

Edwin Shuker ~ “We Dreamt Of Being Expelled.” Being Jewish In Iraq

Growing up Jewish in Baghdad Edwin Shuker remembers one thing very clearly: the desire to run away and lead a normal life with his family. The road to London was far from easy...

World Jewish Congress - “We disappeared.” The story Of Jewish Refugees From The Middle East And North Africa

The stories of the people who witnessed the end of Jewish life in their countries of origin, from Iraq to Libya, and were forced to start from scratch: the Jewish refugees from the Middle East and North Africa. Jewish presence in Arab countries long predates Islam and the Arab conquest of the Middle East and goes back to Biblical times. According to official statistics, over 850,000 Jews were forced to leave their homes in Arab countries between 1948 and the early 1970s. Today, there are fewer than 7,000 Jews left.

Watch the testimonies here: <http://ow.ly/EdeIN>

Violette Shamash ~ Memories Of Eden. When Baghdad Was Beautiful

Imagine a world with no running water or electricity, scorching heat and the constant fear of cholera. Imagine a warren of alleys no wider than a cart. Cows are being milked on doorsteps, street barbers are giving shaves, pulling teeth and lancing boils. Barefoot water-sellers are bent double under their heavy goatskins.

It is 1912 and we are in old Baghdad. To us it sounds like hell. Yet Violette Shamash, born into an affluent family, adored its positive side: sleeping under the stars, hearing the call of the nightingale, smelling scents of gardenias and spices, riding to school on donkey-back. For her it was a kind of Eden. Violette was a privileged witness to a time when nearly 40% of Baghdad was Jewish and Jews, Moslems and Christians embraced each other's differences. Her insights into domestic life, and a society coming to terms with the 20th century, are candid, entertaining, and often very amusing. However, in 1941, disaster struck the oldest community in the Diaspora. A brutal massacre took place over two days of rioting and sounded the death-knell for the Jews of Babylon.

This slideshow contains images from Violette's book, [*Memories of Eden*](#), which not only provides a unique insight into the culture and customs of the Jews of Iraq, but also shows everyday life as experienced by everyone at a time when Baghdadis lived together side by side, in mutual respect, irrespective of religion. William Shawcross has called it "an astonishing record, telling the story of a cultivated and well integrated Jewish community in the heart of Muslim Arabia during the end of the Ottoman Empire and the British Mandate. A superb account of a long forgotten time which is barely imaginable now." Further reviews and comments from academics and literary critics can be seen on our website. We would very much welcome your views and opinions via our blog: <http://memoriesofeden.wordpress.com>

מרכז מורשת יהדות בבל [?] סרטון תדמית

The Babylonian Jewry Heritage Center was established in 1973 to preserve the history of the Jewish community in Iraq and to ensure that it remains part of the future narrative of the Jewish nation. To this end, the Center fosters research, preservation and publication of the culture and folklore of Iraqi Jewry.

Adjacent to the Center is the Museum of Babylonian Jewry, opened to the public in 1988 and exhibiting chapters from the history of Babylonian Jewry throughout the generations over the course of more than 2,600 years.

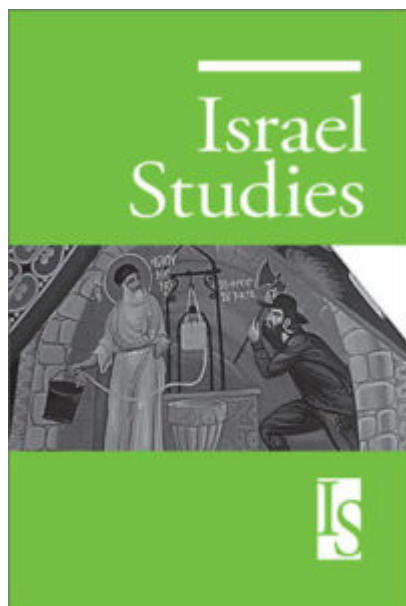
The Jews Of Baghdad

Iraqi Jews had a significant role in the country's contemporary history until the infamous "Farhood" ; AKA the Jewish Exodus from Iraq.

This brief video reminds us of some contributions to Iraq's social and cultural spheres made by its Jewish community.

Avi Picard ~ Like A Phoenix: The Renaissance Of Sephardic/Mizrahi

Identity In Israel In The 1970s and 1980s



Abstract

During Israel's first decades, conflict between immigrants from Islamic countries and the Israeli establishment focused on questions regarding equality. The immigrants protested against discrimination in the labor market, against poor housing conditions, and against police brutality. The question of Mizrahi culture and identity was barely mentioned. In the 1970s and 1980s, however, the ethnic discourse in Israel shifted from economic issues to cultural issues. Different groups challenged the school curriculum, asking for more attention to the history and literature of Jews from Islamic countries. Mizrahi music started to develop on the fringe of the Israeli musical scene and moved slowly into the mainstream. Political parties (Tami and Shas) identified with Mizrahi identity and emphasizing it, started to appear and to achieve success. This article provides examples of the expression of identity and culture in different fields and analyzes the causes of this change.

The paper online (PDF-Format): https://www.researchgate.net/Like_a_Phoenix

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