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Proud Citizens or Enemies of the State? Transformations of Iraqi Jewish Identity Between 1920 and 1950

> *They were really, generally speaking, the Jews in Iraq, they were really good Patriots. They loved Iraq, they loved Baghdad, they loved the folklore of Baghdad, love the songs of Baghdad. They spoke the Arabic language, they love the literature of the, of the Arabs, and their history. . . .After the Second World War they were considered to be the enemies of Iraq, collaborators with the Zionists in Israel. Supporters of annihilating Palestine. . . . Jews were persecuted.*
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> *Salim Fattal, July 13, 2006*[1]

With the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the Middle East was divided into newly created states comprising populations who were meant to share a history, culture, and territory. These states were to be administered by the European Allied powers under League of Nations "mandates," until such time as they proved to be sufficiently civilized as to govern themselves.[2] Simultaneously, a new international system of "minority protections" was codified that would shape conceptions of both minorities and minority rights in the Middle East and beyond. Newer trends in world history have attempted to problematize how we understand the emergence of minority rights, and even the term "minority" itself.[3] Emerging in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the term "minority" was first employed in its current incarnation as a tool of legitimization for European intervention in the Ottoman Empire, supposedly to protect their Christian minority populations.[4] Laura Robson argues that the Mandate and minority protections regimes were constructed in tandem, "not to make sovereignty eventually accessible to the globe but to permanently restrict it on the basis of race."[5]

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The new minority rights regime characterized non-dominant communities, for example Christians and Jews in the Middle East, as put-upon groups somehow separate and subordinate to the majority, similar to how we tend to understand minorities today. However, current scholarship on the history of minorities has instead begun to emphasize the agency of these communities, and the profound ways in which they could influence or be influenced by the politics, culture, and society of the dominant population. In the context of Arab nationalism, Noah Haiduc argues that the identification of minority groups, be they ethnic or religious minorities, was fluid, historically contingent, and indeed was not agreed upon either between or within different communities.[6] These contributions challenge us to rethink the minority status and identity of certain communities as neither natural nor ancient, and highlight the power of non-dominant groups to affect local and global change. With an eye towards the Jewish community in Iraq, this case study exemplifies the complex history of minorities and minoritization in the Middle East outside of the framework of persecution and domination.

One of the oldest Jewish communities in the Middle East, the Jewish community of Iraq can trace its history back to the 6th century AD, long before the creation of the state itself. Following the formation of the state of Israel in 1948 that resulted in their state-led persecution, between 100,000 and 130,000 Jews made the difficult decision to leave their homeland for Israel. As a condition of the exodus, they forfeited their Iraqi citizenship. From the 1920s to the 1950s, the Jewish community witnessed the British Mandate over Iraq, Iraqi independence, and the emergence of both Arab, and Iraqi nationalism. How did the community understand their identity in relation to the nation of Iraq, from its inception in 1920 to their mass exodus in 1950? Drawing on oral histories as well as previous scholarship on the topic, I argue that the Jewish community came to see itself as a part of the nation during this period, sharing history, culture, and confidence in a shared future with the Arab Muslim majority. However, this did not preclude their overwhelming sense of remaining second-class citizens. My sources show that three factors in this period were key to the position of Iraqi Jewish people: the growth of an Iraqi secular national consciousness; the way that educational institutions shaped Jewish identification with Arabic and Iraqi culture; and Jewish political involvement in relation to the state during the 1940s. By referring to oral history sources, this piece not only explores Jewish Iraqi identity prior to exodus, but also how these identities continue to be felt today.

Scholarship on the Iraqi Jewish community during the 20th century has increased considerably over the past three decades. Much of the early scholarship on the Jews in Iraq was written through either a Zionist or anti-Zionist lens, with the former focusing on Iraqi Jewish immigration to Israel as the only option in the face of persistent antisemitic persecution; and the latter emphasizing Jewish participation in the Iraqi state and the relatively small influence of Zionism among the general Jewish

population.[7] In *Zionism in an Arab Country,* Esther Meir-Glitzenstein complicates this dichotomy, presenting Zionism in Iraq as only one ideological avenue for Jewish political participation that could be joined for myriad reasons. Other scholars discuss what is called the "Iraqi Orientation," a term coined by Nissim Kazzaz to refer to increased Jewish participation in political, economic, and social life in Iraq for pragmatic considerations. In this vein, historians Reuven Snir and more recently Orit Bashkin have explored the identification with "Arabness" among members of the community, with Bashkin arguing for the practice of a type of "Arab-Jewishness" during the mandate period that persisted even following the anti-Jewish riots of 1941.[8] Such histories have been increasingly nuanced by the literary productions of the community themselves, including memoirs, novels and autobiographies. This article builds on these works by incorporating oral histories into the scholarship, highlighting both the social cohesion and inequality experienced by the Jewish community between the creation of the state of Iraq in 1920, and their mass exodus in 1950.

Oral Histories: Revealing Non-Hegemonic Narratives

The use of oral history here serves a twofold purpose. According to one of the original oral historians Alessandro Portelli, oral histories bring human agency and understanding into events, by cataloging not just "what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did."[9] Oral history sources allow us to glean more about what the events in Iraqi history meant for the Jewish community, and how they were experienced and understood. Portelli goes on to explain that "oral sources are a necessary (not a sufficient) condition for a history of the nonhegemonic classes."[10] The strength of oral sources lies in the fact that they are "artificial, variable, and partial."[11] With only three accounts studied, these histories are hardly representative of any subset of the Iraqi Jewish community. But when put in conversation with other secondary sources, they demonstrate variations in lived experiences and perceptions of the past. While by no means definitive accounts, working with the subjectivity of oral histories can add nuance to the hegemonic narratives of marginalized groups, such as the Iraqi Jewish community.

Unlike contemporaneous sources, oral histories can tell us how each interviewee thinks about their past more than fifty years after they left Iraq, allowing us to glean something of the historical memory of the Iraqi Jewish community. In Zainab Saleh's Return to Ruin, Iraqi Narratives of Exile and Nostalgia, she writes that in telling stories of their lives and experiences, the Iraqis she interviewed were "trying to make sense of the present and reflect on the past."[12] These rememberings of the past were also "marked by classed, gendered, political, and religious sensibilities," which "reflect how acts of remembrance are always informed by the conditions of the present."[13] Oral histories are useful for examining both a shared communal memory, and how this

memory can vary within different subsets of the community based on factors such as gender, class, and political affiliation. While the subjects may have gone into the interviews hoping to reveal or explore an agreed-upon past, what is more often illuminated through the oral history process is the specificity of individual experiences that should not be overlooked to serve a wider narrative. By making clear the positionality of each of the interviewees, and briefly discussing their viewpoints and lives as they exist in the present, this article teases out the intricacies of each interviewee's relationship with the wider society, and how they saw themselves as fitting into larger historical events and happenings.

In the early 2000s there was a concerted effort to record the oral histories of Iraqi Jews, due in part to the realization that the last generation of Jews born in Iraq were reaching old age. This resulted in the creation of the oral history collection from which this study draws its primary sources. The Tamar Morad, Dennis and Robert Shasha Collection of Iraqi Jewish Oral Histories are a series of interviews recorded in English and Hebrew between 2003 and 2007. Several of these interviews were later turned into the book, *Iraq's Last Jews: Stories of Daily Life, Upheaval, and Escape from Modern Babylon*. This was done in conjunction with the American Sephardi Federation, and the American Center for Jewish History, both of which are dedicated to recording the histories of Jews from the Middle East and North Africa.[14]

This article surveys the oral histories recorded of three diverse members of the Iraqi Jewish community. The first is that of Salim Fattal, born in the poor Jewish neighborhood of Tatran, Baghdad, in 1930. As a teenager he joined the Iraqi Communist Party which eventually led to his exile in 1948. Salim went on to become an Arabic language radio and tv host in Israel, a documentary filmmaker, and an author. The next interviewee, Heskel Haddad, was born in Baghdad in 1930 to an upper-middle class family. He joined the Underground Zionist Movement in his youth and was later forced to flee Iraq for Israel. There he became a doctor, and later, a rabbi. The last interviewee is Doreen Dangoor. Born in 1937, Doreen came from an upper-class Baghdadi family. She moved to England to be with her husband in 1951, but her family remained in Iraq until the early 1960s. While all three participants came of age during the 1940s and 1950s, their life trajectories were highly determined by their social positioning. Salim Fattal and Heskel Haddad were chosen because of their disparate socioeconomic backgrounds and political orientations. Conversely, Doreen did not become involved in politics. As a woman her experiences also differed in several ways from the other two interviewees. These categories of difference that color each of the interviewees' memories and experiences demonstrate the lack of uniformity in the processes through which Jewish Iraqis came to understand their identities vis a vis the nation of Iraq.

Changing Identities: From Dhimmis to Iraqis

The British mandate over Iraq did not immediately change the identification of the Jewish community. Prior to the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire which ruled Iraq from 1532-1704, and once again from 1831-1920, Jewish communities were considered "dhimmis," a term which historically refers to non-Muslim people living in Muslim-dominant countries.[15] Dhimmi status meant that Jews were generally treated equally in terms of law and property, although not afforded all of the same rights as Muslims.[16] The Ottoman 'millet' system allowed each religious community to govern themselves based on their own guidelines, unless their affairs involved outsiders or violated capital law.[17] While these inequalities had been addressed and the dhimmi categorization abolished in the Ottoman's Tanzimat reforms between 1829 and 1870, Jewish Iraqis' self-perception as dhimmis persisted into the twentieth century, as can be seen in the interviews discussed below. However, religious organisation within the pluralistic and diverse Ottoman empire was not based on a system of minorities and majorities, and these communities were not treated differently on the basis of any sort of minority status.[18] In 1920 the British were granted a mandate over the territory, creating the Hashemite Kingdom of Iraq and instituting their own system of governance. Their three pillar system was meant to unite the heterogenous country and guarantee British economic and political control.[19] These pillars were: the creation of a monarchy, led by the son of the Sharif of Mecca and ally to the British, King Faisal I bin Hussein bin Ali-Hashemi; the Anglo-Iraqi treaty that codified Britain's rule; and the Iraqi constitution, creating a government operating within a "Western" style democratic framework.[20] Minority rights under the protection of the League of Nations were also enshrined in constitutional law.[21] The Hashemite period saw the growth of a more secular Iraqi identity, furthered by both the ruling elite, and an emerging educated middle class known as the Effendiyya.

The Effendiyya, which I use to mean people with a Western style education, actively took up the nationalist cause in politics and the press. Almost all Jewish graduates of modern Iraqi schools between 1920 and 1950 were members of the Effendiyya. The social group embraced Arab nationalism, which melded the "Western" ideals of secularism, liberty and democracy with respect for Arab history and culture.[22] This was encouraged by the elite and the Iraqi government, who hoped to maintain the power of the state by fostering a common identity among the masses.[23] Commitment to a non-sectarian Iraqi identity was frequently espoused by King Faisal.[24] In a speech made at the grand rabbi's residence in 1921, Faisal confirmed, "In the vocabulary of patriotism, there is no such thing as a Jew, a Muslim, or a Christian. There is simply one thing called Iraq."[25] As argued by Müller-Sommerfeld, minority status was consistently rejected by Jewish community leaders during the Interwar period.[26] For example, as part of the Iraqi delegation to Geneva in 1931, Jewish Iraqi Finance Minister Sassoon

Hisqail declared to the League of Nations that Jews considered themselves to be Iraqis, and therefore not in need of minority protections.[27] Responding to this growing sense of Iraqi identity, a secularizing wave of the Jewish community argued that religion was a private matter of the individual that should not enter into politics.[28] There is still debate over whether this wave of secularization reached the Jewish lower class. The 1920s were nevertheless a time when the values of secularism and non-sectarianism loomed large in the public sphere and were understood across communities as central to the identity of the new state of Iraq.[29]

Over the 1930s, Jewish Iraqis began producing works that operated outside of community boundaries, as integration into the wider cultural scene increased. For example, in 1929, Jewish Iraqi nationalist Salman Shina founded an Arabic newspaper called Al-Hasid (the Reaper) that fostered Arabic literary culture. According to literature professor Reuven Snir, Al-Hasid "soon became one of the most influential literary Iraqi journals of the 1930s."[30] Jewish writers also wrote for Muslim and Christian publications.[31] Outside of the print world, Jews contributed to Iraqi culture by creating Arabic plays, literature, and even becoming pioneers of modern Iraqi music.[32] The community's increasing integration was reflected in their social habits throughout the 1930s, as Jews, Christians and Muslims began intermingling in shared social spaces such as literary salons, cafes, and libraries.[33] Mixed neighborhoods became common in Baghdad, with the upper and middle class moving out of traditionally Jewish neighborhoods to newly built modern ones. A phrase often repeated in both Jewish papers and the wider Iraqi press during this time was, "Religion is for God; the Fatherland is for Everyone."[34]

Although the 1930s was a period of increased integration into the majority Muslim society, it is difficult to ascertain the scope of private interactions.[35] According to the accounts of the three subjects, the Jewish community engaged readily with Arabic culture, and intercommunal friendships were not uncommon. Salim stressed the patriotism of the Jewish community in his account, as well as the community's commitment to Arabic culture: "they were really, generally speaking, the Jews in Iraq, they were really good patriots. They loved Iraq, they loved Baghdad, they loved the folklore of Baghdad, love the songs of Baghdad. They spoke the Arabic language, they love the literature of the, uh of the Arabs, and their history. They know Quran, all that."[36] However, he also said that Jews understood themselves to be second-class citizens throughout his life in Iraq. For Doreen, life in Iraq was overall good, although it was important to be mindful of interactions with Muslims. She said, "always the Jews lived, learned how to live with the Muslims . . . . We never went out of our way to make them, you know, we minded our own business."[37] Based on the language she used, it seems as though she felt the Jewish community tried its best not to agitate the Muslim majority, which would denote some tension between the groups. Doreen made clear that her father had many business associates who were Muslim, although she did not have

any Muslim friends. She continuously acknowledged the long history of the Jewish community, framing the lives of Jews in Iraq as ones of cooperation.

Heskel's father employed Muslim labourers in his construction and plumbing company, but this was not equated with equality or integration. Heskel said, "We used to go to their [his father's employees] homes and their holidays . . . and then they used to come to pay homage to my father during [Jewish holidays]."[38] He went on to say that their relationship was very cordial. He noted, however, that, "In . . . the social setting, . . . the Jews were always considered dhimmi, you know, like they should be protected by the Moslems. If a Jew [sic] ever show any evidence that he is . . . going to be aggressive . . . it would be put down, right?"[39] Heskel furthermore implied that it was not Iraqi Jews whose culture had been influenced by Muslims, but rather "they [Iraqi Jews] imparted their culture on the country. Baghdad used to close on Saturday. They imparted the, their language was better than the Arabic. . . . The most music . . . was the Iraqi Jews, Jewish music." He is not incorrect, as many Muslim-owned businesses did close on the Jewish sabbath day. Additionally, Jews were very active in the Iraqi music scene during the 1920s and 1930s.[40] Heskel did not conflate cultural influence with social integration. In fact, he believed that the split between Iraqi Jews and Iraqi Muslims was inevitable. He said that this was because of the Muslim character, as Muslim Iraqis were "W-U-K-A-H. Which means they are rascals . . . they are cruel, . . . from time immemorial."[41]

These accounts indicate at least some degree of integration and identification with Arabic culture and history. What's more, they show that cultural dissemination was not a one-way street, as the Jewish community did exert influence and have a hand in shaping Iraqi society. They also reveal key elements of how each interviewee experienced life in Iraq, and how they view it today. For Doreen, her interactions with Muslims were mediated through the business dealings of her father. This makes sense, as during this time middle- and upper-class women were increasingly joining the workforce, but most business affairs were still handled by men.[42] Throughout her interview, she referred to the fact that life in Iraq was both easy and pleasant for her. This is in contrast with how she felt once she moved to London, where she had no family and saw life as very difficult.

Conversely, Heskel positioned the Jews as inherently different from the Muslims, using racialized language to do so. This is in line with some of the racial logics espoused by Iraqi Zionists and Zionists more generally, which Heskel continued to be after moving to Israel. In her work on the subject, historian Chelsie May describes the Zionist construction of a unified Jewish people who shared biology and characteristics as indebted to "imperial whiteness," a term first used to mean the way in which Britain constructed itself as white in relation to its imperial subjects. In Iraq, she said, "this process would be replicated along not only a British-Iraqi axis but also a British-influenced Zionist/non-Zionist axis," continuing that "the political Zionism Jews

encountered in Iraq brought with it an awareness of an idealized and constructed archetype of white racial identity that was reconstituted vis-à-vis a perceived other."[43] In this case, the other is Muslim Iraqis. By describing the Jews of Iraq as different, even more developed and with a richer culture than the Muslims, Heskel positioned Jewish Iraqis as superior and more civilized than their Muslim compatriots, in some ways reifying these racial ideologies to which he was no doubt exposed both in his youth and during his life in Israel.

Salim instead portrays the two groups as sharing in the same culture. This view is similar to Iraqi communists of the time, who rejected imperial whiteness in favor of a shared liberatory movement including all Iraqis. Salim also stressed the patriotic elements of Jewish Iraqis. In his writings and career, Salim has focused primarily on the lives and struggles of Middle Eastern Jews in Israel. Salim wanted to make clear that the Zionist position is overrepresented in Iraqi Jewish literature, saying that Zionist writers tend to write "as if there is no other Iraqis, Iraqi Jews that have another orientation, there is only Zionist."[44] He also said that these writers are ashamed that the majority of Jewish Iraqis were actually poor. He criticized the field of Iraqi Jewish history and memoir writing as coming from the upper classes, whom he said were the most vocal members of the community in diaspora but only made up around five percent of the Jewish population.[45] His goal was therefore to present the story of the poor in Iraq and explain why many of them chose to join the communist party.

In the retrospective opinions of the interviewees, the 1930s saw the Jewish community engaging readily with the majority Muslim population and wider Iraqi nationalism and culture, giving examples of close Muslim-Jewish relationships. However, their accounts differed as to how welcome or integrated the community was, each purporting to feeling some degree of separation from the dominant society. In the case of Heskel, he believed this separation to be innate, and altogether insurmountable. Experiences of existing as part of a 'minority' were variable across and between each sub-section of the Jewish community.

Image 1: "Great Synagogue of Baghdad, Iraq." Source: in the Public Domain, see https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Great_Synagogue_of_Baghdad.jpg.

Creating Iraqi Jewish Citizens: Education as a tool of Arabization

During the Interwar Period an increasing number of Jewish students attended state schools, where they were taught a curriculum designed to foster an Iraqi Arab identity. The Iraqi state school system rapidly grew between the 1920s and 1950s, with the opening of new secondary schools and colleges. State schools offered secular education for little to no tuition and were obligated to accept students regardless of religion. The school's standardized curricula were designed in-part by prominent Pan-Arab nationalists and taught by teachers from across the Arab world. One of the first directors of the new education system, Sati al-Husri, was an intellectual from Syria who made a substantial contribution to the creation of a clear set of Pan-Arab terms and concepts.[46] An emphasis was placed on the study of Arabic language and culture, in order to "reinforce the idea that all Iraqi students were first and foremost Arabs."[47] The linking of Iraqi identity with a shared Arabic language created a framework in which anyone who spoke or wrote in Arabic, including Christians, Jews, and ethnic minorities such as the Kurds could still take part in the national project.[48]

After the Second World War, the state embarked on a school building initiative that included erecting schools in Jewish quarters.[49] This allowed more Jewish children from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds to attend both Primary and Secondary School.[50]

Many middle-class Jewish families saw state schools as a way for their children to better integrate into Iraqi society, and learn the skills needed to work for the new government administration.[51] The presence of Jewish students in the Iraqi education system contributed to the breaking of communal boundaries, as students began seeing themselves as part of a larger nation.

Students who attended Jewish schools also felt the influence of the state's new curriculum. By the 1920s, the Jewish community had the largest schooling system of any religious group in Iraq. The first modern Jewish school that taught secular subjects opened in Baghdad in 1864.[52] The upper class members of the community were the first to send their children to modern schools, which also offered limited bursaries and reduced tuition to children in need.[53] After the 1920s, Jewish schools began receiving grants from the Ministry of Education, requiring them to submit to the state curriculum.[54] The Jewish community council also worked with the state to enforce the standardization of their school curriculums. They recruited non-Jewish teachers, most prevalently in the field of Arabic. Jewish students therefore increasingly graduated with the ability to both read and write in standard Arabic. Jewish schools did adjust the curriculum, providing for Jewish rather than Islamic religious education, and extra hours of English. While they originally offered Hebrew and Jewish history courses, this was banned by the Ministry in 1935.[55] Community schools further focused on exposing the students to Arabic literature and culture, such as by having them read Iraqi novelists, put on plays in Arabic, and keep up on current events affecting the Arab world.[56] Jewish schools therefore contributed to the feeling of a common Iraqi and Arabic identity among their students, in accordance with the wishes of both the state, and the community.

The three interviews demonstrate how social class determined where and how children would receive an education. When asked what school he went to, Salim replied, "it was a Jewish one, for poor."[57] Salim attended a religious Jewish school that taught six grades of students and was most likely part of the Talmud Torah school system.[58] Talmud Torahs had done little to change their curriculum since the early nineteenth century. Their students would receive free religious and Hebrew education, and beginning in the 1930s, a rudimentary teaching of Arabic. Talmud Torahs also attempted to provide aide to the children who came from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, with financial backing from the community.[59] Salim spoke to this, saying, "The community tried to help, in the school I learned, I remember that they brought some coats, or something to dress… to clothe us, sometimes I got something to eat."[60] Like many in his social class, as a young man Salim was taught to read but not to speak Hebrew. He attended a public secondary school run by the Ministry of Education, which he said was the only option if "you wanted to go to higher schools but did not have enough money."[61] At state school he formed his first friendships with Muslims and

Christians. There he was exposed to wider discourses taking place in the Iraqi public sphere, including the rise of Communism.

Heskel had more options when it came to schooling. He went to high school at the Shamash school, one of the few in Iraq that prepared students for English matriculation exams. He said that he wanted to become a rabbi, but his father urged him to instead attend medical school. He began medical school at 15, and said that, "It was a very good school. More British, Edinburgh system. Unfortunately, . . . I left Iraq, I couldn't get my diploma, so I went to Jerusalem, and I got my diploma after doing one year."[62] Only higher-class members of Iraqi society could afford to attend such prestigious institutions. As will be discussed in the next section, Salim and Heskel's different educations would later influence how each man interacted with the changing politics in 1940s Iraq.

Doreen's account illustrates how girls' schools experienced the tightening of state curriculum. As the breadth of the Jewish school system increased, girls' schools were opened across Iraq. Doreen went to the Laura Khedourie Alliance High school, the first Jewish girls' school in Iraq which opened its doors in 1893.[63] Doreen enjoyed her time at the school, but it was also where she first felt the shifting relationship between the state and the Jewish community. She said, "I went to school in the '30s, in the '30s they stopped it [the teaching of Hebrew]...because, by that time, it started already, those feeling of, you know [antisemitism]. First of all, our school, it was independent, but at some stage, it became under the rule of the new Ministry of Education. And the new language had to be taught in Arabic, so they end that then."[64] Unlike boys' schools, Arabic was not the primary language of instruction in Jewish girls' schools until the 1940s. As they were not expected to enter the workforce, upper-class girls were usually instructed in English or French, and provided separate lessons for Arabic and Hebrew. In the late 1930s Arabic became a symbol of unity and integration in Iraq, and therefore was made the primary language of instruction at Laura Khedourie.[65] To substitute for her lack of Hebrew education, Doreen's father hired a tutor for her and her sisters. She said, "at that time, most of our friends didn't learn it, but you know, with my father, as you know, his father was chief rabbi and all."[66] This speaks to the uneven nature of Hebrew education in the Jewish community after the 1930s. Only those whose parents could afford private lessons continued to learn Hebrew, which even then depended on the parent's relative religiosity. Unlike both Heskel and Salim, Doreen's experiences at the Laura Khedourie school did not influence her to become involved in political activism. Nevertheless, these accounts show the way in which the growing importance of Arabic was felt at every level of the community.

Jewish Political Participation during the 1940s

The late 1930s saw increasing instability in Iraq, as well as the permeation of Nazi propaganda in the political and public sphere. This culminated in the 1941 Pogrom that changed the community's relationship with Iraqi and Arab nationalism.[67] In 1933, King Faisal I was succeeded by his son Ghazi bin Faisal. Ghazi was an Arab nationalist opposed to British control, which continued even after Iraq was granted independence in 1932.[68] Nazi influence increased during his reign, as the Nazi party began disseminating their propaganda in Arabic across the Middle East. The key strategy of their propaganda in Baghdad was to paint the Jews as collaborators with the British, and therefore enemies of Iraq.[69] In 1939, Ghazi died in a car crash under suspicious circumstances. He was succeeded by his four-year-old son Faisal II, whose uncle 'Abd al-Ilah became Regent. More tolerant of the British presence in Iraq, Abd al-Ilah's reign ushered in a period of instability in which multiple coups took place. The coup of April 1, 1941 had the most significant impact on the Jewish community. It was perpetrated by a group of influential military colonels known as the Golden Square Officers and headed by then Prime Minister Rashid Ali al-Gaylani. His regime was founded on Arab nationalism and was supportive of the Nazi party.[70] Over their short reign of two months, the Gaylani government spewed anti-Semitic propaganda that worried many Iraqi Jews. It garnered considerable support in Baghdad from the left and right, both of which lauded Gaylani's anti-colonial and Pan-Arab stance.[71] In late May of 1941 the British were able to overthrow the coup regime and prepared to reinstate the Regent. Having reoccupied Baghdad, the British did not immediately send troops into the city streets, creating a power vacuum. The end of the widely popular regime, as well as circulating rumours that Jews had aided the British army, boiled over into anti-Jewish riots.

On June 1, 1941, the first Pogrom in modern Iraqi history began in Baghdad. This event is known as the Farhūd, which directly translates to "the riots." The Farhūd was organized by supporters of Gaylani's regime. Over the course of two days, the rioters attacked Jewish Iraqis on the streets, in busses, and in their homes.[72] The mob then turned to looting Jewish businesses in commercial areas. The riots were quelled soon after the mob began looting one of the largest commercial areas in Baghdad, ceasing to distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish businesses. The Farhūd ended at 3 pm on June 2, when the Regent's forces reached the city. While there are no definitive estimates of casualties experienced during the Farhūd, most historians place the number of Jewish deaths between 135 and 189 persons, with between 700 and 1000 wounded, and between 500 and 900 homes and businesses looted.[73] Following the events of the Farhūd, many in the Jewish community became suspicious of both Arab nationalism, and the British foreign power.

Each of the interviewees experienced the Farhūd differently. The Farhūd had a profound impact on Salim's family. His uncle Meir was pulled out of a bus and beaten in the mixed neighborhood of Bab al-Sheik. Salim said, "[the rioters] stopped the bus, all the busses, the bus of Meir. Meir has a typical Jewish face."[74] When asked by the interviewer how they knew, he said, "there's a kind of instinctive sense, that when you see someone you say this is an Arab, and this is a Jew."[75] Salim denoted this racial separation between Arabs and Jews in Iraq, but was also quick to point out the help that Muslims provided at the time. His uncle's Muslim friend Nahoum left the bus to try and help him. Neither man was ever seen again. Salim also described how Meir's son was saved by the Muslim bus driver. The boy was trying to leave the bus and help his father, but the driver told him that he would be killed, and quickly drove away. As for his own experience of the Farhūd, Salim still remembered the fear he felt fleeing from his home and jumping across the rooftops of his neighborhood of Tatran, at age 11. Other than his uncle, his family was ultimately not harmed.

For Heskel, who was not personally affected by the Farhūd, this moment represented the beginning of the antisemitism that spelled the end for his community. He said "Yeah, they were. . . there was not really overt, uh, anti-Semitism in that regard. I mean . . . when the nationalist movement began to grow, in 1940 . . . when in '41 there was a pogrom. It started the anti-Jewish activities."[76] It is unclear from Heskel's interview why his family was not affected. Jewish people living in more affluent neighborhoods where residents could rely on or afford to bribe policemen or soldiers, or those living in mixed areas, were less likely to be attacked during the Farhūd.[77] Although Heskel had spoken of the Jewish exodus as almost an inevitability, he did not see the Farhūd as the continuation of persecution, but rather the beginning of overt antisemitism in the country.

Doreen's family had advanced notice of the ousting of Gaylani's regime because her brother was an officer in the Iraqi army. She described the tense situation that led to the Farhūd, saying, "at the time, the British didn't come in quickly and we don't know the reason . . . Some people say, like, they wanted to give time to the people to do what they want and do, you know, to keep them busy."[78] This echoes a common sentiment within the Jewish community following the Farhūd. Many knew that the British had troops stationed just outside the city and felt their inaction during the riots was a grave betrayal.[79] Doreen's family had escaped the Farhūd through the help of their Muslim neighbors. As she tells it, "We have very good friends, Muslim friends…who lived around the corner from us. . . . And they said, ' . . . You must come to us.'" After the women in her family left, her brother arrived with two soldiers under his command and guarded Doreen's house. She said that this was not necessarily the norm for her neighborhood, as "[her] husband's parent's house, which was only about a couple hundred yards from us, they looted it, they took everything and they [her husband's family] had to run to the roof to stay safe. So, you know, you get mixed stories."[80] Indeed, there are stories from

Jewish people who lived through the riots that purport to Muslim friends, neighbors, and even strangers coming to their aide.[81] At the same time, there are stories of violence, and Muslim neighbors who led the rioters to Jewish houses. Doreen concluded her account of the Farhūd by stressing that life was generally very good in Iraq, saying, "So, yeah, we had good times, but in between there was some bad time." This attitude, shared by others in the Iraqi Jewish community, explains why so few chose to leave the country after the riots. To many Iraqi Jews, the Farhūd was an anomaly born out of political instability and scapegoating.

The Farhūd did not dull all Jewish people's commitment to the Iraqi nation state, and prominent members of the community continued to reject minority status as altogether detrimental to social cohesion. This can be seen in the testimony of Ibrahim al-Kabir, an economist who was director general of the Iraqi Treasury from 1934-1948. In 1946, he spoke to the Anglo-American committee of inquiry visiting Baghdad to come to an agreement on the admission of Jews to Palestine. Al-Kabir blamed the Farhūd on a systematic propaganda campaign perpetrated by those outside of Iraq, and in particular Nazi Germany, which led to outbursts that "have created among the Jews a sense of bitterness, of resentment that is rendered more intense by twenty-five centuries of peaceful life, common language, customs, and ideals and the belief that they contributed neither directly nor indirectly to the Palestine troubles."[82] He continued, "the Jews do not feel any social disability...the Jews in Iraq do not feel that they have a problem to be solved with outside help. Their domestic troubles — if any — must be settled by mutual understanding and cooperation [with the Arabs in Iraq]."[83] A strong proponent of the 'Iraqi Orientation,' Al-Kabir remained a nationalist following the Farhūd, presenting just one example of the continued commitment to the state of Iraq espoused by many in the Jewish community following the event.

The growth of the Communist party during the 1940s allowed one space for its Jewish supporters to express their dissatisfaction with life in Iraq within a nationalist framework. After the failed coup of 1941, the British severely punished all those involved in Gaylani's regime. The majority of the Arab nationalist officers who had come to dominate parliament were dismissed or imprisoned. An amendment was added to the Iraqi Constitution, giving the King the right to dismiss the Prime Minister if necessary.[84] With these changes, the anti-British sentiment that had fueled Gaylani's coup gained a new fervour. Wartime inflation and widespread shortages served to widen class disparities, further adding to the tension. These conditions allowed for the Iraqi Communist Party [ICP] to begin attracting swaths of workers and students.[85] Although the party was illegal since its founding in 1929, between 1941 and 1945 the British government ignored their activities due to their anti-Nazi stance. By 1946, it had become the most well-organized political party in Iraq. Iraqi Jews joined the ICP in support of its vision of anti-sectarianism, anti-tribalism, equality and non-domination.[86] Through the language of Communism, leftist Jewish intellectuals called for Jewish assimilation

into Iraqi society.[87] They argued that the problems of Jews in Iraq were because of their nation's unjust and exploitative social order.[88] Anti-Semitism could therefore only be defeated if the Jews remained in Iraq and helped to fight for a new social order.[89] By 1948, Jews could be found in all ranks of the ICP. Through the Communist framework they could critique the antisemitism, colonialism, and uneven nature of Iraqi politics while displaying loyalty to their nation and its people.[90]

Jewish involvement in the ICP increased by 1948, the same year that life for Iraqi Jews would change forever. This was the year that Israel formally declared its independence. In the wake of the partition, the Iraqi government began enacting anti-Jewish policies that served to fuel public distrust of the community. The ICP assured Jewish communities that they would do everything in their power to prevent anti-Jewish riots.[91] Although tensions were high in 1948, a considerable number of Jewish leftists felt comfortable participating in the al-Wathbah ("the rising") protests, a series of student demonstrations against the signing of the new Anglo-Iraqi treaty. The treaty was signed on January 15, 1948, angering many. Both right wing pan-Arabists and left-wing Communists were calling for an end to the treaty, not a renegotiation. On January 16, the first al-Wathbah demonstrations took place in Baghdad. Over the month of January, intellectuals, students, politicians, and members of the lower class came out against the treaty. Many were inspired by the non-sectarian nature of the al-Wathbah, which called for equality and an end to colonialism in the country. Slogans of Arab-Jewish solidarity could be heard at all ICP organized demonstrations during this time.[92] The Communist party and its demonstrations therefore became an important avenue through which Jewish youth could show their patriotism. The Iraqi regime's crackdown following al-Wathbah would spell the end of most Jewish communists in Iraq.[93]

Salim's experiences with joining the ICP illuminate the reasons why lower-class Iraqi Jewish youth came to be involved with the party. He described the difficult situation that Jewish Iraqis experienced, saying that "After the Second World War they [the Jews] were considered to be the enemies of Iraq, collaborators with the Zionists in Israel. . . . They were persecuted, Jews were persecuted. In the lower classes, the situation was very bad. Unemployment, . . . the feeling that you are second class in the society." Following the partition of the State of Israel in 1948, Salim said, "we had two choices. To be indifferent, leave everything the way it is . . . and to live in Baghdad as a humiliated citizen. . . . The other one is to say well, this is a bad government, a bad regime. I want to fight; I want to struggle to do something against them."[94] The Zionist struggle was not open to the poor, he said, as the Zionist party preferred to recruit educated, upper-class youths. He explained that for the poor who wanted to fight back, "your way is paved to the communist party."[95] Salim frequently equated Jewish participation in the party with patriotism within the community.

Salim joined the party in 1948, first becoming involved through his high school. He said, "I learned in a school, um, which was known as a school of fighters, all you

know youngsters, that we were very eager, to go out against the government."[96] Schools, especially state schools that served a mixed community, were a central point through which the Communist Party would spread its message and recruit members. He noted that the school administration worked with the authorities to keep a list of suspected Communist and Zionists students. Both Salim, and his high-class Muslim friend had made it onto the list. Together, he and his Communist cell participated in al-Wathbah. At one of the protests against the Iraqi regime, he and his friend had to flee from police: "we run away with a friend of mine who was also a member of the Communist party. And we got a shelter in a Muslim house. . . . They cooperated usually with the students, the Muslims, they love the students. This is best, this is future."[97] The student strikes garnered a high degree of public support. Salim's experiences in the Communist Party demonstrates the non-sectarian connections that the Party helped to foster. Like many young Jewish Iraqis, he saw the party as his only outlet for enacting change in a way that could lessen the pressure on his community. While he left the Communist Party once arriving in Israel, Salim still remembers it as being the only viable political option for poor Jews at the time, presenting it as a counterpoint to Zionism, which he saw as more elitist.

As alluded to in Salim's account, Zionists in Iraq did not begin transporting lower-class Jews to Palestine until the late 1940s. The first Zionist organization was established in Baghdad in 1898, but it did not make contact with the World Zionist Organization [WZO] until 1913.[98] Even then, they received little aide from the WZO, and were temporarily stalled when the Iraqi government banned Zionist activity in 1935. Historian Esther Meir-Glitzenstein credits this lack of support from Israel to a variety of reasons, including immigration quotas, the relative prosperity of Jews in the Middle East and North Africa, and Israel's European Jewish founders' belief in a cultural hierarchy which placed European cultures at the top and all others below them.[99] The Farhūd convinced many Iraqi Zionists that the need for Aliyah, a term for the immigration of Jews in diaspora to the land of Israel, was more urgent than ever.[100]

In 1942 the Zionist movement resumed its activities underground, this time with far more support from the WZO. This was because the government of Israel was becoming aware of how many had been lost to the Holocaust, as well as the increasingly precarious situation of Jews in the Middle East. In 1942, the clandestine immigration organization Ha-Mosad al-Aliya Bet launched the Underground Pioneer Movement (Tenu'at He-Halus, often called Ha-Tenu'a, the Movement), to prepare Iraqi Jews for absorption into Israel.[101] The membership of the Movement consisted of mostly youths who were part of the upper and middle class. By 1949 the organization had 1,650 members, with 23 branches in Iraq. They provided Hebrew education, and agricultural/ occupational training. The Movement then established its defense organization: Ha-Shura. Ha-Shura stockpiled weapons and trained people in case of another pogrom. Soon after it was founded, the Movement began fostering illegal immigration to Israel.

As attacks on Jews increased, so too did illegal immigration, which could be punished by fines, imprisonment, or death. The fact that nearly 12,000 Jews chose to immigrate to Israel at this time alludes to the deteriorating situation of the community in Iraq.[102]

Heskel participated in the Zionist movement, saying that the fear of another Farhūd convinced him to join. "After 1941," he explained, "We started the underground movement, Zionist movement." Heskel, like many others, wanted to arm the Jewish community as a preventative measure. He stressed that the Zionist underground also functioned as a means to educate the youth. He said, "[we] taught Hebrew . . . . And we used to get, uh, necessary [emissaries] from Israel . . . to participate in the teaching . . . and this sort of was very effective in Iraq, because all of the Jews learned Hebrew." He perceived the Iraqi Zionist movement as highly successful in preparing Jews for Aliyah, but this was not necessarily the case. While the Zionist organization attempted to teach members of the community Hebrew, it is unlikely that their reach exceeded a small few. Reports from the transit camps that Iraqi Jews occupied once they reached Israel indicate that a large portion of the community was not fluent in Hebrew. Heskel was forced to flee Iraq before 1948. He left because, "the Iraq police were looking for me . . . as a Zionist and as a Communist, which I was neither . . . I mean, as . . . a Zionist I was in the underground, so they couldn't know that. And I was not a Communist definitely, so ... but, uh, this was an accusation against Jews when they wanted to . . . catch a Jew, you know?"[103] Heskel fled to Iran, where he worked as a doctor in refugee camps for several months. From there he flew to Israel, where his family would later join him. Growing fear after the Farhūd and increased persecution in the late 1940s served to ostracize many Jews from the Iraqi nation. By the time he left, Heskel was sure that the Jewish community could no longer survive in Iraq.

In 1948, the Iraqi regime put in place measures to persecute both the Jewish community, and the Leftist movement that had participated in al-Wathbah. Israeli independence was followed by the invasion of the former Palestinian Mandate by the armies of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Egypt.[104] The Arab-Israeli War of 1948 provided an opportunity for the government of Iraq to silence its dissenters and unite the nation in a common goal. Midway through 1948 the regime amended the Penal Code 51, which banned anarchism, Communism, and immorality, to also include Zionism.[105] This created a framework through which Jews could be arbitrarily punished under suspicion of aiding Israel. They were aware of the high number of Jews joining the Communist Party, and those accused of Communism were usually also accused of Zionism, or vice versa.[106] In 1948 the Iraqi government increased its surveillance of students, focusing specifically on schools with a high number of Jewish children attending. They also began staging public hangings of Communists. When asked about this persecution, Heskel said, "after the partitioning [of Israel] . . . there was a lot of anti-Jewish sentiment. . . . Instigated by the government, . . . not by, the people. The government was in a very precarious situation. And . . . they want to divert attention of the people to

sort of like they're combatting Zionists. So, they used Palestine, . . . as a means to control the public basically."[107] What is notable about this account, is that Heskel did not believe that the anti-Jewish sentiment grew among Muslim Iraqis organically, but rather, was instigated by the government.

Beginning in May of 1948, the community faced increasing restrictions that limited their movement and livelihoods. Jews were banned from travelling abroad unless they paid a high fee and obtained the permission of the Iraqi defence minister. Jewish merchants were compelled to contribute to the war effort, facing harsh restrictions, high tariffs, and threats of imprisonment. Jewish workers were soon fired en masse from civil service, teaching, and administrative jobs.[108] This included those in high level positions, such as the director general of the Finance Ministry Avraham el-Kabir. Universities and colleges also placed stricter quotas on the number of Jewish students admitted. In August of 1948, the wealthy Jewish merchant Shaffiq Ades was charged with selling military equipment to Israel. He was sentenced to be hanged in his own front yard.[109] Salim's reaction was one of shock: "after they hanged him all Jews they said, if this man, close to the royal family was sacrificed and was hanged there, what are we doing here? What chance do we have to make a good life in Iraq?"[110] Doreen also remembered the difficulties of her community between 1948 and 1949, and the fear it caused. She said that before the war it was quite common for people to go to Palestine, "I mean, before that, everyone was allowed to go to Palestine, everyone, there was no restriction, Jews, Muslims, the royal family, they all went to Palestine. And you know, in 1948, when Palestine became Israel, they started going to houses, to Jewish houses to see if they had *anything*, any letter, anything that came from Palestine. And then they would take them to prison, you know."[111] Doreen's family had been to Palestine on holiday in 1946, and they quickly destroyed any pictures they had taken on the trip. Both noted their incredulity at the injustice of these events and measures. The pressure exerted on the Jewish community lessened in early 1949, as the government began relaxing their restrictions. In March of 1949, an armistice agreement was signed between Israel and the Arab countries. Although the war had ended, the restrictions on Jewish movement, employment, and education remained in place. The ongoing alienation and loss of opportunity caused many to consider leaving their homeland behind.

From 1949 onwards, thousands of Iraqi Jews migrated illegally from Iraq to Iran, where they then travelled to Israel or elsewhere. In 1950, the Iraqi government designed a bill aimed at ending illegal immigration, effectively reversing the previous travel ban. The law, passed on March 9, 1950, would allow for Jewish migration on the condition that they relinquished their Iraqi citizenship. They were allowed to leave with one suitcase, and fifty pounds. All other material wealth became the property of the state.[112] The Zionist Movement organized the transportation of Jews to Israel through secret wireless communication. The mass exodus, titled Operation Ezra and Nehemiah, was

facilitated by Movement members posing as officials of the Jewish community, working with Iraqi and Israeli government officials and the Iraqi secret police. In May of 1951, the Iraqi police exposed the underground Zionist network in Baghdad, and found weapons stashed by its defense arm. They imprisoned the Movement's members, fining some and hanging others. This put an end to the underground Zionist Movement in Iraq, after it had brought the majority of Jews to Israel.[113] Through operation Ezra and Nehemiah, 120,000 to 130,000 Iraqi Jews were airlifted to Israel. Around 9,000 Jewish people remained in Iraq for various reasons, and they too were eventually forced to flee due to the persecution, expropriation of property, and the murder of Jews by the Ba'ath government who took power in 1958. Almost overnight, the majority of the community that had lived in Iraq for millennium had relocated.

Image 2: "Immigrants from Iraq Arriving at LOD Airport." Photograph by Hans Pinn,1950. Source: Government Press Office of the State of Israel, used under the Fair Use provisions of the Israeli National Photograph Collection under the licensing agreement at https://gpophoto.gov.il/haetonot/Eng_Agreement.aspx?id=30&Search=iraq.

Doreen and Salim's accounts show that experiences of exodus did not uniformly separate Iraqi Jews from the rest of Iraq. Ultimately, Salim's participation in the Communist party led to his exile. Salim was arrested under suspicion of ties with the Communist party, and although he was soon bailed out, he knew that it was only a matter of time before he was arrested again. Salim did not have the money to flee the country on his own. Luckily, his Communist Muslim friend who was also looking to leave the country found a way for their trip to be financed by an outside party. A wealthy Baghdadi family had a sick son who desperately needed surgery in Israel. In exchange for taking him with them and caring for him on the road, the family financed Salim's trip. He left in 1948.

Doreen's loss of Iraqi citizenship was more tied to her gender than her status as a Jew. She moved to England in 1951 to marry her British husband, therefore taking his British nationality. She wrote a letter to the government asking to keep her Iraqi passport, but they declined. Through her father's connections, however, she was briefly allowed to return to Iraq. Her family's high status, as well as the threat of losing their considerable wealth convinced them that they should remain in Iraq to see if circumstances improved. Although Doreen wanted to visit her family, it was against the policies of the Iraqi embassy to grant a visa to a "foreign" Jew. It just so happened, however, that her father was a friend of the Minister of the Interior. At one of his meetings with the Minister, he began to complain that he had not seen his daughter in years. He implored the Minister to grant her a visa, saying "just because she had a piece of paper, she became foreign? I am here, my children are here, and she became a foreigner just with this piece of paper? Can you help me? I would like to see her." Reluctantly, the minister agreed. And so, in 1957, Doreen returned to Iraq for six months. She described her time in Iraq, saying, "I had fantastic time. . . . And here [in England] I was alone, no family. So, to me, meant going to see all my friends and all the family and having, above all, a very easy life."[114] Once she returned to London she even considered moving back home permanently. She didn't have the time to make up her mind before the Revolution of 1958.[115] While these are only two examples of genial ties persisting between the Jewish and Muslim communities, they demonstrate how there was not necessarily a clear-cut end to the community identifying with the state and citizens of Iraq. For many, feelings of kinship and identification with Iraq continued both during and following the mass exodus.[116]

Conclusion

World historians have successfully argued that the experiences of non-dominant religious or ethnic groups are not uniform across time periods or cultures, and that their agency and ability to affect the dominant society cannot be overlooked.[117] Nor are these categories of social difference, i.e. minority status, innate or self-evident. Rather, they

emerged out of a particular moment in international relations, and were further shaped by the major events, continuities and breakages experienced by each individual community.[118] The Iraqi Jewish community provides just one example of this fluidity, as their identification and relation to the nation of Iraq changed considerably within a period of only a few decades. Rather than merely being tolerated or operating at the behest of the dominant group, the Jewish community played an important role in Iraqi culture and society. These interviews further complicate depictions of minority communities as uniform in opinion or identification, and are illustrative of the complex and shifting identities at the heart of each individual that may fall outside of religious, ethnic, or cultural markers.

How did the Iraqi Jewish community understand their identity in relation to the nation of Iraq, from its inception in 1920 to their mass exodus in 1950? This article does not claim to be representative of the experiences of the entire community. However, the three oral histories combined with secondary sources do clarify some aspects of this history. Thanks to the effort of the British, the Iraqi government, the Effendiyya, and even the community itself, the Jewish community began to adopt and influence the secular values of the nation state. This resulted in the further integration of Jews and Muslims into the Iraqi social and cultural spheres. Nevertheless, each of the interviewees expressed that the feeling of being dhimmis, and therefore second-class citizens, continued throughout their time in Iraq. The Farhūd served to alienate the Jewish community from Arab nationalism, encouraging many to become politically active by joining either the Zionist Movement, or the Communist Party. These events had very different meanings for Doreen, Heskel, and Salim, displaying only part of the multifaceted experiences and memories of minoritization within the Iraqi Jewish community in diaspora. Between 1920 and 1950 the way the Jewish community understood its identity in relation to the state of Iraq went through multiple transformations which can still be felt today. Despite their mass exodus the history of the community, and the state of Iraq, are inexorably linked.

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Notes

[1] Interview with Salim Fattal by Tamar Morad, July 31, 2006, Tamar Morad, Dennis and Robert Shasha Collection of Iraqi Jewish Oral Histories, American Sephardi Federation Repository, New York (hereafter ASFR), ASF AR 72.

[2] Helen Müller-Sommerfeld, "The League of Nations, A-Mandates and Minority Rights during the Mandate Period in Iraq (1920-1932)," in *Modernity, Minority, and the Public Sphere: Jews and Christians in the Middle East,* ed. S. R. Goldstein-Sabbah and H. L. Murre-van den Berg, (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 260.

[3] Laura Robson, "Minorities Treaties and Mandatory Regimes, the Racialization of Sovereignty after 1919," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 1, no. 3 (2021): 333.

[4] Roy Bar Sadeh and Lotte Houwink ten Cate, "Toward a Global Intellectual History of 'Minority'," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 1, no. 3 (2021): 320.

[5] Robson, "Minorities Treaties and Mandatory Regimes," 333.

[6] Noah Haiduc-Dale, "Balancing Identities, Minorities and Arab Nationalism," in *Routledge Handbook of Minorities in the Middle East,* ed. Paul S. Rowe, (New York: Routledge, 2019), 44.

[7] Zionist interpretations can include Zvi Yehuda's *The New Babylonian Diaspora, the Rise and Fall of the Jewish Community in Iraq, 16th-20th Centuries C.E.* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), while an anti-Zionist interpretation includes Abbass Shiblak's *Iraqi Jews: A History of Mass Exodus* (London: Saqi Books, 2005).

[8] See also Aline Schlaepfer's *Les Intellectuels Juifs De Bagdad: Discours et Allégeances (1908-1951)* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

[9] Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 50. See also Orit Bashkin, *New Babylonians: A History of Jews in Modern Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 50.

[10] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 56.

[11] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 63.

[12] Zainab Saleh, *Return to Ruin: Iraqi Narratives of Exile and Nostalgia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021), 31.

[13] Saleh, *Return to Ruin*, 31.

[14] Tamar Morad, Dennis Shasha, and Robert Shasha, eds. *Iraq's Last Jews: Stories of Daily Life, Upheaval, and Escape from Modern Babylon,* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), xi, xv.

[15] The term "dhimmi" was most frequently applied to those sharing common religious texts with Islam, such as Christians or Jews.

[16] Jonathan Sciarcon, "Unfulfilled Promises: Ottomanism, the 1908 Revolution and Baghdadi Jews," *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies* 3, no.2 (2009): 157.

[17] Yehuda, *The New Babylonian Diaspora*, 14.

[18] Haiduc-Dale, "Balancing Identities," 36.

[19] Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2012), 23.

[20] Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 24.

[21] Müller-Sommerfeld, "The League of Nations," 265.

[22] Michael Eppel, "The Elite, the Effendiyya, and the Growth of Nationalism and Pan-Arabism in Hashemite Iraq, 1921-1958," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30, no. 2 (1998): 228.

[23] Eppel, "The Elite," 228.

[24] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 59.

[25] Reuven Snir, "Arabic in the Service of Regeneration of the Jews in Arabic Press and Journalism in the 19th and 20th Centuries," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 59, No. 3 (2006): 389.

[26] Müller-Sommerfeld, "The League of Nations," 265.

[27] Ibid., 266.

[28] This secularizing wave was in response to national discussions around the dangers of sectarianism. They argued that nationalism would transcend sectarian differences, and so religion should not enter into a citizen's politics. See Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 63.

[29] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 63.

[30] Snir, "Arabic in the Service of Regeneration," 291.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Morad, et al., *Iraq's Last Jews*, 20.

[33] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 61.

[34] Snir, "Arabic in the Service of Regeneration," 292.

[35] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 60.

[36] Interview with Salim Fattal by Tamar Morad, July 31, 2006, ASFR.

[37] Interview with Doreen Dangoor by Tamar Morad, July 18, 2006, ASFR.

[38] Interview with Heskel Haddad by Robert Shasha, January 27, 2004, ASFR.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Morad, et al., *Iraq's Last Jews*, 19.

[41] Interview with Heskel Haddad by Robert Shasha, January 27, 2004, ASFR.

[42] Chelsie May, "'Girls of the Eastern Communities': The Intersectionality of Iraqi-Jewish Immigrants in Israel/Palestine 1947-1960," *Journal of Jewish Identities* 11, no. 2 (2018): 250.

[43] Chelsie May, "'Not a Figure in the Past': Zionist Imperial Whiteness, the Iraqi Communist Party, and Their Reverberating Histories of Race and Gender, 1941–1951," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 16, no. 1 (2020): 47.

[44] Interview with Salim Fattal by Tamar Morad, July 31, 2006, ASFR.

[45] Morad, et al., *Iraq's Last Jews*, 41.

[46] Eppel, "The Elite," 223.

[47] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 72.

[48] Ibid, 16.

[49] S. R. Goldstein-Sabbah, "Jewish Education in Baghdad: Communal Space vs. Public Space," in *Modernity, Minority, and the Public Sphere: Jews and Christians in the Middle East*, ed. S. R. Goldstein-Sabbah and H. L. Murre-van den Berg (Leiden, NL; Boston: Brill, 2016), 97.

[50] Goldstein-Sabbah, "Jewish Education in Baghdad," 99.

[51] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 69.

[52] Eppel, "The Elite," 223.

[53] Goldstein-Sabbah, "Jewish Education in Baghdad," 103.

[54] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 69.

[55] Goldstein-Sabbah, "Jewish Education in Baghdad," 109.

[56] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 73.

[57] Interview with Salim Fattal by Tamar Morad, July 31, 2006, ASFR.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Goldstein-Sabbah, "Jewish Education in Baghdad," 101.

[60] Interview with Salim Fattal by Tamar Morad, July 31, 2006, ASFR.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Interview with Heskel Haddad by Tamar Morad, January 27, 2004, ASFR.

[63] Goldstein-Sabbah, "Jewish Education in Baghdad," 115.

[64] Interview with Doreen Dangoor by Tamar Morad, July 18, 2006, ASFR.

[65] Goldstein-Sabbah, "Jewish Education in Baghdad," 115.

[66] Interview with Doreen Dangoor by Tamar Morad, July 18, 2006, ASFR.

[67] Here I refer to the Farhūd as pogrom. While a disputed term, I will defer to its use by other prominent historians in the field. Reference to the Farhūd as a pogrom can be found in: Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 101; Yehuda, *The New Babylonian Diaspora*, 18; and Esther Meir-Glitzenstein's *Zionism in an Arab Country: Jews in Iraq in the 1940s*, (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), 35.

[68] Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 23.

[69] Yehuda, *The New Babylonian Diaspora*, 252.

[70] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 113.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Yehuda, *The New Babylonian Diaspora*, 259.

[73] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 117.

[74] Interview with Salim Fattal by Tamar Morad, July 31, 2006, ASFR.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Interview with Heskel Haddad by Robert Shasha, January 27, 2004, ASFR.

[77] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 119 and 122.

[78] Interview with Doreen Dangoor by Tamar Morad, July 18, 2006, ASFR.

[79] Yehuda, *The New Babylonian Diaspora*, 266.

[80] Interview with Doreen Dangoor by Tamar Morad, July 18, 2006, ASFR.

[81] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 123.

[82] Al-Kabir, Ibrahim, "Evidence Given to Palestine's Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, Which Visited Baghdad," in *Modern Middle Eastern Jewish Thought, Writings on Identity, Politics and Culture, 1893-1958*, ed. Moshe Behar and Zvi Ben-Dor Benite (Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2013), 139.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 57

[85] Ibid.

[86] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 141.

[87] Ibid, 154.

Yehuda, *The New Babylonian Diaspora*, 266.
[88] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 117.

[89] Ibid, 158.

[90] Ibid, 142.

[91] Ibid, 148.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid, 155.

[94] Interview with Salim Fattal by Tamar Morad, July 31, 2006, ASFR.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Yehuda, *The New Babylonian Diaspora*, 118.

[99] Esther Meir-Glitzenstein, *Zionism in an Arab Country: Jews in Iraq in the 1940s* (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), 48.

[100] Meir-Glitzenstein, *Zionism in an Arab Country: Jews in Iraq in the 1940s*, 11.

[101] Yehuda, *The New Babylonian Diaspora*, 121.

[102] Ibid, 123.

[103] Interview with Heskel Haddad by Robert Shasha, January 27, 2004, ASFR.

[104] Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 67.

[105] Bashkin, *New Babylonians*, 155.

[106] Ibid, 155.

[107] Interview with Heskel Haddad by Robert Shasha, January 27, 2004, ASFR.

[108] Yehuda, *The New Babylonian Diaspora*, 55.

[109] Ibid, 55.

[110] Interview with Salim Fattal by Tamar Morad, July 31, 2006, ASFR.

[111] Interview with Doreen Dangoor by Tamar Morad, July 18, 2006, ASFR.

[112] Yehuda, *The New Babylonian Diaspora*, 123.

[113] Ibid, 123.

[114] Interview with Doreen Dangoor by Tamar Morad, July 18, 2006, ASFR.

[115] Ibid.

[116] This identification with Iraq, in this case feeling a persistent connection and kinship with the land and its people, and in some cases the longing to return to an idealized past can be seen in many of the other oral histories in this series. See for example, interviews in Morad, et al., *Iraq's Last Jews*. It is also present in many of the memoirs written by the Iraqi Jewish community in diaspora. A discussion of several of such memoirs and modes of identification with Iraq among the diaspora can be found in Lital Levy's "Self and the City: Literary Representations of Jewish Baghdad," *Prooftexts* 26, no. 1-2 (2006): 163-211. https://doi.org/10.2979/pft.2006.26.1-2.163.

[117] See Sadeh and Houwink ten Cate, "Toward a Global Intellectual History," 319-324, and Paul S. Rowe, ed *Routledge Handbook of Minorities in the Middle East* (New York, USA: Routledge, 2019).

[118] Aline Schlaepfer, "Defining Minorities: Mission Impossible? The Case of Hashemite Iraq," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 50, no. 4 (2018): 771.