

CHRONICLE 1959

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The following is the Chronicle section printed in the first edition of the Jewish Journal of Sociology in 1959. It makes fascinating and often sobering reading. It is a snapshot of a time when the Jewish world was in a state of flux and when social scientists were trying to track a variety of demographic changes: the revival of post-war European Jewish communities, immigration to Israel, the disappearance of some Middle Eastern Jewish communities.

The Annual Report for 1957 published by the Executive of the Dutch Ashkenazi Community states that there are only 18,18 Jews left in Holland who are members of various congregations of the Sephardi community. In Amsterdam the number of those who have joined Ashkenazi congregations totals 10,500, compared with 100,000 prior to the war. At The Hague there are 2,400 Jews, compared with 16,000 before the war; Rotterdam has 700, compared with nearly 12,000 before the war, and Utrecht 430. Holland's Jewish population now totals in all about 23,000.

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A survey published by the World Jewish Congress shows that 75 per cent, of the world's Jewish population is located in three countries: the United States (5,200,000); Soviet Russia (2,000,000); and Israel (1,760,000). More than half, 5,987,000, live on the American continent, 3,214,000 in Europe, 1,959,000 in Asia, 603,000 in Africa, and 64,000 in Australasia.

Figures for some of the other major centres are:

Algeria 130,000
Argentina 400,000
Brazil 110,000
Canada 241,000
France 250,000
Great Britain 450,000
Morocco 200,000
Rumania 200,000

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Union of S. Africa 110,000

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Only 4-5,000 Jews remain in Iraq, out of a community which numbered, over 120,000 before the outbreak of Arab-Israeli hostilities. Most of the Iraqi Jews emigrated to Israel between 1950 and 1951. The Jewish community in the Lebanon today numbers 10,000, half of whom are refugees from Syria.

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The World Congress of Jewish Teachers, sponsored by the Jewish Agency, opened in Jerusalem in July 1958. 3,000 teachers participated, including some 200 from abroad. The Congress decided to establish a World Union of Hebrew Teachers. The low status of Hebrew teachers and the profession's poor attraction for young people had resulted in a serious shortage of Hebrew instructors, stated Dr. Shim Pollack, President of the American Hebrew Teachers' Association.

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The increasingly sympathetic attitude of Latin-American countries towards Jewish migration is one of the most encouraging developments in the continued search for places of resettlement for Jewish refugees and uprooted persons, stated James P. Rice, Director of the United H.I.A.S., at the Fifth Annual Conference of this organization, held in Paris in October, 1958. It was also stated that Australia is now the leading country for Jewish re-settlement outside Israel. 'Here are at present some 15,000 persons registered with H.I.A.S. The total of new immigrants to Israel for the first six months of 1958 was 8,600. The figures increased towards the end of the year, and in September alone 3,500 people arrived in Israel. It is expected that 15,000 people will arrive from Eastern Europe as compared with 3,400 who arrived in the first half of the year.

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The Israel Ministry of the Interior has appointed a special committee to study the reasons motivating Jewish emigration from Israel and to suggest a possible way of removing them. In the past ten years about 63,000 emigrated officially, but it is estimated that several thousand more who left as tourists have not returned to Israel but settled abroad. In view

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of the fact that almost 1,000,000 immigrants arrived during the same period, this represents about 7-8 per cent. of the immigration, which is much lower than is customary in countries of mass immigration. However, it is felt that in the special circumstances under which the *aliya* is being carried out, this is much too high a percentage.

The Committee will request all applicants for emigration visas to indicate reasons for wanting to leave the country and will undertake to keep the information in the strictest confidence.

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The pre-war Czech Jewish population was about 360,000. After the war 23,000 of the survivors emigrated to Israel, many thousands to other countries, and about 20,000 remained in Czechoslovakia. 8,000 live in Bohemia, 2,000 in Moravia, and 10,000 in Slovakia. Half of the Jewish population resides in Prague (4,500), Bratislava (3,000), Kosice (1,000), and Brno (700), the remainder being scattered in tiny communities throughout the country. There are two main community organizations, the Prague-centred Community Council of Bohemia and Moravia and the Bratislava-based Organization of the Community Councils of Slovakia. Each small community, however, conducts its own religious and cultural affairs. The overall supervision is carried out by the Ministry of Education and Culture. There is a shortage of religious functionaries and very meagre religious education is given.

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The official Soviet-Rumanian Year Book for 1957 contains data on the Rumanian Jewish population as at February 21 1956, according to which 144,236 people gave their colloquial tongue as Yiddish.

In fact, reliable estimates give the figure of 240,000 as the Jewish population of Rumania, but since Jews are under no compulsion to declare their religion, many of them, it is believed, prefer to declare themselves to be of Rumanian or Hungarian nationality.

Below are the statistical data of those who declared themselves as Jews and as Yiddish-speaking in the various zones of Rumania, according to the 1956 census:

Place	No. of Jews	Yiddish-speaking
Bucharest (Town)	43,492	4,463
Bucharest (District)	167	16

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Bacau	11,892	2,560
Baia Marc	7,469	3,613
Cluj	8,282	2,397
Constanza	978	309
Craiova	565	72
Galatz	7,223	738
Hunedeara	2,223	490
Yassi	16,677	5,624
Oradia	5,144	879
Pitesti	208	43
Ploesti	1,636	195
Brasow (Stalintown)	3,934	624
Suceawa	18,658	10,518
Timisoara	12,784	1,204
Hungarian Autonomous Region	2,904	520
Total	<u>144,236</u>	<u>34,265</u>

In view of the census that is due to be held in the Soviet Union this year, some figures received of the estimated Jewish population should be of interest. According to these, the numbers of Jews in the various Soviet republics are as follows:

Russia — 1,250,000; Ukraine — 1,000,000; Byelorussia — 150,000; Uzbekistan — 100,000; Georgia — 100,000; Moldavia — 100,000; Azerbaijan — 80,000; Kazakhstan — 80,000; Latvia — 50,000; Lithuania — 50,000; Kirghizia — 15,000; Estonia — 10,000; Armenia — 5,000; Tadjikistan — 5,000; Turkmenistan — 5,000. The total, therefore, is 3,000,000.

Population by cities gives Moscow an estimated half-million Jews; Leningrad, between 200,000 and 250,000; Kiev and Odessa, 180,000 to 200,000 each; Tiflis in the Georgian Republic, 50,000; Kharkov and Tashkent, 70,000 each. Eleven cities have Jewish populations between 30,000 and 50,000; eleven between 15,000 and 30,000; thirteen over 10,000; the rest of the Jewish population being distributed widely in small towns throughout the U.S.S.R.

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Membership of Jewish communities in Switzerland has increased by fourteen per cent., from 3,534 to 4,029, during the ten years between 1946 and 1956, and numbered 4,130 at the end of 1957. This transpires from a detailed Annual Report of the Union of Jewish Communities in Switzerland. Jewish Communities now exist in 25 localities, as against 13 when the Union was founded in 1904. Leading Jewish communities now are Zurich (1,749 members), Basle (851), and Geneva (357). Five communities have a membership of over 100; the remaining list communal membership of between 3 and 100.

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According to an inquiry conducted under the direction of S. Zulicki, President of the Union of Jewish Students in Switzerland, 880 among the 16,500 students enrolled in 13 Swiss universities are Jews.

The survey sponsored by the Cultural Department of the World Jewish Congress, and based on a sample analysis of questionnaires sent in by nearly 200 of the 880 Jewish students, shows that only 23 per cent. of the Jewish students have their pre-university education in Switzerland. 55 per cent. gave their mother tongue as English, 17 per cent. as German, 14 per cent. as Hebrew, 7 per cent. as French. 18 per cent. of the students are Swiss born; 45 per cent. were born in the U.S. and 3 per cent. in Israel.

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The Hebrew daily *Davar* has published interesting figures on the use of Hebrew and other languages in Israel. According to these figures, in 1948, when the State of Israel was founded, Hebrew was the spoken language of 75 per cent. of the population. The increase in immigration during the years following the establishment of the State reduced the percentage to about 60. In 1950, when the immigrants were taking root in the country, the percentage rose to about 62, and this upward trend is continuing.

Of the other languages, Arabic rose to second place in 1954, with about 12 per cent., owing to the large number of immigrants from North Africa. Yiddish follows with 10 per cent., Rumanian with 2.8 per cent., German with 2.4 per cent., Ladino with 2.2 per cent., Bulgarian with 1.7 per cent., Persian with 1.5 per cent., Hungarian with 1.2 per cent., and Polish with 1 per cent.

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A characteristic feature of Jewish education in Great Britain, as in the U.S.A. and other countries, is the increase in the number of Jewish Day Schools, particularly since the end of the Second World War.

Early in 1958 about 4,000 children attended the Day Schools in London, and approximately 2,200 in the provinces. These figures also include the pupils of the kindergartens attached to the Day Schools. Altogether about 12 per cent. of the Jewish children of school age in London attend Jewish Day Schools. The percentage in cities like Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Gateshead is considerably higher. In all the schools the percentage of children of former refugees is particularly high.

Following is a breakdown of the number of Day Schools, pupils, and teachers:

<i>London</i>		
Primary Schools	10	Pupils 2,838
Teachers		118 full-time 30 part-time
Secondary	5	Pupils 1,052
Teachers		51 full-time 27 part-time
<i>Manchester</i>		
(1 Secondary)	6	Pupils 1,276
Teachers		50 full-time 17 part-time
<i>Liverpool</i>		
Primary	2	Pupils 461
Teachers		18 full-time 6 part-time
<i>Leeds</i>		
Primary	1	Pupils 85
Teachers		4 full-time 3 part-time
<i>Birmingham</i>		
Primary	1	Pupils 240
Teachers		7 full-time 2 part-time
<i>Gateshead</i>		
Primary	1	Pupils 71
Teachers		2 full-time 6 part-time

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As for Ireland, the figures on the two Day Schools in Dublin have been made public by the Chief Rabbi of Ireland, Dr. Immanuel Jacobovits. These institutions comprise a kindergarten, a primary and a secondary school, with a total enrolment of approximately 230 and a staff of 7 Hebrew teachers. According to Dr. Jacobovits, about 40 per cent. of the Jewish children of school age in Dublin are enrolled in these two Day Schools. The primary school is subsidized, by the State, as are the kindergarten and secondary school, though to a lesser extent.

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3,000 children receive education in Jewish schools in Mexico. Most of the schools are secular and children study Yiddish as well as Hebrew. In Ashkenazi religious and Sephardi schools only Hebrew is taught. Eight per cent. of Jewish students in Mexico learn Hebrew, a percentage which is the highest outside Israel