouragement to Jews to settle, and he gave the first property grants in 1721 to Abraham Acris, Moses Cansino, and Abraham Benider (who had been Stewart's secretary during the treaty negotiations). In 1723 there was a grant to Isaac Netto, and the following year one to Memon Toledano and a further grant to Isaac Netto of '*A piece of wast ground, on which he hath built a large room, which the Jews have made a synagogue of.*'[13]

The "wast ground" was at the end of a short alley on the east side of Engineer Lane, which became known as Synagogue Lane (now Serfaty's Passage). *Shaar Hasamayim* became the principal, but not the only synagogue in Gibraltar, for small groups of Moroccans still met to hold services on private premises. These were probably shops or warehouses rather than private dwellings, for living accommodation was scarce and cramped. Netto imposed the type of service that he had been used to in his father's synagogue in Bevis Marks, London, which was largely an off-shoot of the Portuguese synagogue of Amsterdam, and there are contemporary references to it as the Dutch synagogue,[14] to differentiate it from the small Moroccan congregations which met in make-shift accommodation. As it was the only building specially constructed for the purpose, and had a bigger congregation than any of the others, it also became known as the Great Synagogue, and became the official centre for the Jews in Gibraltar. All orders from the governor or commander in chief were conveyed through the synagogue's officers, who also dealt with all the problems that concerned the community. The synagogue was governed by a *Mahamad de Yehidim* (committee of subscribers) which in turn elected a *Mahamad de Parnassim* (committee of wardens).[15] The original building was destroyed in the great rainstorm of 1766 and it was rebuilt on a more lavish scale in 1768. By then a

piece of land bordering on Engineer Lane had been purchased in order to extend it and an entrance was made directly from there.

The community grew apace, and when a census was taken in 1725 it numbered 137, of which only 26 were women. Eighty-six of the 111 males came from Morocco, of the rest, 17 were from Leghorn, four from England, three from Holland, and one from Algiers. It is not very clear under what heading the Diaz Carvalhos and the Nuñez Cardozos who came from Portugal were counted.

Colonel Kane replaced Hargrave as commander in chief in 1725. He was sent with instructions to improve the fortifications. A new attack by Spain was expected and the fortress had to be placed in the highest state of readiness. Kane did not approve of British fortresses being over-run by foreigners, and he pointed out to the British government that as the Jews were there in contravention of Utrecht he felt he should get rid of them. But war with Spain was imminent, and as the garrison would again be faced with the interruption of supplies from that quarter, the government did not consider that this was a good time to court trouble by endangering relations with Morocco again, and he was informed that *'considering the present circumstances of our Affairs . . . those Jews at Gibraltar may for the present be connived at, and will accordingly have you suspend the execution of any orders that may have been formally sent for removing them from thence.'*[16] The Jews were to stay while the British government saw how things went with Spain. But after the siege, the border became almost hermetically closed for 40 years, the lifeline from Morocco had to be kept open and the Jews were not disturbed.

The 1727 siege was a relatively modest affair. It lasted only four months before the peace talks put an end to hostilities, but the Jews played an important part in the role of supplying provisions and services to the garrison. Isaac Netto was given the monopoly of procuring food from Morocco, and many of the labourers were put to work, strengthening the fortifications, and removing the obstacles to the Gibraltar guns presented by sandbanks on the neutral ground. Their foreman, Jacob Daninos, was later granted a property in Main Street as a reward for his services.[17] Afterwards, Daniel Defoe summed up their efforts with the words *'The Jews were not a little serviceable, they wrought in the most indefatigable manner.'*

The Spaniards, unable to capture Gibraltar were determined to save face by blockading it permanently, and this state of affairs lasted for a number of years. During this period the position of the Jewish community was greatly strengthened. In 1725 the Jews formed 12% of a total civilian population of 1,113. When the next census was taken by General Braddock in 1753 they numbered 572, or 32% of the increased population of 1,793. They made up for the numbers of Spaniards which in the atmosphere of confrontation which existed during those years had reduced from 36% of the civilian population in 1725 to 10% in 1753. The greatest increase in the number of Jews took place

in the 12 years immediately after the siege of 1727. It was during this period that most of the families that make up today's community first settled on the Rock. They were by no means all traders or shopkeepers, and they engaged in a variety of trades, of which the most significant was that of porter, for there were few beasts of burden in Gibraltar, and most goods were transported on men's backs. The licensed porters were formed into two companies, one of Moroccan Jews and the other of Genoese. There were also bakers, butchers, masons, tailors, shoemakers, and other artisans, and a number of boatmen. The Jewish merchants were still very important, both in the *entrepot* trade with Morocco and in obtaining supplies for the garrison and town. They also at times acted as bankers to the governors.

Isaac Netto returned to London in 1728 when he heard that his father was seriously ill, and the spiritual and civil leadership of the community probably passed to his brother Phineas, who seems to have spent the rest of his life on the Rock. He in turn passed the civil leadership to Isaac Aboab during the 1740s, presumably because by then he was nearing 70 and his age may have made it difficult for him to cope with the onerous duties involved. The position of leader of the Jewish community was an important one within the structure of the civilian society of Gibraltar, as he was required to be at one and the same time the mouthpiece of the governor, the judge in all disputes within the community, and to act as communal spokesman before the governor. The religious leadership passed to Isaac Almosnino, who occupied the position of chief rabbi until he was evacuated to England during the Great Siege. The first Jewish burial ground was in the Red Sands, next to the Protestant cemetery, until 1756. (The Roman Catholics interred their dead in a lime pit in the parish church). That year the governor decided that it was not particularly wise to have the town's cemetery on top of the main water supply so he moved the cemeteries to the neutral ground. This was however Spanish territory and the Jews refused to perform their religious ceremonies on Spanish soil, for obvious reasons. They were therefore given a site on the Upper Rock. The cemetery at Jews' Gate was used till 1848 when it, too, was moved to North Front which had by that time been formally annexed as British territory.[18] The *Yeshibah* (talmudic academy) of *Es Hayim*, in the *Zoco* or meat market, was turned into a synagogue in 1749, though it continued to be used as a centre of talmudic studies.

The civil affairs of Gibraltar were conducted informally and entirely at the governor's whim for many years. This of course led to abuses and complaints. The main ones were: the heavy fees and licenses imposed by the governor, the monopoly established for the imports of fresh foods, and the arbitrary allocation of houses, which were sometimes as arbitrarily revoked. The man who was most publicly attacked was General William Hargrave, who was commandant in the 1720s and in his old age returned as governor in 1740. He was probably instrumental in giving Isaac Netto the monopoly of

fresh supplies from Morocco during the 1727 siege, and in spite of Admiral Vernon's strictures in the House of Commons in 1729, reimposed the system, using Abraham Benider as agent, in 1740.

After being attacked in the press and by pamphleteers, Hargrave was recalled and General Bland was sent out to look into and correct abuses. One of his first acts was to appoint a committee to look into property holdings, and 20 Jewish property owners had their holdings confirmed. He ended the monopoly of fresh foods, though he was disappointed that he was not able to establish that Hargrave had not been getting a 'kick-back' from Benider; and he reformed the system of licences. Bland's instructions had laid down that he was to encourage *'His Majesty's Protestant subjects to settle in Gibraltar by allocating them properties at 'easy rents'.'* but he found that all property not needed by the military had already been assigned and he did not consider it equitable to deprive the Gibraltar merchants of the leases they already held, regardless of their religion. In any case it was no easier now to persuade people from Britain to settle permanently in Gibraltar than it had been during the preceeding thirty years. The Jews and Papists were to continue to form the majority of the civilian population of the place. He established free markets, reformed the currency, and recommended the appointing of civilian magistrates. When he returned to England two years later, he submitted an account of his conduct and the regulations he had established to George II, who confirmed them under his seal, and they in effect became the constitution under which the civil affairs of Gibraltar were conducted for the next 60 years.

Bland even took time to think about the way the Jewish community regulated the behaviour of its members. He enquired from the leaders of the community what powers and procedures they required to deal with the rowdier elements of their congregants, and in particular the porters and hawkers who sometimes committed breaches of the peace. On 23 July 1750 he agreed with the Jewish leaders a series of regulations under which they had powers to deal with any riots or tumultuous behaviour by members of the community, and hawkers were not allowed to buy fresh food within 24 hours of it being landed, except fish for pickling, in order to give housewives the opportunity to buy from the market at the lower price. The community was also responsible for dealing with, and arranging with the governor the deportation of 'strangers', that is to say, any Jew who landed at Gibraltar without the governor's permission. These regulations gave bite to the provisions of article 9 of the treaty with Morocco of 1721, and in order to bolster the authority of the communal leaders, a *Jews' Sergeant* was appointed subsequently, who had the powers of a police officer.[19]

Bland also tried to control the amount of spirituous liquors on sale in Gibraltar, because he was worried about the effects of drunkenness on the morale of the soldiers. He allowed wine and beer to be imported, but only by a few Protestant merchants, and he stopped the sale of spirits in public

houses. However, as the Moroccan Jews did not drink wine or spirits, but only the liquor of figs and raisins that they made themselves, they were allowed to open a distillery to make *mahya*, provided they paid the regulation duty, and did not sell their products outside the community. Though Bland having tasted the *mahya* was of the opinion that *'it is such horrid Stuff that I believe that none but Jews will drink it,'* this was to be the only distillery allowed in Gibraltar until it was closed down 70 years later.

An important factor that was to further the commercial prosperity of Gibraltar was the establishment of a Vice Admiralty Court by an Order in Council of 1739. The purpose behind this was to deal with the prizes that British warships and privateers were expected to capture in the Mediterranean in the coming war. The booty had to be condemned by a court before it could be legally disposed of to the benefit of the captor. There is no evidence that this court brought great benefits to Gibraltar during the *War of Jenkin's Ear*. Probably not, because Minorca, the main British naval base in the Mediterranean received its Vice Admiralty Court at the same time. The Seven Years War from 1756-1763, was a different matter. Minorca was captured by the French at the beginning, and Spain did not enter the war until the last year of hostilities. The cruisers and privateers from Gibraltar were therefore able to operate freely against the merchant fleets of France and the Austrian empire. Some of these privateers were owned by Jews and some sailed under Jewish captains.[20] All the ships taken had to be brought to Gibraltar before the prize court could condemn them; afterwards the captured ships and their cargoes could be sold. This brought a tremendous increase in commercial activity, and many of the local merchants became very rich. John Ward, who was married to Rebecca Tedescho, was reputed to have become 'as rich as Croesus'. A proportion of this increased affluence went to the Jewish community, and when the Great Synagogue was destroyed in the rainstorm in 1766, it was rebuilt to a larger and more magnificent plan.

The next fifteen years were a period of quiet prosperity for the Jews. Their legal position in Gibraltar was no longer challenged. Socially the better off merchants were accepted as equals by the officers, and Gibraltar gained a reputation for being well governed. A contemporary Spanish writer marvels at how the strict rule of the governor maintained order in a town inhabited by such a mixture of races, and it was in fact a safer and more law-abiding place of residence than the other towns of Andalusia. However, he professed to be disgusted by the acceptance that Aboab's attractive young wife Simha had in polite society on the Rock.

The civilian population doubled between 1753 and 1777, increasing from 1,793 to 3,201, but the numbers of the Jewish community only increased by 50% to 863. The Jews at this stage therefore were older established than the Roman Catholic element of the population, and 72% were native born. Their affluence had increased over the years. In 1756 they formed 33% of the

population and owned 20% of the properties, whilst in 1777 they only formed 27% of the population but owned 25% of the properties. This shows their increased wealth and a considerable advance in their standard of living.

Siege and War

The War of the American Revolution was not to provide the rich pickings for the merchants of Gibraltar that they had so bountifully gathered during the Seven Years War. To begin with, American shipping was not plentiful in the Mediterranean area, and the ships in the revolting colonies were more at home in the role of hunter than of hunted. France became involved in the war in 1778. She was joined by Spain the following year and a close investment of Gibraltar began which was to last for four years and became famous in history as *the Great Siege*. During this time Gibraltar was fighting for survival and had very little opportunity for aggression against enemy merchants.

Civilians were obliged by order of the governor to keep three months supplies of provisions by them. Those who could not comply with this requirement had to leave. Others left of their own free will, frightened by the prospect of a Spanish bombardment. Events were to justify their fears. Some left for Morocco, some for Leghorn and some for England. A number left for Minorca; from whence they were expelled when that island was captured by the Duc de Crillon in 1781.[21] Those civilians who remained, removed themselves and their more portable belongings to an encampment to the south of the town, at Windmill Hill, which became known as *Hardy Town* (after the town major of the time,) or, more graphically, as *Black Town*.

During the first two years of the siege the civilians were beset by scarcities and privations. Occasionally a boat would slip through the blockade from England, Morocco or Italy, with supplies. After a few months there was a shortage of bread, but then a relief fleet arrived under Admiral Rodney, and the situation improved for a short while.

A number of Jews took an active part in the defence. Some young men enrolled in the *Company of Artificers*. Others worked for the military as porters or masons. Abraham Hassan joined the 38th Foot Regiment. The boatmen were particularly busy. The rowboat *Hare*, which was owned and manned by Jews, achieved some success as a privateer, among its captures was a Dutch dogger laden with wheat, *a very valuable supply*. Moses Toledano who owned several boats kept running in supplies from Morocco. He later described how on a trip to Tangier he was pursued by Spanish gunboats' *'and to save himself from being seized by them threw himself overboard and swam ashore to Tangier tho' two miles distance, and his boat was taken.'* David Hassan, who was captured in 1779 on board another boat, spent the whole of the war as a prisoner in the Spanish penal colony of Oran.

Gibraltar was beginning to run very short of supplies again when it was relieved by a Fleet under Admiral Darby in May 1781. A diarist recorded that when the first ships of the fleet were seen in the Strait, *'The ecstasies of the inhabitants at this grand and exhilarating sight were not to be described . . . But alas! They little dreamed of the tremendous blow that impended which was to annihilate their property and reduced many of them to indigence and beggary.'* The Spaniards realised that they had no chance to reduce Gibraltar by blockade alone, and they had provided for this contingency. As the van of the fleet reached the mole, the batteries they had been emplacing for the last two years opened up. The civilians fled to *Hardy Town* to be out of range. From now on the bombardment was to continue without abatement for the next 18 months. The whole of the town was destroyed by the 250,000 cannon balls and shells that the Spanish batteries showered on it. The streets had already been ploughed up in order to allow cannon balls to bury themselves harmlessly in the soft earth. Virtually all the roofs of houses were destroyed.

After a few days Eliott sent in parties of soldiers to remove all timber in order to reduce the risk of conflagration. As a result stores of brandy and wine were uncovered. After two years of privations there were scenes of drunkeness and debauchery. Eliott dealt very severely with looters, but it was several weeks before order was completely restored. Nor was the refuge in the south completely safe.[22] On the night of 23 May a shell fell on a house in Scud Hill, killing Solomon Israel, his sister Mrs. Taurel and his clerk the young Abraham Benider, a grandson of the original settler. The synagogue had burnt down six days before. When the supply ships returned to England many of the inhabitants took the opportunity to leave the garrison. Amongst those who left was Chief Rabbi Isaac Almosnino. Not all the refugees arrived in England without incident. Two ships were captured by Spanish and American privateers and a number of civilians, including 36 Jews, were returned to Gibraltar from whence they had to make a fresh start in search of refuge. When Isaac Aboab left for England the following year, his place as leader of the community was taken by David Diaz Carvalho, who was born in Gibraltar in 1726 of Portuguese parents. His father was Isaac Diaz Carvalho who became British vice consul in Tangier about 1750.

The Great Siege ended in February 1783, and the Gibraltarian refugees started to return from Britain, Morocco, and other parts of the Mediterranean. They found the town in complete ruins. The streets had been dug up and most of the buildings had lost their roofs and were completely uninhabitable, so the civilians stayed on in *Hardy Town*. Although the war was over, Eliott's main concern was to strengthen the fortifications in case it was renewed. Most of the masons who were recruited in Portugal and Italy were therefore employed by the military, and the rebuilding of the town went on very slowly. When John Moore, of Corunna fame, arrived in 1792, he reported that most of the houses were still in ruins. The fortifications on the

north of the town, which faced the approach from Spain, were kept on a war footing for years. All the sand and stones required for rebuilding had therefore to be brought from the east side of the Rock, laboriously and expensively, in small boats. When Eliott insisted that the civilians should leave *Hardy Town*, which after all was only a temporary and unhygienic settlement, they built themselves wooden huts among the ruins of their houses. The governor then asked for the payment of the ground rents due to the Crown which were several years in arrears. After all their privations and losses the civilians felt that this was a heartless imposition. Some English merchants tried to sue Eliott for damages, for having ordered the removal of the timber from their houses during the Siege, for the troops that entered their properties under the sanction of that order committed *'the most notorious depradations . . . on the houses and other property of the inhabitants.'* After consultation with the home government the case was squashed but the Attorney General had to stop the governor treating the merchants as mutineers. Eventually wiser counsels prevailed. A proper petition was presented to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, and in August 1783 they agreed to remit all arrears of rents of all those buildings that had been destroyed, and for a further five years.[22]

The Rock did not fully recover its lost trade. Relations with Morocco had been interrupted during the last two years of the siege by order of the emperor, who was in the pay of the Spanish government, and were still erratic. The Spaniards were grieved by their failure to restore their bruised honour, by removing the irritating British presence from their territory, and maintained a strict blockade on the pretext that Gibraltar's close contacts with Morocco required them to impose a strict quarantine on the Rock. John and George Ward sent in a ship laden with Brazil tobacco for smuggling into Spain. Eliott invoked Bland's prohibition of the tobacco trade and banned the ship from the harbour. The Ward brothers went to the courts in England to sue Eliott for the return of over £26,000 they had paid him over the years as duties on wines and spirits they had imported into the garrison. If they could get the courts to declare that Bland's regulations were illegal, they could then drive a 'coach and horses' through his prohibition of tobacco smuggling into Spain. With the threat of law suits hanging over his head Eliott did not visit England for years, although he was promised the services of the law officers of the Crown if he was taken to court.[23]

The sad state of affairs in Gibraltar is demonstrated by the changes in the numbers of the population. The 1777 census showed a total civilian population of 3,201. Ten years later the number was 3,386, but this included a large number of labourers who came in to rebuild the town and fortifications and did not become permanent residents. By 1791 the population had reduced to 2,874, a reduction of 10% on the 1777 figure. The reduction of the British and Jewish inhabitants who formed the majority of the commercial

population was more marked, being 26% and 23% respectively. The number of Jews was 863 in 1777, 776 in 1787, and only 666 in 1791. This last census is the first one to give us a profile of the occupations of the Jews of Gibraltar. There were 238 in gainful occupations, of which 24 were classed as merchants and suttlers, 43 as brokers, dealers and hucksters, and 108 were shopkeepers, making a total of 135. Over half of those in employment were in commerce, the Jews formed less than a quarter of the total civilian population but they accounted for half the merchants and two-thirds of the shopkeepers. There were also 30 classed as servants, 11 as porters, and 6 boatmen. The professions claimed nine, of which four were rabbis, four government officials, and one a doctor — the only civilian practitioner on the Rock. There were also 45 craftsmen of various kinds. The largest number under this section being the 16 shoemakers, who were presumably kept busy making and repairing boots for the army, 8 were clerks, and 7 tailors.[24]

In 1791, the governor appointed Aaron Cardozo to be civilian adviser on 'police' matters and also to act as 'Representative of the Hebrew Inhabitants'. Aaron was born in Gibraltar, and was the youngest son of Jacob Cardozo, who had been brought from Portugal to Gibraltar by his father in 1720, when he was only ten years old. His father and his older brothers had devoted themselves to the Morocco trade, and his brothers took up residence in that country. One of them, Isaac, who was interpreter to the emperor, was barbarously executed in front of the whole court when it was discovered that he had been supplying confidential information to the British government. Aaron himself built up strong commercial connections with Algeria, and he acted as consul for that country in Gibraltar. In the wars at the end of the century he was to prove very useful to the Royal Navy, by obtaining supplies from that quarter for the fleets that at times operated or re-victualled at Gibraltar. Much of what we know about him is derived from a little book which he had printed in London in 1830, in which he recorded the various testimonials that he had received over the years from senior officers he had known at Gibraltar, including the Duke of Kent, and some of the admirals he had assisted in obtaining supplies, including St. Vincent. He also inserted a number of anecdotes about himself including a conversation he had with Nelson a few months before Trafalgar.[25]

Fate was however to smile on the depressed and poverty stricken merchants of Gibraltar by sending them a lucrative series of wars during which great fortunes were made. In February 1793 Britain joined the war against revolutionary France. *Letters of marque* were given to privateers fitted out by Gibraltar merchants, and all prizes made in the Mediterranean, whether by privateers or cruisers of the Royal Navy, had to be brought to Gibraltar to be condemned by the Vice Admiralty court, as Minorca was no longer a British possession.[26]

Gibraltar became a bustling commercial centre once again and money

began to circulate freely. Britain and Spain were now allies and the frontier restrictions which had been imposed after the *Great Siege* were lifted. This was the beginning of a golden age for Gibraltar that lasted for a quarter of a century. It is difficult to understand after this lapse of time how quickly it happened, and, after the war ended, how quickly it disappeared. But during this short interlude the Gibraltar merchants were very rich and powerful. The large amounts of money that circulated through trade disappeared into private pockets, but there were some signs of the increased affluence. Second and third storeys were added to the buildings that had been put up after the Siege.

Isaac Netto's original synagogue had been swamped by Moroccan influence. A group of rich merchants got together to build a new synagogue in the Line Wall which would revert to the 'Dutch' style of service, and raised $26,000 (£5,200) for the purpose. The building of *Nefusot Yehudah*,[27] which became known as the Flemish Synagogue, was opened for services in 1800. It was designed in the Dutch style, and the external bell gable is still to be seen. The interior was however remodelled by an Italian architect early this century, following a fire; and the combination of styles, Dutch externally and Italian internally, has confused visitors ever since. The first minister, Samuel Conquy, born in Gibraltar in 1759, was the son of Ephraim Conquy, who came to Gibraltar from Holland in 1723. Every effort was made to copy the customs of the Amsterdam congregation, even to the extent that the *ketubot* (marriage certificates) were drawn up on numbered forms printed in Amsterdam, instead of the hand written and decorated parchments that were common in Gibraltar and Morocco. Samuel Conquy was succeeded as minister by his son and later by his grandson, and the Conquy family were incumbents for a total of 83 years. The Great Synagogue, which had been patched up after it was badly damaged during the Siege, was substantially rebuilt in 1812.[28]

Spain was forced out of the war in 1795 by a French invasion across the Pyrenees, and the following year was forced to enter the war again on the side of revolutionary France. This gave the cruisers and privateers operating from Gibraltar a much wider and richer field in which to operate. The leading privateer owner in Gibraltar was Judah Benoliel. Born in 1772, his family was one of the few that stayed on throughout the *Great Siege*. We know that he and his father were buying goods from blockade runners at the height of the Siege. He probably started in the privateer business as a dealer in captured and condemned prizes, and later became a ship owner. A list of ships that had been given *letters of marque* in 1803 shows that he owned the largest privateer operating from Gibraltar — the *Caroline*, a 400 ton 18 gun sloop. He also owned the *Minerva*, a 16 gun polacre of 230 tons. He later became an international banker, and together with his partner, John Arengo, played an important part in obtaining the Spanish silver which was required to pay the expenses of the British army during the Peninsular Campaign. He continued

his banking operations to the end of his life, and in later years acted as banker to Cardinal Mastai Ferretti, who later became Pope Pius IX, when he had to transfer church funds from South America. Benoliel conducted a large trade with Morocco and had a great deal of influence in that country, whose consul in Gibraltar he was. He was also consul for Austria.[29]

Although Spain had changed sides in the war, O'Hara the governor managed to maintain good relations with his opposite number across the border, and there were no hostilities round the Rock, though the war at sea continued, to the benefit of Gibraltar's trade. Nevertheless the town became overcrowded with sailors, would-be privateers, smugglers, and desperadoes, from all corners of the Mediterranean, who wished to participate in the *bonanza* that was Gibraltar's lot. They posed a potential threat to the safety of the garrison, and O'Hara tried to reduce their numbers without a great deal of success. Inevitably a group of them, led by some disaffected Irish officers, engineered a scheme for handing Gibraltar to the Spaniards for a large financial reward. Cardozo in his capacity as adviser on police matters, discoverd the plot, and it was scotched. The governor assembled the garrison and thanked him publicy for saving Gibraltar from a *'formidable conspiracy'* which but for his *'intelligence and activity might have endangered the safety of the Fortress'*. The place continued to prosper and at the peace in 1802 the population had grown to 5,339.[30]

The following year war was resumed, but the cycle of money making which continued to be a feature of local life was to be interrupted by a terrible yellow fever epidemic. A virulent form of the disease was endemic in the south of Spain during those years, though it may have been brought afresh each year by the ships that carried tobacco and sugar from Cuba. In August 1800 there had been an outbreak in Cadiz in which over 7,000 people died. The disease spread, but did not reach Gibraltar until November and several hundred people died before the cold of January killed off the mosquito which was the carrier in spreading the disease. Two years later there was a recurrence in Andalusia, which was not too serious, but in August 1804 there was an outbreak in Malaga which was killing 25 to 30 people a day and spread to the surrounding towns. At its height it was killing several hundred people in the province every day, and it also spread to Cadiz. In September it made its appearance in Gibraltar in spite of the lieutenant-governor's endeavours to isolate the place. Medical opinion at the time held that it was spread by personal contact and dirty clothing; the role of the *aedes aegypti* mosquito as a carrier was not established until 1881 by the Cuban scientist Carlos Finlay.

The army organised apparently successful preventive measures to contain the disease and the garrison was sanguine about the outcome. When the ship *Mary* left for Malta on the 23rd September it was given a clean bill of health. The day before, the Gibraltar Chronicle had published an optimistic report, which blamed the few deaths that there had been up to that date on the *'un-*

favourable state of the Atmosphere and the continuance of the Easterly Winds, the sickness continues, but the increase is inconsiderable . . . We have every reason to hope, that the first favourable change in the weather will put an end to the sickness.' But this was to be the last issue of the paper for six months. When it appeared again on 23 March 1805 it had to report that 4,864 of the inhabitants as well as 1,082 of the military had died in the interim. The number of military dead is accurate, but the figure for the inhabitants is probably exaggerated. When Sir Thomas Trigge, the lieutenant-governor, returned to England a few months alter he organised a collection for the orphans of the *'upwards of 2,200'* inhabitants who had died. This is a very high figure, with a mortality in the three months during which the disease was at its height of 40% of the civilian population. Normal life virtually came to a halt, and with more than 100 dead to be buried every day it was well nigh impossible to keep count. Though the lower figure may be the more credible, even this was a tremendous disaster, with the population halved over a period of a few weeks; but such was the prosperity of the place that new immigrants flocked in to take the place of the dead. By 1808 the population had increased to 7,501.[31]

Cardozo had tried to resign from the post of *Representative of the Hebrew Inhabitants* at the beginning of 1804, but he had been prevailed on by the entreaties of the leaders of the community, to which the lieutenant-governor added his own urging, to continue in the post for another ten years. During the epidemic he retired to Oran with his wife, but sent essential fresh supplies from there at his own cost. Afterwards he returned to Gibraltar, and when Nelson called to revictual his ships in July, on his return from the West Indies, where he had gone in pursuit of Villeneuve, he met him for the last time. Gibraltar must have presented a very depressing sight, so soon after the yellow fever epidemic. Nelson's parting words were *'If I survive, Cardozo, you shall no longer remain in this dark corner of the world.'* But Nelson never returned to Gibraltar and died at Trafalgar a few months later. He, however, bequeathed Cardozo a gold medal, which commemorated the Battle of the Nile, as a token of his esteem. Cardozo continued to engage in obtaining supplies for the navy. After Trafalgar, the sloop *Termagant* was placed at his disposal and he went to Oran as ambassador of the lieutenant-governor in order to set the terms under which cattle for the navy and the garrison could be obtained. The following year he was involved in another diplomatic endeavour. New sumptuary laws in Morocco prohibited any Jews appearing in that country in European dress. Cardozo took the matter up through the British consul-general on behalf of the Gibraltar merchants, and managed to get the decree withdrawn. After 1808, when Spain turned against France and there were risings in Andalusia against Napoleon, Cardozo acted as an intermediary with General Ordoñez, and obtained his agreement to dismantling the fortifications at the frontier so that they should not fall into French hands. He also provided Ballesteros with money and clothes for his troops out

of his own pocket; and in 1810 he provided arms for the guerillas in the Serrania de Ronda. For this he was made a Knight of the Legion of Honour by Louis XVIII of France in 1825. His great influence in Algeria, at a time when France was already preparing to expand across the Mediterranean may have been a contributory factor for this late award.[32]

Peace and Prosperity

The war eventually drew to an end, leaving Gibraltar a very affluent place indeed, and the Jewish community in a very privileged financial position. The 1816 census shows this clearly. The civilian population had increased to 11,600 in spite of another outbreak of yellow fever the previous year in which 899 people had died, and a further outbreak in 1814 which claimed 246 victims. The Jewish community now numbered 1,068. Of the 491 Jews in paid employment, 39 were classified as house owners, 143 were merchants and dealers, and 112 shopkeepers. There were now 65 servants; and 57 new arrivals from Morocco, admirably described by George Borrow, worked as porters. The number of tradesmen had reduced to 49, of which only 6 were shoemakers, and 14 were tailors. The Jews were by now the oldest established section of the civilian population and had become decidedly middle class. Their liberality and charity was well known, and they were the largest contributors to the *yeshivot* and poor in Palestine, (particularly to the *yeshiva* of R. Meir in Tiberias).[33]

There is perhaps no better indication of the importance of the Jewish community at this time than the decision that R. Joseph Elmaleh took about 1808 to leave his large *yeshiva* in Rabat in the hands of his son-in-law, in order to become chief rabbi in Gibraltar. Elmaleh, the author of *Tokepho Shel Joseph*, was the leading Moroccan rabbi of his time in both Talmudic and cabbalistic studies and he obviously felt that his position at Gibraltar was of more importance and would give him greater influence and authority than anything he could achieve in Rabat. One of the measures he introduced in Gibraltar was the establishment of the *'imposta nacional'* a tax of one per mille on all real estate transactions and rents received, and half per mille on all other commercial transactions of the Jewish merchants in Gibraltar. The money had to be given to their respective synagogue where the *Parnas de Ha'aniyim* (warden of the poor) used it for charity. The penalty for non-compliance was being put under *herem* (excommunication). This measure remained in force until 1931, though it tended to be ignored in later years. R. Joseph Elmaleh may have made frequent visits to Rabat thereafter, but he lived in Gibraltar for the remainder of his life, and when he died in 1823, he was buried in the cemetery at Jews' Gate.[34]

The activities of the Gibraltar Jews as owners or captains of privateers, and in acting as suppliers to the British army, took them to all corners of the

Mediterranean theatre of war, during those years. When Minorca was retaken in 1799, Menahem Benady was given a passport to that place. Presumably his business was providing supplies for the army. Some years later, when Malta had become a British possession, we find him there. He ended his days in Malta and was buried in the Kalkara cemetery in 1825. Menahem Benady did not go to Malta alone, his sons followed him and so perhaps did other members of his family. The research that Derek Davis is at present conducting in Malta has turned up the names of some other families that moved from Gibraltar. Moses Abeasis, the owner of the privateer *The Two Brothers*, was there as early as 1804. Other Gibraltar names include Hadida, Bendahan and Bensilum, and that of Joseph Pariente, who was in the British garrisons of Portferraio (Elba), and Port Mahon (Minorca) in the late 1790s; he apparently commanded privateers at times. The modern Jewish community of Malta appears to have been founded by these Gibraltar merchants, though by the middle of the century they had been displaced by immigrants from nearby Tunisia and elsewhere.[35]

The other community which was pioneered by Gibraltarians was that of Lisbon, which became a British naval base in 1797. Jewish merchants from Gibraltar were required to negotiate the purchase of supplies, particularly fresh food. A. B. Serfaty, who personally knew the families of the people involved, recounts in his book *The Jews of Gibraltar Under British Rule*, how, when Moses Levy and Isaac Aboab arrived in the Tagus on board St. Vincent's flagship, they refused to pass themselves off as Christians in order to land, for the Inquisition was still active. '*They refused to land under false colours until a safe conduct from Dom João, the Prince Regent of Portugal, was extended to them and to their six servants.*' They were given royal sanction to reside in Lisbon. A corner of the English cemetery at A Estrela was set aside for Jewish burials in 1801 and this was the beginning of the constitution of a community, although the Inquisition was not formally dissolved until 1821, and the decree of religious toleration was not promulgated until 1826. The *Shahar Hashamayim* synagogue was founded in 1813 in the Travessa do Ferregial. It is instructive to see that it was given the same name as the principal synagogue of Gibraltar, just as in 1724, Isaac Netto had given his new synagogue in Gibraltar the same name as his father's synagogue in London. Amongst the Gibraltar families that joined the community were Levy, Cardozo (Aaron's nephew), and in later years, Anahory, Pariente, and Sequerra.[36]

Amongst the other communities in which the influence of Gibraltar Jews can be identified is that of Corfu, in the Ionian Islands. Here, there was a large and old established Jewish community, unlike Malta and Lisbon, where the Gibraltar Jews founded new congregations. Certainly, they came to provide services to the British forces, after the islands became a British protectorate in 1815. The relations with Gibraltar were so close that in 1832, the learned Judah Bibas, who was born in Gibraltar, was made chief rabbi.

Bibas and the other Gibraltarians who were there at the time, formed the extreme orthodox section of the Corfu community and they appear to have conducted a most acrimonious struggle against a section of the Corfu community which had formed a secret society devoted to the object of religious reform. Bibas and his supporters became known as the *Marrochini*, which is evidence of what was considered the origin of their ideas. Their opponents, with whom they at times had physical confrontations in the street, were known as *Sabbatini*, perhaps because they were considered to behave as Jews only on the Sabbath. Bibas became a convert to the ideas of modern political Zionism, of which he was one of the first exponents, and he moved to Hebron in 1825, where he ended his days.[37]

In 1814 Aaron Cardozo, resigned from the position of *Representative of the Hebrew Inhabitants*, and devoted himself to building a sumptuous new house in the town's main square, which cost him *'upwards of thirty thousand pounds, besides the value of the ground.'* After it was finished he gave some of the most lavish entertainments that Gibraltar had ever known. But he still found time for some public duties. In 1815 he became one of the 11 commissioners charged with the duty of arranging the scavenging and paving of the town. He was also one of the commissioners in charge of the lottery for raising money for the Alameda Gardens. But what was much more important, in 1817 he became involved in the public protest against the 1817 Order in Council, which altered unfavourably the terms of most long term leases of the Crown.[38]

The roots of this problem go back to the instructions given to Bland in 1749 to try and limit the number of Jewish and Catholic landowners in Gibraltar, which a combination of pragmatism and fairmindedness had caused Bland and his succesors to ignore. This situation continued until the Duke of Kent arrived in 1803. He was not a biased man, but he was direct and blunt. As far as he was concerned, orders were there to be obeyed, and the governors of Gibraltar had been instructed to get the properties in Gibraltar out of the hands of Jews and Papists. When, therefore, he was faced with having to confirm the ownership of a property by Jacob Benhamu, he referred the matter back to the Secretary of State. When the Royal Duke left Gibraltar, his lieutenant-governor, Sir Thomas Trigge, entered into the dispute with great gusto. The Roman Catholics were attached to Gibraltar in a considerable degree, but, *'I will now take the liberty to say, that the Jews from having been long established here and having no other country are more interested in our keeping possession of this place, and have more to fear from our losing it than any other persons, they are the most wealthy people and consequently the most ready and able to make purchases. I think them very useful and good subjects.'* Trigge went on to say that although people from England should be allowed to hold properties as soon as they arrived and foreigners should have a qualifying period of residence, those Jews and

Catholics who had been resident for a period should not be discriminated against. In February 1804 he received authorisation to confirm the sale of properties to Jew and Catholics who had been resident for a period of at least five years.[39]

The next commander in chief to battle for the civil rights of the non-Protestant Gibraltarians was Sir Hew Dalrymple. He found that under Bland's regulations only Protestant merchants were allowed to import tobacco or spirits into Gibraltar. He objected to the Secretary of State about this invidious distinction, and was informed that his objections had been considered and *'that those regulations may in future be done away, and the benefit of His Majesty's Government equally extended to all individuals living under his protection.'*[40]

The last shot over the status of non-Protestants had not yet been fired. The measures of support that had been elicited from successive Secretaries of State were only temporary measures. The whole question of landed property was being looked at by the government's law officers in London. Eventually this led to an Order in Council which was signed by the Prince Regent in 1817. When the ordinance reached Gibraltar it caused an immediate outcry. To begin with, non-Protestants were only to be allowed to own property after being resident in Gibraltar for at least 15 years, instead of the five that had been stipulated in 1804. In addition, there was to be a survey of all property, and where there had been breaches in the past of the original conditions, the grants involved would have to be reconfirmed, but this would only be for a period of a further 21 years and the ground rents would be increased to 2% of the gross annual value. This was a tremendous blow to many property owners, who suddenly had their long term leases turned into medium-term ones, and at the same time their rents were to be quadrupled; for property in 1817 was much more valuable than it had been in 1749, as the inflation in the intervening 65 years had been considerable. This was a blow, not only to Roman Catholics and Jews, but also to most Protestant landowners, for it affected them in two ways. First of all, it would reduce the value of all property in private hands, and further, any who had bought property which at some stage had gone through Roman Catholic or Jewish hands, would be affected in the same way as a non-Protestant. The Order in Council was motivated by the desire to raise rents rather than any spirit of discrimination.

There was a sharp and vociferous reaction in Gibraltar; public meetings were organised, and a committee of nine of the leading inhabitants, including Cardozo, was formed. A petition was drawn up for the Prince Regent, but the lieutenant-governor refused to pass it on as he said it was an insult to the Privy Council, who had taken the best advice on the subject. A new petition was drafted and taken to London by a representative committee of which Cardozo acted as chairman. There they engaged two prominent barristers who were radical M.Ps. to present their case to the Privy Council. Learned Counsel in

making the presentation to that august body, pointed out that they had already given a decision that Jews in Gibraltar were entitled to hold property there, regardless of Bland's instructions.

This was the case of Judah and Eliahu Benatar, business partners, who had died insolvent. One of their creditors then tried to recoup himself by taking possession of a property that they owned, although in those days real property was not subject to bankruptcy proceedings. He pleaded that as Jews were not allowed to hold real property, the building concerned would have to be considered personal property. The Gibraltar court accepted this view, but the Lord Chancellor had reversed this decision in 1812, when an appeal was made to the Privy Council. The case was well put, and in June 1818, Lord Bathurst wrote to Cardozo saying that the general enquiry into the validity of title deeds was not going to be proceeded with. There was to be no inquest on breaches of the terms of grants, nor were any penalties to be incurred.[41]

The Nineteenth Century

After his success in obtaining the modification of the Order in Council in 1817, Aaron Cardozo began to feel the pinch. His income was no longer what it had been in the prosperous days of war, and his lavish spending had to come to an end. The cost of building his magnificent mansion and the expense of entertaining proved too much. After his wife died in 1820 he spent very little time in Gibraltar. The remainder of his days were spent with his nephew in Portugal or his sisters in London, where he died in January 1832. The glory as well as the wealth had departed from the community.[42]

Judah Benoliel lived till 1839, and when he died he left a fortune estimated at $3,000,000, which is probably the equivalent of £15,000,000 in today's money. He was the confidant of successive governors and was recognised as the leader of the community although he does not appear to have held any formal position. There were times when he demonstrated his great influence. In 1825 some Sardinian ships were attacked by Moroccan *corsairs*, and a Sardinian fleet was sent to exact retribution or redress from the offending country. Benoliel, in his position as a senior Moroccan consul, intervened and the matter was settled without bloodshed. Benoliel received a '*gold box with brilliants bearing the Royal Cypher*' from the king of Sardinia. The emperor of Morocco was to show his gratitude in another way. In 1830 there was a dispute between two Jews in a synagogue in Tangier, which ended in blows. The miscreants were hauled before the governor, who wrote to the emperor expressing his opinion that the house of worship had been turned into a place of strife and dishonour and that therefore all the synagogues in the town should be torn down. The emperor agreed and sent the requisite order. But when he visited Tangier, Benoliel went over from Gibraltar to pay his respects and persuaded him to rescind his decree as a special favour to

him. A special prayer is still said in all the synagogues of Tangier, on the eve of the Day of Atonement, in commemoration of this event.[43]

Social conditions in Gibraltar changed a lot in the early years of the 19th century. The population had grown considerably since the previous century, and improved communications were to bring out many more families of servicemen. The different sections of the population began to polarise. Money and manners were no longer the only dividing factors in local society, which split into its component parts. There was even a split between the Protestant merchants and the military. As they were not allowed to join the new garrison library they founded their own merchants' library, in which the other civilians joined. In this atmosphere the Jewish community became isolated socially. There were hardly any social contacts, except for a very few at the higher social level. The yellow fever had wiped out a number of local Jewish families which had been long established, others had left for London, Lisbon or Malta, so there were important changes within the community which led to less personal contacts with non-Jews. The Jews voluntarily turned away from the rest of the population and towards their co-religionists in Morocco for social contacts and were strongly influenced by them. George Borrow refers to the chief rabbi of Gibraltar circa 1840 with the words *'their priest is from Fez, Rabbi Baruch by name. He is rather a respectable man, but shy and timid with a great dislike of goyim.'*[44] Many of his congregants adopted a similar attitude towards non-Jews. A contributory factor to this introversion may have been increased concern with religion, brought about by the strong religious leadership provided by Rabbi Joseph Elmaleh and his successor Rabbi Israel Benyeshaya, who died in 1837. These rabbis (Joseph Elmaleh at least) introduced a strong leaning towards cabbalism which left an influence on the religious thinking of the Jews of Gibraltar which has only disappeared with the present generation.

When the Archduke Maximilian of Austria (later emperor of Mexico) visited Gibraltar in 1859, he attended a Jewish wedding which was conducted in the traditional Barbary style, at which the governor and most of the officials were present.

The master of ceremonies was the Chief Rabbi of Tangier who had *'a pale handsome countenance and fiery red beard, and a turban with a violet-coloured veil on his head — a genuine old testament apparition'*. The bride who was only fourteen, lay on a divan *'like a motionless wax image on which the glowing colours of art have breathed a fresh living transparency'*. A long ritual took place which included prayer-chanting, drinking wine and dancing to cymbals.[45]

Youthfulness was not normally a feature of brides, and especially of grooms, amongst the Jew of Gibraltar, at the time, for only the very rich could afford to get married when young.

Accommodation was scarce and expensive, and men tended to marry at

an advanced age when they could afford to set up their own homes. There was a tendency amongst the Roman Catholics in Gibraltar to overcome the problem of shortage of living accommodation by settling in extended family groups. The Jews, however, did not generally adopt this habit as the setting up of their own separate homes was considered an important religious obligation. As a result many girls were left on the shelf, and some of the men found that by the time they could afford to get married they were too set in their ways to consider taking the plunge. This led, on the one hand, to an abnormal number of elderly bachelors and spinsters in the community, and on the other to a number of the girls marrying Christians. The main outside cultural influence for the Jews as for most other Gibraltarians at the time was Spanish rather than English. When a Jewish paper was published for short while in 1843, the *Cronica Israelita* was printed in Spanish.[46]

Another social change at the time was most distasteful. After the frontier had opened completely for traffic in 1810, a considerable number of Spaniards started settling in the garrison. Their numbers increased very quickly and by 1816 they constituted 25% of the population. These Spanish settlers were fully absorbed into Gibraltar society over the years, but they brought with them their anti-semitic prejudices. Serfaty records that on Easter Saturdays an effigy representing a Jew used to be taken in procession round the poorer districts of the upper town and burnt in Castle Steps. There were times when it was thrown alight into the patio of the Great Synagogue, and women who had to make use of the Castle Street entrance to that synagogue were frequently accosted and insulted. In 1845, Moses S. Seruya, the president of the synagogue, sent a memorial to the governor who promised to deal with the situation, but the problem persisted for many years. It was not till 1917, when a little girl was almost burnt to death by one of these effigies which had been thrown alight over the synagogue's wall, that the offender was brought before the police magistrate and punished. After that, the police made certain that there were no recurrences.[47]

In 1820 there was a rift in the Great Synagogue of *Shaar Hashamayim*, and a number of the congregants left to start a new synagogue in what had been R. Solomon Abudarham's *yeshivah* (talmudic seminary) in Parliament Lane. It is interesting to note that Judah Benoliel appears among the secesionists. This synagogue subsequently became a focus for new immigrants from Tangier and Tetuan.[48] In later years another synagogue was opened in the south district by Joseph Bensusan but it was closed in 1876. The scrolls of the law were taken to La Linea, across the border, where a synagogue was opened for the Jews who lived there. Twenty years later another synagogue was opened in Villa Plata, the private residence of Joseph Benatar. In 1906 it was closed and the scrolls were taken to the Hebrew School, where services are conducted on Saturday mornings by the pupils.[49]

After R. Israel Benyeshaya died in 1837 the post of chief rabbi was not

filled again for 40 years. Although there were a number of rabbis in Gibraltar none of them occupied a recognised position of leadership. Neither R. Samuel Bibas (the brother of Judah of Corfu) nor R. Israel Ben Baruch Levy Yuly (Borrow's timid priest) appear to have been recognised as such. At this time the court of the chief rabbi of Gibraltar finally ceased to act as a commercial court between Jews, though the last real estate transaction that it handled was as late as 1836. In 1872 Joseph Elmaleh of Mogador visited Gibraltar and urged the Managing Board of the Community to appoint a spiritual leader, but nothing was done until circumstances forced the hands of the communal leaders. In 1877 the governor asked for the tombstones and remains of the old emergency cemetery in North Front, which had been used during the yellow fever epidemics of 1804, 1813, and 1828, to be removed, as the place was being turned into a parade ground. The matter was passed for consideration to the four rabbis then in Gibraltar. Three of them Rs. Aflalo, Barchilon and Benchimol, came back with the reply that they could not constitute a legal court, as one of their number had not been officially named *dayan*, so that he could preside over the religious court. As a result R. Samuel Lasry was appointed chief rabbi in March 1878, though he appears to have been accepted unofficially as such for some years before. R. Samuel Lasry was 78 at the time. He had come to Gibraltar from Morocco in 1835 and had retired as head of *shehita* (ritual slaughter) in 1874. After nine years as chief rabbi he resigned his post in 1887. A short while later R. Raphael Hayim Moses Benaim, who was a member of the rabbinic tribunal of Tiberias and *shaliah* (emissary) for the *yeshiva* of R. Meir, visited Gibraltar and was offered the position of chief rabbi. While he was considering it he received a telegram from Tiberias offering him the prestigious position of chief rabbi of that place. Characteristically, he decided to stay in Gibraltar for, he reasoned, that there were many rabbis in Tiberias and he was not really needed there, but he was needed in Gibraltar. He was the author of a book of responsa *Rahamim Peshutim* and was much loved and respected until his death in 1920. After him R. Solomon Elmaleh acted as chief rabbi until his death in 1926. Since then there have been no appointments to the post, although Rs. Isaac Chocron, Joseph Emanuel Pacifici and Simeon Haliwa, have successively occupied the position of religious advisers to the managing board of the community.[50]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, each synagogue managed its affairs and those of its congegants independently, but the *parnasim* (wardens) of the synagogues formed *ad hoc* committees to handle matters of mutual concern and representations to the government. After the death of Judah Benoliel, his son Solomon acted as representative for a while, but this soon gave way to a procedure under which the *parnasim* of the various synagogues met in committee to choose representatives. The matter which required most attention was the question of charity, and each synagogue had a *Parnas de*

Ha'aniyim (warden of the poor) to handle the substantial sums raised by the *imposta nacional*. This official was only second in importance to the *Parnas Presidente*. There was a standing committee of the *Parnas de Ha'aniyim* of each of the synagogues, and their minute book was also used for the occasional meetings of the *Parnasim Presidente*.

Several attempts were made to institute a more formal structure to control the community's affairs, but the oligarchic system persisted. In 1841 a general meeting was called of selected *yehidim* (subscribers) of the four synagogues. The following year the meeting was limited to four representatives from each of the synagogues — the *Parnas Presidente*, his *Parnas de Ha'aniyim*, and two *yehidim*. In 1852 the meeting was enlarged to 10 from each synagogue, but in 1854 the number was reduced to five. It was not until Yomtob Bergel, an important local businessman, finally determined to put the community's affairs in order that the Managing Board of the Hebrew Community was instituted at a general meeting attended by 80 subscribers in 1864, and Bergel became the first president of the *Junta Gubernativa de la Comunidad Hebrea de Gibraltar*. The name was anglicised in later years and in 1966 it was changed to the *Managing Board of the Jewish Community*.[51]

When General Don reorganised the civilian hospital in what had hitherto been the Blue Barracks, the arrangement was that each of the three religious denominations in Gibraltar should look after the wards of their own co-religionists The hospital was opened in 1816 and the first Jewish deputy governor was J. Abudarham. Judah Benoliel took great interest in this venture and was a member of the committee that organised it The hospital was rebuilt in the 1880s and its management was taken over by the colonial government in 1889.[52]

The nineteenth century was a period of economic hardship for Gibraltar which badly affected the poorer inhabitants. Commerce declined and the *entrepot* trade with Morocco virtually disappeared. The opening up of that country and the introduction of steamships meant that trade was now conducted direct, and Gibraltar was by-passed. The result was that the main occupation of the working class in Gibraltar was as coal heavers. Since they had to compete with cheaper ports like Algiers, wages were very depressed and were kept low by the competition to the work force provided by labourers from Andalusia, where both the standard and cost of living was much lower. All other wages followed suit, with the result that there was great poverty and hardship on the Rock. In 1866 a man died, apparently for lack of care and food; this was felt as a terrible disgrace by the community and a public meeting was called by Simon Bendahan to form a society for the relief of the Jewish sick and poor. *Hozer Dalim* was formed on the basis that all Gibraltar Jews should subscribe 15 centimos (a penny ha'penny) a week, and Israel Gabbay, an accountant and language teacher, was elected as the first secretary. Through his guidance and hard work in collecting subscriptions in

Gibraltar and from overseas, the society was a tremendous success. Substantial support was received from the Argentine where there was a sizeable community of expatriate Gibraltarians. Today's welfare state makes its work not as essential as it once was. The burial society, *Hebrat Gemilut Hasadim*, which runs the cemetery is an independent body normally controlled by its own members who appoint their own *shej (sheikh)*. The society imposes a tax calculated on the value of tombstones in order to maintain a fund to provide proper burial for the needy.[53]

There were times however, when the community's ability to provide the necessary charity in an emergency was not equal to the demands placed on it. In 1859 Spain went to war with Morocco, and 3,800 Jews from the north fled to Gibraltar. They were accommodated in tents provided by the army, which were set up in an encampment in North Front. There was a public subscription in which all the inhabitants participated, and a total of $40,600 dollars was collected for the benefit of the refugees. Peace was soon signed and the refugees returned home after a few months.[54]

Into the Twentieth Century

As the century progressed the isolationist attitude of the community underwent changes. A number of Jewish children were sent to school in England and some entered the professions. The real break-through came when the *Talmud Torah*, which was the institution that was concerned with the religious education of boys and which had premises in the synagogue in Engineer Lane, was extended to include a secular institution — the Hebrew School — in 1876. The curriculum was extended to include the three 'R's and Spanish. The school was maintained by funds provided by members of the community, though there was a small government grant; it came under the supervision of the colonial inspector of schools. Between 1878 and 1893 it transferred to premises, at first in Cornwall's Lane, and subsequently in College Lane, but as this building became unfit it had to move back to the synagogue premises in Engineer Lane. In 1895 the government provided a piece of ground in Bomb House Lane, and an adequate edifice was constructed which the school still occupies in part. The premises are now shared with the office of the Managing Board of the Jewish Community and the Jewish Social Club. The cost of this building was £2,600, of which the government provided £450 and the Anglo-Jewish Association £200. The rest of the money came from voluntary donations. Until 1940 the school had an average of 150 pupils, of which a number were not Jewish. The number of pupils is now about 80.[55]

The process of cultural integration was considerably advanced when all civilians who were non-combatants were evacuated from Gibraltar. The majority were taken to central London, where the Jews were accommodated

in North End House and attended the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue, just as their forbears had done 160 years before during the *Great Siege*. A small number went to Jamaica where they attended the Kingston synagogue. But the two hundred who went to Funchal in the island of Madeira found that there was no Jewish place of worship there. Mr. David Benaim started one in his home which he called *Shaare Rahamim* in honour of his father R. Raphael Hayim Moses Benaim. The scrolls of the law for this synagogue were brought from a synagogue in Faro that had closed down. There was, however, a Jewish cemetery belonging to the Abudarham family which was used for interments.

Possibly the best way to trace the gradual resumption by Jews of their position in the mainstream of Gibraltar society is to follow their participation in politics and in public posts. When the first sanitary commissioners were appointed in 1865, Solomon Levy was one of their number. Subsequently, Moses Serfaty became chairman for a time. Jews were not in those days included in the lists of jurors because they were concerned that it might entail attending court on Saturdays.[56] Serfaty took the matter up, wrote letters to the local press and stirred up the leaders of the community to take up the cause. Abraham E. Levy was the first to be appointed a grand juror, in 1878.

Representative government did not arrive in Gibraltar until 1921, when the City Council replaced the Sanitary Commissioners. Mesod M. Benady (my grandfather) was the first Jew to stand for election. However the Catholic Church did not look kindly on a Jew becoming a political leader in what was basically a Catholic society, and Bishop Thompson canvassed strongly against him. The bishop's influence appears to have been limited to the middle class and, with the help of a strong working class vote, M.M. Benady only lost in the North Ward, by four votes. When his son Samuel Benady, a barrister, stood at a by-election in 1940 there was no opposition from the Church, and he became the first Jew to be elected. Since then there has been no discrimination against Jews in public life.

In the first election after the war, in 1945, the Association for the Advancement of Civil Rights swept the poll. Another barrister, Joshua Hassan, the deputy leader of the party, became chairman. He has had a long and distinguished career in public life. In 1955 he became the first mayor of Gibraltar. He was elected to the Legislative Council when it was inaugurated in 1950 and has been a member of Gibraltar's legislative body ever since. He was appointed chief member in 1959, and became Gibraltar's first chief minister in 1964. He has held this appointment for 18 years and continually during the last thirteen years. He was knighted in 1963, the first Gibraltar Jew to have achieved this distinction. Sir Joshua has achieved the remarkable feat of retaining the top position amongst the elected leaders of Gibraltar for 40 years. David M. Benaim was the first Jew to be appointed a member of the governor's executive council in 1946. Solomon Seruya was minister of tourism from 1957, and of economic development from 1965 to 1969. Abraham W.

Serfaty was a minister for a number of years and has been mayor since 1979. Isaac Abecasis was a minister from 1976 to 1984.[57]

In 1890, Beriro's Home — a *'Hebrew Asylum for the aged and needy'* was opened and maintained by the community. After the war it acquired new premises through the generosity of the John Mackintosh Trust which, under the terms of this rich man's will, built old people's homes for each of the three main denominations. The magnificent premises near Southport Gate today shelter half a dozen old people.

In July 1947 the refugee ship *Exodus* which was carrying 4,500 illegal immigrants to Palestine was stopped at sea by the Royal Navy. The immigrants were transferred to three cargo ships and returned to the south of France from whence they had sailed. They refused to land and after waiting off the French coast for three weeks the ships were sent to Hamburg. On their way through the Strait they stopped at Gibraltar. The ships tied up at the detached mole and no civilians were allowed near. The area was constantly patrolled by naval launches which dropped anti-personnel depth charges in order to prevent any attempts at sabotage. *Hozer Dalim* was mobilised to try and obtain some comforts for the immigrants, who were being transported in somewhat squalid conditions and in the space of just over 24 hours managed to collect a large number of parcels for the numerous children aboard, 25,000 cigarettes and a large number of waterproofs.[58] Subsequently Gibraltar became a transit point for Moroccan immigrants to Israel.

The many years of problems with Spain, resulting in the closing of the frontier, has meant that many Gibraltarians have left to live elsewhere. Some have moved to Spain, but a much greater number have gone to England, where in fact some stayed on after they were evacuated there during the war. Some have, of course, also gone to Israel. The numbers of the community are down to 600, from a peak of 1,800 at the end of the nineteenth century, and they form a bare 2% of the total civilian population. They are no longer a large proportion of the population of Gibraltar nor a vital formative force in the development of the local culture, as they were in the eighteenth century, when the Jewish merchants formed the nucleus round which the new Gibraltarian culture developed. Nor do they possess the financial resources they owned at the beginning of the nineteenth century. But they are well integrated into local life and, as is natural for the longest established section of local society, they are mostly middle class.[59] They have however maintained one idiosyncrasy, in a society where half the labour force is employed by either the local or the British governments, very few Jews are in government service, except as elected politicians

The Gibraltar Jews in Literature

The great Spanish novelist, Vicente Blasco Ybañez was a frequent visitor

to Gibraltar in the opening years of the twentieth century because his two sons were boarders at the Christian Brothers' College. He became friendly with a local Jewish girl, Simy Benatar, who was a 'blue stocking', as it was termed in those days, and in 1909 he published a novel, *Luna Benamor*. This book is set in Gibraltar and the main character is based on Simy Benatar, *'the brunette with the dark blue black hair and the trim athletic figure which moved entrancingly.'* James Joyce read *Luna Benamor* and when he wrote *Ulysses* he was obviously influenced by it, in sketching the character of Molly Bloom, who supposedly, was the daughter of an Irish officer and Lunita Laredo, a Jewish girl from Gibraltar.

Pio Baroja dedicated a couple of pages to Judah Benoliel in his biography of the revolutionary Aviraneta; and Hector Licudi, a Gibraltarian novelist who wrote in Spanish, gives a very sympathetic description of his friend A.B.M. Serfaty (the author of *The Jews of Gibraltar under British Rule*) in his novel *Barbarita*, published in 1928. Serfaty appears under the guise of Sagasti *'the theatre critic, literary man and lawyer'* and ex-journalist *'an erudite man, with a fine critical sense which went well with his impulsive aggressiveness which unwittingly betrayed him at times.'*

In our own days, John Masters has used a purely fictitious Conquy family (he must have liked the name) as the heroes of his epic *The Rock*; and Samuel Marrache appears among the dramatis personae of the fanciful novel *The Day Gibraltar Fell* by Barry Wynne, under the guise of the Sephardi Jew Silvercloud. More recently Gonzalo Arias has published a novel in Spanish on the same theme under the title of *Gibraltarofagia*, which describes several well known local characters, including Sir Joshua Hassan thinly disguised as Josué Benhazam the retired chief minister *'whose prestige was high in Gibraltar, and whose opinions were alway highly regarded, even by his political adversaries.'*

Notes

1 L. TORRE BALBAS, 'Gibraltar, Llave y Guarda de Espana,' *Al Andalus* vol. VII 1942, Fasc.1.; D. LAMELAS, *La Compra de Gibraltar por los Conversos Andaluces* (1474-1476), Madrid 1976; M. BENADY, 'The Settlement of Jews in Gibraltar 1704-1983,' TJHSE vol. 26, pp. 87-110. I covered the period 1704 to 1783 very fully in that article and I have condensed it for the present purpose. I shall therefore not give any references for that period except for additional material.

2 The supply of food from Morocco started in the early days of the occupation. Three days after the capitulation, Prince George of Hesse wrote to the Archduke Charles 'I shall seek to preserve the good relations with the Moor so that the people here . . . do not die from hunger.' On 24 January 1705 his brother Prince Henry wrote to his mother 'The best thing here is that we are not lacking good food and drink, which, except the wine, we get all from Barbery from the Moors.' (Sir J. A. HASSAN, *The Treaty of Utrecht 1713, and the Jews of Gibraltar, JHSE* 1970, p2a). The involvement of Moroccan Jews in Gibraltar must therefore date from that time.

3 I have used the spelling now current in Gibraltar for all Moroccan Jewish surnames, although through the centuries different transliterations have been employed. One of the quirks of the 18th century governors' clerks in Gibraltar was that every final 'i' was rendered as 'y'. This worked very well with Jewish names but the fine old Genoese name of Parodi was turned into Parody.

4 J. TOLEDANO, *La Saga des Familles*, Tel Aviv 1983, pp 61-62.

5 Deposition of Lieutenant Perez de Padilla, *British Library* (hereinafter *BL*) Add.Ms.38329, fo.169.

6 Report of Colonel Bennett, *BL* Add.Ms.10034.

7 *PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE* (hereinafter *PRO*) Co.91:1 Petition of Manuel Diaz Arias.

8 D. DAVIS, 'The Inquisition of Malta and the Jews,' *Lecture to Jewish Historical Society of England*, February 1985; BENADY, *op cit*, p.89a

9 According to Father Charles Caruana the bishop wanted to reinstate the inquisition in Gibraltar, but the governor refused to allow it. (Lecture to Gibraltar Garrison Library 1976).

10 J. WINDUS, *A Journey to Mequinez . . . on the Occasion of Commodore Stewart's Embassy Thither*, Dublin 1725, p.3.

11 *Ibid.* p.6.

12 TOLEDANO, *op. cit* p.62.

13 *BL* Add.Ms. 3617, fos. 139-155.

14 *Minutes of court of enquiry set up by General Bland to look into the ownership of landed property*. 1749.

15 See references to these two bodies in *Libro de Minutas de Juntas de Ha'aniyim 5601 (1841)*, Managing Board of the Jewish Community of Gibraltar.

A visitor to Tetuan in the middle of the nineteenth century gave the following description of the synagogues there: 'Tetuan has sixteen Synagogues. They are located in private houses, and do not extend beyond an area of ten to twelve square yards. It appears that the Jews of Tetuan never erect special Synagogue buildings. They invariably rent private places of prayer. Attempts to unite the Congregations by the erection of a few appropriate houses of worship, have been strenuously resisted . ..' (H. ILIOWIZI, 'Sketches of Jewish Life in Tetuan'. *Annual Report of Anglo-Jewish Association 1877/1878* (hereinafter *AJA*) p119. Netto's synagogue was therefore an unusual institution for this part of the world and set the pattern for the development of the Gibraltar community. There was for a time, a tendency amongst new immigrants to Gibraltar to set up for themselves the less formal and more homely houses of worship that they were used to in Morocco.

16 HASSAN *op. cit.* p.8b.

17 *Bland's court of enquiry op. cit.* fo. 41

18 *BL* Add.Ms. 23637, Tyrawley's Gibraltar papers, entry for 30 Oct. 1756: *GIBRALTAR DIRECTORY 1939*, p.259.

19 For the full text of Bland's regulations for the Jews see BENADY, *op. cit.* p.99b.

20 E. SALMON, *Life of Admiral Sir Charles Saunders*, 1914, p.190.

21 When the Spaniards took possession of Minorca in 1781, the whole Jewish community (and some Greeks and Moors), some 500 in all, were deported to Marseilles. The French authorities were reluctant to accept them, and a number ended up in the Papal city of Avignon. Some went to Hamburg, and a number to Leghorn. After the war some families from Minorca settled in Gibraltar. (C. ROTH, 'Jews in Minorca under British Rule,' *Jewish Studies in honour of Dr Gaster, ed. J. L. Landau p.496.); 1791 CENSUS*; BENADY, *op. cit.* p.107a.

22 *1791 CENSUS. PRO* CO.91:30 fos.325, 467, and printed petition of inhabitants. CO.91:31 Eliott's letters 10 Jan. and 15 Nov. 1784. CO.91:32 Letter no. 30 Eliott to Lord Sydney, 7 Aug 1785. CO.91:34 Petition 5 Apr. 1787. Letter from Steele to Nepean 18 Dec. 1786. C. OMAN, *Sir John Moore*, 1953, p.79.

23 *PRO* CO.91:34 Eliott 5 Feb. 1787.

24 *1791 CENSUS.*

25 *1777 CENSUS*; A. CARDOZO, *Letters, Testimonials, &c &c from His Royal Highness the*

Duke of Kent and numerous highly distinguished military and naval officers, corroborative of the services of A. Cardozo Esq., printed by Henry Baylis, London, 1830. *PRO* CO.91:33, report of death of Isaac Cardozo; *AJA* p.113; J.T. and D. M. Ellicott, *An Ornament to the Almeida*, Gibraltar 1949, pp.15 to 36.

26 *Jewish Museum*, London, Letter of Marque issued to Solomon Aloof in Gibraltar, in 1793, for his boat to operate against the Ligurian coast.

27 Considering the way this synagogue was organised, one would have expected it to be called *Talmud Torah*, like the synagogue in Amsterdam. That it was not, shows that the school for religious instruction of boys, *Talmud Torah*, must already have been in existence at this date. Toledano *(op. cit.* p.227) states that the synagogue was so named after Rabbi Judah Levy who died when passing through Gibraltar on his way to settle in Palestine, but he was chief rabbi in Gibraltar as early as 1788, (R. D. Barnett, 'The Correspondence of the Mahamad', *TJHSE* vol.XX p. 5) and he could not have been just passing through. Rabbi Judah's name does not appear in the list of *Hashcabot* (memorial prayers) compiled by the Rev. Ephraim Conquy, who was minister of that synagogue circa 1850. My feeling is that R. Judah Levy was chief rabbi for a period after the siege and after his death was succeeded in the post by Rabbi Solomon Abudarham who died during the yellow fever epidemic of 1804. The problem lies in that all the community's files prior to 1840 have disappeared and the history has to be built up by piecing together whatever information one can collect, and at times, this appears to be contradictory. A photograph of the interior of this synagogue as it looked before it was reconstructed appears in *The Jewish Encyclopaedia* article on Gibraltar, and A. Pulido Fernandez *Españoles Sin Patria*, Madrid 1905, p.349.

28 *Gibraltar Directory* 1939, p.278; A. B. M. Serfaty, *The Jews of Gibraltar Under British Rule* p.20; *AJA* p.115.

29 *1777 CENSUS*; *AJA* p.113; *PRO* CO.91:28 Court martial of Antonio Juanico.
The list of privateer owners in 1803 and 1804 given in CO.91:45, includes the following Jewish names:
Isaac Abensur *bow KING SOLOMON* 17 tons 2 guns 30 men
Moses Beasis *xebec TWO BROTHERS* 40 tons 10 guns 45 men
Judah Benoliel *ship CAROLINE* 400 tons 18 guns 90 men
Judah Benoliel *polacre MINERVA* 230 tons 14 guns 30 men
Salvador Cansino *bow GENERAL O'HARA* 30 tons 1 gun 40 men
Simon Cohen *xebec MEDUSA* 100 tons 9 guns 40 men
Simon Cohen *mistico FERRET* 50 tons 10 guns 50 men
Jacob Israel *xebec DOLPHIN* 15 tons 2 guns 20 men
Joseph Israel *lugger DRAGON* 60 tons 10 guns 40 men
Joseph Israel *mistico TWO FRIENDS* 15 tons 2 guns 20 men
Jeshua Levy *xebec PALM OF GIBRALTAR* 10 tons 2 guns 35 men
Moses Levey *bow SERENA* 40 tons 4 guns 25 men
The *Two Brothers* was lost near Bona in 1806, after being arrested in Algiers in 1805 by Mr. Consul Cartwright and subsequently vandalised. Moses was subsequently compensated for loss of prizes in Malta; he appears to have settled permanently there after 1839 (Davis *op. cit.*).

30 Cardozo, *op. cit.* p.5; Ellicott, *op. cit.* p.16.

31 A. De Castro, *Historia de Cadiz*, p.540; *PRO* CO.91:58 Report by medical practitioners at Gibraltar, Dec 1813; *Gibraltar Chronicle* Sept. 1804 and 23 March and 25 May 1805; D. Sultana, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge in Malta and Italy* pp. 215, 256, 262; Jacob Benhamu, a local landowner, distributed daily rations of food to the poor at this time, and also clothed the needy. His actions became proverbial. (*AJA* p.114)

32 Cardozo, *op. cit* pp.8 to 27; N. A. Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands*, 1979, p.367.

33 H. W. Howes, *The Gibraltarian*, Ceylon 1951, pp.116 to 122; George Borrow , *The Bible In Spain*, 'the Jews of Gibraltar have the reputation of being more liberal than any others, and from four to five thousand dollars are received annually from them'; J. L. Burckhardt, 'Travels in Syria and the Holy Land' (in Stillman *op. cit.* p.337). Burckhardt was writing

specifically about Tiberias.

After the heavy mortality of the yellow fever epidemics only 38% of the civilian population of Gibraltar had British nationality in 1816, but among the Jews the proportion was 75%.

34 *Encyclopaedia Judaica* vol. 6 p.680; Toledano , *op. cit.* p.189; *AJA* p.112 gives 1%, this is probably a misprint. The name of the Aburdarham synagogue is also given as Abudasha in p.115; *Libro de Minutas de Ha'aniyim*, 5601; *Reglamentos de la Comunidad Hebrea*, 5676; conversation with M. M. Benady who was president of the community in 1931.

35 D. Davis, 'The Jewish Cemetery at Kalkara, Malta'. *TJHSE* XXVIII; Benady family papers in the possession of Mrs. J. Bentata.

36 Clowes' *History of the Royal Navy*, vol. 4, p.152; *AJA* p.114; Serfaty, *op. cit.* p.32; A. Pulido Fernandez, *op. cit.* p.386.

Both *AJA* and Serfaty refer to a Portuguese admiral. *AJA* however, names Count St. Vincent. Earl St. Vincent was of course in command of the British Mediterranean fleet from 1795 to 1799.

When the new synagogue was built in Lisbon it was given the name of Shaar Hashamayim, and the original synagogue was renamed Es Hayim

37 *J.E.* vol 4 p.272; *E.J.* vol 4 p.813; Benady family papers.

38 Ellicott, *op. cit.* p.24 *et seq*.

39 *PRO* CO.91:43 Kent to Pelham 16 Jan. 1803, Trigge to Pelham 21 June 1803.

40 *PRO* CO.19:47 Dalrymple to Castlereagh 18 July 1807; *Gibraltar Directory* 1917, p.117.

41 Printed Papers Relating to Landed Grants, CO.91:85.

42 Ellicott, *op. cit.* p.35; Esther Cardozo de Lara was buried in the Jews' Gate Cemetery. Her tomb is still identifiable.

43 *AJA* p.113; Serfaty, p.19.; J. Davidson, *Notes taken during Travels in Africa 1835 — 1836*, 1839.

44 B. Lask-Abrahams, *James Finn, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul in Jerusalem Between 1846 and 1863*, p.41a. The man referred to was Rabbi Samuel ben Baruch Levy Aben-Yuly (*E.J.* vol 16 p.895a) he was not chief rabbi, see below.

45 H. Montgomery Hyde, *Mexican Empire*, 1946, p.94. The chief rabbi of Tangier was Mordecai Bengio.

46 *AJA* p.112.

47 Serfaty, *op. cit.* p.26.

48 I am indebted to A. B. Serfaty for showing me the notes of the lecture he gave the Gibraltar Garrison Library in April 1984 on the Institutions of the Jewish Community of Gibraltar, which give a new insight into the period.

The 1791 census shows that Rabbi Solomon Abudarham came to Gibraltar from Morocco in 1790 at the age of 40. He died during the yellow fever epidemic of 1804 and was buried at Jews' Gate cemetery.

49 Serfaty, *op. cit.* p.30.

50 I am indebted to A. B. Serfaty's lecture for the information in this and the succeeding two paragraphs.

51 Serfaty (cf Note 48)

The presidents of the Managing Board have been:

1864-1867 Yomtob Bergel
1867-1870 Judah Levy
1871-1877 Solomon A. Nahon
1878-1881 Yomtob Bergel
1881-1886 Abraham E. Levy
1891-1916 Benjamin Levy Balensi
1916-1921 Isaac E. Levy
1923-1930 Benjamin Marrache
1930-1931 Mesod M. Benady
1931-1949 Abraham B. M. Serfaty
1949-1956 David Benaim OBE

1956-1973 Samuel Benady OBE, QC, MA
1973-1983 Abraham B. Serfaty LLB
1984- Haim J. M. Levy LLB

52 *GIBRALTAR DIRECTORY 1917*; *PRO* CO.91:68 Order in Council of 3 Aug. 1816.

53 SERFATY, *op. cit.* p.30; Report of *Hozer Dalim* for 1935; *Libro de Minutas de Ha'aniyim*.

54 *GIBRALTAR DIRECTORY* 1917; H. MONTGOMERY HYDE, *op. cit.* p.93.

55 G. F. CORNWELL, 'The System of Education in Gibraltar.' (*Special Reports on Educational Subjects, vol 12*) pp.454 to 456, 462.

56 *AJA* p112.

57 When arrangements were being made to send two representatives of the Gibraltar Legislative Council to present a petition to the United Nations in 1963, the government was embarrassed to find that the two senior members (i.e. the ones who had received the most votes) Joshua Hassan and Solomon Seruya were both Jewish. Hassan was therefore sent with Peter Isola. Seruya moved to Israel in 1969 where he became director of the *Keren Hayesod* — United Israel Appeal. He was Israeli ambassador to the Philippines from 1976 to 1978.

58 *GIBRALTAR CHRONICLE* July and August 1947.

59 The decorations given to the members of the community since the war are:
GBE and KCMG to Sir Joshua Hassan for political and public services.
CBE to Samuel Benady for public services and Abraham W. Serfaty for political and public services.
OBE to David Benaim for services to the Jewish community, to the brilliant painter Jacob Azagury who died at the age of 91 for his services to art in Gibraltar, and to Abraham J. Benatar for public services.
MBE to the Rev. Moses Benzimra, minister of the Great Synagogue, for his services to the community and as honorary chaplain to the forces, to Rebecca Gabay, radiologist at St. Bernard's Hospital, and to Samuel Tobelem, the director of the Jewish Old Peoples' Home for many years.
MVO (4th) to Sir Joshua Hassan.

THE SEPHARDI COMMUNITY OF LEGHORN (LIVORNO)

by
Flora Aghib Levi d'Ancona

About the middle of the 16th century Cosimo di Medici, Duke, later Grand Duke, of Tuscany, resolved to create a new harbour at Leghorn, since the harbour of Pisa had become silted up. Cosimo's plan was bold enough. The next problem, was to find people willing to go and live there. Cosimo appealed far and wide but the response was only fairly satisfactory, comprising mainly sailors, labourers and some Jewish pedlars.

After Cosimo, Grand Duke Francis I had more success, but substantial progress had to await his successor, Grand Duke Ferdinand I. Ferdinand knew that Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal in 1497 often had difficulty in establishing themselves elsewhere. He therefore issued a proclamation in 1593, inviting all persecuted peope to come and settle in Leghorn.[1]

Particular privileges that Ferdinand granted were: cancellation of debts below 500 *scudi*; exemption from taxes and the right of enrolment in the guilds; asylum from condemnations suffered elsewhere; the right to vote; the right of precedence in vacant hereditary succession due to the Treasury; limited rights of jurisdiction in Jewish courts for law-suits between Jews; the right to work on Catholic holidays and complete religious freedom. Ferdinand's generous proclamation was popularly called *la livornina*.

People, especially Jews, began to throng into Leghorn. In 1599 two Sephardim from the Levant, Moses and Daniel Cordovero, established a money-lending house in the new city. The business was, however, suppressed in 1623 because money was being lent at a rate slightly higher than the permitted 3%.[2] Some of the new immigrants were *marranos* who arrived by ship from the Iberian peninsula. Those already settled in Leghorn used to go to the harbour when ships arrived from the Iberian peninsula, looking for relatives and friends, and calling to them in a loud voice. This practice was soon discouraged, as likely to attract the suspicions of the Inquisition.

Wealthy and cultured *marranos* also immigrated to Leghorn by way of Venice. Some of their family names were Ergas, Franco, Henriques, Arias, Villareal, Attias, Baruch Carvalho, Valensi, Crespin and Pardo Roques.

They immediately established charitable institutions around the small *yeshivah* (religious school) which was built during the 16th century. Soon the school developed into a synagogue, *La Scola Spagnola*, as it was called in Italian, but in Portuguese it was *La Santa Esnoga de Livorne* (Leghorn). Moses Cordovero was one of the officers and Daniel Perrano was its administrator.

The life and opinions of Leghorn's *marranos* are described in a Spanish novel of the seventeenth century, in the form of a dialogue, entitled *Danielillo*.[3]

Communal Organisation

The general population of Leghorn had risen to 8,2000 inhabitants by the time that Ferdinand I died in 1609.

The Sephardim of Leghorn observed and obeyed the statutes of Pisa (published in Pisa in 1637)[4] since the new community of Leghorn depended upon Pisa. However, conditions of life differed widely between the two cities and juridical and commercial problems arose. Sephardi Pisa had a right to veto newcomers to Leghorn, but when a Sephardi from Ancona was forbidden entrance, the Leghorn Sephardim in 1599 applied directly to the Grand Duke. Ferdinand replied that it had always been customary for one synagogue to be independent from another, even in the same city.[5] So the Jew from Ancona was permitted to enter. Leghorn's Jews eventually obtained their full release.

Leghorn's statutes named *Haskamot*, sometimes corrupted into *Escamot*, were written in ancient Portuguese, as spoken and written before expulsion from the mother country. These statutes or laws and precepts were administered by the five Governors of the Jewish community of Leghorn, commonly called by the Italian name of *Massari*. Ferdinand's *letters patent* of 1593 spoke of the law-court of *Massari* as already existing. The statutes had to be approved by a board of sixty-four high officials and rabbis. The *Massari*, whose number varied from time to time, were chosen by lot from among a group of men of great wealth. The first names of *Massari* that we know, Isaac Ergas, David Jessurun, Solomon Baruch, David de Jacob Valensi and Jacob Nunes, were Iberian Jews, all others being excluded from this and other offices for a long time to come. After 1715 the *Massari* were elected for life.

The *Haskamot* were divided into five parts: Government, public order, commerce, justice and synagogue. The statutes of Pisa were chiefly concerned with crimes against public order, whereas those of Leghorn were concerned with espionage, ship-chartering and commercial disputes. A penalty of 50 ducats was imposed for refusing public office; of 10 ducats for buying non-*kasher* meat. The most dreaded punishment contemplated in the *Haskamot* was excommunication. Exile and imprisonment were applied

chiefly to breaking the laws of *kashrut*.[6]

In August 1693 the *Massari* added a body of twelve executives, whose duty it was to supervise communal life within the *Nazione Ebrea*, or Jewish nation, as it began to be called. Petitions were sent directly to the Grand Duke, who answered the *Massari* through the Military Governor of Leghorn. Besides the *Massari* (also called in Hebrew *memmunim*, or *parnassim* i.e. standing committee) there were the rabbis, also called *Hahamim*. The *parnassim* were responsible for the *yeshiboth*. Other administrators were the *gabbaim*, or treasurers, each with precise duties. Some taxes were compulsory, others voluntary. A tax was levied on *kasher* meat. Offerings were required from all the public in the synagogue during a solemn prayer called *medeba*. On *Yom Kippur* the whole community used to light eighteen big wax tapers. Funds were raised on the fast of *Gedaliah*, eight days before *Yom Kippur*.

Although members of the Sephardi community of Leghorn were strictly controlled, they freely intermingled with the gentile population, for a ghetto was never established. Nevertheless, the *Haskamot* recommended prudence. Psalms were not to be sung in a loud voice and prayers should be said behind closed doors and if possible not in the open street on the occasion of the New Moon.[7] A certain simplicity in clothing was recommended, and also moderate food, but the Livornese Sephardim often disobeyed these two precepts, for they were fond of luxury and good cheer. New *Haskamot* were added in an edition of 1677.[8]

Charitable institutions (*Hebrot*) were most important. One took care of the sick; another clothed the poor, including pupils and teachers in the *yeshibah*. A third one called *Matir Assurim* freed Jewish captives of Moorish pirates. Finally, there was the *Hebra para cazar orfas* (a brotherhood for giving dowries to orphaned girls; in Hebrew, *Moar abbetulot*). Membership was inherited and expensive. In these and other institutions access was strictly reserved to Iberian Sephardim.

Spanish Jews were so proud of their ancestral origins that they even looked down on the Portuguese. Most of the grandees, whether Spanish or Portuguese, displayed their coat-of-arms in private documents or on signet rings, or had them engraved on their tomb-stones. The Ergas family had a horse standing on its hind legs, the Pardo Roques had a leopard,[9] the Aghib family had an eagle with wide-spread wings, resting its claws on a wheel. The D'Anconas had three penguins, three tulips and a rising sun, and the Francos had a fountain out of which a palm-tree grew.[10]

A great number of Sephardim arrived in Leghorn by way of the Levant, since conditions in Syria and Turkey, which had been favourable at first, later deteriorated.[11] They spoke Spanish but wrote it in Hebrew characters.

Abraham and Moses Aghib arrived in Leghorn some time before 1670, for Abraham, according to a *ketubah* in the Jewish Community of Livorno,

married 'Dona Fina' in 1671 and Moses was married in the same year to 'Dona Sara'; but he must have lost his wife, for two years later he was married to 'Dona Rahel,' the daughter of Hananiah Ergas. The Ergas came from Portugal and were one of the most important families in Leghorn. Moses must have enjoyed a certain prestige, if Hananiah was willing to give him his daughter for a second wife. Their son Solomon married a girl from the Levant, Rachel Racah.[12]

The Political Background

Grand Duke Ferdinand I died in 1609, mourned by all his subjects. When Grand Duke Ferdinand II proclaimed the perpetual neutrality of Leghorn in 1646, with the support of the British government, neutrality became a corner-stone of the city's history for the following two centuries.

Traffic in the harbour now expanded rapidly, reaching its peak in the second half of the 17th century. The population also increased, as did the number of Jews, almost all being Sephardim. A report from the Consul of Genoa in Leghorn stated in 1655: 'The frigate of Captain Cardi has just returned from Spain with many families immigrating, in order to live here openly in the Jewish fashion.'

Medicine

Moses Cordovero (mentioned above) was not the only doctor in Sephardi Livorno during the 17th century. The *marrano* doctor Philip Rodrigues from Castelo Branco in Portugal, returned to Judaism in Leghorn, before movng on to the Court in Florence, where he changed his name to Elijah Montalto.[13] Another famous *marrano* doctor who returned to Judaism in Leghorn was Jacob Rosales (Emmanuel Frances y Rosales), a friend of Galileo's. He wrote treatises on medicine and astronomy and was named Count Palatine by Emperor Ferdinand III in Vienna. Other doctors were Isaac Mocatta, Moses Cordovero's son-in-law and Michael de Barrios (Daniel Levi) who was converted to Judaism in Leghorn by his aunt Rachel.[14] Paul de Pina, a *marrano* from Lisbon intending to become a Catholic friar in Rome, stopped in Leghorn where his cousin Diogo Lombardo introduced him to Doctor Elijah Montalto, who persuaded him to be converted to Judaism. Eventually de Pina became influential in the Sephardi Community of Amsterdam. Other *marrano* doctors in Leghorn during the 18th century were: Pereira de Leon, Nathaniel Levi, Jacob Arias, Abraham Gutierres, Reuben de Cave and Moses Tilque. The latter formed a Council of Rabbis in 1706.

Trade and Manufacture

Commerce had developed from very simple beginnings. In 1598 Ferdinand I lent money to the Sephardim Joseph Franco and Solomon d'Angiolo, so that they could enlarge their soap factories in Leghorn. In 1607 the brothers Abraham and Isaac Franco were 'reputed to be among the oldest inhabitants in Leghorn and also the wealthiest in the city.' In the year 1615 the Franco brothers ran a silk factory and by 1642 they had the monopoly of silk-weaving.[15] The brothers Moses and Joseph de Ancona had had a factory for making white soap ever since the 16th century.[16] Their names appear in marriage certificates of Leghorn until the year 1799.

Some of the Livornese Sephardim moved on to Tunis and founded the Livornese colony of Tunis. Others settled in London and kept up connections with their native city. Diogo Rodrigues Marques, who died in London in 1675, was a debtor to Roque Rodrigues Villareal for the sume of 50 *milreis*. Gabriel de Medina, of Leghorn, sent money to Portugal in the name of Rodrigues Marques, who was indebted to Benjamin Barzilai of Leghorn for 150 pieces of cloth and an ivory bedstead. Judas Crespin and Abraham Attias were among the principal Jewish merchants of Leghorn about the middle of the 17th century. In 1652 an Ergas was mentioned as an old established merchant in Leghorn. The Franco family, originally from Villareal in Portugal, moved their residence from Leghorn to London.

The coral industry, which was introduced into Leghorn in the beginning of the 17th century, was almost entirely in the hands of Sephardi merchants from Spain, principally from Catalonia. Jews in Leghorn were among the first in Europe to receive cargoes of coffee and to enjoy drinking coffee [17] and chocolate, also to smoke tobacco. The first cargo of coffee sailed to Leghorn from Arabia in 1631. Coffee drinking was only introduced into Paris and London some years later. The cutting of semi-precious stones in Leghorn became famous in the hands of its Sephardim.

The population of Leghorn rapidly rose in number, so that the lack of new buildings was acutely felt. In 1645 there were not more than 500 houses for a population of 9,000, of whom more than 2,000 were Jews. The overcrowding had its effect on the Jewish population. For instance, Abraham Bueno, a protector of Jewish scholars, was obliged to leave his beautiful home in the Via Ferdinanda, *'Jews having to be enclosed in the vicinity of their synagogue towards the Casone bulwark.'* Judah d'Angiolo, a Jew from Ancona, had to go and live in the ghetto that was being formed in Leghorn.[18] Jews were not allowed to enter their houses by the same door as gentiles, and Jewish mothers were not permitted to give their babies to be suckled by Christian nurses. Often these edicts were not obeyed and Jews got on well with gentiles. A common saying was: *'If you hurt a Jew, you harm Leghorn.'* Eventually in 1607 the government in Florence gave the Sephardi Community

of Leghorn the legal status of a *Nation*, which previously they had enjoyed only in name.[19]

Academies

The important *Talmud Tora* school of Leghorn held regular classes in Hebrew, Bible and Talmud, and there were also several other *yeshiboth* bearing the names of the families that sponsored them. Learned Spanish academies, sometimes with Hebrew titles, were in evidence from the very beginning of the 17th century.

In 1609 the academy of the Vega brothers was directed by Jacob Hajes, who translated the *Menorat Hammaor* of R. Isaac Aboab into Spanish. Another early academy was the *Guardian of the Eternal Covenant*. In 1653 Nathan ben Moses Hannover Haskenazi was a teacher in the *Bet Hamidrash* founded by a Sephardi, named Valensin. Two young scholars from Damascus distinguished themselves in the *Reshit Hochma* (The Beginning of Wisdom) academy, presided over by R. David Nieto (1694), who went to settle in London.[20]

The most famous academy in Leghorn was *Los Sitibundos* ('The Thirsty'), bearing the same name as that of the existing academy in Amsterdam, their emblem being a down-turned shell with the motto: 'Unto him that is thirsty bring ye water!'[21] The founders of the academy were young scholars from Amsterdam: Dr. Michael da Silva, Raphael Diaz, Moses Arias and Joseph Penso de la Vega, who acted as secretary. His father was a *marrano* named Isaac Penso Felix who, rescued from the Spanish Inquisition, sailed for Holland with all his family, returned to the faith of his fathers and then started for Leghorn. Joseph was born in Espejo, south of Cordoba, in 1650. He was a delicate boy given to meditation. Most of his literary career was passed in Amsterdam where he wrote some profound and significant works, including his *Triumfos del Aguila* (1683) dedicated to John Sobieski and *El retrato de la prudencia* (1690) dedicated to William of Orange. He also wrote short stories *Los rumbos peligrosos* (1684), and works on economics, including *Confusion de las confusiones* (1688) which may still be consulted with profit. He died in Leghorn at the age of forty-two.

The members of *Los Sitibundos* held discussions on science and philosophy, composed poems in Hebrew and Italian, wrote and acted plays. They included two women poets from Amsterdam: Isabel Enriques and Isabel de Correa and, apart from the Livornese members, scholars from Verona, Amsterdam and other centres.

Another academy was founded in Leghorn by the Franco and Pereira families. Jacob Sasportas, whom we shall meet later, belonged to the academy sponsored by the Soria family,[22] together with David Buono, already mentioned, and Diogo Rodrigues Marques, who died in London.

Birth, Marriage and Death

The wedding ceremony was sometimes performed in the synagogue, but more often in the home of the bride — occasionally in that of the bridegroom. Home weddings are preferred in Leghorn even to this present day. The bride used to present the bridegroom with a prayer-shawl embroidered by her own hands. She also gave him a prayer-book with an embossed silver cover and the initials of the bride and bridegroom surmounted by their coat-of-arms. Wedding festivities lasted eight days.[23]

Unions between Jews and Gentiles were strictly condemned on both sides. Purity in family life was generally respected by Jews and any action calculated to undermine the integrity of the family was considered to be a profanation of the divine will. Festivities took place on the birth of a child, especially of a boy. If the baby was a girl she was brought to the synagogue thirty days after her birth.

Some family festivities took place at the beginning or end of the public reading of one of the five books of the Torah. The *bar-mitzvah* of a boy was celebrated with a home reception after the reading in the synagogue. Guests were also invited when the fiancé entered the home of his future bride for the first time.

After life came death with its solemn ritual. A description of a Jewish funeral in 1680 is preserved. A letter from Senator Panciatichi in Florence to Marquis Alexander del Borro, Military Governor of Leghorn, is about complaints made to the Archbishop of Pisa, upon whom the diocese of Leghorn depended, that a rabbi was to be carried to his grave with lighted torches and singing of psalms in Leghorn. The Military Governor complained to the *Massari*, who replied that the good rabbi had upheld his ministry *"with a life of integrity, teaching his doctrine for forty years to many students, so that we all call him our master. He was carried to our School according to an ancient custom, practised not only with rabbis, but also with old people and was followed by crowds of our Nation. Funerals accompanied by torches were first observed and then suppressed, since the common people, in other similar circumstances disturbed us."* A clerk from the galleys was asked for a tent, so that the crowd might be sheltered on that rainy day. The presence of soldiers was made necessary, *"since we depend on them for our not being disturbed during our services."* Finally the rabbi was carried to his last resting place with lighted torches and psalm-singing all the way.[24]

Another letter of protest from Senator Panciatichi to del Borro in 1695 referred to wealthy Jews neglecting their vineyards and houses in order to own state carriages, 'the finest in Europe'. (Incidentally this document shows Jews already owned considerable landed property in Tuscany.) One of the carriages concerned having overthrown and wounded a Christian on the Pisa highroad, the Military Governor ordained that the carriages be suppressed.[25]

He signified to the *Massari* that the Jews had better not parade along the streets in their carriages, but would do better to look after their vineyards and houses.[26]

Some rescripts, called in Portuguese *Recordas das Graças*, are reminders of the Grand Duke's gracious favour. These hand-written documents give details of private and public life in Livorno, permission to raise a terrace in a house, or to change residence for fear of excommunication. As mentioned above, the Grand Dukes used to reply to the Military Governor of Leghorn, who then got into touch with the *Massari*. In a document signed by del Borro in 1682, Gabriel Farro was named as *Massaro*, as were Emmanuel Ergas and Abram Diaz.[27] Other rescripts apply to trade. In 1694 some privateers sailing from Naples to Sardinia attacked vessels laden with goods belonging to Jewish merchants in Leghorn. The Sephardim asked the government in Florence to protest to Spain, and to obtain a declaration that similar incidents would never be repeated, *'for the execution of which the necessary orders were given to the Signori Viceroys.'* Montemagno, the Ambassador of Tuscany in Madrid, immediately informed the Spanish government and the answer arrived on the very next day, signed by Count Santistefan y Altamura, Duke of Ojeda, bearing the counter-signature *'Yo, el Rey'* the normal Spanish formula used by the king. The matter was settled later, to the satisfaction of the Sephardim.[28]

A rescript of 1673 related to the case of two poor Jewish slaves from the galleys, who were languishing in prison in Leghorn. The Military Governor del Borro replied that justice would be done; a heavy ransom was paid by the *Matir Assurim*.

In a sonnet of the 17th century a Jew named Cameu boasts of having his days full:

> 'Slaves have come to see me
> who have been rescued by the *Matir Assurim*.
> One hour more, and on to the harbour
> with ships to unload!'[29]

George Christopher Martini's Account

George Christopher Martini, a painter and engraver from Saxony, resided in Leghorn from 1725 to 1745. He was indefatigable in taking notes of what he saw. His writings lay in the library of Lucca until recently, when they were translated into Italian and published. Martini wrote: 'Leghorn has very active relations with Aleppo, Smyrna and Alexandria. It imports products of silk, cotton, goat's hair, also called camel's hair, articles of hemp, lapis lazuli and all sorts of precious stones and pearls, important (cargoes) of cocoa and also much gold, ground into powder, with which *zecchini* and *rusponi* are coined in Florence. It has every kind of leather, unbleached hides, almonds,

dates, dried figs and saffron. Tobacco and potash, etc., come from Spain. The British and Dutch people carry on an active trade with Leghorn. Most of the ships one sees are British. Generally they carry salted and smoked herrings, stock-fish, dried cod, cheese, cotton and other goods of their own workmanship. Muscovites bring hides from Bulgaria, furs, salted salmon and caviar. Sulphur and alum come from the coast near Rome. As one can see, the harbour of Leghorn is always full of ships. The coral, which is brought to Leghorn, is worked by the Jews Franchi (Franco) and Medina and by others in a way I shall relate.[30] The wealthy Jew Medina possesses a collection of precious sea-shells and other subjects which he has not carefully sorted but has placed in a closet, so that he can boast of them. The largest coral rock I ever saw is in this collection. It measures an arm's length and is almost as wide, with a number of branches, also a branch of white coral unique in this world, fixed on an emerald rock with perfect workmanship. Medina has also a collection of stones and many rare sea-shells, some of which have the reflections of mother-of-pearl. Medina owns some rare old sculptures, statues, paintings and a well-furnished home.'[31]

The Spanish Claimant

After the death of the old Grand Duke Cosimo III dei Medici, the most widely accepted claimant to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was a distant relative of Cosimo, Prince Charles, the eldest son of King Philip V of Spain.

The young prince, aged 16, landed in Leghorn with 6,000 armed men and was received with honours.

The Jews of Leghorn, however, were in a state of wild apprehension. A Spanish Grand Duke and his Inquisition might endanger their position, possibly their lives. Meanwhile the republic of Venice was speculating about the concern of the Livornese Sephardim. In fact, Venice hoped that Jews might eventually settle in the Dogal city, and so enrich its languishing trade. The Republican Government of Venice wrote to the Jews of Leghorn. The latter were both surprised and shocked that their loyalty to their native city was being suspected. Accordingly they all met on the eve of *Yom Kippur*, October 16th, 1732, and appealed directly to the Grand Duke, to whom they swore absolute loyalty. Marquis Charles Rinuccini replied, expressing His Highness' satisfaction on receiving the *Massari's* message and his letter, addressed to the Military Governor of Leghorn, assured the *Massari* of the Grand Duke's sincere and affectionate feelings towards the Jews. The royal *Infante* of Spain, he wrote, would surely treat them courteously.[32] Among the *Massari* who swore loyalty were David Sulema and son; Isaac Attias and brothers; Joseph de Raphael Franco; Gabriel and Abraham de Medina; Raphael de Jacob Ergas and Samuel Ergas and Jacob Attias senior.

The *Infante* Don Carlos remained four years in Leghorn and won the

affection of the people, especially of the Jews. At the end of that period the French Consular agent, Samuel da Silva, who happened to be a Sephardi, wrote to his government that the *Nazione Ebrea* suffered a great loss when the Spanish Prince left Leghorn, *n'étant pas croyable les bons traitementes qu'elle éprouve et la justice sand intérêt qu'ils lui ont rendus.*[33]

The European powers, however, decreed that Don Carlos should not become Grand Duke of Tuscany. He was replaced by another distant relative of John Gaston, namely Francis Stephen, Duke of Lorraine, who was persuaded to leave his beloved Duchy by the prospect of ruling over Tuscany and above all, of becoming Emperor in Vienna, which he eventually did. He visited his Grand Duchy only once in 1775 with his bride, Maria Theresa, and then abandoned Florence to a Regent. The unfortunate Regency was to last twenty-seven years.

Justice

The Court of Justice of Leghorn's Sephardim was supported by a group of *Massari* and by a board of rabbis called *Issur Veeter*. It is described by R. Pinchas Anab of Ferrara: 'Those who know what is the *Bet Din* are well aware that it so happens in the city of Leghorn (may the most High protect it!). The *Mammunim* the *Massari* (may their light shine) judge all those who apply to the Law Court, according to their frank and clear way of judgement. But when one of the parties wants to be judged according to the Sacred Law (the Torah), the Masters (the rabbis) write and sign, being inspired from Heaven. The *Massari* issue their verdict according to what the Masters have said'.[34]

The Law Court of Leghorn issued *responsa* to questions coming from far and wide. The secret Sephardi Community of Madrid elected its rabbis only after having received advice from Leghorn.[35]

At the end of the 17th century, the President of the *Issur Veeter* was R. Jacob Sasportas, who had come from Amsterdam; he was assisted by the *maskil* Emmanuel Ergas. R. Sasportas accused the *Massari* of transgressing an article of the *Haskama*, and a most agitated controversy ensued, but people in Leghorn went on their own way, for Sasportas left the city.[36]

A rescript of the *Massari* was signed in 1680 by Samuel Lusena, David Jesurun, Isaac Bueno, Jacob Jesurun Lopes, Emmanuel Frances, Samuel Costa, Gerson Tilque and Joseph Senior. The signatories for the Twelve were Gabriel de Medina, Abraham Attias, Isaac Bueno, Gabriel Arias, Raphael Crespin, Gabriel Farro, Abraham de Joseph Franco and Abraham de Isaac Ergas. Offices within the community were usually inherited from father to son, especially after the government in Florence extended the *Massari's* term of office to life in 1715, but the iron ring of exclusiveness enforced by Iberians, of which new-comers from other parts of Italy were becoming

increasingly resentful, became somewhat looser.

In 1735 Jacob Aghib, Moses' brother, was a deputy for *Matir Assurim*, as had been his father, Solomon. In the same year Joseph Gabay Villareal was Censor for Palestine. A rescript of the government in Florence explains his duties: 'Censors are held to compel administrators and secretaries to produce the books, reckon the accounts and take necessary measures according to their judgement. A magistrate's board of Censors must control the habits of every individual, with powers to punish or expel people of shameful conduct from the Grand Duchy. When law-suits are judged by the *Massari* they are assisted by the Censors.'[37]

Among the twenty-three *Massari* elected in 1745 were Hayyim Ergas, Isaac de David Attias, Joseph Gabay Villareal, Joseph Franco, Isaac Pardo Roques, Judas de Faro, Solomon Aghib, Haim Carvalho, Abraham Hayyim Ergas, Isaac de David Sulema and Joseph Attias. The latter was probably the great scholar shortly to be described.

Dialect

The dialect of Italian used by the Jews of Leghorn, corrupted with Hebrew and Portuguese, was *giudaico-livornese*, and was generally spoken, even by upper-class Sephardim. 'It was vivacious, clear and precise, even if what was stated was not precise. It was pure for the lowliest expressions, it was colourful like people's garments and spicy like their food. It possessed the style of the Bible with something of Spanish pomposity and of Tuscan graciousness. But the use (and misuse) of imagery, proverbs, quaint sayings, was still Oriental.'[38]

The New Synagogue

The *Scola Spagnola* had not only become too small to contain the growing numbers of Leghorn's Jews, but the Sephardi grandees also wanted to have a monument worthy of their importance. The building, or rather the re-building was begun according to the designs of Ignatius Fazzi, a well-known architect of churches in Tuscany. The donor was David de Medina, a most influential Sephardi grandee, on the occasion of his son Gabriel's *bar mitzvah*. De Medina paid for the arches along the length of the synagogue, but transverse arches, five on each side, were still missing. De Medina was willing to erect one in his own name. In 1701 Daniel de Samuel Cordovero offered to construct another, but failed to maintain his promise and his name was replaced by that of Samuel Ergas, in memory of his father Jacob. Two arches more were offered by Gabriel Fernandez Diaz and another one by Aaron Bocassa in 1712 for his son Raphael's *bar mitzvah*. One arch was offered to a Sulema, but Joseph de los Rios took his place, and two were erected by the brothers Moses and Raphael Franco and Isaac de Joshua Recanati. The whole set was completed by the *Hebra de cazar orfas* (Society for marrying of

orphans). In the early 19th century the families Attias, Ergas, de Medina, Bassan, Franco and Recanati caused a second row of arches to be erected above the first.[39]

On the eve of *Rosh Hashanah*, September 24th 1714, the Jews were on their way to the *Scola Spagnola* where the best seats facing the *teba* were by custom reserved for the Iberians. However, Isaac Recanati refused to accept this long-standing arrangement and occupied the seat reserved for Emmanuel Attias. Attias reacted angrily and a fight ensued, in which other people joined. The Military Governor's guards were summoned and thrust those responsible into gaol.[40] This deplorable incident finally brought it home to the proud Iberians that they could not keep all the privileges to themselves.

In June 1740, Isidore Baratta, a sculptor who had decorated many churches in Tuscany, presented the decoration for the interior of the synagogue, but the design and ornaments of the *teba* (consecrated in 1745) were entrusted to David Nunes, a Sephardi, who carried it out in many-coloured marble.

Joseph Attias and other rabbis

Between the end of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th, the personality of Joseph Attias[41] towers above other Sephardim. His father, a lawyer, was born in Spain where he had lived as a New Christian. However, the Inquisition grew suspicious and, fearing for his life and that of his family, he fled from Spain and landed in Leghorn. We do not know if Joseph, the son of his father's second wife, was born in Tuscany. He wrote *'But the milk I drank was the Spanish language.'* In his *Autobiography*, the Neapolitan philosopher, Giambattista Vico, writes that Attias had become his friend in Naples, for Joseph was reputed to be the most learned scholar among the Jews of his time in the science of the sacred language, *'as is shown by his edition of the Old Testament.*[42]

Joseph Attias was influenced by Muratori's works not only on textual criticism, but also on religion and philosophy. His book *Della carità cristiana e amore del prossimo*, published in 1714, is imbued with the current of enlightened Catholicism. He kept open house for literary friends, whom he allowed to make use of his well-furnished library. By special permission from the Grand Duke he was allowed to carry a sword and staff.

The Tuscan Inquisition finally became suspicious of the discussions that took place in Attias's home with Catholic scholars. The Visitor of the Inquisition, Father Ambrosio Ambrogi, suspecting heresy, wanted to examine his books. But the Regent for Tuscany, Count de Richecourt, refused permission in the name of the Emperor. The Inquisitor then re-applied directly to the Apostolic Delegate in Vienna. Count Ruccellai replied from Florence that this was a shocking demand and this decision was finally

upheld by the Emperor himself.[43]

Attias had family quarrels and accordingly studied law in order to be able to advise the judges on the manuscript version of the *jus statuarium*. Ordained rabbi in 1733, he died in Leghorn in 1745. Attias left no important philosophical or literary works and most of his writings, chiefly in Hebrew, have been lost.

The eighteenth century was a Golden Age for rabbis in Leghorn. They were writers and teachers, continuing to preach in Spanish in the *Scola Spagnola*, even though most of them were fluent in Italian.

A document of the *Matir Assurim* of 1733 containing the name of Solomon Aghib and twenty-three other subscribers gives the names of the following rabbis: Abraham Vitta Rodrigues, Gabriel del Rio, Daniel Rodrigues Valensin, David Meldola, Emmanuel Vitta Ricchi, Adam Bondi, Jacob Lusena, Isaac Enriques, Malahi Accoèn and Moses Samuel Coen. The latter was also a poet, while David Meldola was also a typographer. The document was signed by Isaac de Lazarus Recanati, with David Nunes as secretary.[44]

R. Jacob Hayyim Lusena (1690-1760) was an eminent ritualist. He was almost blind at the end of his life and had to dictate his works to his disciples.

Emmanuel Vitta Ricchi had a significant and adventurous life. He was born in Ferrara in 1688; studied and taught in various towns of Northern Italy and then sailed for Palestine. In the sacred town of Safed he studied *Talmud* and *Cabbalah*, but on his way back to Italy he was captured by pirates and carried away to Tunis. Eventually freed from slavery he came to Leghorn where he stayed twelve years. He traded as a merchant and presided over the two *Yeshibot*, *Bet Annegarim* and *Ora Haim*, but spent many months in Smyrna, Salonika, Constantinople, Amsterdam and Gibraltar, with the aim of paying back the debts he had contracted to the benefactors in Leghorn who had enabled him to publish his books. Back in Leghorn, he sailed once more to the Levant with his family. Eventually he reached Jerusalem, where he published a beautiful commentary on the Psalms. Once again he returned to Leghorn and wrote a long poem on the new *ehal*. But on a trip to Northern Italy, on the road between Bologna and Modena, he was attacked by highwaymen and murdered at the age of fifty-three.

R. Joseph de Emmanuel Ergas (1685-1730) belonged to one of the oldest grandee Sephardi families in Leghorn and was taught by Samuel de Paz, a well-known rabbi. He had a wife and three sons, but his wealth enabled him to dedicate his life to study. He died in the prime of his life, before he could publish his important works on Jewish philosophy and his poems. Joseph Ergas invited to Leghorn R. David Haim Corinaldi, who wrote a commentary on the *Mishnah*, was a member of the Council of Rabbis for many years and died in Leghorn in 1771.

R. Malahi Accoèn (1700-1771) was a pupil of Abraham Vitta Rodrigues

and Joseph Ergas. He was ordained in 1731 and he wrote *'a sublime poem, for the consecration of the new ehal.'* His most important work was *Yad Malahi*, a concise and vigorous commentary on the *Talmud*, *'one of the best writings of the 18th century.' He also wrote Shibhe Todah*, a series of liturgical hymns of thanks, because no Jews in Leghorn had lost their lives in the terrible earthquake of 1749.[44] Other rabbis were Jacob Haggis, who translated Hebrew works into Spanish and wrote *El arbol de la vida*, a commentary on the *Mishnah*; Baruch ben Joseph who wrote commentaries on sacred texts and was an eloquent preacher; Haim Coen ben Abraham who came from Aleppo, and Benjamin Espinoza who wrote a versified grammar and died in Leghorn in 1776. Joseph Fernandes Africano, Adam ben Abraham (1746) and his son Jacob (1778), Mazaltob and his son Isaac Hayyim (1774) were also rabbis in Leghorn. Isaac Nunes Vaes graced the *Talmud Torah* school. His son Jacob wrote a super-commentary on Rashi. Moses Aaron Rahamim Piazzi took part in R. Joseph Franco's *Medrash Bet Joseph*, and wrote on the ritual of the Feast of *Purim*. His verses for the famous *ehal* and for various occasions in Leghorn are pleasant and harmonious.[45]

The famous R. Abraham Isaac Castello was born in Ancona, probably in 1726. He arrived in Leghorn at the age of thirteen and wanted to become a mechanic, but possessed a most melodious voice and a talent for music, together with a temperament given to study and meditation. Hazzan Adam Bondi, who later became a rabbi, and whose daughter Castello eventually married, persuaded him to change his mind and study *Talmud*. Castello's great scholarship and learning caused him to be ordained rabbi. He was probably the scholar whom Lessing met and admired in Leghorn.[46] In 1765 Castello wrote *Kol Millin*, an allegorical drama in Spanish for the wedding of Aaron Ergas with Deborah da Costa. A coloured print commemorating the wedding was published by Moses Attias and the Spanish text was translated into Italian by R. Joseph Attias, Abraham's son. Abraham also published *Dibre Shir* for the wedding of Daniel de Medina with Miriam Nataf.

Joseph Aubert, a gentile poet born in Leghorn, wrote some verses for the Jewish Contarini-Shires wedding which were translated into Hebrew. He also translated into Italian four Hebrew verses for a marble slab in the *Scola Spagnola* commemorating the memorial service held there on the death of Emperor Francis Stephen. Latin epigraphs began to appear in the *Scola Spagnola* at the end of the century and Latin influence began to be felt in Hebrew poetry.[47]

One of Aubert's Jewish friends in Leghorn was Solomon Mitchell, the nephew of R. Pinchas of Lublin. In his training in Leghorn, Mitchell came under the influence of Abraham Castello and Jacob Nunes Vaes and was an intimate friend of the Attias family. Mitchell's activity as a merchant enabled him to live in wealth and to dedicate his leisure hours to philosophy, natural history and music. He was also something of a poet.

Solomon Fiorentino, who was born in Leghorn in 1742, wrote sonnets and elegies, which were highly praised by Grand Duke Ferdinand III and, later, by the republican French General de Miollis.[48]

Leghorn's reputation as a place of sanctity caused some rabbis to come there to die. The first to do so was the learned R. Solomon Azubi. He was borni in Sofia, spent many years in Southern France and finally sailed for Leghorn with all his family. He died in Leghorn in 1647.[49] After him came R. Ayash; he had intended to travel to Palestine, but was frightened to set sail for fear of pirates. He died in Leghorn. The most famous of the rabbis was Joseph David Azulai, who was born in Jerusalem in 1724. Having travelled through Europe, Azulai finally reached Leghorn, where he soon won much prestige. For fifteen months he was a guest of Michael Pereira de Leon, who was president of the *Massari* in 1757.

Azulai was a Cabbalist and believed in the magic of numerology. He used to preach in the *Scola Spagnola* once a year on *Shabbat Teshubah* between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*. People lined the streets and followed him as he entered and left the synagogue. His studies on the Bible and collected notes were later published. He also wrote books on exegesis and casuistics as well as essays on the *Cabbalah* liturgy and Hebrew literature. He was the author of *Shem ha-Gedolim*, a treatise on the names of great authors, and *Waad ha-Hahamim*, ('the Assembly of Wise Men') containing the titles of many Hebrew books. Azulai won a saintly reputation, together with that of posessing miraculous powers.[50] After his death both Jewish and Christian women visited his grave, hoping that his blessed memory might protect them in childbirth.

There were well-known printing houses in the Sephardi Community of Leghorn. In the 17th century, the *Caf Nahat* press had been run by a man from Smyrna, whose son soon took it back to the Levant.[51] After that there was silence for almost a century, until the Inquisition was abolished in Tuscany in 1782. After that time the rabbis submitted their writings to the *Massari*, who in turn submitted them to the Catholic authorities for their *imprimatur*. R. Abram Isaac Castello owned a printing house with the brothers Sadun as collaborators. They published almost all the works of Azulai, also the *Zohar*, (the Book of Splendour) in three volumes. They had five men and a clerk on their staff. The printing-house of Moses Attias ben Joseph was active from 1762 until 1767. He was the successor of Israel de Moses de Paz in the business of printing prayer-books and other volumes on religion. The printing-house of Abraham Meldola and his nephew Raphael published books on the wedding ritual and other ceremonies. His friend and collaborator was Jacob Nunes Vaes, son of R. Isaac. Eleazar Meldola, of the well-known Leghorn family, had six sons, most of whom were typographers.[52]

Government and Commerce

The Regency for Tuscany came to an end in 1764, when Emperor Francis Stephen suddenly died in Innsbruck. His elder son Joseph became emperor and his second son Peter Leopold, at the age of eighteen, was proclaimed Grand Duke of Tuscany. Young as he was, the new Grand Duke was imbued with the ideas of the French Encyclopaedists and was gifted with exceptional brains. Within a few years he brought Tuscany to the forefront as one of the most progressive states in Europe. In 1765 Peter Leopold and his wife Maria Louisa visited Leghorn where the Grand Duke saw the sea for the first time and was immensely interested in the harbour. He visited the synagogue, where the officials showed him the precious silver ornaments and jewels in the treasury. Leopold looked on without saying a word, but an old Israelite, more sly and far-sighted than the rest, was not pleased at all. He rebuked them repeatedly, saying: *'Oh, how silly and rash you were, to show the cream to the cat! By my life, time will come when you will be sorry for it.'* In fact, the Nation was obliged to give security to the Genoese Republic soon afterwards for one million *scudi*.[53]

The young Grand Duke insisted on visiting every kind of industry in Leghorn, including the Villareal coral factory. The coral industry was flourishing, there being about 23 coral factories in the city, almost all in Jewish hands.

The harbour itself of Leghorn was very active during the 18th century with a high percentage of British ships.

A petition concerning custom dues in 1740 addressed to the French Minister of State, Count de Maurepas, bore the signatures of Joseph de Raphael Franco, Solomon Aghib, Jecutiel Esau Coen *'fils'*, Jacob Caruel Carvalho, Daniel Esau Bonfil, Ergas de Silveira, Raphael de Emmanuel Ergas, Vitta and Joseph Alfarin, Vidal Finzi and sons, David Samuel Nunes de Paz, Judah de Raphael Faro, most of them belonging to the old Sephardi families, who had been living in Leghorn for many generations. They always had wanted to trade with the ports of the Levant and Barbary in preference to all others (they wrote), but had to desist on account of the lightering charges, which had become excessive. This was especially true of the port of Alexandria, where charges recently amounted to 6%, while taxes for British and Dutch ships were only 1% and for Venetian ships 3%. The long letter, beautifully written, contains a mass of detail.[54]

A couple of French ships chartered by the Franco brothers were captured by privateers. The French consular agent, Samuel de Silva, consequently protested to the French government over the capture of the cargo 'entrusted to the merchants of my religion Joseph and Raphael Franco.' The French government apologized, but nothing happened, for losses were commonly suffered by ship-owners.

A document addressed to the Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1773 established a fund for the support of the Merchant's Association. Some of the subscribers' names, fifty-four in all, are well known to us: Moses Samuel Enriques, David d'Abraham de Isaac Attias, David d'Abraham de Emmanuel Ergas, Solomon Aghib, Raphael Ergas, Abraham de David de Medina, Isaac de Lazarus Recanati, Joseph de Moses Franco, Moses Caravaglio, Isaac de Qu. David Attias, Jacob Pardo Roques, Raphael de Moses Ergas, Abraham Hai Ergas.

Grand Duke Peter Leopold decided to impose taxes for the election of the *Massari* in 1769, his rescript being sponsored by the principal Jews: Joseph Franco, Isaac Attias, Joseph Leon, Lazarus Recanati, Jacob de David Ergas, Judas Farro, Dr. Michael Pereira de Leon, Jacob Aghib and Jacob Bonfil. Probably they hoped to keep the highest office in the community in their own hands. Aaron Villareal was elected *Massaro* in 1772, supported by a letter from the Military Governor. Pellegrino Worms, probably of Ashkenazi origin, was *Massaro* in 1775. He had issued a loan to Empress Maria Theresa in 1758 for 40,000 florins at an interest of 4%. Another loan was issued to the government office called *Abbondanza*, for 20,000 *pezze*, a Tuscan coin. Worms founded an insurance company with twelve shareholders, in which all business shares yielded an interest of 4%.

In March 1780 Peter Leopold introduced an important reform, by which Jews in Leghorn were allowed to send one deputy to represent them at the City Council.[55] Moses Aghib's armchair of solid oak is still preserved, having the words *Moise Aghib, reg., 1790*, engraved on the back. Moses' son Solomon Vita Aghib was elected *Massaro* in 1785.

Emperor Joseph died in Vienna in 1790 and the Imperial Crown was inherited by his brother Peter Leopold, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, whose second son now became Grand Duke of Tuscany with the title of Ferdinand III. Young Ferdinand was less brilliant than his father and a weakling. When the Emperor Leopold suddenly died two years later, the new Grand Duke of Tuscany was unable to carry through his father's reforms, and the Constitution, planned by Leopold and his Prime Minister, Fr. M. Gianni, was never applied. However, Leghorn continued to thrive in its own way, but signs of decadence began to be felt, owing to competition from the harbour of Genoa.

Leghorn and England

Intellectuals from England were powerfully attracted by Leghorn's mild climate and flourishing British colony. Tobias Smollett was buried in the Anglican cemetery, whilst Edward Gibbon, although he spent only two days in Leghorn, managed to write some significant paragraphs about its living conditions and on its religious tolerance towards Jews, greater than towards

Protestants.[56]

Anglophilia developed in Leghorn and many Jewish families had at least one member settled in London. Isaac Aghib lived there for many years, maintaining active business relations with his relatives in Leghorn. The names of Solomon (1748) and Jacob Aghib (1785) occur in London documents.[57]

Abraham Franco and his two sons, Moses and Raphael, who were born in Leghorn, settled in London. Their names headed the list on a petition which was presented to the East India Company in 1769 with fourteen signatures of merchants in coral, diamonds, jewels and silver. One of the signatories was Benjamin Disraeli, grandfather of Lord Beaconsfield. Incidentally, older Benjamin's second wife, *née* Villareal, was born in Leghorn,[58] as was the famous Sir Moses Montefiore, born in 1784.

The French Revolution

Bonaparte occupied Leghorn in 1796 and again in 1799. Many Jews were favourable to the French Republicans and raised the Tree of Liberty in the Jewish quarter. Willingly or not, fifty-seven Jewish families gave hospitality to the ragged and tired French troops in 1796, but the *Massari* were generally furious. Solomon Michell wrote three venomous articles in the journal *L'amica della Patria*[59] againt the *Massari*, whose names in 1799 were Isaac Picciotto, Moses Duran, Isaac Fonseca Silva, Solomon Aghib and Prospero Montefiore.

Some Sephardim were bewildered by the unstable conditions in 1799 and suddenly decided to emigrate to Palestine. They attempted to buy the city of Jerusalem from the Turkish Ali Bey (possibly Mohamet Ali); he consented but asked an exorbitant price. The Sephardim's hopes fell, but they asked for help from the Jews in England and France. Unfortunately negotiations soon came to an end.[60]

In 1807, Tuscany was incorporated in the French Empire. Napoleon established a *Consistoire* for all Jews in his dominions and gave Leghorn the same rules as Bordeaux. This decision, which seemed to be liberal and wise, proved to be the death warrant for many Jewish communities.[61] Leghorn never regained its Jewish independence, not even during the restoration under Grand Dukes Ferdinand III in 1814 and Joseph II in 1824. After Tuscany became a part of Italy, in 1848 and 1859, Leghorn's Jews completely identified with other Italian citizens and proved to be good patriots. The harbour of Leghorn lost its freedom from customs fees in 1868 and surrendered its importance to Genoa and Naples.

The Nineteenth Century

During the nineteenth century, Leghorn slowly went downhill, until it

became simply a provincial town. However, Jews went on occupying high positions in trade, culture and society. They owned beautiful homes, both in the city and in residential areas toward the hills in the South.

One great rabbi in Leghorn was Elijah Benamozegh (1823-1900), 'the Plato of Italian Hebraism.' He was the author of important French books: *Spinoza et la Cabbale*, *Morale juive et morale chrétienne*, *Israel et l'humanité* and other writings in which he compared the spiritual beauty of Judaism with Christianity. Benamozegh attracted many Gentiles by preaching Noahism, according to which all humanity descending from Noah could become Jewish.[62] One of Benamozegh's French disciples Aime Pallière, wrote about his spiritual experiences in a book, *Le sanctuaire inconnu* (1926).

Jews were active in Italian politics during the nineteenth century, and were good patriots during the first World War, in Livorno as elsewhere. Deputies in Parliament included Emmanuel Modigliani (1872-1947), a socialist, Darius Cassuto, a liberal lawyer and senator, and Max Bondi, a democrat. Hubert Mondolfi was a socialist Mayor of the city. He died young.[63]

The Uzielli family were influential bankers. R. Abraham Uzielli's son Gustav wrote a book on the scientific activity of Grand Duke Ferdinand I.[64] There were many Jewish musicians in Leghorn. The composer Frederic Consolo (1841-1905), who was born in Ancona, spent most of his life in Leghorn. He published the traditional melodies of the *Scola Spagnola* in a rare volume, long since out of print. Guy Menasci (1867-1925), a professor of comparative literature and a poet,[65] wrote the libretto for Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana* in 1890. Peter Mascagni, a poor boy of Livorno, had his musical education paid for by a group of five gentlemen of Leghorn, three of whom were Jews. One of them, Guy Cave Bondi, an engineer and musician, remained Mascagni's friend for life. *Cavalleria rusticana* had an interpreter famous all over the world in a Jew from Leghorn, the baritone Marius Ancona. Gaston Bernheimer was a sensitive virtuoso and composer. His brother Charles was also musical and the author of works on Sanskrit and Hebrew palaeography and bibliography. Arnold Bonaventura (1862-1922) 'the champion of music', was the author of *Musicisti livornesi* and other books.[66] Doctor Abraham Basevi (1818-1885) wrote books on music and philosophy.[67] Sabatino Lopes, who was born in Leghorn from an ancient Sephardi family, was a brilliant playwright.

Another well-known author was Dino Provenzal. His sense of humour is evident in *La Capitale del mondo*, where he imagines Leghorn to be the capital of the world. Guy Bedarida's *Ebrei di Livorno* contains 80 sonnets in *giudaico-livornese*, some traditional and the remainder composed by himself. Bedarida also wrote *Ebrei d'Italia*.

The ancient tradition of printing in Leghorn was continued and revived in 1834 by Solomon Belforte and is still active in the same family, with works

in Italian and Hebrew.[68]

There were Jewish painters in Leghorn in the nineteenth century. Serafino de Tivoli (1826-1893), who went to Paris in 1855, was inspired by the impressionists to lead the *macchiaioli* movement of Tuscan impressionists. He is called 'the father of the *macchaioli*.' Ulvi Liegi (anagram of Luigi Levi) (1865-1939) was a post-*macchiaiolo*. One of his paintings represents a service in the *Scola Spagnola*. Both de Tivoli and Levi died in poverty. Victor Corcos (1859-1933), on the contrary, soon became a fashionable painter in the principal European capitals, being called 'the Laszlo of Leghorn.' Amadeus Modigliani (1884-1920), the nephew of deputy Emmanuel Modigliani, was born in Leghorn, but spent part of his life in Paris, where he died in poverty and attained celebrity only after his death.[69]

The tradition of coral-working in Livorno was partly revived by the factory owned by Victor Chayes. His brother-in-law, Joseph Modigliani, owned a glass factory. Many flourishing commercial and industrial firms were still owned by Jews at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Leghorn continued to enjoy active commercial relations with cities and countries round the Mediterranean, North Africa, the Levant, Salonika and Corfu. Many families migrated to Leghorn from Turkish dominions, especially from Tunisia, during the nineteenth century and became conspicuous in the Sephardi Community: Franchetti, Funaro, Semama and others.

By 1921 the population of Leghorn was 124,391 but possessed only a low percentage of Jews.

After the first world war only a few Jews in Leghorn became Zionists, and yet the former prestige of the city caused it to be chosen as the seat of the Zionist Congress in 1924. Alfred Bembaron was then president of the Jewish Community with R. Alfred S. Toaff (1881-1963). Speakers included Alphonso Pacifici, Enzo Sereni, Enzo Bonaventura, Cyrus Glass, Angiolo Sacerdoti, Joseph Colombo, Guy Bedarida, Enzo Olivette and Nello Rosselli.[70] The latter, who was from a branch of the family originating in Leghorn, was to dedicate his young life to anti-fascism. He was murdered with his brother Charles by the Cagoulards in France in 1937. Enzo Sereni and Enzo Bonaventura were other martyrs of anti-fascism.

The old remnants of the Sephardi Community had almost completely disappeared from Leghorn after the second world war. Some were converted, or settled elsewhere, others died.

APPENDIX

Livornese barmitzvah and wedding celebrations

Some family documents in our possession provide glimpses of private life in Sephardi Leghorn. Moses Aghib, Solomon's son, was married in 1750

when he was about fifteen to Sarah Tedeschi, an Ashkenazi damsel from Reggio, in the duchy of Modena. Intermarriages between Sephardim and Ashkenazim seldom occurred, and this was an exception. The bride's *ketubah* is beautifully painted on parchment and decorated with flowers and leaves. A silken record of the wedding is printed in Italian, with a *Cantata* composed by the bride's brother, Leon Tedeschi. On another white silk token of this wedding, printed in Hebrew, Sarah 'Askenazi' is coming from 'Regis' on the river Po, while Moses Aghib sees her coming towards him like a big bird. He comes from Damascus and is living in Leghorn on the sea-shore. Silken tokens used to be distributed to guests at wedding festivities which lasted eight days

Another silken token commemorates the wedding of Jacob and Anne Aghib, the son and daughter of two brothers. The wording is printed in Italian. (A description of the same wedding is to be found in the *Annali del porto di Livorno*, hand-written in 63 volumes by Peter Bernard Prato). This man had been a sea captain until he retired to the customs service in Leghorn harbour, where he must have met the Aghibs and possibly been invited to the marriage festivities. Prato describes the beautiful home of the Aghibs with modern furniture. *Maestro* Horace Mei, the organist of the Cathedral, composed some special music and Peter Nardini, a violinist of Leghorn, played a Sonata and the bride, 'as an amateur,' sang an aria. His Highness, the Military Governor of Leghorn, was a guest as were the naval and military officers, all the nobility and the leading merchants in Leghorn. Nardini, a famous composer as well as a violin virtuoso, was chief musician at the Court in Florence.

Two further silken tokens commemorate the *barmitzvah* of the boy Solomon, Moses Aghib's third son, in 1775. An Academy was held at home, where Solomon discussed two "Conclusions of logic and cosmogony" and explained some Propositons of Euclid. His teacher, the celebrated R. Abraham Castello, highly praised his pupil's achievements. On the silk token, printed in Italian, is a *Cantata* composed by Joseph Aubert; the printing is surmounted by symbolic figures in the newly introduced neo-classical style. The Hebrew token has verses and a riddle by an intimate friend of the Aghibs, Abraham Castello's son Joseph, 'the youngest doctor in Leghorn.'

NOTES

Abbreviation: *R.M.I.* = *Rassegna Mensile di Israel*

1 Guido SONNINO, 'Storia della tipografia ebraica in Livorno,' extract from *Il Vessillo Israelitico* (Turin, 1912) pp. 3, 9.; Guiseppe VIVOLI, *Annali di Livorno dalla sua origine sino all' anno di Gesu Cristo 1840* (Livorno, 1844), III, pp. 194-5.

2 VIVOLI, *op. cit.*, III pp. 200, 227. TOAFF, 'Statuti e leggi della Nazione ebraea di Livorno. I, Gli statuti del 1655,' *R.M.I.* September, 1968 pp. 11, 39, note 11.

3 Isaac MENDES, *Daniellillo recuesta a los cristianos*, (Amsterdam, 1738) quoted by Cecil ROTH, 'I marrani di Roma, Pisa e Firenze,' *R.M.I.*, (1968) XXXIV, no. 11 (3rd series), Roth, 'Notes sur les marranes de Livorno,' *R.E.J.* (1936) p.5.
4 Renzo TOAFF, 'Il Libro Nuovo di statuti della Nazione ebrea di Pisa (1637) *'Scritti sull' ebraismo in memoria di Guido Bedarida* (Florence, 1966).
5 TOAFF, 'Statuti e leggi . . . 1655 *op. cit.* p.3.
6 Details on the *Haskamoth* in TOAFF, *op. cit.*, pp. 6, 7, 8, II, 39, note 11; 40, note 18; 44, note 46; 45, note 65.
7 TOAFF, *ibid* p.9.
8 TOAFF, 'Statuti e leggi della Nazione ebrea di Liverno, dal 1685 al 1677,' *R.M.I.* XXXVI, no. 3, 3rd series (March 1972). A printed copy in Portuguese of the *Hebra's* Statutes, in possession of Sig. Nella Enriques Arias, in Florence, gives a list of all its members.
9 From a signet ring belonging to Miss Anne Olivetti (Florence) and one belonging to Mr. Alfred Aghib (Milan).
10 Alfred RUBENS, 'Anglo-Jewish coats of arms', quoted in Alberto FRANCO, *I Franco a Londra nei secoli XVIII e XVII*, (in press).
11 Solomon GRAYZEL, *A History of the Jews*, (Philadelphia) pp. 375-376. Flora AGHIB LEVI D'ANCONA, 'Marche di febbrica e vecchie traditzioni,' *Quaderni della Labronica*. no. 7, (Leghorn, 1976) pp. 26-28. ROTH, *A short history of the Jewish People,* p. 2.
12 From the Archives of the Jewish Community, Leghorn.
13 Attilio MILANO, *Storia degli ebrei d'Italia*, (Turin, 1963). pp. 632-634.
14 ROTH, *A History of the Marranos*, (Philadelphia, 1941) pp. 291, 312, 333.
15 VIVOLI, *op. cit.*, III, p. 211; p. 215, note 98.
16 *ibid* III, p. 202
17 *ibid* p. 147.
18 *ibid* III pp. 390
19 *ibid* pp. 291, 313, note 132
20 ROTH, *A History of the Marranos*, *op. cit.*, p. 268. ROTH, 'Notes sur les Marranos de Livourne,' *R.E.J.* (1936) p. 8
21 *ISAIAH*, xxi 14
22 ROTH, *op. cit.*, p. 313
23 For wedding ceremonies and other festivities, see MILSNO, *op. cit.*, pp. 552-559.
24 PERA, *Curiosità livornesi*, (Livorno, 1888). *Filze* of the State Archives, Florence, LXVIII, p. 123.
25 PERA, *Biografie livornesi*, p. 205
26 SONNINO, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
27 MILANO, *op. cit.*, p. 562.
28 Alfredo TOAFF, 'Trattative diplomatiche fra Toscana a Spagna per gli ebrei di Livorno (1694-1695)', *Scritti in memoria di Riccardo Bachi*, *R.M.I.*, vol. XVI, no. 6-8, (Città di Castello, 1950) pp. 57-60.
29 Guido BEDARIDA, *Ebrei di Livorno*, (Florence, 1956) Sonnet 7, p. 12.
30 Georg Christoph MARTINI, *Viareggio in Toscana*, 1725-1745, Italian translation and introduction by Oscar TRUMPY, (Massa, 1969) pp. 53-54.
31 MARTINI, *op. cit.*, p. 51
32 Leon POLIAKOFF, 'Un tentative di Venezia per attirare gli ebrei di Livorno,' *R.M.I.* vol. XXIII, 1937, pp. 291-297.
33 VIVOLI, *op. cit.*, p. 316, note 159.
34 SONNINO, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
35 *ibid* p. 467, ROTH, *op. cit.*, p. 354
36 ROTH, *A History of the Marranos*, p. 217.
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40 PERA, *Nuove curiosità livornesi*, II, pp. 227, 228.
41 For the life and works of Joseph Attias, see VIVOLI, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 3, note 386; PERA, *Ricordi e biografie livornesi*, (Leghorn, 1867) I, pp. 156-157; TOAFF, 'Vita artistica e letteraria degli ebrei di Livorno nel '700', *R.M.I.*, vol. VII, (2nd series), vol. 7, 8, November-December, 1938, pp. 373-374.
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46 *Jewish Encyclopedia* under CASTELLO.
47 TOAFF, *op. cit.*, pp. 474-475.
48 VIVOLI, *Guida di Livorno antico e moderno dei Juoghi più notabili dei suoi contorni in 1647 (Florence) p. 45*
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51 SONNINO, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-27
52 SONNINO, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-54.
53 PERA. *Appendice ai Ricordi,* p.23.
54 Archives nationales de France, quoted by FRANCO. *Dati sparsi della Franco, etc. (in press).*
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57 FRANCO, *I Franco a Londra nei secoli XVII e XIX, in press.*
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65 A Commemoration of Menesci, *La Rivista di Livorno*, 1st year, March 1926, p. 102.
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69 Paolo D'ANCONA, 'Quatro maestri ebrei della pittura moderna Italiana, '*Scritti in memoria di Sally Mayer*, (Jerusalem, 1956), pp. 75-77. For Serafino de Tivoli, see Piero DINI, Alba DEL SOLDATO, *Lettere inedite dei Macchiaioli* (Florence, il Torchio, 1975) p. 186.
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THE JEWS OF SALONIKA IN THE OTTOMAN PERIOD

by
J. Nehama

I. SPANISH EXILES IN TURKEY

The coming to power of the sultans

The Osmanli Turks left the plateau of Mongolia at the beginning of the 14th century and their advance, marked by a bewildering succession of victories and conquests, brought them to Western Asia which, at this point, marked the limits of the dominions of their brothers, the Seljuk Turks. By 1360 they were in Thrace and thirteen years later they had pitched their tents in Macedonia. The year 1453 marked the end of the Byzantine Empire with the capture of Constantinople by Mehmet II (1451-1481). Less than ten years later, the last bastion of the Latins and Byzantines, the Morea, also fell into Osmanli hands.

Under the first sultans

The Turks found Jewish communities established in even the remotest parts of the provinces they conquered. Until then the Jews had been persecuted and humiliated and they therefore welcomed their new masters as liberators and saviours. The Turks treated them benevolently for they saw in them a reliable element in the population capable of creating prosperity in the regions which they had conquered and which generations of warfare had reduced to chaos and exhaustion. Salonika, when finally captured in 1430, was an almost entirely deserted city, but was soon settled by numerous Jewish families, Byzantine, French, Spanish and Hungarian, thus paving the way for the Iberian influx from 1492 onwards. This pattern was repeated for all the Balkan towns which fell, one after the other, into the hands of the sultans.

On the third day after he had entered Constantinople, Mehmet II proclaimed that the Jews were to return without fear and move back into their homes, and were to be allowed to practise their religion and exercise their professions in complete freedom. He invited Jews from the provinces to settle

in Constantinople and appointed the Jew Yacoub as his financial adviser, and Moses Hamon, a Jew from Granada, as his personal physician. The chief rabbi, Capsali, was made a member of the sultan's council, the *divan*, together with the Ulema and the Patriarch. The various communities were given absolute freedom in the appointment of their leaders.

Life was so pleasant in the Turkish Empire that in 1440 Isaac Sarfati, himself an immigrant, sent a circular letter to the Jewish communities in Germany and Hungary inviting his fellow believers to come to settle.

Not long after, a large group of Jews which had been expelled from Hungary came to join the handful of Ashkenazim who were already living in Salonika. Most of these immigrants began to exploit the gold and silver mines of Siderokapso, in Chalkidike, and established there a small, well-organised community. Single Jewish families, from all parts of Europe, moved in from the north and were warmly welcomed. Spain, however, was to furnish by far the largest contingent.

Spanish Immigration

According to the edict which was issued on 30th March 1492, from the Alhambra Palace at Granada, all Jews who refused baptism were to be banished within four months. Of the 800,000 declared Jews who lived in Spain, only 200,000 were prepared to face exile. Half of these moved to Portugal where, some four years later, they were forced into mass conversion. The other half sailed to the various countries of the Mediterranean. A very large number landed in Turkish-held ports after incredible sufferings. Others made for the Barbary Coast and southern Italy. However, they were only allowed to enter Italy on a temporary basis and any rights of residence which they were able to obtain were unstable, sporadic and extremely expensive. Soon most of these were on the road to Turkey. They arrived in a state of complete exhaustion and poverty. Their co-religionists displayed tremendous generosity and self-sacrifice and did everything in their power to lodge and keep them until they had adapted to their new way of life and were able to find a means of earning their own living. Moses Capsali, Chief Rabbi of Constantinople, and his nephew, Elkana Capsali, organised a subscription and even went so far as to sell the sacred ornaments of the synagogues in order to meet their most pressing needs and, especially, to pay the ransoms demanded by the ships' captains who, not content with robbing them, sometimes sold them as slaves.

Immediately after the exodus of 1492, there began early in 1493, an influx into the ports of the Balkans of Jews expelled from the Spanish province of Sicily, from Portugal, Provence (1498)), from all parts of Italy and from the Barbary Coast. Portugal, especially, sent successive contingents made up of families and small groups. From 1506 onwards, *marranos* of that

country arrived in a continuous stream after a pogrom declared in Lisbon that year had given the signal for a general evacuation. This clandestine evacuation was to continue sporadically for many generations until late into the 18th century. Once they had reached Turkey these *marranos* openly returned to the faith of their fathers and exchanged their Spanish names for the Hebrew equivalent: Serrano became Harari; Paz, Shalom; Amado, Habibi; etc. They were especially remarkable for their piety and religious fervour.

Settlers in Turkey

Most of the refugees settled in the Turkish urban centres of Salonika, Constantinople, Adrianople, and also in Alexandria, Jerusalem, Safed, Beirut, etc. Large contingents went to Vallona, Arta, Corfu, Koron, Doron, Patras, Corinth, Crete, Rhodes and Cyprus, which were then Venetian colonies. The greatest number, however, settled in Salonika and Constantinople, but although in the latter city they numbered some 30,000, they were but a small proportion of the metropolis' huge population. At Salonika, on the other hand, they were from the start an impressive majority because of that city's small population. They turned the sleepy and almost deserted town into a lively centre. For this reason, the Jewish colony which settled there rapidly assumed the leadership over the other communities in Turkey. It became a haven for wanderers, a bright beacon of faith, piety and science for Judaism in Turkey. From here roads led into the hinterland of Serbia, Herzegovina and Bulgaria, to the Danube and its crossings, to Austria, Rumania and the distant frontiers of the sultans' power. The Jews settled in these vast territories, but their centre and rallying-point remained Salonika, with its harbour, numerous textile workshops and commercial counting-houses which maintained a close network of contacts of all kinds with the Turkish provinces and economic centres abroad.

The role of the immigrants

All means of making a living were open to the immigrants. The Turks, for their part, after having been soldiers, were happy to settle permanently in the fertile lands which were their's by right of conquest. The great Osmanli families filled all the important government posts, and led the army of Janissaries. As a recompense the Sultan bestowed on them vast properties and whole urban districts in the cities abandoned by the local population. However, the local inhabitants, Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians and Syrians, resented the invader. The Sultan was unable to depend on them, and they did not constitute an active and productive middle class. The country lacked craftsmen and merchants. The Jewish immigrants filled this gap and

completed the social structure. Hence they were warmly welcomed from the start because they could be trusted; and, being devoid of political ambition, would never claim territorial independence.

This, as far as the Osmanlis were concerned, was a tremendous bonus. The provinces they had seized had been for centuries the victims of foreign pillage. The Byzantines had allowed their sources of riches to be exploited by Venetians, Genoese, Pisans and Amalfitans who were interested only in their own profit. The Jews, on the other hand, were there to stay; they were residents and citizens without interests beyond Turkey.

New Jewish arrivals from the Iberian peninsula preferred to settle in areas where Turks were already settled, sometimes in the Turkish quarters themselves.

Difficulties and frustrations

Everything did not turn out, however, quite as satisfactorily as might, at first sight, have seemed. In practice, the restrictions imposed by the Byzantines survived and were aggravated by the frustrations which non-Moslems were habitually made to suffer in lands dominated by Islam. The law against building synagogues remained in force and, if the local governor was not prepared to turn a blind eye, it was necessary to obtain a special authorization from the Sublime Porte. In theory an imperial permit was even necessary in order to repair places of worship. Furthermore, a constant stream of edicts governing dress sought to restrict any ostentation among non-Moslems, both Jews and Greeks, who were never regarded as true residents. It was forbidden for them to wear costly furs, silks or brocades or to wear the *kalpak* head-dress. Riding on a horse in town, or travelling in a boat with more than two sets of oars was also forbidden. In the *hammam*, only Moslems were allowed to use large towels and wooden clogs.

Sometimes even the right to residence was called into question. In 1568, for instance, the local government of Salonika hotly contested the right of the whole community to reside in the city. But thanks to the intervention of Moses Almosnino, one of the most respected leaders of the Jews in Salonika, backed by Joseph Nasi, banker and favourite of Selim II, matters returned to normal.

Dress and luxury

The *firmans* controlling ostentatious dress remained in force, in theory at least, until the middle years of the 19th century. Indeed, they were periodically reinforced by rabbinical edicts. The leaders of the communities were constantly at pains to curb any tendency towards luxury amongst those for whom they were responsible, in order to avoid giving rise to Turkish

jealousy and cupidity. These restrictions were only applied spasmodically and intermittently; more often than not, as in Byzantine times, they were totally ignored in the provinces and officials were not concerned with enforcing them. The only preoccupation of the latter was to grow rich. Throughout the empire, almost all offices and posts were venal and were traded between members of the Moslem ruling classes. Once he had secured his post, the *vali* or *cadi* would lose no time in making it pay and amassing as quickly as possible the maximum amount of booty. The *raya* (non-Moslems) had to foot the bill on a series of the most futile and fantastic pretexts.

Leading figures

However, the Jews were not singled out in this respect; misfortunes and calamities were the lot of all *rayas* and even, sometimes, of the Moslems themselves. All were subject to the tyrannies of plague and other epidemics, fire, the demands of the soldiery, highway robbers, pirates at sea.

The lot of the Jews was possibly less harsh than that of most other *millets* (ethnic minorities). Some of the Jews who came from Christian countries were highly regarded at court and used their influence to secure the goodwill of their masters towards their co-religionists. Foremost among those favoured were the physicians who had graduated from the universities of Spain, Portugal or Italy. Their craft secured for them high positions with those in authority. It was not uncommon for their knowledge of the language and customs of the west, and their contacts abroad, to be drawn upon in matters of state relating to the diplomacy of Christian rulers in current international politics. The sultans, therefore, frequently used them as ambassadors. In the 15th century, John Giaccobe de Gaëta served three successive Turkish sultans. The Hamon family, which originated in Granada, was employed without interruption during four reigns, from 1492 to 1578, and as a result Judaism in the empire benefited to the highest degree.

One *marrano* family from Lisbon, including Beatrice de Luna, alias Gracia, widow of the rich banker, Francisco Mendes, and the latter's nephew and son-in-law, João Miquez, alias Joseph Nasi, son of the king of Portugal's personal physician, played a major part in international finance. After a series of fantastic adventures, they arrived in Constantinople as refugees in 1553 where they immediately dominated high-level banking and commerce both within the country and abroad and exercised a considerable influence on the politics and diplomacy of Turkey. It became evident when, in 1556, the Inquisition condemned 25 *marranos* to the stake in Ancona, a city which carried on a thriving trade with Turkish ports; Gracia Mendes and her son-in-law ordered the boycott of Ancona. The merchants of Salonika and of other Turkish cities obeyed the order and drove Ancona, one of the most prosperous markets of Italy, to ruin. Joseph Nasi, a close friend of Selim II

(1555-1574), undertook to revive Galilee. He rebuilt Tiberias and founded a weaving industry there whose existence was, however, short-lived. Selim made him Duke of Naxos and gave him the twelve Cycladic islands as his appanage. The Nasi family held both the title and the appanage until the end of the 16th century. They founded synagogues, seminaries and hospitals; their sponsorship of scholars and poets gained them immense prestige.

Arts, crafts and industry

Thus, exiles from the Iberian penisula found the situation in Turkey extremely favourable towards carrying on their professions and occupations. They had at their disposal a vast capital of theoretical and technical information in all matters relating to production and trade. They arrived at precisely the right moment to consolidate the Osmanli conquests. For two centuries they were to play a major role in the provinces under Ottoman domination. From the time of their arrival in 1507, they supplied the imperial army with heavy artillery, all types of fire-arms and gunpowder. They minted coins of all denominations and put them into circulation without any restriction since no law forbade this.

Sicilian Jews, who had been expelled from their island in 1493 by their Spanish masters, were experts in the art of weaving and developed that branch of industry which was to provide the Sephardim of the Turkish empire with their greatest source of wealth. Among them, too, there were iron- and tin-smiths and carpenters. They also possessed the secret of the manufacture of a highly-prized glazed ware known as "oyas de Mesina" (Messina ceramics). First and foremost, however, they were weavers and dyers. The looms (*telares*) clacked ceaselessly and produced vast quantities of sheets, carpets and pile blankets which were marketed throughout the east and also found lucrative outlets in Italy, Provence and as far as Martinique.

It is necessary to insist on the prime importance of weaving and dyeing among Iberian and Sicilian Jews in Turkey. These were favoured crafts and all worked at them, whatever their regular or primary means of livelihood. In Salonika, in all the towns of Macedonia, Thrace and Thessaly, whatever their walk in life, all members of a family would busy themselves around the *telares*. Wools were handled, fulled, washed, carded, spun and dyed.

A large proportion of the textiles was exported, but the greater part was needed to fulfil tax requirements. From the last third of the 16th century onwards, the large community of Jews in Salonica paid its taxes in lengths of cloth which were used for equipping the army of the Janissaries. In effect this industry became a monopoly since it was forbidden to export local wool. For ten generations it was a means of livelihood for huge numbers of Jewish workers.

Trade

As soon as they had settled in Salonika and elsewhere, the Sephardim monopolised internal trade and also handled almost all foreign trade. They had a ready-made network of contacts throughout the country and in all the great cities of Europe. An intense trade developed between Salonika and the ports of Asia Minor, Egypt, the Ionian Isles, Crete, the Peloponnese and Chalkis. Their influence extended to the Danube and beyond, to Hungary, Moldavia and Poland.

Venice was primarily responsible for Salonika's commercial success, since the Macedonian port became a clearing-house for the Republic's trade with the Balkans. At that time Venice was at the height of her prosperity, and was mistress of trade in Salonika. At the beginning of the 14th century she had selected the port and built it up as her main subsidiary, and had maintained there a permanent consul from the middle of the 14th century.

The merchants of Salonika and their relations in the various Levantine trade centres established their own representatives or commissioners, known as *consuls*, in every important port of the Adriatic. From Ragusa, Salonika received caravans of cereal, untanned hides, wax, honey, etc., the produce of Dalmatia and the surrounding provinces. Ancona sent fine textiles and received in exchange wheat, cattle leather, etc.

Under the impetus of its Iberian settlers, Salonika became a major centre from the very beginning of the 16th century. It acted as a pump, sucking in the riches of the Balkans and flooding the peninsula with every manner of manufactured goods. Local trade was extremely active. A large part of the town was occupied by shops, warehouses and stores. Merchants were grouped according to their profession. The largest section, in the north-west, was devoted to cereals and other agricultural produce. The main street was lined with shops dealing in textiles and clothing, whereas drugs, spices and other foreign imports were concentrated in a separate area in the very centre of the residential quarter.

Thanks to the Jews, taxes, customs and excise duties were placed on a firm footing. On the sabbath and on Jewish religious holidays all traffic ceased and the customs ground to a standstill.

Local and communal adminstration

In the Balkans, at all periods, ethnic groups which lived alongside each other were rigidly segregated. Each group was a separate nation which occupied its own quarter and had neither family nor social ties with its neighbours. Each town, therefore, consisted of a series of little cities, each surrounded by an insuperable barrier. Each nation had its own language, its own places of worship and was jealous of its own national characteristics.

Salonika was no exception, and nor were Cavalla, Demotica, Serres, Xanthia, Castoria, Larissa and the Venetian possessions at Corfu, Patras, Corinth, Chalkis and on Crete, etc. This division grew up naturally and maintained its topographic limits until quite recently.

The Spanish immigrants, used as they were to the *aljamas*, conformed to this system without any problem. Wherever they settled, they grouped themselves according to their regional origins so as to form small entities alongside the Romaniotes, and the Ashkenazim who had come from central and northern Europe after the fall of the Byzantine empire.

Each regional group, whether from Aragon, Catalonia, Toledo, Portugal, Sicily or Italy, etc., had its own spiritual leader elected by an assembly of important members of the community; each had its own religious, cultural and charitable institutions, its burial guild, its place of worship where services were celebrated according to the traditional ritual of its particular region, its school, often its seminary, its law-court, etc.; each one therefore formed a small republic, jealous of its independence, its sovereignty and its authority.

The spiritual leader played a vital part for he was the soul of the community. He had to have a broad and thorough knowledge of the Bible and of Talmudic law, together with personal qualities such as common sense, foresight and firmness. It was not necessary for him to have a diploma, a *semiha* or official recognition of learning, despite the abortive campaign led by the famous cabbalist, Jacob Berab of Safed, who, in 1553, had sought to impose on all candidates for posts in communal leadership the necessity of obtaining *semiha*.

The responsibilities of the spiritual leader were enormous: he had to teach, preach, legislate, judge and arbitrate when disputes arose among his flock; he had to proclaim and confirm the *hazakoth* or rights of pre-emption and priority; he settled arguments, dealt with commercial litigation, preserved and protected vested interests as regards the privileges confirmed by the *hazakoth*; he had to guide, counsel and console; he had to administer community finances and fulfil the functions of a guardian and a notary.

The *hazaka* was the indisputable law, regulating and governing all economic life; it protected and guaranteed the vested interests of the first occupant of a house, shop, workshop, fields, meadows and vine-yards, and also those of posts, of customers, sources of supply and outlets. It also acted as a sort of patent office so as to ensure that a patent might be held by an inventor and his descendants in perpetuity.

The early immigrants, wherever they had landed, had been obliged to settle, as and how they could, in abandoned premises which were, in theory, the property of their Turkish overlords. They were supposed to rent this accommodation for which they paid a more or less symbolic rent to a more or less authorized representative of a landlord who frequently could not be located. They risked eviction at any time by someone who was prepared to

pay more. Immediately after they had landed in Turkish ports, therefore, the rabbinical leaders would proclaim a locative *hazaka*, granting priority to the first occupant. In Salonika, such a *hazaka* came into effect as early as 1494. It was, in fact, a *moratorium* on all leases, which automatically became permanent. A locative *hazaka* rapidly became virtual ownership. It could be mortgaged, sold or sub-let; it could be given, bestowed or bequeathed; it could be passed down to one's descendants. Without it the settlement of these refugees would have been extremely difficult.

The powers of the spiritual leader were, however, controlled and limited by a council consisting of the foremost members, generally no more than seven in number, though that number could vary.

Laws and Ordinances

The community was administered by means of *haskamoth* (ordinances) which the Chief Rabbi enacted with the council's agreement and which aimed, among other things, at keeping good relations between members of the communal group, at specifying their duties and obligations as well as their rights; at maintaining order, discipline, decency and morality. The *haskamoth* prescribed moderation in matters of dress, forbade the noisy display of rejoicing in public; they also controlled competition and over-bidding in trade transactions, in the rent of houses, stores and shops, etc.

In 1567 a vitally important *haskama* ruled against matrimonial abuses. Suspect individuals, including fortune-hunters, had been exploiting the patriarchal simplicity of the marriage procedure and claimed to have married the daughters of some of the best families. The parents of young girls who had thus been trapped, were forced to pay a very high price in order to obtain the imposters' repudiation of the marriage. This practice had become a source of scandal and an attempt was made to remedy the situation by an edict insisting on the presence of ten witnesses of which one, at least, had to be a member of the bride's family, for the marriage to be valid.

The *Beth Din* consisted of three *dayyanim* (judges) and a recorder who dealt with all the problems concerning marriage, re-marriage, repudiation, the re-marriage of a widow by her brother-in-law, pensions and inheritance.

Generally the *dayyanim* sought to resolve disputes through conciliation, for it was essential to prevent the faithful from bringing internal litigation before the Ottoman judicial authorities and this was, indeed, strictly forbidden. Everything was done so as to avoid the intervention of Turkish magistrates and officials in Jewish affairs. Contravening this ruling was considered to be a serious offence because invariably this led to pressure being brought to bear, blackmail, extortion and bribery.

The judicial penalties imposed by the *Beth Din* were effective. Apart from the *herem* (excommunication) in various degrees, judges could set fines,

and impose sentences of physical punishment and even imprisonment, either in the community prison, if there was one, or in a state prison. The Chief Rabbi's *takir* or official notification, sent to the *Vali* and ordering the condemned man's imprisonment, was a valid writ of execution.

Taxes

Although the faithful were split up into small republics on a regional basis, each centred on its own synagogue within the walls of the same town, this did not prevent good relations and collaboration between them. The synagogue brotherhoods united under the direction of a co-ordinating committee which generally consisted of the spiritual leaders and of a small number of leading members of the community, whose aim it was to watch over common interests, especially in presenting a united front in matters of tax. The prime function of this federal committee was to gather together the resources necessary to meet the total tax requirements of the state. The *Porte* did not concern itself with regional divisions and treated Jews from a given locality as forming one entity. It fixed a sum for each town which had to be paid by the population as a whole, generally Turks, Jews and Greeks. The amount to be paid by each ethnic group or *millet* was agreed upon periodically by the representatives of each group meeting together under the chairmanship of the local governor. The total tax was roughly divided according to the size of each group, taking into account their economic prosperity.

It was not easy to comply with tax requirements. Foremost among these was the *haradj*, a *per capita* tax payable by *raya* (non-Moslem) adult males. The agreement reached between the different *millets* within a given town as to how the global sum of the *haradj* was to be split up, was valid for a period of three years. Each ethnic group was divided into three categories of taxpayers; the "rich" paid the tax in full, the "middle" group paid half the tax and the "poor" only a quarter. Furthermore, the *rayas* were subject to a number of additional payments, some of which were fixed and permanent, while others were sporadic, temporary, or more or less arbitrary. There were taxes for the upkeep of the army and the roads, for the building or repair of fortifications, for keeping the sultan's flocks, for a dispensation against having soldiers billeted, etc. Rates for drinking water, gardens and vinyards had to be paid and inheritances were taxed. There was a more or less symbolic tax, which Jews only seemed to remember intermittently, according to which they were supposed to contribute towards the upkeep of the Chief Rabbi in Constantinople: his hegemony over all the Jewish communities of the empire was more a myth than a reality since each local group was jealous for the preservation of its independence. People living in a neighbourhood where a corpse had been found would have to pay large sums to officials in order not to be subject to legal proceedings.

Fiscal cloth

From 1568 onwards, the community in Salonika paid the *haradj* with cloth which was to be made up into Janissary uniforms. Inspection of this cloth was extremely thorough and took place in the capital. The departure of the cloth and its journey by caravan or by ship to Constantinople was followed with great anxiety by the whole Jewish population. When it was handed over, real tragedy could ensue. Blackmail, pressure, extortion and all manner of intrigue were common. In 1637, the authorities who received the cloth declared it to be of inferior quality and the Salonika delegate, Judah Covo, who was a highly respected citizen, was condemned to death and beheaded.

The collection of taxes gave rise to recriminations, riots and evasion. Those who were recalcitrant were hunted down and forced to pay up. The tax authorities were ferocious and, if there was any delay in the payment of the *haradj*, the civil and religious leaders were considered responsible for their community's shortcomings and imprisoned. The *haradj* tax was a permanent running sore, from generation to generation, which affected all the Jewish communities of the empire. It was only abolished in 1855 when the *Divan* instituted military service for all *rayas*.

Internal discipline

Each regional community within a town would provide for its own religious expenses, education and welfare, from voluntary donations, bequests and, especially, from the *pesha* — an annual tax on the supposed capital or, failing that, on the annual profits which a tax-payer was normally supposed to realise. Furthermore, the communal treasury received regular income from the taxes levied on all food and especially on meat. This was easy to tax since all animals slaughtered for eating were only declared *kasher* if they had been despatched by the official slaughterer (*shohet*); wine, spirits and cheese etc., were also taxed.

Although there was a tremendous feeling of solidarity and an admirable spirit of self-sacrifice within families, people frequently fought against the yoke of their spiritual and lay leaders. The supremacy of the rich was difficult to endure. Questions of precedence, claims to *kabod* in the distribution of duties and honours and in the organisation of matters relating to worship also gave rise to divisions and splits in the synagogues. Nevertheless, in daily life, traditions were respected and the people were strongly conservative, sincerely and fervently pious.

Merging of communities

After a few generations matrimonial alliances, business mergers and neighbourhood friendships led to a blurring of regional distinctions. The Spanish element was by far the most important and gradually the Romaniotes and the Ashkenazim were assimilated to it. Salonika, especially, rapidly became a Latin island in the midst of the stormy Balkan seas. The city took on a purely Spanish appearance, with the language, customs, dress and manners of Aragon and Castile.

The Portuguese who were mostly of Spanish origin, settled predominantly in the towns of the interior. Those of them who stayed in Salonika rapidly became part of the Spanish majority.

The Italians were the first to join the Spanish. The Romaniotes went on speaking Greek for a long time and maintained their rituals and customs: it took them eight generations before they finally decided to merge with the Iberian mass. The Ashkenazim remained almost totally exclusive, except in the matter of speech which they rapidly adopted from the Spanish. Nevertheless, after six or seven generations, marriage and social and economic contacts did lead to some families merging

From early times Karaites had settled throughout the Turkish provinces and also in Constantinople; they survived until recently, with small groups in all the major cities of the Ottoman empire. They remained strictly segregated from the Rabbanites who felt for them nothing but revulsion and horror. They had their own institutions and abstained from all social contact with those surrounding them. They were strictly endogamous and frequently practised bigamy, much to their neighbours' disgust. Very occasionally they turned to rabbis for advice which would be given reluctantly and often with obvious distaste.

Intellectual life

The Iberian immigrants immediately dominated the Orient, not only because of their numbers, but also because of their cultural superiority. Very soon, throughout the Turkish provinces in Europe, Castilian became the language of all Jews, except those who lived in areas where Arabic was the main language.

Salonika attracted an intellectual aristocracy, acquired very much the character of a university city and became the beacon of Judaism in the Balkans. The Jewish population there was larger than that of Turks and Greeks together. Schools and *yeshiboth* abounded and were well supported by munificent gifts and bequests.

Apart from large numbers of local students, there were many young students from all corners of the Turkish empire and even from Italy. The

Talmud Torah was founded in 1520 and was to survive without interruption for 423 years. It only disappeared in 1943 when the Salonika colony itself was destroyed. During the whole of its existence, it was Salonika's pride. It was at one and the same time a school open to all and a vast federal temple where the many regional groups within the town could join in worship. Here solemn ceremonies took place and popular assemblies which all attended without social or regional differentiation; here also important decisions were announced to the faithful of all the various synagogues.

In the *Talmud Torah*, secular culture, Latin and Arab humanism, medicine, astronomy and the natural sciences were taught alongside Jewish studies.

One branch of the rich Yahia family flourished in the town. It was well known in intellectual circles because of the love and enthusiasm of its members for things of the spirit and also because of its generous sponsorship. The Yahias lodged the famous Amatus Lusitanus (1511-1568) when he fled from the auto-da-fé at Ancona and, after many peregrinations, sought refuge at Salonika in 1559. This illustrious scholar, the glory of the medical world, trained many disciples and stimulated the love of learning during the decade he lived in Salonika. He died of the plague while tending the sick during an epidemic.

All teaching was carried out in Hebrew which was known by all the upper and middle classes; nor was it rare to find excellent Hebrew scholars in the lower and working classes. Knowledge of Castilian and Latin enabled a large élite to maintain contact with the western world. The influence of the Italian Renaissance, in which Jewish scholars played such a conspicuous part, was evident. In about 1570, Guedalia Yahia founded a literary society which met in his family home. During its half-century existence it brought together large numbers of intellectuals, humanists, poets and musicians who carried on a lively correspondence with Jewish literary circles throughout Turkey. Among its leaders was the poet Saadia Longo. There were regular meetings during which members made their works known: lyric poems, musical compositions, liturgical chants, hymns, epithalamia and even, occasionally, non-religious songs. Frequently poems were recited there which had been sent from different parts of the Turkish empire.

There were many intellectual leaders during the golden age of Judaism in Salonika, which lasted from the very beginning of the 16th century until the first decades of the 17th. Among the most notable were Jacob Habib, author of *'Ein Ya-akob*, and his son Levy, who settled in Jerusalem in 1524 where he became leader of the local rabbinical establishment, Joseph Taïtaçak, Perahia the Italian, Isaac Adarbi, Moses Almosnino. Towering above them all was Samuel de Medina whose legal work remains an imperishable monument. Solomon ha-Cohen and Hayyim Shabbetai were dominant figures during the first half of the 17th century.

Education was generalised and almost none were illiterate. In their free time *yeshiboth* were willingly attended by private individuals, merchants and all types of working men. In every household the family would listen with interest, while working at their looms, to readings from Zaraya's *Sefer ha-yashar*, from the *Zohar* or from some other instructive and edifying work. People were proud of their knowledge of the Bible and Talmud and would take part with enthusiasm in scholarly disputation and controversy during meetings with friends, family reunions or evening discussions. Very early on, certainly by 1515 and possibly as early as 1479, printing presses were producing rituals, didactic works and sections of the Talmud, which were made available to the public at modest prices. The 16th century was the golden age of eastern Jewry. Their rich Spanish culture remained alive among them and was periodically renewed and strengthened by the influx of *marranos* from Iberian territories, especially Portugal.

Dark times

At the beginning of the 17th century, however, there appeared the first symptoms of a decline as the powerful grip of the sultans slackened. Furthermore, the influx of *marranos* dwindled as Amsterdam and Livorno offered them an alternative. Thanks to Turkish peace, oriental Jewry had reached a culminating point between 1550 and 1600. After this golden age, it continued to take advantage of its contacts with Venice whose agents in the Balkans were the Ottoman Jews and, more particularly, those of Salonika.

Turkey, however, slid rapidly into disorder. The sultans who succeeded each other on the throne during the three-quarters of century after Suleyman the Magnificent (1520-1566) were degenerate. They were incapable of curbing harem feuds, sedition in the army, riots among the population or administrative extortion. Public finances were pillaged and draconian taxes brought about the country's economic exhaustion.

Taxation was the perpetual nightmare of the non-Moslems. The Jewish communities in the empire fought without respite and with growing anxiety as their leaders were forced to put pressure on the masses in order to satisfy devouring tax requirements. Murad IV, both a mystic and a drunkard, gained a reputation for despotism and ferocity. He doubled and tripled the amount tax-payers had to pay and ordered a huge tax on capital. This capital levy hit all sections of the community. Homes and businesses were abandoned, people changed house and sought escape in order to avoid the weight of the taxes, but they were tracked down wherever they sought to hide.

Community leaders tried to create a monopoly in the manufacture of textiles in an attempt to control the quality of its manufacture and to reduce costs, but they were unable to achieve their ends. The monopoly was badly organised and the whole affair was bungled. The workers murmured and

rebelled and the cloth, becoming increasingly coarse, lost its reputation. The Janissaries rejected it and sold it off cheaply as soon as they received it. The army progressively reduced its orders. Fewer people were interested in textiles and these ceased to be made in the homes so that an important source of income for the working classes tended gradually to disappear.

Chaos abounded in the provinces. Highway-robbery and piracy were on the increase. In 1617 a rich caravan, returning from the famous Dolia fair, was cut to pieces by a band of brigands. It moved the people of Salonika into mourning for a long time.

II. SHABBETAIAN DISRUPTION

Waiting for the Messiah

Often the Iberian exiles sought comfort in the midst of their tribulations by entertaining Messianic illusions. For many, the hour of the *Geula* was fast approaching. They sought inspiration in the study of the *Zohar* and in the mysteries of *Cabbala*. In the Sephardic stronghold of Salonika, a legion of scholars, among whom Samuel Franco and Joseph Taïtaçak were prominent, based their study of the Bible on mysticism and allegory. Solomon Molho, alias Diego Pires (c.1500-1532), a young Portuguese *marrano*, left his country in order to become the fanatical supporter of the strange impostor David Reubeni; he was initiated into the secret of the *Zohar* in Salonika, and his preaching helped to foster the myth of the Coming. Under Isaac Luria and his disciple Haim Vital, Safed became the Mecca of mysticism. They built up a coherent system for the *Cabbala* which spread throughout the diaspora, including Turkey. The *Zohar* was studied and dissected in all the *yeshiboth*; it was the subject of family readings in every household. Preachers filled their sermons with cabbalistic comment. Initiates revealed that in order to hasten the Messiah's coming, even more fervour was required. The faithful underwent lengthy, sometimes week-long, fasts and self-flagellation. Emissaries from the Holy Land, especially those of Safed, were received with the highest honours.

The mystic doctrine was openly accepted by the masses and influenced the whole of eastern Jewry. During the first decades of the 17th century it expanded and became more virulent. The more enlightened rabbinical leaders were well aware of the dangers of this state of mind, but they were unable to make any impact on this mass hysteria.

Shabbetai Zevi

Shabbetai Zevi, born on the 9th of Ab of the year 5386 (August 1626), first came to prominence as a youth in Smyrna, where he was a member of the

Jewish community which was a colony of Salonika.

At an early age he threw himself into studying with exuberant zeal and soon acquired a profound knowledge of the Talmud. At sixteen he plunged into the mysteries of the *Cabbala*, and was just eighteen when he was ordained a rabbi.

Gradually a wild dream took root in his brain: why should not he, Shabbetai, be the one chosen by God to lead Israel towards the goal promised by the Prophets? He revealed himself secretly to a small number of close admirers and then publicly in the synagogue. The rabbinical leaders were appalled. They excommunicated the agitator and his supporters, and called on the Turkish authorities for help. Shabbetai took fright and left Smyrna, seeking refuge in Salonika (1651), where he led a discreet, humble and quiet life. For six years he remained silent, but on Pentecost of the year 5317 (18th May 1657), amidst hysterical enthusiasm of the populace, he declared himself, once again, to be the Messiah. Finally, denounced as being a dangerous impostor, Shabbetai was taken to Adrianople and brought before the sultan, Mehmet IV, where he humbly asked for pardon and sought to become a Moslem. On 24th September 1666, he was officially converted and took the name of Mehmet Effendi.

The Adrianople about-turn caused consternation and confusion among the Messiah's disciples. In Smyrna, Constantinople, Salonika and all the communities of the Ottoman empire, there were mass conversions to Islam. Most people felt they were following the wishes of a leader whom they continued to venerate.

However, Shabbetai himself was far from being wiser. From Adrianople he went to Constantinople, drifting between Islam and Judaism. He forestalled a denunciation by taking himself off to Salonika, where he rapidly won over some prominent rabbis. Following his example, his disciples sought conversion and treated their former co-religionists with condescension and insolence.

In Salonika, as in all the Jewish communities of Turkey, everything was chaos and confusion. Life was unbearable in the Jewish quarter with constant and violent arguments developing into brawls, armed fights, and not infrequently, murders.

The civil and religious authorities in Constantinople followed these appalling upheavals with consternation. The impostor was arrested and deported to Dulcigno in Montenegro, thence to Elbasan in Albania, and finally to a fortress in Beret. Attended by his wife and by a handful of disciples who had followed him into exile, the pitiful paranoiac died unnoticed in a distant corner of the vast Turkish empire on 17 September 1676.

The unrest continued, however, and individual apostasies took place without interruption. Seven years after his death, no less than 300 families

together celebrated their conversion to Islam. The richest members of the Jewish population abandoned Judaism and the Salonika community thus found itself deprived of the element which had been responsible for its economic vitality and which, among other things, had accounted for the major part of the collective tax payments.

However, the community leaders rapidly took charge of the situation. By their firmness and courageous efforts they managed to stem the madness. The Shabbetaian propagandists took fright, called for a truce and retreated into the shadows. Many lost sheep returned to the fold in shame.

Nevertheless, Turkish Jewry had been shaken to its foundations. It became apathetic, impoverished and without direction; it took two centuries for it to recover.

The establishment of the Shabbetaian sect

The disciples of Shabbetai united round the converts, forming a strange sect which, at first, placed itself under the leadership of Jacob Pelossof, known as *Querido*, who was thought to be the incarnation of Shabbetai himself. Members of this sect did not mix with the city's true Moslems although they maintained the appearance of followers of Mohammed. They attended mosques, observed the *bayram* and even, at times, made the pilgrimage to Mecca in order to earn the title of *Hadji*, but in secret they preserved the cult of the Master who was, according to them, the Messiah and even the *alter ego* of the divinity. They married only among themselves. Their beliefs and their cult were surrounded with impenetrable mystery. Nothing was borrowed from Koranic beliefs but both ritual and practices derived from Judaism. They painfully adopted Turkish as their language, but Judeo-Spanish and a bastardised form of Hebrew were used in their prayers, hymns, sermons and in such edifying books as they considered to have sacred meaning. The *Zohar* was their Bible. Their prayers and supplications were addressed to Shabbetai. The sayings of Simon ben Yohai, the leading mystic among the Cabbalists, formed the basis for the discussions of their clandestine rabbis.

During the 18th century internal rivalry caused the sect to split into three sub-sects which were rigidly separate. The leaders of these sub-sects did, however, consult together in order to present a united front whenever the Moslem authorities sought to enquire too closely into their religious behaviour and occult doctrines.

These crypto-Jews called themselves *Maaminim* (true believers); the Moslems, for their part, would refer to them scornfully as *Dönme* (Turkish = apostates), whereas the Jews castigated them with the epithet *Minim* (heretics). *Dönmes* survived in Salonika, under the mask of Islam, until 1922 when, as a result of the exchange of population between Greece and Turkey,

they were obliged to resettle in the provinces which remained in Turkish hands. They took up residence mainly in Istanbul, Aydin and Izmir. As a result of this dispersal, their community groups did not survive. Undermined by modern teaching and scepticism, they turned against the futile heritage of superstitions which had been passed down to them by generations of visionaries. They rapidly disbanded and gradually merged into the Moslem population. Among the Turks, however, they formed an élite thanks to their intellectual emancipation, their feeling for progress and their education.

The establishment of the triumvirate

The division into separate groups, each with its own synagogue, was to be found in every Turkish city. Jews of Greek, Italian or Iberian origin were organised into separate congregations according to geography, linguistic affinity, rites and customs. Each group was autonomous and independent, leading its own life within the same walls. In large Jewish settlements there were numerous sub-divisions and in Salonika, more particularly, there were dozens of synagogue groupings. Each province of Spain, Portugal and Italy had its own synagogue, its own council, spiritual leader, burial society and social welfare organisations. There was no cohesion among these embryonic republics. In order to cope with the Shabbetaian disruptions it was essential for them to join forces and unite. The three most energetic and respected rabbinical leaders, Hayyim Abraham Perahia (died 1667), Moses Hayyim Shabbetai (died 1685) and Jacob de Botton (died 1685), therefore formed a committee for public welfare. Aaron Perahia (died 1697) later replaced his uncle Hayyim Abraham Perahia. In 1680, the spiritual and lay leaders of the synagogues unanimously voted in favour of making this committee for public welfare into a permanent institution and issued a decree whereby the separate communities were to be united under common rabbinical leadership. The three most revered doctors of the Law were henceforth appointed by a joint assembly of rabbis and leading citizens and constituted a triumvirate which was to wield power over all the Jews of the town. The oldest among them was to act as Chief Rabbi and, on his death, was to be succeeded by the older of the two survivors. the third was, in turn, to act as Chief Rabbi when the second had died. A new triumvirate would be elected on the death of the third member. This system was to continue, without interruption, for two centuries. In 1880 a single spiritual leader was elected.

III. A PERIOD OF DECLINE

Trade and industry

The fate of the Oriental Jews was closely linked with that of the Turkish

empire itself. Like all the nations subject to the authority of the *Divan*, they felt the repercussions of the Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699 which marked the weakening of the sultan's power and prestige. Economic life declined. The fairs became less and less popular, since the peasants were being bled dry and lacked the initiative to produce more than a bare minimum for their own survival. Piracy hindered maritime trade.

Although it no longer flourished, the textile industry was still entirely in Jewish hands and continued to provide a means of livelihood for a large section of the poorer classes. The weavers of Salonika supplied cloth for the military, clothed the country-folk and exported their wares to the western Mediterranean. Jews held the monopoly in dyeing and in the silk industry, which was protected by guilds and safe from competitors thanks to the regulations of the *hazaka*. They shared control of the tanning industry with the Turks, but were without equal in the manufacture of carpets, shawls and wool blankets. They were rope-makers, makers of lace and trimmings, tailors, carpenters, iron- and tin-smiths, builders and stone-masons. The best soap- and cheese-makers were Jewish. They were experts in drugs and spices, in salves and ointments, and handled laudanum, henna, mastic, black resin, madder, cochineal, indigo, alum, etc. During the whole of the first half of the 17th century, they were still in almost full control of the finances and trade of Salonika, which remained the centre of Venetian commerce with the Balkans. They dominated trade in all the Turkish cities and were also extremely active in the Venetian colonies in Euboea, Crete, at Koron, Doron, in the Peloponese, in the Ionian isles and on the western coast of the Balkans. Two cities handled transit trade between Turkey and foreign countries and these were Uskup (Skopje) in the middle of the peninsula and Vallona on the Adriatic. Both were under Jewish control from the 16th century onwards. Uskup boasted a well-established and extremely prosperous colony of former *marranos* who handled trade between Salonika and central Europe. In Vallona, Jewish agents, known as *fattori* or consuls, directed all business between Salonika and Italy. Salonika itself had direct trade relations with Constantinople, Egypt and Syria. The Jews of Larissa, together with their co-religionists at Chalkis, carried on a flourishing business with Smyrna.

Commercial decline

Of all these links, it was the close contacts with Venice which were the main source of prosperity for the port of Salonika. But, with the loss of Candia, the Queen of the Adriatic suffered a mortal blow to her supremacy in trade, for it was one of the main ports-of-call for the Venetian fleet.

With the decline of Venice, the Turkish Jews saw the sceptre of trade slip from their hands. When Candia fell to the sultans in 1669, a period of decline began for Jewry in the Greek lands under Turkish domination.

Nevertheless, under Sultan Mehmet IV, Podolia, the Ukraine, Azov, Transylvania and Hungary were captured, thus opening whole new fields to the enterprising Jews of the Balkans. Intense trade developed, centred on the Jewish colonies on the Dniester and Dnieper, and this led, during the last third of the 17th century, to renewed prosperity on the Macedonian market. However, Osmanli power was growing ever weaker. Turkey lost almost all her central European provinces. The Treasury was in dire need of funds and the government resorted to the expedient of devaluing currency, thus causing commercial chaos. Soon the whole country was drained, The Janissaries added to the general misery by their extortions. The Jews were their favourite victims because these so-called keepers of the peace knew that any demand, fine or arbitrary tax imposed on a Jew, would invariably be settled by the community as a whole.

In all Jewish settlements the inhabitants continued to struggle in order to meet exorbitant tax demands. The growing number of apostasies and tax evasion reduced the ranks of the tax-payers, while the tax quota required from each section of the community remained unchanged. Without pity the tax-gatherers threw the civil and religious leaders into prison in order to force them into paying arrears in taxes. To meet the situation, the sacred ornaments of the synagogues had to be sold, as happened in Salonika, for example, in 1719 and 1794. Rabbis, slaughterers (*shohetim*), officials and physicians were taxed, although they should have been exempt. Furthermore, frequent fires deprived thousands of families of their homes. Misery was widespread.

Jurists and scholars

For all that, the intellectual life of the communities in Turkey continued. The vitality of the golden age stimulated scholastic activity for some three or four generations. Among the foremost scholars were the following:

Hayyim Shabbetai (1557-1647) who, despite ill health, played a vital part in leading the Salonika community and whose influence was felt in all Turkey's provinces in Europe. He was the author of many valuable legal works which continued to be consulted by many generations of rabbis. His son, Moses, who died in 1685, was a remarkable teacher and wrote several excellent works of exegesis; he also took an active part in the direction of public affairs during the most critical period of Shabbetaian unrest. A disciple of his, Solomon Shabbetai Halevy (1581-1636), lived for some time in Venice where he acquired a taste for secular culture which influenced his writings on the Talmud; he wrote in an elegant, restrained and pure style which contrasts with that of other writers of the time. He leaned towards mysticism and led an austere life without, however, letting himself be carried away by contemporary enthusiasm for the lucubrations of Luria and Hayyim Vital. He was much

esteemed as a serious and profound thinker. Mordecai Calhi, who died in 1646 at a great age, was an inspired teacher. Born into an exceedingly rich family he supported a mass of needy students in his *yeshiba*. He was hostile to all forms of fanaticism and, although he had a profound respect for tradition, he fought against the superstitions and prejudices of his time. His students included Moses Taïtaçak, a preacher and philosopher, and Abraham Cohen Benardout (died 1645), a man of ample means, a writer, occasional poet, and teacher of repute. Another student of Calhi was the renowned Talmudist, Daniel Estrossa (died 1653). Abraham Mutal (1570-1658), rector of the famous *yeshiba* of the "Lisbon" synagogue, was an influential jurist and teacher. Shabbetai Yona (died 1660), supported in his work by the court physician, Moses Amaraggi, devoted himself to exegesis and legal theory. Judah Handali (died 1660) excelled not only as a Talmudist, but also as a physician and philosopher. Samuel Gaon (died 1667) held the sceptre of the *cabbala*, seeking allegoric interpretations of the Holy Writ. He advocated a more indulgent approach towards the observance of ritual requirements which, according to him, were transitory in character and to be abolished at the Messiah's coming. Baruch Angel (1600-1670), well versed in the sciences, medicine, as well as in religious matters, was one of the most eminent intellects of his age. Humble by temperament, he stood up against the contemporary wave of mysticism, but had to endure the sorrow of seeing his own son-in-law, Joseph Pelosoff, promote the Shabbetaian heresy. Hasdai ha-Cohen Perahia (died 1687), far-sighted, energetic, sober in his writings, a good preacher and profound casuist, trained a multitude of students who spread his doctrines throughout the Balkan provinces. David Conforte (1618-1684) had received training in both the mysticism of Luria and the rationalism of Maimonides, and his whole life was spent in a quest for learning. He wandered ceaselessly through the countries of the Near East, questioning scholars and setting down his conclusions in his *Kore ha-Doroth* a volume lacking in style and method, but forming a major source for the documentation of Hebrew literature.

Literary decline

The rabbis and writers of the last decades of the 17th century and of the following generation were of lesser stature. They were predominantly preoccupied with fine casuistic points. Their numerous collected *responsa* and sermons lack all originality. They included Jacob Abraham de Boton (died 1685), Benjamin Assael (died 1690) and Aaron Abraham Perahia (died 1697) who all gained prominence for their decisive stand against Messianic madness. Samuel Isaac Modellano (1665-1703), broad-minded and liberal, had a short but brilliant career as a community administrator and teacher. Solomon Amarillo (died 1720), was a profound Talmudist and Cabbalist.

Joseph Covo (died 1727), cultivated, intelligent and open-minded, made an important contribution as a spiritual leader. Abraham Benveniste Gattegno (died 1730) was a talented teacher and an eloquent preacher. Joseph David (died 1736) was a restrained and elegant orator, strongly influenced by mysticism. Moses Amarillo (died 1748) was a jurist with an extensive Talmudic knowledge. Isaac ben Sanche, who died in Jerusalem in 1760, was a strange and original figure, a profound scholar who was haunted by poverty. Joseph Abraham Molho (died 1760), cabbalist and mystic, was an expert in the laws of ritual slaughter. His main work, the *Shulhan Gavoa*, which makes attractive reading, was written in Judaeo-Spanish and was the result of twenty years' research. He also achieved a reputation as a circumciser (*mohel*), secretly circumcising innumerable *marranos*. Raphael Elazar Nahmias (died 1778) a man of indomitable character and courage, made a lot of enemies in attempting to combat the lack of discipline in the Salonika community. Joseph Samuel Modellano (died 1789) was a fine jurist with a large private fortune which he used to support needy students and scholars. Solomon Moses Burla (died 1786) was a noted Talmudist whose family had originated in Poland. Isaac Cohen Benardout (died 1807) was an erudite jurist, venerated for his honest and austere character.

The end of trade monopoly

During the last two decades of the 17th century, the local Jews were eliminated from foreign trading. In 1535 Suleyman the Magnificent had granted the Capitulations to Francis I of France and merchants from all countries in western Europe had insinuated themselves into the local economy. These foreign traders enjoyed immunity to Ottoman law and also had important excise and commercial privileges. They lived like lords, surrounded by an army of assistants, and succeeded in obtaining the same advantages for these assistants as they themselves enjoyed. These assistants were officially registered as "servants", but only a tiny minority were, in reality, engaged in humble tasks.

Generally these "servants" were bankers, buyers, accountants, advisers and interpreters. Among these were often important business-men running their own considerable enterprises, who had gone to great trouble and expense to obtain the nominal title of *dragoman*. This was a sinecure of untold value in practice, because it entailed the full advantages of consular protection.

These assistants were primarily recruited among the local Jews and constituted a class of consular licensees who held nominative licenses or *berats* in which the Porte ran a flourishing trade.

Towards 1718 a number of Jews from Livorno came to settle in Salonika and other Turkish ports, under Austrian or French consular and diplomatic

protection. Soon they had established themselves within the foremost ranks of Turkish trade, forming a closed group, an aristocratic caste which they sought to stabilise and perpetuate by using Italian as their domestic language and especially by marrying among themselves. They made use of local Jews as business agents, managers and employees of all types, but treated them as inferiors.

The Livorno assistants and those of other foreign merchants profited handsomely from their occupations. The *hazaka* regulating monopolies and exclusive rights, was guaranteed by age-old rabbinical legislation: this meant that the assistants had no need to fear competition and that their position and privileges were secure for them and their heirs.

In the second half of the 18th century the consuls of England and France claimed the rights granted to them in the Capitulations according to which they could protect religious communities in the Orient. They thereby sought to extend their influence and prestige and at times proclaimed themselves to be the protectors of the Jewish communities, among them Salonika.

Economic and intellectual decline

Despite the vicissitudes of the times, the Turkish Jews could still consider themselves to be privileged. Within their own quarter they ruled supreme. They could peacefuly celebrate the Sabbath and religious festivals and they were free to take part in community or family festivities without fear or hindrance. Admittedly, from time to time, a sultan or a grand vizier would turn against them and issue *irades* (decrees and rescripts) prohibiting the *rayas* from wearing some type of head-gear, footwear or dress of a certain colour. Such rescripts were rarely enforced, however, outside the capital.

With the decline in economic prosperity, the intellectual level also gradually sank. The Oriental Jew lost all direct contact with foreign countries. For generations the influx of *marranos* had stimulated and maintained the taste for learning. Although *marranos* still appeared sporadically in Turkish ports, and particularly in Salonika, they were no longer of the same cultural calibre as their predecessors. They came from Iberian lands where the Inquisition considered all liberal knowledge to be heresy and mercilessly stamped it out. They were no longer in the forefront of innovation. Indeed, they were treated with suspicion and kept apart, while the few who had a broader outlook and an exceptionally wide experience of international trade were rapidly absorbed by the Livorno contingent. The mass of the Jewish population was segregated socially and did not benefit in any way from their presence.

Turkish Judaism, turned on itself, no longer looked outwards. A mantle of austerity enveloped it and its horizons dwindled. Rabbinical edicts forbade all types of luxury and women were no longer allowed to wear jewellery. It

was only behind barred doors that people indulged in the small pleasures of life. All were forced to live in an atmosphere of formal gloom which was enforced by proclamations which were constantly repeated from the pulpits of synagogues.

Having been expelled from large-scale trading, local Jews became shopkeepers. They still went to the fairs but they no longer played a dominant role. The fairs themselves were now poorly stocked and sorry events due to insecure roads and to the poverty of the countryside.

Printing dominated in Salonika and there were presses on every street corner. The printer would go from door to door, selling rituals, edifying books, pamphlets and collections of *responsa*. Jews were also engaged in manufacturing soap, finished brocades, trimmings and fancy buttons, they handled the better qualities of tobacco, they also became goldsmiths and watchmakers. They did not, however, shirk demanding tasks: they therefore became dockers, stevedores and carters.

Schools and learning

The leaders' constant preoccupation was the organisation of professions, groups of craftsmen and shopkeepers into corporations, trusts, guilds and *esnafs*, so as to eliminate competition and thus enable all to make a living. Detailed rabbinical decrees regulated the length of apprenticeship, the purchase and use of raw materials, salaries, prices, etc. The *esnafs* for certain professions were not exclusively in Jewish hands, but Orthodox and Moslem colleagues tacitly accepted the influence of rabbinical regulations.

Towards the beginning of the 18th century, as economic life was shrinking, the level of teaching was also declining, though few men were totally illiterate and most adults could read Hebrew more or less fluently. Girls were firmly excluded from learning. All boys would pass more or less briefly through the primary classes of the *Talmud Tora* which was to be found in most Jewish centres of any importance in the Orient. All learnt to read Hebrew in a parrot-like fashion, together with ritual blessings, daily and festival prayers, and the Sabbath sections of the Pentateuch and of the Prophets. They also learnt basic arithmetic and the special *Rashi* alphabet, which was used for writing Judaeo-Spanish. Those children who stayed on in the *hevra* learnt to chant the *ladino* of the Sabbath portions — an archaic Castilian version which was very different from the language then spoken and was becoming less and less comprehensible. The vast majority of the children did not continue to this stage. From the age of ten or twelve they were forced to find some kind of work in order to supplement the family budget.

Schooling was not free and was restricted to the absolute minimum among the poor. Increasingly, learning became the privilege of the richer classes. A minority attended classes in the upper forms of the *Talmud Tora*

where the Bible was studied together with the best known commentaries, also the rudiments of the Talmud and even certain chapters of the *Shulhan 'Aruh* by Joseph Caro. Apart from the first three rules of arithmetic, everything not directly related to worship was banned from the school curriculum as being useless and even harmful. A very small minority of the richest families imitated the Livorno Jews and sent their sons to study in Venice so that they might learn the practices of commerce and, at the same time, good manners and a smattering of non-Jewish culture.

The *yeshiboth* of Salonika continued to enjoy a high reputation. There were famous teachers, including Solomon Amarillo (died 1720), Joseph Covo (died 1727), Hananiah Saul (died 1738), Abraham Benveniste Gattegno (died 1720), Joseph David (died 1736), Joseph Abraham Molho (died 1760), Raphael Eliezer Nahmias (died 1778), Joseph Samuel Modellano (died 1789) and Solomon Moses Burla (died 1786). Students from countries near and far, including Amsterdam and London, came to study in Salonika.

These seminaries produced a profusion of rabbis who were unable to find employment in Salonika. Some of these young clerics scraped a living by undertaking humble religious duties. Some even resigned themselves to becoming labourers, servants in shops and in the wealthier households. Most, however, emigrated. They found employment in small communities as spiritual leaders, tutors in rich families and school-masters, where they helped to spread not only religious knowledge but also a pious way of life and civilized manners.

This resulted in a paradoxical situation: on the one hand Salonika, the cradle of knowledge, where the poor multitudes, who constituted the majority of the population, were plunging deeper and deeper into ignorance and superstition; on the other hand, the tiny congregations of the provinces and of the islands, where enlightened piety and teaching was spreading among all social classes.

Publishing

Hebrew publishing had flourished in Salonika during the whole of the sixteenth century and during the first decade of the seventeenth century, but then stagnated. From 1740 onwards it took on a new lease of life, thanks to the master-printer Bezalel Halevy Askenazi, whose descendants promoted the art of printing until 1917, when the family's last workshop was destroyed by fire.

Salonika became one of the principal centres of publication in the whole of Judaism. Work from all parts of the Turkish provinces and also from more than one central European city were printed there. An impressive array of works was thus published, though few could claim to be original. For the most part they were compilations in which the same ideas were repeated, the same

arguments put forward with little artistry or method, but they were imbued with a profound feeling of piety and aimed at spreading the fundamental principles of rabbinical law. Local sponsors hastened to provide the funding for these publications.

Medicine and physicians

Forty Jewish physicians were appointed to the sultan's court in 1618, Moses Amaraggi being the most eminent among them. The palace also employed graduates of famous foreign faculties and often used them as diplomats, such as Tobiya ha-Cohen of the University of Padua and David Fonseca of the University of Paris, a Portuguese *marrano* who had returned to Judaism. Among the best-known local practitioners were Moses ha-Cohen (died 1615), Joseph Ami (died 1629), Daniel Uziel (died 1630), Abraham Joseph Pessah (died 1667) and Joseph Cohen Perahia (died 1696).

However, in the 18th century, medical science declined among the Jews of Turkey. Superficial empirical knowledge was transmitted from master to pupil and this was considered a sufficient qualification. Magical recipes, charms, incantations, spells and exorcisms were common usage. Of the local well-qualified physicians at this time, only two stand out: Joseph Samuel Modellano (died 1776) and Moses Joseph Saloniki (died 1779). There were, however, a number of other practitioners who came from the Iberian peninsula or from Liverno, for instance, David de Alba (died 1702), David Mendes Lucena (died 1730), Isaac Silva (died 1764), Emmanuel Calvo (died 1780). They maintained cordial relations with their Greek colleagues, who were very numerous and who had mostly received their training in Italian universities.

Language and folklore

As soon as they had settled in the Balkans, the Iberian Jews became fluent in Turkish and Greek; they also acquired a smattering of Bulgarian and of the current Franco-Italian dialect. But their mother-tongue remained Castilian, and they faithfully preserved their ancestral speech with its pronunciation and medieval phraseology, but it became adulterated with Portuguese, packed with Hebrew expressions and weighted down, as the years went by, with Turkish and Greek loan-words. It finally became the *lingua franca* of Jewry in the Turkish provinces of Europe and Asia Minor, of Palestine and Egypt. In those places which were under the domination or influence of Venice, however, such as Corfu, Zante, Yannina, Arta, Preveza, Patras, Chalkis and on Crete, Greek and, alongside it, Italian continued to be spoken until the present day. From the first decades of the 17th century, when all contact with Spain was lost, an abundant treasury of popular literature was

carefully preserved and orally transmitted from generation to generation. Women, and often also men, would sing plaintive melodies which went back to the days of the Moors and of Spain: romances, tender and pathetic ballads evoking the exploits of the Paladins or the adventures of Biblical heroes. The oral tradition also included *'conseias'*, fairy-tales which were handed down, word by word, scrupulously unchanged, and an abundance of picturesque *'refranes'* or proverbs, some of Iberian origin, others drawn from the Talmud, or borrowed from the placid wisdom of the Turks.

Edifying literature

Alongside the *Zohar*, there was a small number of Spanish works printed in *rashi* type, which were studied within the family circle. These were Moses Almosnino's *El Regimento de la Vida*, Tsadok Formon's translation into Castilian of the *Hoboth-ha-Lebaboth (Obligaciones de los corazones)*, and the *Shulhan ha-Panim*, the abridged version of Joseph Caro's *Shulhan 'Aruh*. From 1733 onwards, the volumes of the *Me'am Loez* were to be found in every home: they were paraphrases of the books of the Bible, enriched with commentaries, anecdotes, legends and fascinating digressions. Joseph Houlli, in Constantinople, had begun work on this literary cycle which was continued by Isaac Magriso in Salonika, and by various other authors at Adrianople and Smyrna, at intervals duting the next two centuries. Furthermore, there were numerous manuals on *Shehita* (slaughtering) and other rituals whose Hebrew texts were accompanied by Ladino (archaic Spanish) translations. Mysticism, however, predominated. The rabbinate forbade the study of Maimonides' *More-nebuhim (the Guide of the Perplexed)*, but recommended the *Orhot Tsadikim*, an anonymous 16th century work which was often reprinted, and the *Yalkut*, a vade-mecum of Lurian doctrine prepared by Joseph David who for fifteen years (1712-1736) was the spiritual leader of the triumvirate. This work remained in manuscript, but was frequently reproduced. The rabbinate also repeatedly recommended the *Zohaŕe Hama* by Isaac Crispi (1738), a mystic commentary on the five *Megiloth* of the Bible, to which were added a large number of *haskamoth* regulating daily life. Other works recommended were the *Shaare Rahamim* of Hayyim bar Selomoh and Solomon Habadi (1761), the *Orhot Yosher* by Isaac Molho (1765), the *Yafe Shahar* by Solomon Judah ha-Cohen and the *Hemdat Yamim* of Nathan of Gaza, Shabbetai Zevi's famous propagandist. These works were mainly devoted to mystical meditation and to commentaries on the esoteric writings of Hayyim Vital and Cordovero, the masters of cabbalistic mystagogy.

The end of foreigners' privileges

Protected as they were by their consuls and embassies, foreigners had managed to control trade to the west, but Russian intervention was to bring about an important change. Under Catherine II the Tsarists instigated a Greek uprising in the Peloponese and undertook a long war against Turkey (1768-1783). After the treaty of Küçük Kainarcí (1774), the Tsarist government set itself up as the protector of Orthodox Christians in the Balkans, and under the aegis of Moscow, commercial supremacy in Turkish ports rapidly passed into the expert hands of the Greeks.

In the face of local competition, the foreigners began to lose their foothold. In its turn the *Divan* cancelled all the restrictions and privileges which had hampered its trade with the west and Turkey ceased to be the private hunting-ground of foreigners and their satellites. Greeks remained at the forefront of business transactions, but as their insurrectionary activities intensified, so their control of trade weakened. Many of them employed Jews who were quick to learn and, from being procurators (*censal*), gradually established their own contacts with the centres of Europe, replacing their erstwhile masters.

Insecurity and poverty

Actually few Jews benefited from the eviction of the foreigners, and, from the end of the seventeenth century onwards, oriental Jewry was in the grip of dire poverty. Very little trade remained in Jewish hands, There were numerous retailers and a plethora of small shop-keepers while many still scraped a living from weaving coarse cloth, carpets and mats. Beggars were legion and people were willing to engage in unpleasant, rough and repellent tasks. All the week peddlers laden with cottons, woollens and haberdashery would follow goat-tracks to remote villages where they would seek to sell their wares. On Saturday, as the first star appeared, announcing the end of the Sabbath, fishermen would set out to cast their nets, returning at the end of the week, on Fridays, with their catch. In the port the hauliers, stevedores, porters and carters were all Jewish; Jews also removed nightsoil. Despite this unremitting labour they were all close to famine and lived with incredible parsimony.

Ignorance and superstition

The Jews, previously so eager for learning, now abandoned their studies. In most communities the *Talmud Tora*, which had been in the forefront of education for generations, now dwindled and shrank. By the end of the 18th century the decline accelerated. Even the *yeshivot*, formerly so prosperous,

lost their sparkle and ceased to attract students from abroad. With the increase in ignorance there was a parallel growth in superstition. Traditional religious practices became intermingled with magic rites which affected all aspects of life.

The spiritual leaders increased the level of austerity. In 1807 the Salonika triumvirate issued a decree, published throughout Turkey in Europe, forbidding Jews from entering coffee-houses and places selling *boza* (millet beer) on the Sabbath or on holidays, and from drinking milk from cows milked by non-Jews.

Publications flowed from the pens of rabbis and superficially they created an impression of intellectual effervescence, but they were all abysmally weak. They re-hashed the age-old casuistic arguments and dredged up problems which had been resolved a hundred times by previous generations, reproducing the texts of sermons which were merely empty discourses, in Spanish jargon interspersed with Hebrew quotations.

The rabbis were all-powerful. In 1847 they forbade card-games under the threat of a fine and, for second offenders, of a *herem*. In Salonika the rabbis had a proper gaol for the imprisonment of those guilty of misdemeanours, and where they could administer the bastinado (*falaka*). The Chief Rabbi had the personal right to call upon the police to imprison anyone who challenged his authority. In 1870 the Salonika rabbinate established a censorship of works published in the city. Nothing could go to press without the *imprimatur* of an *ad hoc* commission.

The Chief Rabbi Saul Molho (1766-1849) kept the Salonika community firmly under his thumb for fifteen years. He was small, weak and ailing, but had a will of iron and the firm conviction that he was endowed with divine power and was directly inspired from above. To the masses he was a powerful worker of miracles and he was both venerated and feared. He hurled lightning bolts of the *herem* against even the mightiest. None dared to oppose him and his rages caused men to tremble. He even had one of his flock hanged for the crime of being an informer (*malsinut*).

IV. NEW TIMES

The Greek Revolution

Mahmut II (1808-1839) began a period of reform. He proclaimed the equality of all his subjects before the law and in respect of taxation, their eligibility to all administrative functions and military ranks; he declared complete freedom of worship. He was, however, confronted with enormous opposition. Ali Pasha of Jannina rose against the Sublime Porte and called upon the Greeks to assist him. The revolutionary movement spread to the Agean isles, Attica and the Danubian provinces. In reprisal the Turks

organised horrific massacres.

In 1821, on the first day of the Orthodox Easter celebrations, the Patriarch Gregory VI was hanged at Fener in the doorway to his residence. The Grand Vizier, Bederli Pasha, who was present at the execution, forced three Jews, picked at random from the crowd, to drag the body of the martyred prelate to the shore. The rumour that the Jews had hanged the patriarch rapidly spread throughout the provinces. In those towns where they had gained control frenzied insurgents poured into the Jewish quarters. The old communities of Patras, Tripoli and Mistra in the Peloponese, of Levadia, Thebes, Missolonghi and Agrinion, were completely wiped out. Those who managed to escape sought refuge in Chalkis, which remained in Turkish hands until 1833, and in Corfu, which was then under British rule.

The uprising spread to Macedonia. The regions of Chalkidike and Olympus were seething and a Greek fleet blockaded Salonika. In the whole country terror reigned. The sultan's forces were inadequate and the military leaders mobilised the civilian population. Some hundreds of Jews were even pressed into auxiliary service which led to their being accused of aiding and abetting the Turks. This was far from the truth, but no sooner had the Greeks been dealt with, than the Turkish officials turned on the Jews, threw the more prosperous into prison and forced them to pay heavy ransoms.

Reform policies

Throughout the empire the days of the Janissaries were numbered. On Sunday 18th June 1826, Mahmut II ordered them to assemble in the Hippodrome Square (at Meydani) of the capital. There they were wiped out by cannon; they were also massacred wherever they were garrisoned throughout the lands under Turkish domination.

The entire population of the country greeted with jubilation the news of the annihilation of the hated militia. In order to wipe out all trace of the Janissaries, the sultan also put to death all those who had been associated with them. Among these later victims we find Chelebi Bohor Carmona, Isaac Adjiman and the Gabbay brothers who were bankers and suppliers to the commissariat. However, the innocence of these victims was soon admitted and they were spectacularly rehabilitated posthumously, their descendants receiving large compensation. The two sons of Mahmud II, Abdul Majid (1839-1861) and Abdul Aziz (1861-1876) continued his work of civil and financial regeneration with a series of reforms known as *Tanzimat*. On 3rd November 1839, Abdul Majid promulgated the edict known as the *Hatt-i-sherif of Gülhane*; and on 18th February 1856, by a new edict, the *Hatt-i-Humayan*, he completed his father's policy of reform. The equality of all subjects of the empire was solemnly proclaimed. All abuses were strictly forbidden — extortion, confiscation of goods and torture. Education,

tribunals, finances and provincial adminstration were re-organised. The ancient system of tax-farming was also abolished.

The old per-capita tax, the *haradj*, was replaced by a new system according to which each adult male had to do military service with the possibility of buying himself out on payment of a substitution tax or *bedel-i-askeriye*. This measure freed the communities from the age-old nightmare of collective tax, for the payment of which the leaders had jointly and personally been held responsible by the authorities.

Despite the opposition of the Old Turks, the *Tanzimat* was largely brought into force. The Imperial Ottoman Bank, founded in 1863 by an Anglo-French consortium in which Jewish financiers played an active part, had a healthy impact on the stability and circulation of currency. Railways financed by Baron Maurice de Hirsch began to criss-cross the European provinces, thus stimulating productivity in the countryside and increasing the living standards of the population. All administrative posts and military ranks were now open which gave the Christian minorities of the empire a big advantage, but was not of much benefit to the Jewish community which found itself unable to supply candidates with even the minimum requirements to make them eligible for admission to the entrance examinations.

The first Jews in free Greece

After the blood-bath of 1821, no Jews were left in the areas liberated by the Hellenic revolution. It should be noted, however, that the Epidaurus Constitution of January 1822 proclaimed the principle of equality in respect of law and taxation and freedom of worship, without any distinction. This liberalism was to benefit those Jews who lived in the provinces subsequently annexed by Greece.

The first Jewish community to be established in territory under neo-Hellenic domination was that which had existed from time immemorial at Chalkis, a city ceded by the Turks in 1833. At this period Jewish families, some of Bavarian origin and forming part of King Otto's court, and other Jews from Smyrna and various parts of Turkey, had settled in Athens which had been forbidden to them for centuries, These families formed an embryonic community, which showed every indication of developing and which was encouraged by the Duchess of Piacenza, a French noblewoman who lived in the capital and who had adopted a form of Mosaic mysticism. However, a trivial incident threatened the very existence of this budding community, whose president, David Pacifico, was of British nationality and had been Consul General in Portugal. During the Orthodox Easter celebrations in 1847, the population were prevented by the police from carrying out the customary burning of an effigy of Judas Iscariot on the main square. They turned against the house of David Pacifico and set it on fire. The

Greek government refused Pacifico's demand for what they deemed to be excessive compensation, and this was followed by a British naval demonstration of force in Piraeus, with a detachment of marines being put ashore and heading for the royal palace. Matters calmed temporarily, but lengthy diplomatic exchanges ensued before it was finally resolved. The whole affair left an aftermath of bitterness and rancour against the Jews which took some time to dissipate.

The Jewish population soon increased, including the flourishing communities of Corfu and Zante, together with the 'Heptanesi' which joined Greece after the British proclamation of the archipelago's independence in 1864.

Then, by virtue of the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, the rich valley of Thessaly was awarded to Greece. In this way the rich communities of Larissa, Volo, Trikkala and Karditsa contributed their Jewish contingents to the country. The Jews soon lost most of their Iberian characteristics and adopted the language and culture of the Greeks.

After the Turco-Greek war of 1897, it was the turn of Crete to obtain autonomy. From then on, the Jewish population of the island, which had maintained its ancestral identity under the domination of the Romans, Saracens, Byzantines, Franks, Venetians and Turks, effectively became part of Greek Judaism.

Towards the end of the 19th century, there were a dozen Jewish communities in Greece, comprising some fifteen thousand souls.

Kulturkampf

The heavy atmosphere of fanaticism which characterised the communities of Turkey, was shaken in Adrianople, Constantinople and Salonika towards the middle of the 19th century. The wind of the *Haskala*, blowing through Odessa, Warsaw, Vienna and throughout Jewry in Germany and northern Italy, reached the larger Turkish communities. The works of Ephraim Luzzato, Naphtali Herz Wessely, Nahman Krochmal, Isaac Baer Levinsohn, Solomon Judah Rapoport, Mordechai Aaron Günzburg, Abraham Dov Lebensohn and, more especially, of Abraham Mapou, were secretly circulated among a few of the younger rabbis. The standard was raised by Joseph Halevy in Adrianople. He was a young Jewish scholar from Hungary who had escaped from Buda after the Russian represssions of August 1849. An enthusiastic liberal movement grew up among the young men of the *yeshiboth* who surrounded Halevy and rapidly spread to the Jewish élite of the Turkish capital. The distinguished banker Abraham Camondo became the leader of the reform party. In 1850 he founded a school, based on Western models, in the Peri-Pasha quarter. It developed rapidly but caused profound anxiety and fierce opposition and hostility among the more

retrograde members of the population. The school progressed notwithstanding, and the first generation of pupils to graduate soon filled high places in the administration, trade and banking. This did nothing to calm the fears of the more backward members of the community. A fiery and indomitable rabbi named Isaac Alkrich set himself up as the champion of religion which he proclaimed to be in danger. Alkrich publicly condemned Camondo, and proclaimed the *herem* on him. Chief Rabbi Avigdor supported Camondo and ordered Alkrich's arrest, but the ignorant masses in the Jewish quarters put pressure on the authorities to release the prisoner. Alkrich triumphantly resumed his attacks and was so successful that the communal leaders were obliged to remove the Chief Rabbi from his post.

Victory of the liberals

Camondo, nevertheless, continued with his work and his example was followed by many others. His own munificent donations were supplemented by large funds from the *Alliance Israélite*.

Judah Nehama (1824-1899), a young rabbi in Salonika, established himself as a book dealer and used this as a cover for entering into correspondence with scientific and literary leaders of the enlightened Jewish communities of central and western Europe. He avidly read the works of the *maskilim* and discreetly passed them around a circle of carefully chosen friends, among whom R. David Pipano was prominent. For his part, Baruch Cohen, a Biblical and Talmudic scholar with revolutionary tendencies, gathered about him a group of disciples, initiated them in textual criticism and laid the foundations for Freemasonry in the city. Dr Moses Allatini, who controlled almost all foreign trade in the European provinces of Turkey, was the leader of the reforms. He was cultivated, with extremely liberal views, a philanthropist and patron with immense prestige among all sections of the population. He engaged the services of the Strasbourg rabbi, Lipmann as tutor for his children. Lipmann not only carried out his duties in the Allatini household, but also devoted himself to a group of students from the upper classes. He gave them a solid basis of religious culture and to this he added a general education according to a programme which was extremely daring for the times, using French as the main language. These classes, though short-lived, produced a group of pioneers who were firmly resolved to introduce a new mentality into the community. Dr. Allatini found able assistants among them to help him in carrying out his projects for intellectual and moral regeneration. As his guide and adviser, he appointed Judah Nehama who, as early as 1862, founded in Salonika a regional committee of the *Alliance Israélite* which had been established two years before. As his factotum Dr. Allatini also appointed Saadi Halevy, an enterprising and energetic propagandist who was descended from the famous master-printer Bezalel Halevy

Askenazi. Saadi was the owner of a small printing press acquired from Judah Nehama. He became the tireless propagator of liberal views.

Chief Rabbi Saul Molho mounted guard over traditional values until his dying day (1849). The succeeding rabbinical dynasty of the Covo's was, at first, hardly any more amenable to the new doctrines, but was not strong enough to withstand the current of vitality and progress. In all the Jewish centres of Turkey, two hostile camps confronted each other. The antagonism between the conservatives, who remained immovable, and the reformers, found expression in disturbances which shook the very foundations of the communities. This was *Kulturkampf*. The traditionalists held that any attempt at emancipation would inevitably entail the ruin of religion and morals. For a long time they held the upper hand but the party of enlightenment was well organised and at its forefront were the most enlightened and respected people of the day.

In Salonika there was a tremendous outcry when, in 1862, the rabbis excommunicated a group of young men who had gone beyond the limits of the *'erub* on the Sabbath. The battle in the educational arena was fierce: the more progressive attached tremendous importance to the teaching of a western language which they saw as the key to the gaol in which the population was imprisoned, the tool with which to break the chains of intellectual segregation. The traditionalists felt that such teaching would open the gate to heresy and apostasy, equivalent to profanation and sacrilege.

Nevertheless, despite objurgations, threats and sanctions, there was an increase in the number and prosperity of the schools. The *Alliance Israélite* founded schools everywhere. Volo, newly rebuilt, was endowed from 1864 with a mixed school which was soon flourishing. Alongside its Jewish pupils it welcomed a substantial number of orthodox students who were attracted by its high standards. Four years later it was the turn of Larissa to receive teachers from France, thanks to the *Alliance*. In 1873 Salonika opened its school for boys and, immediately afterwards, its girls' school. The school committee found it difficult to cope with the number of applications for places. One after the other the Parisian society opened a junior school and district schools, a professional school for girls, and a technical school where young men could follow a traditional apprenticeship in manual crafts while, at the same time, attending evening classes where they learnt basic mathematics, science and industrial draughtsmanship.

The *Alliance* school network spread throughout the Turkish Balkans and in Bulgaria. A school was founded in Cavalla in 1904 and in Preveza in 1908. The teaching of general subjects was in French, but Hebrew and religious knowledge also had an important role. The teachers on the staff received their training in the colleges which the *Alliance* ran in Paris and Versailles. Erstwhile pupils of the *Alliance* also founded excellent private schools and enrolled pupils from all classes of the Jewish population. At the same time the

Italian government and the French Lay Mission founded well-run scholastic institutions which drew the vast majority of their pupils from the Jewish community.

Around the schools there grew up social clubs and associations, sports clubs and circulating libraries. Evening classes and lectures were organised. Jewry in the Balkans was emerging from a long period of stagnation. One of the most remarkable results of the renaissance for which the *Alliance Israélite* was responsible, was the emancipation of women. Until then a woman had been deprived of any education, condemned to total obscurity and relegated to the role of humble guardian of the home. Thanks to the schools, women acquired knowledge and dignity. Early marriage which had been the rule, grew increasingly rare and finally disappeared.

Economic revival

In 1885 the Sublime Porte inaugurated a vigorous campaign for reform which helped to promote the movement for intellectual renaissance. The administrative and tax systems were considerably improved: the re-organised police force cleared the roads of thieves; a network of railways criss-crossed the country. Salonika was linked with Uskup in 1874 and soon the railway reached Belgrade, thus linking the Aegean with the Danube and with the European network in one direction, while eastwards it extended towards Constantinople and Monastir.

The Jews emerged from their isolation and their horizons broadened. They found their way westwards and resumed contact with the civilised world. They found advantageous outlets for Turkish products and suppliers for the manufactured goods which Turkey needed. Agricultural production was greatly stimulated. The Allatinis founded the Bank of Salonika with the co-operation of the Länderbank of Vienna, and opened agencies in the main towns of the area. Spinning-mills and silk-worm nurseries sprang up. The growing and processing of tobacco flourished, making Thrace and the Balkans rich and transforming Cavalla into a major port. Centuries of poverty were replaced by comfort and well-being. The Jews were the prime movers in this renewal.

Community reform

In Constantinople in 1865 there had been timid attempts at administrative reforms. The Turkish authorities had recommended that they should be applied in all parts of the empire, but little had happened. True reform was introduced in Salonika in 1880 as a result of a revolt instigated by a group of young men from the Lipmann school and by the first batch of students from the *Alliance Israélite* schools. The council of elders, under the chairmanship

of the Chief Rabbi, took fright and relinquished its powers to a handful of insurgents who established a temporary commission and drew up a series of statutes based on the imperial *irade* of 1863. Suffrage, based on the census, was instituted. The *pecheros*, or tax-payers, became eligible to vote. They were few in number but as the standard of living improved, so they increased. From now on an elected council had effective power and rabbinical jurisdiction was confined to matters concerned with worship, though even here it was tempered by the administrative control of the synagogue committees. Henceforward community government was democratic and liberal. Salonika's example was soon followed by all other communities.

The Corfu pogrom

One of the problems which Jews in the east had to face, was the accusation of ritual murder. This slander was current wherever there were Greeks in the population; it became endemic throughout the 19th century and gave rise to disturbances and panic. The Orthodox clergy led by the Patriarchate, resolutely attacked this prejudice, and since the days of Suleyman the Law-giver, the *Divan* had severely condemned it. A *firman* promulgated at that time had been frequently renewed. Despite the imperial edicts proclaiming the inanity of this belief, and despite the punishments inflicted on those who held it, it was still firmly maintained by the common people. In 1891, in Corfu, the body of a little girl was found as Easter was approaching and provided an opportunity for turning the Orthodox population against the Jews of the island. For a whole month Jewish families were besieged in their quarters, a prey to famine and fear. A judicial enquiry revealed that the body was that of a Jewish child who had been assassinated by a criminal. However the panic caused 3,000 of the 5,000-strong Jewish community of Corfu to flee, together with most of the Jewish families of Zante. The fugitives settled in Turkish towns as well as in Egypt and Italy.

Intellectual renaissance

Judaeo-Spanish, up till then neglected in intellectual works, achieved rank in the twentieth century as a written language and became a vehicle for culture. Newspapers and journals appeared in profusion in all the large Jewish communities of Turkey. French and Italian books, from novels to encyclopaedias, were constantly being translated. During the last two decades of the 19th century, a thousand books were published, including fiction, works of moral and religious edification and books dealing with matters of general culture. Most of these were produced in Salonika.

Salonika set the tone for progress in all the Balkan countries. Literary societies, social and sports clubs were on the increase in even the smallest

towns. Up till then socialist and Zionist tendencies had been held to be dangerous and contrary to law and order, and had been preached in clandestine fashion; with the beginning of the new century, they gradually emerged into the open. One group, consisting of seminarists and teachers of the *Talmud Tora*, enthusiastically applied themselves to Hebrew and Jewish studies. In Salonika there was a flourishing branch of the B'nai B'rith which co-ordinated efforts made towards achieving good public administration. Trades unions and professional organisations were set up. A new rabbinical seminary, the *Beth Yosef* (established 1896) adopted a modern programme, training rabbis and teachers both in religious studies and in non-Jewish culture. The venerable institution, the *Talmud Tora* which had suffered the depressing effects of intellectual poverty during the last few generations, was also rejuvenated through the efforts of a Liverno professor, Moses Ottolenghi, and, subsequently, of an eminent teacher, Isaac Epstein. Circulating libraries supplied the youth with French and Italian books, while researchers assumed the task of sifting through Hebrew texts published in the east, most of them in Salonika — a varied and abundant source of documentation of Judaism in the Orient in days gone by.

V. MODERN TIMES

The end of Ottoman domination

The beginning of the twentieth century marked the death knell of Ottoman domination in Europe. The Turkish provinces in the Balkans were in the throes of violent insurrection and the various Christian nationalities who lived there under the Osmanli yoke, were resolutely set towards complete emancipation. Profiting from this situation, the Young Turks proclaimed the revolution against Abdul Hamid II in Salonika on 24th July 1908. In all the provinces of Turkey in Europe, Jewish youth was drunk with ideas of liberty and enrolled enthusiastically among the ranks of the revolutionaries, contributing more than a little towards the achievement of the goal of political emancipation. But the Young Turks who led the movement had more zeal than *savoir-faire*. They lacked organisational powers and thought that they could reform everything on the basis of improvised and ill-conceived laws, confusing circulars and grandiose pronouncements. The crumbling edifice of the empire fell apart. Disparate ethnic masses, who had always been hostile towards the oligarchy of their Turkish conquerors, had, for a brief moment, been seduced by the illusion of fraternity, but now they were avid for independence and true freedom. Each regrouped its forces separately and affirmed its own identity, its own ambitions. The exaltation of a moment had led to transient unity, but this was now replaced by dissension, mistrust and hatred. The Balkans were breaking up.

Discontent was rife. Compulsory conscription for all the *millets*, whether Turkish, Greek or Jewish, added to the dissatisfaction, for up till then Greeks and Jews had been able to buy themselves out of the army on payment of a tax. Many sought to avoid military service by moving away. A large proportion of young Jews went into exile. Eight thousand tobacco workers left Salonika immediately after the Revolution to settle in New York. Hundreds of young men from Kastoria, Jannina and Kavalla emigrated to various destinations in France, Italy, Spain, Morocco or the United States. The communities were losing their young blood while the Young Turks witnessed the departure of an element in the population which they had thought they could easily win to their cause. The Young Turks seized every opportunity to demonstrate their goodwill towards the Jews: they favoured the appointment of Haim Nahum, who had been trained in the west, to replace Chief Rabbi Moses Levy, who had supported the court; they welcomed four Jewish members to the legislature, the foremost being the Salonika lawyer Emmanuel Carasso. Nothing availed: distrust, suspicion and disaffection persisted in all groups.

And so the empire broke up. Oriental Rumelia joined Bulgaria, Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkish Jewry dwindled and melted away. Turkey thus lost many important and extremely prosperous centres. Italy declared war on Turkey and, by the Treaty of Duchy in 1912, Tripolitania and the Dodecanese became Italian possessions. The flourishing community of Rhodes profited from the cultural renewal which the agents from Rome brought with them, and blossomed still more. It was now the seminary for rabbis and teachers in Rhodes which aimed at providing spiritual and intellectual leaders for all the Jewish centres in the East.

The apogee of Judaism in the Turkish Balkans

During the first fifteen years of the 20th century, all the Jewish communities in the Turkish Balkans reached a high point in economic and intellectual development. Business was thriving and gold flowed from the hands of the numerous local and foreign political propagandists. The schools of the *Alliance Israélite* gradually raised the level of their educational programmes, and a host of good private and secondary Turkish, French and Italian schools produced an ever-increasing élite. The Young Turks founded a Faculty of Law in Salonika which attracted a large number of Jewish students including, for a brief period, David Ben Gurion and Isaac Ben-Zvi, the future leaders of Israel. An impressive number of young men, belonging to the upper and middle classes, attended the universities and colleges of Constantinople, Paris, Toulouse, Rome, Vienna and Oxford. An increasing number of Jewish engineers, doctors, lawyers, teachers and publicists produced a fundamental renaissance and transformation of Judaism in the Balkans.

In 1912 there were twelve towns in the Balkans with a Jewish population of more than a thousand. The total Jewish population of these localities totalled 105,000 souls. A third of the children of school-going age attended some twenty schools run by the *Alliance* which paid 40% of their upkeep.

Salonika had thirty-two synagogues and some forty oratories which belonged to various brotherhoods, as well as numerous rooms reserved for prayer in private houses. Each synagogue generally had a seminary with a rich reference library. Dozens of candidates for the rabbinate and aspiring teachers pursued Jewish studies there. The *Beth Yosef* seminary was the best of its type. The students acquired a sound knowlege of the Bible and of exegesis, together with elements of non-Jewish culture, taught in French by masters trained in modern methods. There were also clubs for the adults, and all types of charitable institutions. There were a large number of circulating libraries. Works which were Jewish in content were avidly read and helped to spread knowledge of Judaism. Even among the common people who had not benefited from a modern education, there was a lively interest in reading. French and Italian books were translated into Judaeo-Spanish, transcribed into *rashi* characters. Publicists such as Sam Levy, Elias Semtov Arditti, Mentech Bensanchi, Lazarus Nefussy, Albert Matarasso, Elias Veissi, James Ventura and some twenty others devoted themselves to literature and journalism. The debate surrounding the Dreyfus Affair, which filled French newspapers for many years (1894-1906), had strong repercussions not only in Salonika but even in the smallest Jewish communities of the province, and this aroused a great interest in the whole of the Jewish question throughout the world. The Zionist movement found large numbers of enthusiastic supporters among the group. Alongside this movement there appeared a fully-fledged socialist party which rapidly expanded and gained supporters among the Jewish proletariat and the Greek Orthodox working classes.

There were newspapers in Judaeo-Spanish (with *La Epoca*, founded in 1873, at the top of the list, also *El Avenir, El Imparcial, La Accion, El Mesagero, La Renacencia Judia, L'Avanti*, etc.); in French (*Le Journal de Salonique, Le Progrès, L'Independant*); periodicals of all types, and satirical magazines, among them Moses Levy's *El Kirbatch* (The Whip), which was renowned for its devastating wit.

The 90,000 Jews of Salonika amounted to more than half the urban population. The city was the great emporium of the Balkans and almost all the traffic from the territories enclosed by the Aegean and the Danube on the one hand, and the Adriatic and the Black Sea on the other, passed through it. All the city's financial, industrial and commercial businesses were in Jewish hands; they controlled the tobacco industry, which was the principal source of wealth in the area, and many other concerns.

The Jews were also the indisputable masters of local trade and of foreign transactions in Cavalla, Komotini, Didymotika, Xanthi, Souflion, Serres,

Verria, Florina, Kastoria and Jannina. In all these places, each family owned its own house, and all enjoyed a high standard of living. There were many large fortunes, while the poorer members of the community kept their savings in solid gold and in jewels. Relations with Greeks and Turks were cordial.

This prosperity was not shared by Jews in Old Greece, except perhaps in Athens, though the numbers there were so small as to be insignificant. Jewish children attended only Greek schools, and they thus grew up in a restricted environment. Their religious education was limited to a routine formalism. The Corfu colony alone escaped to some extent from this lethargy, thanks to its Venetian past and its Italian speech which opened the gates of nearby Italy's intellectual culture. Some individuals stand out, such as Moses Joshua Haïmes, who taught at the school for advanced business studies in Athens, and the Hebraist, Lazarus Beleli who, for a time, held the Chair for Jewish studies at the University of Salonika. Elsewhere, however, in Thessaly, Chalkis, Morea, on Crete and Samos, the Jews stagnated: they were small shop-keepers, peddlers and craftsmen: they had therefore little hesitation in becoming expatriates and settling in Egypt, in the United States of America and elsewhere.

For bibliography relating to this essay, see p.282.

THE JEWS OF SALONIKA AND THE REST OF GREECE UNDER HELLENIC RULE: THE DEATH OF A GREAT COMMUNITY

by
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The time had come for the final liberation of those Balkan Christians remaining under the Ottoman yoke. In 1909 Eleutheris Venizelos united them briefly. He soon (1911) concluded an alliance with the Bulgarians which was reinforced, on the 25th August 1912, by a military pact. Two months later, at the time of the boycott of the Greeks in the area — for which the Athens press wrongly held the Jews to be responsible, the Greeks and Bulgarians, joined by the Serbians, opened hostilities, put the Turkish army to flight and seized the greater part of the Ottoman provinces in Europe. On the 9th November Salonika surrendered without a fight. The Bulgarians, defeated by Prince Constantine at Kilkitch, were driven from the Turkish territories which they had occupied. Greece remained in control of part of Thrace, Macedonia and of northern Epirus, together with Jannina which, since its foundation in the 7th century B.C., had harboured a large colony of Greek-speaking Jews.

Thus, numerous communities which had lived for half a millennium under Ottoman rule, now found themselves under Hellenic domination. According to the terms of the Treaty of Bucharest (10th August 1913), Thrace finally became Greek. The campaigns of 1912 and 1913 added a Jewish population of 105,000 souls to the 15,000 Jews who were already part of the Kingdom of the Hellenes. They automatically became Greek nationals, with the exception of a few hundred who came under Italian, Spanish, Turkish, French or other jurisdictions.

The First World War found Greece hesitant despite the efforts of Venizelos who was openly in favour of the Triple Alliance. In November 1915 the Allies opened a new front at Salonika. Their armies occupied the city which they used as a base for their operations. Once again the river of gold flowed in Macedonia, as the French and British Armies spent millions on supplies.

Soon Venizelos rebelled against the royal dynasty's so-called neutrality and established a separatist government of "National Defence" in Salonika. When Constantine abdicated in June 1917, Venizelos became master of the

whole of Greece. By the Treaty of Lausanne Greece was irrevocably excluded from Smyrna and Eastern Thrace. Political instability and internal upheavals were, however, to continue for some fifteen years, punctuated by a series of coups d'état with disastrous repercussions on the country's economy. Greek currency collapsed, causing widespread bankruptcy; and the wealth accumulated during the war vanished into thin air.

Initially the Jews of the new Greek provinces suffered from their contacts with their Hellenic masters. They were accused of being cold. How could they, without ingratitude or hypocrisy, welcome Greece as a liberator? How could they, with any decency, forget overnight the goodwill which the Osmanli authorities had always shown them? The Greek public and petty officials were suspicious of them and subjected them to wild accusations, threats, attacks, ostracism and economic boycott. The authorities, whether military, police or civilian, sought to calm matters down and establish order and good relations. Jacob Meïr, chief rabbi of the Salonika community was much respected in official circles. His fine bearing, his powerful personality, his spirited integrity and broad outlook were universally regarded. From the first, the royal family, the ministers in power and the Hellenic authorities were friendly towards him and trusted him. A mutual atmosphere of understanding soon prevailed and harmony between Greek and Jewish citizens was re-established.

Exodus and dispersal

The Sephardim of eastern Greece were well-educated and experienced; from now on they travelled, seeking outlets and suppliers for their foreign trade. In their native province they no longer found sufficient scope for their abilities, still less for their legitimate ambitions. They turned especially towards France because they knew the language, having been taught in it in the schools of the *Alliance Israélite* and in other educational establishments; they also went to Palestine and to the New World; indeed they went wherever their thirst for adventure, their yearning to live life to the full or their endeavours were most likely to find fulfilment. Wherever they went they found co-religionists from Rhodes, Jannina or Castoria, pioneers in emigration, who guided and supported them. When the Ottoman authorities were replaced by Greek officials, a number of Jews from the upper classes, particularly those who had been to Turkish schools, settled in Constantinople, Smyrna and other cities of Asia Minor. The Hellenic régime instituted direct taxation — a tax on income — and this led to an irritating inquisition which was carried out, it would seem, with excessive zeal where Jewish taxpayers were concerned and resulted in the departure of many of the richer citizens.

There were other factors which drove the Balkan Jews to leave. On the

18th of August 1917, during the occupation of Salonika by the Allied armies, the whole of the centre of the town was destroyed in a terrible fire. Seventy-three thousand Jews found themselves completely homeless. Soon after, the whole of the destroyed area was expropriated. The vast majority of those concerned were Jews who received, in exchange for their properties, "land bonds" whose value was subject to the fluctuations of the stock market. The three hundred acres laid waste by the fire were parcelled out according to plans drawn up by a French city-planner named Hébrard. The adjudicators, who were for the most part Greek, bought up the best lots and paid for them with "land bonds" which had been sold to them by their Jewish owners who thus deliberately, for the most part, permanently relinquished the opportunity of living in the rebuilt city.

This near-abdication favoured government policy which sought to strip Salonika of its cosmopolitan atmosphere which it owed to its Jewish Castilian-speaking majority with its French culture. The heterogeneous character of this Judaeo-Latin enclave whetted the appetites of all the Balkan nations. Moreover Prussia and Poland dreamt of linking Danzig and Gdynia to the Gulf of Thermai, and the Baltic to the Aegean and the Suez Canal by means of a bridge over the Danube and by turning Salonika into a free port with access to international trade. Greece hastened to put an end to this nightmare but in order to do so it was essential and urgent that the city should be rapidly Hellenised.The exchanges of populations with Turkey and Bulgaria came at an opportune moment for those who sought to rid themselves of the embarrassment of this foreign element. In 1922, 600,000 Greeks from Thrace and Asia Minor took the place of 150,000 Turks and Bulgarians who left the country. One hundred thousand of these refugees settled in Salonika. They had the full support of the State which granted them every facility, together with financial and tax benefits. Their tenacity, thrift, sense of initiative, punctuality and rectitude soon secured for them a prominent place in trade and industry. Alongside the civilian administrators, the military, the police and constabulary, the members of the teaching profession and their families, there was a vast influx of private citizens, both from the annexed provinces and from all parts of the country, who sought occupation in all fields and helped to accentuate the new demographic morphology of the city.

An attempt was made to bring together on Saturdays the peasant masses who came from the surrounding countryside to sell their produce and to do their shopping. The official blessing which this measure received ensured its success. In 1923, Papanastasiou, a Minister in Venizelos' cabinet, decreed that Sunday should be a compulsory day of rest throughout the whole land. This posed a dilemma for the Jews who either had to take two days off work every week or transgress the Sabbath; after many hesitations it was the Sabbath which was finally sacrificed.

That same year Venizelos' government instituted separate suffrage for Jewish voters who were accused of having cast their votes in such a way, in the 1920 elections, that Venizelos had suffered a resounding defeat. At the next legislative elections, only fifteen voters turned out to vote.

The Campbell Pogrom

For ten years, from 1924 to 1934, the pro-Venizelos press united to blow the trumpets of anti-Semitism. Malicious pamphleteers daily preached hatred and called on the masses to mount direct attacks on the Jews, "those interlopers who suck the blood of our people, who are in the forefront of Communism, and who have vowed to see Greece destroyed." The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, translated into Greek, were widely distributed and reprinted with venomous commentaries. Hitler' Fifth Column which had infiltrated everywhere, was largely responsible for spreading this propaganda and for the founding of a secret society known as *Ethniki Enosis Hellados* (Greek National Union), also known as the three Epsilons (E.E.E.). This society was hedged about with impressive initiation rites designed to appeal to the imagination; and it recruited thousands of devoted members. Soon it entered the parliamentary lists.

In 1930, a congress of Maccabaean organisations took place in Sofia in which a delegate from Salonika took part. During the discussions a Bulgarian Jew alluded, in passing, to Bulgaria's Macedonian aspirations. The remark passed unnoticed, but an E.E.E. ferret found it in the proceedings of the congress and the matter was blown up out of all proportion. The Salonika Maccabaeans and all the city's Jews, indeed Jewry world-wide, were made out to be plotting with Bulgaria to deprive Greece of the finest of her provinces. The press shrieked at this Jewish betrayal and called for revenge. Violent incidents, clashes and acts of aggression took place constantly. At night bands of marauders plundered the premises of Jewish sports clubs and irrupted into the Jewish quarters which they terrorised. Virulent manifestos circulated in profusion. The authorities remained impassive. On the night of the 29th to 30th June 1931, armed columns led by reserve officers poured into the Jewish suburb of Campbell and set fire to the huts in which 300 families were living. The latter were caught unawares as they slept, were overwhelmed and only just escaped massacre. The police were alerted but did nothing to prevent the crime and did not even attempt to arrest those responsible, even though they were well known. At the trial of the arsonists who had been brought to court by the Jewish community, the jury passed a verdict of 'not guilty' and the crime remained unpunished. Venizelos merely rebuked the criminals in Parliament. From a steady stream, the exodus now became a flood and from 1932 to 1934 14,000 Jews emigrated to Palestine where there were soon more than 30,000 immigrants who had come from

Greek provinces.

Every anti-Jewish measure had been followed by a spate of emigrants. Sephardic colonies from Greece sprang up in Paris — with more than 20,000 souls, Marseilles, Lyon, Milan, Naples, Alexandria, Cairo, Brussels, New York, Detroit, Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Rio-de-Janeiro, São-Paulo, Mexico etc. There had been successive departures from Corfu, Kastoria, Jannina and Salonika in 1908 for the United States and France, then from 1917 to 1919, and from 1922 to 1926, and finally for Palestine after the Campbell pogrom. Thus a total of 90,000 Jews had left Greece. Of these 70,000 had come from Salonika, whose total population at the beginning of the century had been 40,000, thus accounting for all new births.

Twilight hours

A knowledge of French had compensated to some extent for a Jew's handicap as an outsider, but this advantage was now withdrawn. Foreign languages were by decree rigorously suppressed from primary education. The schools of the *Alliance Isráelite*, which had always been an open window to the West, were incorporated into the communal school structure. The clear speech of France vanished from the streets and diminished in cultural life. The Jewish element was no longer dominant in Salonika but became increasingly assimilated to the Hellenic mass; it ceased to be a cause of concern. By 1934 the Venizelos party felt that it had won the day and that the time had come to stop its anti-Semitic directives which were in open contradiction to the fundamental principles of its avowed "liberal" programme and which were criticized by its American friends. Political realism called for a radical change in tactics. On the initiative of local Venizelos leaders, a pact of conciliation was concluded between Venizelos himself, who was temporarily staying in Paris, and Jewish personalities who had the ear of their co-religionists. As if by magic the hate campaign stopped from one day to the next. From now on Jewish voters could vote as they wished.

On the 4th August 1936, General Metaxas seized power and instituted a moderate dictatorship. He dissolved the Three Epsilons (the E.E.E.) and took the Jews under his protection despite the nationalist tendency of his aims. The country was calm when cannons opened fire on the frontiers of Poland and France. Suddenly, at 3 a.m. precisely on the 28th October 1940, the Italian Minister in Athens presented General Metaxas with an ultimatum demanding the immediate entry into Greece of Mussolini's troops stationed in Albania, which had recently become Italian. The downright 'No!' which greeted this ultimatum led to the instantaneous invasion of Epirus. The Greek army was speedily mobilised, with some 13,000 Jews in the ranks of those who answered the call to arms. Of these, 350 were officers, with two lieutenant-colonels and one full colonel, the hero Mordecai Frizi of Chalkis

who fell gloriously in battle while leading his men on the Albanian front. Greek troops crushed the Fascist legions and were on the point of seizing the greater part of Albania when, on the 6th April 1941, the German Ambassador in Athens repeated the action of the Duce's representative. It met with an identical refusal. Nazi troops in large numbers crossed the frontier from Bulgaria and repulsed the Greek army. By the 8th April they were in Salonika and less than three weeks later they occupied Athens where they were quickly replaced by Italians. The Jews were henceforward at Hitler's mercy.

In the struggle against Italians and Germans, Jewish soldiers fought with great courage and received high praise. They left 613 dead on the field of battle; 3743 were wounded and of these 2274 were invalided out.

The situation before the end

Despite the adversities of the previous thirty years, on the eve of the Second World War Greek Judaism remained in a strong position. The Salonika community still numbered 65,000 but accounted for only 15% of the urban population, though its members retained nearly a quarter of the economic potential and controlled most branches of local trade. Jews owned 2300 businesses, of which 600 were of the first rank, out of a total of 9800 registered in industry, trade and crafts. However a large part of this population had slipped rapidly into poverty and penury. Seven thousand families, accounting for almost 30,000 souls, were more or less dependent on community help, especially in the matter of housing.

In Thrace and central Macedonia Jews controlled the production and export of tobacco. At Xanthi and Kavalla they were dominant. They continued to play an active part in all sectors of the economy and were represented among the ranks of all the professions. There were Jewish doctors, chemists, professors, engineers and lawyers. They were prominent in industry, banking, insurance and maritime trade. At the same time they practised manual crafts, played an important part in transport and were much in demand for their strong physique and endurance when it came to heavy labour. The vast majority of tobacco workers were Jewish and none could equal the capabilities of Jewish tobacco experts.

On a cultural level, however, Jews no longer had the same enthusiasm and vitality. The élite had emigrated to other climes, to Palestine, Italy and, especially to France where, in Paris, they played an important part in higher education, journalism and even in literature. Their schools in Salonika had had to conform to lower standards and had suffered a marked decline. Those newspapers which had survived from better times, such as *L'Indépendant* and *Le Progrès* in French, *El Liberal*, *La Accion and El Mesagero* in Judaeo-Spanish printed in *rashi* type, were colourless and uninteresting. Whereas in

1932 25,000 copies were being printed, by 1940 this figure had dropped to a bare 6,000 and they all disappeared in April 1941 at the time of the German invasion. Clubs had been lively centres of intellectual activity from the beginning of the century until the proclamation of the Metaxas dictatorship in 1936, but they were now fighting for survival. Lectures and talks were banned together with freedom of speech. Darkness was spreading and extermination was on its way.

Under the Nazi jackboot

When the National-Socialist troops irrupted into Greece, the Jewish population of the country numbered 80,000 souls, including 2,200 Dodecanese Jews who were still under Italian rule. This population was distributed between some thirty localities, nine of which had more than 1000 inhabitants and seven more than 500. Salonika, with a population of 56,000, accounted for 70% of the total. It was on this community especially that Hitler's brutality focussed.

Greece was divided into three zones of occupation. The Germans kept Salonika, the greater part of western Macedonia, the Aegean islands and Crete, together with a strip of Thrace along the frontier with Turkey, which they hoped to recruit to the Axis cause; they bestowed central and eastern Macedonia and the rest of Thrace on the Bulgarians and, from 27th April 1941, they allowed the Italians to occupy the district of western Macedonia close to Albania, continental Greece, the Peloponnese and the Ionian isles.

On the 9th April 1941, at 9 a.m., the first motorised German columns entered Salonika. The Jews were petrified. Nevertheless, following the example of non-Jewish citizens, they attempted to resume their normal occupations in accordance with the invaders' orders. The local press was reduced to the *Apoyevmatini*, a pro-German daily, to which was immediately added the *Nea Evropi* which was the mouth-piece of Hitler's army. Anti-Jewish measures poured down. A large number of Jewish houses were sequestrated, as was the Hirsch Hospital, the medical staff and patients of which were brutally expelled. On the 15th April, the headquarters of the Jewish community were cleared of its contents, archives, carpets, furniture, safe and library. The members of the administrative council and its officials, the president of the *B'nai B'rith* and other important citizens were imprisoned. On the 20th, the *Nea Evropi* published an anti-Jewish attack in the grand style. "Jews had ruined poor Germany and had let war loose on the world. However the Führer's triumphant armies had eliminated these demons and humanity would henceforth live in peace." This same theme was to be repeated in that wretched newspaper *ad nauseam* throughout the whole Occupation. On the 21st April, placards forbade Jews to enter coffee-shops, pastry-shops and restaurants. Eight days later they were called upon to turn in

their radios to the German authorities. They were forbidden to keep their shops closed under threat of requisitioning, but book-shops belonging to Jews were confiscated and their owners were imprisoned. The chief rabbi, Dr. Koretz, and the president of the community, Dr. Halevy, who were in Athens at the time, were also arrested. Dr. Halevy was released after a short interrogation but Dr. Koretz was sent to Vienna, accused of having, at one time, voiced his disapproval of the Axis.

Famine and mortality

The army of occupation lived predominantly off the land. Supplies were not requisitioned but were bought and paid for handsomely, on the spot, first with special marks whose value was artifically inflated — real 'monkey money' — and soon with Greek banknotes which were seized at revolver point by officers of the commissariat from the issuing bank, and driven off by the lorry-load. Inflation soared; a gold sovereign which had been worth 1000 drachmas in October, was soon worth thousands, then tens of thousands and eventually millions. Lack of transport facilities, a halt in imports and a slowing of production, due to seizure by the army, led to shortages in the towns which rapidly took on famine proportions. Jews were by far the worst off. Fear of measures to come resulted in their ceasing all productive and remunerative activities. Most Christian citizens had relatives in the country-side who supplied them cheaply, but Jews did not have the same advantage and had to pay in gold for such food as they were able to find on the black market which was run by German officers and soldiers, either by means of intermediaries or even, openly and shamelessly, by themselves. Jews had to sell their jewels, furniture, clothes and houses at ridiculously low rates. Most of the Jewish community struggled in lamentable conditions. The community organisation was unable to help. In addition to its normal obligations, it had to meet the lodging needs of a group of more or less authentic co-religionists from Central Europe, some of whom acted as informers for the German secret service; it also had to defray the expenses, on a sumptuous scale, of the installation and upkeep of the Gestapo and of the Rosenberg Commission which arrived in Salonika in the middle of June 1941. Soon all its resources were exhausted and it was obliged to sell large parcels of land which it owned in the surroundings, in order to obtain funds which were always insufficient.

The winter of 1941 to 1942 was exceptionally cold and added to the general distress. Ghost-like figures wandered the streets and sorted through the rubbish which piled up outside the houses, in the hope of finding something to eat. To make matters worse, fever characterised by skin eruptions broke out in the poorer Jewish suburbs. Bodies lay everywhere and the death-toll was appalling, especially among children. There were up to sixty Jewish victims a day.

Dr. Koretz was brought back from Vienna, where he had been in a concentration camp, but remained mysteriously silent concerning his detention. He resumed his post as chief rabbi. On the 11th December 1942, at the Gestapo's invitation, he also became president of the council of administration, after the removal of his predecessor who was considered inadequate. Koretz thus held all the leading positions in the community. He began his new duties by calling together all his staff and demanding of them obedience and discipline. In the course of the speech which he made on this occasion, among other things he acclaimed German prosperity. He affirmed that neither white bread nor butter were lacking there. "Look at me", he said, "do I look as though I had been starved in the concentration camp where I spent several months?"

The Rosenberg Commission set about its methodical preparation for its programme of extermination Demographic statistics were prepared and Jewish property in all parts of Greece was recorded while one of its members, Dr. J. Pohl, a specialist in Jewish matters, undertook detailed investigations into every family and Jewish community in the Salonika area. He ransacked the libraries of all the *yeshiboth*, clubs and educated Jews in the city, on which he had precise information obtained well before the war, thanks to the Fifth Column's activities. He seized many tens of thousands of works, among them precious rabbinical folios, *incunabula* and a large number of manuscripts. The same fate befell the archives of Jewish banks in the hopes of finding evidence for an international Jewish financial plot. Dr. Hans Heinrich of the Rosenberg Commission supervised all the practical details of classification, packing and despatch. More than 2000 crates, marked with the sign GSV, were used in the transport of these treasures to Germany, especially to Frankfurt-am-Main.

In September 1942, Dr. Pohl was replaced by Dr. Mertsche, secretary of the Rosenberg Kommandos in the Balkans. He was very erudite and spoke ten languages fluently; with thorough and dogged perseverance he continued the work of investigation and pillage of his predecessor, collecting a huge documentation drawn from the archives of the Balkan communities.

Up till now the vexations inflicted upon the Jews might be thought relatively insignificant when compared with what was systematically and diabolically being prepared in the shadows.

Slave labour

Lightning struck suddenly. A communiqué appeared in the daily newspaper *Apoyevmatini* which ordered all adult male Jews between the ages of 18 and 45, to report on Saturday 11th July (1942) at 8 a.m. on Liberty Square. The Jewish population was in consternation. Further information revealed that all males capable of carrying out essential military tasks were

being mobilised. On the day fixed, at the time and place indicated, 9,000 adults assembled, closely packed against each other. They were surrounded by Nazi guards and threatened by canon and machine-guns placed where they could be seen on the surrounding buildings. They were then forced to take part in grotesque gymnastics, to drag themselves and roll in the dust. Those who showed any hesitation were beaten without pity. Hundreds suffered from sun-stroke and dropped unconscious. From the surrounding balconies the army *Fräuleins* laughed merrily at these heart-breaking scenes. The Greek authorities did not protest.

After six mortal hours spent in this manner, the recruits were ordered to return two days later when their names would be recorded; they were then allowed to withdraw. Their particulars were then registered in a building near Liberty Square over a period of four days. Every adult was given his own card which bore a number. As he came out of the offices where the registration took place, he was seized by brutish German police and forced to roll like a barrel down the whole length of the street, to the accompaniment of shrieks of laughter from the by-standers.

A few days later, the *Nea Evropi* and the *Apoyevmatini* called up batches of recruits who were taken away in special trains, to work on the roads and in quarries in different parts of the country, where they were set the heavy tasks. Their daily rations consisted of 300 gms of bread and thin soup in which a few pieces of vegetables floated. They were made to work ten-hour days during the heat of August, in insalubrious regions where, exhausted, under-nourished, in the grip of iron discipline, ill-treated, with the lack of even the most basic necessities, the wretches died in their hundreds from typhoid, malaria and typhus. Those who survived were mere ghosts. The sick poured into the city and the community council organised a special body to supply the labour camps with food and medicines, but the supplies were subject to frustrating delays and many never reached their destination. It became evident that these prisoners were destined to die within a matter of months.

In its relations with the civilian population, the army of occupation relied on Dr. Maximilian Merten, to whom these powers had exclusively been given by the High Command. He was a Machiavellian character who meticulously prepared all the measures for the extermination of the Jews of whom he impudently claimed to be the friend. Faced with such an alarming situation, the community leaders assailed him with requests and towards the end of August 1942 he agreed that a commission of four Jews should be set up to improve the food and sanitation in the labour camps. The workmen could even buy themselves out upon payment of an indemnity fixed at a million drachmas (150 gold francs) for the poorest — an absolute fortune at the time. These measures remained ineffective, however, owing to the inertia and ill-will of German officialdom. In a space of six weeks 12% of all the recruits died. Army experts themselves admitted that the teams were totally unsuited

to forced labour and that the results of their work were minimal.

After lengthy negotiations and bitter bargaining, Dr. Merten agreed to free all those mobilised in return for a ransom of two and a half billion drachmas (approximately 15,000 pounds sterling), payable in instalments over two months. The agreement was signed on the 7th October 1942 and 700 million were paid immediately. Three thousand of those mobilised were at once returned to their homes. The remainder were freed during the next few weeks. A property tax was imposed to meet the ransom demands and Merten promised to apply pressure to ensure payment. Jews from Salonika who had sought refuge in Athens were also called upon to contribute.

Confiscation and plunder

A period of persecution had started in reality. On the 6th December 1942, under the pretext of allowing for an extension of the University campus, Merten caused the huge Jewish cemetery to be ransacked and 500,000 graves were destroyed. The grave-stones were used for road-building, the paving of courtyards, in marble workshops, and as building material in the neighbouring suburbs. The bones were scattered and mixed with the dust and mud of the roads. The Greek authorities did not protest at this vandalism. A gang of pen-pushers working for the *Apoyevmatini* guided the Nazi propaganda services to all the workshops and stores of Jewish printers and stationers which were sequestrated and where large quantities of merchandise and equipment were seized. Merten and the Gestapo got down seriously to the business of plunder. Furniture stores were "legally" sold to collaborators. The Jewish bazaar which had been in existence for more than 400 years, was brutally cleared and its many shops were handed over to Orthodox local tradesmen. On the 2nd February 1943, the tool-making factory and retail store of the succesful Alvo brothers, was seized. It was the largest and best-equipped business of its kind in Greece and it took no less than three months to move the machinery and stock. Eight days later, all the iron-foundries, and machine-tool and farm-implement warehouses were confiscated This plunder was worth at least 4,000,000 gold francs. The merchants themselves were arrested and were only released upon payment of a large ransom. On the 3rd March, the glass and china shop of Haim Benrubi, which was over a hundred years old and the most prosperous in the Balkans, suffered the same fate. Long trains of railway trucks carried off all this wealth to Germany.

German officers and soldiers would enter shops owned by Jewish merchants and buy up large quantities of goods for which they paid in Greek banknotes which were worth less and less every day.

Racialist measures

The big guns were now brought into action. An S.D. Commission (*Sicherdienst* or Security Services) arrived in Salonika to assist Merten in his extermination work. It was reinforced by agents of the Political and Criminal Police force (SIPO or *Sicherheits Polizei*) They set themselves up in two comfortable villas separated by a garden in the middle of the Jewish quarter. There were six members, led by the bulky and repugnant Dieter Wislicenny and Alois Brünner, who was small, slender and subtle. They got down to business straight away. From the 6th to the 13th February 1943 Merten issued a series of circulars for the attention of "The Community of Jewish worshippers of Salonika" as follows:

1. Every Jew more than five years old must wear on his outer clothing, over his heart, a circle of yellow material in the shape of a six-pointed star, some 10 cms in diameter. Each must carry an identity card with the number under which he is registered within the community. This number must also be visible on the badge.

2. All Jewish businesses, shops, offices etc., all places where Jewish lawyers, doctors and chemists work, must bear a clearly visible sign, in the window or on the door, at eye level, consisting of a white card measuring 50 by 30 cms, bearing the bilingual inscription "Jüdisches Geschäft — Ebraikon Katastema".

A Jewish business is one in which one or more participants, or one or more senior employees, are Jewish.

3. All Jews living in Salonika must live in one particular part of the town.

4. All property (houses, land) occupied by Jews must be marked by a placard bearing a Star of David, clearly visible and fastened to the front door.

5. All Jews are forbidden to:

a) change their place of residence under pain of immediate execution,

b) use the tramway or any other means of transport,

c) frequent public places and go into streets and public places after night-fall,

d) use private or public telephones,

All Jews who have a telephone must return it to the Telephone Company.

A person is considered to be a Jew if:

a) he has at least three Jewish grand-parents,

b) he is the child of a mixed marriage,

c) he has at least two Jewish grand-parents and belonged, on the 1st April 1941, to the Jewish faith.

Relinquishing the Jewish faith, at whatever date this may have taken place, does not absolve a person from wearing the Star of David badge.

In the case of a mixed marriage, the Jewish partner must wear the Star of David badge.

All these measures are to be applied to Jews of both sexes living in Salonika and in the whole Salonika-Aegean territory under German rule. Koretz is to see that they are implemented. Jews of foreign nationality are exempt.

On the 25th February, Merten ordered all corporations, clubs, trades unions and professional organisations of whatever type to exclude their Jewish members.

In the meantime all prosperous Jews were brought individually before the S.D Commission, where they were beaten up and forced to reveal the whereabouts of their cash, jewellery, etc. which they were forced to hand over. The S.D. headquarters soon resembled Ali Baba's cave. The less cumbersome part of this accumulated wealth, such as jewellery, cash and gold coins, was retained for their own use by the two chiefs, while the remainder was sent to Germany.

The mouse-trap

The Jews of Salonica were hastily concentrated into two clearly defined areas — one in the central part of the city and the other in the rich quarter known as the Country, beyond the White Tower. To the latter was attached the populous suburb of Calamaria. The suburbs of Aghia Paraskevy, Régie-Vardar and Hirsch, which were entirely Jewish, were already the equivalent of ghettos.

The S.D. spread the rumour that these various districts formed a federation which was to be established as a sort of autonomous republic. In this manner they sought to lull their victims' apprehensions.

Families were crowded together, sleeping in hallways, kitchens, on staircase landings. A Jewish militia, consisting of 250 members, was formed by the S.D. It was led by Jews who had been officers and non-commissioned officers in the Greek army and by refugee Jews from Central Europe. It was a diabolical stratagem to ensure that discipline in the ghettos was enforced by the Jews themselves. Each member of the militia wore a yellow armband bearing the words "Jüdischer Ordner".

On the 1st March the Jews were ordered to declare their fortunes, calculated in pre-War drachmas (i.e. 1000 drachmas to one gold sovereign). Buildings, land and fields, credits and debts, bank deposits both at home and abroad, valuables, cash and jewellery, carpets, paintings, stamp collections, cars and carriages (even wheel-barrows), domestic animals (down to hens), china, kitchen equipment, clothing, household linen, books etc., were all carefully itemised. This task was conscientiously completed, but it was a pointless exercise, since declarations piled up in the community offices and

never reached the Germans.

Preparation for deportation

The S.D. put their well-prepared plan into execution. The Jewish suburb of Hirsch, next to the railway station, was surrounded by a 4 m high wooden fence surmounted by barbed-wire and dominated by watch-towers equipped with search-lights and machine guns. It constituted a transit camp, some 7.5 acres in extent, in which 2315 people lived and to which were added the fifteen or so Jewish families from Langaza, a small town 20 km from Salonika. The three gateways to this compound were guarded by *shupos* and the inhabitants were forbidden to leave. In the same way, on the 6th March, all the exits from the two ghettos and from the Jewish suburbs were sealed off by *shupos*, Greek police and Jewish militia. Henceforward no one was allowed to go out. Four thousand rations of soup were distributed daily to the poorest; children were given priority. On the 13th March Merten declared that Jews no longer had the right to own property. Everything which they had in the way of clothing, kitchen equipment, jewellery, money etc., except for the clothes which they were actually wearing, was the property of the community and was handed over to president Koretz. Goods in their shops, furniture and draught animals also ceased to belong to their owners and were taken over by a special administration. One hundred and two prominent Jewish citizens were named as hostages in order to ensure the strict observance of this edict. Reluctance to comply with the orders or disobedience would cost the life of one or more of these hostages.

Merten had already ordered the Greek governor of Macedonia on the 7th of March to set up an administration to take charge of all the commercial, industrial and manufacturing companies belonging to Jews and hand them over to sequestration-managers. On the 15th March such an administration was established. Businesmen, merchants, industrialists, craftsmen were called upon to hand over their shops, factories and workshops. Six hundred of the 2,300 ordered to report, actually turned up. The 1,700 businesses which had not been handed over by their owners were given to collaborators, swindlers or prostitutes, if they had not already been ransacked by the mob. However, it was only on the 1st June that, by legal-decree No. 205, a special state department was officially set up under the title of Service for the Administration of Jewish Property (YDIP), in order to oversee sequestrated property. This huge plundering operation robbed the Jewish population of Salonika of wealth totalling some 150,000,000 dollars. As for the furnishings of Jewish houses, they were sent to Germany by the train-load.

The departure of the convoys

On Sunday 14th March, in obedience to higher orders, Koretz harangued the inmates of Hirsch as follows: "Prepare to leave for Cracow where a friendly welcome awaits you. The Jewish community will take care of you, will house you, will see to your upkeep and will find work for every one of you."

Three hundred railway trucks were lined up in the station. The next day, at 11 a.m., 2,365 inmates were piled into them amidst heart-breaking scenes. Each person had been given a cheque — a scrap of paper — for 600 zlotys which was supposed to meet their initial needs when they reached Cracow. No suitcases were allowed but each person was allowed to take a 20 kg bundle. They were all brutally herded together and piled into twenty cattle-trucks, the doors of which were hermetically sealed.

On the same day, at 5 a.m., the *shupos*, Greek police and Jewish militia, rounded up all the inhabitants of the suburb of Aya Paraskevi and drove them with whips into the Hirsch transit camp, which had only just been vacated by the first convoy. On the 16th March it was the turn of all the Jews living in the streets near the railway station. The next day all these people were carried off in a second convoy. The empty houses were raided by German soldiers who loaded all the furniture into lorries. The contents were sorted at the railway station and anything of value sent to Germany.

The Jewish population of the two sealed-off areas was in turmoil. Koretz was called upon to come and offer some explanation in the synagogue. "Yes", he admitted, "everyone is to be sent to Cracow. We must be resigned to this." It was with great difficulty that the militia were able to prevent him from being lynched by the angry crowd. A delegation went to see Merten, beseeching and imploring him, and promising to hand over to the Third Reich half the property owned by the Jews of Salonika. Merten sadly replied that the orders from Berlin were explicit and, that much to his sorrow, he could not change them. On the 19th March, 2,400 people from the city zone were interned in the Hirsch camp and left in the third convoy. Merten immediately announced that he urgently needed 3,000 adults to work on the roads, stations and railways. Koretz thought this might be a way out and offered five times as many, but they were categorically refused. The 3,000 recruits were assembled in a few hours and were sent to Thebes, Lianokladi, Lamia, Karya and Assopi where they joined teams of Russian and Polish prisoners. Subsequently, every two or three days, new contingents of strong young men were recruited for those teams. Bachelors were preferred and in order to avoid being drafted, they got married in haste. Hundreds of marriages were hurriedly celebrated *in extremis* in the Hirsch camp. The S.D. looked on and laughed.

The workers thus summarily recruited suffered barbaric treatment. They

were forced to work like slaves and those who did not work hard enough were shot on the spot.

On the 18th March an incident took place, both ominous and comic, which only increased local anxiety. Dr. Léon Cuenca was attached to the Red Cross and was under the protection of the Italian Consulate, much to the exasperation of the Gestapo. On Merten's orders, he and his wife were kidnapped during the night by German agents and secretly put on board a departing train. In his duplicity Merten pretended to be incensed and claimed that the doctor had escaped: he held the entire Jewish community responsible. He selected 25 hostages who would, he declared, be shot without mercy should any other escape be reported to him. Koretz did his best to prevent any such attempts but, despite his ferocious vigilance, dozens of adults escaped from the ghettos and joined the "resistance". "Ferrymen", charging 35 to 40 gold sovereigns per fugitive, were numerous but so were the betrayals to the Gestapo and those caught were shot in the presence of their relations and of a crowd who were forced to attend the horrible spectacle.

On the 23rd March the fourth convoy left, followed four days later by the fifth. There was then a week's halt. It was learnt that, under pressure from Salonika Jews in Athens, the Greek Prime Minister Rhalis who had come to Salonika for a few hours, had had an interview with Koretz at the Metropolitan's residence and had intimated to Merten that the deportations must cease. New hope sprang up but was short-lived. Rhalis, a weak puppet, was snubbed while Koretz was relieved of his double offices as president and spiritual leader, and was sent, with his family, to the Hirsch camp on the 10th April, after four days in prison. An insignificant character named Albala, who could speak a little German, was appointed president and the venerable Haïm Habib was named chief rabbi. A few days later, however, that good man was also interned in the Hirsch camp.

The convoys started up again, and continued mercilessly in a steady stream, on the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 10th, 13th, 16th, 20th, 22nd and 28th April and on the 3rd and 9th May. Each carried off a human cargo of 2,400 victims. People became resigned and decided to make the best of it. If they were going to Cracow, they might as well prepare themselves for their new life. They would be going to a cold country so they equipped themselves accordingly with warm clothes, stout shoes or, better still, boots and knap-sacks designed to carry the regulation 20 kg. Jewellery, furniture and linen were sold secretly at give-away prices. Non-Jewish friends were given anything not needed and any excess currency.

The Hirsch camp was the gateway to hell. The absolute master of the camp was Garbing, a 23 year old member of the S.D., a degenerate sadist feared for his brutality. He surrounded himself with a staff of executioners drawn from the dregs of the prisoners. Batches of Jews were thrown into this *Gehenna* as one by one the convoys left to make room for the next. The

prisoners in the Hirsch camp lived as best they could, one family per room some 12 to 15 square metres. Ladies from the upper echelons of society made soup and did the washing for the camp masters. Haïm Habib, a very holy man whom everyone treated with respect and admiration, was forced, together with the other rabbis, to sweep the streets and see that the lavatories were kept clean.

Garbing and his pack feasted and took part in orgies involving unfortunate young girls who were selected from the herd of victims, while musicians also drawn from the same source were forced to provide an accompaniment to these scenes of debauchery and vice.

Convoys from the provinces

While confusion surrounded the departure of the Salonika Jews, the communities in the interior were being methodically mobilised. At the beginning of the Occupation, the Germans pretended to ignore the Jews in the towns of the province. Officers were often on good terms with bourgeois Jewish families. Things changed in June 1941. Teams of Jews were made to sweep the streets and build roads. Radio sets were confiscated; furniture was seized; officers and men helped themselves in the shops and paid what they chose.

On the 13th February 1943, Koretz was put in charge of all the Jewish communities under German control and began to impose racialist measures on the Jews of Florina and Verria. He appointed two delegates who made the wearing of the Star of David and concentration into ghettos compulsory. Here too Koretz sought to persuade the population that they would be going to Cracow. Many remained unconvinced and, with the help of the Greek authorities, moved out to the villages where they received a warm welcome from the peasants. On the 30th April, 372 prisoners from Florina were brought to Salonika by Koretz's delegates. At Verria, 660 wretches were besieged in the synagogue on the last day of the Passover. They stayed there for three days and were then herded like cattle straight to the Hirsch camp. On the 8th May, convoys came from the strip of Thrace bordering Turkey which the Germans themselves had occupied. There were 970 captives from Demotica, 160 from Nea Orestias and 32 from Soufli. They were all embarked on the convoy of the 9th May which was completed by a few hundred victims from Salonika.

There were 33 Jewish families in Katherini. Koretz telephoned the head of the local police and asked him to seize them and send them to Salonika under a strong guard. However, he was dealing with a brave man who hastened to send every single one of those Jews into the surrounding villages. Within two hours all had fled, carrying with them clothing and food. The German officer in command turned a blind eye.

Bulgarian ferocity

For their part, the Bulgarians carried out the work of extermination with implacable ferocity in Thrace and in the towns of eastern and central Macedonia which their National-Socialist allies had meted out to them. As soon as they had taken control, they forbade Jews to travel from one place to another and even to go out into the streets. They obliged them to carry a yellow identity card inscribed with the word "JEW". All Jewish houses bore clearly visible inscriptions. In July 1942 they mobilised all adult males for work on the roads and in the quarries and, in January 1943, they sent teams to Bulgaria to repair the railway stations and tracks. In each town a special commissioner supervised the enforcement of the racial laws. Numerous executions took place on the pretext of high treason or sabotage. The slightest infringement was deemed to be a crime against army security and was punished with bloody collective reprisals.

Deportation took place on the 3rd March 1943, the Bulgarian national day, twelve days before the Salonika deportation began. S.S. and S.D. officers assisted the Bulgarian executioners, led by the notorious Danncker who, in November 1942, had organised the Drancy convoys in Paris. The rounding up of Jews had been carefully planned by Assem Tirofonof, a Cavalla police officer, acting on the orders of Belev, head of the commission for Jewish affairs in Sofia. Shortly before midnight, in a well synchronised operation, Bulgarian boy-scouts and policemen broke down the doors of every Jewish house in every community under Bulgarian occupation and dragged all the occupants from their beds, men, women and children, the old and the infirm. In their night-shirts, with no luggage whatsoever, they were piled into lorries and taken to the tobacco factories where they were imprisoned. In this way 596 people were captured at Serres, 780 at Drama, 561 at Xanthi, 819 at Komotini, 15 at Alexandropole and 1471 at Kavalla. Hardly had they been vacated, than all these houses were emptied of their contents by squads of soldiers. For three days those arrested remained without food. On Sunday the 7th March they were all brought to Drama whence they were distributed by train to various camps within Bulgaria. A few days later they were taken to Lom-Limina on the Danube where they were loaded onto barges heading for Vienna. At Lom-Palanka they were handed over to the Germans. No one knows what happened to them. Were they drowned in the river? Did they suffer mass extermination at Birkenau? None survived and the mystery remains unsolved!

Salonica without the Jews

After the sixteenth convoy, that of the 9th May, the only Jews remaining in Salonika were Italian and Spanish nationals, community officials and

council members belonging to the various commissions which had been set up to organise the deportations and who thought themselves to be in a privileged position. Of the latter, 820 were put on a special train which was said to be bound for "the Jewish republic of Theresienstadt". These favoured persons were told that this was in recompense for their services. It was a grotesque farce. The train went straight to Auschwitz and, on arrival, its passengers were loaded into lorries and taken without delay to the gas-chambers and crematoria of Birkenau.

Towards the end of June, all Jews of Italian nationality were sent to Athens where they were housed in schools.

On the 27th July 1943, the heads of the Spanish families were summoned by the Gestapo and told to report to the Beth Saul synagogue where they would receive further instructions. The heads of 117 out of 182 families reported as required. The *shupos* surrounded the synagogue where Wisli-cenny announced that they were to attend a course in Germany. They were loaded into lorries and taken to the Hirsch camp. There they were joined by their wives and children and, on the 2nd August, 367 people were loaded into cattle trucks. A few 2nd class carriages were attached to their train in which 74 privileged people took seat, officials and community council members together with Koretz and Albala. After a journey of eleven days the convoy reached Celle near Hanover; from there they were all taken to Bergen-Belsen. The Spanish Jews were kept in a separate camp but the 74 privileged Jews were thrown into the vast camp where they joined Jewish deportees from Holland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Towards the end of January and at the beginning of February 1944, the Spanish Jews were liberated in two batches and taken to Spain where they were grudgingly received in transit, after having been abandoned to the Germans on their departure from Greece. The JOINT and UNRRA organisations took them under their wing and put them into the Lyautey camp near Casablanca. From there they were taken to Palestine and placed in a camp in Gaza. They were only able to return to Greece in August 1945, but 150 of them decided to stay in Tel Aviv.

No Jews remained in Salonika after the convoy of the 2nd August. The flotsam and jetsam from the labour camps were then brought in, walking skeletons, haggard and dying. There were 1,800 of them. More than twice that number had died as a result of privation, epidemics and barbarous treatment. On the 7th August they were herded into cattle trucks, with whips and truncheons like dogs on the way to the pound, and taken straight to the Birkenau crematoria. This was the nineteenth convoy: it was also the last. A total of 45,861 heads of human cattle had been herded from the railway station at Salonika to the slaughter-houses of Poland. A few weeks later, on the 8th September, eight Jews who had been kept in the Pavlo Mela prison — four men and four women — were shot. Apart from some ten intrepid

families, comprising some 72 people, who had gone into hiding with Christian families, and about fifteen others who were tolerated because they had Aryan wives, there were no longer any Jews in the ancient city which, for more than four centuries, had been one of the capitals of world Jewry.

During the Albanian war, which had lasted 23 weeks (from the 8th October 1940 to the 6th April 1941), 1,500 families had fled from Salonika, which was being subjected to Italian air-raids, and had sought refuge in Athens and in villages in the countryside. During the Occupation, 2,000 Jews had managed to flee to Athens or to the villages of Pindus and Pelion. Five hundred others had joined the partisans. Furthermore, 450 genuine Italian nationals and 300 others who had been accepted as such, thanks to the humanitarianism of the Italian consular officials, had also been able to move to the capital. Many of these refugees were able to reach Crete or the Asiatic coast of the Aegean by one means or another, and from there had moved on to Egypt or Palestine.

Unsuccessful attempts at rescue

On the 28th February 1943, as soon as news of the deportations began to spread, some orthodox Jewish intellectuals, led by Profesor Vizoukidis, Demetrios Dingas and Peter Levis, who had been government ministers, and by Demetrios Spiliacos, a lawyer, hastened to the Governor General, Simonides, to register a protest. The latter referred them to the German High-Command where they were greeted by Merten. "What!" he exclaimed in astonishment, "here we are trying to clean up your city and get rid of the thorns and brambles in your garden and you complain!" The worthy men then turned to the Metropolitan, Gennadios, who also went to Merten and adjured him in the name of Christ. "I was expecting your visit", that hypocrite told him, "I am deeply distressed but there's nothing I can do. My orders have come from the highest authority and are categorical. Nothing can change them."

One hundred and fifty lawyers from the Salonika courts then appealed to the Greek Prime Minister in Athens, citing the sacred traditions of Hellenism, and asked that the Jews be sent to an island under government control. They were wasting their time, for the Germans rejected all requests. They utterly despised the Prime Minister and treated him as a lackey.

Five thousand Jews from Salonika lived in Athens and were treated in a friendly manner by the Italians. They went about their affairs peacefully and without fear, and put unrestricted trust into a handful of co-religionists, ten resolute and intrepid men, devoted to the common cause, active and indefatigable. They were kept informed clandestinely, hour by hour, about what was happening in the German and Bulgarian occupation zones. They were constantly on the alert. They were in close contact with the Resistance,

raised money to pay for escapes into areas held by partisans or to the Near East and helped destitute refugees from Salonika. As soon as they received news about the preparations for deportation, they set everything in motion, moving heaven and earth, and sending out an anguished appeal to all the foremost citizens of Athens. Damaskinos, Metropolitan of the capital and leader of the Orthodox clergy, set the tone: he instructed his priests to give unconditional support to all Jews who asked for it, and to provide them with baptism certificates without hesitation. He interceded personally with everybody of standing, government ministers, and German and Italian diplomats. The whole Academy, together with learned societies and associations of teachers, writers, journalists, doctors, lawyers, solicitors, engineers, painters, sculptors, musicians, actors, the Athens and Piraeus Chambers of Commerce, the technical college, unions of chemists, pharmacists, dental surgeons, businessmen, merchants and the heads of all the political parties openly supported the Jews. Each organisation took steps individually and launched its own protests addressed to the Prime Minister and to the ambassadors of Germany and Italy. The trade unions joined the intelligentia and the leaders of the people of the capital. They rose up against the arrogant fanaticism of the conqueror and voiced their indignation against the Quisling Logothetopoulos — a medical midwife married to a German who, through Nazi influence had become president of the council. Courageously they laid themselves open to reprisals. According to the National-Socialists, the Jews were the sworn enemies of Germany and were part of a worldwide conspiracy, plotting at one and the same time with international plutocracy and with communism: they constituted a serious menace to the army. In order to prevent deportation, numerous proposals were put forward which would isolate and neutralise the Jews and render them harmless so that they would no longer be a threat to the army of occupation. All these proposals were rejected out of hand and it became clear that the enemy was resolved, at whatever cost, to exterminate the Jews.

Wislicenny chafes at the bit

It is worth noting the part played by the Italians. At all times the military, diplomatic and consular officials gave the Jews generous support without paying heed to the racial measures which were being applied in Italy. They were against any German interference in Jewish matters in Athens and in all the cities they occupied. The Gestapo thought very little of their allies and attempted to ride rough-shod over them. They maintained that they should be in charge of Jews in the Italian occupied zone and arrested large numbers of Jews in Athens, seized the community archives and helped to create a so-called national socialist student organisation which launched attacks against the synagogue and plundered the community headquarters. The Italians did

their best to bring to a halt the activities of Gestapo agents. As a result the communities who lived in territory under Italian control believed themselves to be safe. They were not accused of being communists or of harbouring subversive thoughts. They had been assimilated into their surroundings and nothing distinguished them from their fellow-citizens; their language, culture, even their mentality were Greek. Their attachment to their Greek homeland was universally recognised. It is true that in Athens more than half the 8,000 Jews were recent refugees from Salonika but they were only a very small part of the population and were lost in the mass. They all went freely about their business, in full confidence, certain that the war was drawing to a close and that the country would soon be liberated. The British and the Americans were already victorious; soon they would arrive as saviours. These hopes were strengthened when Italy capitulated on the 8th September 1943.

However, National-Socialist troops immediately moved into the areas which had been the preserve of Mussolini's military detachments; they imprisoned the latter and treated them with the utmost barbarity.

The Gestapo could now act freely throughout Greece. Wislicenny hastened to Athens on the 20th September, at the head of an S.D. detachment and set to work immediately. He demanded that the chief rabbi, Elie Barzilai, supply a list of all Jews living in the capital, together with details of their addresses and nationality and ordered him to form a Council of Elders and a Jewish militia. These orders were to be obeyed within twenty-four hours. Damaskinos was asked to intervene but declared himself to be powerless. "Hide," he said, "flee into the villages, seek refuge with the partisans, sail to the Near East. I shall provide you with means of transport. Do not shut yourselves up in the churches, as some of you have suggested doing. The Germans have no respect for holy places and you will be trapped like rats." It soon became apparent that all attempts were doomed to failure. R. Barzilai escaped from the pressures and menaces of Wislicenny by allowing the Resistance to carry him off. At dawn on the 25th September he left Athens with his family and travelled from village to village. Everywhere he was welcomed by peasants and monks and treated with the greatest courtesy. The partisans watched over him and protected him from danger.

Wislicenny felt that his prey was escaping. In Athens it was impossible to set up the type of community framework and militia which had existed in Salonika. His informers, including some forty Jewish refugees from Central Europe, did not know the capital. He was therefore obliged to forego the preliminaries. The Athens security services were led by General Stroop, who had been responsible for the cleaning-up operations in the Warsaw ghetto. An order, signed by him, was posted on the eve of Yom Kippur of the year 5704, on all the walls of the capital and printed in all the newspapers on the 7th and 8th October 1943, declaring that Jews were to remain at a fixed address and were not to move; that they were to be registered in the

synagogue where their addresses were to be recorded; that they were strictly forbidden to be on the streets after 5 p.m. and before 7 a.m.; and that they were to report to the synagogue every two days so that their presence could be recorded. These orders applied to all Jews aged 14 years and over. Jews were defined as those, both men and women, who were descended from at least three Jewish grand-parents, regardless of their religion. Draconian measures, including even out-of-hand execution, were to be applied to all those who contravened these orders and to any non-Jew who hid a Jew or helped him to escape.

Hellish preparations

Wislicenny arbitrarily appointed five councillors to direct the Athens community. Moses Sciaky, a worthy, peace-loving and conscientious man, was named as president and was appalled at the choice. He was a sickly man and took to his bed where his condition rapidly grew worse and he died in terrible pain. Another of the councillors hastened to take his place and provide facilities in the synagogue for those Jews who came to register or report, in accordance with Stroop's orders. The repellent Wislicenny took a personal interest in the proceedings and would come to the synagogue every day where, with great relish, he would photograph the poor starving wretches who filed past him in fear and trembling. However, they were few in number. Those who came, amounting to not more than a few hundred, were Italians and Spaniards for whom the Gestapo already had lists and addresses and those who did not have the means to change their domicile or who had no private resources and had to work for a daily wage. Towards the 20th March 1944, rumours were spread by Gestapo agents that those who were registered would have the right to a ration of unleavened bread and sugar for the Passover which fell on the 8th April. The bait was taken by a number of gullible souls and the total rose to about 2,000. The remaining 6,000 of those who had been in Athens, dispersed and vanished. Many found shelter in hospitals and asylums where they produced imaginary symptoms under the guidance of conniving doctors. Priests delivered false baptism certificates on demand and there was a brisk trade in false identity cards stamped by police in all areas, in accordance with instructions issued by the Greek Chief of Security, Ebert, that they were to offer help and assistance without hesitation to all Jews who might need them. Jews abandoned their homes and businesses and sought refuge in the suburbs where they were not known, in villages lost in the mountains or in the ranks of the Resistance where hundreds were enrolled. Everywhere the refugees were given a friendly welcome. They were sheltered, fed and protected with solidarity and generosity. There was a feeling of brotherhood which found expression in actions rather than words.

The most enterprising took to the sea: they hired or even bought all

manner of craft — trawlers, smacks, barges — and sailed to Crete whence, after facing innumerable dangers, they reached Egypt or the coast of Asia Minor near Smyrna. A welcoming committee, supported by the Jewish Agency, received the refugees, sheltered them, supported them and procured for them the means of entering Palestine. The young generally joined the Jewish and Hellenic brigades which won fame in the African and Italian campaigns.

The knell tolls

Six months passed and the Nazis seemed to have forgotten the Jews. In the privacy of their offices, however, they were putting the finishing touches to a detailed and secret plan. The time and place were fixed for a huge netting operation. All was ready with lorries and trains at Kastoria, Larissa, Volo, Chalkis, Athens, Preveza, Arta and Jannina. It was announced that the distribution of unleavened bread and sugar were to take place in Athens on the 24th March and those registered flocked to receive it, crowding and jostling, eager to be the first into the synagogue. Bored-looking *shupos* maintained order as they poured into the trap. Greek police were suspicious and did their best to dissuade new arrivals and late-comers from joining the queue, but they were pushed aside, driven off and treated as though they were a hindrance. The Gestapo netted 350 men and sent to their homes to collect their wives and children. By evening there were 800 of them, of whom 180 were Italians. From midnight onwards on the same day, luxury limousines collected all Jewish males of Spanish or Portuguese nationality in their homes. They were re-assured and told that a train was to take them to Port-Bou. They were to bring suitable clothing for a summer in Spain. In the morning women and children came to join them with the luggage. On the evening of the 25th March, all these people were loaded into lorries and taken to the transit camp of Haïdar: there were now 1,300, accounting for 16% of the Jews living in Athens.

The prisoners spent a week at Haïdar, sleeping rough in nauseous overcrowding.

That same Friday 24th March, in the continental and peninsular towns where they had replaced the Italians, the Germans methodically rounded up all the Jews who had been unable to find refuge. They were crowded into makeshift accommodation in a hideous mass.

At Arta the Nazi dogs appeared early in the morning. In the town-hall they had obtained the lists of their victims, together with their addresses. They called on house after house. The wretches were given twenty minutes to get ready and report on the main square. From there they were crowded into a cinema: there were 352 of them and only 32 people had managed to get away. At Preveza the same thing happened, resulting in the capture of 172

people out of 250.

The next day, Saturday, at 4 p.m., the Preveza Jews arrived at Arta and were sent to Agrinion, where nine local families joined them. All were sent on to Patras where they were shut up in hotels. None took advantage of the chaos to escape. The Jews of Patras were more prudent and rapidly dispersed: only about 30 out of 240 were seized. On the 29th March lorries carted them off to the Haïdar camp in Athens. On Sunday 2nd April, 1,900 prisoners were loaded onto lorries, driven to Rouf railway station in Athens and loaded into cattle-trucks. During the journey more joined the lugubrious procession: 90 from Chalkis, though 260 had been able to escape to Euboean villages; 225 at Larissa, though the city itself had felt the approaching storm and had taken timely steps so that only 225 out of 1,175 were actually captured; 130 out of 882 from Volo thanks to the far-sighted skill of its chief rabbi, Moses Pessah, who managed to persuade his flock to go into hiding in time; 50 out of 520 from Trikkala; none at Karditsa where all 150 were rescued by the Resistance. Jannina, however, surrendered 1,860 out of 1,950 owing to the fact that the Jews of the old Byzantine city were firmly convinced that they would be exempted from deportation since they were Greek-speaking and their Greek patriotism was beyond question. Furthermore they were fervent in their orthodox practices and thought that Salonika had received the punishment it deserved for its well-known impiety. They nourished the conviction that God would protect them from all danger. Despite this, they were caught by surprise and rounded-up within an hour. On the 25th March they were herded into Mabili Square beside their dream-lake, and were sent off to Larissa under appalling conditions.

In Salonika, 963 prisoners from Kastoria and 150 others rounded up in the countryside, were loaded into a dozen filthy trucks which were added to the endless procession. More than 5,000 heads of human cattle were on their way to the slaughter-house, crammed into 75 trucks divided into two sections which followed each other closely. They died like flies. From time to time the *shupos* would open the doors of these trundling prisons and tip the bodies out onto the railway track. In Vienna some of the trucks were uncoupled and sent on to Germany through heavy bombing raids: they carried 174 prisoners — 155 Spaniards and 19 Portuguese — who were unloaded on the 14th April at Celle near Hannover, and who then went on foot to Bergen-Belsen where they were placed in a special camp near what was known as Albala camp (after the insignificant puppet whom the Nazis had taken pleasure in promoting to President of the Salonika community). Here they joined a large number of deported Jews from Holland and elsewhere, together with the "privileged" Jews from Salonika who had left the city on the 2nd August 1943.

The main convoy went on to Auschwitz. There 800 were selected for work and the remainder were sent directly to the Birkenau crematoria. Of these 800, 160 survived. The 174 Spanish and Portuguese were loaded onto

trains on the 6th April 1945, in the face of the American advance, together with 2,300 Jews deported from Argentine and Holland, and taken east in trucks. On the 13th April, between Magdeburg and Stendal, as the *shupos* were getting the prisoners into groups preparatory to taking them into the nearby woods to shoot them, American advance guards appeared miraculously and saved them.

Satan in the Greek islands

Soon it was the turn of the island communities. The 800 Jews of Herakleion (Crete) had been shot on the 6th June 1943. The community of Canea, which had been one of the foremost in the east, had dwindled considerably since the island had become autonomous in 1898. Early in the century some 600 families, accounting for more than 2,500 souls, had emigrated and the exodus had continued. When the Germans arrived in April 1941, there were only 60 families left in the city, 270 persons. On the 25th March 1944 they were trapped in their houses by the *shupos*; 260 people were seized and immediately incarcerated. Two weeks later, pale, starving and dying, they were loaded into trucks, taken to Herakleion and driven onto a small Greek boat called the *Danaë*; with them were 400 Greek hostages and 300 Italian soldiers. On the way, the German guards and the crew landed on an island and only the engineer remained on board. Near Milos he sabotaged the boat and left in a dinghy: all the human cargo perished.

In the alleyways of Corfu, a five hundred years old ghetto, and throughout the picturesque capital of the island, there were 2,000 Jews who still retained their Venetian dialect. The Italians had treated them with their customary good-will. During the war the city became a haven of peace and prosperity to which refugees came from all parts of Greece. After Italy's capitulation, the Germans arrived and misfortune struck the Jewish community. Soon oppression led to poverty and famine. On Friday 9th June 1944, at 5 a.m., the SS hammered on all Jewish doors and ordered them to assemble immediately on the esplanade. About 200 people managed to escape and sought refuge in the villages, but all the others obeyed. They were surrounded by a cordon of *shupos* and Greek police. A Nazi officer then held a roll-call and the prisoners were forthwith thrown into horribly cramped quarters in the ancient fortress which stood nearby. There they were made to turn out their pockets and place money and other objects into specially-prepared suitcases. The Germans seized their house-keys and immediately carried away any item of furniture which caught their fancy; the remainder was sold by auction.

Two days later, 300 women were embarked on ferries which took them to Goumenitsa in Epirus whence they were sent on to Athens. The remaining 1,500 captives were taken by barge via Leukas to Patras where they were transferred onto a small boat and taken to Piraeus. There they were reunited

with the 300 women who had preceded them and spent a few days in the camp at Haïdar with 575 other Jews rounded up in Athens since the 2nd April 1944. The whole assembly was loaded into filthy cattle trucks on the 20th June and a few bushels of onions and beetroot were thrown in as food. Nine days later the convoy arrived in Auschwitz: 200 were chosen for the labour force and the remainder went to the Birkenau crematoria.

The 150 Jews of Trikkala, the 50 Jews of Katherini and the 275 members of the Zante community had a miraculous escape. The latter had been badly treated by the SS but, with the connivance of the mayor and the Metropolitan, most of them found refuge in the villages, so that only 70 or 80 Jews remained in the town. These were old, sick and helpless and the Gestapo did not think that they warranted a separate convoy — so they ignored them.

The Rhodes community had enjoyed a high degree of prosperity under the Turks who had ruled the island since 1521. At the beginning of the century it was 10,000-strong, but many emigrated to the United States, Argentina, the Belgian Congo and, especially, to Salisbury in Rhodesia. Some 4,500 Jews remained in the island when Italy gained control of the Dodecanese in 1912. Their economic and cultural life then improved, but the application of the racial laws of 1938 led to a further wave of emigration. When German troops settled in the island after the fall of Italy, their numbers dwindled still further to 2,200. In accordance with their usual deceptive tactics, the SS did not show any interest in them for many months. On the 20th July 1944, however, they were ordered to assemble on Tchemenlik Square, where the Luftwaffe had its headquarters. They hastened to obey and German soldiers thereupon raided their homes and shops, clearing them of the contents. Anything of any value was packed up and dispatched to Germany; the remainder was left for the rabble. Three days later, three hideously overcrowded barges towed away the prisoners. For eight days, during which fell the 9th Ab, the convoy lingered at sea before reaching Piraeus. Eight of the wretches had died and a further 12 were at death's door. When they landed, they were treated with the utmost savagery. All were starving and dying of thirst. They were robbed of anything of the slightest value, including their false teeth and the gold crowns in their mouths before they were sent on to the camp at Haïdar. On the 4th August they were loaded into a train, 85 people being forced into each truck. Ninety Jews who had been tracked down in their Athens hiding-places were loaded into another cattle-truck which was coupled to the tail-end of the train. When they reached their destination, 400 men and 300 women were selected for work, while the remainder went immediately to the crematoria.

About 10 Jews were captured after the departure of the Rhodes convoy. They were kept in the camp at Haïdar and in the Averof prison. Throughout Europe German forces were in retreat and the Nazi invaders withdrew from

Greece in October 1944. Behind them they left nothing but ruins and desolation, but the Greek people breathed again.

In order to complete this picture of extermination, it should be added that of the 20,000 Jews who lived in Paris, 5,000 were registered with the Argentinian consulate, since that country was looking after Greek interests in France. These were seized in their homes on the night of the 8th to the 9th November 1942 by French militia. They were assembled at Drancy and two days later were taken away to Auschwitz. This was also the fate of other Greek Jews captured elsewhere in France.

In the heart of the inferno

On the eve of war, there were about 80,000 Jews in Greece and in the Dodecanese, which was still Italian. During the Occupation, more than 4,000 died of famine, epidemics, the ravages of the labour camps, and in the summary execution of hostages, resistance-fighters etc.; 63,000 were deported; 9,000 managed to avoid deportation by becoming outlaws and about 4,000 reached Palestine and Egypt.

When, towards the end of February 1943, Merten and his acolytes were feverishly and secretly preparing the first of the Salonika convoys, all the apparatus for extermination — the gas-chambers and crematoria of Birkenau — had been completed, tested, and was ready to function day and night at full capacity. Of the 63,000 deportees, 51,000 were sent directly to the crematoria as soon as they arrived at the railway station at Auschwitz, while 12,000 were selected for work. Of these convicts, 7,000 were condemned to the crematoria at various stages in the selection process, 3,000 died in the labour-camps and 2,000 survived — in other words only about 3% of the total.

The horrors of the crematoria and of life in the concentration camps have been recounted in innumerable books and by tens of thousands of witnesses in law-courts in many countries, so that the atrocities, barbarity and sadism of the Nazi executioners have been revealed in their minutest detail. Everything has already been said and repeated regarding the monstrous "transport" conditions, the selection processes to which the deportees were subjected on their arrival by train at Auschwitz, on the death factories and on the fate of the adults sentenced to forced labour, their food supplies, the torture of the roll-calls, the Kommandos, the behaviour of the *Kapos* and of the convict-guards, on the cannibilistic pastimes of the SS, etc. The Jews of Greece suffered the same fate. We shall therefore select a few personal details, taken from the recollections of the survivors.

The Greek deportees were remarkable for the close solidarity which united them. They helped each other and sacrificed themselves for one another without ostentation and with admirable simplicity and readiness. They did everything they could to help their failing comrades and sacrificed

some of their own meagre rations in order that those who were seriously weakened might be strengthened and thus fail to attract the attention of the fiends who carried out the selections.

Greek Jews were forced to undertake numerous types of work. Many were sent to the sorting department known as *Kanada* — horrific warehouses where the belongings of new arrivals were thrown higgledy-piggledy — clothing, underwear, shoes, bags, suitcases, wallets, trinkets, watches, keys, spectacles, penknives, pens, chocolate, sweets, an accumulation of the most variegated objects and food. These workers were privileged for, despite the ever-watchful *Kapos*, they were able to get hold of all sorts of things which they shared with their comrades and used for barter. Three thousand Jews from Salonika were employed in the huge industrial war-complex of Buna, in the petrol refineries, or in the manufacture of munitions, synthetic rubber and chemical products etc. The camp of Yavorjno, between Birkenau and Cracow, in a forested area, was the work-place of 1,500 Jewish slaves.

Here, a large tract of forest was cleared, the ground was levelled and, after twenty days of horrific labour, they began to build various factories and mine shafts. Workers were chained together in pairs, ten to a team with the chains of each pair riveted to an iron bar. This hellish camp was the graveyard of the Greek Jews who died of exhaustion or were mown down by SS bullets. Towards the end of October 1943, the Polish *Kapo* accused his men of being dirty and immediately sent 1,000 of them to the crematoria. Two weeks later these were followed by 250 Greek Jews. At the liberation, only 12 of the 1,500 Greek labour-force survived.

Columns of Greek workers were sent to German towns and even to certain camps in order to keep the labour-force up to strength. When the Warsaw ghetto was completely wiped out and transformed into a silent desert, teams of prisoners were brought in to clear it methodically, to level the whole of the abandoned area and to turn it into a huge park in the centre of which a statue of Hitler was to be erected. Towards the end of August 1943, 501 Jews from Salonika and Northern Greece were brought here, followed in September and October by two further convoys of 1,500 Jews each, from the same areas. Three-quarters of these died of typhoid. Some of the survivors were freed by Polish partisans and joined them in pursuit of the Germans. About the middle of the autumn of 1944, 450 Greek Jews, among thousands of other prisoners, were carried off by the fleeing Nazis. Those who did not die on the way, and who were able to reach the camp at Dachau, were liberated on the 2nd May 1945 by the Americans. Forty-one Greek deportees, who were too ill to join the others, were machine-gunned down by the *Kapo* and two SS.

The infamous Blocks 10 and 21, used as laboratories for the study of sexual biology and as centres for vivisection, genetic experiments and the dark practice of gynaecological witchcraft, were stocked with guinea-pigs

drawn predominantly from convoys originating in Greece. At least five hundred Greek women and girls underwent sterilisation in Block 10, had their ovaries dried out, were artificially inseminated and suffered from all manner of diabolical machinations under the overall direction of Dr Klauber and his assistant Schumann, a sadistic and demonic torturer who took pleasure in manufacturing monsters and hideous specimens, by means of the substitution of organs and teratological grafts conceived by his raving mind, in order that anthropological museums might have their collections enriched by the mummies of what were supposed to be Jewish specimens.

In Block 21 and its annexes, Schumann also experimented on Greek male guinea-pigs, removing their testicles and sterilising them in hundreds of different ways.

The few survivors of both sexes who still had any strength left were incorporated into Kommandos of workers — and the others were sent to the crematoria. These sinister laboratories stopped their abominable work in June 1944.

Risings and revolts

Feeble attempts at resistance and angry mumblings occasionally manifested themselves among the prisoners. A Salonikan with a pen-knife killed a member of the SS who persisted in torturing him. On another occasion, five Greek Jews were taking a convoy of lorries loaded with human ashes to be discharged into the Vistula. One of them was Albert Errera, originally from Salonika, who had been deported from Larissa and who, under the name of Aleco Alexandrides, had fought with the Thessalonian partisans. Two members of the SS were in charge of the convoy. One of them was beating the convicts with a whip and using macabre taunts when, in exasperation, Albert Errera struck him a terrific blow on the head with his spade and killed him outright. He then ran towards the other guard, who shot and wounded him, and sent him sprawling into the Vistula. He managed to swim across to the other side where he hid in a neighbouring thicket but was tracked by police dogs, caught by a patrol, bound and brought back to the camp. He was completely exhausted by his wound and by hunger. The deportees were specially assembled and, before their eyes, Errera was pierced with bayonets thrusts, had petrol poured over him and was burnt to death.

The 38 ovens of the crematoria incinerated five to six thousand victims a day and were serviced by a team of 1,000 deportees, 180 of whom were Greek Jews from the spring of 1943 onwards. When they died they were replaced by other Greek Jews and their number was increased to 320 by convicts drawn from the convoy which had left Athens on the 2nd April 1944. These wretches were resigned and submissive as they followed the *Kapo*, not knowing at first, what their horrible task was to be. One hundred of them, all from the Greek

capital, formed a separate group. When they reached the crematoria enclosure, they suddenly realised the nature of the place and the part they were called upon to play. They reacted violently and resolutely refused to undertake the task. This was open rebellion. They were immediately surrounded and hastily machine-gunned. Many were only wounded, but dead or dying they were hurriedly thrown, still dressed, into the ovens.

Among the 220 who remained, there was a certain Yomtov Yacoël a well-known lawyer from Salonika. He was immediately detailed to remove the gold and platinum teeth from the bodies taken from the gas chambers. There was also Joseph Barouch, a brave Greek army officer, originally from Corfu, who had been captured in Jannina during the raid of the 25th March 1944. Joseph Barouch could not contain his rage and his proud soldier's spirit would not accept the ingnominous slavery to which he was being condemned. At dawn on the 30th June, he discovered with horror the bodies of his father and mother among the avalanche of corpses tumbling from a gas chamber in which those captured at Corfu had been annihilated. He was unable to control himself, although knowing full well what fate awaited him, since 200 of his companions had recently been taken, under some pretext or other, a short distance from Birkenau and had been asphyxiated in a hut and incinerated on the spot. His turn would soon come and he must be avenged: since death was inevitable, he would die like a soldier. He therefore began to plan some punitive action and was joined in this by his Greek team-mates. He confided in Kaminski, a Polish Jew, an audacious planner with a will of iron, who willingly agreed to collaborate. The two worked in perfect harmony and enlisted the toughest Greeks and Russians in the oven Kommandos. The SS became aware that some plot was being hatched, arrested Kaminski, subjected him to appalling torture without succeeding in making him talk, and finally shot him. As a preventative measure, they picked out those suspected of being ring-leaders in the unrest, especially Greeks. The gaps were immediately filled by other Greeks and these were drawn into the plot. Mysterious hiding-places contained caches of dynamite and some hand-grenades. The agreement between the members of the four crematoria was somewhat hazy, but it was agreed that the signal for the uprising was to be given by Crematorium I. The SS sensed a certain nervous tension, a rumble of mutiny among the normally docile and dazed mass of slaves and decided to make an end of the hot-heads.

On Saturday 9th September 1944, towards noon, a *Kapo* with a list in his hand turned up at Crematorium III. He called out the names of 100 Hungarians who lined up docilely in the courtyard. He then read out the names of 100 Greeks one of whom gave the signal: "Now's the time!" This was enough to awaken the victims from their torpor. The Greeks refused to obey the *Kapo's* order and hurriedly dispersed. The Hungarians' courage returned and they joined the Greeks in releasing 50 Polish Jews who were

about to enter the gas chamber and who fell in with them. There was now a mad rush in all directions. This was rebellion! The *Kapo* was massacred and thrown into the oven; the sentry was killed. They then tried to escape from the complex, but they had no plan and went where fortune led them. Above the din could be heard the strains of the Greek National Anthem. The convicts could feel heroism in the air. The leaders had hoped that the revolt would spread to all the ovens and throughout the Birkenau camp but this was not to be. The garrison was alerted and, within a few minutes, had surrounded the complex, covering all exits with their revolvers, setting fire to the building and tossing grenades and bombs through the windows. The besieged were unarmed: their store of munitions was in the courtyard, out of reach. They hurled everything they could lay their hands on at the attackers, spades, stools, tables. The fight lasted until 6 p.m. amid smoke, flames and a hail of explosives. The building then collapsed and the walls and chimneys fell in on 300 victims who were buried in the ruins. The hundreds of insurgents who were still alive continued to resist among the smoking débris. For five days they were blockaded by the SS, who finally burst in on them. They were forced to undress and lie face-down on the ground head-to-head, in groups of a hundred. Armed with machine-guns, the SS went from group to group and left them all dead on the field of battle.

In Crematorium I, the teams vainly tried to bring about a revolt, but fell under a hail of bullets. In Crematoria II and IV, the pusillanimous teams kept quiet and escaped the hecatomb.

By the beginning of the autumn of 1944, Hitler's legions knew that they were beaten and only went on fighting in desperation.

In order to clear things up in the Birkenau camp, cremations became even more frequent. Those ovens which were still standing were used and so were trenches which were far quicker. Rapid massacre on a huge scale took place and attempts were made to obliterate all traces of the carnage. In December, three of the four crematoria were dynamited and the trenches filled in. In January 1945, the SS left Birkenau and Auschwitz before the Russian advance. They carried off with them considerable numbers of convicts, among them more than 2,000 Greek Jews. Half these wretches died on the way and laggards were shot, but some managed to slip away. They hid in the forest and in the ruins scattered along their way, where they lived like wild animals until they joined the partisans or were welcomed by the advancing Russians.

Those who trailed along in the wake of the retreating army, were dispersed among the camps of Austria and Germany as far as Bergen-Belsen. Most died of exhaustion or of typhoid and typhus. The survivors had to wait for ten to twelve weeks before the Allies reached their various camps and many months before being able to return to their countries. It would take a brave man to tell the appalling tales of the 1,800 Greek survivors. Each had

his own personal tragedy, his own *via dolorosa*. Most suffered atrociously in the transit camps, some of which differed little from the Nazi labour camps. Through some strange confusion, some deplorable transposition, the liberators sometimes looked on the innocent victims who had been released from slavery as so many pariahs, or as a shameful rabble.

On the other hand, in Holland, Belgium and France, those who had survived were given a warm welcome, whether they were their own compatriots or foreigners passing through. Greek survivors did not always find such a welcome when they got home. The country was scattered with too many ruins, and had been ravaged so savagely by the Nazi vandals that it was not possible to assuage their sufferings. Most had to undergo long wanderings before finding somewhere to live and a means of livelihood. The collaborators who had seized the property of the deportees or who lived in their homes regarded them as importunate nuisances and intruders. The American JOINT organisation provided providential assistance for disinherited Jews and made their miserable lot easier to bear.

In the Resistance

As a whole, the Greek nation reacted with courage and dignity in the face of the invader. For their part, Greek Jews offered their unconditional support for their Orthodox compatriots. In the spring of 1941, in all urban centres, cells sprung up whose aim it was to transmit to the Allies, by clandestine means, all types of information concerning troop movements in the army of occupation. In Epirus, Colonel Napoleon Zorbas formed the National Organisation which recruited thousands of partisans among the vast number of soldiers who had been forced to abandon victorious positions in Albania. Zorbas was a soldier who had neither social nor political ambitions, but whose one aim was to harass the enemy and hinder his troop movements. Three hundred demobilised Jews immediately joined him and were followed individually by many of their young co-religionists from Jannina, Arta, Preveza, Karditsa and Trikkala.

Some fifty clandestine groups took to the hills throughout the area. At first they lacked cohesion. Each contained a Jewish contingent drawn from the Maccabaean and sports' clubs in all the communities. Gradually they grew closer, co-ordinated their actions and in the course of the winter of 1942, ended up under one command under the flag of the National Liberation Front which was fairly strongly Marxist. Jews joined them in ever-increasing numbers as it became inescapably evident that it was the unshakeable aim of the Nazis to exterminate them.

Thousands of Jews of both sexes from Salonika, Athens and all centres moved to the villages under the watchful and solicitous protection of members of the Resistance. Lycée and university students were numerous

among them. The healthiest and most resolute of these unhesitatingly joined the partisans. For example, in February 1943, a group of 373 Jews from Salonika was moving towards Edesa and took refuge on the wooded slopes of Mount Païkon. Two hundred and fifty of them immediately offered to join the guerillas and of these 90 fell in action or were shot by the Germans. A large number of Jewish recruits from Larissa, Volo and Chalkis gained a reputation for courage and decisiveness in the Kommandos of Thessaly and Euboea. Despite his advanced age, Chief Rabbi Moses Pessah showed tremendous zeal and indomitable courage in encouraging his flock — scattered on Pelion and Ossa, to take action. Forty Jewish partisans took part in the audacious manoeuvre which led to the bridge of Gorgopotamo being blown up, thus causing serious delays to troop convoys heading south with the aim of joining Rommel in North Africa. An agronomist of Verria named Eliezer Azaria, organised, administered and carried out the supplying of the National Liberation Front in Macedonia and eastern Old Greece. An architect, Is. Saporta, with the aid of funds supplied by the British, showed enormous energy in rebuilding whole villages, together with their schools and churches, after they had been bombed by the Germans. An Athens Jew, James Costi, together with a handful of his friends, infiltrated the Piraeus harbour services and succeeded in blowing-up at least two German ships, including the *Sante Fé* which was loaded with ammunition and food supplies. Teams of Jewish partisans recovered many arms depots which had been abandoned by the British during their retreat in April 1941 and by the Italians after the fall of Italy in September 1943; they even stole German weapons.

Jewish partisans were selected in preference to others whenever particularly dangerous sabotage operation were planned. They were the most audacious in the destruction of railways, bridges, viaducts, telegraph poles or enemy supply centres. However, their knowledge of foreign languages and their organisational abilities were particularly appreciated in administration and for liaison work and interpreting. It was generally Jews who liaised with the British and American officers who collaborated closely with the resistance high-command, and with parachutists and Allied submarines who brought in funds, weapons, ammunition and food for the two main sections of the resistance.

The names of many Jewish partisans who died on the field of honour are recorded. Solomon Bourla, a sixteen year-old recruit, took part in various actions and died in action in September 1944, a few days before the liberation; Robert Mitrani, a medical student, organised the medical section in the eastern resistance network and died under enemy fire while tending the wounded; Yohanan Hadgi of Arta died in action at the head of a detachment at Amphissa; Benjamin Negrin led an assault Kommando against a German fort, but was captured and shot on the spot; Abraham Haïm Frizi of Chalkis

was the secretary of the thirteenth regiment and was executed by a German patrol — he was only 20; David Cohen of Athens and David Rousso of Preveza were barely older when they suffered the same fate; and so on . . .

It is impossible to obtain even approximate statistics of the number of Jews who took part in resistance groups. All clandestine Jews were given false identity cards bearing purely Orthodox-sounding names. Furthermore, after the war, certain members of the National Liberation Front were responsible for widespread Communist unrest and threw the country into chaos for a considerable time. Members of this network were accused of subversive actions and found themselves indiscriminately suspected by the authorities and the subject of individual criminal proceedings. It was thus imprudent to boast of actions undertaken in the ranks of the partisans.

Return to Life

When they withdrew from Greece in October 1944, Hitler's troops left behind them a devastated and exhausted country. Everything had been mercilessly pillaged. One family out of every six was homeless. The merchant navy no longer existed. The wealth of the country had been reduced by three-quarters and total income by four-fifths.

On the 17th October, the Free Greek government in exile returned, but the political and administrative framework was shattered and there were no elected authorities. As the invader moved out, so the partisans seized power, using methods which were audacious and violent. Fighting broke out in the streets of Athens and Salonika, barricades were set up and people slit each other's throats. For many long weeks the Communists were in control.

Against this background eight or nine thousand Jews, including the partisans, came out of hiding. They formed only a small proportion of the teeming pre-war communities of Corfu, Jannina, Kastoria and Rhodes. On the other hand, all returned to Zante and Katherini and most to Patras and Chalkis. In Thessaly, at Larissa, Volo, Trikkala and Karditsa, 2,300 out of 2,700 returned to their homes. They poured into Athens from all parts in their thousands : there seemed to be more of them than ever before. At Salonika, by the end of October the sixty families who had been exempted from deportation were joined by 400 fugitives who had sought refuge in the surrounding villages and by several hundred partisans, whose number increased during the weeks which followed.

These wretches had nothing. With the very foundations of the social order crumbling and chaos reigning, none could spare a thought for their plight. They had lost their true identity, since their false papers had not been registered anywhere. They could not claim their share of the severely rationed bread and food supplies. Black-market goods were completely out of reach. The Red Cross attempted to alleviate their suffering but it was a

superhuman task in a country where everything was in ruins. Soon, however, certain men of action took the lead and established order and discipline. In all Jewish sections of the population courage and common-sense prevailed and everywhere people began to feel the need to put their house in order. A central consistory was improvised in Athens which was given official recognition by a ministerial decree on the 26th November 1944. Under its direction, like-minded people got together, even in the smallest groups of survivors. Of the 26 pre-war communities, 7 were reconstituted with their full range of prerogatives; 13 whose numbers had been considerably reduced only acquired limited rights and 6 disappeared altogether. Help began to arrive from Palestine, Egypt, South Africa, Argentina, Brazil and London. The JOINT appeared on the scene in January 1945 and began to play an active part in May, tackling a variety of problems with the help of local agents and assistants placed at its disposal by the Jewish Agency and the *Magen David Adom*. It founded an orphanage, a home for destitute young girls and a dispensary; it cared for the vast number who suffered from tuberculosis and for the elderly; it set up a loan fund which enabled hundreds of heads of families to get back into business, etc.

In the meantime, the survivors from the death-camps returned. For many long months after the liberation, nothing was known of the fate of tens of thousands of deportees. On the 15th March 1945, a human wreck, mere skin and bones, appeared in Salonika. He said that he had escaped from Auschwitz in October 1944 and that he had wandered for eleven weeks before reaching Greece. He described the scenes of horror that he had witnessed. People listened in disbelief to his appalling tale. A few days later in groups, other ghosts returned and the awful reality became known. Soon the survivors from hell were pouring in and after a few months they numbered 1,800. Most came to Salonika or Athens. They united and formed a party which claimed its rights, demanded a place in the administration of the community from which, they believed, clandestine elements wished to exclude them. Their party, known as the *Poles*, was opposed by that of the first occupants, who went by the name of *Mountaineers*. At first the struggle for power was bitter, but then things gradually calmed down. The forces of subversion had been overcome and in February 1945 relative peace replaced the chaos. But with the influence and help of the Soviets, tens of thousands of insurgents still controlled the countryside and fomented unrest. Civil war continued to rage for five years, causing devastation, holding the country under threat and considerably hindering its economic recovery.

There was a general feeling of unease and the whole Greek population lived in fear. The Jewish element, still reeling from the terrible experiences it had suffered, found the general insecurity and indecision hard to bear. Each street corner reminded the survivors of innumerable relations and friends who had been annihilated. There were almost no families left; they were

literally without roots, without a home. The government was solicitous and, by legal decree 846 of the 12th/22nd January 1946, transferred to the communities most of the ownerless property which had belonged to Jews who had died in the concentration camps. But it did not help; all the survivors wanted was to get away. In the space of four or five years, more than half of them went into exile. With the help of the JOINT they emigrated to Israel, the United States and to Latin American countries.

In 1959 a resounding trial revived sinister memories of deportation. Maximilian Merten, the Nazi executioner who had sent 56,000 Salonika Jews to death, came to Athens. He was arrested by the Greek authorities and, after months of investigation, brought to trial before a military tribunal. The trial lasted from the 11th February to the 5th March 1959. Merten was sentenced to 162 years in prison on the various counts of the indictment, but the sentences were concurrent and thus effectively reduced to 25 years. However, his friends were still in power. On the 5th March 1959, a curious amnesty law was rushed through during the parliamentary recess. The miscreant was freed and immediately flown to Munich, after having served only eight months of his sentence. Legal proceedings were started in Germany, but it was decided that there were insufficient grounds for prosecution.

The Jewish population in Greece shrank still further and by 1965 there were only 5,000 persons, split among just six communities: more than half lived in Athens (2,600), 1,300 in Salonika, 452 in Larissa, 230 in Volo, 112 in Chalkis and 94 in Jannina. The work of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany, backed by members of the JOINT, helped to maintain a vestige of Jewish life in the communities and encouraged the existence of schools, community centres and children's holiday camps.

The Diaspora of the Greek Jews

Greek Judaism is now very much a minority, barely a single Jew for every 1,500 inhabitants. However, Greek Jews are scattered throughout the world, prospering but very conscious of their origins. 25,000 live in France and at least as many in Israel; 15-20,000 are in the United States and Canada; 4,000 live in Turkey and some 10,000 are spread among the various countries of Latin America, especially the Argentine and Mexico. Wherever they have settled, these emigrants and their children have made an important contribution to the economic and intellectual life of their new communities. Let us select a few, at random, among those who have recently died or who are still pursuing their careers successfully.

In France: Emmanuel Salem (1859-1940), a jurist with an international reputation, and his son Raphaël Salem (1898-1963), doctor of both law and science, director of the Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas, advisor to the

French Government, professor of Mathematics at the Sorbonne and at Harvard, holder of the highest award for mathematics of the Paris Académie des Sciences and member of various learned societies; Albert Cohen of Corfu, the famous novelist, author of *Solal* (Prix Goncourt) and of the enchanting *Mangeclons*; Dr Vidal Modiano, the highly respected leader of French Sephardic Jewry who was ably assisted in his task by the indefatigable Edgard Abravanel and Joseph Nahmias, one of the heads of the petrol industry; Maurice Nahmias, a nuclear scientist and one-time pupil of Madame Curie; André Amar, professor at the Ecole libre des Sciences Politiques; Israël Révah, a Spanish scholar and professor at the Sorbonne; Vitalis Cohen, (known as Shéridan), who carved out for himself a special place in the Parisian press at the beginning of this century; Marc Béhar, a member of the Comédie Française; Paul Ardot (Bernadout), the grand old man of the Paris Odéon; Lazare Nefussy, a brilliant publicist; Sam Lévy (1870-1959), a scathing polemist who not only wrote well in French but was also the best of the Judeo-Spanish writers; Edgar Morin, alias Maurice Nahum, an extremely cultured Marxist economist; Paul Misrahi, a fashionable song writer; Joseph Yacoël, a distinguished heart-specialist; Guy Clumet (son of Jacob Cohen, for many years director of the Salonika *Talmud Tora*) who was of great assistance to the Allies at the time of the North African landings during the Second World War and undertook many important missions abroad on behalf of the French government; Daniel Matalon, representative for Marseilles at the French Chamber of Commerce; the famous "healer" Isaac Allalouf, whose strange cures were even the subject of a doctoral thesis. We should also mention Isaac Benrubi (1876-1943), professor of philosophy at Geneva who acted as a link between great contemporary German and French thinkers and interpreted the works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Henri Bergson, whose friend and colleague he was.

In Israel : Leon Recanati, founder of the Discount Bank, one of the foremost banks in that country; Moses Carasso, business man and philanthropist; Solomon Venezia head of a network of social and cultural institutions; David Florentin, a prolific publicist, who had been a pioneer of the Zionist movement in Salonica before moving to Palestine; Isaac Raphael Molho, a historian devoted to the patrimony of eastern Sephardism; Nathan Salem, a geologist; David Benveniste, a geographer and teacher; Moses Attias, publisher of scholarly editions of Sephardic and Judeo-Moslem ballads; the lawyer Baruch Uziel, deputy in the Israeli parliament, folklorist and, on occasion, a sensitive poet; Joseph Uziel, a writer of wisdom and integrity; Saul Amarel, a leader in the field of electronics and a member of various learned societies; Samuel Samtiel, whose speciality is physiological research (peptides, histidines and enzymes); Abraham Recanati, a valiant fighter for culture conservatism, and his son Daniel who is gaining a reputation as a Hebrew writer; Solomon Ruben-Mordehay, a fine poet who is

deeply involved in social work. It should also be noted that 300 workmen from the harbour at Salonika, who emigrated to Israel in 1935, have been responsible for manning the ports of Haifa and Tel Aviv.

In the United States of America : Leon Sciaky, author of the picturesque *Farewell to Salonika*, has succeeded in recapturing the old Jewish way of life in Salonika; Simon Nesim, a distinguished lawyer; Henry Besso, who works for Voice of America in Philadelphia, has established himself as an authority on Sephardic bibliography; Maurice Abravanel, a noted composer and conductor; Rod Amateau from Rhodes, a painter and writer; Angel Castro, a well-known painter of murals; Saby Nehama, who is active in the New York trade-unions; Maurice Nadjari, assistant to New York's District Attorney; Emmanuel Altchek, a well-known medical man; Isaac Molho, a social worker and publisher; Joseph H. Kattan, a publicist and historian, vice-president of the Emerson Radio Corporation.

Also worthy of mention are : Tekinalp (Moses Cohen), an economist at the Frederic List school who held the chair of financial science at the University of Istanbul and who wrote *Kémal et le Kémalisme*; Saul Israel from Rome, a pathologist who fights for the preservation of Judaism's highest ideals; Michael Molho, who died in 1964 in Buenos Aires, and Isaac Emmanuel who, through their writings, have succeeded in throwing abundant light on Sephardism.

Judaism in Hellenic lands, which goes back to the time of the great prophets in Israel, advocated a broad Mosaic outlook which drew to it a compact mass of humble followers at a time when local deities vanished after Alexander the Great's conquests had led to the loss of national identities. It lost ground, melted and faded into the Byzantine milieu, but the influx of Jews from the Iberian exodus led to its re-forming, flowering, and sparkling in full splendour in the sixteenth century. During the next two centuries it flooded Europe in a wave of mysticism of which the Hassidism of today may be a backwash. After a period of decline, it sprang into new life and shone brightly under the stimulus of the *Haskala* and of the *Alliance Israélite*. It dwindled again after the First World War, collapsed and was extinguished in the hell of Nazi concentration camps. Nevertheless it put forth new shoots under more propitious skies, in France, in welcoming America and in the country which had seen its birth, shoots which are gaining strength in the bright sunshine of liberty.

Like the Phoenix of antiquity, will it one day arise from its ashes?

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SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE JEWS AMONGST THE SOUTHERN SLAVS — THEIR SETTLEMENT AND CONSOLIDATION DURING THE SIXTEENTH, SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

by
Z. Loker

Introduction

Many of the Jews expelled from the Iberian Peninsula settled in the Western and Central Balkans, and particularly in the small communities along the coast of the Adriatic, Ragusa (the present-day Dubrovnik), and Spalato (or Split) which served as transit points and as commercial links between the Ottoman East and the European-Christian North-West. Jewish settlement in the Vardar area of Macedonia (in present-day Yugoslavia) as well as in Serbia (Beograd — Belgrade) had already begun in the Byzantine period and communities of *Romaniotes*, as the Jews there were called, had existed long before the arrival of the immigrants from Spain and Portugal. This study concentrates primarily on Dalmatia and on Bosnia-Herzegovina, attempting to trace the routes of migration and the formation of new communities within these regions, especially the community of Sarajevo and the formation of a Jewish centre in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a region in which Jews resided for four hundred years in near-unshaken tranquility until the Holocaust. The eastern parts of the Balkans belong to a different transport and commercial route; this work is chiefly concerned with the route leading northwards and westwards from the south.

In the course of the Moslem conquests in the Balkans during the 14th and 15th centuries the Southern Slav states of Eastern Rumelia — in present-day Bulgaria —, Serbia, Montenegro and, finally, in 1463, the kingdom of Bosnia, were conquered one by one. By the middle of the 16th century, the attention of the Ottoman government had shifted to central Europe, far to the north of the areas with which we are concerned. In the interior of these regions peace had come to prevail. The Ottoman power was based on a small army and on the local feudal nobility which, on the whole, had embraced Islam and obtained the status of *Spahi* — tyrannical landowners who assisted the central government in securing law and order. To a large extent these regions were cut off from other European centres, even from the capital, Constantinople. This was mainly due to the fact that only a small number of Ottomans had settled there by the end of the period of conquests, so that

after the wars which had impoverished the land, its international particularly commercial connections, markedly deteriorated.

Macedonia, the southernmost region and the nearest to the capital, Constantinople, was closely associated with the commercial port (and important Jewish community) of Salonika and contained in addition the following Jewish communities (the names are given first as they appear in the Hebrew sources): Monastir (Serbian — Bitolj; Macedonian — Bitola); Iskopia (Skoplje); Ochrida (Ochrid, on Lake Ochrid which is shared nowadays between Yugoslavia, Greece and Albania); Struga, the famous mediaeval market-town and Istip, (present-day Stip).

Although many Ottoman Turks resided in these towns, the population was heterogeneous in terms both of nationality and of religion, including Greeks, Armenians, Albanians (Arnauts), Wallachians (Romanians) and Macedonian Slavs (Bulgarians and Serbs). Apart from Islam, the most widespread religion was Eastern Orthodox Christianity. The small towns or townlets were scattered over a large area in which, ever since the early Middle Ages, the population was markedly mixed and minorities abounded.

The Dalmation Coastal Towns:

Ragusa (Dubrovnik) was a city-republic with an aristocratic-oligarchic government subject to Turkish feudal bonds. The population was largely Croatian Catholic. The chief cultural and linguistic influence was Italian-Venetian, despite continual economic and political rivalry with the 'Republic of St. Mark'.[1] Dubrovnik competed with its northern neighbour, Split, despite the cultural and religious affinity between them.

Spalato (Ispalatro — Split), the largest town on the Yugoslav coast of the Adriatic, became a Venetian protectorate and served, along with Zadar (Zara in Italian), the Albanian coastal towns and the islands of Corfu, Crete, Chios and Zante in the Aegean, as one of the southern Venetian strongholds against the Ottomans. The majority of its population was Slavonic-Catholic with a considerable element of Italian settlers.

Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Bosnia a typical mountainous hinterland without outlet to the sea, is situated between the rivers Una in the west, Sava in the north and Drina in the east, the latter constituting its borders with Serbia. In the south, in the Sanjak of Novipazar, it borders on Montenegro. The Slavonic population was divided into three religions: New Moslems (previously Croats and Slavs), Catholic Croats and Greek-Orthodox Serbs.

After the Moslem-Ottoman conquest, peace and stability were achieved mostly through the mass conversion to Islam of the Christian sect of the

Bogomils who controlled the economy of the region.

Until the Ottoman occupation the region was the meeting-place of Western influence (bringing Roman Christianity with it) and that of Serbia and Montenegro (which brought with it the Byzantine Orthodox Church). Forced conversions had been stopped soon after the occupation and freedom of worship was granted by the Moslem Ottomans to all other monotheistic religions.

Settlement in and passage through Dalmatia and Bosnia.[2]

In Dalmatia a distinction must be drawn between Split and Dubrovnik. Hardly any detailed information is available about the Jews of Split in the Middle Ages. From the beginning of the 15th century (1420), when Split became subject to Venetian rule, there is no information about the renewal of Jewish life in the town. However, Keckemet assumes that they were present, on the basis of the Venetian policy towards the Jews generally and the fact that Jews had to cross the Adriatic on their way to the Holy Land.[3]

We know that a Jewish community existed in Split after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, and that this was connected with the migration of Hispano-Jewish refugees in the direction of the Balkans. In 1527 the local Senate granted to the Jews the right to engage in trade and in the crafts.[4] A decree concerned with the burning of the Talmud is noted in the archives for the year 1533 and known as the *Università degli Ebrei*, but[5] it did not become active until the second half of the 16th century.

The merchant and *entrepreneur* Daniel Rodriguez first appeared in Split in 1549 and proposed the building of the *Lazzaretto* (a warehouse or port) in 1566.[6] His activities are discussed in detail below (pps. 292 and 301). The oldest tombstone in the Jewish cemetery of the town is dated 1573.[7]

As for Dubrovnik, there is evidence of Jewish presence there already in the 14th century: Benedictus *olim Judeus*, a doctor who apostatised three Jews from the Albanian port of Durazzo (Drach in Serbian)[8] and some Jewish merchants from Malta. All this indicates that individual Jews may have lived in the city or passed through it on business, but not that a permanent Jewish settlement existed there.

The extensive archives of Dubrovnik provide evidence for the passage through the city of Jews from France, Valona in Albania, Padua in Italy, Barcelona and other places. Although, in a document dated 1431, Jacob Biegen and Simon Semeso are described as Jews of Dubrovnik[9] there was still no Jewish community there at that time.

From the present evidence it appears that the community in Dubrovnik was established after, and as a result of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and of the subsequent expulsions from Portugal, Naples and Sicily.

Once the community was founded a 'Jewish Street' was formed.[10] The

Jews were confronted already in 1502 with the first ritual-blood accusation against them, and the physician Moses *filius Marsilii de Marali* was murdered in prison as a result.[11] The Jewish community of Dubrovnik — small by European standards — progressed along the familiar course of historical development followed by numerous communities elsewhere (e.g. toleration, ritual-blood-accusations, temporary expulsions and restrictions, alternating characteristically with a more favourable attitude on the part of the authorities). Possibly, the final balance between persecution and favour was essentially positive, as has been stressed by Tadíc and all subsequent Yugoslav historians. Be that as it may, the distinctive features of the Jewish community in Dubrovnik were that first it served as a station on the route to Turkey of the Jewish refugees from Spain and secondly that it constituted a commercial link between the merchants of the Balkan interior and Western Europe, particularly the Italian towns. A third aspect — the role of Dubrovnik as a refuge for the *conversos* is discussed below.

Dubrovnik as a transit-port to Salonika

The immigrants arrived in Dubrovnik from the towns of Tuscany, from Venice, Ferrara and Ancona. The contracts for their passage into Turkish territory were drawn up and signed in Dubrovnik. Records of this exist relating to the years 1500-1503.[12] It seems that numerous horse-drawn caravans were set up to transport both men and merchandise (textiles) in parties, and that the charges were fixed according to fluctuations in supply and demand. Tadíc relates the difficulties encountered by the immigrants on this route: they were attacked by bandits, exploited by the ships' captains and on one occasion twenty Jews were murdered by Spanish seamen.[13]

Detail of four such caravans are available: the duration of the journey was seven to ten days. Guarantees of rest on Sabbath and Festivals were written into the contracts, and payment was completed only after the sale of the merchandise in the markets of Salonika. During the period covered by these caravans some 200 Jews passed through Dubrovnik in this manner to reach a place of safety. However, it is reasonable to assume that not all the contracts for their transportation were written down or deposited in the city archives, so that, quite possibly, the volume of traffic in this direction was even greater and spread over a longer period.[14]

The Jewish community of Dubrovnik was thus established in the latter part of the 16th century as a small but fairly important link in the commercial network of Balkan Jewry and the Jewish merchants of Italy. All the Jewish, as well as the non-Jewish citizens of Dubrovnik — a Christian republic which paid regular dues to the Ottoman Sultan without subjecting itself to Venice — enjoyed freedom of movement within the boundaries of these two worlds, both the Ottoman Empire and Italy and Austria.

Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia nad Herzegovina

Two types of sources, epigraphic and historical, exist concerning the time of arrival of the Jews in Bosnia. The earliest of the former type, is a Jewish tombstone dated 1551, but it is generally assumed that only individual Jews came to Sarajevo before the second half of the 16th century. To the second type of evidence belongs a legal document, the protocol of the local *Sharia* or Moslem Court for the year 1565 (943 A.H.)[15] according to which a Jew, Isaac b. Abraham, had been involved in a business dispute with a number of Moslems.[16] This is considered as the beginning of Jewish life in Bosnia. The Jewish quarter of Sarajevo was established officially in 1577. It became known as the *Çifut hane,*[17] or the *Dairah* of *Siyavush Pasha* who served at that time as the Sultan's appointed governor of the region. Thirty Jewish families settled in the quarter at first and called it the *Mahala Judea* or the *Corte Grande*. In fact the Jewish quarter was a consecrated (*Waqf*) property of Siyavush Pasha's family for which the pasha collected regular rent from the Jews. The quarter was situated close to the central city-market. In 1581 the Jews were granted permission to build their first synagogue, known in *Ladino* as *Il Kal Grande*.

Both in Dalmatia and in Bosnia Jewish communities were only established in connection with the events of 1492 in Spain and their aftermath, whereas they had already existed in Bulgaria, Macedonia and Serbia. There the Byzantine *Romaniote* element, together with some refugees from such Northern Ashkenazi communities as Hungary and Bavaria, had merged with the immigrants from Spain and Portugal who were strong both in terms of numbers and of national-religious heritage. As far as is known, these new communities were usually founded by a small number of settlers, not more than a few families in each case.[18]

Places of origin and causes of migration

The Spanish and Portuguese Jews might have come to Bosnia from one of two main regions: either from the Dalmatian coast[19] namely, the west, or from Salonika and/or the communities in the south which were associated with it, including Constantinople. This was the area where most of the Jewish population in the Ottoman Empire was concentrated. The latter alternative seems more plausible. Throughout the Adriatic coast, Dubrovnik included, the Jews were very few and had not yet come to occupy important economic positions. In fact, the majority of Dubrovnik merchants who came to Bosnia in the middle of the 16th century were not Jewish, nevertheless links between Bosnia and the south (Salonika and Macedonia generally) were very close and the Jews there were numerous.

In the smaller communities of Dalmatia (Split, Dubrovnik) the situation

was quite different. The earliest Jewish immigrants came from the neighbouring Italian peninsula, particularly from Ancona, Fano, Ferrara and Venice. Although they had initially crossed the Adriatic Sea, they remained within the same political, linguistic and cultural sphere, dominated by a Christian commercial oligarchy, speaking Italian (which was familiar to them or close to their own tongue) and subject to the considerable influence of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church was the factor determining the pace of Jewish settlement in Dalmatia and its scope. However, the Church was forced occasionally to modify its doctrinaire anti-Jewish attitude under pressure of the local Croatian-Catholic population which was not fanatical and remained relatively estranged from Rome.

In Bosnia, the Jewish community developed in freedom from all religious or administrative restrictions, depending only and directly on the willingness of the Jews to settle and their ability to take root in this new location.

One other difference should be pointed out between the two regions: while in Dalmatia the towns absorbing the Jewish immigrants were ancient, the city of Sarajevo in Bosnia was only founded in 1425.[20]

The reasons for the two-stage migration of the Spanish and Portuguese refugees into the Balkans are not stated directly in any of the documents which have come down to us. Generally it can be argued[21] that the Jews were attracted to these new centres by the improved economic conditions in the Ottoman Empire which had opened new opportunities for men of enterprise.

It is not suprising that the Spanish refugees took part in this development and exploited the possibility it offered them of striking root in a new homeland. Furthermore, trade in such regions as Bosnia and Serbia had stagnated until the second half of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century. A considerable proportion of the agricultural produce yielded by these fertile lands never reached the markets, owing to the lack of intermediaries and *entrepreneurs* to collect it from the small towns and villages.[22] It seems that the Jews gradually came to fulfil this task.

Occupations

(a) *Sarajevo*. The early settlers were merchants, peddlers and craftsmen. Among the latter category are mentioned shoemakers, tailors, bakers, tinsmiths and weavers.[23] Details are not given of the types of merchandise in which the Jews traded, but it is stated that they traded mostly in textiles and silk.[24]

The following occupations may be added: [24a] in commerce — the sale of manufactured goods to the peasants and the marketing of wheat and flour. In the crafts, in addition to those mentioned above are listed carpenters, locksmiths, goldsmiths, tanners, apothecaries and popular healers. It is not

clear when the Jews first engaged in each of these occupations, and possibly, some of those listed did not appear until a later period.

(b) *Dubrovnik*. The Jews of Dubrovnik in the 16th century traded chiefly in textiles, brocades and hides. In addition they imported from the hinterland skins, wool,[25] flax, cotton and lead. To Turkey they exported perfumes, sugar and textiles, particularly 'Kerseys' — a narrow and usually red cloth made out of long, coarse wool and produced in Salonika and in Safed.[26]

A particular type of silk, 'Belgrade silk', was sent by the Jews via the Morea, Skoplje and Dubrovnik in the direction of Venice and the west. They likewise exported to the west wax and blankets.[27] Heavier tariffs were imposed on the Jews than, for example, on Italian (Florentine) merchants, and they tried continually to resist this discrimination against them. Towards the end of the sixteenth century they obtained equal status with other merchants, but this was withdrawn ten years later. Their struggle over this issue continued right up to the end of the seventeenth century, when they were finally recognised as native residents in respect of the rates of tariff.[27a]

The period of acclimatisation and its problems

The legal and social positions

By the end of the sixteenth century the various religious groups which were racially homogeneous in Sarajevo had attained a high standard of toleration and co-existence. The great conqueror Mohammed II (1451-1481) issued a *firman* prohibiting all interference with the rights of the religious minorities known as *Dhimmi* (non-Moslem believers, e.g. Christians and Jews) on the part of the regional authorities within his empire. He and his successor Sultan Beyazid II promised and, indeed, kept their promise to provide refuge for any Jew entering the Ottoman Empire.[28] To quote but one example of the social and religious toleration which prevailed within the empire, a Moslem religious judge (*Kadi*) allowed Jewish women to take their prescribed ritual-bath before marriage at the Turkish public-bath (*Hammam*) of Firuz Bek.[29]

In Dalmatia most of the Church statutes relating to the Jews were, at least officially, applied.[30] Persecutions occurred whenever the diocese was run by a particularly firm and fanatical bishop,[31] but these were usually short term. The legal position of the Jews in Dubrovnik depended on the military and political situation. At times of internal strife such as the wars of the Holy Leagues their situation improved since their services were in great demand. The Jews seem to have become sufficiently integrated into commercial circles but their legal position remained unstable until the end of the sixteenth century, when their official representative, the Consul, was first appointed and became responsible to the Senate of the city.[32]

On the whole, the authorities did not interfere and imposed no restrictions, administrative or otherwise, on the settlement of the Jews in the area. Consequently, the pace of settlement and the form which it assumed were determined almost exclusively by the readiness and ability of the Jews themselves.

Economic integration and the attitude of the gentile population

The objections which the inhabitants of Sarajevo raised at first to the formation of a Jewish quarter in the town (the *Dairah* of *Siyavush Pasha*) have already been mentioned. However, the archives have so far produced no evidence of hostility or active opposition to the Jews.

Once again, the attitude of the gentile environment towards the Jews in Sarajevo was different from that which they encountered in Dalmatia, where the established population reacted with greater hostility. However, even in Dubrovnik, where there was considerable rivalry between the native merchants and agents and the newly arrived foreigners, the former were quick to realise and to enjoy the advantages offered by the good service of Jewish commercial representatives along the southern coasts. Thus, from the start of the sixteenth century (1524) a succession of Jewish consuls (for Dubrovnik) were appointed in the Albanian port of Valona. These consuls purchased wheat and other commodities for the Republic of Ragusa, undertook the liberation ('redemption') of captives and carried out various other economic and political tasks.[33] The first Jewish consul in Split was Daniel Rodriguez. He was appointed on the strength of his part in the construction of the Lazaretto which, when completed, enabled Split to become the rival port to Dubrovnik.[34]

Communal organisation and rabbis

The first synagogue in Sarajevo was established in the Jewish quarter in 1581,[35] but there is no evidence of any rabbis officiating there until two generations later. The first rabbis appeared in the town in 1640.[36] Three are mentioned: R. Asher Zebulun, R. Mazliah Muchachon and R. Samuel Baruch.[37] These last two died and were buried in the town, but none of the three had been born in Sarajevo, and they looked to Salonika as the seat of higher rabbinic authority.

The first minute-book of the community is for the year 1720. A list of tax-paying members survives dating from 1725 (68 households — 214 names) and the first statutes of the community date from 1731.[38] All this proves conclusively the gradual, even slow, development of Jewish settlement in Sarajevo. The rise of local communal institutions was probably delayed not least through the regular assistance in spiritual matters which the Sarajevo

community continued to receive from Salonika.

In Dubrovnik the first rabbi, Solomon Oheb, is known as a native of the city as well as being a merchant who served as consul at the end of the sixteenth century. But it is not clear when and where (if at all) he obtained his rabbinic qualifications.[39]

During this period no rabbis are known to have lived in Split. The synagogue (which survives to the present day) was built in 1728 and called *Scuola* or *Oratorio* after the Italian fashion. It is not known whether any Jewish places of worship had existed there previously.[40]

From all this one may infer that the process of Jewish settlement in these regions was initiated and accomplished effectively without spiritual leadership, but apparently led by merchants and *entrepreneurs*. The fact that the community began to import rabbis and to build synagogues marked its growing strength, confidence and stability and indicated the end of the process rather than its start.

The *kadis* as well as the officials of the Ottoman administration were generally foreigners who had arrived with the occupying army: Turks from Elbasan in Albania, but also Persians from Hamadhan and Arabs from Baghdad, North Africa and even the Arabian Peninsula. They did not discriminate specifically against the Jews, and such oppressive measures as they introduced applied to the Jews only to the extent that they applied to all other non-Moslem subjects (*Rayâ*, as they were called in Turkish; *Raja*, in Serbian, both derived from the original Arabic term).

In some respects the Jews were on a par with other minorities throughout the Ottoman Empire, even where the history and ethnic composition of the native population was quite different from the conditions that prevailed in Bosnia. In Macedonia and Thrace, for example, the Jews had equal status with Armenians and Greeks.[41]

The position of the new Jewish settlers was, on the whole, satisfactory, and this encouraged further waves of Jewish migration into the region.

International commercial routes, types of merchandise and the territorial expansion of the Jews

The chief international commercial routes of the time were as follows:

(1) From the south (Constantinople, Salonika and Adrianople) northwards through Macedonia and Bulgaria to the Danube area, Belgrade and Buda — i.e. Ofen on the right bank of present-day Budapest

(2) A digression from the above route to Bosnia, the Dalmatian ports, and Western Europe.

(3) From the Albanian coast to Dalmatia, for the sake of the Adriatic trade and the outlet to the Mediterranean.

We are concerned here primarily with the second route which, before the

arrival of the Jews, had been followed by Serbian merchants, the Christian agents of Dubrovnik and a small number of Turks.

The central problem relating to this route was the location of the export-harbour on the Adriatic coast. At first intense rivalry developed between the quay (*skela* in Serbo-Croat) on the estuary of the river Neretva (Narenta in Italian) and the port of Ragusa (Dubrovnik). The merchants of Salonika and Bosnia used the facilities of both, and the Turkish authorities (the pasha nearest to Narenta) as well as the government of Dubrovnik advertised their respective ports and even offered reduced tariffs and service-tax as incentives to attract the greater share of business to their ports. But as the volume of trade grew and the Narenta quay could no longer meet the increased requirements, Daniel Rodriguez suggested to the governor of Split and to the Venetian authorities that a port should be built in Split. He first presented his proposal in 1566, but the construction of the port was completed only in 1590. Rodriguez contributed some of his private capital to the financing of this project and managed to secure its approval by the Turkish authorities, despite the fact that the new port was to be subject to the political supervision of Venice.[42]

As regards the third commercial route, it should now be added that coasting (cabotage) was considered much safer at that time than sailing direct across the seas. This was facilitated by the close connections between the Jews of Greece (Kastoria, Patras, Arta and the islands of Crete, Chios and Corfu) and the Jews of Albania,[43] and between all of them with the government of Dubrovnik, as well as the Jewish population of the city.[44]

The Albanian Jews engaged mostly in the exportation of wheat, grain, raw silk, salt, fish (including eels), tar, wool and blankets. All these goods were either sold in Dubrovnik and Split or trans-shipped for further transportation northwards and westwards.

As the Jewish population of Sarajevo and Dubrovnik grew it became clear that a considerable proportion of the trade between Turkey, Venice and Ancona was carried out by Jews.[45] Within this commercial network their role was that of agents and representatives working on a commission basis for their brethren abroad, mostly in Belgrade and Sofia.[46] The export trade included animal skins cured in tanneries owned by Jews in Ancona and elsewhere within the Italian region of The Marches. These Jewish agents likewise exported wax, kids and sheep, and imported Florentine, Venetian and other textiles. Cattle was transported via Albania, Zadar (Zara) or Split. Joseph Penso, the Jewish consul of Split, handled this type of goods on a large scale and for a long period. He, like his predecessor Rodriguez, cultivated commercial contacts with the Turkish hinterland and became one of the first merchants to reach not only Sarajevo, but all other urban centres in Bosnia (Banja-Luka, Bosanski-Brod and Kostajnica).[47]

As the Balkan market opened up for trade with the West during the

second half of the sixteenth century, the height of the seventeenth century and in the eighteenth century, the Jewish population increased in Sarajevo and, to a lesser extent, in Dubrovnik as well. The growing numbers of Jews consisted mostly of merchants and various other types of *entrepreneurs*. Some twenty-five communities were founded in Bosnian provincial towns, the earliest of which were in Travnik, an important Turkish administrative centre, and Mostar, the capital of Herzegovina.[48] Amongst the new occupations in which the Jews became active during this period, particularly in Dubrovnik, were shipping and maritime insurance. Jewish merchants, often in partnership with gentiles, invested their capital in ships and were amongst the pioneers of the maritime insurance industry. The earliest policies of this type were recorded between the years 1593-1599 and the Jews whose names appeared on them were Daniel Ebiatar, Solomon Tene, Solomon 'Taytav' (which should, apparently, be Taytatsak) and Moses Maestro.[49]

In order to boost the desirable commercial activities of the Jews, and in view of the fact that most commercial routes were unsafe, the Dubrovnik authorities made an exceptional gesture: they awarded Dubrovnik passports to a number of Jews and thus rendered them, for economic reasons, citizens of the republic (*de nazione Ragusea*) instead of mere residents (*habitatores*) which they had been until then.[50]

The difficulties and dangers of trade

In addition to natural disasters, fires and the corruption of various officials and rulers, the Jews were confronted with certain difficulties arising either from deliberate discrimination against them from fear of economic rivalry or from hostility based on social and religious prejudice. Measures, such as the inflated tariff rates which have been mentioned above, were used frequently by the Dubrovnik authorities with the additional stringency of expelling from the city all Jews who were not officially recognised as merchants trading in recognised goods or those who pursued occupations other than trade.[51] Another type of restriction was imposed on Jewish food merchants and peddlers.[52]

Apart from these interferences and difficulties, Jewish merchants, at that time as in earlier periods, risked robbery and plunder, confiscation of goods, captivity (from which they could not always be released) and, in many cases, even murder.

In the Dubrovnik archives there is a record of an occasion when Jews tried to ship a consignment of goods to Lisbon, but it was captured and confiscated in the Spanish port of Cadiz. This incident is interesting as one of several unsuccessful attempts by Jews to establish commercial links with their ancient homeland.[53]

Jewish merchants were murdered on land-routes, rivers and seas. Several

examples have been noted of such incidents which occurred in the interior of the country: the prevalence of 'blood-ransom' payments (*krvarina* in Serbian, *dem vediyeti* in Turkish) for the murder of Jews on the roads. This payment was usually made after the *Kadi*'s investigation into the circumstances of the murder and with the consent of both parties. In other words, the sum to be paid in compensation was fixed by means of compulsory arbitration.[54]

The Hebrew sources supplement our knowledge of the dangers on Balkan routes. The *responsa* of Salonika contain numerous discussions concerning re-marriage of women (defined as *agunoth*) whose husbands had been assumed to have been murdered on the roads or rivers. For instance, in 1547 a number of Jews were attacked and robbed aboard a ship sailing on the Danube en route from Belgrade to Buda. The victims were Zevi b. Eliakim, David b. Joseph Arbado, Menahem b. Joseph Moses, Ezra Levi and *"a certain young man who was the son-in-law of a butcher from Sofia, Matatiah Joseph"*. Similarly, in 1532 some Jews were drowned in the river Morava near the town of Smederevo (Semenderia, near Belgrade). They were merchants from Jannina who had set out to Alessio by way of Berat in Albania to take part in the Struga regional fair.[55]

The Turkish army boasted a *corps d'élite*, a gendarmerie known as the Janissaries (*yeni çeri* in Turkish, meaning 'New Soldiers'; *Janicari* in Serbian). The Imperial German Ambassador to the Porte, de Busbeck, described the duties of the Janissaries in his *Memoirs* (first letter, p.19): *"At Buda I first came across the Janissaries — for this is the name by which the Turks call their footguards. When they are at their full strength, the Sultan possesses 12,000 of them scattered throughout the Empire, either to garrison the fortresses against the enemy or* **to protect the Christians and the Jews from the violence of the populace"**.[56]

On the other hand, there were occasions when these government-appointed guards themselves took to robbery and murder. In the middle of the sixteenth century a Jewish dealer in precious stones, Ezra Farangi, was murdered by a Janissary while on his way from Venice to the Adriatic coast, near the port of Drach-Durazzo. This case is discussed in a *responsum* testifying that the Jewish Court had conducted investigations in all the neighbouring communities (Elbasan, Durazzo and Valona) before it released the victim's widow from the status of *Agunah* and granted her permission to re-marry.[57]

It is hard to reconcile the official protection of the Jews with such aggression against them. The general picture in the communities of Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia and Bosnia was that, as a result of the measures adopted by the Ottoman government, the roads became relatively safe, although there were, of course, some victims in exceptional cases. It was, however, virtually impossible to achieve absolute safety on the roads, particularly since the Jews constituted a relatively conspicuous target by their

distinct clothes, possessions and inevitable greater mobility.

The dangers at sea were no less severe. Both the Turkish and the Venetian navies, at war with one another and suspecting every foreign ship, often attacked Jewish merchants and appropriated their goods. While this might be termed institutionalised state-piracy, Jews also encountered plain criminal piracy, unattached to any national cause. Another menace to maritime trade in the Adriatic was, for several decades, the Croatian nationalist seamen group, the *Uskoci* (meaning nautical 'hit and run') in the town of Senj, in the Kvarner (Quarnero) harbour near the Istra (Istria) peninsula. These Slavonic-Croatian national heroes were at times financed by the Austrians whose interest lay in the weakening of Venice. The relevance of this is the fact that this group did not refrain from murdering Jews who sailed under the Dubrovnik flag.[58]

However, the Jewish merchants continued to trade even under these harsh conditions. When in 1617 the Venetian navy put an embargo on all Dubrovnik exports for fear of attacks and confiscation by the *Uskoci*, the Jews pleaded for a special permit to set sail at their own risk.[59]

All this testifies beyond any doubt that, not only did Jewish trade continue in the face of all dangers and losses, but that it expanded during this period, with the aid of the rabbis and *dayyanim* who usually freed the numerous victims' widows to marry again, for the sake of maintaining Jewish family and communal life to the extent that this was possible in the harsh reality of those days.

Jewish craftsmen

In the Balkans, particularly in Bosnia, the terms 'Jew' and 'merchant' were not synonymous. The Jews of Macedonia not only exported raw materials, but cured hides for export, dyed textiles, produced oil and packed it for shipment and manufactured alum-stones which were exported to Bosnia and Dalmatia. The Jews of Macedonia and southern Serbia specialised in the manufacture of various items including buckets, tin lamps and basins, for the production of which they held an informal monopoly.[60] Subsequently, these occupations became predominantly Jewish in Bosnia as well, and a guild of Jewish tinsmiths was established there, while tanning passed into Moslem hands.

In the proximity of rivers and sea-ports there were Jewish fishermen, divers (for coral and pearls) and porters.[61]

Jews felled trees, treating and exporting the wood, in Bosnia where forests were abundant but also in Macedonia. In fact, Jews were the first to open a saw-mill and it became known in Serbian as 'the Jews' saw-mill' (*cifutska pilana*). There were, in addition, tailors, cobblers, and the sources also mention Jewish glaziers in Sarajevo.[62] In Split Jewish tailors were

employed by the army as well as by the hospitals for whom they sewed to order.

There were Jewish furriers, carpenters, butchers and goldsmiths — all crafts which were common amongst Jews generally. In the fur-trade in Bosnia Jews were subsequently replaced by Serbians.

Occasionally, the manufacturing and marketing stages of production were combined (in hides, textiles and corals), but this was not always the case. It seems that there were Jews who earned their living by manufacture alone, and that the manufacturers were not always responsible for distributing their products. Presumably, members of one family often divided these tasks amongst themselves. Be that as it may, a considerable proportion of the Jewish population in Macedonia (where it might well have been a majority), Bosnia and Herzegovina, were engaged in production.[63]

Jews in the liberal professions

The professions in which Jews were most active are all connected with medicine or para-medicine. Within this field there were several divisions: popular healers, physicians, surgeons, apothecaries and dentists. The position differed somewhat between Bosnia and Dalmatia. In Bosnia not only were Jews the first practising physicians, apothecaries and dentists, but these three branches of the medical profession became almost exclusively Jewish, with the exception of surgery which was concentrated in non-Jewish hands.

In the period under discussion medicine as such had not yet arrived in Bosnia as it had done in Dalmatia. Those who practised it were known in the vernacular as *'hećimi'* — medical 'sages' (a term derived from the Arabic word *hakkim*). Two types of *hećimi* operated in the region: specialists in internal diseases who were exclusively Jewish, and surgeons who also treated external skin disorders and were known as *dźarahi* (nowadays they might be called respectively traumatologists and dermatologists) The latter were exclusively Moslem. This division conformed with the parallel ethnic-professional stratification that had developed in Bosnia since the start of the Ottoman occupation.[64]

Throughout the period with which we are concerned only popular para-medical healers could be found in the region. However, as a result of the traditional Jewish concentration in this field, the first academic physician who appeared in Bosnia in the nineteenth century was likewise a Jew.[65]

Apothecaries, too, were almost exclusively Jewish. The name by which they were known, *atari*, was derived from the Arabic word *ahtar*, meaning perfume. In some cases medical preparations were made up by the physicians themselves, for we know that some of them possessed chests containing home-made medications, but this appears to have been the exception rather than the rule. Generally, those who produced perfumes and medicaments

distributed their products independently of the physicians.

The first Jewish apothecary, Judah, was mentioned by the Turkish chronicler Basheskiya in the middle of the eighteenth century. Another, Mordecai Conforti, is known to have lived later and at his house were found prescriptions (in Ladino) and medicaments for numerous diseases.[66]

The first dentist in Bosnia, who had obtained his academic qualifications abroad, was the Jew Jacob Hai Sumbulović. From the end of the Middle Ages to the start of the modern era, only Jews and Moslems practised medicine in Bosnia. This was in conformity with long tradition, well known elsewhere and in previous eras.

Dalmatia. In Dubrovnik there were already Jewish physicians by the end of the fourteenth century and throughout the period discussed here. Benedictus the apostate and Moses Marali, who was murdered in prison as a result of a ritual-blood-accusation against the Jews in 1502, have been mentioned above.

In the beginning of the fifteenth century there was a Jewish oculist in Dubrovnik known as *magister* Samuel. All fifteenth century physicians were of Italian origin, and, in addition, towards the end of the century, a Jewish apothecary by the name of Juliani was mentioned. A number of Jews held the office of city-physician (*fisicus*), among them the surgeon Abraham who served in this capacity for over 30 years.

However, some of these Italian physicians were not Jews, and they competed for the post of *fisicus* with the Jewish doctors. Thus, in 1558 the famous physician, the *converso* Amatus Lusitanus (João de Castel Branco) was selected, but his appointment fell through, apparently because of opposition on the part of Cesare de Pesaro.[67] The matter is discussed further below (see pp. 300-301).

Notably, quite a number of Jews served in this municipal office. Jewish doctors were sometimes sent into Turkish territory to treat the governor or some other high official as a gesture of good will and neighbourly relations. It is evident that the free Republic of Dubrovnik knew how to employ to its own advantage the services of the Jews, even beyond their confines. No less than fifteen Jewish doctors are registered in the annals of Dubrovnik for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries alone. This is a record of remarkable consistency and achievement, particularly in view of the Slavonic-Catholic environment.

In *Split* the following Jewish doctors are mentioned: Judah Lombroso who set up a military hospital in the town, the surgeon Joseph (Iseppo) Senior, Hieronymos Melamed (his Hebrew name is not known), Solomon Thobiah and Thobiah Gabbai, otherwise *Dominus* Tobias Gabai.[68] Archbishop Ponzoni tried, apparently without success, to stop the activities of Thobiah and Melamed.

Even in this commercial port Jewish physicians played an important part,

although one less conspicuous than in Dubrovnik. The Jewish prominence in these fields was derived from the political influence of Venice, for it must have been from there or from other Italian towns that the Italian-born doctors had come to Split. This, however, cannot be proved.

Spiritual leadership and writings at the time of the influx of new Jewish settlers

Rabbis and scholars

As mentioned above, in Sarajevo there were at first three rabbis, one of whom, R. Asher Zebulun, later moved to Belgrade.[69] The rabbi who succeeded in Sarajevo was likewise imported, not, this time, from Salonika but from the north. This was R. Zevi (Hirsch) Ashkenazi, known as *Haham* Zevi, father of R. Jacob Emden and author of a polemic work against the Shabbethaean Nehemiah Hayyun (who was born in Sarajevo, later went to Palestine and subsequently travelled through various Jewish communities in Europe). *Haham* Zevi came to Sarajevo as a refugee after the Turkish siege of Buda where he had lost his wife and daughter. His arrival may be placed within the second wave of Jewish migration to Sarajevo and other towns in Bosnia. The new settlers were no longer arriving from the south but from the east (Bulgaria and Serbia) and from the north-west (Padua, Venice). They were all descendants of Spanish and Portuguese refugees or, occasionally, of the earliest Sephardi settlers in the large and central Jewish communities of the Ottoman Empire, who had migrated again further north.

It seems that *Haham* Zevi was the first spiritual leader of sufficient calibre and prestige to be independent of the heads of the rabbinic academies in Salonika. The Jewish communities in the heart of the Ottoman Empire were perturbed at that time by the rise of the Shabbethaean movement of which relatively weak echoes only had reached Bosnia and none were heard in Dalmatia. R. Ashkenazi was appointed Chief Rabbi of Bosnia and entitled *Haham Bashi*. This post, as well as the title, passed on to his son and grandson after him. Thus, instead of the two rabbis or more who had ruled the community previously, a rabbinic dynasty was formed — a well-known phenomenon in Jewish communal life — to secure stability and continuity in the leadership. During *Haham* Zevi's term of office minute-books of the local *Kahal* were first kept, and the leadership of the community was shared between the veteran merchants and craftsmen and the rabbis.

A further change was to occur in the second half of the 18th century when R. David b. Jacob Pardo was appointed and received from his new community the title of *Morenu* (our teacher). He wrote numerous rabbinic works and introduced religious schools to Sarajevo. He served as rabbi for 13 years, from 1768 to 1781, having previously officiated in Dubrovnik and, for a while, in Split. During his stay there his commentary on the *Mishnah* entitled

Shoshanim leDavid was published in two volumes. He founded a second rabbinic dynasty in the region (one of his sons succeeded him as rabbi of Sarajevo and another, R. Jacob Pardo who, like his father, was a prolific rabbinic author, became rabbi of Dubrovnik).[70] R. David Pardo later emigrated to Jerusalem, thus setting an example for a number of subsequent rabbis most of whom retired to Jerusalem in old age and died there. His son Isaac, who served as rabbi at the end of the eighteenth century, was the first native rabbi of Sarajevo. He published a book entitled *Abodath haShanah* (Livorno, 1808) and was buried in Sarajevo in 1810.

The rabbis, *Haham* Zevi and David Pardo, turned the rabbinate into a genuine position of leadership and strengthened the religious-national heritage of the community. Subsequently, in the absence of a *Haham Bashi*, three rabbinic judges headed the Jewish court and thus provided for the religious and legal requirements of the community.

Ladino — tradition and literature

The new settlers had brought with them the accomplished cultural tradition of Spanish Jewry. In the course of time they cultivated and developed it in daily use as well as in literary creations ranging from religious poetry to secular-popular writings. According to the Sarajevo-born hispanologist, Dr. Kalmi Baruh, the existence of this ethnic-religious group was governed by two factors: spiritually — the Jewish experience of *Galuth* (exile), materially — Balkan-Levantine influences. Baruh has likened the conjunction of these two factors to the successful merger between Moslem culture based on Aristotelian philosophy in mediaeval Spain with the traditional Jewish world-view, a merger which was achieved without effecting the loss of Jewish distinctiveness.[71] Baruh pointed out the influence of the Castilian Spanish translations of the Bible by Abraham Usque and Durate Piñel (Ferrara 1553 and Constantinople 1547) on the cultural inertia of the Balkan Sephardi Jews, singling out as an exception their meticulous preservation of Ladino or Judaeo-Espãnol which, even before their arrival in Bosnia, had combined the Castilian dialect with Leonese, Aragonese, Cordovan, Catalan and some Portuguese elements. Into this dialect were incorporated some Italian words (of the Venetian dialect), Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian words, and later, a number of Turkish expressions. The Jews of Bosnia referred to their own language as *'djidjo'* — a name reminiscent in sound of the word *judio* — and he quotes the following saying: *'Hablar en djidjo, entender en djidjo'* meaning — to speak and understand the Judeo-Spanish dialect.[72]

Baruh also drew attention to the influence of the legend of el Cid on the Jewish *romanceros* whose various components he had analysed. He discerned in them ancient Castilian and Catalan traditions, as well as new elements

which he regarded as *'a product of the Spanish national imagination'* which had departed from the Spanish sources.[73]

The relevance of this is not so much in the analysis of the language as in the literature, which was not considerable except for religious-ritual compositions. These proliferated and gradually, if only partly, replaced Hebrew. The consistent and exclusive use of this language is, however, interesting in that it indicates the extent to which Balkan Jewry remained faithful to the rich and glamorous tradition of Judaeo-Spanish culture. The preservation by the Balkan Sephardim of their own language and culture contributed greatly towards their social exclusiveness and the perpetuation of their distinct ethnic, cultural and religious existence.

Dr. Baruh, a student of ancient as well as modern Spanish culture, belonged to the second generation of academics in Bosnian Jewry and was one of its most outstanding intellectuals. His entire work expresses nostalgic yearnings for the Spanish-Castilian element in the Sephardi tradition. This is characteristic of the consistent strength inherent in the Judaeo-Spanish symbiosis generally, and of the cultural forces which were potent even in this relatively small community, which allowed it to maintain its distinct internal life in circumstances of freedom of expression.[74]

The Iberian conversos in Dalmatia and Macedonia

No organised movement or party of *conversos* is known to have come to the Dalmatian coast or to Macedonia. But gifted individuals made their way to these regions and left their mark, particularly in the central towns of Dalmatia, Split and Dubrovnik. These were forceful personalities who distinguished themselves in various spheres.

The *conversos* or Portuguese Jews played an important role as physicians,[75] business-men and in one case as a humanist writer.

'New Christian' doctors were first mentioned, and described quite explicitly as *conversos*, in Zara (Zadar). Their names and Spanish places of origin were noted as follows: Gabriel (b. Isaac of blessed memory) of Salamanca, and Jeronimos (b. Abraham of blessed memory) of Toledo.[76]

The municipal physician-surgeon of Dubrovnik, Abraham, already mentioned above, was nominated as being a Jew. But the archbishop of the city, Hieronimus Mateucci (1579-1581) who, in a memorandum of thirty-seven clauses, requested that the local population should sever all contacts with the Jews, and who was said, in addition, to have submitted a complaint on this matter to the Vatican, described Abraham, the city-physician, as a *converso*.[77]

Undoubtedly, the most famous physician was the Portuguese João de Castel Branco, better known as Amatus Lusitanus, one of the pioneers in the field of medical literature. Amatus arrived in Dubrovnik in 1555, fleeing the

decree of Pope Paul IV by way of Ancona and Pesaro. In Dubrovnik he was appointed city physician, but his appointment fell through. During his stay there he wrote the sixth chapter of his great medical book, the *Curationum Medicinalium Centuriae*. This chapter contained details relating to his patients who were all members of the city aristocracy. It appears that Amatus did not join the local Jewish community, but re-embraced Judaism in 1559 in Salonika where subsequently he died.[78]

One other inhabitant of Split, Immanuel Abuhab (Aboab), is described as a *converso* from Portugal, but it is not clear whether or not he was a physician.[79]

The extent to which the possibilities for settlement in the towns of Dalmatia were limited can be seen from the proposals which were put before the Senate of Dubrovnik twice, in the years 1510 and 1514, *'to expel the* **conversos** *and Jews with their families from our towns and from all other places within our region'*. These proposals were rejected on both occasions by majorities of 24 to 17 and 26 to 16. But the Jews were eventually expelled, by which time no trace had remained of the *conversos* who must have abandoned this inadequate refuge earlier on.[80]

Conversos in business and other occupations

It appears that the *conversos* contributed to the development of artillery production in the Ottoman empire. This has been suggested on the basis of a report by the French geographer Nicholas de Nicholai in the account of his travels during the second half of the sixteenth century. Further confirmation of this is found in a Turkish document dated 1584 mentioning some Jews who worked in foundries in Rumelia.[81] No other collective reference to the *conversos* has been found so far.

As for individuals, the first *converso* recorded is one registered in 1402 as having borrowed some money in Dubrovnik. This was a man by the name of Methullus who was said to have been *'once a Jew, now a New Christian'*.[82]

Another is a reference to 'Portuguese', relating to a century later and occurs in a document dated June 17th, 1502 which states: *'The honourable Isaac Alfandari, a Jew from Spain, of average height, long nose and a small head . . .'*. This is followed by the names of the 'Portuguese' who are noted as: *'. . . Isaac Latone of Padua and Lope Mazardo, an inhabitant of Venice, both Portuguese'*.[83]

Daniel Rodriguez, the dynamic *entrepreneur* whose financial interests were varied and numerous, has already been mentioned and was, apparently, a *converso*. The fact that Rodriguez had easy access both to the Moslem Turks and to the Catholic Italian towns, Venice and its colonies as well as Dubrovnik, coupled with the absence of any references to his return to Judaism or to his life as a Jew, would seem to confirm this view. However,

one difficulty arises: after the Lazzaretto in Split had been built, Rodriguez was appointed 'Consul of the Jews'. Possibly, in Split which was remote from the centres of Christian fanaticism and the Inquisition, no distinction was drawn between the *conversos* and the Jews.[84]

Rodriguez exhibited a degree of enterprise and mobility which was remarkable even by Jewish standards. In addition to the construction of the Lazaretto he was active in shipping both as an investor and as a guarantor. On one occasion he freed for a ransom of 500 guilders an Italian captain who had been captured, apparently by the Turks. He also traded in perfumes and it is possible that his interests extended even further.

Didacus Pyrrhus — the first humanist in Dubrovnik — came to Dubrovnik shortly after his friend Amatus had settled there. He lived and was very active in the city for almost fifty years. There exists one biography of him, written by a Croatian scholar.[85] His real name was Isaiah Cohen, but he also called himelf Jacob Flavius Evorensis, Evora in Portugal being his birthplace. Before arriving in Dubrovnik at the age of 41 in the year 1558 he had apparently studied medicine in Salamanca and spent some time in Toledo and Liège (Flanders). Subsequently he travelled through Ancona, Ferrara and Pesaro, following a parallel route to that which Amatus had travelled before him. In Dubrovnik he did not practise medicine but taught classics at the secondary school of the town. According to records in the local archives he also engaged in commerce. But it was through his educational and literary work, as a prolific and successful Latin poet, that he achieved recognition and fame already in his lifetime, and among later generations of historians and particularly historians of Croat literature in which the 'Dubrovnik Literature' (*dubrovacka knjizevnost*) forms a chapter of prime importance.[86]

We are entitled to ask what was his relation to Judaism, to his environment and to his country of origin. Of his Jewish origins there is no doubt, though it is uncertain whether he openly professed his Judaism during his long and productive stay in Dubrovnik. Didacus spent a longer period in Dubrovnik than any other Portuguese Jew, and died near it, too. Tadíc has proved that he maintained friendly as well as commercial contacts with the Jews of Dubrovnik, so that the city authorities usually referrred to him as 'Doctor Didacus, Jew', or even by the more cumbrous title of 'Isaiah Cohen Didacho Jacobensis doctore, "Hebreo" '.[87]

Documents show that, not only was Didacus a faithful Jew, but also that he planned to emigrate to the Holy Land in his old age and wished *'that his bones might be buried in the land of his forefathers. But since this proved impossible, he asked to be buried in Herceg-Novi'*.[88]

Isaiah-Flavius-Didacus is the only *converso* known to have re-embraced Judaism within the region which concerns us here. As for his relation to his environment, this, too, offers an example of his integration. Various documents refer to him as *dominus*, a title accorded only to the local nobility.

Didacus' loyalty to his Portuguese heritage likewise found expression in his poetry. In the collection of poems entitled *Xenia* he devoted eighteen couplets to the kings of Portugal (*Portugalliae reges*) from the middle of the thirteenth century to Philip I. Elsewhere in the same book, under the heading of *Urbium Nomina* ('Names of Towns') he mentioned several leading cities in Spain and Portugal.

Summary and conclusion

The migration and settlement of Spanish and Portuguese Jews in the regions of the western and central Balkans took place during a time of relative political and military tranquility in those areas, resulting from the consolidation of Ottoman rule in Bosnia on the one hand, and the stability attained by the Venetian take-over of Split, as well as the establishment of a semi-autonomous government in Dubrovnik, on the other hand.

The initial move into these regions and the subsequent settlement in locations which were usually chosen freely by the Jews did not give rise to any significant hostile agitation. The new settlers managed to secure both livelihood and rights of residence for themselves and their descendants by capturing, inadvertently, important public positions in social and economic life. They obtained recognition within these regions and were integrated so successfully that they became not only a privileged minority, but an organic part of their new social and political environment. In the course of this historical process the Jews made an important contribution to the economic, medical and cultural progress of these regions.

The Jews were both able and willing to adapt themselves to the new conditions of a new environment. They had been born into a tradition of immigration, and the western and central regions of the Balkans constituted their third or fourth stop along a journey which had begun at the time of the Iberian expulsions. They penetrated the villages and demonstrated considerable initiative and enterprise. In other words, they were forever discovering new routes for both domestic and international commerce. These characteristics facilitated their high achievement of social and economic integration which, it has been suggested here, was the prime reason for the continuity of Jewish settlement throughout the area under discussion.

The process of Jewish settlement was gradual, and the range of Jewish occupations well balanced, including craftsmen and labourers alongside merchants and commercial agents. The Jews were united by their religion, language and customs, practising self-reliance and maintaining contacts with the important communities of their countries of origin. They were ethnically exclusive and concentrated their attention on communal and social matters while abstaining from politics and maintaining strict neutrality in both domestic and foreign affairs.

The successful settlement and integration of the Jews in this alien cultural environment can testify to the immanent vital forces of the Sephardi diaspora which found clear expression during this period in the history of Balkan Jewry.

NOTES

1 See review of Comte L. de VOJNOVICH, *Histoire de Dalmatie*, (Paris, Hachette, 1934) in *Slavonic Review* XVII pp. 241-6, by W.J.R. who notes that, from the fourteenth century on, the entire region of Dalmatia became subject to unrestrained rivalry between its feudal barons. He adds that most of the towns within the region sought after some kind of 'a balance between Venice and Hungary, while Ragusa exploited its relative remoteness to establish a powerful independent position'.

2 The pioneers of Dalmatian and Bosnian Jewish historiography have been 20th century rabbis: Dr. Moric LEVI, the Sephardi rabbi of Sarajevo; Dr. D. GINZBURG and Dr. Shalom FREIBERGER. Dr. LEVI pioneered the historiography of Sephardi Bosnian Jewry. His *Die Sephardim in Bosnien* (Sarajevo, 1911) was the first to deal with the origins of this community and to be based, at least partially, on the material contained in the *sigileh*, the collected rulings of the Moslem Courts, written in Turkish. But the studies of these three men essentially provide only preliminary guidelines for research. All of them perished in the Holocaust before they managed to produce any work of sufficient scope and standard. The majority of studies in the field which have appeared after the Second World War were written by Yugoslav scholars. The most important of them, the Croat historian Jorjo TADÍC published his extensive monograph on the Jews of Dubrovnik in 1937. Jorjo TADÍC, author of *Jeoreji u Dubrovniku do polovine xvii stoljéca* (La Benevolencia, Sarajevo, 1937) was for many years Professor of History at the University of Belgrade, and until his death in 1971 acted in the capacity of editor and adviser for the Historical Publications of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Yugoslavia. But all other works on the subject appeared only after the Holocaust (which wiped out almost the whole of Yugolav Jewry) with the encouragement or initiative of the Federation of Jewish Communities and its dynamic Jewish Historical Museum.

Throughout the literature available in the Serbo-Croat language there is not one systematic, comprehensive account of the formation and subsequent development of the local Jewish communities. With the exception of a monograph on Split [Dusko KECKEMET, *Zidovi u povijesti Splita* (Jevrejska Opéina, Split, 1971] the remaining literature consists of brief notes and articles which appeared in specialised periodicals and almanacs. These occasionally introduce new data which are interesting in themselves and supplement our knowledge of the subject as a whole, but all suffer from excessive schematisation and from the tendency to draw *a posteriori* conclusions about the distant past on the basis of findings relating to later periods. They are inclined to far-reaching generalisations insisting, for example, on the continuous presence of Jewish solidarity as an unquestionable principle, and cover summarily long periods on which very little factual information is available. Most of the authors of these works have not been professional historians but rather ethnologists, sociologists or publicists who have devoted part of their time to the study of historical problems.

Another methodological weakness characteristic of their work has been the use of secondary material to which they resorted since the Hebrew sources were entirely inaccessible to them. But despite all this, one cannot deny the value of their contribution to the historiography of Balkan particularly Yugoslav Jewry — a subject still in its infancy.

3 TADIĆ *op. cit.*, pp. 19-25. Negative evidence exists to the effect that in 1431 the Jews were forbidden to acquire real-estate by a Venice Government decreee which had been conveyed to the local Governor. But this decree applied to all Venetian colonies, and does not prove the existence of a Jewish community in Split at that time.

4 *ibid.* pp. 29; 212. But the names of the applicants for these rights are not provided.

5 According to G. NOVAK, *Zidovi u Splitu*, (Split, 1920).

6 TADIĆ, *op.cit.* pp. 32 & 34.

7 *ibid.* p. 12. The author mentions an earlier cemetery dating back to 1386, but no trace of it exists.

8 TADIĆ *op. cit.* pp. 12-13. The links between Drāc (Durazzo) and Ragusa (Dubrovnik) were to continue. The matter is discussed further below.

9 *ibid.* p. 31.

10 *Zudioska ulica* — the street has survived to the present day. The Jews were officially ordered to concentrate in the ghetto only in 1546.

11 See TADIĆ 'An alleged Blood-Libel in the year 1502' *op. cit.*, pp. 108-118; Ladislav MINSTER in *Zbornik* No. 1 pp. 100-105. The latter has produced new details concerning the merchant and physician *(fisico)*, *Magister* Moyses Marali, who was the victim of this blood-libel. It appears that already in 1495 the Senate of Dubrovnik had appealed to the Pope seeking permission to employ this Jewish doctor. This procedure was to recur several times in subsequent years. A second ritual-blood-accusation was made in 1622 and became known as the 'Isaac Yeshurun Affair' See on this, TADIĆ *op. cit.* pp. 119-134.

12 TADIĆ *op. cit.* pp. 40-42.

13 *ibid.* p. 50. The Spanish seamen who entered the Adriatic on that occasion were apparently motivated by greed. But the Adriatic itself was by no means free from local piracy. Turks, Venetians, as well as Croatian *Uskoci* engaged in it, as is demonstrated below.

14 On these caravans see TADIĆ, article in the *Jewish Almanac* (*Jevrejski Almanah*) for 1959-60, pp. 29-54. In it he gave details of the composition of the caravans (from 7 to 80 horses in each), charges and conditions of travel. Notably, they seem to have reached their destinations relatively quickly, despite the mountainous terrain and the inadequate roads. This points to the probability that the Dubrovnik operators (*'Kiridžije'*) who were hired to transport the Jews and their merchandise profited by their employment but carried it out faithfully.

15 Dr. Levi quotes from 'a manuscript found in a certain Moslem library in Sarajevo'. According to this alleged source there were some 30-40 Jewish merchants in the city already in 1541 (the Moslem calendar year 918). But no other source confirms this information, and the date has not been accepted.

16 He claimed compensation for a lost horse. See TADIĆ, *op. cit.* p. 203

17 *Çifut* means 'swine' in Turkish, a perjorative name for the Jews used throughout the Balkans. The Jewish Quarter was first called *Çifut-hané* and later simply *Cifutana*, namely, the Jewish Residence. Some have referred to it as a ghetto, but it is doubtful whether this term may be applied to the Jewish Quarter of Sarajevo as, already at the end of the sixteenth century, there were some Jews living outside it. Possibly, the Jews themselves chose to live together for the sake of greater safety and convenience in religious practice. Siyavush Pasha, nicknamed 'Ancient', reached prominence in the Turkish hierarchy. According to GRAETZ, *History of the Jews*, 3rd German edition, p. 427, he served as vizier (e.g. state-minister) three times. His personal physician was Benveniste (according to reports by French and Venetian diplomats at the Porte, quoted by GRAETZ, 4th edition pp. 550-570).

18 Dr. Hayim KAMHI'S article commemorating the 400th year since the foundation of the Jewish community in Sarajevo (*Jevrejski Almanah*, 1961-2, p. 15) estimates that by the 1560's there were some 30-40 Jewish merchants in Sarajevo.

19 This was suggested by the ethnologist DJORDJEVIĆ, *loc. cit.* pp. 9-12. The same view was

adopted by the linguist K. BARUH 'Balkan Jews and Their Language', *Der Balkan* (Belgrade, 1936) pp. 173-9, re-published in his selected works *(Izabrana djela*, Svjetlost, Sarajevo, 1972) pp. 294-299. But the suggestion is entirely speculative. cf. note 72.

20 According to Skarić, quoted by KAMHI, *loc. cit.* p. 22.

21 cf. R. David GINSBURG'S argument in an article on the Jewish community of Skoplje, published in Croatian in the monthly, *Omanut* V, No. 1-2 (January-February, 1941). A similar view has been put forward more recently by Samardzić in his article on the contribution of Dubrovnik Jews to the development of trade in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He wrote: 'As Jews had been living in some parts of the Balkans since ancient times, clearly, the Spanish and Portuguese refugees could not settle permanently in the regions of central Turkey where their brethren were most numerous. This is why many of them did not even try to settle there but rather, exhibiting extraordinary mobility, they moved within the Balkans and in the direction of the Danube area' (*Zbornik* 1, pp. 24-29).

22 Radovan SAMARDZIĆ, *Zbornik* 1, 1971, p. 31. While it is true that in the majority of cases two generations had elapsed between the first and second migrations of the Spanish and Portuguese settlers within the Ottoman Empire, it still seems reasonable to take into account both the extent of Jewish economic enterprise and the density of the Jewish population. Another explanation has been offered by Skarić, that until the second half of the 16th century Bosnia remained entirely rural and could not accommodate a Jewish population which was primarily urban. The Jews went, therefore, to the islands of the Aegean and the area of the lower Danube first, and from there later penetrated into Bosnia (*La Benevolencia* (1924) p. 29.) This view is interesting in that it denies the Jewish merchants, particularly in Bosnia, the pioneering role which has been ascribed to them, as well as anticipating the Marxist-materialistic interpretations which are current in Yugoslavia today. There have not yet appeared any scholarly, comprehensive accounts of the history of the Jews in Greece. (On Salonika, see arts, by J. NEHAMA in this volume). The *responsa* of Salonika which have been examined by the present author do not refer directly to this important question. See, however, Dr. J. S. EMMANUEL, *Histoire des Israélites de Salonique,* vol. I (Thonon-Paris, 1936) pp. 226-7.

23 See LEVI, *op. cit.* pp. 65-6.

24 Elia VAITIĆ, article about the Jews of Sarajevo, *Spomenica* 1966, p. 24

24a *ibid.* Dr. J. K[ONFORTI] 'The Jews in the Bosnian Hinterland' pp. 1-140 (131-14). The role of the Jews in the crafts is discussed in greater detail below.

25 See the *Responsa* of R. Samuel b. Moses de MEDINA, part IV, p. 94, R. 113 where a considerable quantity of "Cordoban" sheepskins is mentioned, which was sent in 1576 from the Struga fair (Macedonia) through the Albanian port of Alessio (Ljes in Croatian) by a Jew and a Turk who worked in partnership. The latter had lent 10% of the investment. This source is quoted by H. ASHKENAZI *Fontes hebraici ad res oecconomicas/socialisque terrarum Balcanicarum saeculo XVI pertinentes* vol. I (Sofia, Editio Academiae Literarum Bulgaricae, 1958). See also *ibid.* p. 228, R. 438 regarding the shipping of skins from Constantinople to Dubrovnik between the years 1500-1520; *ibid.* R. 462 which indicates that the Jews of Skoplje (Iskopia) engaged in dyeing.

26 M. BENAYAHU, 'The Abrabanel Family in Salonika', *Sefunot* XIV (1970-1973). The full English name for this type of wool imported from England and Flanders is Winchcombe Kerseys.

27 See TADIĆ, *op. cit.* pp. 86-92; 139-145.

27a *ibid.* p. 149.

28 This is borne out by most general histories of the Ottoman Empire. See Dr. A. SUĆESKA 'Polozaj Jevreja u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme Turaka' (the position of the Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina under Turkish rule), *Spomenica* (Sarajevo, 1966) p. 49.

29 This applied to the end of the sixteenth century and to the early seventeenth. *ibid.* p. 50. It

clearly testifies both, that the community grew during that period, and that it did not establish its own institutions. The bulk of the *Sigileh* have not yet been subjected to a thorough scholarly investigation, but the few samples which have been translated reveal a potential wealth of historical material. In addition to the legal information which they contain, they are a source of historical detail comparable to the *Responsa* of Salonika and Constantinople.

30 Evidence suggests that the Catholic Church kept track of the process of Jewish settlement in Sarajevo. In 1565 Bishop Maryan Maravić reported to the Holy See that a certain Jew had been living outside the boundaries of the Jewish Quarter, namely, amongst the Moslems. Presumably such reports were sent regularly, but no harmful interference with the Jews is known to have resulted from them.

31 In 1515 both the Jews and the *conversos* were expelled from the town as a direct result of the activities of Fra Tomasso Illirico. See TADIĆ, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56 on the basis of the local chronicler Fra Serafino Cerva. Tomasso, a preacher-monk, was not native to the region but had come from outside — a phenomenon which recurred several times subsequently.

32 *ibid.*, p. 87. This took place in 1580 when Solomon Ergas was appointed consul of the Jews. The title of consul appears to have been comparable to that of the 'Judge of the Jews' in Central Europe.

33 On the role of these consuls see TADIĆ, *op. cit.* chapter VII (pp. 361-5). Sometimes they acted as rabbis as well and usually they belonged to the Codutto family. All this shows that Jewish communities existed in the areas which bordered on Yugoslav territory, namely, Valona, Elbasan, Alessio and Drac/Durazzo, a fact which calls for further investigation.

34 KECKEMET, *op. cit.* pp. 51-2. There is no evidence for any opposition to the Jews on the part of the local population, such as there was in Dubrovnik, and persecutions are not known to have occurred.

35 The synagogue was twice destroyed by fire, in 1697 and 1789. According to Ivan TAUBMAN 'Spomenici Kulture', *Spomenica* (Sarajevo, 1966) pp. 125-7; it was rebuilt in 1821 and again in 1909.

36 LEVI, *op. cit.* p. 17. These were rabbinic scholars from Salonika. The first was a pupil of R. David CONFORTI, author of *Kore Hadorot* [D. Kassel (ed.), Berlin, 1846] in which (p. 51b) another rabbi is mentioned — Abraham Muttal who 'went to Sarajevo ("Saray Bosnia") and taught there together with Matzliah Muchachon and his brother R. Eliyahu Muchachon who went to Safed and died there'. Nothing is known of R. Abraham Muttal in Sarajevo.

37 With regard to him R. Conforti writes: 'At that time the distinguished scholar, our teacher R. Samuel b. Baruch, went from Salonica to Saray-Bosnia and taught there with R. Matzliah Muchachon. He was a great scholar and expert in legal matters, and he is mentioned in the *Responsa* of R. Hayyim Shabbetai (Maharhash), (Rs 18 and 19). He served as rabbi between the years 1623-46. It might be added, incidentally, that native rabbis did not emerge until the 18th century, after R. David Pardo, himself Venetian-born, had established institutions for rabbinic studies in the town.

38 LEVI, *op. cit.* pp. 23-28. In 1730 the association *Kanfé Yonah* ('Wings of a Dove') for visiting the sick was founded and pioneered the rise of communal associations for mutual aid in the town. See Todor KRUSÉVAC, 'Druśtvene promene kod bosanskih Jevreja za Austrijskog vremena', *Spomenica* (1966) p. 74.

39 See TADIĆ, *op. cit.* pp. 169; 178; 333. He was succeeded by his disciple, R. Aaron b. David Cohen who defended his community at the time of the 'Yeshurun Affair'. See *ibid.* pp. 156; 230; 236; 239 or in TADIĆ, 'Aron Koen', *Zbornik* I (Beograd, 1971) pp. 313-323.

40 KECKEMET, *op. cit.* pp. 96-98. Nor did Novak, who wrote about the subject some fifty years previously, mention an earlier synagogue.

41 See on this, Stanley CASSON, *Macedonia, Thrace and Illyria* (Oxford, 1926).

42 KECKEMET, *op. cit.* pp. 34-52. The official opening took place in 1592 and Rodriguez was

appointed Consul of the Jews in Split. For details concerning the rivalry between the two ports and the survival of Dubrovnik as a viable port even after the establishment of its rival (the Jews contributed to this) see TADIĆ *op. cit.* chapters III-IV. Tadić stresses that the connections between this port and Ancona in particular were established and maintained by the Jews.

43 The presence of some Jews in Berat (Albania) is particularly interesting in view of the now nearly certain hypothesis that Shabbetai Zevi was buried in the proximity of this town. See I. BEN-ZVI, 'The Burial Place of Shabbetai Zevi and The Shabbathian Movement in Albania', *Studies and Sources* (Heb.), 1966, pp. 545-551, as well as Plate 19 which shows a photograph of the tomb ascribed to Shabbethai Zevi. One might add that Yugoslav scholars never confirmed the previously held view that Shabbetai Zevi had been buried in Dulcigno (Ulcinj), on the Montenegran coast of Yugoslavia. The fact that there exists no local tradition to that effect would seem to support Ben-Zvi's findings. It must be noted, however, that the late Professor Gershom Scholem remained unrelenting in his belief that Shabbetai Zevi was buried at the site of his confinement, i.e. Dulcigno/Ulcinj. See his *magnum opus* entitled "Sabbatai Sevi — The Mystical Messiah", Princeton 1973, pp. 920-921, particularly note 255, referring to a report in the Hebrew daily 'Davar' in 1965 — unfortunately, incorrectly quoted — according to which local 'Elders' (of Ulcinj) had told a visitor in 1962 that anonymous visitors used to come from afar to see the grave of an unknown 'holy man'. In his wake, Dr. Paul Fenton from Lyon, France visited Ulcinj and described a 'double' grave (with two persons buried in the same grave) which he also photographed, as being Shabbetai Zevi's resting place. See his, oddly entitled, article "The Tomb of the Messiah of Ishmael" in 'Pe'amim' (Hebrew) 25, 1985, pp. 13-39.

44 On these connections, see Bogumil HRABAK, 'Jevreji u Albaniji od kraja XIII do kraja XVII veka i njihove veze sa Dubrovnikom', *Zbornik* I (1971) pp 55-97, including an English extract. Amongst his most interesting data and/or hypotheses is the suggestion that in the middle of the 16th century there were some 4,000 inhabitants in Valona of whom half were Jewish. He bases this on a certain Albanian document which cannot be discussed within the confines of the present study.

45 TADIĆ *op. cit.* p. 35. The author stresses religious contacts, regular correspondence and a general sense of fraternity, in addition to the commercial link which existed between the Jewish communities of Constantinople and Salonika, Sarajevo, Dubrovnik and the Italian coastal towns, as far north as Antwerp. To these communities should be added the Jews of Monastir — Bitola and Skoplje in Macedonia, and the Jewish settlements of the Peloponnese in Greece. See *ibid.* p. 37.

46 See Tonia POPOVÍC, 'Dubrovnik i Ankona u Jevrejskoj trgovini XVI veka', *Zbornik* I (1971) pp. 44-47.

47 According to NOVAK, *op. cit.* p. 21 the date of the appointment was 1630, and he ascribes to the consul some intelligence work in Albania. See also H. KAMHI, 'Jevreji u privredi Bosne i Hercegovine', *Spomenica* (Sarajevo, 1966) pp. 55-57. Kamhi notes other types of commodities in which the Jews traded: sugar, rice, coffee, as well as a number of direct exchange deals in salt or wax for textiles. This, apparently, was a new exchange technique which formed the economic basis for the new Jewish communities, in addition to the capital Sarajevo, throughout this vast region. cf. above, pp. 28-29. NOVAK (*op. cit.* pp. 28-9) notes during this period the first incidence of commercial collaboration between the aristocracy of Split and the Jews — a phenomenon which had long since been commonplace in Dubrovnik.

48 For a full list of these communities, as well as a description of the settlement process, see CONFORTI, *loc. cit.* pp. 132-140. It should be noted that most of these provincial settlers were craftsmen. Amongst the Jews of Travnik, for example, there were masons who built the local synagogue, devoting to this work for several months the hours between the afternoon and evening services.

49 See TADIĆ *op. cit.* p 299; POPOVIĆ *loc. cit.* p. 49. The immediate reason was the spread of piracy at that time.

50 For a detailed discussion on this subject see Branislav M. NEDELJKOVIĆ, 'Putne isprave dubrovačkih Jevreja', *Zbornik* I (1971) pp. 113-134.

51 See TADIĆ *op. cit.* p. 81. He quotes a statute which restricted the number of Jews in the town and according to which all the Jews were to be expelled who were not merchants or who had remained out of stock for eight days. It makes clear the utilitarian-materialistic attitude that characterised this city-republic and to which have been ascribed its powers of survival and independence. It should be noted that in contradistinction to Bosnia, Dubrovnik prevented the settlement of Jewish craftsmen by statutes of this type.

52 This applied to Dubrovnik as well. See Miroslav PANTIĆ, 'Izbor dokumenata o dubrovačkim Jevrejima od sredine XVII do kraja XVIII veka', *Zbornik* I (1971) pp. 350-56. While Dubrovnik, whose economy was well advanced by contemporary standards, restricted petty trade and peddling or forbade them altogether, the authorities in Bosnia, which was economically more retarded, approved of these occupations.

53 See TADIĆ *op. cit.* pp. 167; 237. This attempt, which was by no means unique, originated in Dalmatia in 1597. The Spanish government confiscated not only the goods but also the ship which sailed under the Dubrovnik flag. Because their property had been lost as a result of state interference, the insured owners received no compensation for it. The controversy which resulted from this incident may be termed an internal one, since both the Jewish ship's owners requesting compensation, the brothers Maestro, and the insurers were Jewish. The brothers Ben-Danon, Solomon Habilio, Abraham Eviatar and Israel Aboaf were members of the Dubrovnik Jewish community. But there were some cases of confiscation by Jews of merchandise owned by fellow Jews who had not paid off their debts. *ibid.* pp. 195-6.

54 See SUCESKA *loc. cit.* p. 52, where he demonstrates that this was a common occurrence.

55 See, respectively, the *Responsa* of R. Samuel B. Moses KALAI, R. 80 p. 72; *Avkat Rochel* p. 117 R. 18; *Perah Matteh Aharon* part II R. 89 p. 136. All these references to the *Responsa* literature, as well as those given below, are quoted from Hananel ASHKENAZI, *Anthology of Hebrew sources*, vols. I-II (1958 and 1960), published by the Bulgarian Academy for Sciences. *cf.* n.25 above.

56 Author's italics. Ogier Ghiselin von BUSBECQ, *Legationis Turcicae Epistolae IV*, translated into German by Wolfram von den Steinen, published by the Academy of Philosophy, Erlangen, 1926. English edition: E. S. FORSTER, *The Turkish Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq* (Oxford, 1927). de Busbecq was the Imperial German Ambassador to Constantinople between the years 1554-1562. His memoirs, first published in 1581, are a historical source of some value. See A. VIERTEL, *Busbecks Erlebnisse in der Turkei in den Jahren 1553-1568.*

57 See the *Responsa* of R. Joseph Ibn Leb (Maharibal), part I, R. 3 p. 2b.

58 See TADIĆ, *op. cit.*, pp. 68; 164; HRABAK, *loc. cit.* p. 64. Tadić notes this phenomenon generally, while Hrabak cites as an example the murder in 1502 of twenty Jews *en route* from Apulia to Valona. They had been thrown overboard and their possessions, including gold and jewellery, were later sold in Dubrovnik. There is no reason to believe that the *Uskoci* killed Jews *qua* Jews, since their hostility was directed chiefly against the Turks. But, as Catholics, they certainly did not like Jews, particularly since, from their point of view, the Jews could be regarded as loyal servants of the Ottomans. One other difficulty mentioned by Tadić on the basis of sources found in the Dubrovnik archive is the Turkish reactions to the closure of the Dubrovnik port. The Turks retaliated by preventing entry into the Turkish ports of all 'Christian vessels'. Clearly such ships often carried Jewish merchants as well.

59 See TADIĆ, *op. cit.*, p. 171. Permission was granted on December 28th, 1617. There is no doubt that their own economic needs had forced the Jews to press for the continuation of trade under any conditions.

60 See Dr. Vuk VINAVER, 'O Jevrejima u Dubrovniku u XVIII veku', *Jevrejski Almanah* IV,

(Belgrade, 1960) pp. 65-78. Amongst other subjects the author deals with the numerous difficulties which the city authorities had put in the way of Jewish Coffee-House owners and itinerant merchants. Cf. above, pp. 70. The fact that Jews engaged in producing alum is confirmed by the Jewish sources. See *Perah Matteh Aharon* II, R. 102, where it is clear that the craft was a typical family one and passed from fathers to sons for generations.

61 Cf. VINAVER *loc. cit* p. 71; TADIĆ *op. cit.* p. 15. According to Tadíc the Jews, Joseph b. Abraham and Angelus (Probably the Hebrew Malach or ben Malach) pursued this occupation of porters already by the end of the fourteenth century, and Jews — it is not clear whether these two or others — shipped the goods to Italy and Alexandria in Egypt. Vinaver, on the other hand, refers only to the eighteenth century, and it is not known how widespread or continuous this occupation was amongst the Jews of Dubrovnik. In contradistinction, the tradition of Jewish porters in Salonika survived until quite recently and their contribution to the construction and operation of ports in the state of Israel has been considerable.

62 See the *Responsa* of R. Joseph ben Moses Trani (Maharit), R. 12 p. 15.

63 The data available are not sufficient even for attempting an estimate of the proportion of merchants as against craftsmen. But there is little doubt that these two sectors comprised the majority of Bosnian Jewry. Tadíc's findings relating to the 17th century (see *op. cit.* pp. 175-6) show only a few Jews engaged in money-lending and pawn-broking while the native Christian population was much more active in these fields.

64 See LEVI *op. cit.* pp. 67-8.

65 This was Isaak (effendi) Salom, who graduated from the University of Padua. In the middle of the 19th century he was appointed Tahir Pasha's military physician and became the first Jew to receive the title of Effendi and to represent the Jews on the regional Council (*Maglis*). In his old age he emigrated to Palestine and died there. His son Solomon was a member of the Turkish Parliament. See LEVI *op. cit.* pp. 73-4. Amongst the best known popular healers were, already in the 18th century, Joseph Hayyim and Samuel Sumbul, Jacob Sumbul and Samuel and Abraham Atias. Some of them operated not only in the capital Sarajevo but also in Travnik and Banja-Luka, the new Jewish settlement centres mentioned above. See Dr. Samuel PINTO, 'Jevrejski hécimi i atari Bosni za Turskog doba', *Medicinski Arhiv* god VIII 2 (March-April 1954) pp. 93-8. I obtained an offprint of this article from the Historical Archive of the Association of Yugoslav Immigrants in Israel whose director, my late good friend Mr. Yakir Eventov, kindly permitted the incorporation here of the material contained in the article.

66 For example: against constipation — *para purgar*; against nausea — *para angusya*. See *ibid.* p. 97 where facsimiles of the prescriptions also appear. Jewish physicians and apothecaries also acted as suppliers to the Bosnian vizier. In other words, medicine and commerce were combined — a well-known tradition in Jewish history.

67 See TADIĆ *op. cit.* pp. 244-50; Dr. Lavoslav GLESINGER, 'Amatus Lusitanus à Ragusa', *Revue d'Histoire de la Médicine hébraique* No. 19, Paris, December 1953, pp. 192-204 and 'Dubrovacki lijecnik Amatus Lusitanus', *Zbornik* I (1971) pp. 291-312.

68 See KECKEMET *op. cit.* pp. 83-5.

69 *Kore Hadorot* p. 51b. In Slang's table of rabbis and scholars (*op. cit.* pp. 142-3) R. Zebulun's name does not appear, but Slang's list may well be incomplete. As for other rabbis who served in Belgrade during the 16th century, Slang's data conform with R. David Conforti's and include the following rabbis: Judah Lerma, Simha b. Gershon Hacohen, Raphael Persenfal, Joseph Almosnino and Joseph Aseo. However, it would appear that there are omissions in Slang's list, which was based not on *Kore Hadorot* but only on the Belgrade Communal Archive and on S. Rosanes "Divrei Yemei Yisrael Torgamah", IV vols, Sofia — Tel-Aviv, 1930-1935, (Hebrew).

70 For further information about this prolific rabbinic family which ran through numerous generations and spread from Salonika via Dalmatia and Italy to Amsterdam, see the study

by the famous rabbi of Verona, Della TORRE, 'Cenno Storico sulla famiglia Pardo', *Scritti sparsi* vol. II, (Padua 1908). See also M. LEVI, 'David Pardo, Sarajevski haham', *Jevrejski Almanah* 5686 (1925-6) pp. 118-126. The details concerning the rabbis of Sarajevo are taken from LEVI, *Sephardim* . . . pp. 30-33 supplemented by KAMHI, 'Sarajevski rabini', *Spomenica* 1966, pp. 273-278.

71 See Kalmi BARUH, 'Jezik Sefardskih jevreja', *Spomenica* 'La Benevolencia' (Sarajevo, May, 1924). The article later appeared in French in *Der Balkan* (1936) pp. 173-9 and in Baruh's selected works, *Izabrana djela*, (Svjetlost, Sarajevo 1972) pp. 265-277. According to Baruh the spiritual wealth of Iberian Jewry did not pass on to the Byzantine (Turkish) East but with the concentration on religious ritual which took place, the tradition fossilised (see p. 268 in the selected works). Baruh was born in Sarajevo in 1896 and studied in Zagreb, Berlin, Paris and Vienna. His doctoral dissertation was a phonetic study of the vernacular of Bosnian Jewry. He visited Spain several times and contributed to numerous periodicals, amongst them *El Mundo Sefaradi* which appeared in Vienna, *Revista de Filologia Española* in Madrid and various Yugoslav journals. He perished in the Holocaust, a few days after his liberation from Bergen-Belsen. His studies and translations (amongt the latter from Unamuno, Valdez, Ortega y Gasset, Laerto, Martinez, Rivera and Madariaga) have been collected and published by the National-Republican Publishing House in Sarajevo, edited by the Serbian author Vojislav Maksimović.

72 On Ladino see Samuel KAMHI, 'Language poetry and proverbs of the Sephardim of Bosnia and Hercegovina', p. 107. See also arts. by O. CAMHY and Henry V. BESSO, *The Sephardi Heritage*. I pp. 560-603 and 604-635 respectively.

73 Baruh stresses that knowledge of the meaning of these poems and sayings disappeared gradually, and many of them were performed and sung only at wedding and circumcision ceremonies, to the accompaniment of an instrument called 'Pandero'.

74 When Baruch was born (in 1896) the Jewish community of Sarajevo numbered some 5,000; by the time of the Holocaust this had doubled. (Now there are less than 1,000 Jews in the town. It is an unfortunate fact that Jewish scholars have so far completely overlooked Baruh's work).

75 They are referred to here as '*conversos* or Jews' since the sources sometimes describe them simply as 'Portuguese', and it is not clear whether Jews of Portuguese origin or *conversos* are referred to. Gentiles continued to regard the *conversos* as Jews, and they were not always precise about the religious definition of each category.

76 See GLESINGER, *Zbornik* I, 1971 p. 295. This record dates from 1480. Another *converso* physician is mentioned there, David Pinto, who was active in Skoplje. The two physicians from Zadar are also mentioned in the Morpurgo family archive in Split. See KECKEMET *op. cit.* pp. 214-56.

77 See TADIĆ *op. cit.* pp. 256-7. It is not known whether the archbishop's denunciation resulted from excessive suspicions which had been cast on the town by the Inquisition or whether it was based on his own conjecture. In either event, this is the only source in which Abraham is described as a *converso* but noticeably, not even as Portuguese.

78 Two Jewish physicians from Zagreb, the late Dr. Lavoslav SIK and Professor GLESINGER have studied Amatus' professional activities in Dubrovnik (*Zbornik* I, 1971, pp. 291-314; *Revue d'Histoire de la Médicine Hébraique* No 19, 1953, pp. 193-204), as well as the non-Jewish scholar, Dr. M. Resetar. See TADIĆ, *op. cit.* pp. 275-97. Amatus was a botanist as well, familiar particularly with medicinal herbs, and he assisted the apothecaries of his time who put his findings to use. Some details regarding this aspect of his scientific work are contained in GLESINGER 'Les Juifs et la Pharmacie', *Revue d'Histoire de la Médicine Hébraique*, March 1955, No. 25, pp. 11-27, where he also notes the achievements of popular Jewish apothecaries in Bosnia. The difficulties that this distinguished scientist encountered in his dealings with the authorities, both in the Italian Catholic towns and in Dubrovnik,

during the period of the Counter-Reformation, testify to the particularly hostile attitude towards the *conversos* that prevailed at that time. It was no accident that he eventually re-embraced Judaism in the large and important Jewish community of Salonika (where, incidentally, he completed the seventh and last volume of his *Centuriae*) and not in the small and Christian-dominated Ragusan community.

79 He is listed here among the *converso* physicians, following KECKEMET (*op. cit.* p. 91). Since he studied in Italy one may speculate that his subject was medicine. He was mentioned in the beginning of the 17th century as a temporary resident of Split, and subsequently he moved to Venice.

80 As previously in the years 1500-1503, the Jews, amongst them probably some *conversos* as well, were permitted to cross the border into Turkish territory between the years 1510-1515. The proposed expulsion was to take effect in Dubrovnik where attempts were being made to reduce the Jewish population. See on this TADIĆ, *op. cit.* pp. 54; 422-425 (the Latin protocols). The city Council discussed the proposal only in principle and accordingly names were not recorded.

81 See Marko S. MIRĆ, 'Jevreji na Balkanskom Poluostrvu i u staroj srpskoj drźavi do dolaska Turaka', *Jevrejski Almanah* III (1957-8) p. 57; ZINKEISEN, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reichs in Europa* III, p. 368. Amongst his sources are GRAETZ, 3rd German edition, vol. 9 p. 28 and Nicolas de NICOLAI's travel book, 1st edition, (Antwerp 1557) p. 256. The 1567 edition, in the chapter which deals with usury as practiced by the Jews, reads as follows: 'Amongst them there are some excellent workers, active in all crafts and industries, particularly the *marranos* who have been lately expelled from Spain and Portugal. They have taught the Turk various new inventions, tools and war-machines, the production of guns, rifles, gun-powder, ammunition and other weapons, to the detriment of Christendom. They have also established a printing press there [Constantinople] which had not been known in those regions before'. (The translation is free.) Mirć's Turkish source is Ahmed REFIK, *Onuncó asr-i hiçride Istanbul hayati*, (Istanbul, 1917) pp. 17 ff. The point is interesting but vague and requires a more thorough examination of the Turkish sources.

82 See TADIĆ *op. cit.* p. 23.

83 See *ibid.* p. 52. These 'Portuguese' are not described there as *marranos*, but the anti-semitic reference to the 'Jew' from Spain, as well as the absence of this title by the remaining names, suggests, though this is far from certain, that they might have been *marranos*.

84 See KECKEMET *op. cit.* p. 31. Tadíc who mentions him several times (*op. cit.* pp. 152; 159; 277; 353) regards him simply as 'Portuguese'. Attilio MILANO *Storia degli ebrei in Italia*, p. 282 notes his appointment in 1573 as 'Consul of the Hebrew nation of the Levant in Venice'. This would suggest that he had had a previous experience of serving as Consul, representing the Levantine merchants in Venice, some twenty years before assuming this role in Split.

85 Djuro KÖRBLER, 'Zivot i rad humanista Didaka Portugalca, napose u Dubrovnika', *Rad Jugoslavenske Akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* Knj. 216, Zagreb 1917 p. 162. Several articles appeared subsequently and all are mentioned in Tadíc's book which came out in 1937 (see *op. cit.* pp. 298-9). His chapter on Didacus was later republished in *Zbornik* I (1971) pp. 239-251. But he was preceded by the Sarajevo rabbi and pioneer of Sephardi historiography in Yugoslavia, Dr. Moric LEVI, 'Iz proslosti Jevrejske opstine u Dubrovniku', *Jevrejski Almanah* 5689 (1928-9) IV god., Vršac 1928, pp. 59-62.

86 While the figure of Amatus Lusitanus has attracted the attention mostly of Jewish physicians and scholars both in Yugoslavia and abroad, Pyrrhus has been regarded as one of the most central figures in Dalmatian humanist literature and a forerunner of the literary renaissance amongst the Southern Slavs generally. The present day literary critics analyse his poetry and translate it. See Darinka NEVENIĆ-GRABOVAC, 'Iz poezije Didaka Pira', *Zbornik* I (1971) pp. 252-289, where the author incorporates selected translations of his poems and where Tadíc has added some biographical details as well as an evaluation of Pyrrhus' educational

and literary work. Nevertheless, not enough about his life has so far come to light.

87 This reference dates from September 2nd, 1574. The appellation Jacho refers to the town of Ancona which had been Pyrrhus' last stop before arriving in Dubrovnik. There are a number of similar references, but they contain no explicit evidence of any appointment or official position of leadership which he might have held in the Jewish community of the town.

88 Regrettably, Tadíc did not publish the full text of Pyrrhus' will, dated 1597. But even the passages which he quotes from the will testify clearly that Pyrrhus fully returned to Judaism and that, to comply with his own wish, he was buried in the neighbouring town of Herceg-Novi, south of Dubrovnik, probably because he wanted to secure for himself eternal rest on Turkish territory in which Dubrovnik was only an enclave. Another interesting detail: the original will was written in Hebrew or Ladino. The sections dealing with his material possessions were translated into Italian to facilitate the registration and official execution of the will. The translation here is based on the quotation from KÖRBLER (*op. cit.* p. 113) which appeared only in LEVI (cf. n. 80) p. 61. Furthermore, Isaiah Didacus wrote a poem about his own exile, 'composed in the wonderful town of Herceg-Novi during the time of the persecutions in Spain'. The form of the poem is that of an epitaph dedicated to himself in which he mentions various mythological figures, as well as the towns of Cordova and Evora to which he refers sorrowfully. Likewise he mourns: 'Here lies, far from the town of Evora and his ancestral home, Didacus whom fate did not permit to remain in his home-town' (The translation is based on that in *Zbornik* I. p. 269).

STRUCTURE, ORGANISATION AND SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE SEPHARDI COMMUNITIES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE FROM THE SIXTEENTH TO EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

by
Leah Bornstein-Makovetsky

Sephardi Settlement in the Ottoman Empire

Jewish emigration from Spain began even before the Edict of Expulsion of 1492, and a small number of emigrants reached the Ottoman Empire, but the large waves of immigrants arrived after the expulsion from Spain in 1492, and from Portugal in 1497. Tens of thousands of Iberian Jews settled in the larger and smaller communities of the empire, primarily in Greece and Turkey. These Jews founded communities, many of which soon became famous as centres of Jewish life. The emigration of *marranos* from Spain and Portugal continued during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though this was an emigration of individuals or families, rather than large groups.[1] By the sixteenth century, due to their economic and cultural strength, the Sephardim formed a majority in many of the important communities of the Ottoman empire, as for example, Salonika and Safed.[2] From the very beginning, they came into conflict over communal hegemony with the native Jewish residents, Romaniotes, living in the territories of the former Byzantine empire of Rumelia.[3] Constantinople was the Romaniote stronghold, and the Sephardim were not able to capture the hegemony until the seventeenth century, when the number of outstanding religious leaders had become practically reduced among the Romaniotes.[4] In Salonika, on the other hand, the Sephardim quickly achieved dominance. In the sixteenth century, no Romaniote *halachic* authority could be found to equal those of the Sephardim. Members of other Jewish ethnic groups who had settled in the Ottoman empire, notably Ashkenazim, Provençals, Italians and Sicilians, in many cases assimilated into the Sephardi communities and were completely absorbed.[5] Nevertheless, their separate synagogues continued to exist for hundreds of years.

There were, however, places where the Sephardim were not able to take root due to the numerical superiority of the other ethnic groups. Thus, in the sixteenth century the Jewish community of Patras in the Morea numbered about five hundred heads of households (about two thousand people), in four

congregations (*Kahalim*). At first, there existed one Romaniote congregation, one Sephardi and two Sicilian, but by the end of that century the Sephardi congregation had disappeared, while another Sicilian congregation had been established. Apparently the Sephardim, few in number, had been assimilated into the other local congregations.[6]

The picture was somewhat different in Israel, Egypt and Syria. Although certain communities attracted large numbers of Sephardim, for instance, Cairo, Alexandria, Damietta, Safed, Jerusalem, Damascus and Aleppo, in many communities dominance was maintained by the *mustarabim* (the native Jewish, culturally-Arabic orientated populace).[7]

Prof. H. Z. Hirschberg has succinctly depicted the cultural level of the Spanish Jews which enabled them to achieve hegemony in communal life in the Ottoman empire:

> "The culture of the Iberian peninsula permeated the blood of its Jewish inhabitants, and its literary languages became first rate vehicles of expression. For example, take the writings of Moses Almosnino and Samuel Usque. Without exaggeration, we can state that from an intellectual viewpoint Iberian Jewry formed the elite of the Jewish people. Under such conditions, it is no wonder then that the Spanish exiles ascended the ladder of success in the Ottoman empire and became the dominating element in the Jewish population, due to their economic power, their political stature in the Sultan's court. From their ranks came the court physicians, bankers and diplomatic agents; and their organization, though internally divided, was strong and aggressive towards the extenal world, including their non-Sephardi brethren. Indeed, they achieved their dominance after confrontation, dispute and rancour. Thus after a short time they left their impressions on all areas of life for the Oriental Jews."[8]

The Autonomy of the Jewish Community

In the framework of the '*millet* (= a national, religious community) policy' practised by the Ottoman government towards citizens of various ethnic groups in the realm of the empire, the Jewish ethnic group was granted broad autonomy, first and foremost in the realm of religion, but also in social and cultural spheres.[9]

Because of this, the Spanish and Portuguese found the cities of the Ottoman empire suitable places for mass settlement and for the formation of their own autonomous communities. However, initially they did not found 'communities,' but rather 'congregations' which were quasi-communities. In a congregation, the centre of which was of course the synagogue, gathered the exiles of a given city in Spain or Portugal, and their offspring. They wished to preserve the venerable traditions of their native cities together with the previous social framework, and in general, preferred to pray together and to maintain a common organizational life in the new land. Hence the autonomy of the individual congregation, and its generally rather weak relationship to other congregations and to the community, the group which united all the congregations in the city.[10] Thus every community of synagogue worshippers

was called a *kahal kadosh*, a 'holy congregation', while the community which united all the various congregations in the city was simply called 'the community' (Heb. *kehillah*).[11]

R. Joseph Ibn Leb writes at the beginning of the second half of the 16th century:

> "In Salonika, every (Jewish) man speaks his own native tongue. When the exiles arrived, each vernacular group founded an independent congregation, there being no mobility from congregation to congregation. Each congregation maintains its own poor; each congregation is entered separately in the Crown register. Thus each congregation appears to be an independent city."[12]

The autonomous existence of the congregations in the various communities was also expressed in some places by their separate registration in the government record of taxpayers. By the beginning of the 16th century the community of Salonika had already enacted legislation to prevent individuals escaping payment of taxes by registering in other congregations or communities. This problem particularly afflicted the Spanish congregations, as a Romaniote, Ashkenazi or Italian, for example, would find much more difficulty in joining a Spanish (or other) congregation, due to the differences in liturgy and custom. On the other hand, a Sephardi could easily join a different Spanish congregation. In spite of the enactments, there were many incidents of division among the Sephardi congregations of Salonika.[13]

No analogy exists between the forms of organisation and administration practised among the Sephardi communities, and those of the non-Jewish communities of the Ottoman empire, not even an external similarity of terms and nomenclature. On the other hand, the precedents taken from the original Sephardi communities of Spain obviously influenced the organizational patterns of the Sephardi communities of the Ottoman empire.

Agreements between the Sephardi Congregations

Rivalry existed among the Sephardi congregations in the Ottoman empire, each congregation aspiring to greatness in quantity and quality. They were necessarily forced to reach agreements so as to prevent disputes and disruption of normal life.

Salonika was the city that absorbed the largest number of Spanish and Portuguese exiles. In the first half of the 16th century, an agreement had already been effected which provided for dividing up the new immigrants among the seven existing Spanish and Portuguese synagogues, according to a given ratio. The seven Spanish congregations agreed amongst themselves to divide all the newcomers, Portuguese and Castilian, in equal numbers by lot among the seven congregations. "In whichever holy congregation falls the lot (of a newcomer), there shall be fixed for all considerations — whether the lots

fall for a Portuguese to join the Castilian congregation, (or) a Castilian to the Portuguese." It was also enacted that anyone (or his father) who had previously belonged to a different congregation of the seven, should rejoin his original congregation.[14]

In the 'covenant' (Heb. *brit*; contract) between the Lisbon congregation and *Leviat Hen* congregation, dated Adar 5320 (1560), the Lisbon congregation gave up their rights over certain individuals who had joined them, and over future Spanish and Portuguese immigrants in Salonika, to the benefit of the *Leviat Hen* congregation, which had been founded by Dona Gracia Mendes.[15]

In another agreement dating from the same period (almost certainly from Salonika) it was stated that 'anyone immigrating to the city, being of second generation Italian birth (i.e. both the immigrant and his father having been born in Italy), even though the grandfather had originated in Portugal or Castile or Aragon or another kingdom, shall go (join) to the Italian congregation. However, if his father was born in one of the above mentioned kingdoms (i.e., the immigrant being only first generation Italian), then he shall go (join) the congregation of his native tongue . . .'

The Aragonese objected to this agreement, as it was to their detriment. In Spain only *marranos* remained, and many of these arriving in the Ottoman empire in the middle of the sixteenth century came from the Spanish communities which had settled in Italy. R. Moses di Trani (*Mabit*) was asked to settle this dispute. He found in favour of the Aragon congregation, that they could not be coerced into accepting this 'agreement'. Anyone of Aragonese descent even if a former resident of Italy, could join the Aragon congregation.[15a]

Communal Splits and Foundation of New Congregations

In spite of the enactments which forbade divisions and founding of new congregations, new synagogues were nevertheless established during the sixteenth century, and the majority of enactments were not enforced. During that century, the Catalan congregation of Salonika legislated twice against secession, but these rules were broken. In about 5305 (1545), it split into the Old Catalan congregation and the New Catalan congregation.[16] The Salonikan Lisbon congregation also enacted against secession but the law was never implemented. In 5293 (1533), the Evora congregation was formed from members who had left the Lisbon congregation. Before 5321 (1561), the Lisbon congregation split once again into two: the Old Lisbon congregation and the New Lisbon congregation.[17]

Communal splits occurred also in Constantinople. In the Spanish exile congregation (Heb. *Gerush Sefarad*), the enactment against secession of 5309 (1549) was broken in 5321 (1561). A number of members joined a new

congregation founded by Dona Gracia Mendes.[18] In Larissa in the sixteenth century, members of the Spanish congregation also left, in defiance of the old enactment which forbade secession.[19]

We can also discern disputes between the Spanish and the Portuguese. In Monastir, in the last quarter of the 16th century, the synagogues of the Aragon congregation and of the Portuguese congregation were destroyed by fire. The two impoverished congregations decided to re-establish the synagogue of the Aragon congregation first. But when the Portuguese realized that the Aragon congregation did not intend to aid them in rebuilding their synagogue, they annulled the agreement.[20]

A well-known communal dispute arose between Spanish and Portuguese in Valona, Albania, at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century, where the following emigrant congregations were to be found: Pulia (Italy), Catalonia, Portugal and Castile. The Spanish congregations suffered from internal disputes and division. At first the Castilians and Portuguese prayed together in one synagogue; later, the Portuguese split off from the Castilians and founded a separate synagogue. The Castilians strongly opposed this move on the basis of a communal agreement which forbade secession. The Portuguese countered with the claim that they formed the majority of the congregation, and thus the Castilians were bound to accept Portuguese hegemony. Secondly, the Portuguese claimed that they were not seceding, but merely setting up an additional synagogue common to both groups.[21] Nonetheless, the fact remains that a split had occurred, and records dating from fifty years later show that two Spanish congregations functioned: Catalan, Castile and Portugal. Thus the Spanish had prevailed over the Portuguese, apparently after additional Spanish immigrants had reached the community. The Spanish and Portuguese formed the majority in the community — during the entire period there existed only one other congregation, that of the immigrants from Pulia, Italy.[22]

The Status of the Individual in the Community

The individual member of the congregation or community was defined as one who prayed in the synagogue on a fixed basis, and was subject to the privileges and obligations of the communal body. Thus, anyone who paid his communal dues (unless he was indigent) was entitled to take part in the political life of the community.[23] Since the Spanish and Portuguese congregations in the Ottoman empire were originally new communal bodies founded by newly-arrived immigrants, no newcomer-veteran conflict arose. As time passed, however, *marranos* who reached the Ottoman empire were considered 'newcomers', and were not always able to achieve communal harmony within the older well-established congregations, and at times were forced to found their own new congregations.[24]

Communal Leadership: the Status of the Rich

Due to the heavy and sometimes arbitrary taxes laid on the Jews, wealthy taxpayers became the dominating element in communal leadership in the Sephardi communities of the Ottoman empire. They had the say in matters of communal and congregational organization, functions and authority. R. Moses Almosnino, an important Salonikan sage and leader in the 16th century, accepts as self-understood the submission of the members of the community to the wealthy:

> 'It is fitting that the great — *i.e.* the wealthy — shall aid and bear the burden of the poor and indigent in the various (governmental) taxes placed upon them, which they are incapable of paying. Thus there shall be no breach nor shouting from the theft of the poor or the groaning of the indigent . . . '[25]

R. Samuel di Medina (*Rashdam*) maintains the same view, and finds that in matters of communal leadership we are to submit to a 'financial majority,' i.e., the majority of the wealthy of the community, rather than to a 'majority of souls,' all members of the community, upper, middle and lower classes, taken together. According to his view, if a given congregation were to be composed of ninety indigent and ten wealthy members — the ten wealthy would decide.[26] The wealthy support the needy, pay their taxes and maintain the communal institutions. Thus the wealthy are the most important element in the community.[27]

R. Isaac Adarbi, *Rashdam's* ex-classmate and chief critic, opposed this view. R. Adarbi maintained that the rule in communal matters should be by the 'majority of souls' — all individual members of the community have the right of expression and vote.[28] The divergent view of R. Adarbi was never accepted, and only taxpayers took part in political life. Only rarely in our sources do we find communal tension in Spanish and Portuguese congregations based on confrontation of wealthy versus poor.

In 5330 (1570), such a conflict occurred in the Lisbon congregation of Salonika. On the intermediate days of Passover of that year, a majority of members decided to depose the communal board on the grounds that the leaders (*parnassim*) oppressed the congregation, did not maintain a smoothly-running communal life, and did not practise a fitting policy towards the communal poor. The rebellious members claimed that their rebellion arose

> " . . . because they were oppressed and broken by taxes, levies and afflictions: they have no way of making their voice heard. The seven wealthy (*parnassim*) enslaved them as (if they were) bought servants. Their words must be followed undeviatingly . . . Because of their wealth they did not supervise the members, so that the poor were not cared for in the congregation — neither in their joy nor in their mourning, (indeed), they did not provide funerals — it has been said that once a member of the congregation passed away, and it was necessary to hire a pallbearer to bear the deceased to the cemetery (i.e. no communal burial

society existed) . . .' The members feel like 'sheep who have no shepherd'."

R. Isaac Adarbi fully accepted the grounds for deposing the board of leadership, a very rare thing among Sephardic congregations.[29]

In the same congregation, the Old Lisbon congregation, there arose a conflict c. 1625 between the general body and the wealthy Isaac Asiao. The membership also plotted against R. Abraham Sirano. This struggle was severe enough to endanger the existing leadership, and the Ottoman government and army intervened.[30] The description of this communal controversy reveals a class war in the community; no similar situation can be found in any other germane historical sources.

It might be reasonable to assume that many of the communal splits found in the Sephardi congregations of the Ottoman empire arose from a class struggle between the broad membership and the wealthy over domination of the community. However, despite the fact that members of the wealthiest families were usually in the position of leadership, there are few complaints about the tyranny of the *parnassim*.[31] Democratic elements prevailed, so that the oligarchal processes never reached an extreme. It is characteristic of these communities that one almost never hears of an absolute leadership.[32] The form of government was generally parliamentary, and communal representatives did lead the entire community.

Leadership Structure and Institutions

(a) The rabbinate

At the head of each congregation stood a spiritual leader, usually called a sage (*hacham*) or a teacher (lit. spreader of the *Torah*) (*marbits Torah*), though other titles are known: sage of the assembly (*hacham haknesset*), judge (*dayan*), sage of the city (*hacham ha'ir*), court (*bet din*), ruler and chief (*katsin va-rosh*). Some of these titles, especially *hacham* and *marbits torah* were already in use in Spain, and the Spanish exiles simply transferred them to the new communities. The title 'chief rabbi' (*rab ha-kollel*) was bestowed upon a *hacham* who acted for several congregations, or for all the congregations in the community. No community could function without a *hacham*. The scholastic titles accorded to the Spanish rabbis of the Ottoman empire were also usually identical with those previously in vogue in Spain. Sephardi rabbis did not receive anything comparable to the Ashkenazi *semichah* (ordination), and only rarely do we hear in Sephardi circles of the conferring of a formal rabbinic diploma albeit *sans* the title 'our teacher' in vogue in Ashkenaz.[33] In the Ottoman empire the image of the *hacham* was formed in the pattern of the Sephardi *hacham* in Christian Spain of the past.

Many sages were highly proficient in *Talmud* and rabbinic codes. The

authority of the sage after the Spanish expulsion depended primarily upon his knowledge of precedents, rather than upon innovative reasoning capabilities.[34] Noteworthy is the face that the Sephardi *yeshibot* (rabbinic academies) of the Ottoman empire produced generations of sages who functioned as rabbis at a young age.

The Sephardi sages were also outstanding in their knowledge of languages and of science. This befits the Spanish heritage.[35] Famous Sephardi sages found their livelihood in international trade and in the manufacture of textiles.[36] The rabbis were only appointed for a fixed period, but generally remained in office for life.[36a]

In the Sephardi congregations, the rabbinate was not subject to inheritance, and only in isolated instances, especially in Salonika and Constantinople do we hear of a rabbinate passing from father to son, and from son to grandson.

A few outstanding individuals among the rabbis also carried on political activities. The most famous among them was R. Moses Almosnino, who travelled from Salonika to Constantinople on behalf of the community.[37] However, their activities generally lay in the judicial and legislative fields, public speaking (sermons and eulogies), teaching in the *yeshibot* and in various synagogue classes, and supervision of the moral, ethical, organizational and religious life of their community. We find the sages interacting with the lay leadership (*parnassim*) of the community, in joint execution of the decisions of either power. In general each realm acted independently, tasks and authority being well defined for each.[38]

(b) Courts

The privilege of maintaining an autonomous judicial system for the Jewish communities was recognized by the *millet* system. Limited judicial punitive authority was granted to the communities over its membership, in addition to the right to apply sanctions for breaking religious law. The Jewish court was also empowered to judge in civil law.[39] In fact, the activity of the Jewish courts was far broader than the formal framework of its powers, although the courts did not judge cases of capital punishment. The communities only remanded cases to the non-Jewish courts when no other alternative was available. For their part, the authorities would only intervene in the Jewish courts' activities after petition by individual Jews, or by order of the government.[40] The majority of courts were maintained by individual congregations.[41]

In most cases the *hacham* of the congregation would also function as the judge. At times he would sit alone, at other times with two additional judges.[42] We also find mention of courts of arbitration,[43] and courts of the *parnassim*.[44]

In four of the major Jewish communities of the Ottoman empire, Salonika, Safed, Jerusalem and Smyrna (Izmir), in which the majority of the Jewish population was Sephardi, we find at various times during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, an institution called 'judge of the city' (*dayan ha'ir*), which formed the highest local judicial authority, a sort of local supreme court. During the sixteenth century, *Rashdam* acted in this capacity in Salonika;[45] in Safed, R. Jacob Berab;[46] in Jerusalem, R. Levi Ibn Habib;[47] in Smyrna from the middle of the seventeenth century and thereafter, two *hachamim* fulfilled this function. The first of these pairs were R. Azariah Joshua and R. Joseph Eskafa; the next were R. Hayyim Benvenisti and R. Aaron Lapapa.[48]

We may assume that the antecedents of this institution are found in the judicial hierarchy which had obtained in the Jewish communities of Aragon and Castile, the prime sources of immigration into the Ottoman empire. The Jews of Aragon chose a special judge with whom appeals could be lodged, while in Castile it was possible to submit an appeal from lower rabbinic courts to the chief rabbi, appointed by the Crown.[49]

However, no central rabbinic supreme court for the empire that functioned as a high court of appeals existed. We do not find the fifteenth century Castilian tradition, where one could lodge an appeal against a local court decision to the 'court rabbi' (*rab de la Corte*) who was considered the chief rabbinic judge of the state (*juez major*), nor as in Portugal, referral to the chief rabbi.[50] Assemblies took place of the *Hachamim* of the various congregations in a community, wherein would be discussed the various problems of the moment, enactments passed, and legal difficulties resolved — these partially solved the problem of the lack of a central court.[50a] Also, the interchange of written decisions and their criticism among the sages conferred a "supreme court" aspect and gave validity to the decisions of local courts.

(c) Berurei 'Aberot

The board of *berurei 'aberot* (lit., 'those elected to eradicate transgressions') was also an organic outgrowth of the Catalonian institution of the same name, mentioned in Barcelona documents from 1241. From Catalonia this institution spread to the Jewish communities of Castile, Valencia and Majorca. The task of the *berurim* ('elected') was to punish offenders against the law of religion and convention, especially in matters of family purity.[51] There can be no doubt that the board of *berurei 'aberot* which functioned in many Ottoman Jewish communities, though sometimes called *memunim 'al 'aberot* ('overseers on sin'), form a direct extension of that Spanish institution and were founded by Spanish exiles: no parallel institution exists in any other Jewish community. *Berurei 'aberot* functioned in Safed, Constantinople, Bursa and Smyrna, and apparently in Salonika and Patras. From the few

details known to us, we can deduce that rabbinic sages stood at the head of the board. Like their predecessors in Spain, they were invested with the authority to punish religious and moral transgressions, particularly adulterers.[52] In several instances they were also invested with power to act in matters of communal security and harmony, to abolish societies (companies) capable of injuring the community, and to punish those suspected of dealing in counterfeit coin.[53] In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in Smyrna, we find *berurei kenasot* ('those elected for imposing fines') instead of *berurei 'aberot*. Their main function was to deal with transgressions and morals, as well as joint action with the administrative leadership of the city.[54]

(d) Parnassim

The leaders of the Spanish communities were usually called *memunim* (appointees), though various other titles were widespread, e.g: *parnassim, berurim, anshei ma'amad, tobei ha'ir, gebirim*.[55] The *parnassim* were aided by those members of the community who belonged to the upper social strata, and who served in various organizational and administrative capacities.[56] The number of leaders in each congregation varied generally from three to seven, sometimes even more.[57] They were appointed by the membership, usually by the taxpayers only, i.e., the rich.[58] Another system whereby an outgoing board would appoint its successors was also prevalent.[59] Generally the *parnassim* were chosen once a year, at very least once every six months, sometimes every three or even ten years.[60]

It was required of them to be 'righteous, upright men, trustworthy in their service.'[61] In the choice of communal leaders we find insistence on honesty, and opposition to informers and transgressors.[62] The *parnassim* served without pay, their expenses being covered from communal funds.[63]

In defining the authority of the communal leaders the Sephardi sages of the Ottoman empire based themselves on decisions of earlier Spanish sages, principally R. Solomon ben Adret (*Rashba*).[64]

The Salonikan sage, R. Abraham di Boton, writes in the second half of the sixteenth century that the *parnassim* are to supervise 'in matters and forms of politico-social leadership . . . , in matters of reforms and needs of the society,' i.e., matters of political representation before the authorities, as well as internal leadership.[65] Their main task was tax collection from members of the community — both governmental and communal.[66] The government viewed them as responsible for payment of the Jewish community's taxes throughout the empire.[67] The *parnassim* supervised communal property, as well as individual property and security.[68] They guarded the rights of their members against Jewish or hostile non-Jewish competition. At times the *parnassim* supervised the communal charity and trust funds, or even administered them.[69] In general, they appointed the communal functionaries

and representatives.[70] In many instances, the rabbis were appointed by them.[71]

The power of punishing offenders was granted to two communal bodies: the court and the lay leadership (*parnassim*). Unquestionably, the *parnassim* held far more power to exact punishments than the judges. This power, bestowed upon them by various communal enactments and agreements, was substantially used.[72]

(e) Various Communal Functionaries

Besides the *parnassim* we find various functionaries in the synagogue forming part of the administrative establishment of the congregation:

The *gabbaim* (also called *gizbarim*, treasurers). This was a prestigious position, with no salary attached. They were appointed to supervise the smooth functioning of the synagogue, charities and contributions to the synagogue, other congregational matters and the scrolls of the law.[73] The charity and relief societies of the congregation were generally administered by special officials, not by the *gabbaim* or *parnassim*.[74]

The *ma'arichim* (estimators, assessors). The congregation and communities appointed boards of tax assessors, mentioned for the first time in the responsa of *Rashba* in the 13th century. The Spanish exiles brought this system with them to the Ottoman empire. In the congregations which they founded, the community appointed assessors, whose task it was to set the amount of tax to be paid by each individual, while the *parnassim* were in charge of exacting payment.[75]

Other posts. In every congregation we find a precentor (*hazan*),[76] scribe (*sopher*),[77] teacher (*melamed*),[78] ritual slaughterer (*shochet*),[79] and sexton (*shamash*).[80] At times, the *hacham* filled some or all of the above mentioned positions. In the Sephardi congregations, as opposed to the Mustarabi, it was not customary to sell any of the various positions or honours in the synagogue, nor could they be inherited.[81]

(f) The Ma'amad

The assembly of the congregational leaders of a given community is sometimes referred to as *ma'amad* (assembly).[82] Almost certainly, the term is taken from the famous *ma'amad ha-kahal* (commmunal assembly) of Castile in the year 1432. In these assemblies, communal matters were arranged and agreements enacted. Such conventions were rare. Non-Sephardi leaders also participated.[83]

(g) The Kollelot

In the seventeenth century a number of communities, large or medium, established *kollelot* — an umbrella organization of local congregations. This body dealt with the administrative and representative affairs of the community; each congregation, however, continued to exist as an independent unit.[84]

Representation before the Government

The sages and leaders of the Spanish communities in the Ottoman empire recognized the value and necessity of permanent contact with the government.[85] It is, therefore, amazing that after the death of R. Elijah Mizrachi, a Romaniote *hacham* in about 1525-1527, no Sephardi *hacham* filled the position of *rab ha-kollel* (chief rabbi) in Constantinople. In fact, the position ceased to exist. The sixteenth century was replete with sages and outstanding Jewish personalities, the children and descendants of Spanish and Portuguese exiles, who had achieved fame in Jewish communal life. Certainly, *hachamim* such as *Rashdam* and R. Moses Almosnino were well-fitted to fill the post of chief rabbi, to represent the Jewish ethnic group before the government, just as the other *millets* were represented by patriarchs.[86] The position of the Jewish *kahya*, the tax collector, also ceased to exist during the 16th century both among the Romaniotes and Sephardim.[87] The government certainly would not have opposed the appointment of a Sephardi sage to the office of *rab ha-kollel* had the Jewish communities of the empire themselves been so inclined.

Apparently, the reason for relinquishing formal representation stems from the great differences and disputes between the many congregations and Jewish ethnic groups. On the one hand, the Sephardim dominated the larger communities and should have had the post. On the other hand, other Jewish ethnic groups, especially the Romaniotes, were not prepared to accept such an authority. Likewise, Romaniote sages, such as R. Elijah Ibn Hayyim and R. Elijah haLevy, still maintained great influence in Constantinople in the sixteenth century. It is also quite probable that the Sephardim themselves, due to their great internal divisions, could not agree on any one candidate for the chief rabbinate. Only in the nineteenth century was a *Hacham Bashi* (chief rabbi) appointed to represent the Jewish communities before the government.

Through lack of choice, the Jewish communities were forced to approach the government from time to time through the agency of Jewish personalities, out-standing members of the communities, who could ably represent the position of the Jews in a fitting manner. They were substantially aided by Jewish luminaries who filled important positions in the politics and economy of the Ottoman empire.

The records of Jewish representatives to the Porte (the 'Sublime Porte,' i.e. the Sultan's court at Constantinople) are few. The most famous was R. Moses Almosnino, a Sephardi *hacham* and preacher in Salonika in the middle of the 16th century. Five times Almosnino was dispatched by the Salonika community to Constantinople, but only on his sixth visit was he able to obtain the *firman* (Sultan's decree) needed by the community. In Constantinople he was aided by five Jewish figures close to the court in achieving the 'writ of release' (from certain heavy, arbitrary taxes) of 5328 (1567).[87a] Among those who aided him he lists Don Joseph Nasi, Duke of Naxos; the physician Judah di Segura; the wealthy Salma; *Hacham* Meir Ibn Sanji, and the physician Joseph Hamon, all residents of the capital who maintained close connections with the government officials whom they served. On his previous missions, he had been accompanied by the sages Jacob Ibn Nachmias and Moses Baruch, both of whom died on the way. On his last mission, he was accompanied by R. Shem Tob Surnaja.[88] The names of these agents and their cohorts are all Sephardi. We find no Jewish representative comparable to R. Moses Almosnino in the following centuries.

In 5396 (September 1636), another delegation sent from Salonika to Constantinople to request a release from part of the heavy taxes laid upon the community, met with a cold reception. The head of the delegation, R. Judah Kovo, was murdered at the command of Sultan Murad IV.[88a] One should not take this bitter episode solely as a consequence of the rigid policy of Murad IV towards the Jews and other ethnic groups, but primarily as a consequence of the lack of Jewish figures in key positions in the Ottoman capital and in the service of the Porte.

At their zenith the Jewish communities of the Ottoman empire benefited from the support of distinguished Spanish and Portuguese Jewish figures, who aided their Jewish brethren throughout the empire. Among them:

Don Joseph Nasi. Don Joseph was born in Portugal in 1524, son of a *marrano* family. From 1554 he resided in Constantinople where he established firm contacts with the aristocracy of the empire, and especially with the Sultan Selim II himself, who appointed Nasi as Duke of Naxos, and granted him a monopoly on the wine tax. Nasi unquestionably exploited his diplomatic contacts for the benefit of his people. As already mentioned, he helped R. Moses Almosnino in achieving the 'writ of release' for the Jews of Salonika in 1567. Don Joseph Nasi also supported Jewish sages.[89]

Dona Gracia Mendes. Dona Gracia Mendes, of the first generation of Portuguese *marranos*, reached Constantinople in the year 1553 and immediately became involved in works of charity and relief. She established a congregation in Constantinople, and a *yeshibah* headed by R. Joseph Ibn Leb. The boycott she tried to impose on the port of Ancona in 1556-57 as revenge for the burning of *marranos* there, is well known. She received the right from the sultan to farm out several villages in the Tiberias area, as well

as the taxes of the city of Tiberias itself.[90]

Solomon Abenaish (Ibn Yaish) (1520-1603). He was duke of the isle of Mytilene and filled an important function in European and Ottoman diplomacy, in the service of Sultan Murad III and of his successor, Mehmed III. Abenaish, the son of a Portuguese *marrano* family, arrived in the Ottoman empire in 1585. Apart from his support for the rebuilding of Tiberias, and his contribution to funds for the *yeshibot* of Safed and Tiberias, we have no records of his activities on behalf of the Jewish communities.[90a]

Moses and Joseph Hamon and Abraham haLevi Ibn Megas. While the number of Jewish doctors in the Ottoman empire was large,[91] the most famous were the personal physicians of the sultans and the pashas.[92] However, only a few used their position for the benefit of their brethren. The most outstanding among them were Moses and Joseph Hamon, almost certainly Sephardim. Moses was born, according to Jewish sources, in Granada. He was the personal physician of Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent (1520-1566), and participated in the war against the Persians, together with the Sephardi doctors Abraham haLevi Ibn Megas, and Joseph ben Tam Ibn Yahya. Due to his high rank and great wealth, he was able to aid his people, and many were the praises heaped upon him.[93] After the blood libel in Amasia, around *Pesah* 5313 (1553), he was successful in eliciting the most important *firman* granted in the empire. In this *firman*, the sultan forbad raising the blood libel against the Jews throughout the empire. The *firman* was later renewed a number of times.[94]

He also was able to quell a communal disturbance in Salonika arising out of an argument between a wealthy member of the community, Baruch and the illustrious Sephardi *hacham*, R. Joseph Ibn Leb.[95] Apparently, he also aided other sages; it is known that he supported R. Joseph Taitatzak.[96] His son, Joseph, physician to Suleyman the Magnificent and Selim II, aided R. Moses Almosnino in eliciting the above-mentioned *firman* for the Jews of Salonika, but was not as renowned as his father.[97]

Abraham haLevi Ibn Megas appears to have been an important figure among the Jewish people of the Ottoman empire. In his old age, the Sephardi congregation of Damascus asked him to reside in their midst, but he did not accept their invitation.[98] It is not known whether the majority of Sephardi doctors and statesmen in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries aided their brethren, or had any influence on Sephardic congregational life.[99]

Spiritual Life[100]

(a) The Rabbis

The sages of the generation of the expulsion from Spain who settled in the communities of the Ottoman empire formed the intellectual backbone of

Jewish society; their impact on the spiritual life of the Sephardi and non-Sephardi communities was decisive and long-lasting. Students of Ashkenazi, Italian, Mustarabi and Romaniote origin learned *Torah* in the *yeshibot* of the Sephardi rabbis in the various communities of the empire.[101] Many Sephardi sages did not accept the official position of rabbi, but acted as heads of *yeshibot (rashei yeshibot)*, preachers and teachers. Among the exiles were sages who had studied in the *yeshibot* of Spain before the expulsion, a number had even taught in those *yeshibot*. Only a few had been able to study personally under the last rabbinic light of Castile, R. Isaac Ibn Jacob Campanton (1360-1463), but most had learned their *Torah* from his disciples; R. Isaac Aboab, R. Isaac De Leon, R. Abraham ben Jacob Saba, R. Shem Tob Ibn Shem Tob, and especially from R. Samuel ben Abraham Valensi, rabbi and judge in Zamora (Western Castile), during the eighties of the fifteenth century.[102] The philosophic sermons of R. Isaac Arama (c.1420-1494) also influenced the thinking of the exiles.[103]

The methods of the Spanish *hachamim* of the fifteenth century in Bible and Talmud commentary, in deciding the law, indeed the methods of study in vogue in the Spanish *yeshibot*, were transferred by the exiles to their new communities in the east, and for hundreds of years influenced the spiritual life of those communities. In a short period of time the Spanish exile sages turned their new communities into important international centres of *Torah*. The majority of *hachamim* chose to settle in Salonika. The best known among them were: Rs. Jacob Ibn Habib and his son Levi, Meir ben Isaac Arama, Eliezer HaShimoni, Samuel Ibn Shoaib, and Samuel and Joseph Taitatzak.[104]

Among the sages that had settled in Constantinople were R. Isaac Caro and the Ibn Yahya family.[105]

In Adrianople (Edirne) we find R. Joseph Fasi and R. Solomon ben Joseph Sirillo;[106] in Cairo, R. Moses Alashkar and R. David ben Solomon Ibn Abi-Zimra (*Radbaz*).[107] Rs. Abraham ben Eliezer haLevi, Levi ben Jacob Ibn Habib, Jacob Mitriel and Isaac Ibn Hayyim settled in Jerusalem.[108]

In Safed were Rs. Moses ben Shem Tob Alfranji, Joseph ben Abraham Alsaragossi, Samuel ben Abraham di Villareal, Jacob Berab, and eventually, Joseph Caro.[109]

A characteristic phenomenon was that sages would reside in various communities for a time, until finally taking root in one permanently. For example, R. Joseph ben Ephraim Caro resided in Nikopol, Adrianople, and Salonika, until he finally settled permanently in Safed. R. Samuel Ate'a settled in Nikopol, and then possibly in Egypt. R. Solomon Ate'a lived in Salonika and then in Jerusalem.[110] R. Solomon Sirillo lived in Salonika, Adrianople, Safed and Jerusalem.[111] R. David Ibn Abi-Zimra lived in Cairo and Israel.[112] R. Solomon Almoli settled, after the expulsion, in Salonika, then in Constantinople.[113]

(b) The Academies

The rabbinic literature in the sixteenth and following centuries contains rich material about the annals of the *yeshibot* (rabbinic academies) and the methods of study in them.[114] The first two *yeshibot* established by the Spanish exiles were those of R. Joseph Fasi in Salonika and Adrianople. Two of his students were R. Meir Ibn Verga, the opponent of R. David ben Judah Messer Leon in Valona, and R. Solomon Ate'a.

The head of another famous *yeshibah* in Salonika was R. Joseph ben Solomon Taitatzak. Two well-known students of this *yeshibah* were *Rashdam* and R. Isaac Adarbi, who in their youth had also studied in the *yeshibah* of R. Levi Ibn Habib in Salonika. At the same time we find the *yeshibah* of R. Isaac Ibn Leb in Bursa.[115] The best-known academy was that of R. Jacob Berab, who settled in Safed after some wandering in North Africa. He resided permanently in Safed from the year 1535 and was recognised as the chief *hacham* and *dayan ha'ir* ('judge of the city'). The academy that he founded was originally the only one in the city, later two others were founded. All the sages of Safed were to be found in his *yeshibah*, among them Rs. Joseph Caro and *Mabit*. We can accept the view of Dimitrovsky that this *yeshibah* was not merely an academic institution, but acted as a meeting place for the sages who engaged in scholastic discussions and then wrote *halachic* decisions based on majority vote.[116]

In the *yeshibot* established in the second and third generation after the expulsion, such as that of R. Joseph ben David Ibn Leb, we also find comparable systems of study to those of Spanish *yeshibot* of the fifteenth century. The *yeshibah* of R. Joseph was founded by Dona Gracia Mendes in Constantinople in the middle of the sixteenth century.[117]

Not only communities but even congregations founded *yeshibot*. They viewed the establishment of a *yeshibah* as raising the religious level and prestige of the congregation.

Every community and many individual congregations maintained *Talmud Torah* grammar schools, which prepared students for study in the *yeshibah*.[118] These *Talmud Torah* schools provided a basic understanding of the *halachah* and contributed to the fact that the illiteracy rate among the Jews was far lower than that of the nations among whom they dwelt.[119] The most illustrious *Talmud Torah* of the empire was founded by the Spanish exiles in Salonika, and for hundreds of years was the crowning glory of its communal institutions.[120] The many records of the various means of raising financial support for the *Talmud Torah* schools and *yeshibot* show how central these were in communal life.[121] The historian R. David Conforte, in his classic work, *Kore haDorot* written in the seventeenth century, describes them at length.[122] The *yeshibot* produced generations of rabbis. The learning in the *yeshibot* also contributed to the creation of a stratum of learned laymen

who held regular *Torah* study sessions.[123]

(c) Printing Centres

Great importance in the renaissance of the spiritual life of the communities is to be attributed to the printing houses that were set up immediately after the Spanish exile in Constantinople, in Salonika in about 1510, and in Smyrna in 1657.[124] These printing houses printed much of the works on *Torah* by the Spanish sages of the Middle Ages, thus saving from total loss the many manuscripts that the Spanish exiles brought with them. They also printed the books of the Sephardi sages of the generation of the expulsion, and the works of their students, and their students' students. Were it not for the presses, it is doubtful whether these works would have enjoyed such wide distribution, popularity and influence throughout the entire Jewish world. Not only scholars bought these works, but a broad reading public. This can be deduced from the custom which obtained in Constantinople for over 300 years, of printing large books section by section in fascicule form, and distributing them in the various synagogues on *Shabbat* during service. Those worshippers who took a fascicule were obliged to pay after the Sabbath. This custom gave rise to a dispute in Constantinople in 1546 between two Spanish scholars, R. Samuel ben Moses haLevi Hakim, and R. Isaac Ibn Leb. R. Hakim published the *Responsa* of R. Isaac bar Sheshet Perfet in fascicules, and "sold" them in the synagogue on the Sabbath. R. Isaac Ibn Leb raised objections to this custom, but R. Hakim claimed that there was no element of business involved, as was forbidden on the Sabbath.[125] As a result of this custom, many books were lost, but we may gather that the books were bought in many homes. We also learn from this of the central function of the synagogue in the spiritual life, apart from its organizational aspect. The gathering of worshippers in the congregation which bore the name of their mother city, gave them an opportunity not only to hear sermons and to learn *Torah* together, but also for other activities.

(d) Literary Creativity and Worldly Knowledge of the Sages

The main literary creations produced by the Sephardi sages were in the realm of *halachah* (Jewish religious law). An important part of this literature is composed of the *responsa* collections. The Sephardi sages also wrote commentaries on the Bible, and recorded their sermons in print. In their works we can discern their feelings, misgivings and hopes about the new Jewish centres which were founded in the Ottoman empire.[125a] An interesting phenomenon is that the first Sephardi *hachamim* also produced a wide range of literary creations — their general education is readily discernible. Among them we find poets, mystics and even philosophers. This is a prevalent

phenomenon, especially during the first generations of the new Sephardi communities in the Ottoman empire. However, there is no reciprocity or interplay between Jewish and non-Jewish spiritual life in the Ottoman empire. In the writings of the Sephardi sages one cannot detect any influence of the neighbouring Moslem or Christian cultures. The Jewish literary creations produced by the sages can be termed immanent, directly influenced by earlier literary tradition. Nevertheless, the sages were quite proficient in non-Jewish literature. We can assume that many spoke the vernacular languages, besides their native Ladino, primarily Greek and Turkish.[126] Among them were sages, such as R. Joseph Taitatzak and R. Solomon Le Beit HaLevi, who almost certainly were proficient in Latin.[127] Most probably this knowledge was gained from private tutors. Most of the sages were acquainted with secular literature, primarily philosophical works that had been translated into Hebrew in Spain in the Middle Ages.

A scholar such as R. Moses Almosnino of the sixteenth century was familiar with the works of both Greek and Arabic writers, Plato, Aristotle, Al-Fabri and Al-Ghazali. R. Joseph Taitatzak was acquainted with medieval Christian philosophy as we shall see below. Even R. Moses Cordovero, the foremost mystic of the pre-Lurianic period, did not negate philosophy. To his mind, one is permitted to use the results of philosophic investigation in religious thinking.[128]

The hundreds of volumes of *responsa* texts which were penned by the Sephardi sages during the sixteenth to eighteenth century show that almost every sage, whether in a small or large community, responded to *halachic* queries posed to him. Many sages did not print their *responsa*; many *responsa* were lost or are found only in other collections or in manuscript. The best-known respondents of the first generation after the expulsion were Rs. Joseph Taitatzak, Jacob Berab,[129] Moses Alashkar, David Ibn Abi-Zimra, Joseph Caro and Levi Ibn Habib.[130]

The most illustrious of the Sephardi sages of the second generation was R. Samuel di Medina (*Rashdam*), born in Salonika in 1505-6, the outstanding disciple of R. Levi Ibn Habib and R. Joseph Taitatzak. For a short period he resided in Constantinople, but for most of his life he lived in Salonika, where he functioned for various periods as rabbi of the large congregations, Gerush and Lisbon. In addition to these positions, he also acted as the 'city judge' and headed a *yeshibah* which attracted students from all quarters of the Ottoman empire. He responded to more than a thousand queries put to him by communities and their individual members throughout the empire, including non-Sephardi congregations who recognized him as the outstanding *Torah* authority of the age (*gadol ha-dor*). Questions even arrived from Italy. His numerous *responsa*, arranged according to the famous Four Sections of the *Tur* code, reveal his erudition and skill in marshalling precedents from all *halachic* literature germane to a given topic under discussion. His noble

personality blended well with his firmness of decision. These decisions became important precedents for all future *halachic* authorities.[131]

His companion in both *yeshibot*, who also became his chief *halachic* critic, was R. Isaac Adarbi, who at various periods was rabbi of the Lisbon and Shalom Congregations in Salonika. In his *responsa* collection, *Dibrei Ribot*, he deals at length with the organization of the communities.[132] These two sages also wrote books of sermons.[133]

The prolific writing of *responsa* is evidenced by the long lists of works in this area that were produced in the Ottoman empire. The majority of *responsa* writers were of Spanish or Portuguese extraction, or sages who had studied under the Sephardi rabbis.[134]

Besides the contribution of the Sephardi sages to the *responsa* literature, we already note at the beginning of the Sephardi settlement in the Ottoman empire creations in other spheres of *Torah* study, which heightened the consciousness of the masses for *Torah* study. *Ein Ya'akob* by R. Jacob Ibn Habib, printed a short time after it was written in Salonika, 1516, rapidly became a text widely accepted in popular circles throughout the entire Jewish world. In this work the author assembled all the *aggadot* (tales, i.e. non-*halachic* sections) of the Babylonian *Talmud*, and some of the Jerusalem *Talmud*, to which he added various classic commentaries. The purpose of the work was to spread religious education among the masses after the bitter experience of Spain.

R. Ibn Habib's commentary to the *Tur* code was known and used by R. Joseph Caro, as well as his communal enactments promulgated in Salonika in the sixteenth century, in his capacity as one of the leaders of the Sephardi community.[135]

Other works which achieved wide distribution were commentaries on various books of the Bible, written by R. Isaac Caro and R. Solomon Ate'a of the generation of expulsion, and R. Moses Alsech and R. Solomon haLevi Alkabetz of the second generation of sages.[136]

The broad learning of the Sephardi sages, primarily those of the first generations, is undoubtedly evinced by the sage with the most varied interests, R. Joseph Taitatzak. Apart from his *responsa*, he produced works on Bible commentary — some in print, some still in manuscript. R. Taitatzak saw no conflict between *halachic* and Bible study, and philosophy and *cabbalah* (mysticism). His commentary on Ecclesiastes, *Porat Yosef* (Venice, 1599) is philosophic in nature, following the views of the scholastic school of Thomas Aquinas and Aegidius Romanus (sometimes referred to as Aegidius of Colonna). He quotes Aquinas by name or as "the sage". Thus, he accepts the doctrines of Aristotle as expounded by Aquinas. However, we do not know whether R. Taitatzak knew Latin or whether he used the works of the fourteenth century Italian translator and philosopher, Judah Romano, on Aquinas and Aegidius of Collonna. R. Taitatzak gathered around him a circle

of mystic scholars; Solomon Molcho met him in Salonika in 1529. R. Taitatzak also engaged in abstinence and self-affliction, and even acquired a *maggid* (an angelic teacher). The *maggid* subsequently appeared to his school of disciples, the best known being the *maggid* of R. Joseph Caro.[137]

Another interesting personality who worked in varied fields of *Torah* study was R. Solomon ben Isaac Bet haLevi (the second). He maintained the tradition of the first generation, despite stemming from the third generation of Sephardi sages. He was born in Salonika in 1532 to a family of Portuguese origin, acquiring there his broad *Torah* and secular education. In c.1571 he was rabbi of the Provençal and Evora congregations, and headed the *yeshibah* maintained by the Evora congregation. R. Bet haLevi wrote more than twenty works on various subjects in the field of Judaica, including sermons (*Dibrei Shelomoh*, Venice 1597) and commentaries on the Bible and *Abot*. A draft of a work on geography has also survived. He also wrote many poems.[138]

Another Spanish intellectual was R. Moses Almosnino, born in Salonika c.1515. He served as a preacher in the *Neveh Shalom* and *Levyat Hen* congregations. Twenty-eight of his sermons were published under the title *Me'ammetz Ko'ah* (Constantinople, 1582); his broad mastery of philosophy is evident. His commentaries on the Pentateuch, the five Scrolls and on *Abot* were also published, as well as a super-commentary on R. Abraham Ibn Ezra. In addition, he wrote *responsa*, of which a few have survived, and he left in manuscript two philosophic works — *Migdal 'Oz*, on Al-Ghazali, and *Penei Mosheh*, a commentary on Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*. He was also interested in astronomy, and left manuscript texts on that subject.

R. Almosnino was proficient in Spanish, as we see from his popular compositions — *El Regimiento de la Vida* (Salonika, 1564), an ethical treatise which included a long dissertation on dreams, and *Extremos y Grandezas de Constantinople*, in Spanish. He also left a Ladino text in Hebrew script on the Ottoman sultans of the 16th century. These works reveal his broad education and interest in all aspects of life and thought. His interests were probably heightened by his visits to Constantinople on behalf of the Salonika community. At any rate, he attempted to create literature both for the masses and for scholars.[139]

Another scholar of the same period was Gedaliah ben Tam Ibn Yahya of Salonika, descendant of a Portuguese family, who translated the *Dialoghi di Amore* ("Dialogues of Love") of Judah Abarbanel (Venice, 1568) into Spanish. He and the Sephardi physician and philosopher, Aaron Afia, were friendly with the great physician, Amatus Lusitanus.[139a]

Lusitanus, a great medical researcher of the sixteenth century, was born in Portugal in a *marrano* family, and after practising as a doctor in Lisbon and other parts of Europe, arrived in Salonika in 1558 and openly returned to Judaism. He was in contact with the sage Moses Hamon of Constantinople

and died in 1568.[139b] In his book, *Curationum Medicinalium Centuriae*, we learn of the contacts between these men of science, both of whom loved philosophy. However, philosophical speculation was not a widespread phenomenon, many sages preferring to concentrate on producing *halachic* literature and sermons. Rather than philosophy, many sages pursued the study of mysticism (*cabbalah*). It appears that the shock engendered by the expulsion from Spain intensified the intellectual study of *cabbalah*. In addition to Rs. Caro, Taitatzak and *Radbaz*, the *cabbalistic* works of R. Solomon haLevi Alkabetz are well known, and even more so, the works of his disciple and brother-in-law, R. Moses Cordovero. These last two Sephardi sages were born in the Ottoman empire and settled in Safed; the latter wrote important *cabbalistic* works before the Lurianic period.[140]

Among the students of R. Cordovero was the Sephardi sage R. Eliezer Azikri, who wrote his *Sefer Haredim*, one of the first works on *cabbalistic* ethics, in Safed.[141] This is not the place to elaborate on the great influence that the Lurianic Period, i.e. the period of the *cabbalah* of Safed created by R. Isaac Luria Ashkenazi (called *Ari*, 'lion'), had on the Jewish world for hundreds of years afterwards. Much has been written about the influence of the *cabbalistic* practices of Safed during this period, and on the *Siporei Ari* ('Tales of the Ari') collection.[142]

Sephardi sages also pursued other branches of science. Outstanding among them was R. Solomon ben Jacob Almoli, born before 1483, who resided for some time in Salonika and for a longer period in Constantinople. He served as rabbi, judge and physician in the Ottoman capital until his death in 1542. He was a master of philosophy, *cabbalah* and grammar, and published various books in Constantinople, among them his own works. He also planned to publish an encyclopaedia which would include all branches of Jewish knowledge. This reveals the scope of his knowledge, and also the material available to the sages of Constantinople in his period. Among his published works are *Sha'ar haShem hehadash* (Constantinople, 1533), on *cabbalah* and philosophy, and books on Hebrew grammar, for example, *Halichot Sheba*. He published the works of Spanish sages from before the expulsion, and also composed poems which appeared in his own books and in those he edited.[143]

This sage and his colleagues, among them the renowned Ibn Yahya family from Portugal, who had settled in Constantinople and Salonika in the sixteenth century, founded centres of science and Hebrew poetry. R. David ben Solomon Ibn Yahya arrived in Constantinople from Portugal via Naples. In Constantinople, he wrote Biblical commentaries and works on *halachah*, grammar and poetry.[143a]

Among the important figures in the circle of Hebrew poets in Salonika during the 16th century was David Onkinera, of Sephardi descent. He corresponded with Tam Ibn Yahya, and with another Salonikan poet,

Sa'adiah Longo, the latter being considered the most widely accepted poet among the Jewish elite.[144]

Okinera also corresponded with the poet, R. Isaac ben Moses Najara (1555-1625), son of a Sephardi family that had settled in Damascus and in Israel. R. Najara explained his motives for writing poetry: (i) the Jews need no longer use the songs written in the languages of the nations who had rejected the Jews; his poems were in the holy tongue and written as befitting the Jewish people; (ii) a divine decree has moved him to praise his Creator through song.

The poems of R. Najara were influenced by Arabic, Turkish, Greek and Italian forms, and some were accepted into the liturgy. His Aramaic poem, *Ya-h Ribbon 'Olam*, sung as a table-hymn (zemirah) on the Sabbath eve, became popular among the Ashkenazim. Motifs which formed the main themes of Spanish secular poems, became in R. Najara's poems, allusions to the love between God and Israel and the ultimate redemption of Israel. It is known that he set his songs to popular tunes.[145]

Despite this, poetry was not widespread in its popularity. Apart from poems written in honour of authors on the occasion of the publication of their works, dirges, eulogies and poems exchanged between friends, poetry was primarily religious, i.e. liturgical poems for use in the regular and holiday prayer books. In many religious poems, such as the famous *Lecha Dodi* (Come, my beloved), written by the *cabbalist* R. Solomon Alkabetz (sixteenth century), and works of R. Joshua Benveniste (seventeenth century) extant in manuscript, the motifs of the Spanish religious poets of the Middle Ages are repeated; for example, the *Keter Malchut* of R. Solomon Ibn Gabirol was widely emulated.[146]

The re-awakened interest in the Jerusalem Talmud can be accredited to the Spanish sages of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the principal work, *Sedeh Yehoshua* (Constantinople, 1662, 1749), being written by R. Joshua Benveniste. This is the first important commentary to a major part of the Jerusalem Talmud, complementing the partial work of R. Shelomoh Sirillo of the generation of the expulsion to Israel, who was the first to write a commentary on the Jerusalem Talmud, on the complete order of *Zera'im* and the tractate *Shekalim*, and R. Azikri who in Safed in the sixteenth century wrote a commentary on the tractate Berachot. The Jerusalem Talmud, neglected in the Middle Ages, was studied first by the Sephardi sages; afterwards this study was largely taken over by the Ashkenazim.[147]

R. Joshua Benveniste's brother, R. Hayyim, rabbi of Smyrna, elaborated the codification work of R. Joseph Caro. His *magnum opus, Kenesset hagedolah*, comprises twelve large volumes (photo-offset edition; Israel, 1966-1976). He assembled the decisions found in the *responsa* and other halachic works of outstanding authorities after R. Joseph Caro, as well as those of earlier rabbinic scholars whom R. Caro had not cited.[148]

The works of R. Solomon ben Abraham Algazi of Smyrna in the field of Talmud commentary and methodology, written in the seventeenth century, continue the tradition set by the Spanish sages of the sixteenth century.[149]

At the end of the seventeenth century, R. Judah Rozanes of Constantinople wrote his classic commentary to Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah, Mishneh la-Melech* (Constantinople, 1731). This was also in the tradition set by sixteenth century Spanish sages.[150] This book was widely accepted, as was his book of *halachic-aggadic* sermons, *Parashat Derachim* (Constantinople, 1728).

All of the above-mentioned works were intended primarily for the sage and the intellectual, and not for the general public. Therefore, for hundreds of years we find sages producing works in Ladino, the tongue used by the majority of the people, in Hebrew script; *Torah* works which spoke to the heart of the common people, endearing their religion to them.

The best known of these Ladino works was *Me'Am Lo'ez*. It is a commentary on the Pentateuch and part of *Nebiim* and *Ketubim*. R. Jacob Culi, who had settled in Constantinople, began the work and published the first part in 1730. After his death in 1732, various sages continued the work for hundreds of years. This compilation is a treasure house of Spanish Jewish thought, based upon traditional Jewish sources: *Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash* and *cabbalah*, rabbinic literature, Spanish poetry and more.[151]

During the entire period, and particularly towards the nineteenth century, Ladino secular literature also developed. An important role in this literature was played by the hundreds of romances which were passed down from generation to generation, many of them dealing with the various festivals.[152]

Relations between the rabbis

The relations between the sages contributed much towards moulding the spiritual life in the communities. We find correspondence between rabbis, generally dealing with *halachic* topics and requesting *halachic* opinions from their colleagues to assist them in forming their own decisions. In many instances, one sage would request other sages to sign his verdict in order to forestall complaint.[153] Mostly we find an attitude of mutual respect prevalent among the sages, especially towards a former teacher, but this harmony was often broken in the case of an *halachic* dispute. At times, this extended beyond the bounds of pure *halachic* dispute, and caused communal dissension. Honest *halachic* dispute, however, served to fertilize the study of *Torah*. Such disputes among Spanish sages in the Ottoman empire were not rare. In general, the opinion of the most famous sage in the community, or of all the communities of the empire, would prevail.

Vehement disputes did, however, break out among the sages of the day:

each viewed his own mastery of *halachah* as no less than that of his opponent. We will note a few instances of such disagreements:

The dispute between R. Joseph Caro and *Mabit*

The relations between the two were not good, though they had studied together at the *yeshibah* of R. Jacob Berab in Safed. The latter complained that R. Caro had insulted him, scorned his knowledge of Torah and had expressed doubt at *Mabit's* ability to act as judge. *Mabit* retorted by demonstrating his care for the community of Safed, and the high prestige in which he was held by R. Jacob Berab.

Mabit, who was born in 1500 in Salonika, spent most of his days among the Sephardi sages in Safed and from 1525 headed a Sephardi congregation, *Bet Ya'akob*. His dispute with R. Joseph Caro, the author of the *Shulhan Aruch* code, reached the ears of the communal leaders and even extended beyond the boundaries of the city, raising controversy wherever the reports of the arguments between these two leaders of their generation spread.[154]

2) The semichah controversy

The most vexatious dispute among the *hachamim* arose from the suggestion put forward in Safed in the year 1538 to revive the ancient institution of rabbinical ordination, *semichah*, necessary for a Supreme Council, the *Sanhedrin*. This idea sprang from Messianic longings, and from the personality of its originator, R. Jacob Berab, who viewed himself as the greatest sage of his time, the inheritor of the Spanish *halachic* tradition. He writes about himself:

> "It is famous, well-known to all, that if there is (one) man in all these kingdoms, and in all the places to which the exiles from the Kingdom of Spain have fled — (actually) there isn't even one who knows how to read *halachah* correctly, to delve to its depths in its (deduction) and to reveal all (of its) mysteries — only I am (that man) . . . "[155]

R. Berab, like many of his generation, believed in the proximity of Messianic redemption. The enlarged Safed community also needed a central authority. It is probable that the sages of Safed wanted to establish a centre for the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora. In his attempt to revive the ordination, R. Berab relied on Maimonides' Mishna Commentary (*Sanhedrin* 1:3) and passages in his *Mishneh Torah* (*Sanhedrin* 4:11).

At that time R. Berab's younger contemporary, R. Levi Ibn Habib, was residing in Jerusalem. This sage, who was already considered a leading *Torah* authority while still heading a *yeshibah* in Salonika, refused to accept the proposal. He suspected that the sages of Safed were plotting to create a *Sanhedrin*, with R. Berab at its head. The argument between these two

rabbinic giants extended beyond the borders of Israel, and lasted a whole year. In spite of the fact that R. Berab actually did ordain sages — his disciples and their disciples — for sixty years, they did not demand the status of a "court of ordained judges" for their own rabbinic courts. Apparently, both sides wanted to dampen down the episode which was liable to cause a serious split among the Jewish people.[156] However, it is clear that in view of the atmosphere prevailing in that generation — personalities who had undergone the trauma of the expulsion forty years earlier — the idea of re-establishing *semichah* (and founding a *Sanhedrin*) was a product of a peak of spiritual tension. The failure of the programme effectively prevented the turning of Safed into a supreme spiritual centre for the Jews after the expulsion from Spain; instead local judges retained the limited authority left them in the post-*Sanhedrin* period in Jewish judicial history.

3) Controversy in Salonika in the sixteenth century

Another serious dispute among the Sephardi sages, having great impact on the community, occurred in Salonika. The main points of the tale are told by the seventeenth century chronicler, R. David Conforte. He described the activities of R. Joseph Ibn Leb, one of the great rabbis of Salonika:

> "I have heard in Salonika, from the elders, that one day he fell into dispute . . . while in the *yeshibah* with R. Shelomoh Hason the elder . . . about the (meaning of) a given commentary of *Tosafot* (to the Talmud). The division between these two rabbis grew wider, and the fire (of their disagreement) raged until they 'blessed' (i.e., cursed) each other in the *Yeshibah* . . . After a few days a plague broke out in the city . . . and (the populace) left to the small villages, and whilst (residing) there in a village, the sage . . . R. David Ibn Leb, the son (of R. Joseph) was killed . . . This was the reason that R. Joseph Ibn Leb . . . uprooted from Salonika and moved to Constantinople, where he was a great teacher of Torah in Israel . . . (Furthermore,) it is written at the end of the Ashkenazi *Machzor* (holiday prayer book), also in the *Shalshelet Hacabbalah* (an historical work), that a litigant who had appeared before R. Joseph Ibn Leb in Salonika, a scoundrel of a Jew, quarreled with him over the verdict which had gone against him, slapped (R. Joseph) on the cheek in the marketplace, in front of all. No one protested, no one said a word to him on this matter, the scoundrel was very wealthy, aggressive and violent . . . "

Continuing the tale R. Conforte related that a great fire broke out in the city and 5,000 Jewish homes were burned, 200 souls lost, and many synagogues and houses of study destroyed. Afterwards, a great plague broke out, killing many. This was in the year 5305 (1545).

Clearly, this story recorded by R. Conforte over a hundred years after it had occurred had come to him from the elders of the community and shows the impact the event had had on that generation. The conflagration and the plague were attributed to these quarrels, between R. Joseph Ibn Leb and R. Solomon Hason, and between R. Joseph and the wealthy Baruch. The sage

R. David Ibn Leb, son of R. Joseph, fell victim to the intrigues of the enemies of R. Joseph. Other sources reveal more about this latter rift. R. Joseph and his friends in Salonika turned to Moses Hamon in Constantinople and requested him to act againt the powerful Baruch. Apparently, R. Ibn Leb had opposed Baruch, hence the latter's interest in removing the sage from Salonika. The murder of his son acted as a warning to R. Ibn Leb. These events caused him to move to Constantinople some time after 1547, where he remained until his death.[157]

We know of no other comparable episode involving murder.

Rabbinic opposition to external intervention

We have noted that *hachamim* did not tolerate the intervention of other sages in internal disputes within their respective congregations. The custom was for no sage to intervene in the doings of another congregation. It is sufficient to cite one example from the sixteenth century. *Rashdam* of Salonika responded with great vigour when the rabbis of Safed intervened in the matter of an enactment passed in a Salonikan congregation, dealing with the legality of a certain oath. In spite of the great admiration and esteem in which R. Joseph Caro was held by *Rashdam* — R. Caro was older and considered to be the outstanding halachic authority of his time — we find *Rashdam* writing to him, and to Rs. Abraham Shalom and Joseph Sages:

> " . . . What had prompted you to write such words to a community distinguished for its scholarly eminence? Why were you not apprehensive as to the danger involved in reversing our decision, (viz.) that of undermining the prestige of a city that is a great centre of learning? Did you think that scholarship and wisdom have departed from our midst? . . . By your action you have undermined the authority of our rabbis in the eyes of the ignorant masses, who are unqualified to analyse the legal aspects of this case. Your reputed wisdom should have enabled you to realise the dangerous consequences inherent in such a precedent . . . I ask your forgiveness for having spoken so harshly. It was the force of the truth and the zeal for the Torah that prompted me to write these lines. It is, however, your obligation, honoured scholars and God-fearing men, to rectify this erroneous decision."[158]

Summary

In this article we have dealt with the organizational and spiritual life of the Sephardi communities of the Ottoman empire after the expulsion from Spain. In particular, we studied the great influence exerted by the immigrant Sephardi rabbis in forming the organizational and spiritual images of the newly-founded communities, including the form of government practised therein. We have been necessarily brief.

We have cited only a few examples of sages, their activities and their influence on the spiritual life of the Sephardic communities, primarily from the 16th century. In the seventeenth century, the historians Conforte and

Sambari dwell at length on the hundreds of rabbis of their period. Study of their biographies, places of activity, their literary works in *halachah* and science, and their inter-relations gives an informative picture of the spiritual life of the communities during that period.

NOTES

1 See Isaac BAER, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 2 vols (Philadelphia, 1961); Isidore LOEB, in *REJ* 14 (1887), pp. 177-183; E. STRAUSS (ASHTOR), *Toledot haYehudim be-Mitzraim ve-Suryah Tahat Shilton haMamlukim*, Vol. II (Jerusalem, 1951), pp. 438-457; Ephraim SHMUELI, *Don Isaac Abravanel vegerush haYehudim mi-Sefarad* (Jerusalem, 1963); Yosef Chaim YERUSHALMI, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto* (New York & London, 1971) pp. 7-50; H. BEN-SASSON, in *Zion* 26 (1961), pp. 23-64; H. Z. HIRSCHBERG, in A. J. ARBERRY (ed.), *Religion in the Middle East*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 144-150; J. HACKER (ed.), *Shalem*, Vol. 1 (Jerusalem, 1974), pp. 105-156.
For a partial listing of sources from Jewish 16th century literature, see M. D. LATES, *Likutim Shonim mi-Sefer Dibrei Eliyahu* (Padua, 1869); *Responsa of RASHDAM, HM* No. 92; Isaac ADARBI, *Dibrei Shalom* (Venice, 1587) — see the piece by R. Solomon ben Shushan at the end of the book.

2 See the census of Jewish congreagtions in Salonika in the 16th century in B. LEWIS, *Notes and Documents from the Turkish Archives* (Jerusalem, 1952) pp. 25-27.
In Safed, during the first half of the 16th century, two Sephardi congregations were founded, *Kahal Gadol* and *Bet Ya'akob*. Other Sephardi congregations were also founded. See MABIT, Part III, No. 48; LEWIS, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7. In Vidin, Bulgaria, in the second half of the 16th century, the Sephardi congregation paid two-thirds of the community tax levy, while the Ashkenazim paid only one-third; see ASTRUC IBN SANJI (Ms.), p. 141.

3 S. A. ROSANES, *Dibrei Yemei ha-Yehudim be-Togarmah*, Vol. 1 (Tel-Aviv, 1930), pp. 203-316; J. STARR, *Romania* (Paris, 1949); A. GALANTE, *Histoire des Juifs d'Istanbul* (1962), pp. 171-176; HIRSCHBERG, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-149. See also note 5 below.

4 The most famous sages in Constantinople were *Romaniotes*: Rs. Elijah Mizrachi, Elijah Ibn Hayyim, Elijah ha-Levi; R. Joshua Sonchin was Italian. During the seventeenth century most of the sages were Sephardi.

5 ROSANES, *op. cit.*, pp. 226-238; LEWIS, *op. cit.*; STARR, *ibid.*; A. MILANO, *Storia degli Ebrei italiani nel Levante* (Roma, 1949); STRAUSS, *op. cit.*, pp. 494-499; Shelomoh SPITZER and Leah BORNSTEIN, in H. Z. HIRSCHBERG and E. BASHAN (ed.), *Mi-Mizrah Umi-Ma'arab*, Vol. 1 (Ramat Gan, 1974), pp. 59-104; C. ROTH, in *Eretrz Israel*, III (1954), pp. 230-234. See also note 3 above.

6 See *Mishpetei Shemuel*, No. 26; MAHARSHAH, Part III, No. 26; *Mishpat Tsedek*, Part II, No, 74.

7 See I. BEN ZVI, *Mekorot ve-Mehkarim* (Jerusalem, 1966), pp. 15-20; LEWIS, *op. cit.*, p. 5; HIRSCHBERG, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-147.

8 H. Z. HIRSCHBERG and E. BASHAN, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 31. See also Ch. H. BENSASSON, in *Yitzhak Baer Jubilee Volume* (Jerusalem, 1961), pp. 220-221.

9 H. A. R. GIBB and H. BOWEN, *Islamic Society and the West*, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1969), index.

10 See also H. BEN-SASSON, *Toledot Am Ysrael be-Yemei ha Beinayim* (Tel Aviv, 1969), pp. 260-261; I. R. MOLCHO in *Otzar Yehudei Sefarad*, 4 (1961), pp. 145-147.

11 See also S. D. GOITEIN, *A Mediterranean Society*, Vol. 2 (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1971), pp. 51-55.

12 MAHARIBAL, Part II, No. 72. On the autonomy of the congregation see also Part I, No. 121; RADBAZ, Part 3, No. 472.

13 See *Dibrei Ribot*, No. 56, 59, 60; MAHARIBAL Part II, No. 72; *Ohalei Tam*, No. 213; RASHDAM, *YD* No. 87; A. DANON, in *REJ* 41 (1900), pp. 115-116; LEWIS, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-27.
On the other hand, in Constantinople secession from the congregation was practised, as the entire community paid taxes as one body. At mid-century the situation changed and was similar to Salonika. *Re'em*, No. 13; MAHARIBAL Part II, No. 72; RASHDAM, *YD* No. 97; MABIT, Part 1, No. 337. For a separate entry of the Sephardi congregation of Chios (next to Smyrna), see MAHARIT, Part II, *YD* No. 16.

14 *Dibrei Ribot*, No. 56.

15 DANON, *ibid.*

15a MABIT, Part 1, No. 307.

16 RADBAZ, Part 1, No. 292; *Ohalei Tam* No. 213; RASHDAM, *YD* No. 94; Meir BENAYAHU, in *Sinai* 28 (1951).
The list of Suleyman the Magnificent contains 216 householders in the Catalan Congregation, and 219 householders in the Old Catalan congregation. According to the list from the year 1613, the congregations had diminished, but they were still in existence at the beginning of the eighteenth century. See LEWIS, *ibid*; I. S. EMMANUEL, in *Zichron Saloniki*, Vol. I (Tel Aviv, 1972): see also *Dibrei Ribot* No. 63; RASHDAM, *YD* No. 152.

17 *Dibrei Ribot*, No. 59, 60; RASHDAM, *YD* No. 87. At the time of Suleyman (see note 16), the Portugal Congregation numbered 96 householders. See LEWIS, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-27.
On this congregation in the 16th century see *Dibrei Ribot*, Nos. 224, 253, 345. The Evora congregation still existed at the beginning of the eighteenth century. See EMMANUEL, *op. cit.*, p. 13, No. 8.

18 MABIT, Part 1, No. 337; MAHARIBAL, Part II No. 72; RASHDAM, *YD*, No. 97.

19 MAHARSHAH, Part IV, No. 71.

20 RASHDAM, *YD* No. 143; *Dibrei Ribot*, No. 387; MAHARSHAH, Part I, No. 36.

21 David b. Judah MESSER LEON, *Kebod Hachamim*, ed. S. BERNFELD (Berlin, 1899); S. SCHECHTER, in *REJ* 24 (1892), pp. 130-138.

22 *Lehem Rab*, No. 73; RASHDAM, *YD* No. 212; LEON, *ibid.*

23 *Le Beit haLevi*, *HM* 25; BERAB No. 22; *Dibrei Ribot*, Nos. 56, 59.

24 These communities were not plagued by the tension which accompanied the Western European community due to the *"herem hayishub"*, ("ban against infringement of settlement"), which closed the community to newcomers. Practically, the only problem was the failure on the part of non-resident merchants to pay taxes to the community in which they did their business. The communities solved this problem through enactments which obligated the merchants to pay taxes to the local community upon a term of residence longer than one year. The problem is dealt with at length by HIRSCHBERG and BASHAN *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 105-166.

25 R. Mosheh ALMOSNINO, *Meammetz Koah* (Venice, 1588), p. 15b.

26 RASHDAM, *OH* No. 37; *HM* No. 421; his pupil, R. Abraham DI BOTON, also concurs. See *Lehem Rab*, No. 2.

27 *Mayim Amukim*, Part II, No. 85; *Ein Mishpat*, *HM*, No. 40; *Torat Hayyim*, Part I, No. 64; *Be'er HaMayim*, *YD*, No. 37; *Leb Shelomoh*, *HM*, 68.

28 *Dibrei Ribot*, Nos. 68, 224.

29 *ibid.*, No. 224.

30 *Torat Hayyim*, Part III, No. 34. Isaac Asi'ao died in 1633. He was a communal leader in Salonika and his signature is found on a congregational enactment of the city. See MOLCHO-AMARILLO, in *Sefunot* 2 (1958), p. 52.

31 See below about the *parnassim*.

32 About absolute leadership in non-Spanish communities, see *Torat Hayyim*, Part II, No. 39 (Buda, the first half of the 17th century).

33 Leah BORNSTEIN, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 223-258; M. BENAYAHU, *Marbits Torah* (Jerusalem, 1957).

34 BORNSTEIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 246-248.

35 E.g., MAHARIT, Part I, No.19; *Sha'ar Yehoshua*, *HM*, No. II. See also RADAH, No. 22:9-10.

36 Some 16th century examples:
R. Jacob Berad traded in spices and R. Moshe Galante owned a textile factory (*batan*) — both in Safed. Many sages in Egypt during the same period lived by trade, the most famous being Radbaz.
Seventeenth century examples are as follow:
Famous sages in Constantinople, among them R. Yom Tob Ibn Ya'ish and family, R. Hayyim Kimchi and Rs. David and Samuel Rosanes also were in trade. In mid-century, the Chief Rabbi of Sofia, R. Hayyim Meborach Galipapa, was also in trade. See RALBAH, Nos. 93, 115; RAMAG, No. 47; J. KENA'ANI, in *Zion* 6 (1934), pp. 190-191; W. H. GOTTHEIL and WORREL, *Fragments from the Cairo Genizah* (New York, 1927), No. 47, pp. 228-234; S. AVITZUR, in *Sefunot* 6 (1962), pp. 41-70; *Darchei No'am*, *HM* No. 32; S. ASSAF, *op. cit.*, pp. 207, 258-269; *Benei-Mosheh*, No. 52; *Penei Mosheh*, Part III, p. 66; ROSANES, *op. cit.*, Part IV, pp. 5, 21, 198-199, 108-109.

36a BORNSTEIN, *op. cit.*

37 See notes 25 and 88.

38 *Abkat Rochel* No. 206; *Torat Hayyim* Part I No. 53; MAHARIT, Part II, *HM* No. 101; *Penei Mosheh*, Part I, No. 30; *Zachor leAbraham*, *HM* No. 57; *Mishnat Rabbi Eliezer*, *HM*, No. 70.

39 See Uriel HEYD, *Studies in Old Ottoman Law* (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 177, 199, 222, 229, 251; RASHDAM, *YD* No. 212.

40 Turning criminals over to the Turkish courts was permitted by the *hachamim* in exceptional cases, such as when the litigants refused to appear before the Jewish court or to honour its decisions. See for example MAHARIT, Part II, *YD*, No. 21; *Mishpat Tzedek*, Part II, No. 71. In general, the communal enactments prohibited turning to non-Jewish courts. See for example *LeBeit HaLevi*, *YD* No. 7; *Michtam leDavid, E h' E* No. 3; BERAB (Ms) in Hebrew National and University Library of Jerusalem, Heb. 8° 1098, p. 7a-b.
About governmental intervention in the Jewish court, see BINYAMIN ZE'EB Nos. 287, 288; Eliezer IBN ORHA, (Ms.), p. 51a. Rarely a non-Jewish litigant would bring his suit against a Jew to a Jewish court. See RASHDAM, *HM* No. 234; MABIT, Part I, No. 232.

41 RASHDAM, *E h'E* Nos. 195, 221; *Dibrei Ribot* No. 5; MABIT, Part I, No. 337.

42 E.g., *Abkat Rochel* Nos. 17, 200; RASHDAM, *E h'E* Nos. 17, 195; RADBAZ, Part III, No. 1007; ALSHECH, No. 78; *Mishpetei Shemuel* No. 79; MAHARIT, Part II, *HM* No. 11; *Penei Mosheh*, Part II, No. 112; *Ms. of collected responsa*, Hebrew National and University Library, Jerusalem, No. 8, 2001, p. 607a; BENAYAHU, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-67, 72. For sources on the juridical authority of the rabbi: *ibid.*, p. 21; S. ASSAF, in *Sinai* I (1938), p. 34; BORNSTEIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-229.

43 These courts existed in various forms: one, two or three arbitrators. Sometimes these were scholars, frequently they were laymen. See RASHDAM, *YD* No. 112; *Dibrei Ribot* Nos. 106, 314, 405; *Ohalei Tam* No. 128; MABIT, Part II, No. 32; MAHARIBAL, Part I, No. 143; ALSHECH No. 111,127; *Lehem Rab* No. 136; *Torat Hayyim* Part II, No. 35; *Magen Giborim*, Nos. 49, 51; *Zera Anashim*, No. 59; *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM* Part I, No. 14.
Courts of merchants: *Torat Hayyim*, Part I, No. 71; RALBAH No. 137; RADBAZ, Part VIII, No. 158.

44 RASHDAM, *E h'E* Nos. 190, 195; *YD* No. 212; *Dibrei Ribot* Nos. 232, 310; RA'ANAH, No. 26; BOTON, No. 36; MAHARSHAH, Part IV, No. 89; *Torat Hayyim* Part I, No. 86; MAHARIT, Part I, No. 31; MAHARITATZ, Nos. 55, 241; *Penei Mosheh*, Part I, No. 95.

45 RASHDAM, *YD* No. 135; *HM* Nos. 239, 278, 292, 310, 343; *Dibrei Ribot* No. 162. It may be assumed that this institution continued to exist in Salonika after the death of Rashdam. Almost certainly, the *Rab haGadol* (chief rabbi) acted in this capacity in the community in

the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

46 RALBAH, Part I, No. 21; MABIT, Part I, No. 157; Part II, Nos. 173, 174; *Lehem Rab* No. 184; *Nibhar MiKesef*, *E h'E* No. 74.

47 MABIT, Part III, Nos. 188, 228.

48 *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM*, Part II, Nos. 171, 172; BENAYAHU, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16, 49, 94-99; G. SCHOLEM, *Sabbetai Zevi, The Mystical Messiah 1626-1676* (Princeton, 1973), index; D. TAMAR, in *Tarbitz* 41 (1973), 42 (1972-3), p. 211; *idem.*, *Sinai* 72 (1973), pp. 185-188.

49 See S. ASSAF, *Batei hadin veSidrehem* (Jerusalem, 1924), pp. 74, 86; BAER, *op. cit*, index.

50 See sources quoted in note 49.

50a E.g., a court of three in Salonika in the 16th century. The judges were RASHDAM, *hacham* of the Lisbon congregation, R. Abraham Siralvo, *hacham* of the Evora congregation, and R. Benjamin Ashkenazi, *hacham* of the Ashkenazi congregation; RASHDAM, *E h'E* Nos. 3, 187. About the assemblies of the *hachamim* in Salonika and in Safed in the sixteenth century see DANON, *op. cit.*, pp. 209-265; BENAYAHU, in *Baer Jubilee Volume*, pp. 254-255.

51 BAER, ibid., index; *op.cit.*, *Die Juden in christlichen Spanien* Vol. I (Berlin, 1929), index; M. BENAYAHU (ed.), *Sefer Toledot haAri* (Jerusalem, 1967), pp. 159-60.

52 BENAYAHU, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-108, 160-161; BERAB, No. 3; MABIT, Part II (Venice, 1630) No. 209, p. 97; Samuel UZEDA, *Midrash Shemuel* (Venice, 1579), preface; *Lehem Rab* No. 114; MAHARIT, Part II *YD* Nos. 48,49; *Penei Mosheh*, Part III, No. 58; *Ohalei Tam* Nos. 140, 186; BASAN, No. 34; *Benei David*, p.47b; *Leb Sameah, HM* No. 6.

53 *Zekan Aharon* No. 180; *Ohalei Tam*, *ibid.*; *Penei Mosheh*, *ibid.*; *Perach Matte Aharon*, Part II, No. 64. See also S. ASSAF, *Be-Ohalei Ya'akob*, pp. 219-222.
About the activities of courts of *Memunei 'Aberot* at the end of the 18th century and in the 19th century, see *Be'er Maim Hayyim*. Part II, *E h'E* No. 12; *Vayya'an Abraham*, *E h'E* No. 4.

54 *Tsefat haYam*, *E h'E* Nos. 1, 2, 3; *Hiqrei Leb*, *HM* Part II, No. 24; *Massa Hayyim* No. 40/78, 70/33; *Shema' Abraham*, *YD* No. 232. *Berurei haKenasot* functioned also in Manisa in the nineteenth century. See *Hayyim veShalom*, *E h'E* No. 38, 39.

55 On *parnassim* see MAHARIBAL Part IV, No. 14; *Beit Shelomoh* No. 11, *Michtam le-David*, *YD* No. 31.
On *manhigim*: *Bet Shelomoh*, *ibid.*; *Debar Mosheh*, Part II, *HM* No. 18.
On *zekenim*: *Torat Emet* No. 48; *Bassan* Nos. 22, 42; *Leb Sameah*, *HM* No. 27; ASTRUC IBN SANJI, MS., p. 41a.
On *berurim*: *Dibrei Ribot* Nos. 53, 197, 254; RALBAH NOS 30, 99; MABIT, Part I, No. 84; MAHARSHAH Part I, No. 112; *Urim Gedolim*, Nos. 213, 214; *Ba'ei Hayyei HM* Part I, No. 11.
On *anshei ma'amad*: *Lehem Rab* No. 63; MAHARIT, *HM* Part II No. 101: *Leb Sameah*, *HM* No. 3; *Boton* No. 6.
On *gebirim*: *Dibrei Ribot* Nos. 99, 224, 299; *Torat Hayyim* Part I, No. 64; Part III, Nos. 40, 102; *Edut BiYosef*, Part II, No. 45; *Ohel Yosef*, *OH* No. 9; *Reah Sadeh* No. 20; *Peat Negeb*, *YD* No. 22.

56 *Ra'anah* No. 58; *Torat Hayyim*, Part II, No. 14; *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM* Part II, No. 67; *Debar Mosheh HM* Part II No. 50.

57 *Dibrei Ribot* No. 54; RALBAH No. 38; *Abkat Rochel* No. 206; *Mishpetei Shemuel* Nos. 92, 93; *Lehem Rab* No. 63; MAHARSHAH, Part III, No. 45; MAHARIT, Part I, No. 132; *Torat Hesed* No. 31; *Tiferet Adam*, *YD* No. 59.

58 See also *Dibrei Ribot* Nos. 197, 224; RALBAH No. 38; *Mishpetei Shemuel* No. 92; *Lehem Rab* No. 63; *Torat Hayyim*, Part II, No. 39; *Engel* No. 57; *Le Beit haLevi*, HM No. 25; *Zachor leAbraham*, *HM* No. 57; *Debar Mosheh*, Part II, *HM* No. 52.

59 In the 16th century: *Dibrei Ribot* Nos. 54, 224; *Abkat Rochel* No. 206; RAMAG No. 47; *Lehem Rab* No. 63.

In the 18th century: *Tiferet Adam YD* No. 59. Only one sage objected to this system of appointment; see MAHARIBAL, Part I, No. 47.

60 *Dibrei Ribot* No. 54; *Mishpetei Shemuel* Nos. 92, 93; RALBAH No. 38; *Abkat Rochel* No. 206; *Lehem Rab* No. 63; MAHARSHAH Part III, No. 45; MAHARIT, Part I, No. 132; *Leb Sameah*, *HM* No. 3; *Torat Hesed*, No. 31; *Tiferet Adam*, *YD* No. 59.

61 *Torat Hesed* No. 31.

62 RASHDAM, *YD* No. 227; *Mishpetei Shemuel* No. 93; *Zera' Anashim*, *E h'E* No. 59.

63 *Nibhar miKesef*, *HM* No. 107.

64 Especially RASHBA, Part I, No. 637.

65 *Lehem Rab* No. 63, see also No. 68; RALBAH No. 38; MAHARIBAL, Part II, No. 71; *Leb Sameah*, *HM* Nos. 13, 14.

66 RALBAH No. 38; MAHARIBAL, Part I, No. 3; *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM* Part II, No. 67.

67 *Dibrei Ribot* Nos. 59, 63, 161, 295, 376; MABIT, Part II, No. 79; RAMAG No. 53; *Lehem Rab* Nos. 63, 76; *Torat Emet* No. 48; MAHARSHAH, Part II, No. 145; Part IV No. 62; *Torat Hayyim*, Part I, No. 64; Part III, No. 102; *Mira Dachya* No. 31; *Yereh Abraham*, Part II, *HM* No. 55; *Tsefat ha-Yam*, *YD* Nos. 25, 26; *Ma'haze Abraham* No. 30; *Ma'aseh Abraham*, HM No. 7; *Simhat Yehudah* No. 102.

68 David ARAMA (Constantinople, 1580), pp. 13-14; *Dibrei Ribot* No. 72; *Abkat Rochel* No. 143; MAHARIT, Part 2, *HM* Nos. 68, 93; *Penei Mosheh*, Part I, No. 30; *Mira Dachya* No. 7.

69 RAMAG No. 47; *Torat Hayyim*, Part I, No. 53; MAHARIT Part II, *HM* No. 101; *Maset Mosheh*, Part II, *HM* No. 14; *Parah Matteh Aharon*, *HM* Part II, No. 118; *Benei-Abraham*, p. 91.

70 *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *YD* No. 200; *HM* Part II, No. 80; MAHARIBAL Part I, No. 51; *Hiqrei Leb*, *YD*, Part III, No. 5; *Ashdot HaPisgah*, *OH* Nos. 2, 3; *Ohel Yosef*, *YD* No. 5; *Edut biYosef*, Part II, No. 45.

71 MABIT, Part III, Nos. 188, 200, 228; *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *YD* No. 206; *Debar Mosheh* Part II, *OH*, No. 1; *Hiqrei Leb*, *YD* Part II, Nos. 49, 52.

72 See MAHARSHAH Part I, No. 107; Part II, No. 27; *Bet Shelomoh*, *YD* No. 12. *Ein Mishpat*, *HM* No. 40; *Debar Mosheh*, Part II *HM* No. 1; *Nahala liHoshua* No. 17; MAHARIBAL, Part I, No. 56; *Leb Sameah*, *HM* No. 27; *Michtam leDavid*, *YD* No. 31.

73 *Dibrei Ribot* No. 224; MABIT, Part III, No. 60; *Ra'anah* No. 29; *Abkat Rochel* No. 206; *LeBeit HaLevi*, *HM* No. 25; *Benei David*, *YD* No. 121; *Parach Matte Aharon*, Part III, No. 78; *Edut beYaakob* No. 75; *Tsefat ha-Yam*, *YD* Nos. 25, 26; *Urim Gedolim* No. 131; *Rosh Mashbir*, *YD* No. 17; *Nehpah BaKesef*, *HM* No. 21.

74 *Dibrei Ribot* No. 223; MAHARIBAL Part I, No. 51; RALBAH No. 38; MABIT, Part IV, No. 66; BASSAN No. 67; MAHARITATZ Nos. 158, 276; *Ne'eman Shemuel* No. 5; *Pe'at Negeb*, *YD* No. 22.

75 *Lehem Rab*, Nos. 12, 121; *Beit Shelomoh*, *YD* No. 9; MAHARSHAH, Part IV, No. 22; *Torat Hayyim*, Part II, No. 12; *Olat Shemuel*, *HM* No. 27; *Ashdot haPisgah*, *HM* Nos. 2-4.

76 For a cantor in the Shalom Congregation in Salonika: *Dibrei Ribot* No. 299; in the Spanish congregation in Sofia at the end of the seventeenth century: *Penei Aharon*, *YD* No. 7.

77 *Alashkar* No. 33; MABIT, Part III, No. 39; *Nahala liHoshua* No. 17; MAHARIBAL Part III, No. 23; *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM* Part II, No. 47; *Edut biYa'akob* No. 39; *Hiqrei Leb*, *YD* Part III, No. 105; *HM* Part II, No. 83; *Mor ve'ohalot*, *HM* No. 35; *Tsefat ha-Yam HM* No. 7.

78 MAHARIBAL, Part I, No. 51; RASHDAM, *YD* No. 4; *LeBeit HaLevi*, No. 28; *Ein Mishpat*, *YD* Nos. 4, 5, 6; *Lehem Rab* No. 4; *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM*, Part I, No. 49.

79 BERAB No. 2; *Dibrei Ribot* No. 281; MAHARIT, Part II, *YD* Nos. 15, 48; *Ohel Yosef*, *HM* Nos. 4, 5; *Mishpatim Yesharim* No. 5; *Torat Hesed* No. 39; *Gib'ot Olam* No. 2; *Kerem Shelomoh, YD* No. 11.

80 *Dibrei Ribot* No. 62; MAHARIT, Part I, No. 32; *Mishpetei Shemuel* No. 59; *Lehem Rab* No. 136; *Mutzal me'Esh* No. 14.

81 BERAB No. 49; STRAUSS, *op. cit.*, p. 495.

82 *Mayim Amukim*, Part II, No. 52; MABIT, Part II, No. 171; NEHAMA, *Histoire des Israélites*, Vol. 2, p. 74.

83 E.g., *Mayim Amukim*, Vol. II, No. 54, *Mekor Baruch* No. 25, MAHARITATZ, No. 211.

84 A few references:
Michtab Shelomoh, No. 74; *Ma'haze Abraham* No. 30; *Tseror haKesef*, *HM* No. 10; *Yereh Abraham*, Part II, *HM* Nos. 55, 56; *Be'er ha-Mayim*, *HM* No. 94; *Penei Mosheh*, Part II, No. 102; *Berechot La-Mayim*, *HM* No. 247; *Din Emet*, pp. 49b-56b; *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM* Part II, No. 78; *Ru'ah Hayyim*, *YD* No. 256a.

85 See HACKER, in *Zion* 34 (1969), pp. 73-4.

86 BORNSTEIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-237.

87 RE'EM No. 15.

87a This was the confirmation of the privileges and exemptions granted by Suleyman the Magnificent to the Salonika community in 1537. The document had been destroyed in 1545, and the local authorities began to place enormous tax burdens on the Jewish community.

88 Mosheh ALMOSNINO, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7. On this *hacham* and his books, see I. R. MOLCHO, in Sinai 8 (1941), pp. 245-256; *ibid*, in *Saloniki, Ir v'Em BeYisrael* (Tel-Aviv, 1967); O. CAMHY, in *The Sephardi Heritage*, ed. R. D. BARNETT, Vol. 1, pp. 573-577.
R. Meir Ibn Sanji also aided the Jews of Damascus in abolishing a government decree against them. See Israel NAJARA, *Zemirot Yisrael*, (Venice, 1969), at the end of the book.

88a In September 1636, another delegation was despatched from Salonika to Constantinople to request relief from the many taxes ("clothing taxes") that were demanded of the impoverished community. However, the delegation received a cold reception, and its head, Rabbi Judah Covo was murdered at the command of the Sultan Murad IV.
See EMMANUEL, *op. cit.*, pp. 295-296.

89 ALMOSNINO, *op. cit.*, p. 7a; C. ROTH, *The House of Nasi*, *The Duke of Naxos*, (London, 1948); P. GRUNEBAUM-BELLIN, *Joseph Naçi, duc de Naxos* (Paris, 1968); INALCIK, in *JEH* 29 (1969), pp. 121-123; U. HEYD, in *Sefunot* 10 (1966); and see below, note 90.

90 *Nahala liHoshua* No. 40; ROTH, *ibid.* in section on *Dona Gracia*; *idem*, in *The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Volume of the JQR* 1967, pp. 460-472; A. TOAFF., in *Cecil Roth Memorial Volume* (Rome, 1974), pp. 263-280.

90a A. GALANTE, *Don Solomon Aben-Yàeche, Duc de Métélin* (Istanbul, 1936); ROTH, *ibid*; MAHARSHAH, Part II, No. 38; *Lehem Rab* No. 203; A. YA'ARI, *Sheluhei Eretz Israel* (Jerusalem, 1951), p. 258.

91 GALANTE, *Médecins Juifs au service de la Turquie* (Instanbul, 1938); *idem*, *Hommes et Choses Juifs-Portugais en Orient* (Constantinople, 1927).

92 See note 91. Also U. HEYD, in *Eretz Israel* 7 (1964), pp. 48-53; RASHDAM *HM* No. 364; B. LEWIS, in *Melilah* 5 (1955), pp. 169-176; *idem* in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 14 (1952), pp. 550-563; ROSANES, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, pp. 188-191, 201-212; *Tiferet Adam*, *HM* No. 1.

93 H. GROSS, In *REJ* 56 (1908), pp. 1-26; 57 (1909), pp. 56-78; GALANTE, *Médecins Juifs*, pp. 9-10; MOLCHO, in *Sura* I (1954), pp. 94-102; INALCIK, in JEH, Vol. 29, p. 120.

94 ROSANES, *op. cit* . Vol. 1, pp. 93, 126; Vol. 2. pp. 4, 56-57, 282-98; Vol. 3, pp. 354-356; U. HEYD, in *Oriens* 6 (1963), pp. 152-170; *idem.*, in *Sefunot*, 5 (1961), pp. 135-150; R. Solomon IBN VERGA, *Shebet Yehudah*, ed. A. SHOCHAT (Jerusalem, 1947), pp. 56, 92; LEWIS, *ibid*.

95 ROSANES, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 62-63, 289-298, also see above.

96 GALANTE, *op. cit.*, also see above notes 88, 93-94.

97 GALANTE, *Médecins Juifs*, *op. cit.*, p. 10; notes 88, 93-94.

98 NAJARA, *op. cit.*, p. 144a. He composed the book *Kevod Elokim* (Constantinople, 1605), an anti-Christian polemic.

99 See note 92. Sultan Ahmed III (1703-1730) retained a Portuguese Jewish doctor and diplomat, Daniel Fonseca.
See GALANTE, *Hommes et Choses, op. cit.*, pp. 28-29; ROSANES, *op. cit.*, Vol. 4, pp. 188-191, 201-212.

100 Due to the brevity of the present article, only a few aspects of the spiritual life of the Jews were dealt with: viz., Torah study, the worldly education of the sages and their works.

101 For a few examples: R. Samuel Yaffe Ashkenazi studied in Bursa under R. Isaac ben Tzaddik Ibn Leb. See BENAYAHU, *Tarbitz* 42 (1973), p. 419. MABIT studied under R. Jacob Berab in Safed. See DIMIMTROVSKY, *Sefunot* 6 (1962), pp. 71-124. R. Menachem di Lunzano studied for a short time under RASHDAM in Salonika. See CONFORTE, *ibid.*, p. 44a. R. Aaron Mitrani studied in the *yeshibah* of R. Joseph Fasi in Adrianople. See R. AZULAI, *Shem HaGedolim, Ma'arechet haGedolim* m/129.

102 BAER, *Spain*, *op. cit.*, index: CONFORTE, *op. cit.*, index, pp. 27b-28a.

103 Sarah HELLER-WILENSKY, *Ha-Philosophia shel Rabbi Isaac Arama* (Tel-Aviv, 1956); BAER, *ibid.*

104 CONFORTE, *op. cit.*, index; I. S. EMMANUEL, *Matzebot Saloniki* (Jerusalem, 1967), index.

105 CONFORTE, *op. cit.*, p. 31a; A. DAVID, in *Sinai* 66 (1970), pp. 367-371; E. CARMOLY, *Dibrei ha-Yamim li-benei Yachya* (Paris, 1850); ROSANES, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 47, 89-90. See also below note 143a.

106 See below; see also note 147.

107 Israel GOLDMANN, *The Life and Times of Rabbi David Ibn Abi Zimra* (New York, 1970); H. Z. DIMITROVSKY, in *Sefunot* 7 (1963); M. BENAYAHU and A. SCHEIBER, *ibid.*, 6 (1962), pp. 123-124; STRAUSS, *op. cit.*, pp. 458-476.

108 M. BENAYAHU, in *Sefer Assaf* (Jerusalem, 1953), pp. 117-118; A. L. FRUMKIN and E. RIVLIN, *Toledot Chahmei Yerushalayim* (Jerusalem, 1969), index; also see note 156.

109 BENAYAHU, *ibid.*, pp. 110-125; CONFORTE, *op. cit.*, p. 28a; note 156.

110 A. DAVID, in *Tarbitz* 39 (1970), pp. 415-418; R. J. Z. WERBLOWSKY, *Joseph Caro, Lawyer and Mystic* (Oxford, 1962).

111 See FRUMKIN — RIVLIN, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1 pp. 64-67.

112 H. Z. ZIMMELS, *Rabbi David Ibn Abi Zimra* (Breslau, 1932); DIMITROVSKY, *ibid.*

113 See note 143.

114 J. GELLER, in *MiMizrach Umi Ma'arav*, Vol. I, pp. 167-222.

115 See the Ms. in the Hebrew National and University Library in Jerusalem, 8° 2001, pp. 404-405; BENAYAHU, *Tarbitz* 42 (1973), pp. 419-420. Before 1526, R. Ibn Leb headed a *yeshibah* in Salonika.

116 DIMITROVSKY, *Sefunot* 7 (1963), pp. 43-102.

117 CONFORTE, *op. cit.*, p. 37b. In the seventeenth century Rabbi Moses Benveniste taught in this *yeshibah*. See *Penei Mosheh* Part III, No. 56; and note 90.

118 GELLER, *op. cit.*

119 *Dibrei Ribot* Nos. 186, 228, 229, MAHARIT, Part I, No. 47; RASHDAM, *HM* No. 324.

120 GELLER, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

121 *ibid.*

122 CONFORTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-52.

123 e.g., *Dibrei Ribot* No. 68; *Alashkar* No. 60.

124 A. YA'ARI, *Ha-Defus ha-ibri be-Kushta* (Jerusalem, 1967); M. BENAYAHU *Haskama u-Reshut bi-Defusei Venetzia* (Jerusalem, 1971), index.

125 S. ASSAF, in *Mekorot u-Mechkarim*, pp. 225-256; Ya'ari, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-15.

125a BEN-SASSON, *op. cit.*, HACKER in *Zion* 34 (1969), pp. 43-83; *idem*, in *Tarbitz* 39 (1970), pp. 195-213.

126 See note 35.

127 See infra.

128 J. BEN-SHELOMOH, *Torat ha-Elohut shel Rabbi Mosheh Cordovero* (Jerusalem 1965); *idem*, in *Sefunot* 6 (1962).

129 Unfortunately, only a few *responsa* from these two *hachamim* have survived.

130 H. Z. ZIMMELS, in *The Sephardi Heritage*, Vol. 1, pp. 394-396.

131 I. S. EMMANUEL, *Histoire*, pp. 167-175; *idem*, *Matzebot Saloniki*, index; M. S. GOODBLATT, *Jewish Life in Turkey in the XVIth Century, as Reflected in the Legal writings of Samuel de Medina* (New York, 1952); M. MOLCHO, in *Sinai* 4 (1957), pp. 36-48; L. BORNSTEIN, *Index to the Responsa of Rabbi Samuel de Medina* (Bar-Ilan University, Raman Gan, 1979).

132 GOODBLATT, *op. cit.*, index; L. BORNSTEIN, *Index to Responsa; Dibrei Ribot*, by Rabbi Isaac Adarbi, ed. H. Z. HIRSCHBERG (Bar-Ilan, Ramat Gan, 1974).

133 *Ben Shemuel* (Mantua, 1622); *Dibrei Shalom* (Salonika, 1580).

134 See the list of authors and works in E. ELON, *ha-Mishpat ha-'Ibri* (Jerusalem, 1973), pp. 1356-1363; *EJ*, Vol. 14, 90-91.

135 He was born in Castile and was a pupil of R. Samuel Valensi. Sometime before 1501, he arrived in Salonika and became one of the leaders of the community. He taught in the Calabrian congregation and later was the rabbi of the Gerush Sepharad congregation.

136 R. Isaac CARO, *Toledot Yitzhak* (Constantinople, 1518), — a commentary on the Pentateuch which includes literal, homiletic, cabbalistic and philosophical interpretations. In his sermons, *Hasdei David*, he used the philosophic and aggadic approach. (Oxford — Bodleian Ms 987).

R. Solomon Ate'a composed a commentary to the Psalms. The commentaries to the Pentateuch, First Prophets, Job and Psalms of R. Solomon Alkabetz, who died no later than 1597, are well known. See D. TAMAR, *Sinai* 70 (1972), pp. 232-235. See also R. Moses ALSHEH, *Torat Mosheh* (Constantinople 1597; Venice 1705), preface; Shimon SHALEM, *Rabbi Mosheh Alshech* (Jerusalem, 1966).

137 WERBLOWSKY, *op. cit.*

138 J. HACKER, *ibid.* See note 125a; also *idem*, *EJ*, Vol. II, pp. 85-86.

139 This work, *Bet Elokim*, is a commentary, still in manuscript, on the book *Kadur Ha'Olam (Sphaera Mundi)* of Sacrobosco, a 13th century English astronomer, according to the translation of Solomon ben Abraham Avigdor, which was printed together with *Tzurat Ha-Aretz* of R. Abraham bar Hiyya the Sephardi, under the title *Sefer Ashpira Hagadol*. Almosnino's second work, also still in manuscript, was written by him at the age of thirty and is called *Sha'ar HaShamayim*; it is in fact a translation and commentary on the work *Theorica Nova Planetarum* ("The Study of the Planets") by the 15th century Austrian astronomer George Peurbach.

See BEN MENACHEM in *Sinai* 19 (1946), pp. 279-281; see also note 88 above.

139a ROSANES, *op. cit.*, 2 (1938), pp. 105-7; H. FRIEDENWALD, *Jews and Medicine*, 2 (1964), p. 707; J. NEHAMA, *Histoire* Vol. 4 (1936), p. 159. See also note 105.

139b EMMANUEL, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-205; *idem.*, *Matzebot* No. 320; *EJ*, Vol. 2, pp. 795-798.

140 On R. Cordovero and his works, see D. TAMAR, in *Tarbitz* 27 (1958) pp. 111-112; I. TISHBI, in *Sefunot* 7 (1963), pp. 119-166; Shalem, *ibid.*

141 See note 147.

142 S. SCHEHTER, *Studies in Judaism*, Vol. 2 (1908); WERBLOWSKY, *op. cit.*

143 N. ALONI, in *Kiryat Sefer* 18 (1941-2), pp. 192-198; ed. YALLON: Shelomoh ALMOLI, *Halihot Sheva* (Jerusalem, 1944), pp. 79-115; *idem*, in *Areshet* 2 (1960), pp. 96-108; *idem*, in *Kiryat Sefer* 39 (1963-4), pp. 105-8; GRUENBAUM, in *Areshet* 4 (1966), pp. 180-201.

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The Rise And Decline of The Sephardi Communities in the Levant — The Economic Aspects

by
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This is a survey of the economic aspects of the rise and prosperity of the exiled Judaeo-Spanish communities in the Levant, as well as the causes of their subsequent decline. This is done against the background of political events and economic changes in the region, the greater part of which was under Ottoman rule, the smaller part being governed by the Venetians.

The exiles from Spain came in several waves of migration between 1391 and 1492, the majority arriving after the final expulsion in the latter year. The migrants followed two main routes: the first was through Italy to the Balkans, Anatolia and the surrounding islands, and, in some cases, from there on to Syria or Palestine. The second route led through North Africa to Egypt and to Palestine.

The Jews expelled from Spain were received favourably by the Ottoman sultans, not only as refugees from their Catholic rivals, but mostly because they regarded the Jews as an economic factor which could contribute to the development of the empire and strengthen the treasury.

The documentary sources, both Jewish and non Jewish, relating to the generations after the expulsion from Spain, indicate that the Jews engaged in a wide range of occupations. These may be divided into three groups:

The professions: physicians, apothecaries, bankers, money-changers and lenders, tax and toll farmers, diplomats, interpreters, brokers, valuers and book-keepers.

The crafts: glass blowers, paper processers, printers; in food production — fishermen, cheese-makers, oil and wine producers etc.; in non-precious metals — miners, casters, blacksmiths, locksmiths and arms manufacturers, including artillery and gun powder; in precious metals, goldsmiths, minters, embroiderers and spinners of luxury garments. The most important and prevalent crafts amongst the Jews were those connected with textile manufacturing, wool, cotton, flax, silk and hides, all of which were used in the production of clothes, carpets, linen etc. In all the crafts in which they engaged, including those which were connected with textiles, the Jews introduced new techniques of processing raw materials, dyeing and preparation for sale, and, in addition to this, they had considerable experience in

* *Dedicated to the memory of my beloved teacher, the late Professor H. Z. Hirschberg.*

trade. The fact that the Jews (as indeed the followers of all other religions) could become members of the craft guilds opened up for them the possibility of pursuing without restrictions a fairly wide range of occupations.

Domestic and international trade.[1]

The departure from Spain of professionally skilled Jews had left a gap in a number of economic sectors, and it has been suggested that this paved the way for the economic decline of that country,[2] while strengthening the economy of the Ottomans, enemies of the Christian world. Christian chroniclers pointed this out angrily, stressing the fact that the Jewish exiles from Spain had taught the Turks all the crafts of warfare such as the production of artillery and gun powder.[3]

The Jews from Spain were useful to the Turks in all these areas, but it would seem that above all they were involved in the development of international trade. Some aspects of this, as well as the causes for this Jewish prominence in commerce, are discussed below.

Even before the arrival of the refugees of 1492, the Jews of Turkey had played a part in international trade within the region. Amongst them there must have been some Spanish Jews who had come to Turkey before the final expulsion. Information on this dates back to the time of Sultan Mehmed II (1451-1481) in connection with trade in spices, dyes for textiles and silk, sugar from the Far East and European clothes which were imported to Turkey by Jews, Greeks and Armenians. These were the three ethnic elements which continued to dominate international commerce throughout the Empire in subsequent generations.[4]

After the expulsion from Spain and Portugal the influx of Jewish immigrants increased, and in the course of the sixteenth century some of them became established in international commerce. This is borne out by evidence from Jewish correspondence of the period and the *Responsa* literature, reports by consuls and ambassadors as well as Christian travellers' accounts.[5]

In the sixteenth century the Jewish refugees from Spain who had settled in the Levant reached the peak of their influence on Turkish export and import trade. Wide networks of commercial enterprises were run by a number of *marrano* families amongst whom stood out the Mendes family, headed by Dona Gracia and Don Joseph. Their agents operated in the commercial towns of Belgrade, Sarajevo and Ragusa (Dubrovnik) on the Balkan Adriatic coast, Ancona, Ferrara and Venice in Italy and also in Lion. Some of them were ex-*marranos*, and the entire network was managed through them. They were granted privileges in order to encourage trade. They imported from Europe textiles and other commodities which were then distributed throughout the Ottoman empire, and they exported pepper, wheat and various raw materials. Their commercial activities extended

beyond the boundaries of the Mediterranean. Sigismund of Poland granted them privileges in 1567/8, and this commercial link with Poland was maintained by Solomon ibn Yàish, the Duke of Mitylene or, as he had been known earlier in his life, Alvaro Mendes, who was born in Portugal in 1520 and gained experience in trade with India while still living in Portugal, before his arrival in Salonika where he re-embraced Judaism.[6] Other families who remained active in this area right up to the seventeenth century were the Abravanels of Salonika some of whom exported Salonika textiles, imported silk garments to the city and exported oil from Greece to Italy. There is information relating to some members of the Ban Veneste family in a collection of documents published by M. Benayahu. One of them, Yehuda, bought woad (a textile dye) in Rhodes; another Solomon, had dealings with some inhabitants of Wallachia (Romania).[7] In addition to these well-to-do families there were large numbers of Jews, of whom less is known, who earned their living by inter-city or inter-state trade. The most detailed source for the study of such activities is the *Responsa* literature, from which it emerges that the Jews maintained commercial relations between the various centres within the empire and those outside it. Their activities included trade among the Balkan towns and between these towns and Anatolia, Egypt, Syria and Palestine. Trade also linked the Jews of all these localities with their brethren in the Italian towns, particularly Ancona and Venice. Apart from wool, silk, cotton, flax and hides which were the main objects of trade, the Jews also traded in precious stones, pearls and jewelry, perfumes, spices, pepper, sulphur, tar, metals and food products, such as wheat, rice, cheese, wines, etc.

Christian sources of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the period by which the Jewish share in the international trade of the eastern Mediterranean was gradually declining, still emphasise the rôle played by the Jews in this field, and some of the better balanced and more realistic of these sources point to the presence in international trade of other religious and ethnic elements such as the Ragusans, Venetians and other Christians.[8]

The Jewish immigrants from Spain were a rival factor to the Christian inhabitants of Turkey, particularly to the Greeks, who had until then complete control over a number of economic areas such as banking and medicine as well as domestic and international trade. In the sixteenth century the Jews were gradually winning the upper hand, but in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the extent of Christian domination over these areas grew at the expense of the Jews.[9]

However, there are a number of exaggerated accounts by European visitors ascribing to the Jews exclusive domination of international trade in these Eastern centres. For example, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, wife of the British Ambassador to Constantinople, wrote in 1717 of her visit to Adrianople:

> "I observed most of the rich tradesmen were Jews. That people are in incredible power in this country . . . they have drawn the *whole trade of the empire into their hands*, partly by the firm union among themselves, and partly by the idle temper and want of industry in the Turks."[10]

It is true that at this time Adrianople was an important commercial centre and that the Jews did take their share of its international commerce, establishing connections with the European merchants who came there. But her account of their strength is exaggerated and it reflects the Christians' envy and resentment of the prosperity of the Jews.

While the first part of Lady Montagu's account is an exaggeration, the reasons she offers for the commercial success of the Jews include valid elements, as is shown in greater detail below.

(a) The Jews had brought with them the knowledge and experience of trade from Spain and Portugal. They were familiar with the economic and political aspects of these countries, with the ways of commerce and international conventions as practised by the two powers which had dominated the scene of international commerce at that time: They knew commercial routes, insurance, credit, prices etc. Some of the Spanish exiles who had reached the Ottoman empire by way of Italy, acquired there the expertise in these spheres which was peculiar to the Italian commercial towns. They spoke the languages of both camps, Eastern and European. All this formed their skilled background and qualified them also to act as interpreters and intermediaries for foreign merchants. Widespread acquaintances and family connections with Jews living in the commercial centres of Italy, North Africa and Europe also facilitated economic relations not only for the Jews but also for the Greeks and the Armenians who, alongside the Jews, continued to engage in international trade.[11]

Ethnic minorities, distinct from the ruling group in faith, language and origin, and operating under a certain measure of restrictive discrimination, tend to exhibit a high level of economic initiative, by which they secure their existence and attain a high standard of living, to compensate for the disadvantages inherent in their position as a minority. Commerce was the key to the highest level of income. This general rule was most applicable to the Jews who were rootless and who retained the memory of the expulsion from Spain as well as the sense of being newly arrived in Turkey for many generations subsequently. The pursuit of the crafts, particularly of trade, is characteristic of communities uprooted from their places of origin, which find themselves in the dynamic situation of readjustment and adaptation to new environments.[12]

(b) By tradition and nature the Turks are not a sea-faring nation. There is a Turkish saying to the effect that Allah gave the sea to the Christians and the land to the Moslems.[13] Indeed, the Turkish navy and merchant marine traditionally attracted large numbers of Christians, some of whom adopted

the Moslem faith. According to the Turkish view of society, the position of the merchant was inferior to that of the craftsman and the craftsman's position was in turn inferior to the warrior's. As a member of the ruling class the Turk saw it as his duty to pursue a career in religion, administration or warfare, all in aid of the expansion of the empire. He entrusted trade to inferior nations. The commercial interest of the Turks was restricted to domestic trade or at most to the coastal trade of the Aegean and the Black Seas. They exhibited little enterprise and were totally inexperienced in off-shore sailing and in commercial relations with countries which lay far away from their coasts.[14]

The Turks rarely settled in their newly conquered territories. They left all economic enterprise there to the indigenous population and to foreign merchants. When they conquered Constantinople in 1453 the Ottomans granted commercial rights to the Venetians, Genoese and Florentines. The Jews (as did the Armenians and the Greeks) gradually ousted the Italian merchants, much to the satisfaction of the Ottoman authorities who were concerned to restrict the Italians' influence and to end their hegemony over the economic centres of the Mediterranean, particularly in the face of the Ottomans' growing hostility towards Venice and the other Christian powers. As a neutral factor in the struggle between Christianity and Islam the Jews were best suited to conduct commercial relations between Europe and the East, relations in which both sides were interested, even at times of war, for economic as well as for intelligence purposes.[15]

The sultans Mehmed II (1451-1481) and his son Bayazid (1481-1512), during whose reigns the Jewish immigration from Spain was absorbed, as well as their successors, were concerned for the economic development of the empire. Generally they treated all non-Moslem minorities with tolerance and encouraged them to engage in commerce and to partake of all other economic activities. They developed Constantinople as a commercial centre. Through it passed goods imported from the Far East, India, the Arabian Peninsula and Europe, which were later distributed throughout the Levant. As a result of the territorial expansion and economic prosperity which marked the sixteenth century (particularly its first half), a certain section of Turkish society acquired sufficient wealth to turn Turkey into a focal point of the increased demand for luxury consumer goods imported from Europe and the East.

The government encouraged commerce in various ways: they built khans (caravanserais); a number of settlements in the Balkans were exempted from tax in exchange for undertaking to guard all passages along the main trade routes against bandits, in order to secure a free flow of goods. It was government policy to grant commercial freedom to all in return for the payment of duties to the Treasury.[16]

The capitulation agreements with various European countries, starting with France in 1535, gave foreign merchants complete freedom of enterprise.

Special *Firmans* (edicts) were issued in which the regional governors were requested not to restrict the activities of these merchants but to enable them to trade freely.[17]

The government policy of encouraging free trade was echoed in the rabbinical literature of the Sephardi scholars in the Balkans, Anatolia and Egypt during the sixteenth century. The rabbis were in complete accord with this policy. They noted the change which occurred in these regions during their own times and compared the freedom of trade practised there with the situation as they knew it in earlier generations in Europe, where the Jewish inhabitants of one town could stop their brethren of another from trading in their town. The Spanish exiles benefited from this open-door policy and, in addition, demonstrated a sincere wish to please the authorities and to express their loyalty to them.

The rabbinic sources refer to this matter in connection with the clashes which occurred between local tradesmen and the foreign Jewish merchants, the former demanding from the foreigners who had come to trade in their towns the payment of the *Gabila*, a special toll imposed on all imported goods passing through. Since such restrictions on the freedom of movement and trade contradicted the government's policy and its interests, the government outlawed the toll, which constituted an additional tax to the one already imposed by the state.

R. Samuel de Medina (Rashdam), one of the most prominent rabbinic scholars of Salonika in the sixteenth century, expressed his approval of this policy in connection with the disputes which arose in the towns of Monastir (Bitola, now in the south of Yugoslavia), Janina (now in southern Albania), Skoplje (Üskub, now in the south of Yugoslavia) in the Balkans and Tire (approximately 70km south-east of Smyrna) in Anatolia. A few characteristic passages from his book may be quoted here:

> "In this great kingdom, which opens its gates to all men and where we, the Israelites, have come to dwell, it appears that these laws (restricting foreign merchants) do not apply as they used to apply in the old days and in the old places (in Western Europe, where the internal 'community ban' controlled the movement of foreigners) . . . Moreover, it is the law of the kingdom that every merchant may trade wherever he wishes . . . In this wide open kingdom, which is "like a city that is broken down and without a wall" (Prov. 25, 28) whose gates are open day and night . . . reason dictates that the Jewish inhabitants of one city should not have the power to stop their brethren of another city of this kingdom or outside it, but rather let anyone who so wishes come and trade here as he pleases" (H.M., No. 407)

Other rabbinical scholars of the time writing in the same spirit included, for example, R. Solomon ben Abraham Hakohen (Maharshah, 1520-1601) who was active in Salonika, R. Meir Melamed of Morea (d. probably during the last third of the 17th century) and R. David ben Zimra (Radbaz, 1480-1574) of Palestine and Egypt.[18]

Most commercial activities were based on the presence of an urban

population. The sultans, therefore, effected a policy of urbanisation. The rural population began to flock into the cities (a trend which produced negative results in subsequent generations). Constantinople, Salonika, Adrianople, Bursa, Aleppo, Damascus, Cairo and Alexandria became important commercial centres. In the smaller towns of Anatolia and the Balkans the population likewise increased. In the Balkans alone there was a 70% population increase between the years 1525 and 1575. The larger commercial cities became centres of strength and of economic and political rivalry with the Venetians and other enemies of the Ottomans.

The Jews who had been traditionally an urban factor found these circumstances most advantageous. The exiles from Spain came to the larger centres of Salonika, Constantinople and others, while a minority of them settled in smaller places where they likewise had considerable impact as merchants and craftsmen.[19]

An Englishman travelling in the Levant at the start of the 17th century recorded:

> "There are many Jews in Constantinople, Aleppo, Damascus, Babylon (= Bagdad), Grand Cayro and every great Citie and place of Merchandise throughout all the Turks' dominions."[20]

As the two most important economic centres of the Ottoman empire, Constantinople and Salonika absorbed the largest numbers of Jewish exiles from Spain. Various estimates have been made of the number of Jews who arrived in both these cities, but all the data indicate that the Jewish population increased sharply between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In 1553 the German traveller Dernschwam found in Constantinople 42 synagogues or congregations and some 15,000 Jews, excluding women and children. By the 1560's the number of congregations rose to 44, but after a fire in the city in 1574 less than 40 were recorded. This remained their number throughout the seventeenth century, according to records relating to that period, published by Heyd.[21] The large number of separate congregations was due to the Spanish exiles' wish to retain their communal independence and the distinctiveness of their Spanish traditions. This was at first a positive, unifying factor, but it became a hinderence during the subsequent period of economic decline, when the small congregations could no longer bear the financial burden of maintaining communal services.

In Constantinople there were, in addition, some congregations of Romaniotes — the oldest element there — as well as Ashkenazi congregations. But, owing to their economic and numerical inferiority in relation to the Sephardim, the Romaniotes and Ashkenazim assimilated gradually into the Sephardi community. A similar process took place in Salonika (with the Sicilian Jews as well) and elsewhere in the Levant.[22]

Various estimates exist of the number of Jews in Salonika at its zenith.

Dernschwam suggested that 20,000 Jews resided there at the time of his visit.

Adrianople was likewise a commercial city which attracted the Jewish exiles from Spain. According to one estimate their number increased from 200 in 1525 to 1000 in 1555.[23]

Apart from voluntary immigration, the Ottoman authorities would at times move the Jews forcibly to such localities as they wished to develop economically. Thus Mehmed the Conquerer ordered the transportation of Jews from Macedonia to Constantinople.[24] A similar edict was enacted in 1523 by Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566) who ordered 150 wealthy Jews from Salonika to settle in Rhodes shortly after the conquest of the island from the Knights of St. John. The Turks regarded the Jews as a productive and loyal element. Those forced to move were granted privileges including 20 years' exemption from tax and a free house provided for each family.[25]

Similar decrees were issued in 1576 and 1577 for the transportation of 1,000, and later, 500, well-to-do Jews from Safed and its region to Cyprus. This occured several years after the conquest of the island by the Ottomans. The decrees were eventually revoked, but a subsequent attempt to induce Jewish settlement was made by the governor of Cyprus who was eager to develop the economy of the island, particularly its commerce, and tried to detain there 100 Salonika Jews whose ship had anchored in Famagusta on its way to the Holy Land. By an edict dated 1579 permission was granted to force them to stay on the island, although this also may have been revoked later. In any event, such measures can serve to demonstrate the importance which the Turks had ascribed to the Jews as capable, productive and diligent colonisers.[26]

(c) The third reason for the importance of the Jewish exiles from Spain in the commercial life of the Levant, as outlined above, was the expansion of European trade with the East which occurred in the sixteenth century. Both the Turks and the Jews benefited from the new commercial interests of the Italians, the Portuguese, the French and, following them, the English and the Dutch.[27]

The foreign merchants were interested in merchandise imported from China, India, Persia and southern Yemen such as china, silk, dyes and spices, as well as raw materials originating from the Middle East, such as cotton and wool. They in turn offered manufactured products from Europe. The Jews became involved in this trade both as intermediaries and as providing direct outlets for their own manufactures, such as textiles and silk.

During the period of general economic decline in the Ottoman empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the maintenance of this commercial link with the European merchants in the East became a vital economic function. Because the Jews had based their livelihood chiefly on this economic function, their migration from the empire was delayed. This point is examined in greater detail below, while at this stage the discussion is confined

to the sixteenth century.

In order to establish economic relations and to regulate them, agreements were made defining the rights of the European merchants. The first such agreement was reached by Venice with Suleiman the Magnificent in 1521. This became a precedent for the agreement with Françis I of France in 1535, which was also inspired by anti-Venetian considerations. The agreement contained clauses guaranteeing mutual freedom of movement to the merchants, exemption from tariffs, the formalisation of the consuls' positions and of the procedure for settling disputes between foreigners and Turks and the tariff collectors. English merchants had been active in the Levant already during the first third of the 16th century, but they could use only Venetian vessels for transporting their goods. By 1583, however, Britain had signed an alliance with Turkey which granted British merchants the right to sail under the British flag. Ten years later a similar capitulation agreement was signed with France.

The British Levant Company cultivated Britain's commercial links with the East for more than 200 years. Holland drew up a similar agreement in 1612 and Austria three years later. Other European countries, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Prussia and Spain all reached this stage only in the eighteenth century. These agreements required constant up-dating, and some of the clauses, such as those fixing the rates of tariff, were changed frequently, according to the pressures exerted by each European country.

The European countries trading in the Levant may be divided, then, into three categories, depending on the nature of the agreement with Turkey achieved by each one of them:*viz.*

i) countries which had signed a capitulation agreement;

ii) those countries which had signed a peace-treaty with Turkey guaranteeing their own merchants freedom of trade with adequate representation at the Sublime Porte;

iii) countries without any type of agreement with Turkey, operating under French protection, according to the 1607 proclamation by the Sublime Porte.[28]

The activities of the European merchants in the Levant created opportunities for the incorporation of the Jews into this economic network as entrepreneurs, financiers, brokers and interpreters. These last two terms must be explained and distinguished from one another: The broker (Turkish *samsar*) was the middle man between the merchants, particularly between the foreign merchants and the local ones, as well as between them and the regional or state administration. The Jews knew the languages of both sides, were familiar with the Ottoman official bureaucracy, knew commercial conventions, prices, the currency, and were, therefore, especially suited for this role. In addition, it was customary in the Levant to negotiate commercial transactions through the intermediacy of a third party even when the two

parties directly concerned could understand each other's language.[29] The Jews acted in this capacity even in dealings amongst local merchants, Jews, Turks and Greeks. There were some brokers who provided the credit needed for the completion of these transactions.[30] The task of the interpreter or *dragoman*, as he was usually called, extended far beyond the limits of a mere linguistic facility. There were two types of interpreters: those employed by private individuals and those who occupied positions of high prestige in the service of foreign consuls or ambassadors. An interpreter to the consul would be his guide and counsellor; he would gather information for him on developments in government and the economy and would participate in all negotiations with the authorities. Occasionally he would be entrusted with diplomatic duties including the signing of agreements. All commercial matters would pass through his hands. Alongside the foreign merchants and travellers he enjoyed consular immunity and his position was recognised officially by the Turkish authorities. In official ceremonies and processions the interpreter's place was in front of his consul. By the terms of the capitulation agreements interpreters received patents of protection entitled *berat* which bestowed on them the extra-territorial status enjoyed by their masters the consuls. By these terms they were exempted from tax, immune to prosecution by the Turks and beyond the reach of Turkish law. There were some interpreters who served several masters at the same time. Their income was derived from a percentage of the amount represented by each transaction in which they took part. The Jewish exiles from Spain, the Greeks and the Armenians were the predominant ethnic elements in this occupation.[31]

Textile Production and Trade

(i) Turkey

Production and trade, both local and international, in all aspects of textiles, silk and leather manufacture, were among the most important bases of the existence of the Sephardi diaspora in the Mediterranean. Even before the arrival of the Spanish refugees in the Levant, there were Jews in southern Italy, Greece, Syria and other localities who were engaged in the production and dyeing of silk as well as in other crafts connected with textiles and leather. According to 15th century sources the Jews were involved in the import trade in garments and fine silk into Turkey.[32] But after the arrival in the East of the Jewish refugees from Spain these occupations assumed greater importance. Increased demand, particularly for fine wool and silk garments, was resulting from the emergence of higher income groups enriched by the conquests and the opening up of new trade routes and markets.

The activities of the European merchants seeking to purchase raw materials for the continually growing textile industry in Europe, were

extended. Furthermore; the Spanish Jews had brought with them new techniques in wool manufacture which resulted in increased demand for their product.[33] Raw silk was brought from Persia *via* Syria to Bursa and Constantinople, and from there, after processing, it was sent on to Europe. Cotton came from Syria, Egypt and Cyprus, and wool cloth came from Greece.[34]

The literature of the Sephardi scholars who came to settle in the East contains abundant evidence concerning Jews who traded, both locally and internationally, in silk, dyes, cotton, hides and textiles some of which they manufactured themselves, and which they exported to various places in the Levant and Italy. From these same regions they imported ready-made garments for the consumption of higher income groups.[35] The Jewish refugees from Spain thus took their share of the overall trade in these products between the larger economic centres of the East and those of the West, throughout the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. However, a distinction must be made between the start of this period and its end: while during the sixteenth century the Jewish textile manufacture flourished, in the sixteenth century it declined gradually and the Jewish interest in textiles became confined mainly to commercial aspects.

There is evidence pointing to Jewish participation in this economic activity and its various offshoots throughout the Mediterranean area in which the Jewish exiles from Spain had settled down. Within this area, Salonika was the city which absorbed many of the Jewish immigrants from Spain and became a large and thriving centre of Jewish life. Many Jews chose to settle in Salonika which was a sea-port and a commercial centre with easy access to the sources of raw materials such as fine wool from Macedonia. Thus, through the activities of these Spanish Jews, the city became an extremely important centre of textile manufacture. Many Jews were employed in this industry, both in processing and in the distribution of products. Special regulations were introduced to protect their interests in the industry. On the income derived from it the Jews of Salonika managed to maintain charitable as well as educational institutions, and the city during its most prosperous period became a centre of rabbinic scholarship and literary activity. Clothes and money were sent to the Holy Land. The Turkish authorities likewise benefited from the thriving Jewish textile industry, by imposing a clothes-tax, enlisting the Jews to produce textiles for army use and, indirectly, from the Jewish export trade with foreign countries.[36] It is not surprising, therefore, that they encouraged production. Proof for this is a *firman* issued in 1576 at the request of the Jewish textile manufacturers of Salonika. They complained that a number of Christians had bought and sent to Europe a quantity of wool which was needed by the manufacturers themselves. The *firman* granted the Jewish manufacturers the first option to buy all wool, but its effect was doubtful.[37]

In Adrianople raw wool, brought in from the villages of Macedonia, was stored and then sent to other markets in the Balkans, Constantinople, Syria and the Holy Land where it was used in the textile industry of Safed. In Adrianople, also, a regulation was passed by the *kahal* to stop the sale of wool to foreigners, in order to protect the incomes of local Jewish inhabitants. The Jews of Adrianople sent hides to Ancona and also traded in silk imported from Persia.[38]

In the smaller Balkan towns where the Jewish immigrants from Spain had settled, the range of Jewish occupations was the same as in the larger centres. The evidence for this is contained in the *responsa* literature of the period. The central markets for woolen and silk clothes, imported to the Balkans from Venice, were Janina (in the west of Greece) where the Jews also traded in hides, and Skoplje. Such merchandise was sent into both these towns via Ragusa whose Jewish inhabitants, immigrants from Spain, maintained close commercial links with Italy and the Jews of the East.

Hides from Turkey were sent to Europe via Ragusa. The Jews of Skoplje likewise traded in hides and silk. Textiles manufactured in Salonika were sold in Skoplje as well as in Pleven, Sofia and Nikopol (all three in Bulgaria). Nikopol was an especially important market for Salonika textiles. There were Jewish tanners in Monastir and Trikkala (in central Greece), and in Trikkala, as in Larissa (Eastern Greece), wool manufacture and trade provided an important source of livelihood for the Jews. In both these towns records have survived of the *kahal*'s approbation of wool prices. In Larissa there were Jewish silk dyers as well. In Arta (central Greece) also the Jews traded in textiles. Patras, situated on the western entrance to the Gulf of Corinth, was known for its fine silk, processed by Jews, and foreign merchants used to go there to purchase silk and other merchandise.[39]

Bulgaria was one of the regions providing hides which were then sent on to Constantinople and the Balkans. Jews worked as tanners and they exported the leather to Venice, Ancona and other places.[40]

This happened on the islands, too. On Corfu, according to the account by R. Elijah of Pesaro, written in 1563, the occupations pursued by the Jews could be divided into 'money-lenders, dyers and tanners.'[41] In Rhodes the Jews owned textile workshops set up with the aid of Salonika craftsmen. The Jews of Rhodes exported textiles to Egypt.[42]

The Anatolian communities of Constantinople and Bursa were the centres for the processing and marketing of silk. The Jews were well integrated into this industry. They were also involved in the production of other commodities such as hides which were exported to Italy. Considerable quantities of Salonika textiles used to arrive in Constantinople and were sold there.

The sources regarding these occupations amongst the Jews of Smyrna, Manisa and Bursa deal principally with the seventeenth century, for, after the decline of Salonika, the focal points of Jewish economic life in the empire

moved into these towns.[43]

(ii) Syria

The most important Jewish community there was Aleppo. The city was a centre for silk imports, dyes and other products from India and Persia which were sent on to Turkey and Europe. Aleppo reached its peak of influence and importance at the end of the 16th century and maintained it throughout the 17th century, when British and European merchants came there to buy silk as well as locally grown cotton. The Jews acted as brokers in this trade. Sixteenth century sources mention the commercial activities of the Jews in Aleppo and Damascus. They purchased dyes in India as well as cloth manufactured in Italy.[44]

In Damascus and Tripoli sophisticated silk industries had existed since Mameluk times, and these continued during the subsequent Ottoman period. In Damascus Jews were employed as silk dyers during the nineteenth century. In the sixteenth century the textile manufacturers of Safed sent their merchandise to Damascus and the Jews of Damascus in turn sent silk and textiles to their brethren in Aleppo and Egypt. The Jews of Sidon bought woollen cloth from Constantinople and silk from Venice.

According to a seventeenth century source the Jews of Homs were connected with breeding silk-worms. European merchants had been coming there to purchase silk, cotton and flax, since before the start of the Ottoman period.[45]

(iii) Palestine

Due to the textile industry which had been developed in Safed by Jewish immigrants from Spain, Safed became the most significant Jewish settlement in Palestine during the 16th century and a thriving spiritual centre. This industry served as the economic basis for the immigration into the town, and when it was hit by an economic crisis the town began to decline gradually.[46]

(iv) Egypt

Egyptian Jews used to buy textiles manufactured by the Jews of Safed, Rhodes and Salonika while providing the manufacturers with dyes imported from India. They exported hides to Palestine and Venice, and the Jews of Alexandria sent flax to Ancona. Flax was grown extensively in Egypt; until the eighteenth century Egypt was the chief exporter of this commodity.[47]

In all these localities natural or economic conditions existed which facilitated Jewish integration into production or trade or both, in all branches of light industry. Their geographic proximity to the sources of raw materials

or else, the fact that they had settled along the main routes of transport on which these raw materials were carried from the Far East to the Levant, as well as the traditional skills of the local population, formed the conditions which enabled the Jews to contribute to the development and improvements of these trades as well as the expansion of markets for their products.

Business interests in wool and similar commodities were so prevalent amongst the Spanish Jews of the Levant and dominated their lives to such an extent, that communal and charitable institutions used to invest their funds in textiles or lend them to the producers and merchants while benefiting from the profits. The pupils of the Salonika *Talmud Torah*, for example, were given clothes once a year by the local manufacturers.

The fact that so many Jews were connected with the textile industry guaranteed them a high level of income as long as the sixteenth century prosperity in manufacture and trade lasted. But towards the end of the century the first signs of crisis appeared and, with other manifestations of political and economic instability in Turkey, the economic position of the Jews began to deteriorate. The background, causes and results of this crisis are reviewed below.

The decline of the Ottoman Empire

The period of territorial expansion and economic prosperity in the Ottoman empire, a period which was marked by the rule of gifted sultans equipped with well organised armies and bureaucracies, lasted till the 1560's, namely, till the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566), when a gradual decline began, resulting from a succession of political and economic crises which brought about the deterioration and ultimate disintegration of the empire.[48]

The political and economic stability of the empire had been shaken. Social upheavals and crime spread in the towns and on the roads. Price inflation, the monetary crisis, desertion of the villages for the towns, food shortages and stagnation in the trades were only a few details in the chain of phenomena all indicating collapse and the inexorable closing of a vicious circle. This situation had a strong impact on the economic and social stability of the Sephardi immigrant communities of the Levant. It is against this background that the decline and subsequent dispersion of these Sephardim must be explained.

The reasons for the crisis may be divided into two categories: human failure and natural disasters. The stages of decline are described below in greater detail.

In contrast to the gifted heads of state who emerged in the countries which were hostile to Turkey, the sultans who succeeded Suleiman the Magnificent were weak rulers, immersed in pleasures and subject to the

influences of mistresses, slaves and Court intrigues. They could not control the vast and corrupt imperial administration, the sheer size of which was its greatest weakness. In the second half of the sixteenth century a change was introduced in the procedure for appointing slaves to the Civil Service. Until that time they had been chosen on merit and could not pass on their offices to their heirs. But now the sultans were forced to accept the hereditary right of slaves' sons to office even if they were utterly unsuited for the positions to which they succeeded. As a result, the administration deteriorated further.

The wars in which Turkey engaged and failed, some of which were lengthy and costly both in financial and in human resources, likewise contributed to its decline. The unsuccessful campaign against the Knights of St. John in Malta in 1565, the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 which was very damaging to the Ottoman navy, the wars against Persia which lasted for more than twelve years (1578-1590), the conflict with Austria between 1593 and 1606 and especially the struggle (1683-1699) against the Holy Alliance, headed by Austria which represented a new unity within the Christian world in the face of Islam, forced the Turks to retreat from Buda as well as from most of the Balkan territories which they had conquered before 1526. All these wars left behind a trail of scorched earth throughout the battlefields of the Balkans. The recurrent wars against Venice, as well as the eighteenth century wars against Russia, weakened the Turkish army. The population of the empire shrank and production declined. As a result of unrest and uprisings which, following the wars, occurred amongst the Christian minorities in the Balkans, lands were deserted and the central government was weakened.

The weakness of the Turks at sea, their losses in naval battles, the belated reconstruction of their navy and the delayed application of new techniques encouraged the Christians, particularly Venice and the Knights of Malta — the spearhead of the Christian world, to attack Turkish coastal towns and merchant vessels even in the eastern Mediterranean and in the regions close to the densest centres of population in Turkey. People were taken captive and merchandise was plundered.[49]

During the period of expansion, the Treasury drew its income from goods and manpower captured in war, from taxes and tariffs. In the seventeenth century this income decreased as expenses increased. The wars and the need to maintain an army made it necessary for the government to impose additional and somewhat arbitrary taxes and levies. Craftsmen and farmers, the productive sectors of the population, were forced to pay heavy taxes while the inhabitants of the village through which the troops passed had to provide for them. Religious minorities, including the Jews, were especially exploited.[50] Discipline within the army was weakened, and there were occasional periods of unrest and uprising inspired by the *sipahi* (cavalry) and the *janissaries*.[51]

The authorities made no provisions for stabilising the economy and maintaining food production. Land passed on from the *sipahi* to the courtiers, sycophants and ladies-in-waiting who cared little about the productivity of the land. A non-productive middle sector of society was formed, while the agricultural sector which had suffered from increased land duties, protection money and bribes paid out to state officials, was oppressed by the tax collectors and land lease holders, enslaved to money lenders, and, in addition, smitten by natural disasters such as plague and drought.[52] Fields and irrigation systems were devastated by the wars. Farmers could not maintain the fertility of the soil. All these factors accounted for reduced crops, desertion of the countryside and an influx of migrants into the towns. The growth of the urban population increased the demand for food and drove up the price of wheat. Between 1550 and 1600 prices in Ankara rose five-fold and in the Aegean islands they rose ten-fold. At the same time wheat prices went up in the European markets as well, and merchants began to export wheat from Turkey despite the government's prohibition of this, aggravating the shortage of wheat in Turkey.

Shortages and the consequent rise in food prices, as well as the increased demand for raw materials from the East in the European markets, pushed up prices in Turkey and the value of the currency continued to drop. Another phenomenon which added to the monetary chaos prevailing was the appearance on the market of counterfeit coins, produced by both natives and foreign residents despite the severe penalties imposed by the authorities on all offenders. These included galley slavery, chopping off of hands, confiscation of property and even hanging.[53] Communal efforts to prevent the Jews from becoming involved in counterfeiting were expressed by recurrent *kahal* prohibitions of this activity as well as on the acquisition and circulation of counterfeit coins.[54] But it is doubtful whether the *Kahals* were effective in this respect. Even if Jews did not actually engage in counterfeiting, others did, and the Jews were in effect forced to trade in counterfeit currency.[55]

Because of the growing lack of confidence in the basic Ottoman currency of the silver *asper*, demand grew for the stabler European silver currencies, such as the *Loewenthaler* and especially the Venetian and Florentine gold *ducat*. The incidence of gold-coin clipping rose. Owing to the drop in value, weight and quality of the *asper*, and in order to overcome the shortage and to restore confidence in the currency, the sultans would mint new coins periodically. For this purpose they had to buy silver, gold and other raw material on the European markets.

It should be noted that during this period Western Europe was likewise suffering from inflation, but the Western European states demonstrated greater powers of adaptability than the Turks, and their population was less affected by it.[56]

To give some indication of the drop in the value of the Ottoman silver

currency, a few data may be pointed out: during the reign of Bayazid II (1481-1512) one gold coin was worth 54 aspers. By the end of the 16th century, in the reign of Mehmed II (1595-1603), it was worth 220 aspers. This represents a drop in the value of the asper of approximately 400%. In the 1640's a slight improvement occurred, but during the war with Austria, between 1683 and 1690, as a result of military expenditure, the price of gold coins rose to 360 aspers.[57]

How did inflation affect the economic life of the Jews? Jewish money lenders were adversely affected by it, as the money repaid to them had less purchasing power than the money which they had lent.[58] The rising trend in prices tempted merchants with cash to hoard merchandise,[59] but they also were affected, for, as a result of the economic crisis, the public could not afford to buy, and sales declined. Moreover, trade had been based largely on credit, and the value of deferred payments was reduced by inflation. It was a vicious circle: as a result of the drop in demand and the shortage of money, merchants were forced to sell their goods at declining prices, and their losses multiplied. The many cases of bankruptcy, both amongst Jews and amongst gentiles who owed them money for merchandise or on loan, which were mentioned in the *responsa* literature from the 1570's on, right through the seventeenth century must have been connected with this phenomenon.[60] Some of these bankrupt Jews fled to avoid repaying their debts. Such movement contributed to social instability.

Additional factors contributing to the economic decline of the Jews were riots and the activities of bands of brigands in the towns and on the roads. As a result of the social and economic tremors of the last third of the sixteenth century gangs of desperadoes formed, engaged in robbery and plunder. The central government which had lost control of the bureaucracy and the economy, was also incapable of maintaining internal security. These gangs united in a large-scale uprising which was intensified in the reign of Mehmed III (1595-1603) who fought a war in Hungary. During this war thousands of soldiers deserted the Turkish army to join the ranks of the rebels.

The leader of the uprising, Kara Yaziji, who was active from 1599 till 1602, reached his strongest position in 1600 when he commanded an army of some 20,000 men. During the years 1604-1610 the uprising became more acute when violent, hungry rebels robbed and murdered, totally disrupting life within the empire. Urban centres such as Tire and Ankara suffered especially. Jews were captured and held under threat of death until ransomed by their brethren. In some cases hostages were murdered even without the anticipation of ransom money. In subsequent generations local rebellions occurred occasionally against the background of social, religous and sectarian tension.[61]

In addition to the groups of rebels, soldiers likewise would assault, rob or kill defenceless civilians on the roads.[62] The prevailing chaos encouraged

anyone so inclined to attack travellers, the chief victims being merchants *en route* to the fairs, hawkers as they went round the villages to sell their goods and manufacturers visiting the villages to purchase their supplies of wool as well as milk for the production of cheese.

To guarantee their safety, travellers began to set up convoys and hire armed guards to accompany them. But this did not deter the gangs.[63] This situation constituted an additional disruption undermining the economic position of the Jews.

The position of the Jews during the decline of the Empire

(i) Anti-Jewish agitation and the ousting of Jews by Christian merchants.

As the signs of economic crisis became apparent in Turkey, two developments took place, which can be connected with the deterioration in the civil and economic position of the Jews.

The Moslem and Christian populations had been envious of the achievements and high standing attained by the Jews. Now public resentment was directed against them and they were denounced as responsible for the crisis, as counterfeiters, etc. The fact that most of the Jews were wealthy and some were employed as tax-farmers intensified this resentment at a time when the nation as a whole felt exploited and oppressed. Amongst those who agitated against the Jews were the Moors who, like the Jews, had been expelled from Spain but who did not reach the level of economic achievement attained by the Jewish exiles. One of the ways in which they expressed this hostility was by devastating synagogues and by the expulsion of all Jews from the Galata quarter of Constantinople in 1612. This was done by the Moors who inhabited this quarter of the city, with the aid of the Kadi. Similar events took place elsewhere in the Balkans at the initiative of the Christian-Greek population in subsequent generations.

So long as they prospered and the regime was stable (during the sixteenth century) no one dared harm the Jews. But the economic crisis, the instability of the régime and the declining position of the Jews made room for these actions.[64]

The second development was the increasing rivalry between the Jews and the Christian merchants of the Balkans who gradually took over the Jews' position in domestic and international trade. This trend was connected with the cultivation of Christian sectarian and national consciousness, which drew its vitality from the defeat of the Turks and the victories won by the European powers in the course of the seventeenth century. The Greeks, the Serbs and the Bulgarians had turned from a largely rural to an urban population and their share of trade grew at the expense of the Jews. In all the Balkan urban centres the Moslem-Turkish population declined and the Christian population

increased.

The authorities took notice of this development and in 1669 Sultan Mehmed IV (1648-1687) issued a *firman* permitting the Bulgarians to settle in those quarters of Sofia in which the population was declining; these had been previously restricted to Turks only, and he excluded the Jews from these quarters. Economic and administrative offices previously held by the Jews were now being passed on to local Christians. In the seventeenth century, and to a greater extent during the eighteenth, the Armenians ousted the Jews from economic offices.[65]

(ii) **Changed trade routes**

Another factor, unconnected with internal developments in the Levant, which reduced commercial opportunities in the region, was the change which took place in the main trade routes. Instead of the traditional route leading from India to Europe via the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf to Iraq, Syria and Anatolia, in the sixteenth century and particularly in the seventeenth, merchant ships began to make the journey by way of the Cape of Good Hope. As a result of this, economic activities in the commercial centres of the Levant, Alexandria, Aleppo, Bursa and Constantinople, were curbed, and even Venice suffered from this change. The economic significance of the Mediterranean countries declined gradually, to the benefit of the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English.[66]

There were other factors in operation, deriving largely from the nature of Turkish society and the policies adopted by the Ottoman authorities. As mentioned above, the Turkish citizens had no interest in cultivating international trade. Moslem merchants never operated in Europe. On the other hand, European merchants came to dominate not only the sea routes from the Far East but also all trade within the Levant. They founded colonies and became established in the commercial towns of the East.

The Christian powers took advantage of Turkey's military and economic weakness, and in their renewed capitulation agreements with the empire they managed to obtain for their merchants better conditions and additional privileges such as reduced tariff rates. While local merchants had to pay tax, foreigners were exempt by the terms of the agreements and, furthermore, even the consul's servants and interpreters were exempt from tax. The consuls used to sell the *berat* — an official document granting exemption from tax — to all members of their *entourage*. This lent itself to corruption, for the *berat* could, and often was, sold to anyone offering a good price for it, without being in the employment of the consul. Thus the circle of tax evaders grew, and the income of the treasury dropped continually.[67]

Restrictions were imposed on all local merchants as a result of the economic depression. In 1590 the export of products such as wheat, barley,

cotton, wool, hides and horses was prohibited.[68] On the other hand, the European merchants could purchase in the East without any interference raw materials intended for European industries, including the textile industry, all on the strength of the capitulation agreements. In the seventeenth century Venice, for example, encouraged her merchants to go as far as Bulgaria to purchase hides, instead of resorting to the services of local merchants some of whom were Jews. The Europeans sold in the Levant such products as textiles and garments manufactured in Europe, as well as those goods imported from the Far East which they could not sell in their own countries. This cut down the production of local manufacturers in the Levant.[69]

(iii) **Declining Standards of Production in the East**

The conservative nature and rigid family traditions maintained by craftsmen in the East prevented the possibility of innovation in the crafts. In addition, the guilds were too weak to introduce new techniques. The Turks' sense of superiority and hostility to the Christian world had created a barrier which foreclosed the possibility of learning from the experience of Christian craftsmen and adopting their new techniques, at a time when the scale of production and its quality in Europe were rising.[70] This resulted in the stagnation of the crafts.

The Jewish immigrants from Spain whose novel techniques had raised professional standards in the East during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, ceased to act as an innovating factor in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The Ottoman régime did not protect local industry nor encourage it. There was also a paucity of sources of energy for the mechanisation of production as a result of the drop in the quantity of timber throughout the Mediterranean. Goods produced in the East could not compete in price and quality with those imported from Western Europe, and consumers in the Levant demanded European products. All these factors harmed local production.[71]

(iv) **The crisis in the textile industry.**

The factors listed above may shed light on the crisis which hit the textile industry in the East, an industry in which the Sephardi Jews had a considerable share. The Jewish manufacturers did not adapt themselves to changing fashions and the new techniques which had been developed in Western Europe. They could not survive competition with the variety of styles, the quality and prices of garments, textiles and silk produced in the Netherlands, France (particularly notable for its silk) and above all Britain, which were imported by European merchants (among them Jews). The

expansion of British commercial activities through the Levant Company from the beginning of the seventeenth century, introduced English textiles into the Levant markets. In the eighteenth century these markets were also flooded by "Leipzig garments" manufactured in Aachen in Germany and named after the Leipzig fair. Newly enriched Turkish officials bought Russian furs and European luxury garments. The women preferred French imported silk to the silk which was produced in Bursa.[72]

The textile and silk industries in the Italian towns of Venice, Florence, Genoa and Milan, which had enjoyed a high reputation and flourished in the sixteenth century, when the Jews played a part in marketing these products and distributing them throughout the Mediterranean, were undergoing a crisis in the seventeenth century. The causes of this crisis were complex: an outburst of the plague which lasted from 1630 till 1657 wiped out a third of the Italian urban population. A shortage of skilled labour resulted, pushing up wages and increasing the cost of production. Taxes were increased, and all this, in addition to the outdated methods of production, created a situation in which English textiles could compete with the domestic product. Delicate Venetian garments, previously worn by the wealthiest sections of Turkish society, were substituted by garments manufactured in England and elsewhere, as mentioned above.[73]

(v) The Jewish communities

(a) Salonika and Safed

The main economic basis of the two most important communities of the Jewish refugees from Spain in the 16th century, Salonika and Safed, had been the textile industry. Both these communities, as indeed many others, were hit by the crisis; consequently, their social and economic stability was undermined. Charitable and educational institutions had lost their financial backing, merchants and scholars alike scattered seeking new places of residence and new sources of income. The decline of Safed was connected with a succession of events, including raids by Arabs and Druze, from the 1570's on, cruel oppression by the regional Governor, plague, locusts and a drop in the number of immigrants to the Holy Land. However, considerable significance must be ascribed to the crisis in the textile industry. Already in the early 1570's the industry had experienced difficulties in distributing its products. A surplus was created which caused prices to drop. The flooding of the markets with English and other textiles blocked the domestic producers' outlets to a considerable extent. The heavy tax imposed on producers further aggravated the situation. A consignment of wool and money which the Jews of Constantinople had sent to Safed by sea between the years 1599 and 1601 in order to revitalise the textile industry and to help sustain the town's Jewish

community, was lost: one ship sank and the other was captured. Manufacturers and merchants were shifting to other occupations. There was a wave of emigration from the Holy Land. Only well-established producers survived this crisis, but the majority were wiped out by it. One of them, Ovadiah Alfandari, is known through reports about him which were collected in 1691. He went bankrupt as a result of heavy taxes imposed on him by the authorities, emigrated to Egypt and was killed on his way from there to Morocco.[74]

The crisis reached Salonika a few years after it had hit Safed. But there also economic conditions had begun to deteriorate gradually. Epidemics and fires caused damage to life and property. In the big fire of 1620 twenty eight synagogues were destroyed, as well as many houses including a number of textile workshops. The 'clothes tax' which could be tolerated so long as the community flourished, now overburdened the producers who had to face increasing competition, rising costs, a drop in demand and continually rising taxes. A delegation of Salonika Jews pleaded before Sultan Murad IV (1623-1640) in 1637 for an alleviation of the clothes tax, but their mission failed and the leader of the delegation, R. Judah Covo, was hanged as a result.

Trade in the Jewish community of Salonika suffered from raids by gangs of robbers and murderers in and around the city, as people were assaulted on their way to the fairs.

The Jewish families of Salonika who represented the greater share of professional skill in the textile industry began to leave the city. Several waves of Jewish emigrants left Salonika from the beginning of the seventeenth century, to settle in other Balkan cities, in Anatolia, the Mediterranean islands and its shores, including Egypt (whose economic crisis had not yet become so severe) and the western European states. Internal security as well as economic opportunities in Constantinople and Smyrna were better than in Salonika, mostly due to the presence of European merchants there. Many Salonika Jews moved, therefore, to these two cities, and the focus of Jewish economic and cultural life likewise shifted away from Salonika. But the Jews of Salonika did not forget their textile experience. Often they applied it elsewhere. Some of these Jews established weaving workshops in Monastir (Bitola).[75]

Between the 1640's and 1660's, during the Cretan war, Sultan Mehmed IV was resident in Salonika, and the Jewish population of the city was drained of its financial resources by him and victimised by his troops. Another event in the 1660's which had an adverse economic effect was the appearance on the scene of Shabbetai Zevi. The belief in his messianic powers made many Jews totally indifferent to economic matters and paralysed all economic enterprise. They abandoned their shops and workshops in anticipation of their imminent transportation to the Holy Land. This was reported by Sir Paul Rycaut, the British consul in Smyrna, who wrote that many Jews believed that in the

Messianic era they would come into possession of all the property which had belonged previously to non-believers, and that, therefore, there was no need to strive and labour in the present era, which had nearly reached its end.[76]

In 1686 another false Messiah, Jacob ben Joseph Philosoph, made his appearance in Salonika, and some 2000 Jews followed his example and converted to Islam.

Between the 1730's and 1750's several fires occurred in Salonika and the Jewish quarter was damaged.[77] All these events led to a sharp decline in the Jewish population of the city. According to one estimate it was reduced from 40,000 in 1660 to 12,000 in 1792. Those who stayed in Salonika suffered severe financial hardship. In 1725 they addressed a question to the rabbis of Constantinople, seeking to establish whether or not it was permitted to use public charitable funds to pay their debts.[78] In 1759 the Jews of Salonika pleaded with the Portuguese congregation of Amsterdam, which had absorbed some recent Jewish immigrants from Salonika, to help them pay their overdue taxes. In the Amsterdam protocol it was noted that the Salonika community had never asked for help in the past.[79]

However, even during this period of depression, there were some Jews in Salonika who remained in textile manufacture, though on a smaller scale. The industry died out completely only in 1826, when Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) ordered the remaining workshops to close down.[80]

(b) **Adrianople**

Adrianople had been the second most important Jewish community in the Balkans, and retained a position of importance even after the decline of Salonika. In the eighteenth century it still enjoyed economic conditions which enabled the Jews to establish themselves there. From Adrianople commercial relations were conducted with the Mediterranean countries and with western Europe. European merchants, among them the British, founded a European colony there which served as a basis for their economic activities. The Jews fitted into this commercial network in the rôle of customs-tax-farmers, as they had done in Constantinople and Bursa. The account by Lady Wortley Montagu who visited the city in 1716, quoted above, contains some details concerning the position of the Jews in Adrianople and their occupations:

> "Every Pasha has his Jew, who is his *homme d'affaires;* he is let into all his secrets, and does all his business. No bargain in made, no bribe received, no merchandise disposed of, but what passes through their hands. They are the physicians, the stewards, and the interpreters of all the great men."

Although somewhat exaggerated, this account indicates the range of Jewish occupations amongst which brokers and interpreters were the most prevalent,

and it points to their privileged economic position and the consequent envy of the Christians.

By the end of the eighteenth century, following the Napoleonic wars, international trading activities in the region were curtailed, and the Jews moved from Adrianople to other centres including Vienna. In 1801 there was a fire in Adrianople which caused severe damage to Jewish life and property. From then on the community continued to decline.[81]

(c) **Constantinople**

As mentioned above, from the beginning of the seventeenth century Salonika Jews had been moving to Constantinople. But this important commercial centre of the East was also gradually declining, to be succeeded by Smyrna. Nevertheless, in the seventeenth century Jewish communal and cultural life in Constantinople was still active. The community organised help for the refugees of the 1648-49 persecution in the Ukraine who were arriving in Constantinople by way of the Black Sea. They raised ransom money to free Jewish captives and to support them. From the beginning of the eighteenth century the 'Constantinople Officials' (*pekidim*) were the patrons of the Jewish community in Jerusalem, and Constantinople Jews raised funds for the community in the Holy Land. However, compared with the position of the city in the sixteenth century, and with that of Smyrna, particularly in the eighteenth, there had been a decline.[82]

From a source dated 1772 it appears that the Constantinople congregations suffered an annual deficit of 11,000 *aspers*, in addition to accumulated older debts. Fires and epidemics also contributed to undermining the stability of the Jewish community and increased emigration.

(d) **Smyrna**

In the seventeenth century and even more so in the eighteenth, Smyrna became the most important economic centre in Turkey, overshadowing even Constantinople, the capital.[83] For this reason it attracted many Jews from various other localities. After the rise of Shabbetai Zevi, the influx of Jews from Salonika increased. In the course of the seventeenth century Jews came to Smyrna from Tire and Manisa in Anatolia which had been raided several times by gangs of bandits. Smyrna became a cosmopolitan city. Apart from the English merchants for whom it served as the main centre of commercial relations with the East, French, as well as Dutch, merchants were attracted there. The Jews participated in all this commercial activity as brokers, interpreters, money lenders and as independent merchants selling goods to the foreigners. Jews from other cities sent merchandise such as wool and cotton wool to Smyrna for sale to foreign merchants. The Jews of Smyrna

maintained close commercial links with their brethren overseas, including those in the Holy Land.[84]

Fires seem to have wiped out the achievements of Jewish economic enterprise in Smyrna. The big fire of 1772 devastated the Street of the Jews. Shops and synagogues were devoured by the flames. The Jews turned for help to their brethren in Adrianople whose economic position was still relatively satisfactory. Seventy years later, in 1840-41, a succession of fires hit the city again, causing severe damage.[85]

In summary it may be said that Smyrna and Adrianople were the Jewish communities in the Levant which managed to maintain their economic and spiritual vitality for longer than any of the other communities affected by the economic crisis.

(e) **Syria**

Syria did not escape the crisis which hit the Levant, though it would seem that its effect there was not as severe as in the Balkans. The Jews in all the urban communities of Syria were hit by inflation and the roads were not safe. Jewish merchants were robbed and murdered. In addition to this there had been a number of epidemics and natural disasters which affected agriculture. As a result food prices rose sharply.[86]

The Jews were rescued from the ill effects of the crisis by European merchants who, in the seventeenth century, intensified their commercial activities in the Syrian cities, particularly in Aleppo, where they established a number of merchants' colonies. This benefited the Jews who were employed by the foreign merchants as their brokers, interpreters and money-lenders. Following the arrival of the foreign merchants, Jewish merchants from Italy, particularly from Leghorn, came to Aleppo and settled there while maintaining their separate identity and traditions in relation to the indigenous Jewish population. They enjoyed consular French and, in the eighteenth century, consular British protection, but in the course of time they became integrated into the local Sephardi community.[87]

From the 1780's on, developments took place which reduced the Jewish share in the commercial life of Aleppo. The first was Christian rivalry, west European as well as Greek and Armenian. Volney[88] who visited Syria and Egypt between 1783 and 1785 wrote that Syrian trade, previously in the exclusive control of the Jews, had now passed into Christian hands. During this period Jews were also being ousted from their positions as tax collectors and financial administrators. Secondly, the British merchants who were the second most important foreign factor in the city (after the French) diverted all their trade with India from Aleppo to Iraq. As a result of this, a considerable proportion of the transit trade no longer passed through Aleppo.[89]

Volney noted further that at the time of his visit, conditions for trade in

Syria were poor. The roads were not maintained in good repair; Bedouins and gangs of bandits had complete control over them; there was not a single port that was safe from pirates and well maintained. The European merchant colony which had flourished in the seventeenth century began to shrink in the second half of the eighteenth century. French trade in Syria stopped with the French Revolution, and by the nineteenth century Aleppo had ceased to attract foreign merchants altogether. After the departure of the foreign merchants, the Jews concentrated on domestic trade, but this did not yield the results which contact with west European trade had yielded in the previous centuries.

(f) **Tripoli**

Tripoli which had been an important port for cotton exports and a centre of silk production in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, became in the eighteenth century the target of raids by the Knights of Malta, who gained control over a large section of the Mediterranean and who could reach as far as the coastal towns of Syria and Palestine. They collaborated with Dahr El Umar, the regional governor of Galilee. French intervention, intended to put a stop to these raids, was unsuccessful.[90] A traveller who visited the town in the beginning of the nineteenth century described its poverty, the decline of trade and the presence of only a few Sephardi Jews.[91]

(g) **Egypt**

In the early years of the Ottoman occupation of Egypt, the government was concerned with economic rehabilitation. State supervision and control of the economy was extended. The Jews played an important part in the economy, first and foremost in all the occupations connected with finance. There were Jewish minters, money changers and Court bankers in the service of the government administration, domestic merchants, importers and exporters, brokers and interpreters.

Until the middle of the eighteenth century there were many Jewish tax-farmers concerned with the *Mukata'at* in the urban areas, and this was one of their most important sources of income. The prevailing theory within the Ottoman empire was that all land, any installations on it, such as a harbour, as well as any property or products which were situated on it, including agricultural and industrial produce, belonged to the Sultan. These constituted the *Mukata'at*. In order to guarantee his income from the various elements of the *Mukata'at*, the collection of tax on each or every one of them within a region was leased for a limited period (up to three years) to individuals who would pay the authorities a certain sum of money for this franchise.[92]

However, from the middle of the eighteenth century and, increasingly,

from the 1760's on, local Christians began to oust the Jews from their rôle of tax farmers, as well as from all other positions within the financial and political administration, and from their traditional role as interpreters.

In international trade the Jews were likewise ousted by the Greeks and Armenians. The Greeks who had failed in their attempts during the eighteenth century to overthrow the Ottoman rule (the Morea uprising of 1770) were oppressed and sought refuge outside the Balkans. They came to Egypt and were integrated successfully into both domestic and international trade there.

Another factor which undermined the economic condition of the Jews in Egypt was the fact that various European countries, such as the Netherlands, France and the Baltic states, began to grow flax in increasing quantities and no longer required Egyptian flax which, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, had been imported to Europe on a very large scale. In the course of the eighteenth century the level of Egypt's flax exports continually declined, and by the end of the century exports had ceased altogether.[93]

(vi) **Brokers and Interpreters in the service of foreign merchants**

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the Jewish share in production, the crafts, the professions and international trade in the Mediterranean countries, was declining gradually, the occupation which served as a substitute source of livelihood and increasingly prevalent everywhere, was service in the employment of the European merchants. It is not by accident that the majority of Jewish literary sources depicting Jewish brokers and interpreters in the service of foreign merchants belong to this period. These Jews occasionally also lent money to merchants who were temporarily short of cash. The sources provide details concerning the conditions of employment under which the Jewish brokers operated.

Two or three Jews would sometimes form a partnership, establishing exclusive rights to deal with one of the bigger commercial houses, their income deriving from a certain fixed percentage of the profits. These exclusive rights (*hazakah*) were often hereditary. Some merchants insisted in advance on their right to terminate such employment at any time, precisely in order to prevent the claim to exclusive and hereditary rights by the brokers. On the other hand, the Jewish brokers occasionally obtained these rights by approval of the municipal governor, thus securing their monopoly and income. The constant fear of trespassing by fellow brokers led the Jewish brokers physically to prevent any access to 'their' merchant from all possible rivals. The problems of exclusive rights and trespassing in relation to brokers and interpreters were the subject of many controversies and debates within the Jewish community. Due to this, rabbinic literature contains detailed historical evidence on this topic, including the fact that Jewish brokers were in

the service of English, Flemish and French merchants in Turkey. These sources refer, for example, to certain Jews as "brokers at the gate of a foreign merchant" or "a gentile merchant", and it may be assumed that the "foreign" or "gentile" merchant in such cases is one of the European merchants operating in Smyrna, Adrianople, Aleppo etc.[94]

In a source dated 1668 a Jew by the name of Jacob Florentine is mentioned as being the French consul's interpreter (possibly in Salonika), and in 1749 Elijah Samnun was employed as an interpreter in Salonika. The Venetian representatives in this city likewise employed a Jewish interpreter.[95]

(vii) **Migration from east to west**

In the previous sections we explored the changes and economic crises which followed the period of prosperity in the Levant. A combination of these factors weakened the economic and social foundations of the Levantine Sephardi communities and stimulated migration to western and central Europe. This trend became more pronounced in the eighteenth century.

Positive economic and political factors were also in operation, encouraging the migration of Jews from the Levant to Europe. The centre of gravity of international trade had shifted from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, where it was conducted under British and Dutch control. Britain and the Netherlands, engaged in a political and economic struggle against Catholic Spain and wishing to expand their commercial interests, were willing to offer shelter to Jewish refugees from Spain and Portugal as well as to others who found in these two countries conducive outlets for their economic enterprise. Holland granted Jews, Greeks and Armenians the same rights of free trade as the rights enjoyed by her own citizens. The British opened their gates to free economic activity, and this was demonstrated in 1753 by the admission of Jews to the Levant Company. Another factor which must be borne in mind is the principle of religious tolerance which was upheld by both Britain and the Netherlands.

After the Holy League's victories over the Turks at the end of the seventeenth century, the Hapsburgs began to colonise Hungary and encouraged German farmers to settle there. These new settlers were in need of middlemen to distribute their agricultural and other produce. Greek, Macedonian and Jewish merchants from Turkey were attracted to Hungary for this reason. The rise in the population of Europe generally, and the increased volume of production, offered good opportunities to the commercial sector which mediated between producers and consumers. The spirit of enlightenment which prevailed in eighteenth century Europe increased tolerance towards the Jews. Sephardi immigrants from the Levant established congregations in Vienna as well as in Temesvar in Transylvania which maintained close links with each other. Austria granted full citizenship to the

Jews in 1796. Turkish Jews visited Hamburg and attended the Leipzig fair. Others scattered in various localities in Europe. Some formed their own congregations retaining their identity as Spanish refugees, while others were integrated into the existing Ashkenazi communities or assimilated into the gentile world.[96]

NOTES

1 On the range of occupations of the Jewish refugees from Spain, their economic position and contribution to the Ottoman economy according to non-Jewish sources, see A. H. LYBYER, *The Government of the Ottoman Empire in the time of Suleiman the Magnificent,* (Cambridge, 1913) p.241, after the account by an Italian traveller, Benedetto Ramberti, who toured the Levant in 1534. The Frenchman Pierre Belon (1517-1564) visited the region in the 1540's: Pierre BELON, *Les Observations de Plusieurs Singularités et Choses Memorables, Trouvées en Grèce & c.*, (Paris 1588). The details concerning the Jews were published by Lusitanus, *OYS*, I (1959) pp.62-73. The German Hans Dernschwam visited Turkey in the 1550's: F. BABINGER, *Hans Dernschwam's Tagebuch einer Reise nach Konstantinopel und Kleinasien 1553-1555, nach der Urschrift im Fugger Archiv*, (München & Leipzig, 1923) pp.107, 110-114, 250. The details concerning the Jews were quoted by PORGES in *MGWJ*, 68 (1924), pp.244-245. Compare C. ROTH, *The House of Nasi; Dona Gracia*, (Philadelphia 1948), p.95; H. LAMB, *Suleiman the Magnificent, Sultan of the East*, (New York, 1951), p.84. The Frenchman Nicholas de NICOLAY accompanied the French ambassador to Constantinople in the 1550's. See his account, according to the English translation of the French original, *The Navigations, Peregrinations and Voyages made into Turkey*, in: *A Collection of Voyages*, (London 1745) Vol. I p.624. Compare GROSS, *REJ* 56 (1908) pp.2ff. HEYD, *Oriens* 16 (1963) pp.152 ff. See also M. FRANCO, *Dibrey Yemey Hayehudim Be'Eretz Turkia*, (Jerusalem, 1904) p.78; S. P. SCOTT, *History of the Moorish Empire in Europe*, (Philadelphia & London 1904), Vol. III pp. 154-176; A. GALANTE, *Sinai* VI (1940) pp.459-473; M. BENAYAHU, *Sinai* 28 (1951) p.181; Y. R. MOLCHO, *Sefunot* II (1958) pp.29-30; *idem, OYS* I (1959) p.16; L. S. STAVRIANOS, *The Balkans Since 1453*, (New York 1958) p.90; R. MANTRAN, *Istanbul dans la Seconde Moitié du XVII Siècle*, (Paris 1962) pp.57, 61, 93, 97, 185, 208-209; ISSAWI, 'The decline of Middle Eastern Trade, 1110-1850' in *Islam and the Trade of Asia, A Colloquium* ed. by S. R. RICHARDS, (Oxford 1970) p. 250; H. INALCIK, in: *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*, ed. by M. A. COOK, (London, 1970) p.207; *idem*, *JEH* 29 (1969) pp.121-138. On Jews in the guilds, see B. LEWIS, 'The Islamic Guilds', *EHR* 18 (1937) pp.20-37; S. SHAW, *Slavic Review* 21 (1962) p.618; G. BAER, *Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times*, (Jerusalem, 1964) p.6; *idem*, 'Monopolies and Restrictive Practices of Turkish Guilds', *JESHO* 13 (1970), pp.145-165.

2 Sir A. de C. BROOKE, *Sketches in Spain and Morocco*, (London 1831) Vol. I p.248.

3 Nicholas de NICOLAY, *op.cit.*, notes the Jewish share in commerce, Jewish skills, and, under the heading: "Of the Merchant Jews dwelling in Constantinople and other places of Turkey and Greece", he adds ". . . Likewise they have amongst them workmen of all arts and handicrafts more excellent and especially of the Maranos of late banished and driven out of Spain and Portugal, who to the great detriment and damage of Christianity have taught the Turks divers inventions crafts and Engines of war as to make artillery . . . gun powder, shot and other ammunition."

4 INALCIK, *JESHO* 3 (1960), pp.133-139; H. F. M. PRESCOTT, *Jerusalem Journey; Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the 15th Centurey* (London 1954) p.16.

5 All the sources, including Pierre Belon, Dernschwam and others, are mentioned in note 1 above. Nicolay points out that the Jewish shops in the towns of Turkey and Greece, particularly in Constantinople, are stocked with merchandise of the highest quality, and that the Jews are also involved in shipping. According to him, their economic prosperity increases their numbers. While describing Chios, Gallipoli and Adrianople, he writes that the Jews of these cities are engaged in commerce, both in land and on the seas. With regard to Adrianople he adds that there are many "Rich Jews and Great Traders" there. See *A Collection of Voyages, op.cit.* Vol. I pp.581, 585, 624, 629.

6 ROTH, *Dona Gracia*, p.112; *idem, The Duke of Naxos*, pp.18, 35, 42, 46-48, 55-56, 156, 211. On the Ancona *herem*, see RASHDAM, *HM*, No. 305; *Dibrei Ribot*, No. 365; BEN LEB, *Part I*, No. 115, Part II, No. 54; MABIT, No. 237; *Nahalah liHoshua*, No. 39, 40; SONNE, *REJ* 89 (1930), pp.360-373; ROSANES, *Dibrey Yemey Israel beThogarma*, Vols. I—V, (Tel-Aviv-Sofia 1930-1938), Vol. II, pp.78-80; MARCUS, *Sinai* 29 (1951), pp.16-17; BENAYAHU, *loc. cit.*, p.193; HAROSEN, *Sinai* 30 (1952). On Solomon Ibn Y'aish, see A. GALANTE, *Sinai* 6 (1940), pp.459-473.

7 BENAYAHU, 'R. David ben Ban Veneste MiSaloniki Ve'Iggarto LeRabbi Avraham ibn Y'aish', *Sefunot* 11 (1978), pp.269-297; *idem*, 'Beyt Abravanel BeSaloniki', *Sefunot* 12 (1978), pp.9-67.

8 Thus, for example, William Lithgow, who toured the Levant in the first decade of the 17th century, writes in 1610-11: "The whole commerce of all commodities in Turkey is in the hands of the Jews, and Christians to wit, Ragusans, Venetians, English, French and Flemings . . . they enjoy the most profits of any trading there." W. LITHGOW, *The Rare Adventures and Painefull Peregrinations of long nineteen years Travels from Scotland to Europe Asia and Africa*, (Glasgow 1906) p.148.

9 GIBB & BOWEN, *Islamic Society and the West*, (Oxford 1950) Vol. I Part I, p.309. He points out the fact that domestic trade in Turkey, Egypt and Syria was in the hands of Christians, Syrians, Armenians and Jews. See also KURAT & BROMLEY, *The New Cambridge Modern History*, VI (1970), pp.611-612; VUCINICH, *Slavic Review* 21 (1962), p.613; D. LANDES, *Bankers and Pashas . . .* (London 1958) p.24.

10 *The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (London 1837) II, p.13; compare MARCUS, *Sinai* 45 (1959), pp.377-378.

11 On the new commercial methods introduced into the Levant by the Jewish refugees from Spain, see SCOTT, III, p.164. Pierre Belon notes that the Spanish refugees in Turkey are fluent in four or five languages, and some of them know as many as ten or twelve (cf. note 1). See also W. E. D. ALLEN, *Problems of Turkish Power in the 16th Century*, (London, 1964) pp.12, 30 ff. On family kinship and a common extraction and religious background as incentives for international commercial activities, see LANDES, *op. cit.*, pp.26-28; MOLCHO, *loc. cit.*, pp.29-30; MANTRAN, *op. cit.*, pp.56, 215; C. SALTER (F. Knight), *Introducing Turkey*, (London, 1961) p.52; VUCINICH, *loc. cit.*, p.605.

12 Some Spanish Jews were skilled in various agricultural areas such as vinedressing, and these traditions were maintained by the Spanish refugees who settled in Turkey and the Balkans. In Salonika, for example, a number of Jews were mentioned in sixteenth century sources as vineyard owners, but this appears to have been uncommon. See RASHDAM, *HM*, No. 250; *Lehem Rab*, No. 209; *Dibrei Ribot*, No. 425. In this last source the following account is related: "Reuben bought a vineyard from Simon for 15,600 silver coins; at the time of the purchase the grapes had not yet appeared on the vines"; MAHARSHAH, Part III No. 75. The wealthy Jew, Jacob Ezra, of Salonika owned a vineyard which was situated near the city. See on this, MOLCHO, *loc. cit.*, p.45 note 49. In the Holy Land during this period there were Jews in the villages near Safed who were engaged in agriculture. See KENA'ANI, *Zion* (Me'assef) 6 (1934) pp.208-217; BEN ZVI, *Eretz Yisrael VeYishuvah BiYemey HaShilton HaOttomani*, Jerusalem 1955, pp. 147-149, 188-193; Itzhak NISSIM, 'Teshubot Yom Tov Tzahalon Be

'Inyeney 'Abodat Adamah . . . ' *Sefunot* 9 (1965) pp.7-9.

13 Paul RYCAUT, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London 1668) p.216.

14 H. BLOUNT, *A Voyage into the Levant* (London 1650) pp.133-34; C. THOMSON, *Travels . . . Containing Observations on France, Italy, Turkey in Europe, the Holy Land, Arabia, Egypt*, (London 1744) Vol. II, pp.171-172; BENT (ed.), *Early Voyages and Travels in the Levant*, (London 1893) p.IV; STOIANOVICH, *JEH* 20 (1960), pp.291-292; D. HOTHAM, *The Turks* (London 1972) p.67.

15 A. GALANTE. *Sinai* 6 (1940), pp.460,464; BENAYAHU, *Sinai* 28 (1951), p.183; STOIANOVICH, *loc. cit.*, p.240; MANTRAN, *op. cit.*, pp.525,531-2; *idem,* in RICHARDS, *Islam and the Trade*, pp.171-2; C. M. KORTEPETER, 'Imperial Policy and the economy of the Black Sea Region in the sixteenth century' *JAOS* 86 (1966), p.100. At times of war, any Jew who was willing to allow trade to be carried on in his name by a Turkish merchant seeking to avoid risking the confiscation of his merchandise by the enemy, was awarded a fee equalling 20% of the value of the merchandise. On the other hand, the Jew was held responsible for the merchandise if it was confiscated despite this precaution. This is reported in an eighteenth century source. See *Hiqrei Leb*, Part II, *YD* No. 48.

16 On the measures taken by Mehmed the Conqueror to develop Constantinople immediately after the city was conquered in 1453, including the inducement of craftsmen to settle there by exempting them from tax, see A. HESS, *AHR* 75 (1970), p.1901. On Constantinople as an economic centre and the incorporation of the Jews in its economy, see MANTRAN, *op. cit.*, pp.3, 583; ALLEN, *op. cit.*, p.12; PORGES, *MGWJ* 68 (1924), p.244; BENAYAHU, *loc. cit* p. 181. On commercial freedom and trade incentives, see STOIANOVICH, *loc. cit.*, pp. 242-244, 309; KORTEPETER, *loc. cit.*, p.100.

17 The Sublime Porte directed such a *firman* to the Governor of Damascus and to the *Kadi* of Safed on September 2nd, 1585, See U. HEYD, *Ottoman Documents on Palestine 1552-1615* (Oxford 1960) pp.133-4.

18 To Monastir: RASHDAM: *YD* No. 122, *HM* No. 363. To Janina: *HM* No. 407. To Skoplje, *ibid.*, No. 141. To Tire: *YD*, No. 126; MAHARSHAH, Part III, No. 76; *Mishpat Zedek*, Part I, No. 47, Part II, No. 77; RADBAZ, No. 2248) MABIT Part III, No. 31; *Mishpetei Shemuel*, No. 60. See also, E. BASHAN, 'Hofesh HaMishar VeHatalat Misim UMechasim al Soharey HaHutz HaYehudiyim BaImperia HaOttomanit BaMe'ot Ha 16-17', *MiMizrah Umi-Ma'arab* 1 (1974), pp. 105-166.

19 SOKOLSKI, *Balcanica* I (1970), pp. 95-96; F. CARTER, *Dubrovnik (Ragusa) — A Classic City State* (London & New York 1972) pp. 379-80.

20 William BIDDULPH, *Travels into Africa, Asia and to the Black Sea* (London 1609) p. 72.

21 According to one estimate, between 30,000 and 40,000 Jews arrived in Constantinople from the fifteenth century to the sixteenth. According to another estimate there were 1500 families in 1574. See STOIANOVICH, loc. cit., p.246; DERNSCHWAM, *op. cit.*, pp.107-109; U. HEYD, 'The Jewish Communities of Istanbul in the 17th Century', *Oriens* 6 (1953) pp.299-314.

22 On the Ashkenazim in Salonika, see MOLCHO, *Yeda' 'Am* 3 (1955) pp.37-39; *idem*, *OYS* 3 (1960), pp.83-85. On the Sicilians, see ROTH, *Eretz Yisrael* 3 (1954), p.231. On the Ashkenazi communities in Turkey and the Balkans, see, S. SPITZER, *MiMizrah UmiMa'arab* 1 (1974), pp.59-74; L. BORNSTEIN, *ibid.*, pp.81-104.

23 According to one estimate there were 10,000 Jews in 1507. Another estimate suggests that there were approximately 5000 families in 1529, representing an increase of 100% since 1478. In 1568 — 2800 families were estimated, and in 1584 — 84,000. See *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, Vol IV (1967), p.39; *Saloniki, 'Ir Va'Em BeYisrael*, (Jerusalem & Tel-Aviv 1967), p.3; STOIANOVICH, *JEH* 20 (1960) p.246.

24 HEYD, *loc. cit.*, p.303.

25 This is based on the evidence of R. Isaac ben Jacob Parash, published by M. BENAYAHU in *Sefunot* 11 (1978), pp.271, 290-91. Before the discovery of this manuscript the account was

known through R. Joseph HaCohen, *Divrey Ha Yamim* (1554) 165a.

26 A. Heyd, 'Te'udotTurkiyot 'al Yehudey Tzefat BaMe'ah Ha-16' (Jerusalem); *Mehkerey Eretz Yisrael*, (Jerusalem 1953), pp. 128-135.

27 J. B. Harrison, *New Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. V. p. 398.

28 P. M. Brown, *Foreigners in Turkey* (Princeton 1914) pp. 24-27; A. J. Toynbee and P. Kirkwood, *Turkey* (London 1926) pp. 29-35, 137; Horniker, *JMH* 18 (1946), pp. 291-305; Mantran, *op. cit.*, pp. 546-551; Jahn, *ZDMG* III (1961), p. 65. For Turkish economic interests in these agreements, see H. Inalcik, in Cook, *Studies*, pp. 214-215; J. Mathiex, *New Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. VI (1970), p. 549. On the beginnings of commercial relations between Britain and Turkey, and the reasons for the rise of the British at the expense of the French, see Horniker, *JMH* 14 (1942), pp. 289-316. On the diplomatic efforts by the British to obtain these privileges, and on their economic activities in the Levant, T. Bent, *Early Voyages*, pp. 272-273; Epstein, *The Early History of the Levant Company* (London 1908); A. C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (Oxford 1935).

29 Mantran, *op. cit.*, pp. 60, 215, 266, 389, 447, 451, 474, 610, 622; Stoianovich, *loc. cit.*, p. 260.

30 According to 16th century sources. For Jewish brokers mediating between Jewish merchants, see *Binyamin Ze'eb*, No. 441; *Dibrei Ribot*, No. 396; Maharshah, Part I, No. 87. In Rhodes: Radbaz, Part I, No. 322. For Jews mediating between Constantinople Turks in the fish trade, see Maharibal, Part IV, No. 4; in the silk trade, see Maharshah, Part IV, No. 3. For Jews providing credit, see Radbaz, Part VI, 2082.

31 A. Russel, *The Natural History of Aleppo* (London 1794) II, pp. 4, 21, 26; Gibb & Bowen, *Islamic Society*, Vol. I Part I p. 310; Lutsky, *Zion* 6 (1941), pp. 56-57; Ben Zvi, *Eretz Yisrael VeYishuba BiYemey HaShilton HaOttomani*, (Jerusalem 1955), p. 133. On Jewish interpreters, see C. Eliot, *Turkey in Europe*, (London 1900), pp. 278-279; Franco, *op. cit.*, p. 79. On brokers and interpreters, see H. J. Bloom, *The Economic Activities of The Jews of Amsterdam in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, (Williamsport 1937), pp. 83-84.

32 This was already a traditional Jewish occupation in Hellenistic times and during the Middle Ages in Palestine and the Mediterranean diasporas. For the Middle Ages, see A. Schaube, *Handels-geschichte der romanischen Völker der Mittelmeer Gebiets bis zum Ende der Kreuzzüge*, (München & Berlin 1906), p. 242. For Greece during the 12th century, see Wischnitzer, *HUCA*, II (1925), p. 254. For the Latin period (1204-1430), see Molcho, *Sinai* 27 (1950) pp. 99-100. For Modon, in the south of Greece, see. W. Miller, *Latins in the Levant*, (Cambridge 1964), p. 495; W. Sombart, *Die Juden und das Wirtschaftsleben*, (München & Leipzig 1911) p. 441. In the island of Chios Jews had engaged in silk production and in the dyeing of silk and textiles during the period which preceded the expulsion from Spain. Jacoby, *Zion* 26, (1961), p. 194; Inalcik, *JESHO* 3 (1960), p. 136.

33 Roth, *Duke of Naxos*, p. 117; Mantran, *op. cit.*, pp. 338, 420.

34 For Bursa as a centre for silk processing during the fifteenth century, see. Inalcik, *loc. cit*, p. 136. For the sixteenth century, see *idem*, *JEH* 29 (1969), p. 111. For the processing of silk and its distribution in Europe, see Lamb, *Suleiman*, p. 301; Issawi, in Richards, *Islam and the Trade*, pp. 257-8; Kortepeter, *loc. cit.* p. 95. Bursa was still a centre for silk manufacture and export by the beginning of the nineteenth century. See R. Walpole, *Travels in Various Countries of the East; Being a Continuation of Memoirs Relating to European and Asiatic Turkey*, (London 1820) II, p. 111. For Constantinople as a centre for silk manufacture and trade, see Stoianovich, *loc. cit*, p. 237. For the exportation of silk from Persia via Turkey to Britain, see C. Thomson, *Travels*, II, p. 172. British merchants began purchasing cotton in the Levant, particularly in Syria, in 1590. See Davis, in Cook, *Studies*, pp. 193-206. For the exportation of cotton to Europe, see Issawi in Richards, *Islam and the Trade*, p. 258. For silk and cotton exports from Aleppo in Syria during the 18th century, see W. G. Browne, *Travels in Africa, Egypt and Syria, from the year 1792 to 1798*

(London 1799), p. 387.

35 For further details, see BASHAN, *MiMizrah UmiMa'arab* I, (1974), pp. 109-131; WISCHNITZER, *Crafts*, p. 131; CARTER, *Dubrovnik*, pp. 305, 373-77.

36 The sources for the Jewish textile manufacture in Salonika are too numerous and detailed to be listed here in full. See, for example, I. EMMANUEL, *Histoire de l'Industrie des Tissus des Israélites de Salonique*, (Paris 1935).

37 N. H. BIEGMAN, *The Turco-Ragusan Relationship, According to the Firmans of Murad III (1575-1695 . . .* (Paris 1967) p. 108.

38 For wool sent to Palestine, see *Galante*, No. 43. For the Kahal regulation, see *Ben Leb*, Part III, No. 16. For hides, see RASHDAM, *HM*, No. 54. For the silk trade, see MARCUS, *Sinai* 29 (1951) p. 17.

39 For Janina, see *Mishpetei Shemuel*, Nos. 48, 49, 50; MAHARSHAH, Part II, No. 50. Compare ROSANES, Part III, p. 76. For Skoplje, see *Dibrei Ribot*, Nos. 307, 343; MAHARSHAH Part I, No. 10. For silk, see *ibid.*, No. 16. For wool, see *Dibrei Ribot*, No. 157. For hides, see RASHDAM *HM*, No. 441. For Ragusa, see EVENTOV, *Toledot Yehudey Yugoslavia*, (Tel Aviv 1971), pp. 77-108; CARTER, *Dubrovnik*, pp. 361, 377. For Plevna, see RASHDAM, *YD*, No. 81. For Sofia, see *Dibrei Ribot*, No. 307. For Nikopol, see RASHDAM, *HM*, No. 147; compare BENAYAHU, *Sefunot* 11 (1978), p. 286; *Dibrei Ribot*, No. 93. For Monastir, see RASHDAM, *YD*, Nos. 122, 125, *HM*, No. 363; MAHARSHAH, Part I, No. 184. For wool production in Trikkala, see RALBAH, Nos. 30, 99. For the joint decision between the *Kahals* of Trikkala and Larisa to restrict wool prices, see BEN LEB, Part I, No. 50; *Mishpetei Shemuel*, No. 101; compare ROSANES, Part III, p. 387; AVITZUR, *Sefunot* 6 (1962) p. 63. For hides sent from Trikkala to Corfu, see MAHARSHAH, Part II, No. 16. For Plevna, Trikkala and Larisa, see MARCUS, *Sinai* 29 (1951) pp. 18-19. For Arta, see *Torat Emet*, No. 189. For woad silk dye purchased in Larisa, see MAHARSHAH, Part II, No. 116. For trade in silk garments, see *Lehem Rab*, No. 112; MAHARSHAH, Part I, No. 162. For Patras, see *Beit Shelomoh*, No. 31; M. WISCHNITZER, *A History of Jewish Crafts and Guilds*, (New York 1965) p. 131.

40 For the exportation of hides from Bulgaria to Constantinople, see KORTEPETER, *JAOS* 86 (1966), p. 98. For the trade in hides, see *Dibrei Ribot*, Nos. 74, 108; RASHDAM, *HM*, Nos. 166, 397; *Mekor Baruch*, No. 46; MAHARSHAH, Part I, No. 188, Part III, No. 25. For the year 1608, see *Torat Hayyim*, Part I, No. 43. For the 17th century, see *Sha'ar Ephraim*, No. 121. For the year 1673, see *Ba'eyi Hayyei HM* Part II, No. 116; *Penei Yehoshua*, No. 11. For Venice, see *Lehem Rab*, No. 94. For the seventeenth century, see *Mishpatim Yesharim*, No. 22. For Ancona, see RASHDAM, *HM*, No. 438; MAHARSHAH, Part I, No. 168. For "Francia", see MAHARSHAH, Part IV, No. 46. For a document dated 1649, testifying to the sale of hides by a Sofian Jew to Venice, see ROSANES, *Yoseph Da'at*, 1889, pp. 231-232, 261-262.

41 EISENSTEIN, *Otsar Masa'ot*, p. 167. For a Corfu Jew selling silk and cotton wool to gentiles on credit in the seventeenth century, see ANGEL, No. 13.

42 ALSHECH, No. 134; TZAHALON, No. 184. For trade in *Banyo*, a silk dye, see BENAYAHU, *Sefunot* 11 (1978), p. 285. For Egypt, see RADBAZ, No. 1002; WISCHNITZER, *loc. cit.*, pp. 136-7.

43 For Constantinople as a silk centre, see above, note 34. For silk purchased by Constantinople Jews, see MAHARIT, Part I, *HM*, No. 13; Evliya ÇELEBI, *Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa in the XVII Century*, trans. by J. VON HAMMER, (London 1834), Vol. I, Part II, p. 203. For the export trade in hides, see MAHARSHAH, Part I, Nos. 64, 168; MANTRAN, *Istanbul*, p. 518. For Salonikan manufactured clothes imported to Constantinople, see *Dibrei Ribot*, Nos. 383, 389; MAHARSHAH, Part I, Nos. 91, 139; *Torat Emet*, Bodleian Ms. 830, p. 32a; WISCHNITZER, *loc. cit.*, p. 128. For Bursa, Manisa and Smyrna, the following seventeenth century sources are available: *Penei Mosheh* Part I, No. 39, for Bursa; *Sha'ar Yehoshua*, No. 15, for a Smyrna Jew purchasing silk in Bursa; BENAYAHU,

Zion 12 (1947), p. 43, for Manisa; *Torat Hayyim*, Part I, No. 82, for a Smyrna Jew who gave his fellow Jew a certain quantity of goats' wool to take with him to the island of Chios; *Benei Aaron*, No. 97, for the trade in goats' wool; *ibid.*, No. 40, for wool; *ibid.*, No. 37, for cotton wool; *ibid.*, Nos. 52, 102, for textiles: *ibid.*, No. 75, for partners in dyeing.

44 For the British merchants purchasing there, see above, note 35. For the purchase of textile dyes in Aleppo, see GALANTE, No. 118. For trade in "Frankish clothes", see ALSHECH, No. 129.

45 ASHTOR, *Toledot HaYehudim BeMitsrayim VeSuria Tahat Shilton HaMameluqim*, (Jerusalem 1944), Part I, p. 259. For Damascus silk in the sixteenth century, see *Mase'ot Eretz Yisrael LeRabbi Mosheh Basola*, Ben-Zvi edition, (Jerusalem 1939), pp. 65-66. For other sixteenth century sources, see MABIT, Part I, No. 207; Part II, No. 61; TZAHALON, Nos.6, 95. For Egypt, see MAHARIT, Part I, No. 70. For the 19th century, see J. WILSON, *The Lands of The Bible*, (Edinburgh 1847), II, p. 336. For silk production in Tripoli, see PARRY, *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, Vol. IV (1967), p. 161. For clothes imported by Jews from Italy to Tripoli, see RADBAZ, No. 2,248. For Sidon, *Torat Emet*, No. 77. For Venice, *Lehem Rab*, No. 181. For the wool trade, M. GALANTE, No. 88. For Homs, ASHTOR, *op. cit.*, Part II, pp. 120-121; Vincent LE BLANC, *The World Surveyed*, (London 1660), I, p. 5.

46. KENA'ANI, *loc. cit.*, pp. 182, 195 ff; *idem*, *Sinai* 22 (1948), pp. 94-100; S. AVITZUR, *OYS*, 3 (1960), pp. 91-94; *idem*, *Sefunot* 6 (1962), pp. 41-69; *idem, Teba VaAretz* 7 (1965), p. 89.

47 For garments manufactured in Palestine and sold in Egypt in return for water-buffalo hides, see *Abkat Rochel*, No. 140; RADBAZ, No. 638; *Mishpetei Shemuel*, No. 67. For Rhodes, see RADBAZ, Part III, 1002. For Salonika, see Jehudah 'ABBAS, Bodleian Ms. 470-MICH, p. 6; MAHARSHAH, Part II, No. 81; *Be'er Mayyim Hayyim*, No. 57. For garments sent from Constantinople to Egypt in the seventeenth century, see *Mishpatim Yesharim*, No. 10. For trade in silk and woollen clothes in Egypt, see RADBAZ, Part IV, No. 1206. For the seventeenth century, see *Matteh Yoseph*, Part II, *EHa'E*, No. 1; Part II, No. 86. For Syria, see TZAHALON, No. 95. For trade in hides, see, *Ohalei Ya'akob*, No. 114. For hides sent to Venice, see RASHDAM, *HM*, No. 146. To Ancona, see RADBAZ, No. 638; *Abkat Rochel*, No. 140. For flax sent from Alexandria to Ancona, see RADBAZ, Part VI, No. 2,110. For flax sent to Europe in the seventeenth century, see *Darchei No'am*, *HM* No. 38. For the Egyptian export trade in flax, see ISSAWI, *loc. cit.*, pp. 256-257. For dyes imported to Salonika, see MAHARSHAH, Part I, No. 11.

48 A number of Turkish statesmen were aware of the first signs of decline already in the first half of the sixteenth century, when the empire was still at its zenith. They warned against the trends which were the causes of the subsequent decline, but their warnings and proposals were not heeded. For details on this, see B. LEWIS, *Islamic Studies*, I (1962), pp. 71-87.

49 For the weakness of the Turkish navy, see Jean de THEVENOT, *Travels into the Levant* (London 1687), p. 73; J. C. HOBHOUSE, *A Journey Through Albania . . .* (London 1813), p. 909; S. J. SHAW, *Between Old and New . . .* (Harvard 1971), p. 152; A. HESS, *AHR* 75 (1970), pp. 1893-1894. For piracy as one of the causes of economic decline in Turkey, see KORTEPETER, *loc. cit*, p. 111; MOLCHO, *Sefunot* II (1958), p. 31.

50 A special tax was imposed on craftsmen during war time, according to a source dating from the first half of the eighteenth century. See *Debar Mosheh*, *HM*, No. 51. For tax on the provision of food for the troops, see a document dated 1585, published by HEYD, *Ottoman Documents*, pp. 124-125, No. 74; *Kerem Shelomoh*, *HM*, No. 81; *Mor Ve'ahalot*, *HM*, No. 13; J. L. BURCKHARDT, *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land*, (London 1822), p. 301.

51 See, for example, an account dating from the first half of the 17th century, in NAIMA, *Annals of the Turkish Empire from 1591 to 1654*, edited and translated by C. FRASER, (London 1832), I, pp. 10-12.

52 As for example, in 1672 and 1679. See *Aderet Eliyyahu*, No. 8; *Penei Shelomoh*, No. 37.

53 S. RIZAJ, 'Counterfeit Money on the Balkan Peninsula, from the XV to the XVII Century'

Balcanica I (1970), pp. 71-79. For special inspectors of mines and coins, to prevent counterfeiting in Constantinople in the seventeenth century, see, A. PALLIS, *In the Days of the Janissaries . . .*, (London 1951), pp. 144-145.

54 RASHDAM, *YD*, No. 124; MAHARSHAH, Part III, No. 108. For the eighteenth century, see, *Michtam le David*, *YD*, No. 31.

55 BEN LEB, Part III, No. 30; RASHDAM, *HM*, No. 80; BASAN, No. 84; *Torat Hayyim*, Part III, No. 107.

56 For the monetary crisis in Western Europe, see, E. J. HAMILTON, *War and Prices in Spain 1651-1800*, (Cambridge 1947); Y. S. BRENNER, 'The Inflation of Prices in Early Sixteenth Century England', *EHR* 14 (1961-2), pp. 225-239; *idem*, 'The Inflation of Prices in England 1551-1650', *EHR* 15 (1962-3), pp. 266-284; J. D. GOULD, 'The Price Revolution Reconsidered', *EHR* 17 (1964), pp. 249-266; F. J. FISHER, 'Influenza and Inflation in Tudor England', *EHR* 18 (1965), pp. 120-129; A. M. WATSON, 'Back to Gold and Silver', *EHR* 20 (1967), pp. 1-34; F. P. BRAUDEL and F. SPOONER, 'Prices in Europe from 1450 to 1750', *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, IV (1967), pp. 374-486; F. P. SPOONER, 'The Economy of Europe 1559-1609', in *The New Cambridge Modern History*, III (1968), pp. 14-43.

57 For further details, see RIZAJ, *Balcanica* I (1970), pp. 77-78.

58 See, for example, MAHARSHAH Part I, No. 61.

59 MAHARSHAH Part II, No. 156 reports one such case.

60 *Mishpetei Shemuel*, No. 52; *Mekor Baruch*, No. 45; *Lehem Rab*, Nos. 119, 183; MAHARSHAH, Part I, No. 184, Part II, Nos. 50, 199, 210; *Torat Mosheh*, *HM*, No. 4; *Torat Hayyim*, Part I, Nos. 53, 83; *Mishpatim Yesharim*, No. 22; GA'ON, No. 15; *Perah Matteh Aharon*, Part II, No. 37; *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *YD* No. 190, *HM* Nos. 126, 151; *Magen Giborim*, No. 28; *Penei Mosheh*, Part I, No. 96, Part II, No. 104; *Ne'eman Shemuel*, No. 84; *Peleitat Beit Yehudah*, No. 4; *Kerem Shelomoh*, *HM*, No. 63, *Hilechot Ribit*, No. 5; *Penei Aharon, HM* No. 2. On the monetary crisis, see, E. BASHAN, 'The Political and Economic Crisis in the Ottoman Empire from the end of the 16th Century, as Reflected in the Responsa Literature', *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, 1976 pp. 107-115.

61 For the Gelali uprising, see EI, KARI-YAZICI; HAMMER-PURGSTALL, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, (Budapest 1829) IV p. 271 BABINGER, *Islam* 11 (1921), p. 14 n. 3; M. AKDAG, *Gelali Isyanlari 1550-1603*, (Ankara 1963); SHAW, in JELAVICH, *Balkans in Transition* (1963), p. 70. For the Hebrew sources, see, the *Responsa* of Hayyim GAVIZON, Hebrew National & University Library Mss. $8^{0}127$, 170a; compare BENAYAHU, *Zion* 2 (1947), p. 44; MAHARIT, Part I, Nos. 103, 134; compare ROSANES, *op. cit.*, Part III, pp. 89, 137; *Torat Hayyim*, Part III, Nos. 5, 69; *Penei Mosheh*, Part I, No. 5. For assaults on and the plundering of their property in Manisa on *Shabbat HaGadol* of 1592 as reported by R. Aaron LAPAPA, see *Benei Aharon*, p. 34.

62 *Lehem Rab*, No. 180; *Torat Hayyim*, Part III, No. 104; *Mishpat Tsedek*, Part III, No. 45. For killings, see *Torat Hayyim*, Part II, No. 45; MAHARSHAH, Part II, No. 40.

63 *Mekor Baruch*, No. 56. For an account of the murder of an Ashkenazi Jew in the Balkans in 1593, see MAHARSHAH, Part II, No. 151; *Lehem Rab*, No. 36. For an account dated 1595 of a Jew who was murdered while travelling in the villages around Salonika to purchase milk for the production of cheese, see MAHARSHAH, Part III, No. 103. A year later three Jews were murdered on their way to Vidin. See MAHARSHAH, Part IV, No. 51. For the murder of a Jew on his way to Salonika in 1608, see *Ein Mishpat*, *E h'E*, No. 1. For a murder near Nikopol in 1606, see MAHARSHASH, No. 48. For the murder of a cheese-producer in a village in 1620, see *ibid.*, No. 23. For the disappearance of two Jews on their way from Monastir to Castoria, see *ibid.*, No. 44.

64 F. W. HASLUCK, *Christianity and Islam Under the Sultans* (Oxford 1929), pp. 725-26; STOIANOVICH, *JEH* 20 (1960), p. 245.

65 STOIANOVICH, *loc. cit.*, pp. 234-313; VUCINICH, *Slavic Review* 21 (1962), pp. 600, 605, 615; MANTRAN, *Istanbul*, pp. 52-53.

66 R. POCOCKE, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries*, (London 1743-5), I, p. 173; A. H. LYBYER, 'The Ottoman Turks and the Routes of Oriental Trade', *EHR* 30 (1915), pp. 577-588; F. C. LANE, 'Venetian Shipping During the Commercial Revolution', *AHR* 38 (1933), pp. 219-239. Lane rejects the assumption that the changed trade route caused the decline of Venice as a commercial centre. He argues that the shortage of timber throughout the Mediterranean countries had created difficulties in the ship building industry and reduced the scale of Venetian navigation.

67 A. TOYNBEE & K. P. KIRKWOOD, *Turkey* (London 1926), pp. 139-140.

68 POCOCKE, *op. cit.*, II, p. 90.

69 For the British import and export trade with the East, according to a British traveller who visited Turkey in the beginning of the 17th century, see George SANDYS' *Travels*, (London 1610), I, p. 67. From another source it appears that textiles were the most important British exports to Turkey in the seventeenth century. See F. J. FISHER, 'London's Export Trade in the early 17th Century', *EHR* 3 (1950), pp. 151-161. This was likewise reported by the British consul to Constantinople in the early 1670's. See G. F. ABBOT, *Under the Turk in Constantinople; A Record of Sir John Finch's Embassy 1674-1681*, (London 1920), pp. 27-28, 149, 247, 397. A visitor to the East in the beginning of the 18th century wrote about clothes imported from Britain. See THOMSON, *Travels*, II, pp. 172-173. This is corroborated by the following source, noting also that Egypt imported English, French and Venetian silk, and that it exported raw cotton and flax. See POCOCKE, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 125, 173, II, p. 141. According to an account dating from the end of the eighteenth century, the British bought in Constantinople cotton, silk, indigo, hides and dried fruit. See M. D. GRIFFITHS, *Travels in Europe, Asia Minor and Arabia*, (London 1805), p. 121. For manufactured garments sent from England to the East, as well as for additional details concerning the import and export trade of the British and other European merchants with Egypt, see R. WALPOLE, *Memoirs Relating to European and Asiatic Turkey . . .*, (London 1818), p. 17. For French, Livornese and Venetian exports of manufactured products to Egypt, and for Egyptian exports of raw materials, see M. C. VOLNEY, *Travels Through Egypt and Syria in the Years 1783, 1784, 1785*, (London 1787), I, pp. 208, 228; DAVIS, in COOK, *Studies*, pp. 193-206. For Dutch and English textile exports to the East in the 17th century, see J. B. HARRISON, *New Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. V (1961), pp. 399-401; R. DAVEY, *The Sultan and his Subjects*, (London 1907), p. 410; CARTER, *Dubrovnik*, pp. 299-301, 377.

70 For the progress of industry in Britain, see, for example, J. U. NEF, 'The Progress of Technology and the Growth of Large Scale Industry in Great Britain, 1540-1640', *EHR* 5 (1934-5), pp. 3-24.

71 A select bibliography on the decline and crisis in the Ottoman Empire: R. DAVEY, *The Sultan and his Subjects*, (London 1907), pp. 137-139; H. GIBB & H. BOWEN, *Islamic Society and the West*, (London 1950), I, pp. 173 ff., 295 ff.; M. G. S. HODGSON, 'The Role of Islam in World History', *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*, I (1970), pp. 99-123. For the connection between the structure of the army (the cavalry) and agricultural land in Turkey, see, H. INALCIK, 'Land Problems in Turkish History', *The Muslim World* 45 (1955), pp. 221-224; C. ISSAWI, 'The Decline of the Middle Eastern Trade 1110-1850', in RICHARDS (ed.), *Islam and the Trade of Asia; A Colloquium*, (Oxford 1970), pp. 245-266; J. Kaldi-Nagy, *Acta Orientalia Hungaricae* 19 (1966), pp. 363-365; C. M. KORTEPETER, 'Ottoman Imperial Policy and the Economy of the Black Sea Region in the 16th Century', *JAOS* 86 (1966), pp. 86-112; A. N. KURAT & J. S. BROMLEY, 'The Retreat of the Turks 1683-1730', *The New Cambridge Modern History*, VI (1970), pp. 608-647; B. LEWIS, 'Some Reflections on the Decline of the Ottoman Empire', *Studia Islamica* 9 (1958), pp. 111-127; *idem*, 'Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline', *Islamic Studies* I (1962), pp. 71-82; *idem*, *The*

Emergence of Modern Turkey (London 1966), pp. 21-39; R. MANTRAN, *Istanbul dans la Seconde Moitié du XVII Siècle* (Paris 1962); *idem*, 'L'Empire Ottoman et le Commerce Asiatique aux 16e et 17e Siècles', in RICHARDS (ed.) *Islam and the Trade of Asia* (Oxford 1970), pp. 169-179; S. SHAW, 'The Aims and Achievements of Ottoman Rule in the Balkans', *Slavic Review* 21 (1962), pp. 617-622; *idem*, 'The Ottoman View of the Balkans' in JELAVICH (ed.), *The Balkans in Transition*, (London 1963), pp. 56-80; *idem*, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire Under Sultan Selim III 1789-1807*, (Cambridge, Mass. 1971), pp. 3-11, 175-179, bibliography p. 416; L. S. STOIANOVICH, 'Land Tenure and Related Sectors of the Balkan Economy 1600-1800', *JEH* 13 (1953), pp. 398-411; *idem*, 'Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant', *ibid.*, 20 (1960), pp. 234-313; *idem*, 'Factors in the Decline of Ottoman Society in the Balkans', *Slavic Review* 21 (1962), pp. 623-632; V. S. VUCINICH, 'The nature of Balkan Society under Ottoman Rule', *ibid.*, pp. 597-616, 633-638; R. WALPOLE, *Memoirs Relating to European and Asiatic Turkey*, second edition, (London 1818) pp. 1-32.

72 See above, note 69.

73 For evidence for this by a traveller visiting the Balkans between 1671 and 1679, see B. RANDOLPH, *The Present State of Morea*, (London 1686), pp. 16-17. For the crisis in Italy, see C. M. CIPOLLA, 'The Decline of Italy; The Case of a Fully Matured Economy', *EHR* 5 (1952), pp. 178-187.

74 For the decline of Safed and the reasons for it, see A. YA'ARI, *Sheluhey Eretz Israel*, (Jerusalem 1951), pp. 236 ff., 408 ff.; BEN ZVI, *Eretz Yisrael VeYishubah*, pp. 205 ff.; ROSANES, Part III, pp. 422-427; BENAYAHU, 'Sheluheyha Shel Tzefat BiZeman Sheki'ata', *OYS* 2 (1959), pp. 77-81. For oppression by the regional governor between the years 1576-78, which was expressed in arrests, forced labour on the Sabbath and heavy taxation, see HEYD, *Ottoman Documents*, pp. 164-168; S. AVITSUR, 'Uchlusiyat Zefat Ba-Aliyatah UViyeridatah', *Teva VaAretz* 7 (1965), pp. 88-93; *idem*, *Sefunot* 6 (1962), pp. 67-69; For ships travelling from Constantinople to Safed, see the introduction by Baruch KALIMANI to *Torat Mosheh* by Mosheh ALSHECH (Venice 1603); D. TAMAR, *I. Baer Jubilee Volume*, (Jerusalem 1961), pp. 297-303; BENAYAHU, *OYS* 2 (1959), p. 80; *idem*, *ibid.* 5 (1962), pp. 101-108; AVITSUR, *Sefunot* 6 (1962), p. 56; on Ovadiah Alfandari, see Abraham HALEVI, *Ginat Veradim* Part II, *E H'E*, 3, No. 8; HABIB, (Jerusalem 1927), *E H'E*, No. 3. AVITSUR, in *Sefunot* 6, p. 54 mentions the first but not the second source.

75 For epidemics, see *Dibrei Ribot*, Nos. 347, 359; ROTH, *Naxos*, p. 176; MOLCHO, *OYS* 2 (1959), p. 31; J. S. EMMANUEL, *Histoire des Israélites de Salonique*, (Paris 1936), p. 220. For fires, see *ibid.*, p. 222, in 1587; *Mishpat Tsedek*, Part III, No. 35, in 1620; David CONFORTI, *Kore HaDorot*, ed. Cassel (Berlin 1846), p. 45a; *Torat Hayyim*, Part I, No. 5; J. NEHAMA, *Histoire des Israélites de Salonique*, (Salonika, 1959), V p. 45; MOLCHO, *OYS* 2 (1959), p. 33. For 1734, see *Tzeror HaKeset*, *HM*, No. 10. For 1759, see ROSANES, Part V, p. 95. For the clothes tax, see *Torat Emet*, Part II, No. 111; LE BEIT HALEVI, *HM*, No. 24; *Debar Mosheh*, *HM*, No. 110. For Jews leaving Salonika after being asked to contribute to the clothes tax which constituted such a heavy burden on those who remained in the city, see *Torat Hayyim*, Part I, Nos. 63, 64, 94, 95; *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM*, Part I, Nos. 105, 106; *Leb Sameah*, *HM*, No. 13; ROSANES, Part III, pp. 393-396; MOLCHO, & AMARILIO, *Sefunot* 2 (1958), pp. 30, 53; See also *Perah Matteh Aharon*, Part I, No. 51, Part II, No. 25; NEHAMA, V., p. 161; BENAYAHU, *Sefer Toledot HaARI*, Jerusalem 1967, pp. 211, 214. For the delegation, see MOLCHO, *OYS* 2 (1959), pp. 35-36. For the clothes tax in Janina, see *Mishpetei Shemuel*, No. 48. For the killing of Jews in and around Salonika, see Yehudah Yaakob NEHAMA, *Michtebey Dodim MiYayin*, 1893, letter No. 56; MOLCHO, *OYS* 2 (1959), pp. 31-33. For emigration to Constantinople, see *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM*, Part I, No. 105; *Benei Abraham*, *HM* No. 82; MANTRAN, *Istanbul*, p. 43. For emigration to Egypt and other countries, see NEHAMA, *Ginzach Saloniki* 1 (1961), pp. 20-23.

76 P. RYCAUT, *The History of the Turkish Empire from the Year 1623 to the Year 1677*, (London

1687), II, pp. 174-181.

77 EMMANUEL, *Gedoley Saloniki LeDorotam*, Part I, (Tel-Aviv 1936), p. 11. For fires see Emmanuel, *ibid.*, p. 12 for the years 1734, 1749 and 1759; *Tzeror HaKesef*, *HM*, No. 10; *Hon Rab*, Part II, *HM*, No. 25; *Pe'at Negeb*, *HM*, No. 32; ROSANES, Part V, p. 95.

78 *Debar Mosheh*, *HM*, No. 50.

79 Emmanuel, *Ginzach Saloniki* 1 (1961), p. 24.

80 Be'er HaMayim, *YD*, Nos. 40, 56; compare ROSANES, Part VI, pp. 104-106.

81 POCOCKE, II, p. 141. By the beginning of the eighteenth century there were some two hundred British families there. See DAVEY, *The Sultans*, p. 311. For Lady Montagu's report, see above, note 10. For the economic life of the Jews in Adrianople and the decline, see MARCUS, *Sinai* 29 (1951), pp. 15-20; *idem*, Sinai 45 (1959), pp. 377-378. In a letter from Adrianople to Smyrna written after the fire of 1801 the change in the condition of the Jews was noted: "This city used to preside over all other cities confidently and in safety", but now it was "disrupted by troops and by the heavy burden of taxation". See BENAYAHU, *Reshumot* 2 (1945), pp. 151-152.

82 On the 'Constantinople officials', see BEN ZVI, *Eretz Israel VeYishubah*, pp. 265 ff. For debts, see *Zachor leAbraham*, *HM* No. 50. For the fire of 1607, see William BIDDULPH, *Travels into Africa Asia and the Black Sea*, (London 1609), pp. 24-25. For the fire of 1660, see the introduction to *Penei Mosheh*, Part I and towards the end of Part II; MANTRAN, *Istanbul*, pp. 57-58; NEHAMA, V, p. 182; ROTH, *Dona Gracia*, p. 126; ROSANES, Part IV, p. 11. The Italian physician and scholar, R. Raphael Mordekhai Malkhi, who came to Jerusalem in 1673 and died there in 1704, wrote of the poverty of the Jews in Turkey: "Those who reside in Turkey have been reduced to the lowest level and they are increasingly poor". See *Selections from his Commentary on the Pentateuch*, ed. A. RIVLIN, (Jerusalem 1923), p. 46. A traveller visiting Constantinople in 1800 complained about the limited variety and poor quality of products. See E. D. CLARKE, *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa*, (London 1810), I, pp. 450-451.

83 POCOCKE, II, p. 37. For the account by a British physician who visited the city towards the end of the 18th century, see GRIFFITHS, *Travels . . .*, pp. 42ff., 121; J. C. HOBHOUSE, *A Journey Through Albania and Other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia . . . During the Years 1809 and 1810*, (London 1813), p. 617. DAVEY, *The Sultans*, p. 311; STOIANOVICH, *JEH* 20 (1960), p. 271.

84 For the emigration of Jews from Salonika to Smyrna, see *Leb Sameah*, *YD* No. 3; *Be'er HaMayyim*, No. 121; ROSANES, Part V, pp. 126-127; NEHAMA, *Ginzach Saloniki* 1 (1961), p. 20. For their emigration from Tire and Manisa to Smyrna, see *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *YD*, No. 220, *HM*, Part II. No. 32; ROSANES, Part IV, pp.39-40, Part V, p.195; BENAYAHU, *Zion* 12 (1947), p. 43. The rabbi of Manisa, R. Aaron Lapapa (born in Salonika in 1604) was one of those who emigrated. See the introduction to his book of *Responsa Benei Aharon* (Smyrna 1674). Pococke, who visited the Levant in the first third of the eighteenth century, estimated that there were between five and six thousand Jews there at the time. See POCOCKE, II, p. 37. For commercial links between the Jews of Smyrna and English merchants in 1680, see on the basis of a report by Britain's ambassador in Constantinople, G. F. ABBOT, *Under the Turk in Constantinople: A Record of Sir John Finch's Embassy 1674-1681*, (London 1920), pp. 292-293. For two Jewish brokers working in partnership for English merchants in Smyrna, see *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM* Part I, No. 128. For three Jewish brokers working in partnership for a limited duration in the service of "Flamingos" merchants in Smyrna in the year 1675, see *Ba'ei Hayyei, HM* Part I, No. 50. For a Jew employed as a broker by a "Franco gentile" merchant in Smyrna, 1670, see *ibid.*, Part II, No. 13; *ibid.*, according to Cambridge Ms. Add. 515, p. 24a (No. 16808 in the Institute of Photographs of Hebrew Mss in Jerusalem). For a Jewish broker in Smyrna, without additional details, in 1660, see *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM*, Part I, No. 13. For a broker mediating between Jews and gentiles, see, *Benei Aharon*, No.

36. For a partnership of brokers, see *ibid.*, Nos. 74, 105. For Jewish partners bringing wool and cotton wool to Smyrna and selling it to gentiles there, see *ibid.*, Nos. 37, 40. For an interpreter by the name of Isaac ben Adot, nicknamed Bindigo by the gentile merchants, who was hired by the Captain of the British consul's ship in Smyrna because "he was fluent in several languages", see *Yad Aharon*, No. 11. For the economic prosperity of Smyrna and the Jewish share in it during the reign of Selim III (1789-1807), see ROSANES, Part V, p. 195. For commercial relations, see the account relating to a Jew who gave his fellow a quantity of goats' wool to take with him to the island of Chios, in *Torat Hayyim*, Part I, No. 82. For commercial links with Palestine, see *Nehpah baKesef*, Part II, *HM*, No. 14.

85 For fires, see ROSANES, Part V, p. 127; BENAYAHU, *Reshumot* 2 (1945), pp. 144-154. For the 19th century, see *Massa' Hayyim*, p. 2a; *Ruah Hayyim*, *YD*, No. 251 p. 155b, *HM* No. 207 p. 113b.

86 For the changed value of currency in Damascus, see Mantua Ms. No. 150 (No. 2278 in the Institute of Photographs of Hebrew MSS in Jerusalem) where the question is raised in 1594 of a widow who did not know how to cash in her *Ketubah* since the value of the currency had declined since the time of her marriage. For bandits on Syrian roads, see MABIT, Part I, No. 326; around Damascus: ALSCHECH, No. 43; near the river, *ibid.*, No. 119; MAHARIT, Part I, No. 52; *Nibhar miKesef*, Nos. 51, 59; *Yad Aharon*, Nos. 4, 5; towards the end of the 18th century, *Birkat Eliyahu*, No. 4. For epidemics, see *Nibhar miKesef*, Nos. 44, 63, 88. For an epidemic in Syria, according to R. Elijah of Pesaro, see EISENSTEIN, *Otsar Masa'ot*, pp. 168-169; in 1586, MAHARIT, in the introduction, R. Mosheh Galante complains about the rise in food prices in Aleppo and Tripoli. See his *Responsa*, No. 54. Following an outburst of the Plague in 1767, the price of bread rocketed in Aleppo. See Isaac LANIADO, *LiKedoshim Asher BaAretz*, (Jerusalem 1952), p. 16.

87 POCOCKE, I, p. 125; A. RUSSEL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, (London 1794), Vol. II; VOLNEY, Travels, Vol. II, pp. 92-94. For British trade in Aleppo and the appointment of a consul there in 1585, see BENT, *Early Voyages*, p. IX; DAVEY, *The Sultans*, p. 311; A. LUTZKI, 'The "Francos" and the Effect of Capitulation on the Jews of Aleppo (from 1673 to the time of the French Revolution)', *Zion* 6 (1941), pp. 46-79.

88 VOLNEY, *Travels*, II, p. 426. Compare GIBB & BOWEN, I, I, p. 311. For the British as the second most important factor, see VOLNEY, II, pp. 151, 428. For the inadequacy of conditions for trade, see *ibid.*, II, pp. 416-417.

89 R. Abraham ENTIBI, the *haham* of Aleppo (d. 1858), wrote of the irregular and haphazard nature of the visits in his city by the foreign merchants. See *Mor Ve'Ahalot*, *YD*, No. 3.

90 VOLNEY, II, p. 417.

91 BURCKHARDT, *Travels in Syria . . .*, p. 168.

92 ISSAWI, in RICHARDS, *Islam and the Trade*, p. 247; S. J. SHAW, *The Financial and Administrative Organisation and Development of Ottoman Egypt*, (Princeton 1958), pp. 68, 98-103, 124, 138-140, 173, 325; *idem*, in JELAVICH, *Balkan in Transition*, (London 1963), pp. 57-60. For Jewish Customs-tax farmers, see, Tuv-Mizrajim, (Jerusalem 1908), p. 24a; BENAYAHU, *Toledot Ha'ARI*, p. 152. Moses di Rossi who visited the Levant in 1535 wrote that in Alexandria ". . .those in charge of taxes and the Crown's income are all Jews". See KAUFMANN, *JQR* 9 (1897), p. 498; RADBAZ, Nos. 13, 100, 136, 290 (for three years), 416, 417, 706, 970, 1126; Bezal'el ASHKENAZI, No. 32. For the 17th century, see *Darchei No'am*, *HM*, Nos. 16, 37; GIBB & BOWEN, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 308-310.

93 Ali Bey passed on the leases for customs collection from Jews to Christians. See VOLNEY, I, pp. 224-225; GIBB & BOWEN, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 310-311. For the Greeks in Egypt, see LANDES, *Bankers and Pashas*, p. 24. For flax in Europe, see ISSAWI, in RICHARDS, *Islam and the Trade*, pp. 256-257.

94 For Jews acting as money lenders for British merchants in Turkey, see WOOD, *Levant Company*, pp. 214-215. For Jewish brokers in the 18th century, see *Debar Mosheh*, Part III,

HM, No. 10; *Rosh Mashbir*, Part II, No. 20. For the provision for terminating the broker's employment, see *Penei Aharon*, *HM*, No. 5. For a monopoly granted by the governor, see TZAHALON, No. 280. For the fear of trespassing, see *Rosh Mashbir*, Part II, No. 16. For Jewish brokers in the service of English merchants in the 17th century, see RYCAUT, *History* II, p. 174 on Shabbethai Zevi's father. Evidence dated 1641 is provided by *Sha'ar Yehoshua*, No. 28; *Penei Mosheh*, Part II, No. 16; *Benei Aharon*, No. 74. For a link with a Flemish merchant, see *Sha'ar Yehoshua*, No. 37. For such a link with a French merchant, see *Be'er Mayim Hayyim*, Part I, *HM*, No. 4. This last source relates the account of a Jewish broker who went bankrupt while in the employment of a French merchant. The Frenchman followed the custom of his land by terminating the Jew's employment as a broker and appointing him his scribe. For Jewish brokers in the service of gentile merchants, see *Magen Giborim*, *HM*, No. 29. For the year 1673, see *Ba'ei Hayyei*, *HM*, Part II, No. 98; *Torat Hesed*, No. 196, 210; *Leb Shelomoh*, No. 87.

95 For the *Hazakah* rights of a Jewish interpreter to a consul, according to an 18th century source, see *Kol Eliyahu*, *HM*, No. 17; *Debar Mosheh*, *HM*, No. 48; *Tzeror HaKesef*, *HM*, No. 10; *Penei Aharon*, *HM*, No. 14; *Rosh Mashbir*, Part II, No. 25.

96 For Britain, see WOOD, *Levant Company*, p. 155; C. ROTH, *A History of the Jews in England* (Oxford 1964), pp. 206. For the Jewish emigration from Salonika to Amsterdam, see MOLCHO, *OYS* 2 (1959) p. 36. For the Sephardim in Vienna, see N. M. GELBER, 'Contribution a l'Histoire des Juifs Espagnols a Vienne', *REJ* 97 (1934), pp. 114-246. For Temesvár, see GELBER, *HaTor* 1924, 51, p. 9. For all the above, see STOIANOVICH, *JEH* 20 (1960), pp. 244-309.

THE SEPHARDIM OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

by
Alan D. Corré

The Sephardim in New York, 1654-1840

In September 1654, shortly before the Jewish New Year, twenty-three Jews stepped ashore at New York, which at the time was under Dutch rule and known as New Amsterdam. With them began the history of the Sephardim in the American colonies. At this period it is difficult to disentangle the history of the Sephardim from that of the Jews as a whole, since distinctly separate Ashkenazi communities did not emerge until the latter part of the next century, and the *minhag* (religious rite) of the Sephardim predominated until the early nineteenth century. Yet Jews of Ashkenazi origin formed a substantial part of the American Jewish community from its earliest beginnings. How are we to account for this in view of the separation which was maintained between Sephardim and Ashkenazim in those parts of Europe where Jews of both backgrounds were living together? The answer must be sought in the environment of colonial America and the circumstances of its Jewry which made the Sephardim less apt to wish to exclude Ashkenazim and the Ashkenazim more inclined to enter a Sephardi community. The Ashkenazi Jew who ventured to emigrate to the Western Hemisphere was *prima facie* likely to be more flexible than the majority of his brethren. Clearly, he faced a future in which the observance of dietary laws and other obligations of his religion would be difficult and perhaps impossible. Once he had overcome this obstacle the acceptance of a ritual and tradition somewhat different from his own would be a relatively small sacrifice. Moreover, the "chaste liturgy of the Sephardim," as Dr. Pool calls it, probably appeared more adapted to the predominately Protestant background of early America. The Sephardi in turn was less able to play "the hidalgo" in a new and developing society. All the settlers must have been aware of the fragility of their existence in a continent peopled by hostile tribes and possessing a climate needing fortitude to endure. Outside observers noted that the Sephardim were more lax in their religious observance, being willing in many instances to eat meat from the regular slaughterhouse, unlike the Ashkenazim.[1] But this did not stop Jews of both heritages from working together.

Twenty-three arrived from Recife in Brazil. Brazil was a Portuguese colony which had been captured by the Dutch in 1630. Under the rule of the tolerant Dutch, the Jewish community had developed and flourished. In 1656, however, it was retaken by the Portuguese and a three month amnesty was declared to give the Jews time to depart. Many returned to Holland. A boat called the *St. Charles* or *St. Catherine* (the name is uncertain) brought Jews to New York. They arrived in a virtually indigent condition and had difficulty in settling the accounts for their passages with those who had brought them there. The director-general of New Netherland, Peter Stuyvesant (1610-1672), a Netherlander who had himself seen service in Brazil, was disturbed by the arrival of the new immigrants. On September 22, 1654, he wrote to his superiors in Amsterdam that the Jews were unpopular locally and, in addition, their indigence might make them a public charge. He declared that he had asked them to leave.

That winter the Sephardim of Amsterdam petitioned the directors of the Dutch West India Company to allow the Jews to reside in New Netherland. They pointed out that many Jews had suffered in the defence of Recife, and had had to leave there. They could not return to Spain or Portugal on account of the Inquisition. They argued that New Netherland could support a large population, and its economic development would benefit the mother country. Moreover, many shareholders in the Dutch West India Company were Jewish and had fostered the programme of the company. Other European countries were allowing Jews to settle in their American colonies.

In the following April the directors wrote to Stuyvesant. They sympathized with his position, but instructed him in clear terms to allow Jews to stay in New Netherland.[2] Equality however came slowly. In 1655 the right of citizenship was extended to Jews — which had earlier been denied — and Asser Levy became the first Jewish burgher. Jewish worship had to be conducted privately within Jewish houses. The time was not yet ripe for permitting the building of a synagogue exclusively devoted to worship. However, in February 1656 a piece of ground was granted as a cemetery plot on a petition by Abraham de Lucena, Salvador Dandrada and Jacob Cohen. Its location is now lost. In 1682 a second cemetery was opened at St. James' Place.

The precise time when Jewish services commenced in a fixed place is unknown, although by 1700 it is clear that such services were being held, since contemporary documents speak of a "Jews' synagogue."

In 1728 a public meeting was held for the purpose of purchasing land and building a synagogue. A parcel of land was bought on Mill Street, close to the house which was already in use as a synagogue, in the name of Lewis Moses Gomez, Mordecai Gomez, Jacob Franks and Rodrigo Pacheco. Contributions for the erection of the brick structure came from Barbados, Jamaica, Boston, Surinam, Curaçao and London. It was dedicated on Passover 1730

and arranged in the traditional Sephardi manner. It was thirty-five feet square and twenty-one feet high, by any standards a very modest structure. There was a ritual bath adjacent, and room for the erection of a festive booth during the festival of Tabernacles. Soon afterwards an additional building was erected to serve as a school and meeting house. The costs of the new building were defrayed by Jacob Mendes da Costa of London, a wealthy merchant.

In 1758 a house for the *samas* or sexton was added, and in 1790 a house for the *hazzan* or minister, which completed the little complex of buildings constituting New York's Sephardi Synagogue, *K. K. Shearith Israel* "the Holy Congregation the Remnant of Israel."[3]

The first minister of the Mill Street synagogue was Moses Lopez de Fonseca. The regulations of 1728 state that he was required to attend the synagogue to conduct the services, and to assist in ritual slaughter when necessary. His salary was fixed at £50 a year plus firewood and *matsot* (unleavened bread) at the Passover festival. In this office he had been preceded by at least two functionaries, Saul Pardo and Abraham Haim de Lucena, who had officiated at the makeshift earlier synagogue. The former — under the anglicized name of Saul Browne — appears in the minutes of the Common Council of New York for September 12, 1685, petitioning for the right to engage in retail trade. This was denied, the council declaring that "noe Jew ought to sell by Retaile within this Citty." Wholesale trading however was permitted — a fact which doubtless influenced the trend of Jewish commercial effort.[4]

In 1736 Moses Lopez de Fonseca left New York to take up a similar position in Curaçao, where he had family ties. He was succeeded by David Mendes Machado, who was a native of Portugal. The congregation took the opportunity to reduce the salary to £40, with a promise of a £10 bonus if circumstances permitted. He was, however, able to make a little extra money by giving instruction and certifying the ritual fitness of meat. He died in 1747.

His successor, Benjamin Pereira, served for nine years and for reasons of health left for Jamaica.

The community turned to London for help in finding a successor, and the London Sephardi community recommended a young Dutchman by the name of Joseph Jessurun Pinto. He helped support himself and his family by teaching Spanish and Portuguese as well as Hebrew, but in 1766 returned to Europe to become the *hazzan* of the Sephardi community of Hamburg.

About this time Sephardi prayer books began to appear. In 1761 an English version of the *arbit* service for New Year and Atonement was printed in New York. This was the spiritual successor of the Spanish language prayer books which were printed for the benefit of *marranos* newly arrived in centres of Jewish worship in the previous country, and which enabled the reader to follow the service in a language he could understand. A similar, but more encompassing volume was published five years later with Isaac Pinto as the

author. No Hebrew-English edition of the prayers appeared until 1826, when Solomon Henry Jackson brought out an edition of the Sephardi Daily Prayers.

On Pinto's return to Europe, Isaac Cohen da Silva temporarily filled the post of *hazzan*, as he had done before, until in 1768 Gershom Mendes Seixas, *"the first American Rabbi,"* was appointed *hazzan* at the age of twenty-three years. During the Revolution, Seixas was an adherent of the colonists' cause and left New York when it was taken by the British. He moved to Connecticut, and later to Philadelphia, where he became the first minister of the Sephardi Congregation *Mikveh Israel* of that city. After his return to New York in 1784, he organized a Hebrew school. He was invited to President Washington's inauguration of 1789 and was elected to the Board of Regents of Columbia University.

It is remarkable that mid-eighteenth century America was able to produce a native-born Sephardi capable of taking a firm religious lead in the little community. His British connections were of long standing, his grandfather Abraham Mendes Seixas having been a banker in London. His father Israel (born 1709) emigrated to America. His religious education must have been obtained locally, presumably at the feet of Joseph Jessurun Pinto, who served *Shearith Israel* during Seixas' 'teens. Seixas was very much a part of the general as well as the Jewish scene, and he was capable of taking an independent line. In 1798 he delivered a sermon on the occasion of a national fast-day which had been proclaimed to foster anti-French sentiment. Unlike most clergymen, Seixas took an anti-Federalist line; not surprisingly, since the pro-British, prestige-conscious Federalist party had distinctly anti-Jewish overtones. In the course of his remarks Seixas declares: *"It hath pleased God to have established us in this country where we possess every advantage that other citizens of these states enjoy, and is as much as we could in reason expect in this captivity, for which let us humbly return thanks for his manifold mercies."*

In 1802 Seixas became the first president of the *Hebra Hesed Va-Amet* (burial society), which exists up to the present day, although its primary function of acting as *'lavadores'* (washers of the dead) has been taken over by professionals. Over the years it has published burial handbooks and prayerbooks and assisted in aiding needy burials and relief cases. Seixas' death in 1816 left a void in Jewish religious leadership which was indeed hard to fill.[5]

The eighteenth century was marked by continuous growth of the city of New York. Sephardim were active both in the religious and general communities as various documents attest. Thus there is extant in the New York City Hall of Records an indenture of apprenticeship of one Solomon Marache to Isaac Hays of New York, dated May 15, 1749, whereby his widowed mother Esther agreed to his learning the *"art, trade and mystery of a*

merchant". It has been noted that this lad was treated especially favourably, receiving up to twelve pounds in his last year, as well as the customary board and lodging. The apprenticeship was not completed, but Marache grew up to be a wealthy merchant, and at the time of the American revolution, was a signatory to a petition to the Continental Congress again to make Philadelphia its seat. A witness to the indenture just mentioned was Daniel Gomez, a New York merchant whose extensive ledger[6] shows Gomez dealing with a veritable network of Sephardi trading partners, e.g., Moses and Isaac Brandon of Jamaica; Abraham Carvallo of Barbados; Isaac Haim Rodriguez da Costa of Curaçao; Abraham Lopez of Newport; Jacob Gonsales of London; Joseph Tobias of Charlestown and many others.

The good name left behind by *Hazzan* Seixas is attested to by the fact that for four years his work was continued by a volunteer, the salary formerly being paid to Seixas going towards the support of his family. However, in 1820 the volunteer, Moses Levi Maduro Peixotto,[7] finding it difficult to pursue his own business as well as the work of *hazzan*, was elected full time successor to Seixas. Shortly after the commencement of his voluntary period of service, the synagogue was completely rebuilt and enlarged to allow for the seating of three hundred worshippers. Financial support came from a large number of communities including Curaçao, which sent six hundred pieces-of-eight, and Barbados, whose Abraham Brandon sent a chandelier. The dedicatory address was given on April 18, 1818, by Mordecai Manuel Noah. Best remembered for his abortive "Ararat" project involving the purchase of a tract of land near Buffalo as a Jewish "national home," Noah has been described as the most influential Jew of his period. He was born in Philadelphia, where his political life had its start, but settled in New York, where in his early thirties he combined the activities of playwright, journalist and politician. He published an English translation of that curiosity of Jewish literature the *Book of Yashar*[8] along with an introduction of his own. He would have been happy to know that it was deemed worthy of a photographic reprint in New York, 1972. His oratorical powers were further called upon to pay the last tribute to *Hazzan* Peixotto on his death in 1828. He was buried in the old Chatham Square burial ground, although his grave had subsequently to be removed on account of changes in the area.

His successor came at the end of the "Sephardi period of American Jewish history," serving in the years 1828-1839 which marked the growing ascendency and independence of Ashkenazi Jewry in the U.S. Isaac Benjamin Seixas was a nephew of Gershom. He was born in Philadelphia, and married and spent a good part of his life in Richmond. He was appointed at a salary of six hundred dollars a year, which he supplemented by voluntary offerings of about half as much again. However, after the erection of a new synagogue in 1834 his salary crept up to the thousand dollar mark. This new building was in Crosby Street. It had about the same seating capacity for men,

but the women's seating capacity had been increased by about fifty per cent. The new synagogue was lit by gas — an innovation less than a decade old in New York — and possessed a basement which housed a chapel and synagogue rooms. At the dedication on June 12, 1834, the first day of the Feast of Weeks, numerous officials, including the Mayor, and clergymen were present. The indefatigable Mordecai M. Noah gave a lengthy address. This building served until 1859 after which time it became a Minstrel Hall. It was demolished in 1881.

In 1840 the notorious "Damascus Affair" burst upon the Jewish scene.[9] In New York one of the members of *Shearith Israel*, Solomon Joseph, drew together a committee to consider what action might be taken on behalf of Damascus Jewry. They decided to hold a protest meeting and petition the United States Government to intercede. An application was made to hold the meeting at *Shearith Israel*. It was refused. Apparently, the leaders of the synagogue did not wish to compromise the position of their co-religionists in America by a noisy intervention on behalf of foreign Jewry. As a result the meeting was held at the Ashkenazi synagogue *B'nai Jeshurun* (Sons of Jeshurun). A letter signed by Israel Baer Kursheedt and Theodore Seixas was dispatched to the President of the United States. The Secretary of State replied that action had already been taken. Kursheedt, a Frankfurt Jew by birth, was a son-in-law of Gershom Mendes Seixas, and had been president of *Shearith Israel* prior to his removal to Richmond where he had been active in the Sephardi synagogue. On his return to New York he helped found the new Ashkenazi synagogue *B'nai Jeshurun*.

The refusal of *Shearith Israel's* trustees to entertain the protest meeting, and the meeting itself, marks a watershed in American Jewish history. The refusal brought an end to Sephardi hegemony and forced the now far more numerous Ashkenazi Jews to strike out for themselves in community endeavour. The meeting itself brought about a rash of meetings, notably in Philadelphia, where the authorities of the Sephardi synagogue had no qualms and allowed a meeting to be held on their premises. This marked for the first time a concerted political action on the part of American Jewry, basically different from earlier previous acts of supplication to permit them to live and prosper like other citizens.

American Jewry discovered that it was capable of raising its voice, being heard with respect and not suffering as a result.

The Transition

This maturation in American Jewry led to a distinct change in the situation of the Sephardi communities of the United States. In places such as London and Amsterdam regulations *(ascamot)* disqualified Ashkenazim from participating in the life of the Sephardi community communally or religiously.

These communities have continued up to the present as close-knit, exclusive units. In America the situation was different. As we saw earlier, Ashkenazim were never excluded; with the possible exception of Savannah in its early years, they rapidly formed the majority. Accordingly, it would be more accurate to say that the congregation was an outgrowth of the synagogue. The existence of the institution evoked members to fill it, even though they came from various places and had no prior community commitment to the Sephardim. The Sephardi mode of worship did indeed continue, and continued to hold high prestige, perhaps because its dignified character seemed more natural on the genteel American scene. The foundation later in the century of a "Portuguese" synagogue in Baltimore where there were no "ethnic" Sephardim indicates the enduring aesthetic attraction that the Sephardi *minhag* had for certain individuals. But from this time on the United States did not in the true sense have a Sephardi *community*. It had respected and high status Sephardi synagogues with congregations whose links, for the most part, were composed of bricks and mortar rather than identity of cultural background.

At this point we must give some consideration to the communities which grew up in other parts of the United States.

Newport

The early Jews of Newport have left as a monument a beautiful Georgian synagogue erected in 1763, furnished in the characteristic Sephardi style. Apart from a somewhat dubious Masonic document which may date to 1658, the first clear mention of Jews in Rhode Island, a colony set up in devotion to freedom of conscience, is in a document conveying ground to Mordecay Campanall and Moses Pacherckoe or Pacheco for a burial place, dated February 28, 1678. Campanall persuaded a number of Barbadian Jews[10] of the Burgos, Tinoco, Nasy, Mendes and Campanall families to leave Speightstown, Barbados, for the greater opportunities to be found in Rhode Island. The community was further boosted in 1693 by an influx of some 90 Jews from the Dutch island of Curaçao, including the families of Touro, Gomez, Molina, de Meza, Casserers, Rodrigues da Costa, Coehn Henriquez and Luis.

The community grew during the eighteenth century, augmented in some cases by individuals born on the Iberian Peninsula, often, as was the case with *marranos*, much inter-married. Jacob Rodriguez Rivera was born in Spain in 1717 whence he fled and was naturalized in New York in 1746. He settled in Newport, and did well, trading in spermaceti candles. His daughter, Sarah, married Aaron Lopez, one of the most prominent merchants in Newport prior to the civil war. Aaron was born in Portugal, from which he fled with his first wife Abigail; in Newport they became practising Jews. His older half-

brother, Moses Lopez, had left for America some years earlier: he married his first cousin on his mother's side who was the sister of Jacob Rodriguez Rivera. Rivera and Aaron Lopez often co-operated in business ventures. Aaron's situation in the community is indicated by the fact that in 1773 the Rhode Island General Assembly appointed him a member of a small committee set up to protect the right of the Rhode Islanders to share the Canadian codfish trade, which Parliament wished to place in the hands of a monopoly. Moreover, he was the largest taxpayer in Newport. He paid a tax of £32.9.10, almost double the amount paid by the next citizen on the rolls. Aaron died prematurely in a freakish accident which brought about his death by drowning. Ezra Stiles,[11] who composed an epitaph for him, called him *"an ornament and valuable pillar to the Jewish society of which he was a member."*

By 1754 the Jews of Newport were ready for a synagogue. They appealed to the London Sephardim whose treasurer or *gabay*, Moses de Jacob Franco, responded with his blessings, but no money. Five years later Jacob Rodriguez Rivera and two Ashkenazim, Moses Levy and Isaac Hart, purchased a small parcel of land for £1,500 Rhode Island currency. The New Yorkers sent them £150 towards the proposed building. Money was also now forthcoming from the Sephardi communities of Jamaica, Curaçao, Surinam and London, and in 1763 the synagogue of K. K. *Yeshuat Israel*[12] ("The Salvation of Israel") was dedicated.

The first minister of the synagogue was Isaac Touro, a member of a family which was scattered throughout the Americas, and who had served the congregation for some time before the synagogue was built. In 1773 he was married to Regina Hays, by Rabbi Isaac Carigal, (the name is also spelled *Karigal* or *Carregal*) an emissary, or *shaliah*, from the Holy Land who was then studying in Newport and acted as the officiant.

Ezra Stiles has left us in his diary for May 28, 1773, a graphic description of the service in the synagogue on the Pentecost festival:

> 'Pentecost. Went to the Synagogue at IX^{h} A.M. At reading the Law the Rabbi was desired and read the Ten Commandments. But before reading the Law and the prophets, the Rabbi went to the Desk or Taubauh and preached a Sermon about 47 minutes long, in Spanish. It was interspersed with Hebrew. His Oratory, Elocution and Gestures were fine and oriental. It was very animated . . .
>
> The Affinity of the Spanish and Latin enabled me to understand something of the Discourse — but after all I have but an imperfect Idea of it. He wore Spectacles thro' the whole Sermon, and frequently looked down on the Desk before him as if he had the Discourse written, but I don't know that he had any Writing. The Jews intend to print it. He was dressed in his Fur Cap, scarlet Robe, green silk Damask Vest, and a chintz under Vest — girt with a Sash or Turkish Girdle — besides the Alb, with Tzizith. The Jews dont admire his *reading* (the X Commandments) and indeed he speaks off with much greater Fluency and Ease than he reads, tho' he reads correctly. There was Dignity and Authority about him, mixt with Modesty. After the Sermon, two Rolls of the Law were brought forward with great Solemnity, and after Elevation, the parasang including the XXth Chapter of Genesis was read as usual: at reading the X Commandments the whole Congregation rose up and stood.

After which Mr. Rivera's little son 8 or 9 aet. read the first Chapter of Ezekiel — then Prayers for all Nations, for the Jews, for the King and Royal Family, for the Magistrates of Rhode Island. — The Law was then returned in solemn procession singing the usual Psalm: then Alms Prayers and Singing concluded the Whole. The Synagogue was decorated with Flowers &c. About the Time the Rabbi began Sermon which was a few minutes before X^h three of the Commissioners came in, viz. Gov Wanton and Judge Oliver and afterwards Judge Auchmuty and were seated in the Seat of the Parnass or President of the Synagogue. The whole service ended a quarter after twelve. — I have often found that I can better understand the English pronunciation of Hebrew than the Spanish, German or Polish; every nation pronounces a little differently. I mean that the Jews whose Vernacular Tongue is English pronounce so that I understand it better than when pronounced by a Jew whose vernacular Tongue is dutch &c. Accordingly I easily perceive the Words, when Riveras son (born here) reads, tho' he is taught by a Dutch Master. But when this Jerusalem Rabbi read the Law I could understand it as well as if I read it myself, and much better than I can understand Mr Tauro the Huzzan, tho' I have been used to his reading 13 or 14 years. I must say, however, that tho' the Rabbi reads more correctly than Tauro, yet the latter exceeds him in a certain Grandeur of Utterance, and a more bold and lofty Sonitus Verborum.'

The sermon which Stiles heard has been preserved. It was translated by Aaron Lopez and published in the same year.[13] The reference to *Genesis* was a slip: *Exodus* is meant. The congregation's dislike of the rabbi's reading was doubtless due to his use of the oriental mode of cantillation which is different from the Portuguese. Stiles observed at his visit two weeks before that Carigal corrected Touro's faulty reading of *geulato* in Leviticus 25:29. It may be noted that in Newport they followed the Amsterdam custom of having a young boy read the prophetic reading — even apparently from the book of Ezekiel which is usually reserved for older men.

Touro acted an an inspector of Jewish dietary laws; a certificate in Spanish attesting the ritual fitness of forty kegs of packed beef and other meat sent to Surinam has been preserved.[14]

With the advent of the revolutionary war many of the Jews left Newport. Touro stayed on for a while and later moved to New York where he ministered to the remnant of the Jewish community which stayed on under British rule. Soon after, he moved to Jamaica where he died in 1784 at the age of 46.

After the successful conclusion of the war, Moses Seixas, the *parnass* of the Congregation, presented an address to George Washington. In his reply, Washington spoke of the *"inherent natural rights"* of his correspondents, and promised the protection of the United States Government *"which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance."*[15]

Newport did not recover its former prosperity after the war, and the Jewish community declined. Services were no longer held, and by 1800 the sacred scrolls were lodged for safe-keeping in the home of the signatory of the letter to George Washington. In 1822 Moses Lopez, the last Jew in Newport, moved to New York, and the care of the synagogue was taken over by Nathan Gould, a Christian. The synagogue was later to benefit by a bequest for its

upkeep of $10,000 by Judah Touro. His brother Abraham also endowed the building. The ownership of the synagogue devolved on the *Shearith Israel* Congregation in New York.

The Newport synagogue remained closed until 1881, apart from occasional services conducted by summer visitors. In that year the new Jewish inhabitants of Newport — not Sephardim of course — petitioned the Newport City Council, as trustee of the Judah Touro fund, for permission to use the synagogue and the income on a regular basis. Congregation *Shearith Israel* was able to establish its right to the building, and made provision for Sephardi services to be held there for the high holidays. In 1882 Abraham Pereira Mendes, father of the minister of the New York congregation, took over the ministry in Newport, and conducted regular Sephardi services. He was born in 1825 in Jamaica and had married a daughter of the *Hazzan* of Bevis Marks in London, D. A. de Sola, under whom he trained for the ministry. For a short time he served the community of Montego Bay, Jamaica, whose synagogue, built in 1840, was destroyed in the hurricane of 1912. For a time he served in Birmingham, and later was principal of a private school in London.

In July 1879 he had been appointed lecturer to the Sephardi community of London, but they refused to make his appointment permanent in the expectation that the office of *Haham* would ultimately be filled — as it was in 1887 with the election of Dr. Moses Gaster. This led to Mendes' departure for Newport.

The synagogue was officially re-consecrated in 1882 with Mendes and his two sons conducting the services. Mendes was killed accidentally in New York in 1893.[16] David Baruch was appointed by *Shearith Israel* to succeed him, but he was caught in a prolonged struggle between two local groups who sought to exercise control of the synagogue. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that the Newport City Council had control of the Touro funds, and was called upon to determine who should be the beneficiaries in the name of the synagogue, while distant *Shearith Israel* had title to the property.

The legal problems were finally settled by 1904. *Shearith Israel* was much interested in preserving the Sephardi *minhag* at Newport despite the fact that there were no native Sephardim to benefit by it, and hence ensured a succession of Sephardi ministers including — briefly — Abraham H. Nieto and Henry S. Morais. Morais was the last to maintain the tenuous thread of Sephardi tradition in Newport. His successors introduced a modified service more to the liking of their constituency, as well as the Ashkenazi pronunciation of Hebrew, although services in the Sephardi *minhag* conducted by visiting ministers from New York have been held, and no doubt will continue to be held, on the fairly frequent occasions when a commemorative service is called for by the unusual historic character of Newport's beautiful Sephardi synagogue building.

Charleston

From its earliest beginnings South Carolina offered toleration to Jews. The eighty-seventh article of the *Fundamental Constitutions* published in 1669 by the Earl of Shaftesbury, one of the original Carolina proprietors, declared that it would not be reasonable to keep out *"heathens, Jews and other dissenters from the purity of the Christian religion."* Doubtless his liberal secretary, the philosopher John Locke, had a hand in this formulation. In 1707 John Archdale, former governor of the province of Carolina describes in his memoirs[17] how he communicated with certain Indians: *"I . . . ordered him to bring these Indians with him to Charles-Town which accordingly he did. There were three men and one woman: they could speak Spanish, and I had a Jew for an Interpreter, so upon examination I found they professed the Christian Religion as the Papists do . . ."* This incident took place in August 1695, but the name of the Jew mentioned in this contemporary account has unfortunately not come down to us. Two years later an Act was passed by the Caroline Assembly to grant citizenship to aliens, designed principally to aid fleeing French Huguenots, but applying also to Jews. Four Jewish merchants benefited by the Act: Simon Valentine, Jacob Mendis, a third by the name of Avila and a fourth of unknown name. Valentine later became the first Jewish landholder in Carolina. By the eighteenth century the Sephardim were firmly established. The *South Carolina Gazette* for April 19, 1735, contains an advertisement by the firm of Carvallo and Guttens offering goods varying from all types of cloth and clothing to soap and "very good lime-juice." Advertisements by Isaac de Paz and Moses de Mattos appear soon after. Not long after there was an attempt by the Sephardi community of London to solve its recurrent problem with paupers by exporting them to America. A group had earlier been dispatched to Georgia, to which reference will be made later. A committee was set up, and a certain John Hamilton petitioned for a grant of land to settle Jews there, but this attempt came to nothing.[18] However, English Jews continued to settle in Charleston; by 1750 there were sufficient to form a congregation. *K. K. Beth Elohim Unveh Shallom*[19] ('Congregation of the House of God and Abode of Peace') was founded. A London Jew by the name of Moses Cohen was appointed *Haham* and *Ab Bet Din:* he earned his living as a shopkeeper. Isaac Mendes da Costa was the first *Hazzan*, and Joseph Tobias the president.[20]

Ezra Stiles records in his diary for August 2, 1774, a visit paid to him by the *Hazzan*. Da Costa was then fifty four years old. Stiles records that he had studied under *Haham* Nieto in London and left there at the age of 29.

These Sephardim did not forget their connection with London. Jacob Oliveira in his will dated July 27, 1751, left £10 to the Sephardi synagogue in London.

The most notable Jew of the period was Moses Lindo, who was also a

Londoner, engaged in London in the profitable indigo trade. Finding that a good grade of indigo was coming from Carolina, he moved to Charleston in order to put his expertise at grading to best use. In 1756 he advertised that he *"is arrived from London, with an intent to purchase Indico . . . and remit the same to his constituents in London, classed, sorted and packed in a manner proper for the foreign market."* Six years later Lindo's efforts were rewarded by a commission signed by the Governor of South Carolina, appointing him Surveyor and Inspector-General of Indigo in South Carolina, he being the only person *"qualified to ascertain the First Sort."* Lindo's interest in dyestuffs went beyond mere business interest. The London Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* for 1763 contain an account of a new crimson dye he had discovered. The worthy inspector died in 1774 leaving an estate worth £2,000.

The very same year another London Sephardi, Francis Salvador, became the first Jew to hold State Office in what were soon to be the United States. He was elected to the Provincial Congress of South Carolina, having been active in resisting British domination. His grandfather of the same name was born in Amsterdam, whence he moved to London. The family became very wealthy, but their fortune was eaten up by the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 and other catastrophes. Francis the younger came to Carolina in the hope of recouping the family fortune. But his career was cut short during the American War of Independence in the course of a Cherokee uprising. His end is graphically described by Major Andrew Williamson writing to the President of South Carolina: *". . . Mr. Salvador received three wounds, and fell by my side . . . before (Lieutenant Farar) could find him in the dark, the enemy unfortunately got his scalp, which was the only one taken. He died . . . forty-five minutes after he received the wounds, sensible to the last . . ."*[21]

During this period the congregation worshipped in various wood or brick buildings. By 1791 the congregation numbered about 400. It was incorporated in that year by an Act of the South Carolina legislature. In 1792 a new synagogue was erected at the cost of $20,000, and constituted the most impressive synagogue in North America. Seven years later, at the instance of David Lopez, a handsome ark was added.

By the turn of the century the Jewish community of Charleston was perhaps the most prosperous in the country. Recognizable Sephardi names in Charleston records of the period include Aguilar, Albergo, Amesquita, Azuby, Brandon, Cardozo, Carvalho, Corre, Da Costa, D'Azevedo, Da Vega, De la Motta, De Leon, De Pass, Gomez, Harby, Labat, Lindo, Lopez, Melhado, Mendez, Moise, Monsanta, Morales, Naar, Peixotto, Perrera, Pinto, Ricardo, Rivera, Rodrigues, Sacedote, Sarzedas, Sasportas, Seixas, Suares, Torres and Valentine.

At this time the minister of the congregation was Abraham Azuby, who had succeeded Abraham Alexander in 1785. Alexander was a Londoner who had emigrated to Charleston around 1766. Little is known about Azuby other

than that he was the recipient of a salary of £100 which his widow continued to receive after his death in 1805, it later being replaced by a smaller life pension. The congregation then asked the London Sephardim to find a new minister for them *"who would reflect honour on himself and stamp an additional degree of dignity and respectability upon our congregation."* They sent out Benjamin, son of the late *Haham* Moses Cohen d'Azevedo. The congregation was not pleased with him, and after a while sent him back, to the chagrin of the London congregation.[22]

Some time elapsed before a regular minister was appointed, Jacob Suares, Moses Levy and Emanuel de la Motta conducting the services in the meantime. In 1809 the congregation invited Emanuel Nunes Carvalho to be their minister. Carvalho was a Londoner who had just arrived in New York to be a teacher in the Polonies school of *Shearith Israel* after a stay of some nine years in Barbados as *hazzan* of the Sephardi synagogue of the island. It was 1811 when he arrived in Charleston. The following year found him involved in an unseemly *fracas*. This took place when the synagogue leaders had suspended him for some infraction of rules, and a petition was presented asking for the removal of the ban. Mordecai Manuel Noah, who happened to be present records in a letter that *"Mr. Carvalho in person aided and abetted the confusion and riot which took place in a short time, the whole meeting parnass and all were battling with clubs and bruising, boxing etc . . ."* During his stay in Charleston, Carvalho began work on his *Key to the Hebrew Tongue* which was published soon after he left in 1814 to become minister of Philadelphia's Sephardi synagogue. He died in 1817. The Charleston community maintained strict discipline, and it is not surprising that Carvalho fell foul of it. Fines were imposed for failing to attend meetings and for refusing synagogue offices. One Solomon Moses was fined £3 for hitting a member of the Burial Society in the face while he was engaged in his sacred duties at the house of Mr. Abraham Torres. The 1820 constitution of the congregation gives a vivid picture of the disciplinarians who wrote it.

> "The *Parnass Presidente* shall have the sole direction in the Synagogue, during divine service and all officers under pay shall be under his control . . . No person being called to *Sephar*, having *Portos-Hechal* (i.e. given the privilege of opening the ark), or going up there to offer, shall leave the same, without offering at least one shilling for the *Parnass Presidente*, and prosperity of the congregation, nor shall any ridiculous or unusual offering be permitted . . . nor shall any person, desirous of consummating a marriage with any female who has lived as a prostitute, or kept a disorderly house, be permitted such marriage under the sanction of this congregation . . . any person or persons publicly violating the Sabbath, or other sacred days, shall be deprived of every privilege of synagogue and the services of its officers. He or they shall also be subject to such fines and penalties as the *Parnassim* and *Adjunta* may deem fit . . ."

Two years before the date of these severe rules Hartwig Cohen had been elected minister of the congregation. He served until 1823 when S. C.

Peixotto was elected who served until 1835.

Early in the latter's term of office a significant split occurred in the congregation, ante-dating by almost two decades a similar schism in the parent congregation in London. In 1824 forty-seven members of the Charleston Sephardi congregation petitioned for a revision of the ritual. They requested a repetition of parts of the service in English, the introduction of an English sermon and abridgement of the service. The custom of making offerings particularly aroused their ire. The petition[23] was tabled but no action was taken on it. This led to the formation of the "Reformed Society of Israelites," which was organized formally on January 16, 1825, and later incorporated by the South Carolina legislature.

The type of Sephardi service to which the reformers were reacting is described unsympathetically by an anonymous Christian observer[24] in the *North American Review:*

> *"Upon entering one of these edifices on a Saturday, you behold the assembly seated or standing with their hats on, and generally wearing an air of much greater indifference, than is witnessed even among Christians, during the season of public devotion. The priest, with a few attendants, is stationed on a high enclosed platform in the centre of the floor. As an instance of the little interest, which is excited by the immediate business of the place, we recollect, that once, while we were fixing our attention on the intonations of the chanting priest, a highly respectable elder of the congregation arose and crossed the area, and taking his seat next to us, began the discussion of a curious point of Hebrew phraseology; after which, he entered upon more general conversation, leaving our minds at last the impression of his being a polite and hospitable entertainer, rather than of what we know he really was, a devout fellow worshipper.*
>
> *The whole of the liturgy is conducted in the Hebrew languge with the exception indeed of occasional portions, which, in some synagogues, it seems, are uttered in Spanish . . .*
>
> *The ritual consists of readings and responses in a kind of chant, or recitative, enunciated frequently with great indistinctness and volubility, now sinking into a low murmur, and now rising into a kind of nervous and violent vociferation . . .*
>
> *Owing to the rapidity of uttering the liturgy, it is generally finished in about three hours . . .*
>
> *During its repetition, the members of the congregation, except a few of the most devout, are seen coming in and going out of the synagogue at all times, and but a very slight check seems to be imposed upon the usual inclination of the children. There is nothing in the shape of a discourse, or religious instruction of any kind, except, we believe, on a very few annual or occasional festivals. At these solemnities, some enlightened member of the body is called upon to deliver an appropriate English discourse.*
>
> *We ought to remark, that the part of the liturgy, which consists in reading the portion of the laws, called the Parasah, is generally well read, devoutly, and emphatically. The rest of the service corresponds to the description given above."*[25]

In 1825 Isaac Harby delivered a discourse to the Society in which he states the objects of the reformers. Harby was the grandson of a Moroccan Jew who, he states, was in the service of the emperor, and later emigrated to England, where he married an Italian lady. Their son, Isaac's father, settled in Jamaica as a young man, and later moved to Charleston. Isaac Harby was a

writer of some talent. He declares the desire of the society to *"throw away Rabbinical inter-polations,"* to avoid repetition, chant with solemnity and translate the Scriptures into English.[26]

Services were conducted (with uncovered heads) by David Nunez Carvalho in a local Masonic Hall. Attempts were made to raise money to build a synagogue, but these failed. Isaac Harby moved out of Charleston in 1828 — he died soon thereafter — and in 1833 the society wound up its affairs. Its members rejoined the old synagogue. However, the spirit of their movement was not dead.

In 1836 a Polish Ashkenazi Jew, Gustavus Poznanski, was elected minister on the recommendation of Philadelphia's Isaac Leeser. He had been educated in Hamburg, where in 1818 the first regularly constituted Reform Temple had been established. This Temple had considerable influence on him.

In 1838 the Charleston synagogue was burned down. When it was rebuilt in 1840 a petition was presented to include an organ. This led to a grave split in the congregation. Those who favoured the organ won, and the traditionalists took the matter to court, where they lost. On appeal the judge declared that it was impossible to determine whether an organ was permissible by Jewish law or not without setting *"a judical standard for theological orthodoxy."*[27] Accordingly he agreed that the majority rule must prevail in the congregation. The minority seceded, forming a new congregation called, like the Sephardi community of New York, *Shearith Israel*; they worshipped in rented quarters. The seceders were joined by a further group of seceders who felt that Poznanski had gone too far when, on Passover 1843, he preached a sermon recommending the abandonment of the observance of the second day of the festivals. In 1847 Poznanski resigned, but continued to maintain a lively interest in congregational affairs and fostering the Reform movement. (He later returned to New York and rejoined *Shearith Israel.*) When in 1850 Isaac M. Wise, later to become a leader in the American Reform Movement, arrived in Charleston as a candidate for the vacant pulpit, Poznanski declared to him: *"We have invited you hither to defend our principles, and since these are possibly unknown to you, I place myself at your service to impart them to you."* Wise's tart — and typical — response was that this was unnecessary as he had come to state *his* principals.[28] Although Wise signalled his acceptance of the post, he eventually decided to remain in Albany. But seemingly Poznanski had done his work well. In his *Reminiscences*, Wise already refers to this congregation of *"influential merchants, bankers, lawyers, physicians, authors, politicians, public officials, most of them rich and descended from old Portuguese families"* as the 'Reformed Congregation.'[29]

In 1825 Isaac Leeser visited Charleston and found

> "the congregation Shearith Israel was in a prosperous condition, and that public worship was well attended the two Sabbaths we spent there . . . we came little in contact with gentlemen of the reform Synagogue; but we learnt that the attendance there has greatly diminished, a result which was long since anticipated . . ."[30]

Efforts were made to persuade Leeser to minister to *Shearith Israel* but without success. Solomon Jacobs, "a good Portuguese *hazzan*", was elected instead.[31]

The secessionists re-united with the old and now reformed congregation at the time of the terrible Civil War that destroyed the tranquillity of Charleston; but the thread of tradition had been snapped.

In 1879 the congregation adopted a reformed prayer book[32] drawn up by its rabbi David Levy — although the board insisted that references to the Messiah and bodily resurrection be retained.[33] Mixed seating was introduced, and the hat and prayer shawl became optional. The silk hat and frock-coat were no longer seen. The congregation continues an active life at the present day, but the only overt connection with its Sephardi past is the letters K.K. (for *Kahal Kadosh* "Holy Congregation") which precede its name.

Savannah

In January 1733 a ship left London in the charge of one Captain Hanson carrying forty-two Jews to settle in the new colony of Georgia. It took six months to arrive, having been subjected to several lengthy delays. It carried two Yiddish speaking Ashkenazi families, the Minis and the Sheftalls: the remainer were Sephardim — Nunes Ribeiro, Noah, Henriques, Bernal, Olivera, Paiba, Abudiente, de Crasto, de Pass, Villareal, de Molina, de Miranda, Delmonte, de Lyon[34] They had gone at the instance of Moses da Costa, Joseph Rodrigues Sequeira and Jacob Israel Suasso who, with the consent of the London *Mahamad*, had been appointed commissioners by the Georgia trustees to raise money; in fact they arranged for the emigration of Jews to the new colony.

The early records of the colony were preserved in Hebrew or Yiddish by the Sheftall family in the form of diaries; they were translated into English in the late eighteenth century and preserved in a manuscript now in the Keith Reid collection of the University of Georgia.[35] A synagogue was founded two years later and named *K. K. Mikva Israel* ("Hope of Israel").[36] Evidence of their desire to build a proper synagogue, as well as the difference between the Spanish and German Jews is found in a letter sent to Germany by the Rev. Bolzius, preacher of the Salzburg Lutherans who had settled in Savannah:

"Somebody recently complained to me in Savannah that the Spanish and Portuguese Jews persecute the German Jews in a way that no Christian would persecute another, and asked me to put in a good word for the German Jews with the authorities . . . he promised me that sometime he would explain the whole affair why they are so embittered towards one another. They would like to build a synagogue, but the Spanish and German Jews cannot agree about it. What the particular circumstances are is unknown to me. The Spanish and Portuguese Jews are not so particular with their food as the others. For instance, they eat the meat that usually comes from the Savannah store, or is sold elsewhere. But the Germans would starve before they would eat anything other than what they slaughter themselves. They have the same liberty in Savannah as any other Englishman has. They bear arms, soldier-style, as others do. They have no other profession than farming or dealing in small merchandise. The last comes easier to them than the first. There is also a doctor among them who has been permitted by the Trustees to cure anyone in Savannah who wishes to get cured at his own expense. They practise the same ceremonies in their worship that I have seen in Berlin:[37] this they do in a miserable hut where men and women are kept separate. A young man who understands several languages, and Hebrew particularly well, is their reader and is paid by them. Only two families know Yiddish. They themselves do not yet know if the Trustees will give them leave to build a synagogue. This must surely take a little while, since as will be recalled the Spanish and Portuguese Jews are against the German Jews, and also in regard to the petition[38] for the building of a synagogue they are objecting to one another . . ."[39]

The doctor was Dr. Samuel Nunes Ribeiro. His services somewhat mollified the attitude of the Trustees to the presence of Jews — they were not at all sure that they liked the idea — and they expressed the hope that Oglethorpe, the Governor of the Colony had recompensed his services, but not with land. In point of fact the Jews came into possession of lands as a result of a local legal ruling that they might do so.

Later in 1733 more Sephardim arrived. One of the original immigrants, Abraham de Leon, began to grow grapes, as he had done in Portugal. In 1738 he applied to the Trustees for a loan of £200 in order to enable him to bring vines from Portugal. The request was granted, with the money to be repaid over a six year period.

By 1740 the once flourishing Jewish colony had departed. The Spaniards in Florida were close, and showed signs of moving northwards. These Sephardim, many of whom had at some time been baptized, needed no encouragement to stay out of the way of their former fellow-countrymen.

However, the Jews returned shortly thereafter. The decision to admit slave labour to Georgia which had previously been prohibited, made matters much easier.

It would seem that regular religious services were not resumed until 1774. For September 14, 1774, the Sheftall diaries record that:

"having a sufficient number of Jews here to make a congregation we came to a resolution to meet at the house of Mordecai Sheftall, which was done. A congregation of Jews meet here at Mordecai Sheftall's house and continues to congregat *(sic)* as was formerly in this province."

The War of Independence caused much difficulty in the community. The diaries declare on December 6, 1775:

> "The American Revolution at this time throughout America did ocation many Jews to be continually coming and going that there was no possibility to keep any register of there names as there was nothing but warr talked of and everybody had their hands and herts full."

In 1786 however:

> "we meet and re-establish our Congregation of Mikva Israel. We hired a place for a snogo and choose the following named persons for the heads of the Congregation:
>
> Philip Minis *Parnass*
> David Nunis Cardozo, *Gabay*
> Levi Sheftall)
> Cushman Polock) *Adjuntas*
> Joseph Abraham)
> Emanuel Delamotta, *Hazan*
> Levy Abrahams, Secretary

It will be observed that while most of the leaders of the community were Ashkenazim, the *hazzan* was a Sephardi, a native of the island of St. Croix in the Danish West Indies. Delamotta later moved to Charleston where he became a founding member of the Supreme Council of Scottish rite Masonry.

In 1789 the Hebrew Congregation of Savannah sent George Washington an address of congratulations on his victory, becoming the first Jewish congregation and the only religious group in Savannah to do so. A fulsome reply was received.[40] The congregation was incorporated in 1790 as the *"PARNASS and ADJUNTAS of the MICKVEH ISRAEL at Savannah."*

Jacob Delamotta, the son of the first *hazzan*, is a good example of the successful Sephardi of early nineteenth century America, well-educated, devoted both to Jewish tradition and to the ideals of America.[41] He was born in Savannah in 1789 and moved to Charleston with his family as a young boy. He attended the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania from which he graduated at the age of 21. He practised in Charleston for a short time, became an army surgeon during the war of 1812 and then went into practice in New York. Gershom Mendes Seixas died during his stay there, and he delivered an eulogy[42] which was later published. Delamotta returned to Savannah in 1818 where he became prominent in his field of medicine; his attempts, however, to obtain election as a City Alderman were not successful. He was prominent in the Masonic movement and gave the address at the dedication of the new Savannah Synagogue in 1820.[43] The address elicited from Thomas Jefferson the comment that *"religious freedom is the most effectual anodyne against religious dissension."* In 1823 he moved to Charleston, where his orthodoxy caused him to join the party opposing the introduction of an organ in the synagogue service in Charleston, and doubtless helped spur Isaac Leeser's eulogy[44] after his death in 1845.

The synagogue which Delamotta consecrated at the corner of Liberty and Whitaker streets was destroyed by fire nine years later, although the *sepharim* (scrolls of the law) were saved. A new synagogue was erected on the same site after a lapse of some years and was dedicated in 1841 by Isaac Leeser.

Mickveh Israel had difficulty in filling its pulpit. They were unsuccessful in attempting to lure Abraham de Sola away from his post in Montreal.[45] During the latter part of the nineteenth century *Mickveh Israel* gradually became a reform synagogue, although there does not appear to have been any strong movement towards reform as there was in Charleston. In 1848 the severe penalties for Sabbath violation were abolished. Six years later, the prayer for the government was recited in English instead of Hebrew. In 1857 mixed seating was permitted during addresses in the synagogue, presumably to enable the ladies to hear better. On February 11, 1868, a number of radical reforms were introduced. The second-day holiday of the festivals was eliminated; a mixed choir and organ were introduced; the prayers were abbreviated, and the *haphtara* (the reading from the Prophets) was eliminated. A year later the monetary offerings (which had so vexed the Charleston reformers) were eliminated, and soon after the procedure of calling men to the reading of the law was abolished, except for the *bar mitzvah*. Mixed seating was now allowed all the time. A new synagogue was built in 1878 in which two years later Jastrow's Conservative prayer book replaced the old Portuguese prayers; hats were made optional for men in 1892, and the reform-style late Friday evening service was commenced in 1904.[46] Its present spiritual leader, R. Saul J. Rubin, informs the writer that the only current survival of Sephardi tradition is the hymn *El Nora 'alila* which is still sung to the traditional chant, unaccompanied, before the Atonement closing service.

With the new synagogue the congregation got a new Sephardi minister, Isaac Pereira Mendes, who left the failing Sephardi congregation in Richmond. Mendes was a nephew of Abraham Pereira Mendes, who was afterwards to minister to the Newport congregation, and a cousin of Henry Pereira Mendes of *Shearith Israel* in New York. Isaac Mendes was a native of Kingston, Jamaica, (born January 13, 1853) who had been educated in London at Northwick College, a school founded by his uncle Abraham. At the age of 20 he became minister of *K. K. Beth Shalom* in Richmond, and served *Mickveh Israel* from 1877 to his death in 1904. He was the recipient of an honorary doctorate from the University of Georgia, and published several devotional works. He was the last Sephardi to minister to two Southern congregations, *Beth Shalom* which closed on his departure, and *Mickveh Israel*, which still worships — as a reform congregation — in the century old Gothic structure of which he was first minister.

Philadelphia until the time of Leeser

At the time of the American Revolution, Philadelphia was one of the most populous cities in the British Empire, reportedly ranking second only to London itself. Sephardim had connections with the city of William Penn early in the eighteenth century, although the bulk of the Jewish population was Ashkenazi. Philadelphia was a major American port, and the de Paz family of London (a member of which left a substantial sum in 1743 for the establishment of a *Yeshibah* only to have it struck down in court as *"in contradiction of the Christian religion"*)[47] used the shipyards there for boat building. A *"fashionable convert"* by the name of Miranda is recorded in Pennsylvania in the first quarter of the century. He traded with the Indians and died in 1732, leaving houses and other property in Philadelphia and other parts of the province. But he was not a practising Jew, and doubtless found that the religion he or his family had been forced to assume was more convenient for him in those pioneering days in America, as it had been in the peninsula.

The Jewish community of Philadelphia is generally reckoned to have been founded by Nathan Levy, a native New Yorker of Ashkenazi origin, who was a member of New York's Sephardi congregation *Shearith Israel*. He settled in Philadelphia permanently around 1738, but continued to pay his dues faithfully to *Shearith Israel*, and became one of its most liberal supporters. He was joined by his younger brother Moses, and a couple of years later by their kinsmen David and Moses Franks, who were also from New York. In 1740 Nathan Levy purchased a plot of land for a cemetery, a sure sign that the community was a settled one. These men engaged profitably in trading. Some years later they were joined by Barnard Gratz, a Polish Jew who had lived for some time in England, and later by Barnard's brother Michael, who, after various ventures, decided to try his hand in the New World. This formed the nucleus of the Philadelphia community, Ashkenazi in origin yet linked to the Sephardi community in New York, and, so to say, an offshoot of it.

Jewish service was being held in Philadelphia by the middle of the eighteenth century. What its nature was we cannot know for sure, but probably it followed the model that Levy knew from his childhood in *Shearith Israel*. In 1761 *Shearith Israel* lent the Philadelphians a scroll of the law and gradually the other accoutrements of Jewish worship were obtained.

By 1782 the population of Philadelphia had been greatly augmented by Jews fleeing from British occupied cities such as New York and Newport. The synagogue board or *"adjunta"*, as it is called up to the present day, consisted of six men of whom only one, Barnard Gratz, had been previously a Philadelphian, and only one bore a Sephardi name, Benjamin Seixas. Another member of the group, Jonas Phillips, who had emigrated from

Germany as a 'teenager had indeed married a Sephardi woman, Rebecca Mendez Machado, the daughter of the *hazzan* of *Shearith Israel*. He had served as a ritual slaughterer in New York, and settled in Philadelphia as a retailer and auctioneer. The group determined to build a synagogue, and bought a lot on Sterling Alley for the purpose. However, the adjoining German Reform Church displayed no enthusiasm for its new neighbour, so the lot was sold and a synagogue erected on Cherry Alley — thirty feet by thirty-six feet in area. Gershom Mendes Seixas, the *hazzan* of New York's *Shearith Israel*, had reached Philadelphia in 1780 in flight from the British, and became the first *hazzan* of K. K. *Mikveh Israel*, as the reorganized congregation was known, given the same name ("Hope of Israel") as the congregations in Savannah and Curaçao. The dedication took place on Friday, September 13, 1782.[48] The order of service is contained in Jacob Raphael Cohen's record book, one of the basic sources for the history of the congregation.[49] It includes prayers for Haym Salomon, in recognition of the *"quarter cost of the synagogue building which he paid,"* as well as the *"honorable widows, wives and maidens who gave the covers and wrappers for the scrolls and the covers and curtains for the ark."* Haym Salomon is probably *Mikveh Israel's* most famous member; a statue of him next to George Washington and Robert Morris stands in the city of Chicago, and there is another in Los Angeles. Henry S. Morais describes him as *"having been born in Lissa, on the Prussian side of Poland, in 1740 and descended from Portuguese stock."*[50] There is not a shred of evidence of Salomon's *"Portuguese"* descent; the statement however does point to the need that some Sephardim feel for *"justifying"* a Polish presence in a Sephardi synagogue. Salomon was a leading broker, and has been described as the *"financier of the revolution."* The claim that he lost a personal fortune in the American cause and was not properly compensated has been disputed.[51] However, his loyalty to the American cause and to his Jewish background at considerable personal cost and inconvenience cannot be doubted. He died insolvent in 1785.

In 1784 Seixas decided that he should return to his native New York, and he was replaced by Jacob Raphael Cohen, who was at that time serving in New York in a temporary capacity. Cohen was probably born in the Barbary states, present-day Morocco. He spent some time in London, and then went to be minister of the Sephardi congregation of Montreal. In 1782, after a disagreement, he set sail for London, but the ship was diverted to New York, and he was stranded in the British occupied city. There he served the few Jews remaining (most had fled when the British arrived) until Seixas' return.

In 1788 Cohen took part in a remarkable celebration in Philadelphia celebrating the ratification of the newly framed constitution of the United States, which a year later was to be amended to separate firmly church and state. The city was decorated festively and all segments of the population

marched in the "Grand Federal Procession." A letter from a gentleman in this city to his friend in a neighbouring state, published in *The American Museum or Universal Magazine*, vol. IV, declares:

> "The Rabbi of the Jews, locked in the arms of two ministers of the gospel, was a most delightful sight. There could not have been a more happy emblem contrived, of that section of the new constitution, which opens all its powers and offices alike, not only to every sect of christians, but to worthy men of every religion."[52]

In 1790 Manuel Josephson of *Mikveh Israel* personally presented a letter of congratulation to George Washington on behalf of the congregations in Philadelphia, New York, Charleston and Richmond. Washington's response is preserved in the archives of *Mikveh Israel* in Philadelphia. Less famous than his response to the Newport congregation penned a few months before, it nonetheless warmly accepts and reciprocates the good wishes which were conveyed.[53]

In 1795 an Ashkenazi congregation, *Rodeph Shalom* ("Pursuing Peace") was founded in Philadelphia for the benefit of those who were unable to accustom themselves to the Sephardi *minhag*. This congregation, now a constituent of the Reform movement, was the first Ashkenazi synagogue in America. Nonetheless, membership in either congregation tended to be a matter of choice rather than origin.

Jacob Cohen died in 1811. His son, Abraham Haim, who had sometimes assisted his father in his duties had married a convert in 1806. He succeeded him for a short time, and served later as *hazzan* in Richmond. He was replaced by Emanuel Nunes Carvalho who came from Charleston in 1816 but died soon afterward. In 1824 after a long period in which various temporary readers officiated, Abraham Israel Keys of Barbados was appointed. Keys was described by Rebecca Gratz — the reputed model of her namesake in Scott's Ivanhoe — as *"an excellent teacher, and a good man . . . very popular with the congregation"* — although he had a trace of West Indian indolence. Keys was to witness the dedication of the second synagogue of the congregation which came about soon after his arrival. The synagogue was designed by William Strickland[54] in the Egyptian style which had become popular since Napoleon's exploits in Egypt. Both the building and the service at which it was dedicated caused much comment in Philadelphia at the time.[55] The building in particular evoked much interest, and served the congregation until 1860. Keys did not live long to minister to *Mikveh Israel*. He died in 1828.

Keys was succeeded by a man who was probably the most significant Jewish figure of the nineteenth century. Isaac Leeser was born in Neukirchen, Prussia, in 1806. He came under the influence of R. Abraham Sutro of Munich, who was an ardent opponent of the new reform movement in Judaism which was beginning to take shape in Germany, writing for that

purpose a lengthy Hebrew treatise entitled *The Wars of the Lord*. At the age of eighteen Leeser emigrated to the United States, working for his uncle in Richmond, Virginia. Here the religiously inclined young man assisted with the services in Richmond's Sephardi synagogue, and acquired an attachment to the Sephardi liturgy and ritual which never departed from him. Three decades later he wrote: *"Could our advice avail, we would honestly counsel every new congregation to adopt from choice the prayerbook of the Sephardim."*[56] He admired its simplicity and understandability. Leeser gained notice by an article which he wrote in the Richmond *Whig* in response to one denigrating Judaism in the *Quarterly Review*.[57] As a result of this article he was elected *hazzan* of Congregation *Mikveh Israel* in Philadelphia in 1829. One of his first actions was to introduce a regular English sermon into the synagogue service. Leeser had acquired an impressive command of English with great rapidity. His style was somewhat ponderous and lacking in humour, but those were days when formality in worship was considered desirable, and represented something of a reform in the face of the relative informality of Jewish worship.

Leeser was highly conscious of the weak state of Judaism in America in his day. He did not hold, as many did, that the answer lay in fundamental reform of the religion. The answer lay in education, and to this end he set about writing books and manuals which he felt would advance the cause. His *Jews and the Mosaic Law* (published in 1834) was a defence of Revelation; it was followed by school books such as elementary Hebrew manuals (*The Hebrew Reader*, 1856, six editions) and catechisms (*Instruction in the Mosaic Religion* 1830 — a translation — and his own *Catechism for Jewish Children*, 1856).

Leeser's two major accomplishments however were his translation of the Bible, and the American Jewish Journal, the *Occident*, which appeared monthly, and for a short period weekly, over a quarter of a century.

Leeser's Bible was an attempt to provide a translation suitable for the Jewish layman which would be free from Christological interpretations. It has enjoyed enduring popularity. Israel Abrahams ascribed this more to the personality of the translator than the translation's intrinsic merits: *"What made the book popular was the people's growing love for Leeser. Can higher praise be given, can a finer fate be asked, than that a man's book shall live in his brethren's hearts because of him?"*[58] Despite the publication of the 1917 translation of the Bible by the Jewish Publication Society of America, Leeser's Bible is still in print, and readily available from its New York publisher, surely a remarkable record for any Bible translation.

The impact of the *Occident* has never been fully assessed, but undoubtedly it served as an important medium of communication. A letter to Leeser gives poignant testimony to the function it served. Writing from Belton, Texas, the correspondent, confessedly a "poor scolar" declared: *"I*

cane not express my feeling with the pen when I accidently came in poseestion of such valuable inphomation as containing in you valuable OCCIDENT *May the leeving God spair you that you may accomplish which you have undertaken to do."*[59] He asked if Leeser had prayer books available. In fact, Leeser edited and translated the prayer books of both the Ashkenazi and Sephardi rites. His translation of the Sephardi Fast Days prayerbook was recently reprinted photographically at the joint instance of the London and New York Sephardi congregations.

It has often been suggested that Leeser was not a scholar as we would understand the term.[60] This assessment is largely Leeser's own fault; his modest disavowels of scholarship and astounding frankness at stating his ignorance on occasion, should not obscure the fact that his erudition was considerable and is not lessened by its largely auto-didactic nature.

Leeser did not get along well with *Mikveh Israel*. His bachelorhood in public office gave rise to scandalous and malicious rumour-mongering, and doubtless his congregants would have preferred a man whose parish was not the entire United States. In 1850 he resigned from the congregation and some years later his admirers established a congregation for him, pointedly called *Beth-El-Emeth* ("The House of the God of Truth"). He died in 1868 the year after founding Maimonides College, an abortive attempt at a Jewish rabbinical seminary; his monument in the *Beth-El-Emeth* cemetery in Philadelphia makes no mention of his long connection with Philadelphia's surviving Sephardi congregation.

Leeser has received much less recognition than is his due. Paradoxically, it has been members of the Reform movement which Leeser bitterly opposed who have been most active in pointing this out.[61] This is not unconnected with the fact that Sephardi Judaism is the spiritual father of American Reform;[62] just as East European Orthodoxy is the spiritual father of the Conservative movement. It might be said of him that he imbibed the spirit of the Sephardim so well that his own Ashkenazi brethen found him strange to them. Leeser was succeeded at *Mikveh Israel* by Sabato Morais.

Richmond

Until 1898 Richmond, Virginia, had a Sephardi synagogue, *K. K. Beth Shalom*,[63] but throughout its history of a little more than a century, the synagogue had few Sephardim indeed. Its Sephardi style of service was doubtless due to the close connexion that the Jews of Virginia had in the early years with the Sephardi *Mikveh Israel* Congregation in Philadelphia, a mere 250 miles to the north-east and the nearest Jewish community of consequence.

One of the early Jewish settlers in Virginia figured in an incident that generated some heat in the Philadelphia congregation, and demonstrates the

link between Richmond and Philadelphia. In May 1782 Jacob I. Cohen of Richmond applied for membership in the *Mikveh Israel* Congregation. He was of German origin, and after some peregrinations settled in Richmond, where he engaged in the tobacco trade, which caused him to travel to Pennsylvania. While there he met Esther, the widow of Moses Mordecai, and proposed marriage. She was not wealthy, and had in fact received some modest financial help from *Mikveh Israel*. The problem was that she was a proselyte, and he a *cohen* (one of Aaronic descent) which made the marriage prohibited under Jewish law.[64] The synagogue board gave strict instructions to *Hazzan* Gershom Mendes Seixas not to officiate at the wedding nor to be present if they married — which they did. Cohen was later to become president of *Mikveh Israel* when he subsequently moved to Philadelphia. When the synagogue in Richmond was founded seven years later, two of the founders were former members of *Mikveh Israel*. It was not unnatural that the Richmond synagogue modelled itself on that in Philadelphia, even though the German language was probably heard within its walls as often as English.

The early records of *K. K. Beth Shalom* were destroyed by fire in 1865, leaving many gaps in its early history. We know, however, of two brothers, Moses Nunes Cardozo and Aaron Nunes Cardozo, who lived in Richmond around the time of the foundation of the synagogue in 1789. Both men were farmers, owning estates in the Richmond area.

One of the earliest activities of the congregation was participation in the joint letter which was sent to George Washington in 1790 by the congregations in Philadelphia, New York, Richmond and Charleston.

Isaac B. Seixas, a nephew of Gershom Mendes Seixas, was in business in Richmond early in the nineteenth century, and in 1822 officiated at the dedication of the new synagogue building of *Beth Shalom* in Richmond. He later became *hazzan* of *Shearith Israel* in New York. His cousin by marriage, Israel Baer Kursheedt, who similarly had New York connections, also appears to have acted as *hazzan* of the congregation. Another officiant in the synagogue was Abraham H. Cohen, the son of *Hazzan* Jacob Raphael Cohen of Philadelphia, who served intermittently until he died in 1841. Cohen had fallen madly in love with a young Christian lady by the name of Jane Picken: at their very first meeting he had contrived to steal a lock of her blond hair. His father was much distraught by his son's intentions. Jane converted to Judaism, and they were married, but she had great feelings of guilt and secretly instructed their children in the tenets of Christianity. After their removal to Richmond she reverted to her former faith, and Cohen acquiesced so long as she did not make it public. When she finally publicly avowed her Christianity, Cohen left her. The pathetic story of their relationship — and the strains it exerted on their children — are told in an apologia that she published.[66]

Another officiant was Jacques Lyons who had served the

Sephardi congregation of Surinam. Lyons was in Richmond from 1836 to 1839. After Cohen's death, Jacques Lyons' brother Ellis served for some eight years. Thereafter individuals were elected for brief periods until Henry S. Jacobs was appointed in 1854. He was from Jamaica as was his brother, George, who succeeded him in 1858 and served until 1869, when he left to succeed Isaac Leeser as minister of the *Beth-El-Emeth* congregation in Philadelphia; his three unmarried daughters Virginia, Adelaide and Emilie were still living in Philadelphia in the 1950's and were regular attendants at the services in *Mikveh Israel.* Henry S. Morais described Jacobs as "of large build and striking countenance, possessing an excellent knowledge of rhetoric, a flow of language and a dignity, all of which contributed to interest and impress his hearers . . .[67]

The last minister of *Beth Shalom* was Isaac P. Mendes, who was appointed in 1873. By that time the congregation had become very enfeebled. A few years before, a contemporary observer records that he entered the synagogue on a Friday evening to find the reader reading the services to empty benches.[68]

In 1875 a group of ladies petitioned the board to abolish separate seating, shorten the services and improve the congregational singing. This proposal was rejected, probably on account of the traditionalist attitude of Mendes. At the same time a movement was afoot to move the synagogue to a more desirable location. However, Mendes resigned in 1877 and moved to Savannah, and on this the plans foundered. By 1878 the synagogue building was closed, although it was used occasionally. In 1891 the building was sold and the congregation, or what remained of it, was merged with the *Beth Ahabah* congregation.

New Orleans

The early history of the Sephardim in New Orleans is largely that of one family — the Rodrigues Monsanto family. The founder was David Rodrigues Monsanto, a native of Amsterdam, who in 1715 was serving as clerk of that remarkable personality, Sir Solomon de Medina.[69] De Medina, who was knighted for his services to the Duke of Marlborough and King William III, seems to have thought highly of Monsanto and left him a considerable bequest. Monsanto was quite wealthy at one time, but by 1746 became impoverished to the point where he and his family were being supported by the charitable funds of the Sephardi community of the Hague. In 1754 the family received a grant of six hundred florins from the community to enable them to emigrate to the Dutch province of Curaçao, which was at the time a busy trade centre. David's fortunes apparently improved in Curaçao; it is not known where he died.

A few short years after their arrival in Curaçao, David's eldest son

together with Manuel de Britto, chartered the sloop *St. Joseph* for a voyage to New Orleans. Another son, Manuel, travelled on board the ship. The voyage was ill-fated. The ship was captured by a British privateer and taken to Newport where it was ransomed with the help of the Newport Sephardi, Jacob Rodrigues Rivera. The ship was then sent off and again captured! In the meantime, Isaac Monsanto became attracted to New Orleans and by 1758 had settled there. One brother remained in Curaçao; another brother and sister settled in Hispainola; others joined Isaac in New Orleans. Monsanto and de Britto were joined, too, by one Isaac Henriques Fastio, a native of Bordeaux who had lived in Curaçao.

At this time Jews were supposedly not permitted to settle in Louisiana. In 1685 the so-called *Code Noir* which governed slavery in the French island colonies reversed the previous liberal policy, and decreed the expulsion of the Jews within a period of three months. This was reiterated in the Louisiana *Code Noir* of 1724. However, the law was not enforced, and the French governor de Kerlerac was quite friendly towards the Jews, and particularly towards Isaac Monsanto.

Sephardim were also to be found at this time in the nearby British-controlled section of West Florida — de Palacios and Mendes are names which occur. Sephardim played a part also in the later history of Florida after the end of Spanish rule. Moses Elias Levy, a native of Mogador who was raised in Gibraltar, came to Florida in 1821 after residing in the Virgin Islands and Cuba, and developed plantations in the new United States territory. His son, David, who assumed the old family name of Yulee, became the first senator for Florida when the territory was admitted to the Union in 1845. Yulee married out of the faith, and his children were brought up as Christians. His brother became a missionary of the Swedenborgian Church.

Soon after Monsanto settled in New Orleans, the city was ceded by the French to the Spanish, by the 1762 treaty of Fontainebleau. The Spaniards proceeded to enforce their restrictive trade practices, which led to a riot in which Monsanto did not participate. He apparently felt that his *"loyalty"* to the king of Spain would protect him, but compliance with the law was enforced. Monsanto was expelled, and moved to Pensacola in West Florida, under the British flag. He and his family were ruined by the change of masters in New Orleans. He died a broken man in 1778. Isaac's three sisters all married out of the faith. Isaac's youngest brother, Benjamin, married a Jewess from Curaçao, Clara la Mota, in 1787, but being in New Orleans married her in the Catholic faith, declaring that he was baptised at birth. Benjamin presents a case of *marranism* in Spanish New Orleans, since almost certainly he professed Judaism — although not too strongly — and had in fact probably never been baptised, as he was born in Holland and educated at the Jewish school in the Hague.

The Spaniards remained in control of New Orleans until 1803, when they

ceded it to the French. The French held their regained city less than a month before turning it over to the United States as part of the Louisiana purchase. Just before this change, Judah Touro, son of the minister of the Sephardi synagogue of Newport, Isaac Touro, arrived in New Orleans to seek his fortune.

Touro is perhaps the most renowned American Sephardi, even though he lived much of his life out of touch with the Jewish community. Numerous institutions in American Jewry have been named after him, notably the Newport synagogue which he endowed and most recently (1970) a college and law school in New York city.[70]

Judah was born in Newport in 1775; his childhood consisted of one uprooting after the other, brought about by the trials of the War of Independence. After his father's death in 1783, his mother brought her young family to live with her brother, Moses Michael Hays, in Boston. It was in his business that Judah learned the ways of commerce, and this knowledge he took with him to New Orleans in 1801. Touro, who never married, accumulated a fortune by his business interests in which he was careful to avoid the speculation which brought ruin to others.

In his early years Touro identified little with the organized Jewish community. He gave a token contribution to *Sha'arai Chasset* of New Orleans when that congregation was founded, but did not become a member. He was more generous to Christian organizations.

Touro's striking change in attitude was apparently sparked by Gershom Kursheedt, grandson of Gershom Mendes Seixas after whom he was named, who came to New Orleans around 1840. Kursheedt must have sensed that Touro was ripe to end his alienation from the faith of his fathers, but could not identify with the current synagogue procedures which were Ashkenazi and poorly conducted at that. His proposal to establish a new *Sephardi* synagogue apparently sparked something in Touro's soul. He paid the cost of the building, developed a great interest in it and became a practising Jew. Korn finds it difficult to understand Touro's change of heart,[71] but the Sephardi service from which he had been separated so long doubtless brought back childhood memories from Newport and made Touro aware of the emptiness of a life spent in accumulating a million dollars. Touro died in 1854 and left over $100,000 to Jewish institutions in New Orleans, $50,000 to Sir Moses Montefiore to use for charitable works at his discretion (this sum was finally used to build Jewish housing in Jerusalem); and approximately $150,000 to Jewish institutions in the major cities of the U.S. He became *"in death what he had never been, never wanted to be, in life: a local and national hero; a leader of men; a dignitary; a man of inspiring presence; an exemplary Jewish philanthropist."*[72]

Touro was not the only northerner attracted to the city at the time when the city was changing hands. David G. Seixas, the seventeen year old son of

the Rev. Gershom Mendes Seixas, came to represent his sister's husband Israel Baer Kursheedt in a business dealing in dry goods, foodstuffs and other commodities. Kursheedt was in partnership with Benjamin Spitzer. The partnership was not successful and Seixas ultimately left for greener pastures in Cincinnati. Congregation *Shearith Israel* of New York provided several residents of New Orleans: Jacob Hart who came to New Orleans in 1804 and engaged in commerce for the next forty-five years, and Benjamin Levy, a former teacher at *Shearith Israel's* school who from 1811 was for many years a bookseller in New Orleans.

Organized communal life began late — at the instance of Jacob Solis, a Londoner who emigrated to New York at the age of 23 in 1803. After some peregrinations, Solis, who was a ritual slaughterer of animals, came to New Orleans around 1827 to open a shop. Solis also initiated a Jewish congregation, which became the Holy Congregation *Sha'arai Chasset* or "Gates of Mercy." The congregation was chartered by the Louisiana legislature on March 25, 1828, and among its by-laws (published in English and French) was one requiring that *"all prayers offered shall be after the custom of the Portuguese Israelites."* This was not achieved without some difficulty, as Solis was the only person qualified to conduct such prayers. When he was out of town the first president, Manis Jacobs, wrote to him: *"My dear sir, since you have been gone I had hard work to do, that is to say, to say prayers every evening in the house of the mourners, and you know that I do not know much of the portugaise minhag . . ."* Solis died quite young in 1829, and by the 1830's prayers were being conducted according to the Ashkenazi rite.

But this was not the end of the voice of Sephardi praise in New Orleans. Around 1839 Gershom Kursheedt moved into New Orleans and joined *Sha'arai Chasset*. Six years later he organized a new Portuguese Congregation, *Nefutzot Yehudah*, with encouragement from his friend, Isaac Leeser. Judah Touro paid the greater part of the cost of the building, which was a remodelled church. The first minister was Moses N. Nathan who, like so many of his colleagues, had come to the United States from Jamaica. Nathan resigned in 1853 declaring that his congregation was more willing to employ a good minister than to pay him. He was succeeded by J. K. Gutheim, who had been serving *Sha'arai Chasset* since 1850. Gutheim was a native of Westphalia who served as spiritual leader of the Cincinnati synagogue *B'nai Yeshurun* from 1846 to 1850. He was a noted preacher, and at one time *Shearith Israel* in New York was seriously interested in securing his services to supplement those of *Hazzan* Lyons. The Civil War brought about Gutheim's departure from New Orleans, and the eventual dissolution of the congregation. In 1878 the remnant of *Nefutzot Yehudah* united with *Sha'arai Chasset* to form the Touro synagogue dedicated to the furtherance of Reform Judaism. Once again a Sephardi community became the forerunner of a monument of

Reform Judaism, its Sephardi background lingering on only in its name and history.

Baltimore

In the nineteenth century Baltimore possessed what is perhaps the shortest-lived Sephardi congregation on record.[73] It was founded in 1856, consecrated its synagogue in 1857 and went out of existence in 1859. Isaac Leeser noted in his *Occident,*[74] that a Portuguese congregation was in process of formation. Services began in the autumn of 1856 and the Rev. H. L. Jacobs of Richmond was invited to preach. A hall was leased for a period of three years, and in the presence of five hundred guests the synagogue was dedicated by Leeser and Rev. Solomon Jacobs, a Sephardi from the Virgin Islands who was serving as minister of the Ashkenazi *Beth Israel* synagogue in Philadelphia. Jacob M. de Sola served as minister.

Solomon Nunes Carvalho, the artist, photographer and traveller, was a leading light in the community. His father, David, was born in London. He emigrated to Charleston where his elder brother Emanuel was minister of the Sephardi congregation. Solomon was born in Charleston in 1815, moving with his father to Baltimore in 1828 and to Philadelphia in 1836. After residing for a time in Barbados (the home of his mother, Sarah d'Azevedo) he practiced as a daguerrotypist and portrait painter in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Charleston, making his home chiefly in Baltimore Carvalho wrote a book entitled *Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West* (New York, 1857) which described his travels as accompanying artist to an expedition out west, and enjoyed great popularity.[75] In 1860 David Nunes Carvalho died in Baltimore, and his son Solomon, no longer tied to the city, moved to New York where he spent the rest of his life. The Baltimore Sephardi congregation did not survive the Carvalho's departure. The synagogue dedicated with such pomp a couple of years before lacked the Sephardim needed to sustain it.

New York and Philadelphia — The Modern Period

Jacques Judah Lyons became *hazzan* of *Shearith Israel* of New York in 1839. His parents were Philadelphians who had gone to live in Surinam where he was born in 1813. He came to the United States in 1837, having been trained in the Sephardi community of that Dutch colony, and speaking half a dozen languages. He served *K. K. Beth Shalom* in Richmond for three years, and was then elected to succeed Isaac Seixas in New York to whom he was related by marriage; both the mother and paternal grandmother of his wife Grace Nathan were members of the numerous Seixas family. Lyons was very much interested in American Jewish history, and made voluminous notes, which, some time after his death in 1877, came into the possession of the

American Jewish Historical Society and constitute the important Lyons collection. The memoir in the account of that collection, published as the twenty-first and twenty-seventh volume of the *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society,* declares that *"his appearance was commanding, his personality magnetic . . . he was a mild-mannered man, unobtrusive and notably courteous."*

Despite Lyons' talents there were some problems. The call for reform was being heard in New York as it had been heard in other Sephardi communities of the western world. During his lifetime he resisted any change in ancient custom; immediately on his death a motion was introduced to lessen the number of prayers and avoid repetitions; it was defeated by a mere three votes. An even more determined attempt at radical change in 1893 also failed. Continuing agitation to abolish the separate seating for men and women was set to rest in 1895 when Benjamin N. Cardozo strongly opposed any such change. Cardozo, who was born in New York City in 1870, was a great-great-grandson of Aaron Nunes Cardozo, a Londoner who settled in New York around 1750. His father was a lawyer who had been involved in a scandal centring around New York City "bossism". Cardozo had a meteoric career in law which culminated in 1932 in his appointment to the Supreme Court of the United States.[76]

Although change in ritual was resisted at *Shearith Israel*, the call for adequate preaching became ever more insistent. Dr. Arnold Fischel, the first man appointed preacher at *Shearith Israel*, officiated at the dedication of the Nineteenth Street building of the congregation in 1860 — a site which gave the congregation many problems.[77] Fischel was an Ashkenazi Dutch Jew who during the Civil War attempted unsuccessfully to have the military regulation changed which permitted only Christian chaplains. He had declined re-election to his apparently uncomfortable position in 1861.

This appointment had been preceded in 1854 by an invitation extended by the trustees to J. K. Gutheim of New Orleans to become lecturer in the synagogue, supplementing the ministrations of Lyons. Gutheim was born in Westphalia in 1817, and had been some eight years in the United States. In 1853 he became minister of the Sephardi *Nefutzot Yehudah* congregation in New Orleans. However, he did not find *Shearith Israel* a congenial position, doubtless on account of the feelings of Lyons. He returned to the South but later returned as preacher in New York's Temple *Emanu-El*, giving his support to I. M. Wise and his reform movement. Other attempts were made to fill the office of "lecturer," but they foundered on the opposition of Lyons and his supporters.

In 1887, just before Lyons' death, the congregation invited Henry Pereira Mendes to visit New York. Mendes was only twenty-three years old at the time, and was already ministering to the newly founded Sephardi synagogue of Manchester, England. He was a grandson of David Aaron de

Sola, minister of the London Sephardi congregation, and demonstrated great promise. Pereira was both a good preacher and a good *hazzan* — a combination which *Shearith Israel* had lacked for many years. He was as active in the general community as he was in his own *Shearith Israel*, feeling a special affinity for causes aiding handicapped children. He was the author of both popular and scholarly works. He retired in 1920 but remained active for another seventeen years until his death in October 1937.

Mendes' successor was appointed well before his retirement. David de Sola Pool was a second cousin of Mendes, like him descended from *Hazzan* David Aaron de Sola. Pool had been brought up in the Mildmay Park Synagogue, a suburban Sephardi synagogue in London which finally went out of existence in the 'thirties. He was educated in London and Germany, receiving his doctorate from the University of Heidelberg. Pool became assistant to Mendes in 1907. Ten years later he married Tamar Hirshenson, a gifted and capable lady, who played a great part in the fame which Pool was to acquire, and achieved national prominence in Jewish organizations in her own right.

Pool was an enthusiastic Zionist, something not often seen among Sephardi Jews at the time, and was soon given a chance to prove his devotion to the cause. In 1918 he was appointed to the Zionist Commission to be set up in Palestine, even though the congregation was unwilling to give him leave of absence. Early in 1919 Pool left for Palestine where he stayed for three years. In 1922 he returned to New York and after a period of working in the field of Jewish education was taken back into *Shearith Israel*.

Pool's combination of scholarly, administrative, pastoral and musical gifts gave him a unique position in his congregation and in American Jewry as a whole. His work on the *Kaddish* (1909, reprinted 1964) established his credentials as a Hebrew scholar, and is still useful. He wrote important and beautifully produced works on the history of his congregation, both notable contributions to American Jewish History (*Portraits Etched in Stone*, 1952: *An Old Faith in the New World*, 1955). His style of preaching was unforgettable. His talent for organization gave him access to posts of importance in national Jewish bodies such as the Synagogue Council of America over which he presided for two years (1938-1940). He published editions of both the Sephardi and Ashkenazi prayer books; his rendering, occasionally a little too ornate for all tastes, yet contains many fresh and inspired touches.

Pool retired in 1956 and continued to be active in communal life until shortly before his death in 1970. He had, however, groomed a successor, Louis C. Gerstein, a New York Ashkenazi and graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary who displayed much early promise in the field of Jewish philosophy. He duly succeeded Pool when the latter retired. A century before, dissatisfied with a simple *hazzan*, the congregation had

sought to bring in a preacher. Now endowed with a preacher, and also a *hazzan* in the person of Abraham Lopes Cardozo, a native of Amsterdam, the congregation looked around for yet another functionary and invited the *haham* of the London congregation, Dr. Solomon Gaon, to share his time with the New York congregation. This arrangement was discontinued after a few years. At the present time Marc D. Angel from Seattle, a scion of the Sephardim of Eastern Europe, serves as minister. He has published some notable articles on his native community.

In Philadelphia, during Isaac Leeser's incumbency in the pulpit of *Mikveh Israel*, there was little likelihood that any radical reforms would be introduced. He opposed reform vigorously. Leeser was succeeded by an individual who was as traditional as Leeser, although his style was different.

Sabato Morais was born in Leghorn, Italy, in 1823 and studied under Abraham Piperno of that city. At the age of 22 he applied for the post of *hazzan* to the London Sephardi synagogue. In the election that took place there, David Piza, who had served the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue of Montreal for six years, received forty-seven votes and was elected. Sabato Morais received only three votes, but there were two other candidates who received none.[78] Morais must, however, have made an impression, as he was offered a position as teacher of Hebrew at the *Sha'are Tikvah* ("Gates of Hope") school of the congregation, which he accepted. In 1850 a vacancy occurred in the Philadelphia congregation, and Morais took ship for the United States to seek the post. He came to a divided congregation and it took six ballots before Morais was able to command a majority of the votes and secure election over Jacob Rosenfeld of Charleston. Rosenfeld had served as minister of the break-away Sephardi synagogue *Shearith Israel* of Charleston after the death of Jacob Delamotta in 1845. He was a recent immigrant, but had rapidly learned the English language and the Sephardi *minhag*. Apparently Morais' London connections and Sephardi birth outweighed the advantages of the candidate who was already established in the United States, not to mention the impact of his "trial sermon" which was later published.[79] Morais became minister on his twenty-eighth birthday and served the congregation until the day of his death at the age of seventy-four.

Himself a devoted traditionalist, Morais lived at a time when the reform movement was growing rapidly in the United States. He did not totally reject the notion of some modest modifications of ritual,[80] but came to perceive that nothing but radical reform would satisfy the demands of the reform movement. The unacceptable principles enunciated in the "Pittsburgh Platform" of 1885 made him realize that no compromise was possible, and he urged the founding of a traditional seminary where orthodox principles would be followed. He desired it to be called the "Orthodox Seminary," but Kohut's suggestion "Jewish Theological Seminary" won the day. In 1886 the seminary was founded in New York, and Morais became President of the Faculty and

Professor of Bible, in which positions he served until his death. Morais wrote copiously in the Jewish press in support of traditional principles and never lost an opportunity to defend tradition. He was a sound Biblical scholar and an expert in Italian Jewish literature,[81] but his communal obligations must have left him little time for scholarly pursuits.

Morais' disciple Solomon Solis-Cohen (1857-1948) exemplifies the inspiration he provided for the model cultivated Sephardi Jew. Solis-Cohen was a descendant of families well established in the United States. He achieved eminence in medicine, becoming Professor of Clinical Medicine at the Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, and combined this with a life-long interest in Hebrew letters. He had a talent for verse[82] and produced a number of beautiful English verse renderings of Hebrew liturgical poems including the *Ahot Ketanna* recited on the eve of the New Year Festival in the Sephardi rite, and the poems of the medieval poet Moses ibn Ezra.

After the death of Morais the congregation moved to appoint a replacement. The task was a difficult one, and the committee looking into the matter was moved to report that it was almost an impossible one despite the number of applicants.[83] The choice ultimately fell on Leon H. Elmaleh, a member of the second graduating class of the seminary which Morais had founded. He was elected in 1899 at a salary of $1,200 per annum. Born in 1873 in Jaffa where his parents had moved temporarily to enable his grandparents to die in the Holy Land, he had been reared in Gibraltar whence he emigrated to New York. Elmaleh devoted himself to the preservation of the Sephardi tradition of the community. In the face of the popularity of the reform movement, and of the incipient "conservative" movement, which was still under the orthodox wing, and widespread ignorance of Sephardi tradition on the part of members of Ashkenazi origin, Elmaleh perceived himself, not without reason, as the embattled champion of a beautiful and fragile tradition. He took to heart what had happened in Charleston and Savannah. While his cantorial gifts and piety were appreciated, it was difficult for him to move from the shadow of his dead predecessor — especially as his preaching skills were limited and impeded by a Spanish accent which he never lost. After a decade, the congregation attempted to improve the situation by the appointment of Julius H. Greenstone, also a seminary graduate, as co-minister. Greenstone was the same age as Elmaleh, and apparently found the position uncomfortable. After a year he left and became a professor at Gratz Colege, a teacher's training college operated under the aegis of the congregation in accordance with the will of Hyman Gratz. In the meantime, the congregation moved to a beautiful new synagogue which formed a complex with Gratz College and Dropsie College (now renamed Annenberg), the latter being a post-graduate institution for Hebrew and cognate learning. The president of Dropsie College was Cyrus Adler, a native of Arkansas who had been brought up as a member of *Mikveh*

Israel. In 1915 he became acting president, and later president, of the Jewish Theological Seminary in addition to his post in Philadelphia. Elmaleh disapproved of the innovations of the Conservative movement with which Adler was intimately connected and disassociated himself from the seminary from which he had graduated, since he believed its character to have been radically altered by Solomon Schechter; he declined a degree which they offered to him.

In 1927 the congregation appointed Abraham A. Neuman as rabbi along with Elmaleh. Neuman was a native of Austria, a seminary graduate and a protegé of Adler who joined the teaching staff of Dropsie College in 1913. He was an excellent historian and a brilliant orator, but not steeped in Sephardi tradition. This arrangement, as before, lasted only one year, but this time Elmaleh offered to retire. He was pensioned, but continued to involve himself in communal activities for more than another forty years until his death in 1972. For a long period he conducted high holiday services on the Jersey shore for a band of faithful followers who preferred his ministrations.

Neuman succeeded Adler as President of Dropsie College on the latter's death in 1940 and after a three year interval was succeeded in the pulpit of *Mikveh Israel* by David Jessurun Cardozo, who came to them from New York. In the post-war era the district in which the synagogue was located changed rapidly and became part of Philadelphia's black ghetto with a consequent decline of membership. The school of "observation and practice" attached to Gratz College which had been a centre of young participation in the congregation moved to another area. In 1950 Cardozo's contract was allowed to expire. No Sephardi candidates could be found, and at Elmaleh's urging the congregation applied to the Isaac Elhanan *Yeshibah* in New York for a successor. R. Emanuel L. Lifschutz was appointed, but at the expiration of his contract in 1955 he left to take up a position in Altoona, Pa. After an eight year period in which Alan D. Corré, a native of London, served as minister, Ezekiel Musliah was appointed. R. Musliah is a native of India and a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary. He was succeeded by the present incumbent, Dr Joshua Toledano.

In connection with the celebration of the American Jewish tercentenary in 1954 Alfred Bendiner, a Philadelphia architect, received a grant from the American Philosophical Society to research the plans of the Strickland synagogue of 1825. This brought about a movement to erect a reconstruction of the synagogue in the projected Independence Mall area; however, these plans did not materialize. There are plans to move the synagogue to a building to be erected not far from the site of the original synagogue. The famed architect Louis Kahn drew up plans for the new building,[84] but since these were found to be costly, a new architect was engaged. Location of the synagogue in this area, which has been rehabilitated as a high-income residential area, will doubtless ensure the continuation of the spark of

Sephardi tradition in Philadelphia, albeit with the stress on history rather than as a living and developing community.

The Levantines

At the end of the nineteenth century a different type of Sephardim began to emigrate to the United States. These were the descendants of those Sephardim who had chosen the domain of the sultan as their place of refuge in the fifteenth century rather than staying in the west. They were joined by Greek and Arabic speaking Jews who were akin to these Sephardim in culture. By 1925, New York City had some 40,000 such Jews who were *"almost as alien to their kinsmen as are the Negroes to the average white Southerner . . . (they) are set apart from New York Jewry by religious, linguistic, and psychological differences that vitiate any attempts at mutual understanding"*.[85] Other communities were established in cities such as Seattle, Los Angeles, Cincinnati and Montgomery. Despite the century long history of this group in the United States no research has been done on it, and there are no reliable figures as to its present size. An exploratory study has recently been published by Rabbi Marc D. Angel.[86]

The Sephardi Experience in America

An attempt must be made to offer some assessment of the Sephardi experience in America. As a point of reference let us give some consideration to the mother-congregation of the Western Sephardim, *K. K. Talmud Torah*, founded in 1639 in Amsterdam by the merger of three earlier congregations. The Amsterdam Jews dwelt among a people who for practical reasons extended to them full toleration, but were not intrinsically friendly towards them and had questions as to the legitimacy of their presence in their midst. The famous Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius, consulted as to whether Jews might properly settle in Holland, responded in the affirmative, but declared in his Remonstratie (1615) that they should be limited to 300 families in Amsterdam, should be required to register with the authorities and assert their belief in God, and be prohibited from marrying Gentiles. In its inner life the community was strongly tradition-bound, leading the minutely regulated life of Orthodox Judaism. It is described in glowing term by a contemporary observer Shabbetai Bass, author of the bibliographic work *Sifte Yeshenim* (Amsterdam, 1680), in his introduction of that book.[87] He observed with awe their magnificent and crowded synagogue; their successful educational system; their command of spoken and written Hebrew. In an unselfconscious traditional community such as this the aesthetic and antiquarian aspects of their existence were of no significance. Ceremonies were observed whether they were aesthetic or not.

Ahad Haam in his essay *Past and Future* has adequately explained the disdain of the traditional Jew for antiquarianism; he studies the sacrifices not because of their connection with the past but because for him they constitute an immediate part of the future. When this future is killed there is a compensatory stress on the past — "the Jewish heritage."[88] The life of the traditional community proceeded because so it was ordained immutably; there was no need for reference to aesthetics, antiquarianism or gentile approbation. In such a community "progress" was not a term with meaning. Perfection was immediately at hand for the individual who chose to espouse the way of Torah to the full and his "success" was the assurance of a place in the world to come.

Individuals reared in this tradition met with a very different circumstance if they chose to follow the new fashion of going west. The American colonies needed manpower, and even Jews qualified. In 1740 Parliament passed an act permitting Jews to naturalize after seven years' residence in the American colonies after taking an oath in keeping with their conscience.[89] Significantly this act begins "whereas the Increase of People is a Means of advancing with Wealth and Strength of any Nation or Country . . .". The fact that *all* white men in America were in some sense intruders created a different relationship between Christian and Jew in the New World. It is symbolic that a diorama of Francis Salvador the Sephardi being mortally wounded by Indians stands in the *B'nai B'rith* building in Washington; it seems to say that the Christian-Jew antagonism has been replaced by a White-Red one. A new man had appeared to take on the Jew's satanic role. It is interesting to note too that the diorama was established by another Sephardi, Thomas Jefferson Tobias (note the name), whose *"ancestry reads like a 'Who's Who' of American colonial Jewry."*[90]

If the outward circumstance was changed, the inner condition was changing too. If the spirit of the enlightenment was able, as it did, to penetrate the Jewish communities in Eastern Europe, how much more vulnerable was the Western Jew to the anti-religious thinking! Little wonder that irreversible changes began to occur in the life of the Jewish community. To this one must add a feature of "natural selection;" the Jews most devoted to the faith of their fathers were more likely to remain in the European centres, where their religious needs could assuredly be filled, than to pioneer in new lands.

Three ways were open to the Sephardi communities in the face of this situation. The first was reform, breaking down the tight discipline which the community formerly exercised, backed up by various fines and other penalties, and altering the mode of religious expression to conform to a new reality — the acceptance of English as the substantive language and America as the substantive Zion. This solution, however distasteful it may be to the traditionalist, represented a search for reality. It was chosen by Savannah,

Charleston, New Orleans — as well as the old communities in the islands — Jamaica, Curaçao, St. Thomas. An alternative was to stress aesthetics and antiquarianism. This route stresses the *aesthetic superiority* of the Sephardi to the Ashkenazi tradition; it stresses the *ancient character* of the tradition, its quaintness, its relationship to an idyllic past peopled with dons and hidalgos and grandees. Hence the *Bet Hamedrash* gives way to the archives chamber.[91] This route was chosen by New York and Philadelphia. It led also to the rearguard battle to maintain the Sephardi *minhag* in Newport. The Philadelphia community is carrying this solution to its logical conclusion by choosing a location in the Independence Mall area, where it will be essentially a monument to the Jewish presence in the United States, rather than serving a local constituency. At this point it becomes an institution living in the past in its totality. Richmond chose the third and most straightforward possibility — extinction.

From the classic American viewpoint of the "melting pot" the Sephardi was an ideal citizen. For the most part he melted beautifully, contributing his dreams and his genes to the mainstream of American life. From the orthodox Jewish viewpoint, the Sephardi demonstrates what happens when a community fails to develop the educational means to its survival. The antiquarian-aesthetic can rest happy that *marrano* Sephardi tradition flickers on in two eastern cities of the United States, and, barring an unusual catastrophe, will not disappear. The congregations "Remnant of Israel" and "Hope of Israel" are now both remnants, albeit proud ones; the hope surely lies elsewhere.

Bibliographical Appendix

The first meeting of the American Jewish Historical Society was held in Philadelphia in 1892 — the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America. The object of the society was "to collect and publish material bearing upon the history of our country . . . the objects for which this Society was organized are not sectarian but American." This objective was doubtless partly for the sake of pure research, but also in part to provide material against the ever present threat of anti-Semitism, demonstrating the loyalty, industry and inoffensiveness of the Jew. Since that time the early history of American Jewry has been researched intensively, and the Sephardim form the subject of the great part of this research. In the first volume of the publications of the Society, of fifteen papers, eight have direct bearing on Sephardim; one deals with the Sephardi settlements in Georgia, another with the Philadelphia *Mikveh Israel* Congregation, another with Jacob Lumbrozo, the "Jew Doctor" of Maryland who was tried for blasphemy in 1658, and so on.

The quality of this research has varied greatly. An exemplar of the best type is B. W. Korn's modestly titled *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (American Jewish Historical Society, Waltham, Mass. 1969). The style is low

keyed and compelling; figures and trends stand out in bold relief; assessment is sober, avoiding hero-worship or sectarianism. The complaint by some reviewers that the book lacks overview[1] does not detract from the solid achievement of this study in making available basic material. At the other end of the spectrum is Stephen Birmingham's *The Grandees: America's Sephardic Elite*. This brightly written patchwork of fact and fancy should be read in conjunction with Edouard Roditi's comment *The Real Grandees*.[2] Or again, the masochistic reader may care for *Highlights of Sephardi Heritage in American History*.[3] This gem of Jewish tub-thumping is mercifully anonymous, but on internal evidence would appear to emanate from the public relations department of Yeshiva University. Between the poles there is a mass of books and articles touching on United States Sephardim. Community histories cannot avoid them; these have largely been drawn on in preparing this survey. David and Tamar de Sola Pool's study of the New York Community[4] is detailed and accurate but a little saccharine for some tastes. It also exhibits a delicacy which may obscure the full story. Morris A. Gutstein's studies of Newport[5] are written unabashedly to inculcate a patriotic and Jewish spirit into the next generation. Wolf and Whiteman's volume on Philadelphia[6] is an excellent volume which replaces the tendentious *Jews of Philadelphia* published by Henry S. Morais, son of Sabato Morais, in 1894. Reznikoff and Englemann' *Jews of Charleston* (1950) replaces Barnett Elzas' well researched volume[7] which almost inevitably contains tantalizing gaps. Ezekiel and Lichtenstein[8] deal sensitively with the demise of that Sephardi congregation, basing their research on archival material. Malcolm Stern's compendium[9] is basic for genealogical studies. Selections of documentary material are also available.[10] *The Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society* (now called the *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*) as well as *American Jewish Archives* contain numerous studies in the area as do the journals of the various State Historical Societies.

NOTES TO APPENDIX

1 T. H. WILLIAMS in *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 60 (1970) pp. 200-202; Edwin WOLF II in *American Historical Review* 75 (1970) pp. 1516-1517.
2 *Commentary*, October 1971, pp. 93-96.
3 *O Y S* 11-12 (1969-1970) pp. XLIV-L.
4 *An Old Faith in the New World* (New York, 1955)
5 *The Story of the Jews of Newport* (New York, 1936) and *To Bigotry No Sanction* (New York, 1958).
6 *The History of the Jews of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1957)
7 *The Jews of South Carolina* (Philadelphia, 1905)
8 *The History of the Jews of Richmond from 1769 to 1917* (Richmond 1917)
9 *Americans of Jewish Descent* (Cincinnati, 1960)
10 Morris U. SCHAPPES, J. L. BLAU, and J. W. BARON *The Jews of the U.S. 1810-1840 A Documentary History* (New York, 1963).

NOTES TO MAIN TEXT

1 See *infra* p. 397.
2 Translations of the original correspondence may be seen in Morris U. SCHAPPES, *A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States* (New York, 1971) pp. 1-5.
3 The name is based on JEREMIAH 31.7.
4 SCHAPPES, *op.cit.*, p.18.
5 See J. R. MARCUS, "The Handsome Young Priest in the Black Gown" *HUCA* 40-41 (1969-70) pp. 409-417.
6 The ledger is preserved in the Lyons collection of the American Jewish Historical Society, published as volumes twenty-one and twenty-seven of the *Publications of the Society* (PAJHS). The papers give a fascinating insight into the life of New York Sephardim of the eighteenth century.
7 Several of his descendents achieved prominence. His great-grandson George de Maduro Peixotto became a prominent portrait painter.
8 On this late product of Midrashic Haggadah, see *JE (Sefer ha-Yashar)*.
9 See Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore ed. Dr. Louis Loewe, facsimile edition, (London, 1983) I, 206-60.
10 Wilfred SAMUEL in his monumental "Review of the Jewish Colonists in Barbados in the Year 1680" points out the connexion between Barbados and the Newport Sephardim. *TJHSE* XIII (1936) p. 25.
11 Stiles was at the time pastor of the Second Church of Newport. He later became president of Yale University.
12 *Psalm* 14.7.
13 *A Sermon preached at the Synagogue in Newport R.I. called "Salvation of Israel" on the Feat of Weeks 1773 by Hajim Isaac Carigal.* (Newport, 1773)
14 In the Lyons collection. See Morris A. GUTSTEIN, *To Bigotry No Sanction* (New York, 1958) p. 82.
15 SCHAPPES, *op.cit.*, p. 80.
16 Further details of his career are to be found in *PAJHS* Vol. 11 (1903) pp. 207-211.
17 John ARCHDALE, *A New Description of that Fertile and Pleasant Province of Carolina* (London, 1707).
18 A. M. HYAMSON, *The Sephardim of England* (London, 1956) p. 158.
19 GENESIS 28.32; ISAIAH 32.18.
20 In 1949 Thomas Tobias, (now deceased) direct descendent of Joseph Tobias, was elected president of the congregation. Tobias has published several good papers on local history.
21 SCHAPPES, *op.cit.*, p. 46.
22 See James PICCIOTTO, *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History* (London, 1875) p. 271-272.
23 SCHAPPES, *op.cit.*, pp. 174-75.
24 Perhaps the Rev. Samuel Gilman, a Unitarian minister. See Allan TARSHISH *"The Charleston Organ Case" AJHQ* 54 (1965) p. 413.
25 July 1826, p. 68-69.
26 Isaac HARBY, *A Discourse . . . before the Reform Society of Israelites* (Charleston, 1825). See *North American Review* V. 23 (1826) p. 75.
27 *South Carolina Law Reports* 2 pp. 271-274.
28 I. M. WISE, *Reminiscences* (New York, 1945) p. 143.
29 *Ibid.*, p.141.
30 *Occident*, Vol. 10 (1852) p. 173.
31 *Occident*, Vol. 10 (1852) p. 401.
32 *Abodat Hakodesh*, (New York, 1879.)
33 Charles REZNIKOFF, and U. Z. ENGELMAN, *The Jews of Charleston* (Philadelphia. 1950) p. 200.

34 The names are listed in Malcolm H. STERN, *"New Light on the Jewish Settlement of Savannah" AJHQ*, 52 (1962) pp. 175-76. There is no doubt that the "Shem Noah" and "Shem Nunes Henriques" he lists are both *Samuel*. The name *Shem* was not in use among Sephardim and Shem or Sem was a common abbreviation for *Shemuel*, the Hebrew form of Samuel.

35 Malcolm H. STERN, The Sheftall Diaries" AJHQ 54 (1964) pp. 243-277.

36 JEREMIAH 14.8; 17.3. The same name was used by the congregation in Curaçao.

37 This leads W. Guenther PLAUT "Early Settlement in Georgia" *HUCA* 14 (1939) pp. 580-581, to assume erroneously that a "Berlin" ritual was being practiced. There was no separate German congregation. Bolzius was unable to distinguish. Plaut also misunderstands the term "high German." This can refer to Yiddish, since it simply means a German dialect that has *'s'* where low German has *'t'*. Accordingly his entire argumentation on this point can be ignored.

38 The petition was not by the German Jews; Stern's translator has misled him on this point. There was a petition for a synagogue, but the two groups were sending conflicting and confusing messages to the authorities — with resultant delay.

39 Quoted in German in PLAUT *loc cit.*

40 SCHAPPES, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

41 Thomas J. TOBIAS, "The Many-Sided Dr. de la Motta." *AJHQ* 52 (1963) pp. 200-217.

42 *Funeral Address Pronounced in the Synagogue Previous to the Interment of the Relics of the Rev. Gershom Mendes Seixas* (New York, 1816).

43 SCHAPPES, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-155.

44 *Occident*, 3 (1845) p. 60.

45 *Occident*, 10 (1852) p. 224.

46 Jerome W. GROLLMAN, "The Emergence of Reform Judaism in the United States" *AJA* 11.2 (1950) pp. 8-9.

47 HYAMSON, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

48 Not Saturday, as recorded in Edwin WOLF and Maxwell WHITEMAN, *The Jews of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1957) p. 121. The scrolls could not have been carried from the old building to the new on the Sabbath as they imply.

49 Alan D. CORRÉ and Malcolm H. STERN, "The Record Book of the Reverend Jacob Raphael Cohen." *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*, 59 (1969) pp. 23-82.

50 Henry S. MORAIS, *The Jews of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1894) p. 24.

51 J. R. MARCUS, *Early American Jewry*, (Philadelphia, 1953) Vol. 2, Chapter 8.

52 The parade is described by Naftali Phillip — eighty years after. See *AJA* VII (1955) p. 65. This account does not mention the rabbi, but declares that there was special food for the Jews at the following reception.

53 SCHAPPES, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-84.

54 William Strickland (1787-1854) was the son of a carpenter who worked for an architect, Benjamin Latrobe, who took an interest in him. Strickland was much influenced by Greek architecture and designed the Custom House and Mint in Philadelphia, and Washington's sarcophagus at Mount Vernon.

55 WOLF and WHITEMAN, *op. cit.*, p. 368.

56 *Occident*, Vol. 14 (1856) p. 428.

57 "On the Present State of the Jews," *Quarterly Review*, 38 (1828), pp. 114-145. The *Review* was not uniformly anti-Jewish. One reviewer speaks up in favour of citizenship rights for Jews, whom he describes as "a loyal and industrious body of men." (Vol. 35 (1827) p. 95).

58 Israel ABRAHAMS, *By-Paths in Hebraic Bookland* (Philadelphia, 1920) pp. 254-259.

59 *AJA* 8.2 (1956) p. 104.

60 Henry ENGLANDER, "Isaac Leeser" *Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook* (1917) p. 227.

61 ENGLANDER, *op. cit.*, Bertam W. KORN, "Isaac Leeser, Centennial Reflections" *AJA* XIX (1967) p. 127.

62 See Abraham LEVY, *The Sephardim: A Problem of Survival* (London, 1972).
63 I SAMUEL 25.6
64 WOLF and WHITEMAN, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
65 H. T. EZEKIEL and Gaston LICHTENSTEIN, *The History of the Jews of Richmond from 1769 to 1917* (Richmond, 1917) p. 239.
66 *Henry Luria — or, the Little Jewish Convert* (New York, 1860). WOLF and WHITEMAN (*op. cit.*, p. 237) call this "recently discovered" — althugh EZEKIEL and LICHTENSTEIN used it in their 1917 book (p. 219). Harvard University Library possesses a copy.
67 Henry MORAIS, *The Jews of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1894) p. 106.
68 EZEKIEL and LICHTENSTEIN , *op. cit.*, p. 252.
69 See A. M. HYAMSON, *The Sephardim of England* (London, 1956) p. 103.
70 Judah's brother Abraham also endowed the synagogue. The College, which seeks to combine Jewish and secular education, is reportedly named after the synagogue, a case of naming at second remove. For the weird story of the plans to erect a statue of Touro that was vetoed by European rabbinical authorities see Morris A. GUTSTEIN *To Bigotry No Sanction* (New York, 1958) pp. 155-157.
71 B. W. KORN, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, 1969) p. 249.
72 *ibid.* p. 257.
73 See Benjamin H. HARTOGENSIS, "The Sephardic Congregation of Baltimore." *PAJHS* 23 (1915) pp. 141-146.
74 Vol 14, (1856) pp. 354, 404.
75 See the introduction by Korn to the recent reprint of this book.
76 See George S. HELLMAN, *Benjamin N. Cardozo — American Judge* (New York, 1940). His legal contribution is assessed in B. H. LEVY, *Cardozo and the Frontiers of Legal Thinking* (Cleveland, 1969).
77 David de SOLA POOL, *An Old Faith in the New World* (New York, 1955) pp. 57-67.
78 A. H. HYAMSON *op. cit.*, p. 341.
79 *Asmonean*, March 28, 1851, p. 181.
80 "Should the Ritual be Changed?" *Jewish Messenger,* November 3, 1871, p. 4. See also Mordecai WAXMAN , *Tradition and Change* (New York, 1958) pp. 59-64.
81 His essays were republished by Julius H. GREENSTONE, *Italian Hebrew Literature* (New York, 1926).
82 He published a volume of original poems *When Love Passed By* (1929). A tribute to his teacher is included in his *Judaism and Science* (1940).
83 *Supplementary Report of the Committee to Receive and Report on Applications for the Position of Hazzan and Lecturer. April 3, 1898.* Quoted in *Mikveh Israel Record,* June 1972, p. 4.
84 A drawing of this proposed building is in the Museum of Modern Art, New York. See *EJ*, Vol. 10 p. 691.
85 Louis M. HACKER , "The Communal Life of the Sephardic Jews of New York City". *Jewish Social Service Quarterly* 3.2 (1926) p. 26. This article is a digest of a report commissioned by the New York Jewish Federation to investigate the social problems of the group.
86 "The Sephardim of the United States: An Exploratory Study" *"American Jewish Year Book* (1973) pp. 77-138.
87 An English version appeared in S. MELKMAN, *David Franco Mendes* (Jerusalem, 1951).
88 Asher GINZBERG, *Selected Essays by Ahad Haam.* (tr. Leon SIMON) (Philadelphia, 1912) pp. 80-90.
89 Anno 13 Geo. II, Cap. VII.
90 Malcolm STERN in *AJHQ,* 60 (1971) p. 304.
91 The president of a Sephardi synagogue once remarked in my hearing on seeing some papers in the office: "Look at this. One day it will all be archives."

SEPHARDIM IN BRAZIL : THE NEW CHRISTIANS

by Anita Novinsky

The last decades of the fifteenth century brought decisive changes in the history of the Jews. The era which began with Portuguese maritime expansion, with great discoveries and the development of mercantile activity, paradoxically reinforced the power of the ruling groups, and made the rise of an incipient bourgeoisie possible, resulting in the need for a new kind of social organization. For the aristocracy this represented a threat to the old medieval structure of politics and society. The Portuguese middle class, who flocked into the urban areas and embarked upon commercial ventures, found themselves competing with the Jewish bourgeoisie, who from 1497 had been forcibly converted to Catholicism.[1] The two sections of the ruling class, the nobility and the clergy, allied to the Crown by their economic interests, tried to consolidate their power and maintain their position and privileges, by resorting to a highly punitive organ, whose actions had a long-lasting effect on the economic, political and social life, as well as on the thinking, of the Portuguese people: The Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition. The New Christian phenomenon in Portugal as well as in the colonies is directly and indissolubly linked to the existence of this eminently political religious institution. When the Inquisition was established in Portugal, political and spiritual power, king and inquisitor, found themselves united and identified in one person.[2] After the Portuguese Crown gained independence from Spain in 1640, it became involved in serious conflicts with the Inquisition, and the monarchs gradually lost control of its direction. Religious ideology, controlled by the Inquisition, was an excellent pretext for getting the mass of the people to submit to the ruling élite, and at the same time it justified the ferocious persecution of the descendants of the Jews, all of whom were suspect on principle. The Portuguese people, superstitious and fanatical, accepted the view of the ruling classes and fully endorsed the ideas of persecution which were fed to them through a carefully organized programme of sermons, *autos de fé* and indoctrination. They turned against the descendents of the converts, who constituted the nucleus of the Portuguese commercial and financial bourgeoisie, and blamed them for all the economic and social miseries of the country. The *Regimento* and the programme put

forward by the Holy Office were clearly the product of the culture of the age, to convince the people of the legitimacy of persecution, and to get them to adhere to the ideology of the ruling classes, thus guaranteeing the continuity of the absolute and authoritarian system of the State.[3] The myth of purity of blood, which had been strong in Spain for more than a century, became an obsession for the Portuguese from the end of the sixteenth century, and the Lusitanian rulers firmly endorsed the discriminatory legislation. No Portuguese who had in his ancestry a Jew, a Moor or a negro, could legally take part in academic life, occupy judical or treasury posts, enter religious or military orders, or use any honorific title.[4] The restrictions on their part in society and in their opportunities for progress, together with an intensification of the persecution, led New Christians to emigrate to various parts of the world. In some of these places they returned to Judaism and formed flourishing communities. However, one cannot ignore the fact that most New Christians stayed in Portugal and Spain or emigrated to Portuguese and Spanish territories overseas.

There had been New Christians in Brazil from the beginning of the colony. After its discovery, a group of New Christian merchants, led by Fernando de Noronha, were granted a lease to trade with the colony by King Manuel, which is evidence of the first products of colonial economic exploitation.[5] Little is known about the Jewish origins of the first settlers who established themselves permanently in Brazil, and the claim that some were New Christians still lacks a scientific base.[6]

From 1549 the first batches of colonists began to arrive; some of them had been exiled for civil or religious crimes, others had brought funds with them to use in trade or in the construction of sugar-mills. Portuguese colonization in America was essentially agricultural in character, and many New Christians who landed on Brazilian soil became land-owners and important latifundiarists. These New Christians, better equipped from the educational point of view than the rest of the colonists, were used in managerial positions in political and administrative life, in spite of the stringency of the legislation discriminating against them. They bound themselves by marriage to noble Portuguese families, and in time came to form part of the aristocracy of the country. One of the pioneers in the penetration of the Brazilian forests in search of gold and gems was the Spanish convert, Filipe de Guillen. He was in the Governor's confidence, and on various occasions was entrusted with control of the administration.[7] There is also the example of the grand-daughter of the New Christian Tristão Mendes, who married the governor of São Vicente, Jeronimo Leitão, and whose family produced the earliest examples of Judaisers in Brazil.[8]

The introduction of sugar-cane to Brazil has been attributed to the New Christian merchants who had called at the islands of Madeira and St. Thomas.[9] Diogo Fernandes stands out as an "expert" in sugar production at

that time. Together with his whole family, he was denounced some years later to the Inquisition for secretly practicing Judaism.[10] The New Christian Bento Dias Santiago appears as early as 1570 as the owner of three sugar mills, and the New Christians of Pernambuco and the surrounding areas gathered on his estate to celebrate Jewish festivals.[11] The Antunes, one of the oldest New Christians families in the colony, lived in one of the famous Bahian mills — Matoim. There was a synagogue and a chapel there simultaneously, and for a while it was the scene of some interesting events in Jewish life.[12] Various members of the Antunes family were accused of Judaism and sentenced by the Inquisition, among them Ana Rois, taken to Lisbon when she was over 80, where she died in prison.[13] In the last decade of the sixteenth century, two famous literary figures lived in Pernambuco, the poet Bento Teixeira, and the author of the first colonial economic history, Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão. The poet was denounced and arrested as a Judaiser, and died in prison in Lisbon; Brandão, who was commander of an expedition against the French and the Indians in Paraíba, was never troubled by the Inquisition.[14]

Throughout the whole colonial period New Christians led important revolutionary movements. Manuel Nunes Viana was the leader of the revolt of the group of so-called *emboabas* against the people of São Paulo in the "War of the Emboabas," and Manuel Beckman was the leader of the revolt which became known in Brazilian history as the "Beckman Rebellion."[15] In the most important administrative centre of the colony, the municipal council of Bahia, New Christians constantly influenced important decisions. This made them powerful enough to oppose the direction taken by the Metropolis, and during certain periods they became hostile to the Governor and the Bishop, both of whom were connected with the Inquisition.[16]

In 1624 and 1630, the Dutch, as part of their programme of expansion of commercial capitalism, invaded Brazil. The attitude of the New Christians to these invasions was not the same in Brazil as it was in Holland, France and other important economic centres. Although a small number of Jews in Amsterdam or Rouen, eager to undertake new money-making ventures, might have an interest in this commercial expansion, the attitude of those living in Bahia and Pernambuco was very different; they had material and emotional ties in Brazil, some had even been born there, and had economic and family connections in Portugal. The New Christian population, despite the evident hostility they showed to Catholicism, had never lived in a religious Jewish community, and their identification with Jews was not in terms of religion, but of "exclusion" from society at large. Some authors, Jewish as well as Christian, have had no hesitation in claiming that the New Christians encouraged the Dutch, and collaborated with them in the invasions of Brazil. These authors have attempted to prove that the New Christians welcomed the attack on Brazil and its inhabitants, and that they received the news of the invasion plan euphorically, because it would remove the Inquisition's yoke

from them. The simplification and generalisation of historical phenomena distorts the historical reality of the facts, giving only one side of the picture.[17] The truth is that the New Christians never constituted a homogeneous group, and their adherence to the policies of Portugal, Spain, Holland or any other country, must be seen in a much wider and more complex setting than a purely religious one. To understand it, one must have a clear idea of the structure of Iberian society and economy, and of the social and intellectual "universe" in which the New Christians lived, in this case, the Brazilian situation. Bahia fell with almost no resistance, and all classes of the population accepted the Dutch presence — the Portuguese Governor, the 'Old Christian' population, and the New Christians. The reason for the collaboration of the New Christians is explained not by their ties to the Jewish religion, but by social and economic factors. Moreover, in the invasion of Pernambuco in 1630, while there was no difference between the behaviour of New or Old Christians, there was a difference between that of the social classes. After a short struggle, the wealthy class, fearful of losing their properties and privileges, went over to the Dutch invader, who offered them various advantages, mainly economic. With the arrival of the Governor, Maurice of Nassau, the general populace, largely influenced by the example of the Catholic clergy, also surrendered to Batavian domination.[18] The Dutch offered the Portuguese, Christians and Jews, encouraging economic conditions and freedom of conscience, so that for a time there was an agreement of interest among the various groups, which brought visible prosperity to the North East. The ruling class of mill-owners were dependent on Dutch and Jewish merchants, to whom they owed enormous sums, incurred in the purchase of mills, slaves and other equipment necessary for sugar production, and after some years, for clearly material reasons, they encouraged the people to begin the struggle which eventually led to the expulsion of the Dutch in 1654. Among the indebted mill-owners were Old and New Christians. Portuguese New Christians and Jews, mainly those who had come from Holland, thus found themselves politically and economically divided.[19]

From 1638 onwards, the number of Jewish immigrants increased in the occupied area, but the majority came directly from Holland, and were already re-converted or officially educated in the Jewish religion. Manuel Mendes da Costa came with a group of 200 Jews. Two congregations were organized. *Tsur Israel* in Recife, and *Magen Abraham* in Mauricia, the first rabbi of the community, between 1642 and 1645, being Isaac Aboab de Fonseca. This was the only period in the whole of colonial history in which the Jews could practice their religion and customs freely. In 1644, the Dutch suffered a severe defeat in Rio São Francisco, and some Jews were sent to Lisbon with them.[20] At this time Isaac de Castro Tartas, thought to be 'a missionary of the Mosaic Law,' was taken prisoner in Bahia. He was denounced to the bishop, sent to the Inquisition prison, and there burned at the stake at the age of 24.[21]

In spite of the relative protection and liberty that the Dutch government afforded the Jews, economic rivalry gave rise to serious conflicts between Lutherans, Catholics and Jews. Calvinist clergymen constantly complained of both the Jews and the Portuguese authorities.[22] When Maurice of Nassau left Brazil after years of exceptional government, he advised religious tolerance and a more moderate economic policy, but the men controlling the government only managed to increase the tensions.

The Jews living in the Dutch part of Brazil were demographically important. By way of comparison, in Holland, where the strongest nucleus of Iberian Judaism of the seventeenth century was concentrated, there were 1,800 Jews (after the arrival of those expelled from Brazil in 1654) while in the Dutch territory of Brazil, in a white civil population of 2,899, there was a total of 1,450 Jews, that is, about half the white civil population. In 1648 (after the departure of Maurice of Nassau), the number of Jews went down to 720, and in 1654 to 650.[23]

The New Christians of Brazil were distinguished in their behaviour, beliefs and attitudes in three different ways. Firstly, there were those who sincerely accepted the Catholic faith and who over the centuries managed, consciously or unconsciously, to become part of Portuguese social and religious life, and were able to merge themselves and their descendants into society at large. Amongst these are found some of the most illustrious men in the political and religious life of Brazil.[24] Secondly, there were the New Christians who belonged to families that for generations had suffered at the hands of the Holy Office.These New Christians provided the Tribunal with their prisoners; they were the thousands of heretics, crypto-Jews or not, who for hundreds of years paraded in the *autos de fé*. In the third place, there were those New Christians who were divided between two irreconcilable worlds, the Jewish and the Christian. They put themselves outside both, remaining unbelievers, whether in Judaism or Catholicism. They did, however, keep deep cultural bonds with their people of origin, right up to the nineteenth century. They fill the pages of Brazilian history with the most diverse heresies, learned and popular — unbelievers, libertines, deists, rationalists, blasphemers — they were persecuted and condemned as Jews, and formed an integral part of the history of the Jewish people.

The New Christians in Brazil were conditioned by an organized programme of persecution, and differed both from a religious as well as from a social point of view from those who were converted in 1497. Born more than a century after the 'conversion' of the Jewish-Portuguese communities, they had been brought up and educated in a totally different cultural atmosphere from that of their ancestors. They showed extremely interesting characteristics which clearly distinguished them from the New Christians who emigrated to the countries of Northern Europe or the Levant. They mixed in considerable numbers with the native population, with Indians, negroes and

mulattos, and this miscegenation led to a considerable growth in the number of New Christians who were only a half, a quarter or an eighth Jewish.

Portuguese legislation, responding to the interests of the ruling class, and aiming to curtail the nascent bourgeoisie, of which the New Christians constituted an essential part, was extended to the colony of Brazil. However, it underwent profound adaptation during this change. The criteria employed in the application of official legislation had practical effects, favourable to human relations. On the one hand the authorities and the mass of the Old Christian population overlooked the numerous prohibitions and taboos, and on the other, the New Christians allowed themselves to be more amenable to assimilation. Both maintained a certain resistance to the programme imposed by the Mother country, the Old Christians mixing with the New and relaxing the dogmatism of their faith, the New Christians keeping alive their spirit of criticism and their suspicions in matters related to the Church. Another phenomenon emerges with this integration, which was the result of the constant airing of the question of legal discrimination: the New Christian's awareness of his situation as a pariah was maintained; he was conscious of his limitations and of a whole system of prohibitive and degrading laws, and of a life based from a most tender age on the necessity for deceit and pretence.[25]

The New Christian almost always attained a higher social status when he came to Brazil. From being a merchant or shopkeeper, he frequently became a mill-owner, or an important business-man: some even reached the rank of governor or military leader.[26] The people who really ruled the colony were the mill-owners, who tried to consolidate their positions of prestige by combining their interests with those of officials of the administrative bureaucracy sent by the Crown. On the other hand the New Christians constituted a significant portion of the wealthy class of Brazil, with which it was best to keep an understanding.[27] In the first half of the seventeenth century New Christians made up 10-20% of the white population of Bahia and the surrounding areas, and they also played an important part in economic and political management.[28] In the political sphere we find the name of Diogo Lopes Ulhoa, counsellor to the Governor and responsible for Bahia's defence plan against the Dutch; the *licenciado* Gonçalo Homen de Almeida, who was Chief Magistrate of the Council of Bahia; António Mendes de Oliveira, royal treasurer, and a man of "prestige and reliability;" and also the families of the Moniz Teles, Bitencourt, Botelho, etc.; in the military sphere was the Gonçalves Laço and the Aguirre families.[29] Such a level of attainment shows the fundamental difference between the way of life of the New Christians in Brazil and those in other regions under European rule.[30]

The Holy Office of the Inquisition never established an official Tribunal in Brazil, but the Inquisition did act continuously in Brazil through its Visitors, Commissioneres, Bishops, Vicars, and the thousands of bailiffs of

the Holy Office.[31] Bishops were empowered to imprison people, confiscate their goods and send prisoners to the Inquisition in Lisbon. The bailiffs also had the power of arrest and confiscation in remote areas.[32] In the last decade of the sixteenth century, the economic prosperity of the colony awoke the greed of the Inquisitors, who sent the first official "Visitation" to Brazil. Although persecution included the crimes of sodomy, witchcraft, blasphemy, bigamy and Lutherism, its main target was the Judaisers. Thus from the last decade of the sixteenth century, and throughout the first half of the seventeenth, hundreds of New Christians were accused of Judaism.

The Jesuits were the main executors of the orders of the Holy Tribunal in Brazil, despite the known rivalry between the Society of Jesus and the Dominicans in Portugal. It was in the College of the Society, and led by the Jesuit Provincial, than an important inquiry into heresy, especially Jewish, took place in 1646.[33]

It is difficult to know the exact number of New Christians in Brazil during the centuries of colonization. However, one can estimate approximately how many were involved with, or denounced to, the Holy Office. Yet there is no doubt that a large number of Portuguese of Jewish descent escaped persecution, and are lost to historians.[34]

In the eighteenth century, inquisitorial action in Portugal and Brazil entered its most violent phase. The increase in the opposition of a middle class, and the growing awareness on the part of a Portuguese "intelligentsia" of the disastrous Portuguese economic and religious policy led to the reinforcement of repression. The discovery of gold in Brazil concentrated a great number of Portuguese and Brazilian adventurers in the mining areas, where they found ample opportunity to enrich themselves. The Holy Office of the Inquisition kept commissioners and bailiffs in the colony charged with collecting denunciations and information, confiscating goods and arresting suspects. In the first half of the eighteenth century the number of prisoners, both male and female, was considerable.[35]

It was also during this period that the Inquisition pronounced the greatest number of death sentences on Brazilians. Among these was the strange case of a priest in Bahia, an Old Christian, who was burned at the stake because he would not abjure the Jewish religion, which he considered the true one.[36] The occupations of these prisoners were very varied; there were a large number associated with work on the land, tenant farmers, and also tradesmen, doctors, soldiers, miners, students and artisans in general. Many of them were under age.

The large number of imprisonments led New Christians to emigrate to London, where they had relatives, and where there were promising economic opportunities open to them.[37] An interesting circle of scientists developed in Brazil, among them the New Christians José Henriques Ferreira, a relative of the humanist António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches, responsible for the foundation

of the first Academy of Medicine and Natural History in Rio de Janeiro. Part of the family of Ribeiro Sanches lived in Brazil, and a namesake of the great doctor, himself a doctor, was imprisoned there by the Inquisition and sent to prison in Lisbon. After serving his sentence, he returned to Brazil and settled in Bahia, where he married the daughter of an important Old Christian family.[38]

The continuance of *'marranism'*, as it has been called by some authors, or rather the persistence of the New Christians in maintaining their Jewish beliefs and customs, with their various forms of behaviour and attitudes, in the Iberian Peninsula as well as in the overseas possessions, did not result from an unyielding "decision" about a Jewish destiny or "mission", but from eminently historical factors. The way of life of Portuguese Sephardim, who had stayed voluntarily or forcibly in Portugal, Spain or the colonies, was totally different from that of the Sephardim who settled in countries where they were given relative religious freedom, and who returned officially to the heart of the Jewish people.

The Jewish heresy, whether popular or erudite, became in Brazil, as in Portugal and Spain, a form of resistance to accepting the dogmatic moral and religious impositions of the Inquisition. The principal ideas which moulded the mentality of the new Christian can be reduced basically to the non-acceptance of the materiality of God in the person of Christ, and to the persistence of their traditional Messianic hopes. They showed a dogged dislike of images and confession; they rejected the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and the virginity of Mary, as being contrary to all logic and reason; they refused to accept the spiritual authority of the representatives of the Inquisition, and they considered Catholic practices and the behaviour of Old Christians to be idolatrous.

The Jewish cultural heritage was carried on, expressed in a very subtle and varied way. One finds members of New Christian families who confessed that they secretly persisted in keeping up Jewish traditions — the Sabbath rest, the fast of Yom Kippur, the Passover, Purim, etc., as well as some dietary restrictions.

However, it is extremely risky to take the confessions of the prisoners before the Spanish and Portuguese Tribunals as certain proof of their Jewish religion. For centuries they recited the same formulae automatically, often without knowing what they were saying. Parents and relations often taught their children to repeat Jewish forms and prayers from memory, as a way of saving themselves from the Inquisition if they were taken prisoner. Contrary to the practice in the civil courts, in the Inquisition courts prisoners had to show that they were guilty, confess themselves Judaisers and then repent in order to be saved. This aspect of the process is absolutely fundamental to an understanding of the 'Judaising' phenomenon in its true socio-cultural context, and shows that one should not naively accept as the only proof of

religious behaviour the thousands of repetitive pages, which is often met without the slightest alteration of vocabulary or facts, collected in the archives of the Holy Office. The New Christians, as is the case with Jews in some countries today, had neither the right to be Jews, not the right not to be.

There were also New Christians who, without being atheists or free-thinkers, had little or no interest in religious practices. However, because of their ideas or their dissolute behaviour they were included among those suspected of Jewish heresy. And there were also the extremists — free-thinkers, unbelievers and even atheists — who believed in the morality of the soul, in the non-existence of hell, and in the legitimacy of sexual pleasures, condemning celibacy as an insult to nature; and following an old Iberian tradition, they believed that "there is nothing more than being born and dying." Their 'Judaity' (*judéité*), to use Alberto Memmi's term, is not expressed in terms of doctrine or belief, nor in participation in a community or group, but in their manner of being.

If we apply the precise meaning given by Memmi to *judéité*, we are dealing with a whole complex of subjective and objective characteristics; these sociological, psychological characteristics make up the manner of being and the way of life of the New Christian, his relationship to the Jewish whole and his place in the Non-Jewish world.[39]

The 'coefficient of Judaity' differed among the New Christians of the eighteenth century as it differs among Jews of today, and so it is difficult to characterize the New Christians in terms of Judaism. One fact seems to be common to all the variations: the divided nature of their souls and their minds.

The essential characteristics of New Christian behaviour were the contradictions, the lack of coherence and the paradoxes in which their whole lives were immersed. Even the humblest struggled with a cruel uncertainty, and tortured themselves with a feeling of guilt about their origins, and about the doubts which had been passed on to them. Their confusion of Jewish and Catholic practices is characterised by the prayers of 'Our Father' and 'Ave Maria,' which they directed to Moses. The more cultured, with their religious and social non-conformity, their criticisms of policy, legislation, authority, religious dogmatism and the whole social organization, were always viewed with suspicion.

It is extremely difficult to separate those who 'believed' and 'sincerely' practiced Jewish principles from those who only professed them in order to save their lives. The torture systematically applied by the Inquisition, even in the eighteenth century, extracted from the prisoners everything the Inquisitors wanted to prove. Most New Christians were not given the death penalty, but 'prison and lifelong penitential dress.' The Inquisition was not trying to eliminate the New Christian heretics completely. Although the expulsion of the New Christians was at various times discussed by the Crown, the

Inquisition *always* pronounced itself against this.[40] It was more important to keep them alive as sinners in order to legitimize their persecution and the existence of the institution itself. Therefore, to the claim that the Inquisition killed relatively few people, the reply is that the ultimate aim of the Portuguese socio-political process was the mental and physical mutilation of a whole section of Portuguese society, descendants of Jews and people who mixed with them. In their three centuries of operation the Holy Office managed this in Portugal and Spain, and found Judaism an excellent pretext.

Although stigmatized, the New Christians managed to maintain the essential factors which enabled them to play a fairly distinguished role. The case of Luis Mendes de Sá is very significant; he was born in the Inquisition prison in Coimbra, taken prisoner in Brazil 37 years later and burned at the stake by the Lisbon Inquisition as a Judaiser.[41] After the drastic legislative measures of the Marquis of Pombal and the administration of the king, Don José, and the abolition of the distinction between New Christians and Old Christians, the Jewish phenomenon acquired a different meaning.[42] It is a mistake to suppose, however, that it disappeared from the Lusitanian world immediately. Information about Brazil or Spanish America is scanty and still unresearched, but New Christians accused of Judaism, mainly from the region of Covilhã, appear in Portuguese archives right up to the nineteenth century.[43] From the suspension of the Tribunal in 1821 up to recent times, Portuguese, Spanish and Brazilian people descended from Jews converted in 1497 were still called Jews, their loyalty with regard to the State and to religion was suspect, and they were identified as revolutionaries and Freemasons.[44] A scientific appraisal of the total number of Portuguese of Jewish origin who were persecuted by the Inquisition in Portugal and Spain and their overseas colonies is still to be made. There were years of mass imprisonments and executions, followed by years of greater leniency.[45] This long-lived and organised system of political and religious persecution was part of an eminently Iberian process, through the form and characteristics it acquired. It created wrongdoers, condemned innocents, manufactured Judaisers, and supported a subversive movement and a resistance which preserved 'Judaity' among New Christians for centuries. But time, isolation and suffering has undermined the true religious content of their Judaism, and with the ending of persecution in the nineteenth century, the New Christians, as Judaisers, only exist in Brazil as a memory in the minds of their descendants, and traces of Jewish rituals are only kept up in a few families. The problem of Jews and New Christians as a social and political phenomenon lasted for 285 years in Portugal and the colonies. A study of it and the mark it left on Brazilian civilization still remains to be done.

A new wave of Sephardi migration to Brazil began after Independence (1822), coming directly from Morocco to the Amazon region, and centred mainly on the city of Belem. In 1828, a synagogue already functioned there.

With the passing of the years this immigration increased, and came to play a significant part in the economic development of the region, mainly in the exploitation of rubber and in commerce. Many of these families rose in social status through marriages to Brazilian Catholics of the established society. But the community continued, following Jewish religion and traditions, with a synagogue, a cemetery, a school, and even a newspaper, which at the beginning of this century had an eminently Zionist character. Economic development in the south of Brazil attracted many of these Sephardim to Rio and São Paulo. Today, this community of Moroccan origin in Belem consists of only a few hundred people, following orthodox Jewish practices.

After the crisis in the Middle East, in the fifties, Sephardi immigration to Brazil increased greatly, mainly from Egypt, Europe and the Levant; they settled by preference in the south of Brazil, where they maintain a synagogue with their own rituals and liturgy, but with a social life intimately linked to the Ashkenazi Jews.

NOTES

1 Under pressure from Spain, King Manuel in 1496 undertook to expel non-Catholics from the country. In the following year he revoked this order, and prohibited all Jews from leaving, forcing them to become converted to Catholicism.

2 Cardinal Henrique was Regent of Portugal from 1562 to 1568, and king from 1578 to 1580. He was Chief Inquisitor for 40 years, that is, from 1539 to 1580. Cardinal Alberto was the Governor of Portugal in the name of Philip II in 1583 and 1593, and Chief Inquisitor from 1586 to 1596. D. Pedro de Castilho, Bishop of Leiria, governed Portugal twice, from 1605 to 1608, and from 1612 to 1614; he was Chief Inquisitor from 1605 to 1615.

3 The anti-Jewish works published in the seventeen and eighteenth centuries clearly show the level of persecution propaganda. Some were re-published several times, as for example the *Sentinela contra os Judeus*, by P. Francisco de TORREJONCILLO, translated into Portuguese from Spanish; it ran to six editions, and contained the accusation of ritual murders, the charge of homicide against New Christian doctors, together with ridiculous and insulting caricatures. V. M. KAYSERLING, *Biblioteca Espanõla Portugueza-Judaica*, (reprinted Nieuwhoop, 1961).

4 On the statutes about purity of blood, which anticipated the "Blutschande" of our times by four centuries, see A. SICROFF, *Les Controverses des Statuts de "Pureté de Sang" en Espagne du XVe, au XVIIe siècles*, (Paris, 1960).

5 A. WIZNITZER, *Jews in Colonial Brazil*, (Columbia University Press, New York 1960) pp. 5-8.

6 The claim has been made that men such as João Ramalho, the 'Bacharel' of Cananéia, Diogo Álvares Correa and other pioneers in the colonization of Brazil were New Christians, but there is no firm evidence, as this period has not been the subject of serious research.

7 Franco FRANCISCO DE ASSIS CARVALHO, *Dicionário de Bandeirantes e Sertanistas do Brasil*, (São Paulo 1954), p. 188. Filipe de Guillen was a chemist and a mathematician who constructed some nautical instruments in Lisbon. He obtained a pension of the Order of Christ from the king. In 1539 he was in Brazil, and appointed Treasurer of the Captaincy by the Governor, Tomé de Souza. He was an amateur geologist and prospected for gold and gems. He is mentioned as a New Christian during the Visitation of 1591-1593, charged with wearing the sign of the cross on the sole of his shoe. Carvalho Franco says that information about him was lost after 1563.

8 Heitor FURTADO DE MENDONÇA *1ª. Visitação do Santo Ofício às Partes do Brasil (Denunciações da Bahia, 1591-93* (São Paulo 1925); and J. G. SALVADOR, *Cristãos Novos, Jesuítas e Inquisição*, (São Paulo 1969) p. 60.

9 A. WIZNITZER, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

10 Heitor FURTADO DE MENDONÇA, *Primeira Visitação do Santo Ofício às Partes do Brasil, Denunciações de Pernambuco, 1593-1595* (São Paulo, 1929).

11 *Ibid.* See also WIZNITZER, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-27, and 32.

12 On this important family, see J. Wanderley PINHO, *História de um Engenho no Recóncavo* (Rio de Janeiro 1946) and also WIZNITZER, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-19, 21-23, 41.

13 Trial, Inquisição de Lisboa, no. 12.142.

14 On Bento Teixeira, see Trial, Inquisição de Lisboa, no. 5206. There is a 1972 edition of the "Prosopopéia," (Rio de Janeiro, Ministério da Educação e Cultural) with an introduction and notes by Celso CUNHA and Carlos DUVAL. The work by Ambrósio Fernandes BRANDÃO is called *Dialogo das Grandezes da Brasil.*

15 On the War of the Emboabas (1707-1709) see C. R. BOXER, *A Idade de Ouro do Brasil*, (Imprensa Nacional, São Paulo 1963) Ch. III, pp. 72-88. The true "spirit" which moved the Beckman Rebellion (1684) is still unknown. Two brothers, Manuel and Thomas, took part in it, and the first, who was leader of the revolt, was hanged. (The Jewish origins of Viana and Beckman are found in as yet unpublished documents.) Manoel Beckman expressed the strong reaction of the colonial population against the political and economic rule of Portugal. See Maria LIBERMAN, *O Levante do Maranhão "Judeu Cabeça do Motin"*. (Ed. Univ. São Paulo, 1983).

16 See Anita NOVINSKY, *Cristãos Novos na Bahia*, (Ed. Perspectiva, São Paulo, 1972) Ch. III, pp. 75-76.

17 Anita NOVINKSY, 'A Historical Bias: The New Christian Collaboration with the Dutch Invasion of Brasil. (17th century)' in *The Fifth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Vol. II, (Jerusalem 1972) pp. 141-154.

18 Anita NOVINSKY, 'Uma Devassa do Bispo D. Pedro da Silva,' in *Anais do Museu Paulista* (São Paulo, 1969) on the collaboration of the Catholic clergy with the Dutch.

19 Of the 166 sugar mills in Dutch Brazil in 1639, 60% belonged to Luso-Brazilians, 32% to Dutch owners, and approximately 6% to Jews. The Jews were mainly occupied in commerce, finance and tax collection while the New Christians were more involved in agricultural production. WIZNITZER *op. cit.* pp. 69-70.

20 On the condition and life of the Jews during the Dutch occupation of the North East of Brazil, see WIZNITZER, *op. cit.*, Chs. III, IV, V, VI. See also José Gonçalves de MELO, 'Gente da Nacão-Judeus residentes no Brasil Holandes 1630-54' in *Rivista do Instituto Arqueologico Histórico e Geográfica de Pernambuco*, Vol. 51 (Recife 1979).

21 Trial from the *Inquisição de Lisboa* no. 11.550.

22 WIZNITZER, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

23 I. H. BLOOM, *The Economic Activities of the Jews of Amsterdam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, (Williamsport, 1937) p. 31 and WIZNITZER, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

24 Of New Christian origin were José de Anchieta, Superior and Provincial of the Society of Jesus (1577-1587), called the "Apostle of Brazil," Pe. Leonardo Nunes, Jesuit author of *Vocabulário da Língua Brasílica e Doutrina da Língua do Brasil*, and considered by his contemporaries to be the "Prince of Brazilian languages," and Ignácio de Tolosa, Provincial of the Society of Jesus in Brazil in 1571, Doctor of Theology of the University of Évora. He was also Rector of the Colleges of the Society in Rio de Janeiro and Bahia. See J. G. SALVADOR, *Cristãos Novos Jesuítas e Inquisição*, (1969) pp. 31, 139, 144.

25 For more information about the New Christians, see Anita NOVINKSY, *Cristãos Novos.*

26 In spite of pressure on the colony exerted by the mother country and despite discriminatory legislation, New Christians managed to gain posts in the government, as for example, Miguel

Teles da Costa, who was *capitão mór* of the region of São Paulo, imprisoned and condemned for the crime of Judaism in 1711, and José de Moura Corte Real, who was Governor of Cabo Frio, also in the 18th century. (In unpublished manuscripts). See Rachel BROMBERG, *A Inquisição no Brasil-Um Capitão-Móz Judaizante* (Ed. Univ. São Paulo, 1984).

27 The percentage of sugar mills belonging to New Christians was extremely high. From 1587 to 1592, there were 54 sugar mills in Brazil, at least 12 of which belonged to New Christians, that is, more than 20%. The Visitation of the Inquisition to Bahia in 1618 reveals that of 34 mills, 20 belonged to New Christians, equivalent to 60%. This figure is, in fact, too high, because as is known, the Inquisition applied itself mainly to the wealthy class. E. d'Oliveira FRANÇA, 'Engenhos, Colonização e Cristãos Novos na Bahia Colonial' in *Anais do IV Simpósio Nacional dos Professores Universitários de História*, (São Paulo, 1969) p. 224.

28 An approximate classification of the occupations of New Christians living in Bahia between 1624 and 1654 shows that 36% applied themselves to trade in general, 32% were in the professions (administrative and religious posts, graduates, soldiers, surgeons) 20% had occupations concerned directly with the land (mill-owners, farmers, peasants), and 12% were more modest workers (artisans and sailors). See Anita NOVINSKY, *Cristãos Novos . . .*

29 Gonçalo Homem de Almeida was the brother of the Professor of Law at the University of Coimbra, António Homem who was burned at the stake as a Judaiser in 1624. See NOVINSKY *ibid.*

30 *Ibid.* Ch. III, for more information about these New Christians.

31 On the activity of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Bahia, see NOVINSKY, *Cristãos Novos. . .* Ch. IV. The "familiares" of the Holy Office had the important function of collecting information and bringing denunciations to the Inquisitors. See Anita NOVINSKY "A Igreja no Brasil, as Familiares do Santo Oficio' in Anais do Museu Paulista, No 33 pp. 16-34 (Univ São Paulo, 1984).

32 Confiscation was always one of the crucial problems of the Inquisition, because, with the exception of the occasional gift or legacy, the goods of the condemned were the only source of income available for maintaining the Tribunal, for the upkeep of its enormous bureaucratic apparatus, the splendid ceremonial of the *autos de fé*, the maintainance of prisoners, etc. Half of the revenue from the confiscations should have gone to the king, but the Inquisition always claimed to be in financial difficulties, and the Crown rarely received its share. See Anita NOVINSKY, *Inventários dos Bens Confiscados à Cristaõs-novos no Brasil (século XVIII)*, Imprensa Nacional, Casa da Moeda, Portugal, s.d).

33 The "Grande Inquisição de 1646", in NOVINSKY, *Cristãos Novos. . .*, pp. 129 and 140, and in Appendix 4 of the Indices of people denounced; in Appendix 5 the social classification of the informers.

34 A List of the Inquisition, one of the most complete existing in their archive, and detailed from 1605 up to the second half of the 18th century, shows the numbers of people suspected or sentenced for Judaism in Brazil — approximately 298 New Christians in the seventeenth century (31 women and 267 men), and 1,871 in the eighteenth century (804 women and 1,067 men) a total of 2,169 for both centuries. See NOVINSKY 'Uma Fonte Inédita para a História do Brasil,' in *Revista de História* (São Paulo, 1973) no. 94.

35 In the 18th century the number of women sentenced in Brazil for Judaism increased considerably. Their youth stands out, many being only 16-18 years old. Some women died in prison, such as Catarina Marques and Ignes Ayres, the latter being 81 years old; others were condemned to "prison and lifelong penitential habit," and even to death. It is interesting that for the crime of Judaism an emancipated negro slave, Mariana, born in Angola and living in Rio de Janeiro, and a mulatta, Mariana de Andrade, born and resident in Rio de Janeiro, were sentenced to life imprisonment. In the *auto de fé* of 1711, for example, 50 Brazilian New Christians were sentenced, of whom 24 were women. 444 Brazilian New Christians were imprisoned, mainly in the first half of the 18th century (226 men and 218 women).

36 Padre Manuel Lopes de Carvalho. He held long discussions with learned religious men, and shocked the Inquisitors by claiming that he was an Old Christian, but that if he were able to, he would change all his blood to become a Jew. 21 Brazilian New Christians accused of Judaism were burnt at the stake in the first half of the 18th century (19 men and 2 women).

37 Among the New Christians who went to London from Brazil are; António Dias Correa from Rio de Janeiro; 3 brothers born in Bahia, Marcos, Joseph and Jerónimo, sons of Manuel Mendes Monforte; João Nunes Ribeiro, from Bahia; Miguel Nunes Fernandes from Rio de Janeiro; Branca Lopes, married to Diogo Fernandes Cardoso, from Bahia; Simão Henriques Rodrigues from Rio de Janeiro; Diogo Nunes Ribeiro, uncle of António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches; Ana Mendes; António Coelho; João, son of Francisco de Andrade, and many others. (From unpublished manuscript).

38 Trial, *Inquisição de Lisboa*, no. 11603.

39 Albert MEMMI, 'Recherches sur la judéité,' in *Revue Française de Sociologie* (Paris, Jan-Mar. 1965).

40 cf. 'Lei do Extermínio' in 'Reservados' of the Academia de Ciências de Lisboa, Cod. 11. 2/9, *Manuscript*, and the opinion against the Law in Cod. F. G. 1587, Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, Secção de Reservados, *Manuscript*.

41 Trial, *Inquisição de Lisboa* no. 8015.

42 Law of 1768, renewed in 1773. See Paul RÊGO, *Qultimo Regimento da Inquisição Portuguesa* (Ed. Excelsior, Lisbon, 1971).

43 On the remnant of the crypto-Jews in Portugal in the 20th century, in the Belmonte area, see Anita NOVINSKY and Amilcar PAULO, 'The Last Marranos' in *Commentary* (New York), May 1967. See also a recent new book by David Augusto CANELO, *Os ultimos judeus secretos* (Belmonte, 1985).

44 Compare Mario SÁ, *A Invasão dos Judeus*, (Lisbon, 1925).

45 From 1704 to 1713, 1,392 people were sentenced in Portugal, and 17 of these received the death penalty. (About 139 people per year); from 1724 to 1733, 1,070 people were sentenced, of whom 22 received the death penalty; from 1734 to 1743, 51 people were executed; from 1750 to 1759, 1,107 were sentenced, and 18 burned at the stake. A. H. de Oliveira MARQUES, *História de Portugal* (Lisbon 1973) p. 543.

THE SEPHARDIM OF THE CARIBBEAN

by
Aubrey Newman

The Sephardi communities of the Caribbean area reflect, in their changing fortunes, the fortunes of their individual hosts. During the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries they prospered with their hosts; and they suffered from the economic afflictions which hit the whole of the West Indies during the rest of that century. To the extent that they became culturally assimilated into the new cultures and governing groups that took over during the twentieth-century process of 'decolonisation' they have been able to share in the growth and developments of the more modern period, but more usually they found themselves pushed to one side, neither a full part of the 'planter' class who were now being dispossessed nor a full part of the classes which had taken over. But even if they are often now regarded as 'irrelevant' their three-hundred years of participation in West Indies history should not lightly be ignored, and their contributions to the economic, social, and political history of their local hosts ought not easily be forgotten.

The original settlements of Jews in the West Indies derived from the Portuguese colonies in Brazil or, more accurately, from the collapse of the Dutch conquest of some of these colonies. The Inquisition never having been introduced there, Brazil had attracted many 'New Christians' whose devotion to the Roman Catholic Church might well have been suspected had they remained in the Iberian peninsula or in those colonies dependent on the Spanish crown. Their presence had been, of course, one of the factors which had induced the Dutch to look to Brazil as a potential area of conquest; correspondingly, the Dutch offer of an open exercise of religious beliefs had induced many to take up residence after the Dutch conquest of Recife. So long as that colony remained in being the Jews of Brazil flourished with it, modelling themselves upon and establishing very close ties with the Sephardi community of Amsterdam whose *Escamot* served as a pattern for their own congregation. But the political decline of the Recife colony, and the final evacuation of the Dutch in 1654, was accompanied by a departure of the Jewish settlers for new homes over the Caribbean area, and so there were founded in the West Indies a series of small communities maintaining a

tenuous link with the mother community of Amsterdam or with an alternative mother, the community of Bevis Marks in London. This latter link had developed independently of the former. There had, in these years, also appeared a number of congregations able to absorb refugees following the Brazilian collapse. Some of them were so ephemeral as hardly to warrant even the recital of their names; the very dates of their separate existence are matters of dispute. Others however managed to continue until the present century without attracting the attentions of any historian. The substantial colonies of the British West Indies have, for example, never been given the attention they deserve, while the equally important congregation of Curaçao has been very fortunate in attracting a lavishly and lovingly produced community history. But all of them fall into a basic pattern. Their most prosperous period coincided with the heyday of West Indian sugar, but a closer examination of these communities and of their economic activities would suggest that the links are rather more tenuous than might have been supposed, and that the pattern of the rise and fall of the Sephardi communities in the Caribbean is far from clear cut.

The British West Indies

The two main centres of Sephardi Jewish settlement in the 'British' West Indies were Barbados and Jamaica, though there were instances of comparatively short-lived settlements elsewhere. There was for example by the 1680s a small community on the island of Nevis, which included for a while one Rehuel Abudiente, his name later anglicised to Rowland Gideon; his son was later prominent in London Jewish and financial circles as Samson Gideon. But that community was neither rich nor prominent; an account of the principal town of the island, Charlestown, written in 1724, reported that there were then 'seventy households . . . near 300 whites, whereof one quarter are Jews, who have a synagogue there, and are said to be very acceptable to the country part of the island, but are far from being so to the Town.'[1] The Jews on Nevis were mainly traders, and the ground for their unacceptability to their fellow (non-Jewish) traders was their under-cutting of these latter merchants' prices. A century later however there was little trace of this community. There were some slave-owners with Jewish names but these were not among the leading figures on the island, and other contemporary documents refer merely to the site of the 'former' synagogue. Even the existence of mineral springs on the island, which apparently gave it some sort of eighteenth-century tourist industry, did not restore prosperity to the Jewish community.

Barbados

Although there is some evidence for the settlement of individual Jews on Barbados in the late 1620s, almost immediately after its first annexation to the British crown and the first appearance of settlers on it, it was not really until the collapse of the Recife settlement that numbers of Jewish settlers became at all significant, and it was as a reaction to these newcomers that a petition was submitted from the colonists on the island 'that the Laws and Statutes of the Commonwealth of England relating to foreigners and strangers be exactly taken notice of, and put into due execution, by those whom it should concern.'[2] Already there were apparently fears that the local traders might find their place taken by these newcomers, and the later appearance of further refugees from the French West Indian colonies and the former English settlements from Surinam (after that colony was surrendered to the Dutch) would seem to have exacerbated these attitudes. In 1661 licences had been given to certain named Jews to continue their residence in Barbados, and certificates of endenization had been given to others, but opposition to their presence was expressed in part by attempts in 1665 to secure the expulsion from the island of Jews who had failed, as promised, to find gold mines on the island, and later by attempts to refuse to allow Jews to give testimony in the courts of law. In 1669, in response to a petition by duly endenizened Jews that they were being deprived of the privileges of that status and in particular not allowed to testify, whereby their trade was suffering, the Governor reported:[3]

> 'I do find it to be true, that the Judges in the Courts of Judicature in Barbados have ever since your Majesty's most happy Restoration, refused to admit of the Testimony of the Hebrews in such cases wherein your Majesty's Christian subjects are parties . . . but I do find, that in the time of the late Usurpation their testimonies were then admitted in all Courts, and in all cases whatsoever.'

The Council agreed to recommend that Jews be given the right of testifying, subject to whatever restrictions the local assembly wished to place upon that right, and the assembly thereupon passed an act confining that privilege to matters of trade only. That act, passed in 1674, remained valid until 1786 when at last it was formally repealed. Similarly there were restrictions upon the rights of Jews to own slaves; non-natural born and non-naturalised Jews were forbidden to own more than one slave on pain of having the excess confiscated, and there were in Barbados, as elsewhere, restrictions upon the employment by them of 'indentured' non-Jewish labour. This was of course a great restriction on the possibility of Jews becoming plantation owners, the economy of these estates being to a very great extent dependent on the existence of such labour. None the less there were by the 1680's four Jewish planters owning quite considerable estates, and further

evidence of Jewish involvement in the sugar industry — which was at that time beginning to take over as the sole crop of the island — is afforded by the patenting of a new sugar mill invented by a Jewish immigrant from Recife who was given the financial backing and political patronage of a group of English noblemen, including the Governor of Barbados.

The community in Barbados in the year 1680 is unusually well-documented as a result of a population census made in that year.[4] From this it is possible to identify virtually the entire community and to establish the links which existed between them and other colonies in the western hemisphere as well as with London, Amsterdam, and Hamburg. The links thus worked out show conclusively how close these communities were, both in matters of trade and in matters of religion, and how frequently individuals named in one geographical context can be found elsewhere, establishing for example congregations in the island of Barbados and yet several years later appearing (and dying) in Amsterdam or New York.There were in Bridgetown, the capital of the island, 404 householders in all, of whom 54 were Jewish. These provided 240 Jews in that town together with a further sixty elsewhere on the island, most of them at Speightstown. Thirty-nine of the heads of these households were male, but fifteen women were listed as heads of households, reflecting a pattern of matriarchy found elsewhere in the West Indies. Many of the settlers in Bridgetown were urban traders or craftsmen and the various lists of taxation and local levies for rates given an indication that they were by no means as well-off as contemporaries sometimes alleged. The taxes were expressed in terms of pounds of sugar. Five of the 54 householders could be classed as 'magnates', responsible for substantial amounts: fourteen as 'well-to-do'; and seven as 'moderate'. Nine were even classifiable as 'poor'. By 1710 there were about 150 Jews in Bridgetown and a further 20 in Speightstown. They were not popular with the trading and planting elements on the island; on 9 July 1705 the Council recorded:[5]

> 'Whereas it appears to this Board that the Jews on this Island are very prejudical to Trade, by not buying the produce of this Island; but, on the contrary, reap off all the ready money they can get, it is ordered that the Solicitor General and Queen's Counsel procure a list of what Negroes belong to the several Jews in this Island, and they prepare a Proclamation to revive, and put into execution a law relating to Jews keeping negroes.'

Technically Jews were only supposed to possess one negro slave each, although there is no evidence that this law had ever been enforced; on the other hand, it is not clear what further action was taken on this occasion.

Other evidence for the relative wealth of the Jews of Barbados as compared with the Christian communities can be seen in various references to the burden of taxation at the beginning of the eighteenth century. As was common elsewhere in the Islands the Jews were responsible for any shortfall in receipts from any others of the community. In addition there were on

occasions extra taxes levied on the Jews as such: in 1670, for example, the Jews of Bridgetown complained that they were being unfairly taxed as compared with the rest of the parish. There was also a general expectation that the Jewish communities should make some sort of personal gift to the Governor of the colony. On Jamaica this became institutionalised into the notorious 'Pie', 'tart', and 'tartlet'; on Barbados there was merely the "Jew's Pie", but there is no indication of its value, except for the complaint in 1704 by the Barbados' Assembly to the Council of Trade and Plantations in London that 'Contrary to Your Majesty's commands aforesaid, the Nation of the Jews in this Island have presented the Governor with the sum of 200£ sterling, and by him received, whereby they have many privileges allowed them contrary to law.'[6] Although the Governor was recalled and reprimanded it was not on account of this action alone, and there is nothing to suggest that others did not receive similar presents without any undue attention paid to their actions. The relative prosperity of the communities is shown up in a petition of the Barbados Assembly in 1709; according to that the Christians on the island had paid a total of £675 in taxes in 1692 while the Jewish community had paid £750, in 1704 the Christians had paid £1500 and the Jews £750, and in 1709 when the Christians had paid £6000 the Jews had paid £1500.[7] Other evidence would suggest a gradual running down of the Jewish community on the island; an attempt in 1756 to impose a special tax upon the Jews failed and the idea was abandoned in 1761, while a description in 1786 of the building of a hospital on the island drew attention at once to the generosity and the impoverishment of the community.[8]

> 'Justice to the humble remnant of a once highly favoured State calls upon me to observe that of the sum subscribed to this charity upwards of one tenth was contributed collectively and individually by the Hebrew Nation; though their numbers fall short of one twentieth of the whole inhabitants of Barbados and not one hundredth of the property of the island is in their hands, Sir, this despised (not to say oppressed) but peaceable, loyal and, I will add, venerable people still remember, as they were commanded, the affliction of their forefathers in the land of Egypt.'

The bulk of the Bridgetown Jews lived round Swan Street, often nicknamed Jew Street, and it was there that they had their synagogue. There was another, much smaller synagogue, at Speightstown, on the other side of the island, but that was taken down in 1779 and never rebuilt. The two congregations seem to have co-operated in most matters, but there seems to have been a certain number of internal discords within the community as a whole. Thus in August 1753 the *Mahamad* of Bevis Marks (whose spiritual authority the Barbados community acknowledged) wrote to Barbados about discords which apparently some wished to have settled by action in the law courts and which "no one here can remedy. It is incompatible with the British Constitution to enforce laws of *ascamot* in societies which are not incorporated by Royal Charter."[9] How this was resolved appears unknown. Other

references within the correspondence of the London synagogue do however throw light upon the disasters to which the Antilles were prey, such as in 1781 when the synagogue was badly damaged in a hurricane and London voted £200 towards the cost of repairing the damage. For their part however the Barbados community was as generous as it could afford to be, giving grants to other islands nearby — such as St. Eustatius — and always ready to give to the *Terra Santa* fund sponsored by the Bevis Marks congregation. Whether any of the emissaries from the Holy Land actually travelled to the West Indies to collect the sums or whether they were merely forwarded to London for this collection is not always clear.

At all events by 1792 the community in Bridgetown had still a respectable measure of financial independence. It had 147 members that year and an income of £116, and during the next thirty years its Jewish members had acquired social respectability and political emancipation. In 1831 however the community suffered a heavy blow in the destruction of its synagogue in a hurricane. Again the building had to be replaced, and in many ways the reconsecration marked a high-point of the community. Three hundred were present at the ceremony, but many of them were non-Jews, for even though the revenue of the congregation in 1831 had reached £387 its membership had dropped considerably, and thereafter the decline intensified. The revenues of the congregation were insufficient to maintain the salaries of its paid officials, and its funds were deposited on trust with the *Mahamad* of the Bevis Marks congregation for the benefit of the Barbados congregation. In 1846 the (Ashkenazi) Chief Rabbi Dr. Nathan Marcus Adler attempted to gather statistics for all the Jewish congregations in the British Empire, and to this end approached the Barbados community for information. They, still loyal to Bevis Marks, wrote to the *Mahamad* for guidance:[10] "As you are aware that this Kaal has ever acknowledged yours as the parent synagogue we leave the matter entirely at your disposal and shall be guided accordingly." No return was made to Dr. Adler.

But it was a dying community; the average attendance at Synagogue that year was twenty-two, and by 1848 there were only 71 Jews on the whole of the island, 38 in the congregation itself. In 1869 the property of the synagogue was, like the congregational funds, placed in the hands of trustees who were empowered to convey it to the Bevis Marks Synagogue "in case there should be no person of the Hebrew community residing on the island".[11] By 1905 there were only seventeen Jews on the island, five men, nine women, and three children, and on 30th June 1905 the following entry was made in the Congregation's Minute Book:[12]

> 'Being the only contributing member of the Kaal at present in the island and as Ex-Parnas of the same, I have according to the custom prevailing in recent years and as far as practicable under existing circumstances this day assumed and undertaken the functions of Parnas.'

By 1924 the two surviving members of the Congregation were eighty-one and sixty-nine years old, and the last of them died on 6th June 1934. With him died the ancient Sephardi Community of Barbados.

Jamaica

There were certainly Jews in Jamaica before its occupation by the English in 1655; it has been claimed that it was the Jews who planned the conquest beforehand, but doubtful though that may be it is certainly true that the conquest was welcomed by *marrano* Jews both in England and on the island. But they were not prominent in the island's affairs, and the Jews who are identifiable as such were traders or mining prospectors rather than planters; on the other hand there was a steady trickle of applications from Jews for 'endenization', marking a constant flow of foreign-born Jews seeking a more recognised status on the island. The further significance of these applications for a status which was by no means as desirable as full naturalisation but which was not dependent upon the necessity to take oaths which would be religiously unacceptable and which would also involve the need to accept Christian sacraments, was that the process involved costs of over £100 and therefore implied that the applicant had already achieved a fairly substantial status. In Jamaica too was played out the drama of Rabba Couty, a Jew who had been endenizened in New York but whose property had been seized from a ship in Jamaica and ordered to be forfeit on the ground that he was not a subject of the Crown and was therefore engaged in illegal trade. His appeal from the courts in Jamaica to those in London was upheld, and his property was restored to him. It was however almost by accident that his name appears in Jamaica records.

Attempts however were made at about this time to persuade various Jewish planters to establish themselves in Jamaica. Following the surrender of Surinam to the Dutch under the Treaty of Breda in 1667 'the Dutch Hebrew and English nation' were assured that there would be provided[13]

> shipping and convenient for the transportation of your families, servants and merchandizes and all your conveniences for the making of sugar and indigoes to any of the caribbee Islands and to Jamaica or to England if it be desired . . . and that if you desire to go to Jamaica, by the head as well for your slaves as yourselves, double the quantity of land that is usually allowed to other Planters and to take care that you be furnished with provisions and other necessaries at moderate rates if you want till you shall be able to produce them yourselves.'

A number of families did migrate, not only from Surinam but also from Barbados and Nevis, and by the end of the seventeenth century there were some eighty families on the island. Few of them were planters; there seem only to have been five plantations owned by Jews by the end of the century and the number did not rise much above that figure. Of course on Jamaica, as

elsewhere, there were the basic institutional reasons militating against Jewish ownership of plantations, principal amongst them being the difficulty of securing white indentured labour for supervision of slaves, but the basic interests of the community would seem to have been trading and commercial. At all events in 1680 seventeen of the five hundred and seven householders in Port Royal (then the principal centre on the island) and twenty-one of the 1181 militiamen had Jewish names. Three have been identified as 'mariners', but most of the rest were merchants and shopkeepers, living for the most part in the Middle Precinct of the town, on or near Jew Street, where four years earlier, in 1677, a number of Jews had bought for £57 a tract of land, 63ft. by 24ft., for the building of a synagogue. This must have been the building which was destroyed in the earthquake of 7th June 1692 which virtually destroyed Port Royal. According to a contemporary — 'I turned into the Jews' Street in order to get home, when the Synagogue fell by my side.'[14]

The probate records of Jamaica contain a few Jewish inventories of this period, and although some of the deceased were wretchedly poor, others were very poor, some were prosperous, and two of them managed to build up estates of over £2,000. Much of this was in cash, bonds, shop-goods, or even a few slaves, but there was very little real estate. It is clear that the Jews were very largely traders and as such they aroused a great deal of opposition from other (non-Jewish) traders who objected strongly to their continued residence on the island and tried on many occasions to have them removed. Some of the early Jewish settlers had been given permission to prospect for metals, and one of the earliest petitions against the Jews was that they had failed to keep to the terms of these early licences. Complaints were made to the Governor and to Government in London that the Jews were

> 'a kind of company, and trade with a joint stock, whereby they always command ready money, and by that means do not only always buy the choicest and best goods but frequently whole cargoes, and if your Honour's petitioners have at any time a share with them they will certainly undersell them though to their own loss, which they can better bear because of their penurious way of living.'[15]

The Governor, in forwarding such petitions, was careful to dissociate himself from their terms, and indeed on occasion emphasised the value of the Jewish merchants on the island, both as to their loyalty and their willingness to supply goods that no-one else was prepared to do.

Failure of attempts to expel the Jews was followed by a series of attempts to exploit them financially. There was a consistent policy of imposing special taxation upon the Jews as such, at a time when such policies had been thwarted in England. The justification for the Assembly's action was that the other, indirect, taxies levied by the Assembly did not touch Jewish merchants who did not normally trade in taxed goods and who were therefore not paying a fair share of public taxation, and that, in addition, the Jews were by reason

of their various religious obligations relieved of many of the other burdens which otherwise weighed heavily upon the rest of the community. The examples quoted by the Assembly included requests for dispensation from militia service on 'their sabbath or festivals . . . to which may also be added, that they are not at the trouble and charges of any civil and military offices.'[16] The burden on the Jewish community of this additional taxation was comparatively insignificant when it first began in 1686, but opposition against the Jewish community mounted, and as it did, so did the taxation. In 1692 the Council complained:[17]

> 'The Jews eat us and our children out of all trade, the reason for naturalising them not having been observed; for there has been no regard had to their settling and planting as the law intended and directed. We did not want them at Port Royal, a place populous and strong without them; and though told that the whole country lay open to them they have made Port Royal their Goshen, and will do nothing but Trade.'
>
> 'When the Assembly tried to tax them more heavily than Christians, who are subject to public duties from which they are exempt, they contrive to evade it by special favours. This is a great and growing evil and had we not warning from other colonies we should see our streets filled and the ships hither crowded with them. This means taking our children's bread and giving it to the Jews. We believe that it could be avoided by giving a little more confidence to the Council.'

By 1700 it was estimated that a Jewish community 'not surpassing eighty persons including married men, bachelors, widows and the poor maintained upon charity'[18] had had to pay additional taxation of £3,450. The taxation was levied upon the community as a whole, so that if any individual was unable to pay his own contribution the others had to make up the deficiency. Despite a series of remonstrances no action was taken either by the Governor or by the ministers in London, and the *Journals* of the Jamaican Assembly record faithfully a series of these special taxes as well as petitions from Jewish residents either against the imposition of the taxes altogether or else asking for some alleviation of the burden insofar as it affected them personally. On one or two occasions the London ministers were stirred up into action; in 1718 for instance the Secretary of State reacted strongly to an attempt by the Jamaican assembly to abridge the privileges of those Jewish settlers who had been endenizened, and in 1731 the Assembly was called on to justify its special taxation on Jews:[19]

> '. . . As to the tax laid upon the Jews they have always quietly submitted to it and think themselves well used that it is no higher, besides we never thought them of any advantage to the island, they take the bread out of the mouths of more deserving people, they have no religion to fight for, and provided their property can be secured they are very indifferent under which Prince they enjoy it.'

Within five years however the political atmosphere in England had changed emphasis, leading to a much more assertive attitude among the

London ministers. This can be seen in one or two aspects of relations between the London government and the Colonies, such as the passage by the Westminster Parliament of the Molasses Act, and can be seen also in the growing agitation inside Parliament and without over Spanish treatment of English traders and smugglers in the Caribbean culminating in the discords over the English South Seas Company and the eventual outbreak of war between England and Spain, the so-called *War of Jenkins' Ear*. It would seem unlikely that the Jewish merchants of Jamaica were able, either directly or indirectly through London correspondents, to bring any pressure to bear on the King's ministers, but it remains a mystery as to why there should have been a change in the policies of a principal minister, Sir Robert Walpole, who was rather renowned for his unwillingness to initiate drastic changes in policy of his own decision. The changes came in two directions, towards the alleviation of the taxation policy of the Jews of Jamaica and towards rendering it possible for the Jews in the colonies generally to become naturalised subjects without breaking any religious obligations.

In 1735 officials in London who had previously been in Jamaica forwarded to the Board of Trade and Plantations a petition from merchants in London and Jamaica complaining of the additional taxation imposed on Jews. One of the officials, William Wood, pointed out the benefits that the Jewish merchants provided for the resident planters on the island:[20]

> '[The Jews] are almost the only persons that send any dry, fine goods to Jamaica, at their own risk, and on their own account and the Jews in Jamaica the only persons almost that have any large quantities of all kinds of goods lying in their warehouses or shops, for the supply of the inhabitants of the Island and for making proper sortements of goods for the Spaniards when there is either a want or a call for them.'

Additional information was given by Benjamin Bravo, member of a family which had been engaged in trade with the island for more than eleven years before the firm had virtually been forced to cease trading there. He affirmed that the Jews of Jamaica were in practice subjected to all the normal taxes and civic obligations, and gave information about the size of the community; there were between seven and eight hundred men, women, and children, and about 'Fifteen settlements producing Sugar and other commodities, and many Jews besides that . . . owners of lands and houses in the towns of Kingston, Spanish Town and Port Royal, as well as other parts of the island.'[21] There is no direct information about how difficult it was to persuade ministers of the injustice of the Jamaican assembly's actions, but certainly the Council was quick to issue positive additional instructions to the newly appointed Governor of the island to meet the complaint:[22]

> 'Whereas complaint had been made to us, by several traders to our said Island of Jamaica, and others, setting forth that several acts have been passed there whereby extraordinary

> taxes have been imposed, and great hardships laid on the Jews residing there, over and above what is laid on our other subjects there, we being desirous to receive full information concerning the matters complained of, do hereby signify our Royal Will and Pleasure, that you do, upon your arrival in our Island make a due enquiry into the same transmit a particular state thereof to us, and shall have received our will and pleasure thereupon you do not give your assent to any Act or Acts to be passed in the Assembly of our said Island whereby any tax shall be imposed on the said Jews, as only, over and above what is laid upon the rest of our subjects there.'

There was precedent for these Instructions, but in the past Governors had been prepared to acquiesce in their breach by the Assembly. What was new was the determination of the Governor to uphold them, even at the risk of vetoing important money legislation at a time of impending war, and of course the determination of ministers at home to insist on the implementation of these orders. The first such act coming before the Governor was eventually allowed by him and in turn by the ministers but he was given very clearly to understand that repetition would not be allowed and on this occasion he used his powers of veto. The Assembly reacted violently and in its rejoinder emphasised once more all the grounds of their prejudice — the alleged wealth of the Jews, their ecape in practice from the normal burdens of public service, their alleged evasion of the obligations which supposedly had accompanied their initial permission to settle — as well as trying to assert the general point of the unrestricted privileges of an English colony to formulate its own code of laws and taxation. None the less this was the last attempt at discriminatory taxation; only the 'normal' discrimination of exclusion from public office was left, a discrimination which applied in England as well, against all those who were not members of or prepared to conform to the established Church.

A further measure of relief was also introduced into 'Imperial' legislation in 1740, namely a measure to permit foreign-born Protestants and Jews to gain naturalisation without having to conform to the Established Church or take an oath of allegiance 'on the true faith of a Christian'. While this was obviously not initiated entirely for the benefit of foreign Jews it did certainly specify Jews who had resided for seven years as being able to take advantage of its provisions, and in the years between 1740 and 1753 one hundred and eighty five Jews in the Americas took out naturalisation. Of these one hundred and forty were resident in Jamaica, evidence of a continual trickle of immigrants into the island a decade earlier. The Jamaica list of names do not give any places of origin, nor indeed when the new citizen had arrived on the island. But with one possible exception the names appear all to be Sephardi and they group most interestingly. Almost one third of them are women, and although some appear in close connection with men of the same surname there are many with no obvious male connections. Analysed by date, the list reveals that one third were naturalised within a year of the passage of the Act, and the next peak — of thirty names (fifteen males and fifteen females) —

comes in the year 1743. Bearing in mind the pattern of refugees from the Inquisition, the decisions of the *Mahamad* of Bevis Marks to encourage such refugees to go to the West Indies, and the collapse of would-be Jewish settlement in the Colony of Georgia, it would seem more likely that these new citizens came from the Old rather than the New World.

The war which broke out in 1739 ended in the virtual establishment of English predominance in the West Indian trade, and in consequence in the sugar industry. Although, as has been shown elsewhere, the pattern of this industry was changing, with consequential changes in the structure of Jewish society in the islands, such changes were not immediately evident, so that it is possible to look at the succeeding decades as a 'Golden Era' for the Sephardi communities in the Caribbean. On Jamaica they took an active part in the social and economic life of the general white community. Edward Long, writing about the island in the early 1770s,[23] mentions the Jews as chiefly retail traders but that they included 'several very opulent planters and capital merchants connected with great houses in the City of London.' Although there is very little evidence for the great London Jewish houses having much trade or connection with Jamaica, there is certainly much evidence for the retail trading. Long enumerates their specialisations, perhaps a little unkindly:

> 'damaged salt-butter, herrings, beef, cheese, and . . . train oil; a congregation of stinking commodities, which is enough to poison the air of their habitations. Their shops may be scented at a great distance; and, in what is called the Jew-market in this town, a whole street of their houses reeks incessantly with these abominable odours.'

Many of these retailers were in Kingston, and the Kingston Vestry Poll Tax records reveal them as concentrated in Peter's Lane, Orange Street, White Street, and Tower Street. Indeed in 1770 thirty-six out of the thirty-seven houses in Peter's Lane were owned by Jews. An account of the island a little later in date commented that the prices of goods offered by the Jewish shopkeepers were more moderate than those of the Christians, 'but their goods generally of an inferior description.'

The two major communities on the island were in Spanish Town and Kingston. In 1774 there were about 300 Jews in Spanish Town itself and about another 50 in the surrounding countryside. Their death rate was apparently rather low; Long estimated it at about one in 26 as compared with one in 24 for the resident Christian population. He commented:

> 'The Jews here are remarkably healthy and long-lived, notwithstanding their diet is frequently salt-fish and such kind of ailment . . . But these people are abstemious, and so temperate, that a drunken Jew is rarely seen. They are particularly nice in drinking the purest water, which most of them use unmixed; and others make only a small addition of rum. They are exceedingly fond of garlic, which generally has a place in all their sauces, and is known to be a great antiseptic; and they indulge in chocolate. The more luxurious among

> them gormandise chiefly on fish; and no doubt but their religious fasts, of which they are rigid observers, now and then interposing, assist in freeing them from noxious redundancies. I think they may be supposed to owe their good health and longevity, as well as their fertility, to a very sparing use of strong liquers, their early rising, their indulgence in garlic and fish, their adherence to Mosaic Ritual in the choice of sound and wholesome animal food, their religious purifications, and fasts.

The statistics quoted by Long imply that in Spanish Town about a third of the total white population was Jewish. The community was a fully organised one, with a *shohet*, 'a convenient burial-ground walled in, at some distance out of the town; and a synagogue in the Eastern quarter, not far from the river; the place of worship has several well-adapted ornaments.'[24]

No overall statistics are available for Kingston, but the community there would appear to have been rather larger. Long wrote of it:[25]

> 'The Jewish synagogue in this town is a handsome spacious building; and here the principal rabbi officiates. It contains a gallery, like that in Spanish Town, for the reception of their women, who do not mingle with the other sex in their public devotions. The Jews are numerous in this town, being possessed of the greatest share in the Spanish trade. They have a convenient burying ground without the town.'

Smaller communities also existed elsewhere on the island, as evidenced by the later building of a synagogue at Montego Bay, on the north-west of the island, and by the numerous graves in small burying grounds to be found scattered over the island. There are also several groups of title deeds of various small estates, although of course these latter are less evidence of Jews as active planters than of their owning land which might have been rented out to others.

Generally however the Jewish community had achieved a wide measure of social acceptance by the non-Jewish community. Again, Long can be used as evidence, though of course he had his own axes to grind. He drew distinctions between the upper class of Jew and the rest, but for the former group he had nothing but praise.[26]

> 'The Jews were very early settled in this island, attracted no less by the quantity of gold and silver brought into circulation here, than the mild disposition of the government towards them. In some of the other sugar islands they were proscribed, by admittng the evidence of pagan slaves against them in the courts of justice . . . It must be acknowledged, however, that these people have shewn themselves very good and useful subjects upon many occasions. When the French invaded this island . . . they opposed the enemy with great courage. Their knowledge of foreign languages, and intercourse with their brethren, dispersed over the Spanish and other West India colonies, have contributed greatly to extend the trade and increase the wealth of the island; for they have always been the chief importers of bullion: and the riches they acquire to themselves are expanded in effect to the public welfare, for they are not mere brokers and money holders that may remove *ad libitum*; they are allowed to purchase lands and actually possess a large share of both. This gives them a solid attachment to the interest and security of Jamaica; which they consider as their home

> . . . The chief men among the Jews are very worthy persons, and ought not to be reproached for the vices and villainies of the lower rabble, since they strive all in their power to put them in the way of earning their livelihood honestly: and although some fraudulent bankruptcies now and then happen among the poorer and more knavish tribe; yet there are no common beggars of their nation, the elders having an established fund for the relief of all their poor.'

By the end of the century there had developed an Ashkenazi community, marked by the building and consecration of an independent synagogue in Kingston — 1788/1789 and in Spanish Town in 1796.

None the less this acceptability had in a sense to be bought. Just as in London there was an annual presentation to the Lord Mayor of the City so in Jamaica the community felt it expedient to make presentations to a newly appointed Governor and his staff. The Governor was presented with a *pie* of 200 pistoles, a Lieutenant-Governor a *tart* of 150 pistoles, and the Governor's secretary a *tartlet* of 50. This custom continued for many years, although there is no indication when it came to an end, possibly before the end of the century.

Having gained freedom from discriminatory taxation and social emancipation, the Jews of Jamaica had next to gain political emancipation. They were still barred from political office and from the vote, in which their position was very similar to that of the free coloured, with the difference that the free coloured were allowed the franchise since they could take a qualifying oath on the Bible. They served in the militia however, and militia records show that Jews performed this duty regularly, though here too the inability to swear allegiance on the Bible debarred them from holding commissions. On the other hand there seem to have been companies of militia entirely composed of Jews. At the same time that the laws in England were under pressure from Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters, the discriminatory laws in the West Indies came under pressure equally. The first overt measure was taken in Jamaica in 1826, an act 'to entitle Jews born within the ligeance of the King to the rights and privileges of other natural born British subjects'; this act was eventually rejected by the London government. Another act attempted a variation of the same kind, but again the 'Imperial' ministers advised against it, on the basis that Jewish subjects on the island were not under any specific disabilities; technically the argument was valid, in the sense that if Jewish subjects were willing to take an oath upon 'the true faith of a Christian' they could exercise the vote or accept public office. However, in 1831 a Jamaican Act specifically permitting Jews to participate in the government of the Corporation of Kingston was allowed in London, and in 1833 another act was allowed permitting Jews to hold any office on the island without a Christian oath. Over twenty years before political emancipation had been secured in Britain the Jews of Jamaica had attained that freedom.

This was however to be the peak point of the Sephardi communities in

Jamaica. Economic delay combined with a falling away of spiritual fervour, and, as elsewhere in the West Indies, the second half of the century saw increasing pressure for a uniting of Sephardi and Ashkenazi congregations with a ritual containing elements of both heritages and yet not really belonging to either.

The Dutch West Indies

The largest Sephardi colony in the Dutch West Indies — indeed in the Caribbean as a whole — was that in Curaçao. That presents a pattern entirely different from that of the British West Indies. Not merely tolerated, but even given special privileges by the Dutch West Indian Company, the Jews of the island had access to the Directors of the Company even over the heads of the local Governors of the island. On the other hand they were hardly full citizens, and were under the particular jurisdiction of the Company whose power to settle internal disputes within the congregation were in practice subject virtually to no limits. Time and again discords within the congregation were referred to non-Jewish adjudication — sometimes even to the Stadholder himself in the Netherlands — while the authority of the *Mahamad* was given backing by the requirement that the Governor implement the decisions made by the governing body of the Congregation. This status — at the same time both privileged and restricted — lasted as long as the Company itself did, and it meant that the Jews of Curaçao represented in America a pattern of life much more evocative of the ghettoes of Central Europe than that of the British islands already discussed.

Curaçao

The island of Curaçao, like the earlier colony of Recife, was administered by the Dutch West India Company, but unlike Recife it had been seized from the Spaniards and not the Portuguese, and there seem to have been no *marrano* settlers waiting to greet the conquerors. The Dutch took some *marrano* Jews to assist in the original conquest, but these soon left the island, and although the island became a thriving centre of the slave trade the original Jewish colony did not flourish. Various other attempts were made to invite Jewish settlement between 1651 and 1659, but the Jewish colony did not begin to flourish until the grant of comparatively wide privileges to a group of settlers led by one Isaac de Costa. Many of these settlers would seem to have been originally refugees from Recife who had emigrated after the fall of that colony to Amsterdam, only to find that the mother community was unwilling to receive them and would prefer to pay out money to send them back to the West Indies. The privileges which the Company was now prepared to offer the settlers were wide-ranging and covered not merely

religious life but economic activities as well. There was one other feature of these privileges which marked out the Curaçao colony; the Jews were allowed not merely to buy and sell slaves but they were allowed to own them on a long-term basis and to use them directly as labour. It was this absence of restriction on the use and ownership of slaves which made it possible for the Curaçao Jews to become considerable landowners and farmers. Many of the plantations owned by Jews late in the seventeenth century were still being farmed by Jews several generations later.

Another of their activities was ship-owning, linked very closely with a general trading activity. The Jews traded among the islands and were increasingly responsible for importing large quantities of goods from Europe, quantities far larger than could be consumed on the island itself. Several contemporary commentators pointed to a growing Jewish participation and even quasi-dominance over the whole pattern of West Indian trade, including the trade with the Spanish colonies both on the various islands and on the mainland. Technically illegal so far as the Spaniards were concerned, the trade represented an essential element of their own economies, and even the Spanish colonial governors made use of the Dutch Jewish traders. A memorandum presented to the British Council for Trade and the Plantations emphasised the way in which Curaçao — and by direct implication the Jewish traders of that island — took part in the trading of the islands.[29] This was not restricted to the products of Europe or even to the colonial products of the islands themselves. An essential element in it was the slave trade, and in the late seventeenth century Curaçao was virtually the leading slave centre in the Caribbean. Although the Company had a monopoly of the trade Jewish participation was often considerable, and men like the Senior brothers or Jacob Calvo d'Andrade were involved in association with the Company in various details.

One of the troubles however in the development of the community on the island was the extent to which the Company's official policy was subject to detailed interpretation by local representatives. Although the Company's official policy was one of toleration, very often the local representatives were themselves deeply involved in rivalry with Jewish traders and used their official position to bring undue pressure to bear on them, contriving to limit their privileges in practice and seeking to redistribute taxation in order to impose additional burdens on the Jews. Duties such as service in the militia had been accepted by the local Jewish community, but there were continual complaints about being compelled to undertake it on Sabbaths or on Festivals, and the history of the Jewish community shows an almost continuous pattern of local dignitaries having to bring to bear pressure from the mother community of Amsterdam on the Court of Directors themselves in order to secure the full rights of the Curaçaon settlers. As on the other islands, too, attempts were made to levy taxes on the Jews as a group, with

the intention of making the *parnassim* of the community responsible for the defaults of any of the group. This, too, aroused great antagonism, at a time when the Protestants were being charged individually, and here again the Company was eventually asked to intervene and instruct the local officials not to discriminate. On the other hand the continual arrival of fresh settlers not only from Amsterdam but from other islands in the Caribbean testifies that conditions were not exactly intolerable for the Jewish community. Records survive of a ransom which had to be paid by the colony as a whole to a French privateer in 1713; out of a total collected of nearly 152,000 pesos the Jews, in total, paid nearly 35,000. Some of the sums levied on the Jews were for amounts of 30, 25 or even 20 *pesos*, while there were some so indigent that no levies at all were made, but others paid over a hundred times that amount, and there were two whose individual assessment came to over 3,000 *pesos*. On the other hand, there were some 140 Jewish families as against 320 white non-Jewish families, so that although there were some very wealthy Jewish members of the island's trading community, the Jews as a whole did not represent a large proportion of the colony's wealth.

Some factors can be seen a little later in the same century. In 1750 the Jews formed about half of the total white population of the island, but only a third of the plantations were owned by Jews and Jews owned only about a quarter of the total number of slaves registered on the island. By 1780 it was reckoned that there were some 3,000 white inhabitants on the island and of these about 1,200 were Jews.

The principal activity of the Jews continued to be in trade, and particularly the inter-island shipping trade and its ancillary activities such as insurance and broking. Working in close collaboration with non-Jewish traders both in the island and elsewhere in the Caribbean, the Jews of Curaçao were to be found throughout the Spanish Main and on the Central and North American mainland; there were many direct family links with the Jews of North America and surviving correspondence emphasises these connections. The continuing wars within the West Indies of the European rivalries of the Great Powers gave the neutral Dutch traders a great opportunity, as of course did the War of American Independence, and by 1780 the Curaçaon trade had extended as far as Turkey and the Eastern Mediterranean. On the other hand losses at the hands of English, French, and Spanish privateers were equally enormous, and if capture by English or French was less dangerous than that by Spaniards it was still expensive in terms of the ransoms which were constantly being demanded on all sides.

There is none the less ample evidence of the comparative liberality of the Curaçao community; it contributed to a wide list of charities in both the New and the Old World, including a number in the Holy Land, and was particularly noted for its open-handed attitude towards the congregations elsewhere in the Caribbean. In 1746 one writer hailed it as 'Mother-City of all

the islands in America'.

At the same time, however, the atmosphere of the community led to a number of bitter internecine feuds, some of which could be settled by reference to the mother synagogue of Amsterdam while others could only be settled by reference to the lay authorities in the Company or Colony. The most recent historian of the colony gives in detail many of these quarrels which serve mainly to illustrate the difficulties in keeping such a community in being at a time when even the religous leadership had to be imported from Europe and then only after considerable delays. There was no outstanding character, lay or ecclesiastical, within the community to give it leadership, and there was little real chance for the establishment of other associated synagogues which might perhaps have acted as a quasi-safety valve. One daughter congregation was established in Curaçao itself in 1732 and this remained in being until early in the 19th century, the building eventually being sold in 1864. Even where the dissidents remained within the congregation, however, the result was a gradual decay in the authority of the *parnassim* and a weakening of the traditional bonds of the community. Only the continual external restraints of the local non-Jewish administration kept various elements within bounds.

The French Revolution and the Revolutionary wars had great effect upon the life of the island. The economic impact of the war was very great, for as a result of the war and the blockade and counter-blockade which it imposed, the shipping trade between the island and Europe came virtually to an end. Between 1795 and 1802 not a single European ship anchored in the island's harbour, while from the point of view of the Jewish community there was little to choose between the domination (after 1795) of the island by the French and the actual occupation by the British. The removal of the link between the island and the Netherlands meant that the expenses of administration had to be met by local taxation, while the arrival of a British occupation force meant the confiscation of the property of many of the richest inhabitants of the island — including inevitably many of the Jews. The ending of the wars and the restoration of Dutch independence meant for a while the restoration, too, of the former position of the Company and the Congregation, but in 1825 Curaçaon Jews were given full civil and political rights. The corollary of that, however, was the surrender of the particularist privileges of the community granted earlier by the Company and the Dutch government. At the same time there was a continuing political unrest throughout Spanish America and the Curaçaon community could hardly, with all its trading links, fail to be involved directly and indirectly in those movements of liberation. Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century the political instability of the Caribbean littoral had its impact upon the economic and communal stability of the Congregation. Many daughter congregations sprang up and had a short-lived prosperity, while many Curaçaons themselves reacted to the decline in the fortunes of the island by

seeking better conditions elsewhere in the area.

The middle of the century saw a return to prosperity on the island, and once again Curaçao found itself at the centre of a wide trading empire in the area. When in 1863 the slaves on the island were emancipated, eighteen hundred and fifty-one of the 6,751 in all on the island were Jewish-owned. It was at this moment that there was renewed the sort of rift which had occurred earlier among the community but with much more worrying consequences. Splits amongst individuals within the leading families led some of them to assume the mantle of Reform Judaism, even though it might perhaps be suggested that the founding fathers of the Reform Congregation had no very clear idea as to what they had in mind in such a designation and had apparently to send to America not only for some sort of ecclesiastical leadership but also for some sort of definition of the demands which they had already made for modifications in the basic Sephardi services. None the less, the history of the Sephardi community in Curaçao shows a steady decline thereafter and a parallel there to the changes occurring elsewhere in the area.

St Eustatius

Among the various small islands in the West Indies under the authority of the Dutch West India Company and with Sephardi congregations dependent on that of Curaçao and Amsterdam, the island of St Eustatius stands out if only because of the circumstances of its occupation by the British under Admiral George Rodney. A small number of Jews were apparently in residence there by the end of the seventeenth century, and in 1737 these obtained permission to build their own synagogue. The outbreak of war between Britain and the Dutch Republic in December 1789 led directly in February 1781 to an attack on the island by British naval and military forces and Admiral Rodney's direct confiscation of the wealth of the leading inhabitants of the island. Despite attacks on his actions in the House of Commons by Edmund Burke he did not surrender his gains. Following a recapture of the island by the French later that year the Jews returned to the island, but from 1795 onwards the Jewish population dwindled, and by 1850 the congregation had virtually disappeared.

French West Indies

The most important Jewish colony under French rule in the West Indies was on Martinique which experienced a short period of considerable prosperity during the middle of the seventeenth century, but thereafter was subjected to a policy of restriction and eventually of expulsion under the so-called Black Code of Louis XIV. This was despite all that the prosperity not only of Martinique but of the French West Indies as a whole owed to the Jews

in general and to the family of Benjamin D'Acosta in particular for the introduction there of new crops, particularly the intensive cultivation of sugar.

The island was occupied by the French in 1635. They found there a certain number of Jews who had come there under the auspices of the Dutch West Indies Company as agents or factors of the Company. These Jews, allowed to continue with little or no interference from the French government, continued to prosper, although they attracted the ire of the religious orders, particularly of the Jesuits, who were beginning their commercial expansion and who were developing their jealousies of all potential rivals. A good picture of the status of the Jews on the island in 1654 is presented by one Roman Catholic priest:[30]

> 'They [the Jews] were permitted in the island to Judaise, and in the sight of all the world to exercise their religion and observe their Sabbath. The Jews have or had at this time their principal shops at St. Pierre, the town or city of the island where ships come to port. They are the principal merchants and have found so much favour and credit with M. Parquet and his wife, by means of their friends, that they have obtained from him the free exercise of their Sabbath. It is the custom of this island that, on Saturday, all the inhabitants who have gotten ready their merchandize, such as sugar, tobacco, ginger, indigo and like things, bring them in on that day into the city to be weighed by the public scales established by the Governor of the island. The merchandize having been weighed and examined to see that they have no imperfections, each person distributes them in order among the shops he is accustomed to supply with the merchandizes that are needed. As the Jews have the principal shops and are the best supplied with merchandize, they would be much occupied on that day and this would prevent them from observing their Sabbath day. Therefore it is that by means of their friends, as I have already said, the day of weighing on Saturday, which is like market day, has been transferred to Friday. This was readily accorded to them by the Governor, as they have the favour of his most powerful friends. So that while I was being persecuted the Jews, who were not endured in France, having no place of refuge there, find one in a French island and Judaise there. For from Friday sundown until Saturday at the same hour they rest and give no merchandize to anyone, but they have no difficulty on the holy Sunday and holidays instituted by the Church, and are not prevented in giving to everyone whatever he requires on those days.'

Within five years there had already built up enough pressure on the Governor to bring him to introduce decrees attacking the position of the Jews on the island. A decree which forbade them from participating in the commerce of the islands was succeeded by a number of petitions which pointed out the dangers such an edict presented to the commerce, the industry, and the very future of the island, so that it was quickly followed by another edict which restored to the Jews the privilege of trading which they had previously enjoyed. The attack did not remain thwarted for long, but changed ground, seeking to make their continued life impossible through attacks on their religious observances. In this it was possible to point not directly at the Jews as such but against all those who did not conform to the Roman Catholic Church; in this period, in which the animosities stirred up by

the Wars of Religion of the previous century were still very strong indeed, it was correspondingly more difficult to withstand such an attack. The Governor-General issued a decree that *'all the Jewish nation shall sell and receive on the sabbath day until they may be otherwise ordered by his Majesty under penalty of a fine of 300 pounds of tobacco.'* It was only after approaches to the ministers in Paris and to the king that the instructions were given that the king did not wish any change in whatever had earlier been permitted to the Jews and to the Protestant Huguenots. On the other hand the open exercise of any other religious ceremonies than those of the Roman Catholic Church was to be rigorously forbidden as was the practice of converting negroes or even of compelling them to observe the Sabbath day. Indeed the Jews were forbidden expressly either to work on a Sunday or even to be seen out of doors between Good Friday and Easter Sunday *'on pain of severe punishment'*.

The advent of a new Governor, who soon became convinced that the Jews were not merely useful but virtually indispensible for the smooth running of the trade of the French Antilles, brought about a new Royal decree, counter-signed by Colbert, the leading French minister in matters of trade.[31]

> 'Having been informed that the Jews who are established on Martinique . . . have made considerable expenditure for the cultivation of the land and that they continue to improve their establishments for the benefit of the public, I send you this writ to inform you of my intention that you protect them so that they should enjoy the same privileges as are possessed by other inhabitants of those islands and that you leave them a full liberty of conscience, taking nonetheless necessary precautions that the exercise of their religion might not cause any scandal to the Catholics.'

The following years were years in which the Jews of Martinique were given favourable treatment by the Governor; letters of naturalisation were speeded up while annual reports to Paris spelt out the advantages which their presence brought to the island. So long as Colbert was alive even the arrival of the new less sympathetic Governor could do little to upset this position even though he attempted by little pinpricks to make life a little more intolerable. In 1680 for instance he wrote to Colbert:[32]

> 'I believe that it is necessary for the King to send an edict about the Jews; they have their own houses and lands, they have christian slaves and 'commis'; they take part in almost all the commerce and this grows to the extent that trade is nearly completely held by this sort of people; they have had important protection in the time of M. Debaas [the former governor] and it seems that commerce is established enough and that everything is in a state where we don't have need of them.'

It is from this period that a series of reports give a full statistical account of the community, while a long petition emanating from the Jesuits but on which the Jewish leaders were permitted to make observations gives a very

interesting account of some aspects of the life of the community.In 1680, for instance, there were eighty-one Jews ranging in age from sixty-one years to six months and classed in eighteen households. Three years later, in 1683, there were ninety-four men, women, and children, still in eighteen households, twelve of which were the same as three years earlier. There were also one hundred and thirty two slaves, negroes, negresses, and half-castes. The document from the Jesuits contained a large number of complaints and other allegations, but the marginal comment, based upon responses from the Jews themselves, was very often *'They denied this and it is difficult to prove.'* The Jews denied being largely apostates from Christianity and that they actively campaigned amongst their coloured dependents against Christianity; on the contrary, they claimed that they allowed their slaves a full liberty to do whatever they wanted on Sundays and feast-days of the church. There were further complaints, that Jewish children played indiscriminately with Christian children and that the Jews were in a position to exercise their religion in a way which caused scandal to the truly faithful.'[33]

'They openly keep the Sabbath, refuse to keep their shops open on that day or to sell any merchandise no matter the necessity for it and thus disobey the orders of Justice.

Every Friday after sunset they light a lamp to warn that Sabbath has begun. (They observe this custom particularly in their upper rooms.)

They observe the unleavened bread and the festival of Easter [Passover] for eight days.

They celebrate the festival of Tabernacles and adorn in their gardens and courtyards cabins of branches which ornament with flowers and fruits and in which they live and eat during the fortnight in the very sight of the Christians whom they even invite to this celebration.

Comment
They do not lodge there, but they eat and drink there.

They have priests officiate in their assemblies with their special clothing . . .

Comment
Denied. They deny having clothes other than those they normally wear.

The Jew named Barjuda [he appears in the list as a carpenter] serves as their sacrificer, it is he who kills their meat in the houses and who goes sometimes to kill them at the abattoir at the Fort St Pierre to see if those [animals] which are to be used for the Christians might be suitable for those of the sect; for they do not dare to send them if not approved of by him.

The Jew named Louis the Jew circumcises their little children with the ceremonies usual amongst them.

Comment
That is correct in particular points. It is not Louis the Jew but Menasseh Pereira. They do not do it without the permission of the magistrate.'

Other accusations made against them concerned their over-elaborate wedding ceremonies, the over-elaborate cemeteries and gravestones, (all of which were denied); they were accused of all sorts of incest and disgusting habits of free divorce, and the Christians who had to be defended from the bearers of these appalling habits had themselves no experience to help them in this task. The Jesuits called for the Jews to be compelled to wear some obvious and external mark and for a regular session of Christian instruction which the Jews would be bound to attend.

Despite these 'marginalia' the pressure against the Jews had become more intense, and the death in France of Colbert had removed their most important and significant defender. Almost immediately after his death a Royal Edict was announced chasing the Jews out of the French islands of America; it gave them a month, or in one or two outstanding cases a special extension of three months was given. These orders were reinforced by a constitutional edict, the *Code Noir* or Black Code, issued a year and a half later. And there traditionally would end the story of the Sephardi Jews of Martinique, were it not for the fact that for the next generation these orders to expel the Jews were consistently being re-iterated. Again, royal ministers were continually having to explain to local officials who wrote pointing out the advantages of allowing the Jews to return, the dangers involved in so doing. And yet, ten years after the *Code Noir* was promulgated a minister wrote to Martinique:[34]

> 'The King has been informed that there is in actual fact in Martinique six Jewish families who are established there and have bought land contrary to the foundation edicts of the colonies and to the ordinance of 1683 . . .
> He does not believe that you have given permission to derogate from the ordinance or that you have suffered the re-establishment of the Jews . . . It shall never be permitted for any merchant or other making profession of the Jewish religion to establish themselves in the Islands and French colonies of America.'

The Governor was to allow them only enough time to embark their effects and to pass to the district of Bayonne 'where the king has permitted them to reside'. In fact, although there was a continually watchful eye kept on these islands by the Jesuit order so as to keep them 'free' of Jews there was also a constant pressure by various Jews to secure unofficial entrance into the islands for purposes of trade. Indeed the Governors and *Intendants* of the colonies kept on reminding their home government of the advantages which other colonies, such as Jamaica or Surinam, had secured by not merely permitting Jewish settlement but even by encouraging it. One Governor wrote.[35]

> 'The Jews of Surinam profess their religion, possess lands, slaves, and houses. They have a voice in their councils, even to the election of members of their Court, like other citizens. Moreover there are even Jewish magistrates — their nomination is made so that they can decide their own affairs and quarrels, provided that they do not interest themselves in matters of law and order, or in citizens of another religion.'

The very repetition of these Instructions to colonial administrators in itself suggests that Jewish settlement was never absolutely dead, and it would seem that after the death of Louis XIV the effectiveness of the *Code Noir* had diminished considerably. Sometimes these Jews had arrived from Barbados or Jamaica, but more often they were colonial representatives of that small Sephardi Jewish colony which had been given permission in 1550 by Henry II, King of France, to settle round Bayonne, the *Juifs régnicoles*. They claimed that just as they had permission to reside in France and to pass on their possessions freely by will, exempt from the Crown's right of confiscation of the property of heretics, so they had similar rights elsewhere in territories under the French crown. This was a claim that was never effectively decided during this century, but it was strong enough to provide effective cover during its course.

The Bayonne family which took the lead in trade with the West Indies was that founded by David, son of Diego Gradis; he and his sons made themselves indispensible not merely in the commerce between France and the French Antilles but for the supplying of French military and naval expeditions throughout that century, and indeed for over two hundred years the family's position was virtually unassailable. David Gradis, or members of his and allied families, set up various 'factories' throughout the French islands, not least of all on Martinique and Haiti, and was responsible for the annual despatch to the Indies of as many as six ships, with such names as *Patriarche Abraham*. Typically, he would sent out to the more important centres a close member of the family to learn the business and to give a general superintendance. It was in pursuance of this policy that in 1731 his son Samuel was sent to Martinique, but the following year Samuel died. It is an indication of the size of the community that must have existed on the island that he was buried with full Jewish rites (that is, with the assistance of a *minyan* of ten adult males); it is another indication of the limits of the toleration enjoyed that although a local Roman Catholic Order, the Brothers of Charity, permitted his burial in their gardens, they refused to allow a tombstone to be erected even though the bereaved father offered a gift of a thousand livres for that purpose. Another member of the family, Abraham Gradis, nephew of David, died in Martinique in 1738, leaving all his property to his two unmarried sisters and excluding the sisters who had already married; one of these latter had been baptised and married to a prominent lawyer in Bordeaux. He it was who laid claim to his brother-in-law's estate on the grounds that Gradis should never have been allowed to live in the West Indies anyway and had thus put himself outside the benefits of the privileges of 1550. The point was never satisfactorily considered but it is quite clear that there was in practical terms a mutual ignoring of the *Black Code* by both the Government and the Jews of the French West Indies.

In 1764 a new Governor arrived in the French West Indies determined to

put them into a more effective state, and at the same time to raise the amount of taxation to be collected, amongst others, from Jews. Beginning by offering them his protection and in particular suggesting that he could secure additional privileges for them against additional taxation and gifts to the Crown, he proceeded in effect to levy on them substantial financial imposts. His papers show a tax in all of some 140,000 livres, charged upon some thirty heads of households or commercial firms ranging from 100 to 50,000 livres. Some of the additional comments upon those made liable to these payments are in themselves of considerable interest.[36]

> 'Depas senior, head of a family, has at St. Louis a great house on which he has about 280 negroes; this Jew possesses another habitation in the Bay d'Aquin and another at Azile.

He was to provide various public works including a fountain and a water conduit as well as paying 7,000 livres a year to equip five companies of soldiers.

> "Depas the younger, an honest man. He has just bought a house with 100 negroes near the Bay d'Aquin; he has another at Azile. He has two houses at St. Louis and Cayes.'

His contribution was to be a gun-battery for four guns and a government posting-inn.

> 'Michael Depas, a bad man against whom there has been a multitude of complaints from settlers, free negroes, and half-castes. He owns a very considerable house at Grande Colline with 120 negroes and has another at Mangon with 30 negroes. He has refused on several occasions to obey orders for the public good; this man has been formerly adviser to M. Gradis.'

He was to pay 50,000 livres in order to buy various ships for the king's service. One final name given was that of Levis, of which it was noted:

> 'He has ruined many inhabitants by the debts which he has purchased and in which he has trafficked. He claims to have been baptised and to have had My Lord the Duke of Orleans as God-father; he has reverted to Judaism in the Colony.'

These extortions were bitterly attacked in the colony, and complaints were made against them in France. The accusation was made that they were really intended for the Governor's private pocket. The Governor however had various reprisals in mind, principal among them being an appeal to him from various commercial interests on the island begging for the expulsion of the Jews under the terms of the *Black Code*. This petition was passed on by the Governor to the local judge and he in his turn decreed the expulsion of the Jews within a period of three months. The opposition to the Governor collapsed; he offered once again to be the protector of the Jews in return for these considerable sums of money and the complaints were immediately

withdrawn. The Jews fell over themselves in acknowledging that they were intended as voluntary gifts, and the judicial decision was in turn withdrawn. Most of the money was paid, and the Jews remained on the island.

The basic situation however was still unsatisfactory, and the communities of 'Portuguese Jews' approached the court to have their privileges renewed in general terms. The general dilatoriness of the French administration at this time in a sense worked in their favour. No one wished either to insert new instructions giving liberty of settlement or of conscience, but no one on the other hand wished to see the Jews (or indeed any other minority group) expelled from the colony. The ministers therefore instructed the then governor on 7 March 1777:[37]

> 'The Laws of the Kingdom with regard to the Jews and Protestants not being rigourously observed in the colonies, His Majesty wishes it to be permitted that those who are established at Martinique and St Lucia are not to be disturbed for their beliefs provided above all that they abstain from all public exercise of the religion which they profess.'

And there the matter rested until the Revolution swept away all the restrictions and privileges, leaving the Jews in a limbo between the laws which officially forbade their settlement in the colonies and the instructions to the governors which permitted them to regard those laws as a nullity. A truer mark of the significance of the Jews to the island however is to be found in a gathering of French West Indians at Bordeaux, held in 1790 in the Convent of St. Dominique; these Creoles, disturbed at the way in which the Revolution seemed likely to upset their interests in the colonies, chose as their representative, best fitted to speak to the Government on their behalf, the Jew David Gradis. Thereafter, however, the political upsets of the Revolution and the colonial wars which ensued, together with the decay of documents in the West Indies, have resulted in the virtual disappearance of the records of the Jews of Martinique.

OTHER COLONIES: St Thomas

These were the major areas of settlement, for the colonial powers were the major influences within the Caribbean. Yet just as in Europe in the eighteenth century every minor princeling would seek his own 'Court Jew' so every trading power sought its own toe-hold in the West Indies. Some of these possessions were very fleeting indeed, but others, though minor, lasted for a considerable period. The Danes, for example, controlled the Virgin Islands and the island of St Thomas became the centre of a small community of Sephardim. As early as 1684 one Gabriel Milan, 'a soldier of fortune', was appointed governor of the island, although there is no evidence that he had much impact upon any potential growth of a Jewish community upon it. It was not until the attack by Admiral Rodney on St Eustatius in 1781, already

mentioned, that the existence of a sizeable colony, developed largely from that and other Jewish communities in the area is described. In 1801 there were only nine families on the island but the community developed rapidly to thirty-two in 1803 and sixty-three in 1824, the new arrivals coming variously from St. Eustatius, Curaçao, and Europe.

By 1837 there were 400 Jews on the island and by 1850 some 500. The original synagogue was built in 1796, and rebuilt in 1812 after destruction by fire. It was enlarged in 1823 and again in 1832, but thereafter the congregation began to decline and even before the end of the century had sunk to a fraction of its former size. On the other hand there had always been complete religious freedom on the island as well as a close connection with the North American mainland even before the United States of America purchased it from the king of Denmark, and many of its citizens played a fairly prominent part in the politics and development of the United States.

Another area with a Jewish community after the beginning of the nineteenth century was Cuba, while Haita/San Domingo also were centres of Jewish life at various times during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. None of these, however, ever had the prestige and importance of the three main areas already discussed in this section.

CONCLUSION

Although it has been most convenient to discuss the development of the Sephardim in the Caribbean in terms of their 'host' countries it would be wrong to conclude that each community — or group of communities — was entirely separate. There was a considerable degree of movement between them for which the political allegiances of the colonies could be largely irrelevant. Ministers went from one to another — as between Jamaica and Curaçao — with little regard as to whether they were under Dutch or English rule, and perhaps more important than strict political ties were the links between the individual colony and the 'mother congregation' — whether Amsterdam or Bevis Marks. The weaknesses of the congregation in Martinique are as much explicable in terms of the absence of any strong link between the colony and any equivalent 'mother' community as by any other reason. Some of these congregations — such as those on the North American mainland — were accustomed to turn for guidance to either of these mother communities indiscriminately, and their members appear at times among the active members of both the British and Dutch Caribbean communities as well as retaining their active membership of the mainland communities. Family inter-connections equally became highly involved, with various branches of individual families appearing all over the western hemisphere in charge of branches of the main family business. As time went on, and communities developed particular characteristics, local loyalties developed far more

strongly so that sharp differentiations could be made amongst these groups. But at their high point — the middle-eighteenth century — the links were far stronger than their differences. And yet, it must be pointed out, these colonies had certain inherent weaknesses. They did represent a non-native element, in that their spiritual leadership came from outside and they echoed almost self-consciously the religious attitudes of their European 'mother' synagogue. Just as their economics reflected the patterns of European trading, so that when 'colonial-products' were in high demand they were most prosperous, their vitality in other respects reflected the changing patterns of Sephardi life in Europe, but at a more refined and intense level. It is no accident that the late nineteenth century saw in all the surviving congregations pressures to adopt changes in ritual and observances which were in many ways very far removed from those which could have been regarded as acceptable by the Founding Fathers of the seventeenth century. If that process has been described in most detail in one of those communities, that of Curaçao,[38] the story elsewhere is not all that different.

The Sephardi communities in the Caribbean maintained a prosperity for a little over two hundred and fifty years, for as long as the original sources of Caribbean prosperity was maintained. But the gradual run-down of planter prosperity and the need to find new indigenous sources of wealth and economic activity were combined with an inability in the two main European congregations to continue the sorts of supervision which had been so vital in earlier centuries. A tendency to look to Europe and to the Holy Land not only as sources of recruitment or of spiritual revival but also as places in which to live and to return to had always been present; a growing cadre of communities made that tendency even stronger than ever before and resulted in a weakening of local ties. There was, and is, nothing unique in that process. It was a combination of this factor with the other, basic, weaknesses which has proved so damaging to the Sephardim of the Caribbean.

NOTES

Abbreviations: *CSPC* = Calendar of State Papers Colonial (Public Records Office, London)
PAJHS = Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society
TJHSE = Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England
REJ = Revue des Etudes Juives

1 Report of the Rev. Robert Robertson, printed in *Caribbeana* (ed. V. L. OLIVER), III, 322.
2 Quoted N. D. DAVIS, 'Notes on the History of the Jews in Barbados', *PAJHS*. XVIII, pp 129-148.
3 *Ibid* p 132.
4 Tribute must be paid to the indispensable work done on that census by W. S. SAMUEL, 'Review of the Jewish Colonists in Barbados in the year 1680', *TJHSE*. XIII, pp 1-111 — a model of its kind. Similarly important is the work by E. M. SHILSTONE, *Monumental Inscriptions in the Burial Ground of the Jewish Synagogue at Bridgetown, Barbados* (no date: actually 1958).

5 Quoted DAVIS, *op.cit* p 143
6 *CSPC* 1704-05, No. 570, p 258.
7 *CSPC* June 1708 p 352.
8 W. DICKSON, *Letters on Slavery* (1789), quoted DAVIS *op.cit* pp 146-147.
9 Quoted R. D. BARNETT, 'The Correspondence of the Mahamad of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century', *TJHSE* XX, pp 1-50.
10 Quoted A. M. HYAMSON, *The Sephardim of England* (1951), p 154.
11 W. S. SAMUEL, *op.cit* p 109.
12 *Ibid.*, p 11.
13 There is a lot of undigested information about the Jews of Jamaica in J. A. P. M. ANDRADE, *A record of the Jews in Jamaica from the English Conquest to the present time* (ed B. Parks, Jamaica, 1941). See also J. H. HOLLANDER, 'Documents relating to the attempted departure of the Jews from Surinam in 1675', *PAJHS* VI, p 23.
14 E. Heath to Dr Charlette, 7 June 1692, Ballard Letters, Bodleian Library, quoted H. P. SILVERMAN, *A Panorama of Jamaican Jewry* (Jamaica, 1960).
15 'Read in Council 11 June 1672', *CSPC* 1669-74 p 336.
16 'Answer of Governor and Council of Jamaica', 3 May 1700, *CSPC* 1700 p 226.
17 *CSPC* 1689-1692 p 594.
18 'Memorial of the Jews about their taxes', quoted C. GROSS, 'Documents from the Public Record Office' *PAJHS* II, pp 165-167.
19 14 December 1731 Council to Governor *CSPC* 1731 p 377.
20 18 February 1735/6 quoted by J. R. ROSENBLOOM, 'Notes on the Jews' Tribute in Jamaica', *TJHSE* XX, p 196
21 *Ibid.*
22 12 January 1737/8 quoted G. F. JUDAH, 'The Jews' Tribute in Jamaica' *PAJHS* XVIII p 160.
23 E. LONG, *History of Jamaica (1774).*
24 LONG, *op. cit.* II p 18.
25 *Ibid.* II p 116.
26 *Ibid.* III pp 195-296.
27 All work on Curaçao is inevitably indebted to I.S. and Suzanne EMMANUEL, *History of the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles* (American Jewish Archives, 1970).
28 *CSPC* 1710 - June 1711, pp 13-16, Quoted EMMANUEL, *ref cit.* pp 71-73.
29 The leading work on the Jews of Martinique is by Abraham CAHEN, *REJ* II and also *REJ* vols IV and V.
30 'April 1654' A. BIET, *Voyage de la France Equinoxiale en l'island de Cayenne* (Paris, 1664).
31 23 May 1671 quoted CAHEN II p 99.
32 19 Nov. 1680 *ibid.* p 101.
33 26 December 1681 *ibid.* pp 116-122.
34 28 April 1694 *ibid.* p 112.
35 Quoted *REJ IV* pp 130-131.
36 'Nottes sur les Juifs de Saint-Louis et des Cayes qui ont offert par requête, et pour être tolérés, de contribuer au bien public', quoted *ibid.* pp 240-241.
37 Quoted *REJ V*, p 90.
38 EMMANUEL, *op.cit.*

THE SECRET-JEWRY IN THE SPANISH NEW WORLD COLONIES: 1500-1820

by
Seymour B. Liebman

Many years ago, Lucien Wolf wrote:[1]

> 'The work of the more ambitious branches of the Holy Office of the Inquisition . . . in America has only been made known to us in pieceeal, and with reference to the conspicuous individuals of more romantic cases. For social data relating to the great body of Marranos the records have not hitherto been studied.'

The intervening years have not produced a single work covering the general history of the Jews in the New World Spanish colonies. My own works have hitherto covered only what is now Mexico and Central America,[2] with the addition of one article on Peru. The present chapter is, to my knowledge, the first attempt at a summary of an all-inclusive history of the area.[3]

The Spanish New World was divided into three primary vice-royalties: (i) *New Spain* which covered Mexico, Central America and the Phillipines (this vice-royalty will hereafter be referred to as Mexico, as a synonym for New Spain); (ii) *Peru* or New Castile (the latter name most rarely used) which originally included Panama and all of South America except Brazil and the Guianas and (iii) *New Granada* which was cut off from Peru and included Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, Spain deemed it advisable to create the vice-royalty of Rio de la Plata formed to include present Argentina, Paraguay and part of Bolivia.

In 1569, tribunals of the Holy Office of the Inquisition were decreed for Peru and New Spain by King Philip II of Spain. They operated out of Mexico and Lima, the capitals of these vice-royalties. Although these tribunals ostensibly were branches of the *Suprema*, the main court of the Inquisition in Madrid, they acted almost autonomously. In 1610, a tribunal was decreed for New Granada with its seat in Cartagena, the capital of the vice-royalty.

Lucien Wolf correctly referred to the importance of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions, since these are the primary and almost exclusive original sources for our studies. Very little was written by the Jews in the New World during the colonial period since they were present there illegally.[4] For

only a few years during the reign of Charles V and early seventeenth century were there relaxations of the law that no Jew or even Catholic descendants of Jews or those penanced by the Holy Office could emigrate to the Spanish empire in the New World. Decrees barring Jews were issued almost periodically until the last decree of September 16, 1802. The very repetition of these decrees to the end of the colonial era suggests that Jews infiltrated the colonies in spite of all the royal minions and the *comisarios*, agents of the Inquisition.

This study is limited to the period from 1500 to 1820. The opening date does not preclude the presence of any *conversos* in the New World prior to 1500. In fact Columbus was accompanied by six *conversos* on his first voyage in 1492. One of them, Luis de Torres, was the first man to step on the shores of the New World. These six men were Sephardim. We terminate this essay with 1820 since that date marks the break-up of the Spanish empire and the birth of the newly-formed Latin American nations that broke away from the mother country and permitted the first glimmers of religious tolerance. Despite Spanish royal decrees strictly excluding Jews, Moors and recent converts, the presence of Jews in the Caribbean Islands was noticeable by 1508. The proctors representing the Spanish Catholic colonists then complained to the authorities in Madrid and Seville that the teachings of the Jews were corrupting the natives. *Tierra Firma*, the mainland of Mexico and Central and South America, was not conquered until 1521 by Cortés and Peru by Pizarro in 1532.[5] Several letters and other documents in the Archivo Historico Nacional de Madrid between 1550 and 1813 constantly remind that action must be taken to bar the continued incursions of the *conversos* into Buenos Aires, Lima, Mexico, Acapulco and other parts of the Spanish colonies. In addition to these, Sephardim came also from Pisa, Bayonne, Leghorn, Salonica, and the Holy Land in the sixteenth century and later from Amsterdam and other places in Europe. We know of no Ashkenazim in the Spanish colonies until 1690.

The migrations and activities of the *conversos* may be divided into three principal periods. The first is from 1500 to 1580; the second from 1580 to 1639 for Peru and from 1571 to 1649 for New Spain; and the third from 1650 to 1820 for the entire area.

The First Period (1500-1580)

Inquisition activities in the New World were carried on first by Spanish bishops under their episcopal authority. They were superseded by Apostolic Inquisitors in 1530.

The records of the bishops and Apostolic Inquisitors for New Spain have been preserved to a great extent. Consequently we know that the early *conquistadores* who came with Cortés included several *conversos*. Two of

them, Hernando Alonso and Gonzalo de Morales, were the first martyrs to die at the stake in Mexico City on October 17, 1528. During the 1530s, Bishop Juan de Zumárraga, as Apostolic Inquisitor, tried nineteen New Christians for acts of Judaism. From 1539 until 1571, none of those apprehended were burned nor exiled.

With the decrees for the establishment of the Holy Office of the Inquisition for New Spain and Peru in 1569, all power to search for culprits in matters of faith was transferred to the Inquisitors presiding over tribunals of the Holy Office.

The Second Period (1571-1645)

Almost 100,000 Sephardim had found temporary refuge in Portugal in 1492 under an agreement with King Manuel. They were forced to undergo mass conversion in the early sixteenth century.

When the Spanish king assumed rule over Portugal in 1580, after a brief war for succession to the Portuguese throne, many *conversos* who had fled from Spain during the intervening years from 1492 fled from the Lusitanian kingdom for fear that the Spanish Inquisitors who were sure to follow would ferret them out. It was in 1580 that there began a great influx of *conversos* into the New World.

Prior to 1580, the Portuguese inquisitors had deported to Brazil many New Christians who had been tried and convicted of practising Jewish rites. After 1580 many of these persons fled from Brazil and made their way to Buenos Aires. Numerous letters sent by agents of the Holy Office in Lima to Spain between 1608 and 1619 note the arrival of Jews from Rio de Janeiro and report that many left Buenos Aires for Córdoba, Tucumán and from there would cross the Cordilleras to Santiago, Concepción and Lima in Peru or would go to the Altoplano and Potosí and the other places where there were silver mines. Spanish hegemony over Portugal lasted until 1640 when Portugal regained its sovereignty.[6]

The Portuguese migration to Peru and elsewhere in the Spanish colonies resulted in what Julio Caro Baroja terms *"penetración portuguesa"* adding that one could conclude on the basis of research that "many, very many, Portuguese migrated to America."[7] Henry H. Keith also confirms that large numbers of secret Jews were in Cartagena "and all over the Americas" and that the Spaniards' difficulty in investigating the Portuguese and the collapse of their control over immigration by the end of the sixteenth century resulted in the Jewish penetration of the New World.[8]

Although many of the Portuguese immigrants were of Spanish ancestry or were persons who if born in Portugal, had migrated to Spain in 1580 prior to wending their way overseas, the Inquisition labelled them all 'Portuguese'. Yerushalmi asserts that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the

New Christians were terms by the Portuguese *"Homens de negocios"* —"men of affairs" because these men were considered men of business and commerce.[9] They virtually monopolized the traffic in sugar, slaves, spices and other colonial commodities.[10]

Extended family relationships is a Sephardic characteristic. These relationships were strengthened by commercial relationships that contributed in no small measure to the rise of capitalism (although not necessarily to the extent depicted by Werner Sombart).[11] Credits between members of the same families in Peru or Mexico facilitated trade with relatives in Amsterdam, Antwerp, Leghorn and, under assumed names, with agents and families in Iberia. A vast amount of merchandise left the New World without payment and ships with slaves and goods also came without payment.[12]

Two decrees and a Papal Bull in the first decade of the seventeenth century played a great role in facilitating a large scale immigration of Iberian *conversos* to the New World. King Philip II of Spain had died in 1598 and he was succeeded by his son, Philip III. In 1601, the New Christians in Spain and Portugal paid the king 200,000 ducats for an irrevocable free permission to go the colonies of Spain and Portugal. This "irrevocable" permission was withdrawn in 1610.

In 1602, negotiations were opened with the king for a papal brief which would grant general pardon for all past offences of 'judaising' including cases on trial. The New Christians offered a bribe of 1,800,000 ducats to the king plus 50,000 cruzados to "the king's whore, Lerma", 40,000 and 30,000 cruzados respectively to the two members of the Suprema Council and 30,000 to its secretary.[13] The Papal Pardon of Clement VIII was finally issued in 1604 and signed by the king in 1605. This general pardon extended to all *conversos* wherever they might be and gave them a grace period of two years within which to receive forgiveness if they had not been previously arrested. They were not to suffer any indignities, confiscations of property or any form of corporal punishment.

The Third Period (1650-1820)

While the 1649 *auto* in Mexico marked the height of Holy Office's activity in the Spanish Americas, it did not mark the end of the search for crypto-Jews and other heretics.

From 1649 to 1665, Jews appeared in several *autos*. Some of them had been in previous *autos de fé* and they were considered *relapsos* (relapsed sinners). Of the more than two hundred who had been ordered to go to Spain unescorted by Inquisition officials or other guards, many remained in the New World. They escaped detection either by going to the northern parts of the vice-royalty or to the Yucatan peninsula. Some of those who had been put aboard ships in Veracruz *en route* to Spain either "jumped ship" while passing

some Caribbean island or were released when the ships stopped for fresh supplies prior to crossing the Atlantic. At Barbados, Jamaica, or Martinique, there were local Jews who might have bribed the ships' captains to release the prisoners and have them then report in Spain that the Jews had been washed overboard by a storm or had died at sea.

During the last decades of the seventeenth century, the Sephardim took more and more to smuggling which became one of the important trades. Some French Sephardim came to trade but not to settle. Fines and less than total confiscations appear to have been the greatest punishments administered. The Holy Office concentrated more of its time and attention to the inroads of Protestantism, Freemasonry, and prohibited literature. With respect to the fines imposed upon the Jews, it is conceivable that the Inquisitors knew that the non-Spanish co-religionists would produce the necessary funds to secure the freedom of the prisoners.

In 1699, the Hapsburg dynasty came to an end in Spain and the War of Spanish Succession (1700-1714) ensued. Then began the Bourbon dynasty. Jealous of the Holy Office's power and suspicious that it was withholding funds from the king, the new monarchs sought to enhance their own power and influence in the New World by making concessions to the New World people. While antipathy to the Jews did not subside, financial need caused a concentration of attention on the wealthy *conversos*.

The eighteenth century witnessed a decline in the religiosity of the secret Jews in the New World. Immigration practically came to a halt. Legitimate commercial possibilities suffered because of the smuggling and the intrusion of British and Dutch interests which wrested certain privileges from Spain's deteriorating power.

There was no incentive for a new immigration because of the growth of the liberties for Jewish life in Holland, England and even in southern France. This was also true of the Ottoman Empire which then extended into Greece on the west and Hungary on the north. A neglect of the spiritual needs of the secret Jews brought an accelerated decline in learning and the quality of the religious practices. This decline was augmented by the realisation of the crypto-Jewish New Christians that the stream of Jewish life was passing them by. The strength of their faith was weakened: acculturation had a greater impact; and, since Judaism was practised secretly, to decrease or eliminate religious observance was easy and escaped censure from the small communities or groups. From being only professing Christians, many became practising Christians or non-believers.

Distribution

The period from 1580 to the middle of the seventeen century saw flourishing communities (albeit secret and of varying sizes) in Mexico City,

Guadalajara, Veracruz, Pueblo, Guatemala City in New Spain; Puerto Bello, Popoyapan, Medellin and the surrounding area, Tunja, and Santa Marta in New Granada; Lima, Potosí, Tucumán and Córdoba in Peru, although the latter two cities later became part of the vice-royalty of Rio de la Plata, which also included Buenos Aires and Rosario.

The above-mentioned list of the Jewish settlements does not represent the total number. There were other small settlements spread over the New World but none of them had any religious officiants or persons possessing knowledge in Jewish religious matters. Contributions were raised by the crypto-Jewish New Christians in the seventeenth century for overseas brethren, especially for the purchase of the freedom of Jews captured by the Barbary pirates. Contributions were also made to aid Holland to wage war against Spain so as to secure the release of the vice-royalty of Peru from Spanish dominion.[14]

There were family relationships between *conversos* in Peru and New Spain and intervening points. Sometimes the faith of a secret Jew in Central America or Mexico was disclosed through the arrest and confessions of a relative in Lima or Cartagena or Puerto Rico as well as in the Iberian Peninsula. Each of the tribunals of the Holy Office exchanged information gleaned by torture or otherwise about Jews, secret or open, in other parts of the Spanish dominions as well as in other parts of the world where there were Spanish ambassadors. In the New World, arrests numbering over a hundred were made in the seventeenth century as a result of confessions made in Panama, Cartagena and Lima. Since the Great *auto-de-fé* (1649) in Mexico was the last of its kind, confessions there were of little avail in locating other Jews since they had either fled or had succeeded in hiding.

Travels by the *conversos* were almost incredible. There were not only the 2,500 mile trips from Buenos Aires to Lima which entailed crossing pampas, deserts, mountains and other geographical barriers, but sea trips were also frequent between Callão, the seaport of Lima, and Acapulco, on the west coast of modern Mexico, and between Caracas and Veracruz.

Despite the family inter-relationships among these *conversos*, there is a feature that appears to be inexplicable. The secret Jews in Peru and Rio de la Plata conducted a major portion of their commercial transactions with the Jews in Amsterdam, Antwerp or Hamburg. This may be explained by the proximity of Peru and Rio de la Plata to Brazil which was held by the Dutch (at least the northern half) from 1631 to 1654 but, for reasons not germane here, this theory can be regarded as inapplicable for the years prior to 1631 and subsequent to 1654. The secret Jews (*conversos*) in New Spain traded, in the main, with Jews in the cities of northern Italy, especially in Livorno (Leghorn). Some of their exports found their way to northern Europe.

The Communities

There was a difference in the manner of settlement and establishment of communities in the three areas: Mexico and Central America; Peru and New Granada; and Rio de la Plata.

1. *Mexico and Central America*

Mexico, as part of the vice-royalty of New Spain, was fortunate in that it was the first to be conquered and settled, its Indians were sedentary and non-nomadic and accepted, without too much difficulty, their role as slaves of the Spaniards both in the fields and in the silver mines. Antonio Mendoza, an enlightened Spaniard, was its first viceroy. Jews came with Cortes and continued in a trickle until 1580. The absence of *autos de fé* after 1528 served as an allure. While some activity was shown by Bishop Juan Zumárraga as Apostolic Inquisitor in 1530s, the number of arrests and trials for the ensuing forty years was minimal. Sentences, while somewhat harsh, did not involve burning at the stake.

The accounts of the life of Luis de Carvajal, *el Mozo*, ("the Younger") and the members of his family have been related in some detail in other works.[15] Luis was a mystic, the first or second secret-Jewish author in the New World.[16] He was a figure of mystery, drama and colour. He and his mother and three sisters ended their lives as martyrs at the stake in Mexico City on Deceber 8, 1596. Another sister, Marianne, went to the funeral pyre in 1601. The youngest sister died in the Inquisition cells. Subsequently her bones were disinterred so that they might be consumed by the flames in the Great *Auto de fé* of April 11, 1649.[17]

The *auto-de-fé* of December 8, 1596, was the high water mark for the persecution of the *conversos* at the end of the sixteenth century. There were forty-five *conversos* in this *auto* of whom nine (five being women) were burned. The following is the beautiful eulogy for Luis *el Mozo*, which Padre Contreras included in the final report to the Holy Office:

> 'He was always such a good Jew and he reconciled his understanding, which was very profound and sensitive, with his highly inspired Divine determination to defend the Law of God — the Mosaic — and to fight for it. I have no doubt that if he had lived before the Incarnation of our Redeemer, he would have been a heroic Hebrew and his name would have been as famous in the Bible as are the names of those who died in defence of their law when it was necessary.'[18]

In 1605, fifteen *conversos* languished in the Holy Office cells in Mexico City. They had to petition for release because of the obstacles thrown in their paths by the Inquisitors.[19] Juan Vicente and Gonzalo de Luna were the only ones in the cells in Lima to be freed. Other Jews had been 'reconciled' or

burned at the stake.[20]

Alfonso Toro summarised the first fifty years of Mexican Jewish colonial history as follows:

> 'In spite of the legal prohibitions we found that many Israelites went to the New World, that they had a role in its conquest and discovery, as also the foundation of the colonial society: thus one finds them in all social classes and playing a role in the professions and governmental offices . . . As the Jews and practitioners of Jewish rites (*los judios y judaizantes*) were in great numbers among the early population of New Spain, it is indubitable that the lack of *procesos* involving the observance of the law of Moses is due to the ignorance of the judges more than to any other cause; since among those [cases] of blasphemy there were many Jews who escaped with light penalties only because careful investigation was not made about their beliefs or because they did not look suspicious to the judges.[21]

Clandestine immigration was principally accomplished by one of two methods. The first was to assume the name of a recently deceased person in a village distant from Seville. The other was to go aboard a ship either as a servant of another *converso* who had secured a licence to emigrate to the New World (no licences were required for servants or household members under twenty-five years of age) or as a member of the ship's crew, for sailors did not require a licence. In this latter instance, the ship's captain (usually also the owner) might be a secret Jew who aided and abetted the *conversos* desiring to cross the ocean and re-establish themselves.[22]

In addition to the clandestine methods of emigration the connivance of Spanish bureaucracy was always available for a price and forged passports were obtainable.

The illegal immigrants were usually landed at secret ports along the Gulf of Mexico south of Veracruz, e.g., Campeche, and the coasts of Honduras, or on the west coast of South America. These ports were also used for smuggling manufactured and other products from Europe and for purchasing silver and other raw materials from the New World, smuggling and slave trading being among the occupations of the secret Jews in the Spanish colonies. Among other objects smuggled into the colonies were books, newspapers, and other prohibited items. The Holy Office of the Inquisition had to approve all literature and could even ban books that bore the *imprimatur* of bishops. Agents of the Inquisition were at all legal ports of entry to ensure the destruction of prohibited items. Many of the banned books, etc., came from the English and French colonies in the Caribbean. In South America, the legal ports were Buenos Aires, Callão for Lima, Santiago and Valparaiso, Cartagena, Santa Marta, Puerto Bello and Darien. Spain did not have sufficient manpower and funds to maintain *aduanas* (customs houses) at all ports of entry into its vast colonial empire.

The papal pardon approved by Philip III in 1605 caused many *conversos* to seek sanctuary in the Americas. Many of their relatives and townspeople

were already there and the commercial opportunities were great. Many undoubtedly dreamed that fortunes might be amassed speedily and that they would then move on to places where they could practice their faith openly and freely. 'The *conversos* comprised the class most likely to possess the aptitude and capital needed to develop colonial trade and industry.'[23]

During the period from 1605 to 1642, there was a considerable growth in the *converso* population due to a natural increase and the renewed immigration. The absence of almost any Inquisition activity from 1605 to 1625 was an additional spur and deflected many from going to Holland. The development of silver mining at Zacatecas and Guanajauto brought about new enclaves of *conversos*.

While religious practice was not completely open, a denunciation filed in 1622 with the Holy Office attests the existence of a synagogue in Mexico City which was reputed to hold Saturday morning services attended by hundreds of people.[24] There is no indication in the archives that any steps were taken to confirm the veracity of the report.

Medina, in his history of the Inquisition in Mexico, wrote that the public opinion of the Inquisitors in the seventeenth century had fallen so low that, for a period they were subordinate to secular judges and officials. He commented that this condition was reflected in the actions of the Jews in Mexico City where 'with so little secrecy and fear, they held their meetings and synagogues as if they were in a place where they were tolerated and permitted.'[25]

The period from 1625 to 1635 marked the re-activation of Inquisition proceedings. Apparently the Jews paid no attention to its awakening from somnolence. The few arrests resulted from testimony in Spain and Portugal about New Christian relatives in the New World. It may also have been from a letter sent by Manuel de Frias in 1623 to the king in which he reported the arrival of crypto-Jews in Buenos Aires and Lima and the receipt of correspondence by *christianos neuvos de judios, que son judaizantes*.[25a]

While arrests were few and punishments comparatively light, some figures of future prominence were involved. They included Thomas Treviño de Sobremonte and Captain Tirado *alias* Antonio Váez *alias* Antonio Castelo-blanco. The latter circumcised the former while they shared an Inquisition cell in 1624 in Mexico City. Antonio later was the beadle of the Jewish community of which his brother Simon Váez Sevilla was the leader. Simon was one of the wealthiest Jews in the New World. His mother-in-law was the matriarch of the community and his wife, Juana Enríquez, was the first lady.[26] Simon's ships sailed the seven seas. Treviño de Sobremonte married María Gomez, a pious and learned Jewess. Thomas became a wealthy merchant, orthodox, and the leader of his religious community.

The Holy Office's activity increased in 1641 because, among other reasons, of earlier activity by the Inquisitors in Peru and New Granada. The

great *auto-de-fe* of 1649 in Mexico City was the culmination of eight years of search, seizure, trials, and several *autos de fé* in 1646, 1647 and 1648. Simon Vaez and his wife Juana were 'reconciled' in the *auto* of 1649 while Thomas and María were burned at the stake with Antonio. María had been arrested and 'reconciled' in 1635 but was released by the Holy Office with little more than spiritual penance.

The 1649 *auto* involved 108 Jewish participants of whom thirteen were burned at the stake. While Thomas was burned alive, the others were garrotted as an act of mercy having kissed the Cross or acknowledged that they had been in error. The bones of forty-seven Jews were disinterred and then burned in effigy after being carried to the *quemadero*, the place of the funeral pyre. One man was absolved because he proved that he had not practised Jewish rites. The remainder were 'reconciled', their possessions confiscated, directed to wear a *sambenito* in public, and ordered to serve life sentences in the Inquisition cells in Spain. Research has revealed however that only two ever arrived in Spain and reported to the *Suprema*.

The last Jew found in the Holy Office cells in 1820, when Mexico attained its independence, was Rafael Cristiano Gil Rodríguez. He had found refuge as a Franciscan monk but had been unfrocked when his true faith was discovered. Due to his desire, at least to be buried as a Jew, he had left written instructions which were found by his enemies. In 1795, he was sentenced to the stake as a *relapso* but, at the last moment, his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment.

The number of Jews in the capital was insignificant. The few centres of secret Jewish population were in the provincial areas.[27] These were strengthened by waves of Jewish immigration in the late 1830s and then in the 1860s, with the arrival of Emperor Maximilian who brought with him not only his personal physician, Dr Samuel Basch, a practising Jew, but also many Jews of Alsatian, Austrian and French nationality. The Sephardim came in waves between 1890 and 1910 and hailed from Greece and Turkey.

2. *Peru, Rio de la Plata and New Granada*

The crypto-Jews in Peru attained great commercial influence at the beginning of the seventeenth century. These *conversos* were, in the main, of Portuguese descent. We mention this because a great number of them in New Spain were considered Portuguese by the Inquisition although they could trace their ancestry back to Spaniards who had left Spain in 1492 and had settled in Portugal. So great was their control of commerce in Lima, that the street opposite the cardinal's palace was and still is known as *Calle de los Judíos*, 'the street of the Jews'. They were 'in absolute control of the traffic in merchandise ranging from brocade to sackcloth and from diamonds to cumin seeds', and 'the Portuguese Jews controlled the trade of Lima from the vilest

African Negro to the most precious pearl.'[28]

Among other activities in Peru, the *conversos* managed and also worked in some of the silver mines, while some operated mule teams between the Altoplano and the coast. They were also food dealers and itinerant peddlars from Lima to the high places in the Andes. The crypto-Jews in Rio de la Plata were small merchants and owners of *haciendas* which served as hostels for travellers going from Buenos Aires to Tucumán, Córdoba, Santiago, Concepción, and Lima. The crypto-Jews in New Granada lived either in Cartagena or ports along the Caribbean until about 1635. After that, many settled in the middle of present Columbia in the province of Antioquia. Medellin was the centre. This region was sought because Inquisition officials rarely made an appearance there. Some modern writers however deny that this area had a crypto-Jewish settlement.[29] The Jews secured not only the local trade but also many of the government administrative posts.[30] They controlled the appointments to all important posts across the Isthmus of Panama. They also controlled the commerce going from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The slave trade, while not as flourishing as it was in New Spain, was considerable and a portion was handled by the *conversos* as agents for the Crown since the slave trade was purportedly a royal monopoly.

One of the reasons for a lengthy period of comparative safety for the Jews (if safety is understood as non-molestation by the Inquisition), was the presnece in South America of Bishop Francisco Vitoria, the son of a noted Jewish family.[31] Since the *conversos* were not counted as Jews unless they were apprehended by the Holy Office, we have no exact knowlege of how many there were in the New World or what proportion they constituted of the total Spanish and Portuguese population. Julio Caro Baroja writes that in the seventeenth century, there were in Peru proportionately twice as many Jews who had converted as there were in Spain.[32]

As early as 1624, Holland made efforts to capture some of the Spanish colonies in South America. They tried to capture Callão de Lima about May 1624. It may be inferred from later actions that Jews may have supplied information to the Dutch since they later provided finances for the Dutch capture of Peru, which the Jews termed *la tierra promesá* (sic) and considered the Spaniards unworthy to own it.[33] The accumulation of evidence of Holland's intentions to take Brazil and other parts of South America and the capture of Brazil in 1631, served as a catalyst for mass arrests beginning in 1634 of *conversos* in Peru. The Holy Office accused the *conversos* of creating a conspiracy called *"La Complicidad Grande"* and *"La Complicidad de judaismo"*.

Over a hundred were arrested but many more escaped. Some went to New Spain, others to the Caribbean Islands and Brazil. The great *auto-de-fé* of January 23, 1639 in Lima, marked the crest of Holy Office activities in that area. Of the sixty-one Jews in the *auto*, eleven (one of whom was already

dead) went to the stake. One of the victims was the illustrious Francisco Maldonado de Silva, who refused the garrot and was burned alive. He was a successful surgeon in Valparaiso, who was incarcarated for almost thirteen years, and had changed his name to Eli Nazareno in the Inquisition cells. The most famous man of his times who also was one of the ten martyrs was Captain Manuel Bautista Pérez. Pérez was exceptionally wealthy, a noted patron of the arts and the recipient of an honorary degree from the University of San Marcos. Two of Pérez' brothers-in-law also were sentenced to the stake. As the prisoners stood on the *quemadero* on January 23rd, the three men exchanged *osculos de paz* (kisses of peace). The kiss of peace is a sacramental rite in the Christian Church but some authorities state that it was derived from Jewish ritual.[34] Either the crypto-Jews were familiar with ancient Jewish rites or the kiss was a result of acculturation from association with Christianity. It may be more than a coincidence that in the 1649 *auto* in Mexico City, two women at the *quemadero* attempted also to exchange these 'kisses of peace'. These women had no relatives in Peru.

As a result of the Holy Office's confiscations of the funds and other properties of the Jews between 1634 and 1639, many were unable to pay their debts, commerce lagged and many bankruptcies resulted. Peru went into an economic decline from which it did not recover for two centuries. The crypto-Jews scattered to places in Chile, New Spain, and Paraguay. They did not go to New Granada because a similar round-up of *conversos* was being conducted there. Many wended their ways to the Caribbean and some of the sea-coast towns such as Caro and Barcelona in what is now Venezuela.

Organized crypto-Jewish life on any noteworthy scale ceased to exist in South America except for the northern portions and in Chile for over 150 years. In Santiago there was a community which was quite vigorous in the eighteenth century as were some in smaller towns along the northern coast of South America. The Sephardim, having found refuge in such places as Barbados, Curaçao, Jamaica and Martinique and holding English, French or Dutch nationality were able with a certain amount of impunity to trade, mostly by smuggling, with the Spanish colonists. A few went inland to such places as Caracas and Maracaibo (now modern Venezuela) and carried on retail trade. Others began exporting cacao and other agricultural produce from the hinterlands.[35] Cocoa and cochineal dye were also mainstays of commerce for the Sephardim in New Spain. The Holy Office was abolished for one year (1813-14), then re-established. Its final demise came in the 1820s in the New World and in 1834 in Spain.

The Religion of the Secret Jews

Despite statements made by some that the crypto-Jews lived isolated from other Jewish communities and "that the doctrine of the ordinary

marrano . . . lay in one sentence — that salvation was possible through the law of Moses, and not through the law of Christ",[36] Cecil Roth did admit that '. . . the *marranos* of Mexico had a far more accurate knowledge of Judaism than those of Spain and Portugal.'[37]

Circumcision was not rare. Observance of Jewish dietary laws and *kashrut* was common. Contributions for the support of the Jewish communities, i.e., Jerusalem, Safed, Hebron and Tiberias, in the Holy Land were made through *shiluhim*, 'messengers', who came from there to teach and take collections. These *shiluhim* were pursuing a custom known as *farda*. The circumcisers came from Amsterdam, Pisa, Bologna, and from the Provence area.

One of the problems in obtaining a comprehension of the depth of religious observance of Spanish and Portuguese *conversos* is that most writers have failed to distingush between the two groups. Yerushalmi states '. . . one must assume an *internal* difference in the very genesis and character of the two New Christian groups.'[38] His research indicated that the crypto-Judaism of the Portuguese was sufficiently vigorous to survive for centuries. My research in the Inquisition files in the archives in Mexico, Lima, Madrid, Seville, and elsewhere leads me to agree with his findings.

In preparing a list of the religious practices generally observed by the *conversos* in the New World, I found a great similarity with the list made by the late I. S. Révah for his article on the Portuguese *marranos* and the Inquisition in the sixteenth century.[39] In the following summary, I indicate after each rite those which also appear in Révah's chapter by *"I S R."* I believe that this indicates a continuity of almost identical practices for over a century and confirms the strength and tenacity of Judaism for survival despite the necessity of practising it secretly. The following list has been taken from the testimony of the *conversos* before the inquisitors and, with few exceptions, was given in the 1640s, a century after those practices listed by Révah.

1. *The Sabbath*
   a) Abstention from work. (*ISR*)
   b) Abstention from handling money, e.g., collecting debts, or making sales and receiving payment.
   c) Changing bed linen, cleaning the house, donning clean attire prior to sunset on Friday. (*ISR*)
   d) Lighting candles after cleaning the candlesticks and permitting the candles to extinguish themselves.
   e) Baking bread prior to the onset of the Sabbath.
   f) Single men lit the Sabbath candles in their domiciles.

It should be noted that in the *proceso* of Juana Enríquez,[40] we learn that

she cut up the bread and meat into pieces ready to be eaten so that even this work was made unnecessary on the Sabbath. She also criticized another female *converso* for brushing her teeth on the Sabbath as this was considered work.

2. *Kashrut*
   a) Fowl were decapitated with a special knife that was examined prior to use to be assured that it had no nicks (*ISR*). The fowl were then hung by the feet so that the blood would flow into a pan of water; the contents of the pan were then emptied into the ground. (cf. *Deuteronomy* 12.23, 24).
   b) Animals were slaughtered by men and the meat was soaked in warm water in order to draw off the blood. The thigh vein and surrounding suet was always removed and this porging (*landrecilla* in Spanish) often revealed the secret Jews.
   c) The Biblical injunction against eating fish without scales, pork and pork products was followed. (*ISR*)
   d) There is no mention of milk or butter in those *procesos* which have been studied. Cooking was done in olive oil and a liquid chocolate was prepared from the cocoa bean and made frothy by the use of an Indian form of swizzle stick. This was the favoured liquid in New Spain. Wine was common in Peru and was made by the secret Jews.

3. *Foods*
   a) *El ani*, also known as *adafina*. A form of stew (copied by the Ashkenazim and called by them *cholent*), was a favourite dish. Incidentally, many *conversos* bought new dishes prior to *Pesach* and used them for the first time at the *Seder*.
   b) For the onset of all fasts, only eggs, vegetables, fish and olives would be eaten. The first meal after the fast was of a like nature. Fruit would be eaten on all occasions. (*ISR*)
   c) When a family was sitting *shiba* no meat meals were eaten. The same menu as before a fast was the rule.
   d) *Pan cenceño* 'thin bread' (i.e. *matzot*) were eaten on Passover. There is an account of a *converso* doctor in Peru who prescribed unleavened bread for many a patient with stomach disorders so that he could eat *matzot* on Pesach without fear of arousing suspicion about his faith because he could feign a stomach ache as the reason for his diet.

4. *Holy Days, Fast Days and Prayers*

   a) Passover or *Pesach* was known as *Pascua de cordero*, 'Festival of the Lamb.' (*ISR* refers to it as 'La Pâque du pain azyme'). As no *Haggadah* was known its place was taken by reading the story of the Exodus from

Egypt directly from the Bible and enacting it, as recorded in the *proceso* of Luis de Carvajal, *el Mozo*. The Seder meal was preceded by the eating of lettuce, radishes, and bitter herbs. The reader paced back and forth, with a staff in one hand and the Bible in the other, and wore a white garment with his belt tightened about his waist.

b) The most awesome holy day was the Yom Kippur and was known as *El Dia del Perdon, El Gran Dia de Ayuno*, and *Quippur* (*ISR*). It was observed on the "10th day of the September moon." Prayers were recited until midnight, except by the children, and commenced again the following morning. There was a long recess in the early afternoon and many *conversos* would make themselves visible so as to allay suspicions of agents of the Holy Office and other potential observers searching for Jews. There are reports of people walking in the public parks with toothpicks in their mouths.

Prayers, for all holy days, were of a penitential nature and were recited from memory. Teenagers, after they were told that they were Jews and were sworn to secrecy, were taught the prayers. The following prayer, was taken from the trial of Gabriel de Granada[41] and is fairly typical of others. Since there was a paucity of prayers, most were repeated several times during the holy day:

> 'Lord, my soul called upon Thee to deliver me from fire and flame that I may not be burned or scorched. Here am I in this desert, turned into a plant (servat) where great trouble shall overtake me. Into thick darkness shall they cast me where neither brother nor cousin can ought avail me. One thing, my God, shall I ask of Thee, that Thou remember my soul and deliver it at the mouth of the cave and going out at a door, and that I may not amuse myself in counting the Stars of Heaven or throwing water in the Sea.'

Prayers were recited by both men and women. The men always wore caps or other head coverings and many of both sexes recited prayers three times daily, on non-holy days, the equivalent of *Shahrit*, *Minhah* and *Ma'arib*. The leader in the praying usually stood with his feet together. There is a report of one leader who stood on bricks so that he could not move his feet. Shoes were not worn while praying on *Kippur*. They prayed in stocking feet. The women wore *mantillas*.

Several prayers were taken from the Dominican Book of Psalms and used as hymns. They were sung to the tunes of Church liturgy but references to Jesus and Mary were eliminated. It must be noted that none of the prayers for *Quippur*, or any other time, made any derogatory references to Christianity or its sacred personages. One custom that was unanimously followed on the eve of Yom Kippur was the exchange of requests for forgiveness among members of the family and of close friends.

c) Purim was the third most important holy day in the annual calendar of Jewish holy days (*ISR*). The importance may be attributed to the

analogy made beetween the *conversos*, symbolized as Mordecai or Esther whose lives, as were those of all Jews, threatened by Haman, who symbolized the Holy Office. Purim for the *conversos* was not a happy holiday and the observance of *Ta'annit Ester* was rigidly observed.

d) Fasts from sunrise to sunset on Mondays and Thursdays were quite common. Of course, Jews have never been uniform in their commitment to or observance of Jewish ritual. Then, as now, many were strict in observance, orthodox, while a great many ranged from the fairly observant to the non-observant.

e) *Shabu'ot* was known as *Pascua de la Primicias*, Festival of the First Fruits, known to Christianity as Pentecost. There were no particular foods or customs except for some praying

f) *Rosh Hashanah* received scant attention.

g) *Tish'a b'Ab*, the Fast of the 9th day of the Hebrew month of Ab, which commemorates the destruction of both Temples in Jerusalem (and, co-incidentally, the last day on which the Jews were permitted to depart from Castile and Spain on August 2, 1492 without being apprehended by the authorities of the Inquisition and/or Throne), was observed as a fast day by many.

h) *Succot* was known to the *conversos* as *Pascua de Cabanelas*, the Festival of the Huts. This festival almost disappears from the *converso* Jewish calendar by the seventeent century.

i) *Hanukkah*, or the Festival of Lights, commemorating the victory of the Maccabees and the cleansing of the Temple in 165 B.C.E receives very little mention. There is one odd aspect to be noted in documents in Spain and in the New World, to wit, that ten candles were lit. The usual custom for centuries had been to light candles for eight days beginning with one and increasing to eight for the last day.

Some other customs connected with praying were almost *sui generis*. Many prayed with arms outstretched and others with arms crossed over their chests. The recital of the *'Shema'* was quite universal and with eyes closed or with a hand over the eyes. The *procesos* have references to *tzizit*, a *taled (tallit)*, phylacteries, and even the Scroll of the Law. The worshipper faced East — towards Jerusalem — while praying. Fasting became an end in itself and was usually done in groups. A *converso* from Guatemala testified in 1642 that Jews believed in "one positive precept, the observance of the Sabbath, and one negative precept, the refusal to worship images, and a third precept — to observe the Mosaic Law to the best of one's ability and that the intent often sufficed for the deed." However, these simplifications were symbolic of attitudes in rural areas, such as Guatemala. In the large urban areas, where one could find more than one community, the following represents a synthesis of the beliefs and customs of *conversos*:

1. The Law of Moses is the true Law. It was sometimes referred to as "the Law that God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai."
2. The Law was written by God with His finger on the tablets that He gave to Moses.
3. One should love only God and not venerate any images since such veneration was contrary to the Ten Commandments.
4. One must refrain from eating pork or pork products as well as flesh of animals which did not chew the cud or eat fish that do not have scales.
5. The *Seder* meal should be observed ritually and during the entire period of seven or eight (the custom varied) days, adults should abstain from leavened bread.
6. The Sabbath should be observed from Friday sundown to Saturday sunset and no class of work should be performed during that interval. Clean shirts should be worn and clean linen should be used for the table and beds. The secret Jews acquired new clothes for *Yom Kippur*. The Sabbath was a reminder that God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh.
7. On the 'Great Day of Pardon', God judged all people.
8. There were other fast days for the secret Jews which were acquired by acculturation, e.g., the Fasts of Judith and Tobit were part of acculturation from Christianity.
9. Cutting of finger and toenails should take place prior to the onset of the Sabbath and the clippings were to be gathered and burned.
10. Hope lay in the coming of the Messiah, accompanied by a firm denial that Jesus was the Son of God or that He was the Messiah, and in the belief that the Messianic era would be the result of Jewish devotion to the Mosaic Laws. As a concomitant, there was a strong antipathy to official Christianity and to the Holy Office and its officials but not to Christian neighbours or Christian laymen in general.

Many of the knowledgeable were called 'dogmatisers' by the Inquisition. These 'dogmatisers' felt it incumbent upon themselves to attempt to bring back into the fold of Judaism those who had apostatised or were the descendants of apostates. Since the process of seeking converts had been abandoned by Jewry since the fourth century, it is difficult to understand this 'dogmatising' by the *conversos* since it exposed them to dangers. If a Christian descendant of former Jews were a sincere Catholic, he might report the dogmatiser to the Holy Office in accordance with the Edicts of Faith. These Edicts, placed on the doors of the churches from time to time, described many of the Jewish customs and threatened excommunication and anathema to all Christians who failed to report the presence of any Jew, Moor or other heretic who had come to the attention of any Christian.

Death and Mourning Customs

The preparation of the cadaver for burial and the dressing of the deceased in a linen shroud was very important and was a result of the great respect accorded the dead. There were few exceptions to the rule that the deceased had to be buried in a linen shroud. Some families had connections with officials of the Church and desired that deceased members of their families should be buried in a cathedral, monastery or convent. Those who were buried in a crypt in these Catholic places were dressed in the garb of a monk or nun. This practice is found primarily in Mexico City and its environs. A reason for the decision for such burial was that the city lay on the bed of three lakes and the sub-surface waters frequently washed away many graves. Prior to the final dressing, the body was completely douched with warm water according to Jewish law.

Many interments took place in the fields of other secret Jews. This was considered figuratively virgin ground since the secret Jews could not own a sanctified Jewish cemetery. Fresh virgin soil was thrown onto the coffin before it was covered. Before the closing of the coffin, a piece of grain or a piece of a broken pearl of a piece of a broken coin was inserted into the mouth of the dead person. This appears to be by acculturation from the indians.

The family of the deceased ate hard-boiled eggs upon the return home from the interment. All jars of water were emptied into the street and all mirrors were turned to face the wall, in which position they remained during the seven days of *shivah*. During this period, all meals were prepared and served to the bereaved family by friends and neighbours. The family sat on the floor. At the conclusion of the seven day period, members of the family searched out poor Jews and offered charity to them and urged them to make fasts for the soul of the deceased to ensure an ascent to heaven.

Synagogues and communal meetings

The homes of the very wealthy, such as Manuel Bautista Perez in Lima, were used as places of worship. This home still stands and is called the *'House of Pilatos'* and also the *Casa Cultural*. It is owned by the government and used as the centre for Peruvian cultural information. In Mexico City the home of Simon Vaez as well as his *hacienda* served as a place of meeting and worship. In addition, those who owned a warehouse or other similar building would make them available for services and discussion groups. Small groups met in private homes. The only time that there were large assemblages (about fifty people) was on *Yom Kippur* and then at a *hacienda* in the country away from prying eyes and without any servants being present. The Jewish women attended to all chores, e.g., cleaning, serving, etc.

While there are mentions of Sabbath morning services, more frequently services were held on Friday nights. An assembly at night would not attract the attention that a meeting on a Saturday morning would do. Friday night services were along traditional lines but very much abbreviated. The major part of the service consisted of a lesson by one of the more learned men (learned to be understood in a comparative sense) unless there were a visitor from abroad who usually was more qualified, and a discussion on a Biblical section or something from the Prophets or the Apocrypha.

In the context of the subject of the secret Jews and their communities, it is appropriate to discuss the five principal reasons for their survival:

1. *Adherence to religious beliefs and practices, and to the belief in the coming of the Messiah* which would bring to them surcease from all trials and tribulations and the right to practise their faith openly and freely. Were it not for the belief in the coming of a Messiah who would release all Jews from oppression — as well as bring peace for all mankind — the *conversos* would have abandoned Judaism.

Messianism was more than an abstract belief or faith in an event that was to occur at some distant time in the future. Jews throughout the world for the past 2,000 years had prayed for the coming of the Messiah in their time or, at least in the time of their progeny. The advent of Shabbetai Zevi in the seventeenth century was thought to herald the imminence of the dawn of deliverance and peace. While his existence and preachings were known throughout Europe, there is no mention of his name in any *proceso* that I have read. In Spain and the New World, or at least New Spain, the *conversos* were convinced that the Messiah or his mother would be born of their number. One can hypothesise that they felt that the risks and sacrifices that they were making daily to adhere to the Mosaic laws entitled them to the honour of having him come from their ranks and that he would be born in the seventeenth century in Mexico.

The grandmother of Juana Enríquez, Juana Rodríguez de los Angeles, had thought that her daughter Esperanza Rodríguez was going to bear the Messiah. When Esperanza proved to be childless, the hope was transferred to Juana Enríquez when she married Simon Váez Sevilla.

When Juana and Simon produced Gaspar as their child, many crypto-Jews in Mexico believed that Gaspar was going to be the Promised Deliverer. After his arrest by the Holy Office in 1642 and his continued incarceration for four years without any sign that he could deliver himself, their faith and hope were transferred, in turn to Inez Pereira, the niece of Thomas Treviño do Sobremonte. She was a member of a very religious family and her uncle was the leader of this orthodox group. The ultimate disillusionment and disappointment did not cause any wavering in the faith of the *conversos*.

2. *Belief in the Biblical Covenant and election as the Chosen People.*

The *conversos* as do all religious Jews, believed that a Covenant exists between God and Jewry. This Covenant is an unalterable bi-lateral agreement. The Spanish Sephardim stressed the purity of their families, claimed royal descent and extolled their martyrdom and adherence to the ancestral faith.[42]

3. *Endogamy and the role of the Jewess.*

The Spanish and Portuguese crypto-Jews in the Americas as elsewhere were so anxious to have their daughters marry within the faith, that there are numerous instances of uncles marrying nieces, as permitted by Jewish law. In other instances, there were marriages with grooms brought from Pisa, Leghorn or Bologna in Italy or from other vice-royalties in the New World where there were kin and who were known as observant or knowledgeable Jews.

The secret Jewish communities in the Americas were matriarchal to the extent that the education of the children was entrusted to the mothers and the observance of ritual was under their control. We see instances of this responsibility in the conduct of women such as Justa Mendez, Juana Enríquez[43] and Mencia de Luna.[44] It has been mentioned that the women slaughtered fowl. In addition the women acted as a *hebra kadisha* (burial society) and, by force of circumstances, even prepared the male cadaver for burial. They ordered linen from Hebrew manufacturers in Rouen, France, so that they could be assured that the linen was pure and unmixed with other fibres, according to the laws of *shaatness*.

When one of the Jewish communities in Mexico was without a male spiritual leader for a period at the end of the 1630's Blance Enríquez acted in that capacity. It was she who examined Juan Pacheco de León (his real name was Solomon Machorro) who had been brought from Italy to act as a teacher. She tested his scholarship to ascertain if he were qualified to be the spiritual leader. About the only act that women did not perform was that of circumcision. Women lit Friday night candles to inaugurate the Sabbath and often blessed the children.

The women had great matrimonial opportunities open to them if they had chosen to abandon their faith and marry a Christian. For almost the whole first century of the Spanish dominion in the New World, men outnumbered women by a great majority.

Converso women were subjected to torture by the tribunals of the Inquisition in Madrid, Seville and Lisbon. Many of those women who defeated or overcame the Inquisition tortures and were subsequently released, wended their way to the Spanish New World colonies.

4. *The Spanish Psyche.*

The Iberian Jew bore all the pride of race and faith equal to that of his Christian neighbours. The crypto-Jew who came to the Americas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries possessed a physical hardiness, a cunning and nimbleness of wit that enabled him to outwit the inquisitors. This is revealed by their comments while they were incarcerated in the Inquisition cells. Their words were taken down by eavesdroppers who listened from secret openings, some of which are to be seen today in the House of the Inquisition in Lima, Peru. The crypto-Jew elected to live under a Sword of Damocles because he preferred to live among Spanish or Portuguese speaking people and those who shared his secular ethnicity. Américo Castro wrote that 'the Jews expelled from their fatherland, that is Spain, in 1492 felt themselves . . . as Spanish as the Christians.'[45] Castro repeats the testimony given to the Holy Office in Spain by a Jew named Francisco de Caceres who had left Spain after outwardly accepting Christianity and then returned about 1500. When asked to explain his conduct, he replied:

> 'If the king our lord should order the Christians to become Jews or else to leave his realm, some would become Jews and others would leave; and those who left, as soon as they saw their sad plight, would become Jews so they could return to their native place, and they would be Christians and pray like Christians and deceive the world; they would think that they were Jews, and inside, in their hearts and wills, they would be Christians.'[46]

NOTES

1 Lucien WOLF, *The Jews in the Canary Islands, (J.H.S.E.,* 1926) p. xxii
2 Seymour B. LIEBMAN, *The Jews in New Spain*, (hereafter LIEBMAN, *New Spain*) (Florida, 1970) and see the bibliography listed therein.
3 See also Seymour B. LIEBMAN, *The Inquisitors and the Jews in the New World.* (Florida, 1974)
4 Clarence H. HARING, *The Spanish Empire in America.* (New York, 1963) pp. 10, 189.
5 HARING, *ibid cit.*, p. 10 fn.13.
6 Jośe Toribio DE MEDINA, *La Inquisićion en el Rio de la Plata.* (Buenos Aires, 1945) pp. 153-59.
7 Julio Caro BAROJA, *Los Judios en la España Moderna y Contemporanea*, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1961), 2:336.
8 Henry H. KEITH, 'The New World Interlopers: The Portuguese in the Spanish West Indies from the Discovery to 1640', *The Americas*, vol. xxv, Apr. 1969, No.4 pp. 360-6.
9 Yosef Haim YERUSHALMI, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto.* (New York and London, 1971) p. 16.
10 Antonio Dońinguez ORTIZ, *Politica y hacienda de Felipe IV* (Madrid, 1960) p. 127.
11 Werner SOMBART, *The Jews and Modern Capitalism*, trans E. EPSTEIN. (London, 1913).

12 H. M. Alvares CORREA, *The Alvares Correa Families of Curaçao and Brazil: A Genealogical Study*. (The Hague, 1965) p. 3 and *passim*. "The family Alvares Correa, whose members are at present scattered all over the world . . . certain members have gone to neighbouring countries for economic reasons." The author states 'The Alvares Correas are *Marranos* (also called *Cristãos novos* or New Christians) i.e. Jews who publicly professed the Catholic religion but secretly followed the Mosaic rites.'
See also Cecil ROTH, 'Notes Sur Les Marranes de Livourne' *REJ*, xci (1931) pp. 1-27.
13 KEITH, *op.cit.* p.364.
14 Seymour B. LIEBMAN, 'The Great Conspiracy in Peru' *The Americas*. vol.xxviii, October 1972, No 2, p.176-179, 180. (*Publications of the Academy of American Franciscan History*, Washington DC.)
15 cf. LIEBMAN, *New Spain* chap 8 and Seymour B. LIEBMAN, *The Enlightened*, etc. fn.23. (see note 40)
16 Some might name Juan Bautista Corvera as the first Jewish writer in the New World, cf. LIEBMAN, *New Spain*, pp. 128, 129.
17 Seymour B. LIEBMAN, *The Great Auto de Fé of 1649* translated and edited with intro. (Lawrence, Kansas)
18 LIEBMAN, *New Spain* p. 182.
19 *Archivo General de la Nacíon de Méxíco* (hereafter *AGN*) volume 279 document No 9.
20 Jośe Toribio MEDINA, *Historia del Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisicíon de Lima* (hereafter MEDINA, *Lima*) 2 vols. (Santiago de Chile, 1956) 1:303, 304.
21 Alfonso TORO, *Los Judios en la Nueva España*. (Mexico, 1932) p. xxvii. (All translations by this author unless otherwise stated.)
22 Isaac S. and Suzanne EMMANUEL, *History of the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 2 vols. (Cincinnati, 1970) vol 2, Appendix 3, pp. 681-746. For information about Jewish shipowners, captains and crews from Holland for the period from 1600 to 1820 see the notarial records in the Geemente Archief, Amsterdam, Holland, many of which have been translated and published by Elie KOEN in *Studa Rosenthaliana*.
23 HARING, *op. cit.*, 189.
24 *AGN* 335 expediente 6.
25 J. T. MEDINA, *Historia del Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisicíon en Mexico* with additional notes by Julio Jiménez Rueda (Mexico City 1962)
25a *Ibid*
26 MEDINA, *Rio de la Plata*, p. 206.
The subject was quite completely covered in this author's master's dissertation at the University of the Americas (Mexico City, 1963) and digests of it have been published in *AJA* (vol. xix November 1967 No 2, pp. 144-174) and in *The Jewish Digest* (vol xiv, December 1968, No 3, pp. 39-47 and January 1969 No 4, 41-51).
27 Robert RICARD, 'Pour une étude du judaisme portugais au Mexique pendant la periode coloniale'. *Revue d'histoire moderne*, 14,1939, pp.516-524.
28 C. R. BOXER, *Salvador de Sá*. (London, 1952) p. 81; LIEBMAN, 'Great Conspiracy in Peru'. *op. cit.*
29 James J. PARSONS, *Antioqueña Colonization in Western Columbia* (Berkeley, 1968), 2, 62.
30 I. S. RÉVAH, 'Fundo de manuscritos por 'l'histoire des nouveaux chrétiens portugais'. *Boletín Internacional de Bibliografia Luso-Brasilera* 2.
31 See *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem 1971) Vol. 16. Art. Vitoria, Franciso de.
32 BAROJA, *op. cit.*, II:337.
33 LIEBMAN, 'Great . . . Peru', pp.182-83, fns. 24-29.
34 *JE*, 12 vols. (New York, 1905) IX:566.
35 I. & S. EMMANUEL, *op. cit.*, *passim* and Isaac S. EMMANUEL, *The Jews of Coro, Venezuela*. (Cincinnati, 1973) *passim*.
36 Seymour B. LIEBMAN, *The Great Auto de Fé of 1649*.

37 Cecil ROTH, *Gleanings*. (New York 1967) p. 119-123.
38 YERUSHALMI, *op. cit.*, p.41.
39 I. S. RÉVAH, 'Les Marranes Portugais et L'Inquisition au XVe Siecle', *Sephardi Heritage*, vol. I p. 500.
40 Seymour B. LIEBMAN, *The Enlightened: The writings of Luis de Carvajal el Mozo*, with a preface by Allan Nevins. (Florida, 1967).
41 'The Trial of Gabriel de Granada', trans. from original by David FERGUSSON, edited with notes by Cyrus ADLER. *PAJHS* vol. 7, (1899), p.17.
42 H. J. ZIMMELS, *Ashkenazim and Sephardim*. (London, 1958) pp. 284-6.
43 Seymour B. LIEBMAN, *Valerosas Criptojudias en America Colonial*. (Buenos Aires, 1973).
44 Ricardo PALMA, *Tradiciones Peruanas* (Madrid 1961) 1219, 1221, 1274; G. FRIEDLANDER, *Los Heroes Olvidados* (Santiago de Chile, 1966), p.137.
45 Américo CASTRO, *The Structure of Spanish History*. (Princeton, New Jersey, 1954) p. 446.
46 *Ibid*, chapter 13. (The testimony was first discovered in the Spanish archives by Fritz (now Yitzchak) BAER and narrated in his *Die Juden in christlichen Spanien*).

COMBINED INDEX
to
SEPHARDI HERITAGE I and II

The Sephardi Heritage vol. I published by Valentine, Mitchell in 1971 did not contain an index. In the present volume this omission has been remedied by providing a combined index to both volumes. Entries are distinguished by the figures I and II respectively, preceding the page numbers concerned. The two volumes contain 35 essays in English, French, Hebrew and Spanish in vol. I, and English only in vol. II. Language apart, authors are idiosyncratic in the transliteration of foreign names and places, and there appear to be no generally accepted rules applying to the recording of double-barrelled names, e.g. Mendes da Costa. In compiling this index liberties have therefore been deliberately taken, even to the extent of departing from linguistic niceties, in order to attain a measure of conformity. Many cross-references have, however, been added to assist the user. Titles have been added only where such are indicated in the text; the omission of such titles implies no disrespect to persons either living or dead.

The following abbreviations have been used in the index:

I The Sephardi Heritage volume I
II The Sephardi Heritage volume II

(Archpb)=Archbishop
b.=ben, bar (son of)
(Bp)=Bishop
(Brig)=Brigadier
(Capt)=Captain
(Col)=Colonel
(CR)=Chief Rabbi
(Dr)=Doctor
(H)=Haham
(Prof)=Professor
(R)=Rabbi
(Rev)=Reverend

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