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# Continuity and Change Within an Immigrant Community: The Jews of São Paulo, 1924–1945

Jeff H. Lesser

Between 1920 and 1950 Brazil had one of the most rapidly developing economies in the Southern Hemisphere. Into this setting came a large population of immigrants, some fleeing various forms of persecution, but most hoping to find economic and social mobility in the expanding industrialization process that Brazil had embarked upon. It was in large part during this era that the Brazilian-Jewish community, currently the second largest in Latin America, was formed.<sup>1</sup> The examination of Brazilian Jewry provides an opportunity to study the ways in which conflicts within an immigrant community are shaped by factors in the receiving national society such as economic growth and mass immigration. The applicability of change theories ("melting-pot") and continuity theories will be considered in order to suggest that forms of communal alteration and cultural persistence often occur simultaneously and in highly variable proportions.<sup>2</sup> It is hoped that this examination of the formation of the modern Jewish community of Brazil, a group with a markedly different pattern of development than the large Jewish communities in the United States, Argentina, or Canada, will provide comparative insights into the processes of immigration and ethnic identification, and into the formation of modern Brazilian society, a society strongly marked by its reception of large numbers of immigrants.<sup>3</sup>

For the foreign-born, tension between continuity and change in the nation of relocation always exists. By analyzing one specific aspect of immigrant life, intra-ethnic conflict, the pressures that build up within new communities may be better understood. This essay will suggest that economic and political factors within Brazil between 1924 and 1945 exacerbated long-standing conflicts within the Ashkenazic community.<sup>4</sup> In other words, it will be shown that divisions among Jews which originated in Europe were stimulated and exaggerated in Brazil, and especially in São Paulo, by forces specific to the local situation. By evaluating ethnic, class, religious, and linguistic divisions within Ashkenazic Jewry in Brazil from a perspective of national origin, the interaction between the old world and the new can be probed. In this analytic manner, a better comprehension of Brazilian immigrant history, in

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which ethnic groups have generally been seen as monolithic, will be constructed. The methodology proposed for examining the history of Brazilian Jews, then, may be applied to other ethnic groups, giving a more precise set of terms by which to understand the congeries of immigrants who make up a significant part of the contemporary Brazilian population.

With World War I and its aftermath, Brazil became an important haven for those leaving economically and politically devastated Europe. Between 1914 and 1923 more than 500,000 people made the voyage to Brazil, the majority coming from Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Germany.<sup>5</sup> For many, North, not South America was the preferred destination, and the United States received more than five million newcomers between 1914 and 1924.<sup>6</sup> Restrictive legislation, however, culminating in the 1924 National Origins Act, virtually ended non-Northern European movement to U.S. shores.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, Argentina also began to restrict immigration in the second half of the 1920s as it "deviated from its definite open door policy and began to adopt a policy of selection."<sup>8</sup> Not surprisingly, immigration to Brazil jumped by 50 percent, to 737,000, in the ten-year period after 1924.<sup>9</sup> Among those groups migrating in significantly larger numbers were the Japanese (500 percent) and the Germans (200 percent).<sup>10</sup> Additionally, those fleeing dislocations caused by political and economic upheavals in Eastern Europe, especially in Poland, Rumania, and Lithuania, began journeying for the first time in substantial groups to Brazil. Combined immigration from those nations grew from 9,400 in the decade before 1924 to 93,438 in the decade after.<sup>11</sup>

Jews made up a significant portion of the increased Eastern European migration to Brazil in the years after World War I, and it was during this period that the first significant national Brazilian-Jewish communal organizations were formed.<sup>12</sup> Although Jews were not distinguished in the Brazilian census of 1920, the international organizations which acted as sponsoring groups for most Jewish immigrants did keep track of the numbers of Jews moving to Brazil.<sup>13</sup> The Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), for example, reported that 22,894 Jews migrated to Brazil between 1925 and 1930, and demographers Schmelz and Della Pergola note that "the period of most intensive migration to Brazil was in the late 1920s."<sup>14</sup> The *American Jewish Year Book* reported that the Jewish population of Brazil jumped from 6,000 in 1920 to 30,000 in 1930.<sup>15</sup> Jews, then, appear to have comprised approximately 25 percent of the Eastern European migrants to Brazil after 1924. Subject to many of the same factors encouraging general East European emigration, Jewish relief organizations began seeing Brazil as a viable option for relocation because of its open door policies and opportunity for occupational and social ascension. Given the "economic situation of . . . the East European (Jewish) communities, which worsened since [1917 when] economic and political uncertainty had become the norm even before the rise of Fascism and Nazism," immigration became a response to the combined lack of economic mobility and deteriorating cultural

situation.<sup>16</sup> An increase in popular anti-Jewish movements in Eastern Europe and the closure of U.S. and Argentinian gates further served to encourage Jewish migration to what had been previously believed an unpromising destination.<sup>17</sup>

Jewish life in Brazil prior to 1936 was basically free of internal conflict. Rapid economic ascent left many of the Jewish political groups who formerly held power in Eastern Europe with marginalized institutional significance. Jewish life in São Paulo was easily established as anti-Semitism was minimal when compared to the European situation prior to immigration. Furthermore, wide opportunities for economic and social advancement left the community with few reasons for discord. Importantly, Brazil had not experienced a nineteenth-century German-Jewish immigration such as had occurred in the United States and Argentina. Thus, it was not until the entrance of Central European, mainly German, Jewish refugees in the mid-1930s that a struggle began for leadership of the Brazilian Jewish community. This conflict between Eastern and Central European Jews was fought on the ground of myths transferred from the European milieu and transmuted within the Brazilian setting.<sup>18</sup>

By the end of World War II two very different groups of Ashkenazic Jews jointly populated São Paulo. The pre-1935 migration was of religiously traditional, mainly working-class origin, encouraged by international organizations to seek better economic and social opportunities outside of Eastern Europe. Germany World War II refugees on the other hand, eventually comprising about 25 percent of the Ashkenazic population in São Paulo, migrated to escape a rapidly deteriorating situation under the Nazi regime, and tended to be more urbanized, more socially assimilated with non-Jewish populations, and of mainly professional and managerial class background. In addition, most German Jews were members of the Liberal movement which emphasized religion as less a matter of daily appearance than internal thought. Thus, even matters of religious practice constituted a point of difference among European Jews in Brazil.

It should not be unexpected that Ashkenazic Jewry, united in name by religion but differing in most other regards, clashed upon encounter in Brazil. This certainly was the case in the United States and in Argentina although the nature of the collision differed because German Jews who had migrated in the nineteenth century formed the power base in both nations. Conflicts in São Paulo appear especially divisive, especially when compared with Porto Alegre and Rio de Janeiro, cities with virtually the same ratio of East European to German Jews. Simple transmission of former European enmity, then, does not adequately explain the lack of harmony with São Paulo's community. Rather, Brazilian national political events must be examined in conjunction with economic changes taking place in São Paulo in order to comprehend the factors that encouraged turbulence among Jews in the city.

As early as 1938, just three years after significant numbers of German Jews had begun to settle in São Paulo, the Jewish community began showing the first signs of tension, in part because the

Germans had neither the desire nor the opportunity to enter Jewish communal organizations run by East Europeans. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported that

[a refugee] relief committee, in which the so-called 'East-European Jews' who have been residing in Brazil for many years are not given any representation, has stimulated antagonistic feeling within the Jewish community. In fact, it has split the Jewish community in Brazil into two separate camps, one representing the 'Ost-Juden' who are the bulk of the population, and the other representing the newcomers from Germany.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, almost immediately upon arriving in São Paulo, the German Jewish community formed an organization which would ostensibly represent the interests of the German refugee. It was the *Congregação Israelita Paulista* (CIP) (Jewish Congregation of São Paulo), a religiously Liberal *einheitsgemeinde* (unified community), which acted to encourage social integration through the teaching of Portuguese, and "especially [helped] provide for immigrants."<sup>20</sup>

Under the leadership of the stridently anti-Zionist Dr. Ludwig Lorch, the *Congregação Israelita Paulista* became the focal point of German Jewish life in São Paulo.<sup>21</sup> It is clear that German Jewish leaders believed from the start that existing East European Jewish organizations could not, or would not, provide relief and support for new German refugees. The creation of the CIP, however, was taken by East Europeans as a challenge for leadership of São Paulo's Jewish community. The establishment of the CIP thus provided a German-Jewish forum for expressing intra-group hostilities.

The gauntlet of challenge presented by the *Congregação Israelita Paulista* quickly divided the Jewish community. The conflicts between the *Centro Hebreu Brasileiro* (Brazilian Jewish Center), a loose confederation of Eastern European organizations, and the CIP diverted the Jewish community's energy away from refugee relief, probably the most critical issue of the moment. It was soon apparent to outsiders that differences in what it meant to be Jewish ("ser judeu") would hinder the effective mobilization of resources for the victims of Nazism. In June of 1939 Friedrich Borchardt and David Glick issued a report for the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) which expressed concern over the formation of CIP exactly on these grounds. "(F)orming a religious congregation . . . conducted in a very beautiful manner by an ordained rabbi . . . may segregate the German Jewish group from the . . . East-European Jews," thus preventing the maximization of community efforts towards refugee relief.<sup>22</sup> Implied is that the "beautiful" services of the CIP would be viewed by many in the Eastern European community as "assimilationist," and therefore anti-Jewish. This concern is of particular interest as many Eastern European Jews in São Paulo were highly integrated with non-Jews in the economic sphere, a

situation which had led to an increase in social integration as well.

Members of international Jewish groups were by the late 1930s primarily concerned with the peaceful relocation of Jewish refugees. Having little time to oversee actual resettlement, they were not hesitant about showing dissatisfaction with local groups upon whom this burden fell. Alfred Jaretzki, Jr., Chairman of the JDC's Subcommittee on Refugee Aid in Central and South America, wrote a pointed letter to Ludwig Lorch and Salo Wissman of the CIP expressing annoyance over the division of the community along national/religious lines. "The Subcommittee . . . reiterated its opinion that a program of aid conducted and centered about a German Jewish religious body is disadvantageous from the point of view of Jewry in that it emphasizes differences between Jewish groups which, in their result, must inevitably lead to disharmony and defeat coordinated action."<sup>23</sup> Given the enormous need to maximize donations for refugee support, communal unification was encouraged by the Joint Distribution Committee. Surprisingly, the Joint Distribution Committee used the Congregação Israelita Paulista as its exclusive base in São Paulo, and did not have strong relations with East European Jewish groups.<sup>24</sup>

By 1940 the Jewish community in São Paulo was in the midst of an internal crisis. Getúlio Vargas' *Estado Novo* further exaggerated tensions by beginning the anti-foreigner *brasilidade* campaign. Legislation which both restricted refugee immigration and limited economic opportunities for non-Brazilians profoundly affected Jewish life in São Paulo by promoting tensions which had existed within the community prior to migration. The Nazi government, for example, usually expropriated Jewish money and goods as a condition of emigration. Thus, German Jews often entered Brazil financially dependent on international and local relief organizations, a problem compounded in 1938 when Brazilian legislation made it illegal for aliens without permanent resident status to find jobs.<sup>25</sup> Psychological and financial pressure was especially high for the many Jewish refugees who had entered Brazil with tourist or transit visas, often purchased from Paraguayan consulates in Europe.<sup>26</sup> Such visas, however, gave the holder no employment rights and little guarantee that the status of the visa would be changed.<sup>27</sup> Regulations on tourist visas decreed that foreigners might enter Brazil only "if they can prove that they are able to return to the country whose national they are . . . and that they are in possession of means" to do so.<sup>28</sup> Refugee Jews with tourist visas were thus caught in a bind. In 1940 there were "2600 persons who are not permitted to remain in Brazil and who at the same time are unable to leave the country" to return to Nazi-occupied Europe.<sup>29</sup>

The situation which faced the Jewish community was how to deal with the numerous problems of refugees, many illegally in Brazil. The need to rapidly and efficiently raise money for relief, however, brought out the divisions within São Paulo's Ashkenazic community in a highly developed form. Bruno and Lena Castelnuove, writing to Rachelle S. Yarden, Director of the Latin American

Division of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, expressed concern that tension between Eastern and Central European Jewry was magnified by the lack of economic opportunity which faced German refugees in Brazil:

There exists . . . two powerful factions: the CENTRO HEBREU BRASILEIRO [Eastern European Jews] . . . and the CONGREGAÇÃO ISRAELITA PAULISTA [German and Italian speaking refugees]. When these ten thousand refugees, many of them without any means and without the right to engage in remunerative occupations, descended upon the São Paulo community of some twenty-five thousand East European Jews, they presented a grave problem. (The) CENTRO HEBREU BRASILEIRO protested against (the Congregação's) 'squandering of Jewish money to build a stronghold of assimilationism in Brazil.'<sup>30</sup>

To the Eastern Jews the CIP represented all the negative aspects of assimilationist and non-Zionist German Jewry. It is not surprising that the East European community was unsure if donating money to the CIP for refugee relief was really in their best interests.

The numbers of refugees in São Paulo, the high costs of relief, and the magnification of tension between the CIP and Eastern European organizations led many in the East European community to stop contributing financially to causes which were connected to the Congregação Israelita Paulista. Brazil's Eastern European Jews not only rejected what they saw as the "assimilationist" nature of the CIP, they also assumed, incorrectly, that organizations with Central European members were rich. In fact the CIP would not have survived without the support of the American Joint Distribution Committee. In 1939 it was apparent that "one of the inevitable and understandable consequences resulting from the [creation of the] . . . Congregação Israelita Paulista is the failure of the Jewish community as a whole to give financial support. . . ." to refugee organizations.<sup>31</sup> In other words, Eastern European Jews, afraid that contributions funneled through the CIP might not get to refugees but would instead be used to support Liberal Judaism in Brazil, often refused to donate to CIP fundraisers. A fundraising drive for the relief of Jewish refugees in São Paulo begun in April, 1940 managed to collect only three-quarters of its goal of 500,000 milreis (approximately \$25,000). Dr. Lorch, reporting on the drive's failure, pointedly informed the Joint Distribution Committee that "you overestimate our possibilities [for raising money] . . . This result has only been obtained under greatest efforts, owing to the reserved attitudes of older resident [East European] Jews towards the German Jews."<sup>32</sup> In 1937 one observer reported that the care for incoming refugees had fallen upon those with "a stronger conscience--namely East European Jews."<sup>33</sup> By 1940, however, German Jewish refugees could only count on the financial support of the Congregação Israelita Paulista.

Further difficulties stemmed from the CIP's alliance with the Joint Distribution Committee. The JDC was believed by many East

European Jews to be anti-Zionist, in part because of its well-publicized fights with the World Jewish Congress, the leading Zionist organization in the pre-1948 period, and a group to which most European Jews in Brazil contributed because of its affiliation with the Centro Hebreu Brasileiro. Attempts by the Joint Distribution Committee to act as the primary and exclusive refugee organization for European Jewry were seen by other groups as "imperialistic."<sup>34</sup> In the minds of Paulista Jews, who rarely contributed money for international organizations not connected with their own particular religious/social body, the Centro Hebreu and the World Jewish Congress positively represented the Zionism and Judaism the CIP and JDC did not. Competition by Jewish groups at the international level therefore became mirrored by a similar situation locally.<sup>35</sup>

The Estado Novo promulgated numerous laws aimed against legal resident aliens and those citizens still tied culturally to their places of birth which further deepened cleavages within the Ashkenazic community.<sup>36</sup> The targets of most anti-foreign legislation were Germans, Italians, and Japanese who might form a "fifth column" in Brazil, but these laws also had an effect on foreign-born and refugee Jews. Foreign language schools and cultural activities were restricted, all foreign organizations were banned, and foreign press outlets were censored. In August of 1941 all foreign language newspapers in Brazil were required to print in Portuguese, and the *Congregação Israelita Paulista* newspaper, the *Crônica Israelita*, was forced to change its advertising, the only portion of the weekly still in German.<sup>37</sup> In another instance, a Jewish radio program with commentary in Portuguese and music in Yiddish was forced to stop using the "foreign" records. The producer of the "Hora Israelita," Francisco Gotthilf, after being told that there was no distinction between German and Yiddish because both were subversive, went as far as to give members of the local police a lecture on the differences, but to no avail.<sup>38</sup>

Anti-foreigner laws aimed against Germans, Italians, and Japanese were easily used against refugee Jews. An important indicator of the lack of concern that most in the Vargas government felt for the Jewish plight was the Estado Novo's unwillingness to distinguish between Jewish refugees clearly fleeing from Nazism and Fascism, and those Brazilian citizens and immigrants potentially tied to right-wing ideologies. After the establishment of the Estado Novo European immigration was drastically reduced, and Jews, treated not as refugees but as potentially dangerous foreigners, had particular difficulty entering. In 1936 and 1937 legal Jewish immigration to Brazil dropped over 40 percent, to 2,003. In 1938, when general immigration to Brazil showed a decrease of 44 percent, only 530 Jews were allowed to enter.<sup>39</sup> The high hopes that Brazil would provide safe haven for refugees were dashed when Jewish immigration was officially curtailed between 1937 and 1939 as the Estado Novo's anti-Semitism became "most evident in the area of refugee policy."<sup>40</sup> That Horácio Lafer, a Brazilian-born Jew, was to become Vargas' Finance



Minister from 1951-1953 (thus fitting the classic stereotype of Jewish financial ability), does not make it clear whether earlier Estado Novo policy was specifically anti-Semitic or not.<sup>41</sup> By 1940 the Vargas government had eased its regulations somewhat, but, by placing non-native Jews in the legal category of "foreigner," effectively controlled all Jewish entrance.<sup>42</sup> Simultaneously, tensions within the community were increased as Brazilian Jews were forced to choose between support of the government and support of refugee Jews.

Into the morass of anti-foreigner legislation fell Zionism, banned in 1937 as a movement based on allegiance to another state. The Jewish community was left with only two options, to reject Zionism or to clandestinely support it. One simple means by which organizations skirted the law was to reorganize themselves along the lines set out by the Vargas regime while still participating secretly in Zionist activity.<sup>43</sup> Yet even though all groups were forced to become "nationalistic" and therefore non-Zionist, a small but growing Zionist faction in the CIP used the paper reformation of the Centro Hebreu as ammunition to attack the Eastern European group. Pointing to the Centro Hebreu's new non-Zionist charter, Vittorio Camerini, the ardently Zionist Italian-born First Secretary of the Executive Committee of the CIP, claimed that Eastern European Jews in Brazil were not truly Zionist.<sup>44</sup> Central European Jews on the other hand "in spite of all pre-Hitler assimilative tendencies never lost their Jewish consciousness . . . and only a very few lost their feeling of *Kol Israel haverim* [All Israel is one]."<sup>45</sup> Camerini's analysis of the situation was far from accurate. The Centro Hebreu, although publicly operating along the guidelines set out by the Vargas regime, did clandestinely support Zionist organizations such as the *Keren Hayesod* (Palestine Foundation Fund).<sup>46</sup> The policies of the Estado Novo, however, and the willingness of the Eastern European group to go along with them on paper, gave Camerini's Zionist faction an opportunity to present itself within the Jewish community as the one truly Zionist Brazilian group. Camerini, once known affectionately as "Kamerinsky" because of his early attempts to form an alliance with East European Zionists, allowed antagonism against Eastern Jewry to inform his pro-Zionist activity after becoming a leader in the CIP.<sup>47</sup>

Although the anti-foreigner laws caused immense intra-communal tension, the Jewish community, realizing that Brazil could provide many economic and social opportunities, was hesitant about taking the Vargas government to task for its policies. Furthermore, the Estado Novo showed little mercy to its enemies, at one point expelling the Jewish wife of Communist leader Luis Prestes to her native Germany where she was thrown in a concentration camp and murdered.<sup>48</sup> In this tense atmosphere even former European language differences became a point of conflict between Brazil's Eastern and Central European Jews.

Rejected by German Jewry after emancipation in 1848 as *zhargon*, Yiddish had remained the language of Eastern European Jewry. As early as 1924 the German-born President of the Brazilian Zionist

Organization, Jacob Schneider, expressed a widely held belief that the far-reaching changes brought on by the *Haskalah*, the artistic and cultural Jewish enlightenment of Eastern Europe, had led to a dismissal of political Zionism by Eastern European Jewry on the grounds that a Jewish homeland was unneeded by those living Jewish lives in segregated areas. "Among the new [Eastern European] arrivals in Brazil there are few Zionists and many anti-Zionists of whom *the most active are the Yiddishists* . . . coming from the Ukraine."<sup>49</sup> Initially then, as was the case in Europe, the use of Yiddish was one means used of dismissing Eastern European Jews as lacking in Zionist attitude. In the early twentieth century Central European Zionists believed, as did the Austrian "father of Zionism" Theodore Herzl, that Hebrew, and not Yiddish, was the language of Zionism. From its earliest roots, then, language played an important role in Zionist politics. During the crisis caused by the establishment of the Estado Novo, however, Eastern European Jews appropriated Yiddish as a sign of pro-Zionistic thought, a situation which had occurred earlier in Europe. A major point of contention between the Congregação Israelita Paulista and the Centro Hebreu was that the CIP "resented their being classed as assimilationists 'for the sole reason we cannot speak Yiddish.'"<sup>50</sup> In Brazil, Yiddish, not Hebrew, represented a continued tie to a national Judaism, indicating that the power in the Jewish community lay with the Eastern European group which had migrated earlier, was numerically stronger, and which could set the agenda for conflict. German and Italian-speaking Jews, secularized to the point of no longer using a specific Jewish language, were seen as unconcerned with a "return to Zion."

Zionists in the CIP actively responded to the charges of assimilationism. As late as 1945 Central European Jewish leaders in Brazil were contending, like Schneider had more than twenty years earlier, that Eastern European Jews had "changed the sky but not their souls," and were

concerned . . . more with problems of Diaspora policy than with those of Palestine and the policy of the Jewish Agency [because] . . . having been in Eastern Europe part of a visible Jewish Nation, protected by minority rights with a language and cultural life of their own, very often higher than that of their surroundings and, therefore, rather proud of Judaism, but with some of their old mentality, Zionism was never a problem to them . . .<sup>51</sup>

External pressure on Brazil's Jewish community to reject Zionism, and an inability under the Vargas regime to protest publicly, led to an internal confrontational atmosphere. By the final years of World War II the situation became so highly charged that Eastern and Central European Zionist groups even used language as a way of separating "good" Zionists from "bad" non-Zionists.

The study of São Paulo's Jewish community tells much about how internal ethnic politics are affected by economic environment and state policy. Conflicts within Brazil's Ashkenazic Jewish

community were clearly reinforced and promoted in São Paulo both by economic forces and by political changes which occurred during the *Estado Novo*. The model implicit in this research is applicable to all immigrant groups in Brazil. Certainly divisions among the Paulista Japanese community over support of the Emperor during World War II suggests that the Jewish experience in Brazil is not unique.<sup>52</sup> An understanding of immigrant life in the nation of relocation can only be understood when the situation prior to migration is analyzed. In this manner the notion of immigrant monolithism based on nationality, religion, or race, can be dismissed. Such is especially important for the study of Brazil in which the melting-pot theory plays such a great role in both national myth and policy.

Prior to migration, Eastern and Central European Jews were divided on the basis of national origin, class, and language, all the while being bound by a common religion often practiced in different ways. In São Paulo, where acculturative pressure was high and the laws of the Vargas government strictly enforced, conflict rarely took place between Jews as a group and non-Jewish society. Rather, as strains within the Jewish community increased during the World War II era, old conflicts between Jews were re-created in the Paulista setting. The nature of divisions in the Jewish communities of Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre, both with different forms of economic growth, patterns of immigration, and relations to the Central government other than São Paulo, is unfortunately outside the scope of this paper. Largman and Levine's recent work on Bahian Jewry, however, suggests that in the absence of German Jews, divisions among Eastern European Jewish groups may become more pronounced.<sup>53</sup> Divisions among Ashkenazic Jews in São Paulo, however, were not so great as to prevent unification when needed, especially when the Jewish community had dealings with the State or non-Jewish organizations like the Catholic Church. Instances of why and when divided immigrant and minority groups choose to present themselves as unified would be a valuable area for future research.

Jews, commonly examined as a single community, are not unitary in social, economic, political, or religious terms. More generally, assumptions about homogeneity must not be made when analyzing immigrant-populated nations. Even those migrant groups with a common national origin demand careful internal examinations for areas of friction and cohesion. Scholars must move away from the study of immigrants as necessarily unified within their racial, national, or religious confines. Through an internal examination of migrant groups which is then applied to a more general analysis, a sophisticated framework of the evolution of immigrant communities, often developing within a societally imposed uniformity, can be constructed.

#### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup>U.O. Schmelz and Sergio Della Pergola, "World Jewish Population, 1984" *American Jewish Yearbook-1986* (hereafter *AJYB*) (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1986), 357.

<sup>2</sup>For an example of change theories see Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted* (New York: Grossett and Dunlap, 1951). An example of continuity theory may be found in Rudolph J. Vecoli, "Contadini in Chicago: A Critique of *The Uprooted*," *Journal of American History* 1 (1964).

<sup>3</sup>Historical research on modern Brazilian Jewry is fairly limited. See Nachman Falbel, *Estudos sobre a comunidade judaica no Brasil* (São Paulo: Federação Israelita do Estado de São Paulo, 1984), and Jacob Nachbin (São Paulo: Editora Nobel, 1985) or Henrique Rattner, *Tradição e mudança: A comunidade judaica em São Paulo* (São Paulo: Atica, 1970). The only major historical work in English is Judith Laiken Elkin's groundbreaking *Jews of the Latin American Republics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980).

<sup>4</sup>The term Ashkenazic is generally understood to define those Jews who lived in Eastern and Central Europe, often, after the 16th century, speaking Yiddish. See *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, Ltd., 1971), vol. 3, 719-722.

<sup>5</sup>*Revista de Imigração e Colonização* (hereafter *RIC*) (Rio de Janeiro: Conselho de Imigração e Colonização) 1, no. 4 (October, 1940): 641-642. An overview of immigration patterns may be found in Maria Stella Ferreira Levy, "O papel da migração internacional na evolução da população brasileira (1872 a 1972)" *Revista de Saúde Pública* (supplement) 8 (São Paulo, 1974): 49-90.

<sup>6</sup>U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, *Annual Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), 25.

<sup>7</sup>The passage of this immigration bill "left a conviction in various quarters that the chief purpose . . . was to keep out Jews." John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1955), 310.

<sup>8</sup>Haim Avni, "Argentine Jewry: Its Socio-Political Status and Organizational Patterns," *Dispersion and Unity* 12 (Jerusalem, 1971): 141.

<sup>9</sup>*RIC* 1, no. 4 (October, 1940): 641-642. This does not include Russian immigration to Brazil. Immigration and its effect on economic growth are discussed in Thomas W. Merrick and Douglas H. Graham, *Population and Economic Development in Brazil: 1800 to Present* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1979).

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.* Between 1924 and 1933 more than 13 percent of Brazil's immigrants came from the area now known as Eastern Europe; between

1914 and 1923 Eastern European immigration totalled less than 2 percent.

<sup>12</sup>On the earliest Jewish communal groups in Brazil see, Nachman Falbel, "Early Zionism in Brazil: The Founding Years, 1913-1922," *American Jewish Archives* 38, no. 2 (1986): 123-136.

<sup>13</sup>Only in 1941 was the category "israelita" added, under the nationality heading, to official immigration statistics. *Boletim do Departamento de Imigração e Colonização* 5 (São Paulo, December, 1950): 16-59.

<sup>14</sup>"Rapport d'activité pendant la période 1933-43." YIVO Institute for Jewish Research Archives (New York) (hereafter YIVO-NY), Records of HIAS Main Office/New York, Series 13-Brazil, Folder 1; and U.O. Schmelz and Sergio Della Pergola, "The Demography of Latin American Jewry," *AJYB-1985* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1985): 68.

<sup>15</sup>*AJYB-5683* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1922): 301, and *AJYB-5691* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1930): 242.

<sup>16</sup>Salo W. Baron, Arcadius Kahan et al. *Economic History of the Jews* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1975): 104.

<sup>17</sup>Brazil was not seen as having a high potential for Jewish life prior to World War I. This is amply demonstrated through a comparison with South Africa whose Jewish population swelled from 4,000 in 1880 to 49,926 in 1911. Stephen Cohen, "Historical Background" in *South African Jewry: A Contemporary Survey*, Marcus Arkin, ed. (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1984): 3.

<sup>18</sup>On conflicts between Eastern and Central European Jews see Stephen Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German-Jewish Consciousness, 1800-1928* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982).

<sup>19</sup>Memorandum of unnamed Brazilian correspondent of Jewish Telegraphic Agency (J.T.A.) to Jacob Landau. Sent by Landau to Joseph C. Hyman of the Joint Distribution Committee, 22 April 1938. Archives of the American Joint Distribution Committee (New York City) (hereafter AAJDC-NY), File 1092.

<sup>20</sup>Interview with Rabbi Fritz Pinkus, first Rabbi of the Congregação Israelita Paulista, 1 September 1986, São Paulo, Brazil.

<sup>21</sup>According to Alfred Hirschberg "two thirds of [the German Jews in São Paulo] are registered with the . . . Congregação Israelita Paulista." "The Economic Adjustment of Jewish Refugees in São Paulo," *Jewish Social Studies* 7 (January, 1945): 31.

<sup>22</sup>"Report of Friedrich Borchardt and David Glick," 27 June 1939. *American Jewish Archives* (Cincinnati) (hereafter AJA-C) Rhodes Collection, Box 2249.

<sup>23</sup>Alfred Jaretzki, Jr. to Dr. Lorch and Mr. Wissman, 27 September 1939. AAJDC-NY, File 1093, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup>The JDC also supported a German/Liberal congregation, the *Associação Religiosa Israelita* (ARI) in Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>25</sup>Decree Law of May 4, 1938, Art. 12 and Decree Law of Aug. 20, 1938, Art 1 (b). From Karl Loewenstein, *Brazil Under Vargas* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1942): 172.

<sup>26</sup>Nathan Eck, "The Rescue of Jews with the Aid of Passport and Citizenship Papers of Latin American States." *Yad Vashem Studies I* (Jerusalem, 1957): 125-152.

<sup>27</sup>Report of Friedrich Borchardt and David Glick on São Paulo, Brazil dated New York City, June 28, 1939." AAJDC-NY, File 1093.

<sup>28</sup>Loewenstein, 181.

<sup>29</sup>"Situation of Refugees without Permanent Status in Brazil," 14 October 1940. AAJDC-NY, File 1093.

<sup>30</sup>Bruno and Lena Castelnuove to Rachelle S. Yarden, 14 June 1945. Central Zionist Archives (Jerusalem) (hereafter CZA-J), s5/779 no. 244.

<sup>31</sup>Alfred Jaretzki, Jr. to Dr. Ludwig Lorch and Mr. Salo Wissman (C.I.P.), 27 September 1939. AAJDC-NY, File 1092, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup>Ludwig Lorch, Salo Wissman and Martin Friedlaender to American Joint Distribution Committee, 8 June 1940. AAJDC-NY, File 1093.

<sup>33</sup>Cecilia Razovsky Davidson, "Report on the Present Status of Jewish Settlement and Jewish Migration to Brazil and Argentina," 11 October 1937. AAJDC-NY, File 1091, p. 6.

<sup>34</sup>Henry Shoskes (HIAS Delegate for Latin America) to Marc Leitchik (Jewish Colonization Association), 4 October 1946. YIVO-NY, Records of HIAS Main Office/New York, Series 13-Brazil, Folder 48.

<sup>35</sup>In 1940 the J.D.C. attempted to discredit the World Jewish Congress among Rio de Janeiro's Jewish leadership: "Claims [were] made by the World Jewish Congress that it was providing relief to Jews in Poland and in Germany . . . Our investigations satisfy us that the World Jewish Congress has not and is not doing any relief work in these areas." Moses A. Leavitt to Dr. Paulo Zander, President of the "União" Associação Beneficente Israelita (Allied Jewish Benevolent Association), 6 November 1940. AAJDC-NY, File 1099, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup>Robert Levine, *The Vargas Regime: The Critical Years, 1934-1938* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970): 167.

<sup>37</sup>The *Crônica Israelita* ran large stories on Vargas at least twice a year. Beginning with the edition of 8/15/41 (no. 70) the *Crônica* was printed entirely in Portuguese.

<sup>38</sup>Interview with Francisco Gotthilf, 5 June 1986, São Paulo, Brazil.

<sup>39</sup>YIVO-NY, Records of HIAS Main Office/NY, Series 13-Brazil, Folder 1. In 1938, 19,388 immigrants entered Brazil. *RIC* 5, no. 3 (September, 1944), Table IV, 590.

<sup>40</sup>Levine, 54.

<sup>41</sup>Vargas himself claimed that laws passed against foreigners were not anti-Semitic in origin. Letter of Alfred Houston to the Refugee Economic Commission reporting on a personal interview with President Vargas, 27 January 1938. AAJDC-NY, File 1092, p. 5.

<sup>42</sup>In 1940, 1,230 permanent visas were given to "Hebraicas." *RIC* 2, nos. 2-3 (July-April, 1941): 435.

<sup>43</sup>In Europe, as in Brazil, groups were divided over what the proper conception of Zionism should be. See David Vital, *The Origins of Zionism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).

<sup>44</sup>Ludwig Lorch resigned from the Executive Board of the CIP in 1945 after clashing with Camerini and other Italian Zionists. Interview of Dr. Walter Rehfeld by Rabbi Clifford Kulwin, July, 1982. AJA-C, tape C-470, side a.

<sup>45</sup>Veit and Camerini to President of Zionist Organization (London), 24 December 1945. CZA-J, ZU/10229, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup>The *Keren Hayesod* was founded in 1920 as the financial arm of the World Zionist Organization.

<sup>47</sup>Interview with Helena Mortiz, daughter of Vittorio Camerini, 29 June 1986, São Paulo, Brazil.

<sup>48</sup>Fernando Morais, *Olga: A vida de Olga Benario Prestes, judia comunista entregue a Hitler pelo governo Vargas* (São Paulo: Editora Alfa-Omega, 1986).

<sup>49</sup>Minutes of report on interview with Jacob Schneider, 2 November 1924. CZA-J, ZU/2350, p. 2. Emphasis in original.

<sup>50</sup>Bruno and Lena Castelnuove to Rachele S. Yarden, 14 June 1945. CZA-J, s5/779, no. 244.

<sup>51</sup>Veit and Camerini to President of Zionist Organization (London), 24 December 1945. CZA-J, ZU/10229, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup>Eloisa M. Prada Queiroz Guimarães, "The Role Played by the Shinto Remei Trials in Japanese Immigration to São Paulo," in L.M. Martínez Montiel, ed. *Asiatic Migration to Latin America* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1981).

<sup>53</sup>Esther Regina Largman and Robert M. Levine, "Jews in the Tropics: Bahian Jews in the Early Twentieth Century," *The Americas* xliii, no. 2 (October, 1986): 167.