FOREWORD

Jews as Native Iraqis: An Introduction

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Nissim Rejwan tells us, quoting W. H. Auden, that he always fought for the right to remain “a private face in a private place.” Readers of good faith will want to respect his declared intentions. Yet those who have found their way to this memoir are, like the author himself, unlikely to have avoided the bruising impact of the powerful political forces that overwhelmed the private interests and aspirations of most Iraqi Jews and terminated centuries of Muslim-Jewish coexistence.

Over a century of Arab-Zionist conflict has made it difficult for those with no direct experience of it to imagine Jews like Nissim Rejwan as an indigenous, indeed a vital, presence in Arab and Muslim societies and cultures. Nowhere were Jews more deeply rooted and culturally assimilated than in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley. The profound Jewish symbiosis with the other communities of what was constituted as Iraq after 1921 — Sunni and Shi‘i Muslim Arabs, Kurds and Turcomans, Assyrian and Aramean Christians, and Yazidis — is the indispensable point of reference for understanding the cultural and political context of *The Last Jews in Baghdad*.

The modern state of Iraq was formed out of three provinces of the Ottoman Empire: Baghdad in the center, Mosul in the north, and Basra in the south. During the nineteenth century the Jewish communities of these provinces, and especially the city of Baghdad, grew dramatically in number and prosperity. In the early nineteenth century there were about 10,000 Jews in Baghdad and less than 1,500 in Basra. By 1908 Jews constituted 53,000 of Baghdad’s 150,000 inhabitants.¹ The last Ottoman yearbook for Baghdad enumerated 80,000 Jews among the city’s 202,200 residents in 1917.² By 1947, according to the national census, Jews comprised 118,000 of the total Iraqi population of 4.5 million (2.6 percent; unofficial estimates range as high as 130,000). Jews were highly concentrated in the largest cities with 77,500 in Baghdad, 10,500 in Basra, and 10,300

in Mosul. Smaller Jewish communities resided in every province of the country. The dramatic increase in the size of the Iraqi Jewish community complemented the enhanced prosperity of its commercial and financial elite and the cultural prominence of its intelligentsia.

Jews served as the bankers of the governors of the Ottoman provinces of Mesopotamia as early as the eighteenth century. From the second half of the nineteenth century to the 1950s they also dominated long-distance trade from the Tigris-Euphrates valley to India and Europe. The rise of the Jewish merchants of Baghdad and Basra was enabled by the end of the commercial monopoly of the British East India Company in 1813, the expansion of the port of Basra, and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Members of Jewish mercantile families settled in Bombay, Calcutta, Rangoon, Singapore, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and England. Jews residing in Britain and its colonies came under British protection, giving them legal and economic advantages over Muslims that facilitated the establishment of commercial networks extending back to Mesopotamia. The presence of family and trusted community members abroad allowed Jews to engage in banking and financing of long-distance trade more easily than Muslims and Christians without such connections. Jewish merchants, although they traded mostly in Indian and British goods, were not simply compradors. They competed with British businessmen more often than they collaborated with them. The extent of Jewish commercial dominance is expressed by their preponderant presence in Baghdad's leading commercial and financial institutions. In 1938–1939 ten of the twenty-five “first-class” members of the Baghdad Chamber of Commerce were Jews, and Jews comprised 43.2 percent of the chamber's 498 members. In 1936, thirty-five of the thirty-nine bankers and money changers in Baghdad were Jews.³

The Sassoons were the most prominent of the Jewish business families. “The Rothschilds of the East,” as they were known, maintained a far-flung commercial, agricultural, and textile-manufacturing network with interests in India, Iran, China, Japan, and England in addition to Iraq. Families like the Sassoons constituted only 5 percent of the Jewish community. The great majority, like their urban Muslim and Christian neighbors, were either poor or small merchants, artisans, and white-collar employees of middling income.

Britain occupied Mesopotamia in 1917. That conquest was legitimized by a League of Nations mandate, and Britain remained the ultimate power in the country until Iraq gained independence in 1932. The elite elements of the Jewish community prospered during the British man-

date; their business and political interests were generally compatible with British overlordship. Britain remained a substantial factor in Iraqi politics until 1958 through its military bases and dominant role in the petroleum industry.

The British installed Faysal I as king of Iraq in 1921. He was committed to forging a new, civic national identity which would unite Sunni and Shi'i Muslims, Christians, and Jews as Iraqis. Prominent Jews enjoyed good relations with the monarchy. The constitution of 1925 guaranteed the equality of all before the law, freedom of religion, and the right of minority communities to maintain schools in their own languages.

Elite Jews accepted Faysal's vision of a civic Iraqi identity, and several of them occupied high political offices in the mandate period. A smaller but still significant number remained politically prominent in the first years of independent Iraq as well. Sassoon Hesqel, one of the most prominent men of Baghdad in the first half of the twentieth century, served as minister of finance from 1921 until 1932. Ibrahim al-Kabir served as director general of the Ministry of Finance. Da'ud Samra sat on the High Court of Appeal from 1923 until he retired in 1946. Jews won five parliamentary seats in the 1925 elections—two each from Baghdad and Basra and one from Mosul. Menahem Salih Daniel (1925–1932) and then his son Ezra Ben Menahem Daniel represented the Jews in the Senate.

The Arab-Jewish communities of Yemen and the Tunisian island of Jerba continued to write primarily in Hebrew or Judeo-Arabic (Arabic in Hebrew script) into the twentieth century. Many Jews of North Africa and the Levant used French as their lingua franca. In contrast, Iraqi Jews spoke the Baghdadi Jewish dialect of Arabic at home and, from the late nineteenth century, adopted standard Arabic as their language of culture.

In 1864 the Jewish community of Baghdad opened the first modern school for boys in the three Ottoman provinces of the Tigris-Euphrates valley. Administration of the school was entrusted to the Alliance Israélite Universelle—an organization of French Jews which espoused a *mission civilisatrice* to Europeanize Middle Eastern Jews by providing them with a French, secular education. The Alliance opened a girls' school in Baghdad in 1893 and two more schools for boys in the early years of the twentieth century as well as schools in Basra, Mosul, and several smaller cities. Many Iraqi Jews developed a fondness for French and English and sometimes positioned themselves as translators from these languages to Arabic. But by and large the Jewish communities rejected the Alliance's policy of adopting French as the sole language of instruction. Most Jewish schools retained Arabic as the language of instruction, and their students

attained high levels of mastery. The Alliance lost the struggle over the language of instruction, and all but the first two Baghdad schools reverted to administration by the local Iraqi Jewish communities during the mandate era.⁴

The network of schools established after 1864 enabled Jews to become, on the whole, better educated than their Muslim neighbors in the first half of the twentieth century. The influence of the Alliance promoted the secularization of the Jewish community. While many Jews became more cosmopolitan than their neighbors because of their exposure to English and French, the majority remained in the Arabo-Muslim cultural orbit.

The economic and social prominence of the Jewish elite, their integration into the newly established Iraqi state, and the community's embrace of Arabic were the basis for the "Iraqi orientation" adopted by the great majority of Jews. Most saw Iraq as their homeland, and many sought to contribute to building up the new state and society, while differing widely on how this should be done. The Iraqi orientation of the Jewish community enabled members of its intelligentsia to become significant figures in the formation of modern Iraqi Arabic culture.

More than a decade before the first Arabic press, Baruch Moshe Mizrahi established the first printing press in Baghdad in 1853.⁵ Several other Jews established presses in the second half of the nineteenth century. These early presses published works in Hebrew and Judeo-Arabic. But soon after the turn of the century use of Hebrew became restricted to religious purposes. The secularization of the Jewish community was well underway, and Arabic was becoming the preferred language of the Jewish intelligentsia.

The 1908 Young Turk revolution consolidated the inclination of the Jewish literati to write in standard Arabic. Many Jews throughout the Ottoman Empire embraced the ideal of equality of all religious and ethnic groups on the basis of a common Ottoman civic identity that the new regime advocated. The abrogation of censorship and the restoration of the Ottoman constitution produced a flurry of new periodicals in the Arab provinces. Among them were three Baghdadi newspapers with substantial Jewish participation. The first two appeared in late 1909: the bilingual Arabic-Turkish *al-Zuhur*, edited by Nissim Yusuf Somekh and Rashid Effendi al-Saffar, and the Arabic *Bayn al-Nahrayn*, edited by Ishaq Hesel and Menachem 'Ani. The bilingual *Tafakkur*, owned by Sulayman 'Anbar, appeared in 1912.⁶ The first book in standard Arabic written by a Jew was *The Ottoman Revolution* (Baghdad, 1909) by Salim Ishaq, a lawyer and secretary to the chief rabbi, Ezra Dangoor.

The first works of Arabic fiction in Iraq appeared after World War I. By then there was a critical mass of Jews who were both well-educated in Arabic and familiar with Western literature, which they brought into conversation with emerging forms of Arabic literary modernism. The following paragraphs offer brief summaries of the accomplishments of many Iraqi Jewish writers of fiction, poetry, drama, cultural criticism, and journalism as well as actors and musicians. Those unfamiliar with this cultural phenomenon may find the detail overwhelming. I felt it important to mention these names (many others have been omitted) in order to demonstrate the extent of Jewish participation in modern Iraqi Arabic culture.

In 1922 Murad Mikha'il (1906–1986) published one of the first Arabic short stories in Iraq: “He Died for His Country, She Died for Love” (“Shahid al-watan wa-shahidat al-hubb”).⁷ Mikha'il also wrote poetry, and his innovative free verse was noticed by major Iraqi poets like Ma'ruf al-Rusafi. Over a dozen other Jewish writers made their debut in the 1920s, including Anwar Sha'ul (1904–1984), Ezra Haddad (1909–1972), and Salman Shina (1898–1978). Shina, a lawyer and member of the Iraqi parliament, established the Arabic language Jewish newspaper *al-Misbah* (The Candelabrum), which appeared regularly from 1924 to 1927 with a few issues in 1928 and 1929.

Anwar Sha'ul, a graduate of the Alliance school in Baghdad, was the outstanding member of this group. He was a lawyer and the legal advisor to the private treasury of the royal household from 1935 to 1949. In the 1940s he defended Jews charged with being Communists. His literary works include translations of two volumes of Western short stories as well as French and English plays into Arabic. Although he served as the first editor of *al-Misbah*, Sha'ul, like the other Jewish authors of his generation, generally did not address specifically Jewish concerns. This first generation of Jewish literati wrote as Iraqi patriots. Sha'ul opposed the British mandate, wrote poems praising the monarchy, and supported the emancipation of women and human rights.⁸ In 1929 Sha'ul established a weekly literary journal, *al-Hasid*, which featured articles by many young Jewish and non-Jewish authors, including Sha'ul's wife, Esterian Ibrahim, and five other women until it ceased publication in 1938.

The appearance of *al-Hasid* marked the development of a second generation of Jewish authors. Shalom Darwish (1913–1998?) published his first short stories and critical essays in *al-Hasid* in 1929. Two volumes of his collected stories appeared in the 1940s. Both Muslim and Jewish critics consider Darwish to be the most talented of the first two cohorts of Iraqi Jewish short story writers and a significant figure in Iraqi liter-

ary history.⁹ In addition to his literary accomplishments, Darwish was an activist in the National Democratic party.

Trained as an economist, Me'ir Basri (b. 1911) edited the journal of the Baghdad Chamber of Commerce from 1938 to 1945. Although Basri was not a major poet, he was among the first Iraqis to write sonnets and free verse. Ya'qub Bilbul (1920–2003) succeeded Basri as the editor of the journal of the Baghdad Chamber of Commerce (1945–1951). Bilbul and Basri both revived the Andalusian strophic forms of poetry known as *muwashshahat*. Bilbul published his first book of short stories in 1938 after graduating from the Alliance school. He is considered one of the first writers of social realist fiction in Iraq.¹⁰

The first modern Arabic play in Mesopotamia was written in 1888 by a Christian and performed in Mosul the next year. Jews had their own traditional theater based on the religious calendar. The Alliance schools introduced modern drama to the curriculum. *Queen Esther*, which debuted in 1908, was apparently the first play performed at the Baghdad Alliance boys' school. It may also have been among the first Arabic plays performed in Baghdad; previously plays in Turkish were offered by visiting troupes. Just before World War I Khadduri Shahrabani organized a Jewish company that performed theater pieces in Arabic in Basra and India. He resumed his theatrical activity in Baghdad after the war. Before World War I most of the dramatic productions by Jews were staged before mainly Jewish audiences. Because drama is usually performed in dialect, the existence of distinct communal dialects in Baghdad delayed the integration of the pioneering theatrical activities of Jews into the common Iraqi culture. But by the 1920s Jewish actors and directors were performing for mixed audiences. There were many well-known Jewish actors in addition to the preeminent Khadduri Shahrabani. In 1926 Prime Minister 'Abd al-Muhsin al-Sa'dun attended an Arabic production of Corneille's *Le Cid* directed by Shahrabani and featuring actors of the Literary Reform Bookshop. Sa'dun was so impressed that he recommended that a second performance be arranged in honor of King Faysal. The king attended and gave his approval. The texts of only a handful of plays written by Jews survive. *Loyalty and Betrayal* (1927) by Salman Ya'qub Darwish and *After His Brother's Death* (1931) by Shalom Darwish were published as was Anwar Sha'ul's Arabic translation and elaboration of Richard Sheridan's *Wilhelm Tell*. Others exist only in manuscript form. Shmu'el Moreh, an Iraqi Jew and professor of Arabic Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem who has written extensively on Arabic literary production of Iraqi Jews, could not locate copies of the published works of Eliyahu

Khadduri, Hesqel Ibrahim Nissim, and Eliyahu Smira. Smira's student, Salman 'Abd Allah, wrote two plays in the Muslim Arabic dialect, but only the text of one in the Jewish dialect, *The Wedding in Baghdad*, is preserved.¹¹

Jews were active in the revival of the classical Iraqi *maqam*, which was promoted by Prime Minister Nuri al-Sa'id and other prominent figures of the mandate and early independence period. The Iraqi *maqam* is a musical suite—a complex local variant of the musical form common in Arab, Turkish, and Persian cultures with origins in the 'Abbasid period (750–1258). Salman Moshe (1880–1955) and Hesqel Qassab were well-known *maqam* singers. Among the female vocalists who became popular in the 1920s was Salima Murad (1900–1972)—the Jewish wife of Nazim al-Ghazali, a Muslim and the student of Muhammad al-Qubbanchi, the leading Iraqi *maqam* singer of the twentieth century. Most Jewish *maqam* artists were instrumentalists, not vocalists. Many Jews performed in the ensembles that accompanied *maqam* singers known as the *tchalgi Baghdadi*. In 1932 al-Qubanshi appeared at the Cairo Music Congress, the first international Arabic music festival. All but one member of the *tchalgi Baghdadi* that accompanied him were Jews. Hesqel Mu'allim accompanied the Egyptian diva, Umm Kulthum, when she performed in Iraq in the 1930s. The brothers Salih and Da'ud Kuwaiti were the best-known Jewish *maqam* musicians.¹²

Jewish participation in Iraqi culture and politics diminished somewhat in the mid-1930s. King Faysal I died in 1933 and was succeeded by the weak King Ghazi until he died in a car crash in 1939. During those years Nazi propaganda disseminated by the German Ambassador found an audience among pan-Arabist army officers who fiercely opposed Britain's continuing influence in Iraq. A series of military coups beginning in 1936 undermined the liberal promise of the 1925 constitution. In 1935 the teaching of Hebrew, except for the Bible, was proscribed.

Despite these pressures, Jews remained a prominent presence in Iraqi cultural life. In 1937 the foremost Iraqi neoclassical poet, Muhammad Mahdi al-Jawahiri (1900–1997), wrote a newspaper article criticizing the decision of the Jewish community to raise the tax on kosher meat and expressing his support for poor Jews who would be burdened by the increase. The military government arrested him for inciting communal strife. In jail he wrote a satirical poem criticizing the government and referring to this affair using the Hebrew word *kashair* and its opposite, *taraiif*.¹³

Al-Hasid was forced to close in 1938 by a combination of economic and

anti-Jewish pressures due to its outspoken anti-Nazi stand. It was the last of the Jewish-owned Iraqi periodicals. But many Jews remained active in Arabic journalism and letters in the 1940s and 1950s, writing and editing for periodicals owned by Muslims or Christians.

The Jewish journalists and authors of the post-World War II period constitute a third generation, which was, on the whole, more sharply politicized than its predecessors. Communism was the most popular political current among young Jews in the 1940s. Its greatest rival was Zionism, which became significant only after the 1941 anti-Jewish riot known as the *farhud*. The mildly social democratic National Democratic party, the populist al-Ahali group, the centrist Liberal party, and the People's party all won adherents among the Jewish intelligentsia. These were democratic and Iraqist, not pan-Arab, political tendencies. Many Jews were eager to be Iraqi Arabs. But like most Arabic-speaking minorities, they were suspicious of the romantic and racist aspects of pan-Arabism. Moreover, in Iraq pan-Arabism was associated with the continuing dominance of the Sunni Arab minority.

The proclamation of the state of Israel in 1948 and the participation of the Iraqi army in the failed Arab effort to block its establishment increased pressures on the entire Iraqi Jewish community, even though only a minority actively supported Zionism. The beginning of the end of prominent Jewish participation in Iraqi journalism was signaled by the removal of the two Jewish editors of the daily *al-Barid al-Yawmi* in 1948 following their arrest without charges. Yet many remained in the profession, some even after the mass Jewish emigration to Israel in 1950–1951. Na'im Tuwayq worked at the daily *al-Ahali* from 1934 to 1937 and resumed work at the paper in 1942 when it became the organ of the National Democratic party. From 1938 to 1963 he worked for the daily *al-Zaman*. Menashe Za'ur was the editor of *al-Iraq*, owned by Razzuq Ghannam, and then of the evening daily *al-Hawadith* till he left for Israel in 1955. Murad al-'Imari worked at the daily *al-Sha'b* from 1944, the year of its appearance, until 1946 and then for the National Democratic party's *al-Ahali* until 1952, when he became a reporter for the English-language daily the *Iraq Times*, where he remained until 1963. He also worked as a radio broadcaster from 1944 to 1946. Menashe Somekh sat on the editorial board of *al-Sha'b* until he left for Israel in 1950. Suhayl Ibrahim (Edward Sha'ul, b. 1918) edited *Sawt al-Ahrar*, the journal of the Liberal party, until he too left for Israel in 1950. Salim al-Bassun sat on the editorial boards of many papers, including *al-Sha'b*, *al-Bilad*, *al-Siyasa*, *al-Istiqlal*, and, after the overthrow of the monarchy in 1958, *al-Jumhuriyya*.¹⁴

Nissim Rejwan belongs to this literary generation. From 1946 to 1948 he wrote movie and book reviews regularly for the *Iraq Times*. He frequented a left-leaning, modernist literary circle centered on Al-Rabita Bookshop where he worked. The proprietor of Al-Rabita, ‘Abd al-Fattah (Abdel Fattah) Ibrahim, had been a leader of the *al-Ahali* group in the 1930s and founded the small and short-lived Marxisant National Union party in 1946. Al-Rabita Bookshop was closed in 1948, and Rejwan left for Israel in 1951.

The most prominent Jewish authors of the post-World War II era are Sami Mikha’il (b. 1926) and Shimon Ballas (b. 1930), both members of the Communist party, and Naim Kattan, Esperance Cohen (b. 1930), Yitzhak Bar-Moshe (1927–2003), Nir Shoheit (b. 1928), Sasson Somekh (b. 1933), Shmu’el Moreh (b. 1933), David Tzemah (1933–1998), and Samir Naqqash (b. 1937). They are indelibly marked by the decisive rupture between Jews and the rest of Iraqi society—the mass emigration of all but some five thousand to ten thousand Jews to Israel in 1950–1951. The demise of the Jewish community of Iraq was the result of a complex dynamic involving the pro-British and promonarchical sympathies of the Jewish business elite, the corrosive effects of Nazi propaganda in the 1930s, the delegitimization of the monarchy because of its links to British imperialism, pan-Arab nationalism, and the Arab-Zionist conflict.

Several Iraqi Jewish authors did not leave in 1950–1951. Anwar Sha’ul and Me’ir Basri considered themselves Arab Iraqis of Jewish faith. They continued to write poetry glorifying Iraq and the Arabs. In 1968 the Ba’th came to power and began to persecute Jews harshly. A show trial culminated in the public hanging of twelve Jews on fabricated charges of spying for Israel in January 1969. Basri was arrested without reason. Sha’ul unsuccessfully appealed for his release, but to no avail. One day a leading figure in the regime, Salih al-Mahdi, heard one of Sha’ul’s poems in praise of Iraq recited on television. Its opening lines are:

Though it be from Moses that I draw my faith,
yet I live shaded by the followers of Muhammad.
The tolerance of Islam is my salvation,
the wisdom of the Qur’an is my inspiration.

Al-Mahdi was so impressed with the poem that he ordered Basri’s release.¹⁵ Even after this incident Sha’ul continued to write panegyrics to Arabism. At the Conference of Arab Writers in Baghdad in April 1969 he recited:

My heart beats with love of the Arabs, my mouth speaks
 their language proudly . . .
 I love my precious homeland, and those who ennobled
 me with their love.¹⁶

Nonetheless, between 1971 and 1974 Sha'ul and Basri as well as the journalists Salim al-Bassun, Murad al-'Imari, and Na'im Tuwayq left Iraq. Basri went to London; the others to Israel. Nissim Rejwan's friend, Naim Kattan, left Iraq in 1946, immigrating to Canada. Their departure brought an end to the Iraqi orientation of the Jewish community.

The discrimination and denigration of their culture that Iraqi Jews faced in Israel—slyly alluded to by Nissim Rejwan's pithy account of being dusted with DDT on arriving at Lydda airport—do not justify a triumphalist Zionist attitude toward their history. Nostalgia has been a popular genre for the recovery of Iraqi Jewish culture. But nostalgic representation alone risks trivializing Iraqi Jewish culture as a minor folklore ancillary to “mainstream” Israeli Hebrew culture. Tragedy evokes the sense of loss, but disregards cultural endurance and adaptation.

Although the physical connection to Iraq was broken, Iraqi Jewish culture was not extinguished when the great majority of the community immigrated to Israel. Shimon Ballas, Sami Mikha'il, and Sasson Somekh continued to write in Arabic in the press of the Communist party of Israel. Although they eventually shifted to writing in Hebrew, their work is permeated with Iraqi influences and themes. Ballas and Mikha'il have both written novels critically portraying the disdainful attitude of the Zionist and Israeli authorities toward the culture of Middle Eastern Jewish immigrants and their inequitable treatment in Israel: Ballas's *The Transit Camp* (*ha-Ma'abara*, 1964) and Mikha'il's *All Men Are Equal—But Some Are More* (*Shavim ve-shavim yoter*, 1974). Neither is available in English. Mikha'il's *Refuge* (*Hasut*, 1977), one of the few Hebrew novels by a Middle Eastern Jew to be translated into English, draws on his experience in the Communist party of Iraq. Ballas became a professor of Arabic Literature at Haifa University and continues to write occasional literary essays in Arabic. Sasson Somekh became a professor of Arabic Literature at Tel Aviv University and has written about Egyptian and Iraqi Jewish Arabic writers. Yitzhak Bar-Moshe and Samir Naqqash still write only in Arabic. The other Iraqi Jewish immigrant writers adopted Hebrew as soon as they could. Eli 'Amir (b. 1937) was born in Baghdad and left for Israel with his family in 1950. He was sent to school in a kibbutz. His autobiographical novel—available in English as *Scapegoat* (*Tarnigol kaparot*, 1983)—

evokes the humiliation he, his family, and his friends faced as they attempted to integrate into an Israeli society dominated by European Jews who did not imagine that Arabic speaking Jews could have a culture worth preserving.

In the 1950s and 1960s Middle Eastern music was considered “primitive” in Israel; more recently it has become quite popular. For the last eighteen years elderly Iraqi Jewish musicians have gathered every Monday to play at Pardes Katz.¹⁷ Yair Dallal, born in Israel in 1955 and trained as a classical European violinist, has achieved international recognition as an *‘ud* player. He preserves the Iraqi Jewish musical heritage and brings it into dialogue with other regional musical traditions through his performances with various Middle Eastern artists.

No single mode can capture the full variety of the Iraqi Jewish community’s experiences and the diverse understandings of those experiences by differently positioned individuals. The linguistic range of the efforts to recall and record it exemplifies this diversity of experience. Anwar Sha’ul published his autobiography in Arabic, even as he lived in Israel.¹⁸ Naim Kattan wrote an autobiographical novel in French while living in Canada.¹⁹ Sasson Somekh has written several newspaper articles in Hebrew, which herald the appearance of a full-length memoir.²⁰ All three wrote in Arabic when they lived in Iraq. Finally, Nissim Rejwan offers us this memoir in English. The multiple languages used by the authors of these texts throughout their careers exemplify the hybrid cosmopolitan cultural identities that simultaneously made Jews an integral part of Iraq and ultimately excluded them from it.

Notes

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2. Sylvia G. Haim, “Aspects of Jewish Life in Baghdad under the Monarchy,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 12, no. 2 (May 1976): 188. These statistics must be regarded as estimates, hence the inconsistency between the 1908 and 1917 figures.

3. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 244, 246, 250. “First Class” members were the wealthiest with a “financial consideration” (capital and business volume) of 22,500 to 75,000 dinars.

4. Zvi Yehuda, “Iraqi Jewry and Cultural Change in the Educational Activity

of the Alliance Israélite Universelle,” in Harvey E. Goldberg, ed., *Sephardi and Middle Eastern Jewries: History and Culture in the Modern Era* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 134–145.

5. Dafna Tzimhoni, “Kavim le-reshit ha-modernizatzia shel yehudei bavel ba-me’a ha-19 ‘ad shnat 1948,” *Pe’amim* 36 (1988): 31–32.

6. Nisim Kazzaz, *Ha-yehudim be-‘irak ba-me’a ha-‘esrim* (Jerusalem: Mosad Ben-Tzvi le-Heker Kehilot Yisra’el ba-Mizrah, 1991), 147.

7. Sasson Somekh, “Lost Voices: Jewish Authors in Modern Arabic Literature,” in Mark R. Cohen and Abraham L. Udovitch, eds., *Jews among Arabs: Contacts and Boundaries* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1989), 14. The division of Iraqi Jewish authors into three generations is based on this article.

8. Myer Samra, “Shaded by the Followers of Muhammad: The Poet Anwar Sha’ul and the Jews in Iraq,” *Australian Journal of Jewish Studies* 7, no. 2 (1993): 127–129.

9. Nancy Berg, *Exile from Exile: Israeli Writers from Iraq* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 36–37.

10. Shmu’el Moreh, “Arabic Literary Creativity of Jewish Writers in Iraq,” in Shmu’el Moreh, ed., *al-Qissa al-qasira ‘inda yahud al-‘irak / ha-Sipur ha-katsar shel yehudei ‘irak / Short Stories by Jewish Writers from Iraq, 1924–1978* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1981), 23.

11. Shmu’el Moreh, “Ha-te’atron ha-yehudi be-‘irak be-mahatzit ha-rishona shel ha-me’a ha-‘esrim,” *Pe’amim* 23 (1985): 64–98.

12. Neil van der Linden, “The Classical Iraqi *Maqam* and Its Survival,” in Sherifa Zuhur, ed., *Colors of Enchantment: Theater, Dance, Music, and the Visual Arts of the Middle East* (Cairo: American University of Cairo Press, 2001), 321–335.

13. Sasson Somekh, “Rhyme and Reason at Café Baghdad,” *ha-Aretz*, September 10, 1999.

14. Moreh, “Arabic Literary Creativity of Jewish Writers in Iraq,” 19–20.

15. Samra, “Shaded by the Followers of Muhammad,” 131–132.

16. Reuven Snir, “We Were Like Those Who Dream: Iraqi-Jewish Writers in Israel in the 1950s,” *Prooftexts* 11, no. 2 (May 1991): 155.

17. Aviva Luri, “Buena Vista Baghdad Club,” *ha-Aretz*, June 23, 2000.

18. Anwar Sha’ul, *Qissat hayati fi wadi al-rafidayn* (Jerusalem: Rabitat al-Jam’iyyin al-Yahud al-Nazihin min al-‘Iraq, 1980).

19. Naim Kattan, *Adieu, Babylone* (Paris: Julliard, 1976); translated into English as *Farewell, Babylon* (New York: Taplinger, 1980).

20. For example, articles in *ha-Aretz*, September 10, 1999; September 17, 2001; October 5, 2001; January 18, 2002. The memoir was published just as this volume went to press: *Bagdad, etmol* (Tel-Aviv: Ha-Kibutz ha-Meuhad, 2004).