CHAPTER I

IMMIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT

Having achieved its independence in 1948, Israeli society has been shaped by immigration patterns, before and after independence, which are significant to understand major themes that guide this analysis. The creation of the Israeli society is definitely a unique one in more way than one. No other society in modern times has ever expanded its ethnically diverse population through immigration to such a large extent in such a relatively short period. The nature and origin of this immigration and initial settlement, inherently discriminatory nature of political response in the initial post-independence period and pre-existing institutions, their subsequent impact on Oriental Jewish population of the country and the responses to these problems would form the core of this chapter. The changing demographic character of the two main ethnic categories -- Afro-Asian and European-American -- would also be examined over a period of time and upto the recent past.

The ethnic mosaic and ethnic integration processes in Israeli society have been affected directly by fluctuations in the volume of immigration over a period of time from different places or origin and there have been major demographic transformations of the migrants and their children. Also significant in this part is to analyse the nature and composition of Jewish population and various institutions in Israel prior to independence which set the stage for cultural clashes and discriminatory nature of the future society.
Social, economic, cultural, and political developments in Israel, and the internal conflicts among Jews -- mainly between Oriental Jews and their European-American counterparts -- are inextricably linked to the intensity of immigration and to the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of those immigrating.

Israel's Jewish population is made up of immigrants and their descendants from all over the world, most of whom came to the country only in the last few decades. Within this societal mosaic the meeting of the two major origin groups of Jews is of particular significance and has attracted widespread attention by social scientists.

Immigration ideologies and policies have been at the core of Zionism and Zionist political movements and institutions for over a century, predating the establishment of the state and changing with its development. Mass immigration of Jews to Israel continues to enjoy wide support on an abstract level from Jews in Israel and abroad, but the fact is that most Jews do not live in Israel.

However, immigration has been a major strategy of nation-building in the state of Israel and the Zionist movement since the nineteenth century, and the state from the time of its establishment, have sought to gather together in one country the Jews from all over the world.

The bottom line of immigration balance sheet is determined by a large number of forces including development taking place abroad, the attitude of the ruling power, the
psychological predisposition of the immigrating population. These forces in turn affect the likelihood of successful absorption and the effect of immigration on the political institutions of the country.

Before dealing with the current link between immigration and settlement and socio-economic status of oriental Jews, we shall give a brief account of immigration of Jewish community to Israel from various countries over a period of time which decidedly shaped the social, political and cultural infrastructure of the country and hence the status of Oriental Jews. For our purpose, the period between 1882 and 1988 can be taken for immigration and settlement of Jews in the land of Israel. The period can be divided into following categories.

1882-1903 - First wave of modern immigration to Palestine (aliyah); 25,000 Eastern European immigrants arrive.

1904-1914 - Second Aliyah; 40,000-55,000 Jewish immigrants arrive from Eastern Europe and Russia.

1919-1923 - Third Aliyah; 35,000 Jews arrive, mostly from Poland and Russia.

1924-1928 - Fourth Aliyah; 67,000 immigrants arrive, half of them middle-class, urban Poles.

1929-1939 - Fifth Aliyah; 250,000 Jews, one-quarter of them refugees from Nazi

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Germany, arrive in Palestine.

1945-1948 - Almost 75,000 immigrants arrive, most illegally.

1950 - Knesset passes the Law of Return, granting all Jews the right to immigrate to Israel.

1948-1951 - Mass immigration; 690,000 Jews arrive from Europe, Asia and North Africa.³

**SETTING OF THE STAGE FOR A FUTURE SOCIETY: PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD**

For our analysis it is significant to examine the nature of Jewish population and institutions in Israel prior to the establishment of the modern state which formed the basis for the creation and functioning of a modern (as opposed to a traditional) society which was to decidedly imbibe Western characteristics and shape into a modern industrial society best suited for European and American immigrants.

During the English Mandate period itself, a modernizing trend developed in Israel leading to a basic transformation which gave rise to the emergence of a Western Social system and upon the establishment of the new state, it had already become inevitable that the new state would shape into a modern industrial society.⁴

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The growth of Zionist ideology in an era of nationalism and improved technology, with the ever-present, pervasive anti-Semitism of many European countries as an incentive, led to Jewish immigration to Palestine in substantial numbers in the period from 1882-1948.

The land of Israel was the ancient birth place of the Jewish people, and it is in this area that the religious identity of the people was formed and developed. Later, the ancient Jewish State, the holy land, and Jerusalem became the spiritual focal points of the Jewish religion -- a part of its hopes rituals and goals -- in addition to provide historical links for the Jews.

Approximately 90 percent of the Jewish immigrants to Palestine during the Mandatory period whose country of provenance was recorded came from Europe. Even if some adjustment is made for unrecorded cases, the European proportion remains as high as 88 percent.5

The members of the Yishuv (the Hebrew name for the Jewish community in the British Mandatory Palestine), most particularly the members of the Second and Third Aliyot (waves of immigration), were able to create many of the institutions necessary for the functioning of a modern (as opposed to a traditional) society. These institutions were structured in accordance with Socialist Zionist ideology, and were the objects of inter-party struggles, as various political groups vied to increase their power.

Most importantly, these institutions, as a result of being structured in accordance with Zionist ideology, inadvertently created a situation which was inherently discriminatory against many of the Sephardic immigrants who were to arrive in such large numbers in the immediate post-independence period.6

The proliferation of institutions during the 1882-1948 period, especially during the 1920s and 1930s, was massive and most of Israel's today's institutions in fact are direct continuations of those established during the pre-independence period. A significant outcome of the development of these various institutions during the Mandatory period is that they became the infrastructure of the future Israeli state and society. In other words, when independence was proclaimed, it was not necessary to start from scratch to develop all the paraphernalia of a modern nation-state. This was already in existence, and independence merely placed a formal seal of statehood upon the activities of those organisations which had been in progress for many years.

If we have a look at the history of various countries, for example, of Africa, which attained statehood during an era of nationalism, we see that as a contrast, these countries have struggled to create viable national institutions capable of integrating the nation and administering public services. Israel came into existence with a fully developed state apparatus and the modern state after coming into existence could have been more efficient in absorbing the massive waves of immigration that followed with the limited resources at hand.

Already developed state apparatus also meant that the new immigrants, especially Oriental Jews, would almost inevitably feel alienated from these institutions, for they had not participated in their establishment and could not relate to many of the concepts associated with the establishment, development and operation of these institutions. A cultural clash ought to have been foreseen, which many social scientists argue was not as many Israeli leaders erroneously anticipated that the common bond of being Jewish would surmount the cultural obstacles.

Sephardim were not steeped in the doctrines of socialism, as were European Jews, nor were they highly motivated Zionists, for their migration to Israel was a consequence of their traditional religious values. The Jewish communities in Yemen and elsewhere came to Israel partly because the creation of Israel and the defeat of the Arab armies in the War of Liberation made the continuous presence of Jews in these countries a hazardous proposition, and partly because the opportunity to settle in Israel meant that they would be dwelling in the Land of the Bible.

While for Ashkenazim the imperatives for establishing Israel were invested with additional urgency as a result of Holocaust, for Sephardim, concepts like redeeming the land, building a Jewish state and creating a haven for persecuted Jews were not major components of their attitude sets. The holocaust, while virtually annihilating Jewish communities in Germany, Poland and elsewhere in Europe, had left their counterparts in Yemen, Iraq and Syria untouched.7

7 Ibid, op. cit., p. 32.
The cultural shock which Sephardim experienced when arriving in Israel (a result of their traditional life-styles) would have been sufficient to guarantee a very difficult period of acculturation to the new society. But when one adds to this the fact that the Sephardim were not committed socialists or Zionists, the problems created were multiplied manifold. The Sephardim were not farmers, yet they migrated to a country which encouraged, honoured and advantaged those who returned to the land. They were not politically active, yet they came to a country where close involvement with a political party was often necessary to advance oneself in every walk of life. The Sephardim were not socialists, yet the economy of their new country of arrival was heavily oriented towards involvement in cooperative, collective and government enterprises. Most importantly, government planners and officials at almost all levels tended to assume that Sephardim were all that which they were not.

However, while analysing the pre-independence history of Jewish community and the institutions, one should also not ignore the fact that the economic difficulty and social tensions inevitably associated with early statehood were exacerbated by the necessity of absorbing large numbers of new immigrants, survivors of the European Holocaust of World War II, in the early months of statehood. 8

The formative Period (1882-1924) saw the smallest immigration numerically, but was most significant politically. The very limited and select immigration of rather homogenous population was the time of initial emergence of political leadership that was

to dominate Israel’s years of domination.

Before 1880, fewer than 25,000 Jews lived in Eretz Israel. They were concentrated in the four holy cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias and Safed and spent their time largely in the study and prayer. Sustained by money collected from Jewish communities outside Eretz Israel, they prayed for the redemption of the land and the coming of the Messiah. Their reception of secular settlers who came to fulfill their prayers without divine help was notably cool.

The settlers of the first aliyah, 1882-1903, numbering between 20,000 and 30,000 came in reaction to the growing anti-Semitism in Russia. Whereas most of their fellow Jews immigrants went to the United States, this handful (compared with the 2.5 million Jews who left Eastern Europe between 1880 and 1924) responded to the nationalist awakening among Jews and immigrants to Eretz Israel. Many of them had received ideological instruction in the first organised nationalist Jewish group known as Hovevei Zion, but were dramatically lacking in funds and agricultural skills.

The immigrants were relatively educated from urban backgrounds, and totally unprepared for the barren wasteland they encountered in Eretz Israel. This brave beginning was rescued from ignominious failure by “important capital,” money sent from abroad, a feature of Israeli life that would persist. The efforts of Baron Edmond de Rothschild, a noted Jewish philanthropist, rescued the settlers who became accustomed to turning to Paris for help and even sent their children to France to school. Many of them did not return to Israel.
The second aliyah (1904-1914) came out of the ferment of the unsuccessful Russian revolution of 1905 with its attendant ideas of social equality and freedom. Of the 35,000 who came during this period almost all were from Russia, a few thousand from Romania, and 2,000 from Yemen.

About 10,000 were pioneers in the sense of abandoning the easy life and comforts of home in order to participate in the Zionist revolution. Reports of malaria and other tribulations received from members of the first aliyah did not daunt them, but many proved unable to meet the challenge and left.

The third aliyah comprised mostly young, single males from Poland and Russia who had been prepared for their immigration by participation in agricultural training programmes in Europe organised by Zionist organisations. They entered a more structured environment than had the members of the first and second aliyot, and strong ideological motivation was prevalent among them. Their experiences in Europe taught them the importance of political organisation and control, and their nationalism brought them to Eretz Israel rather than America or other destinations. ⁹

The period from 1925 to 1948 is the generation of the Mandate, the struggle against the British, the struggle against the Nazis, the struggle for immigration, and ultimate independence.

The fifth aliyah (1932-38) reacted to the spread of anti-Jewish activities in Central and Eastern Europe, especially the rise of Hitler in 1933. This was a huge immigration by

⁹ Asher Arian, op. cit., p. 15.
local standards, numbering some 2,000,000. In 1935 alone a record 66,000 Jews arrived in Israel. The Jewish population of the country more than doubled in five years.\textsuperscript{10}

The fifth aliyah, while often called the "German aliyah," in fact comprised only a quarter of German and Austrian Jews. The biggest group numerically was from Poland, which did, after all, have the largest concentration of Jews in the world at that time; the biggest decline was from the USSR because restrictions on emigration were enforced. These central European Jews brought with them capital for investment and, along with their middle-class backgrounds, urban life styles and organisational skills, thus decisively establishing the roots of a society heavily tilted towards western values.

The British white paper of 1939 limited Jewish immigration to 75,000 for the next five-year period, making the Jews a third of the population and then terminating immigration. By the date the White paper had immigration ending, only about 50,000 Jews had immigrated. Illegal immigration had existed throughout the Mandate, and since 1934 illegal immigrants were deducted from the quota of Jews permitted to enter Eretz Israel (if the number of illegals could be determined). After World War II, tens of thousands attempted to enter illegally, and many were successful. But after mid-1946, most of these Jewish survivors of European persecution were intercepted and 56,000 of them were imprisoned on Cyprus. Between 1945 and mid-1948 about 75,000 Jews came, most of them illegally.

The 1948 Declaration of Independence stated that "the State of Israel is open to

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid, p. 16.
Jewish immigration and the ingathering of Exiles." The first order enacted by the provisional government abolished the British restrictions on immigration and defined as legal those residents who had been "illegals" under British rule. Two years later, in 1950, after hundreds of thousands of Jews had come to the country, the Knesset passed the "Law of Return," which grants to every Jew in the world the right to immigrate to Israel.

**IMMIGRATION AFTER INDEPENDENCE**

It was not until the slaughter of six million (mostly European) Jews during the World War II that the Ashkenazi Zionists leadership decided to recruit Jews massively from Asia and Africa. This recruitment intensified when it became clear that Jews from the Eastern bloc were no longer allowed to immigrate to Israel.\(^{11}\)

Following tables will show the changing composition of Oriental Jewish population of Israel as against Ashkenazim over a period of time.

**TABLE 1.1\(^{12}\)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JEWS - TOTAL</td>
<td>4,637.4</td>
<td>4,549.5</td>
<td>4,441.1</td>
<td>4,335.2</td>
<td>3,946.7</td>
<td>3,350.0</td>
<td>2,686.7</td>
<td>1,932.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>Israel</td>
<td>1,198.4</td>
<td>1,140.1</td>
<td>1,085.3</td>
<td>1,030.8</td>
<td>880.9</td>
<td>533.9</td>
<td>225.8</td>
<td>106.9</td>
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<td>Asia</td>
<td>728.1</td>
<td>731.3</td>
<td>734.4</td>
<td>736.3</td>
<td>744.3</td>
<td>740.2</td>
<td>655.9</td>
<td>818.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>847.0</td>
<td>844.2</td>
<td>841.5</td>
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<td>806.7</td>
<td>736.1</td>
<td>617.9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Europe-America</td>
<td>1,863.8</td>
<td>1,833.9</td>
<td>1,779.9</td>
<td>1,730.5</td>
<td>1,514.7</td>
<td>1,339.7</td>
<td>1,187.0</td>
<td>1,007.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


TABLE 1.2

POPHATION OF ISRAEL, BY RELIGION, ETHNIC ORIGIN AND BIRTH PLACE: 1948, 1961, 1972, 1982. (Numbers in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population group</th>
<th>1948a</th>
<th>1961b</th>
<th>1972b</th>
<th>1982a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total country</td>
<td>881.7</td>
<td>2,179.4</td>
<td>3,147.7</td>
<td>4,063.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>716.7</td>
<td>1,932.3</td>
<td>2,686.7</td>
<td>3,373.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European -American origin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>591.4</td>
<td>1,007.1</td>
<td>1,187.3</td>
<td>1,343.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in Europe or America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second generation , born in Israel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African or Asian origin (Oriental)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105.0</td>
<td>818.3</td>
<td>1,273.6</td>
<td>1,496.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in Africa or Asia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second generation , born in Israel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European -American and Afro-Asian third generation, born in Israel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Jewish population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>165.0</td>
<td>247.1</td>
<td>461.0</td>
<td>690.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moslem Arabs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>170.1</td>
<td>352.0</td>
<td>530.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Arabs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Druze and others</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a 1948 and 1982 figures are as of year end.
b 1961 and 1972 figures are as of mid-year.

Note: First-generation Jews are those born outside Israel; second generation are those born in Israel of foreign-born parents; third generation are those born in Israel of Israeli-born parents.

\[ \gamma, 73 (0,5), 465^\circ \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of Immigration</th>
<th>In Thousands</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>America-Oceania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total in Cumulative Annual Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948 b-1988</td>
<td>1,804.4</td>
<td>1,804.4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>1,804.4</td>
<td>784.7</td>
<td>357.3</td>
<td>427.4</td>
<td>994.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In thousands</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948 b-1951</td>
<td>686.7</td>
<td>686.7</td>
<td>189.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-1954</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>740.8</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955-1957</td>
<td>164.9</td>
<td>905.7</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958-1960</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>981.2</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-1964</td>
<td>228.0</td>
<td>1,209.2</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>40.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965-1968</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>1,290.5</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969-1971</td>
<td>116.5</td>
<td>1,407.0</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>72.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972-1974</td>
<td>142.8</td>
<td>1,549.8</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-1979</td>
<td>124.8</td>
<td>1,674.6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1984</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>1,758.2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>72.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-1988</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>1,804.4</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>75.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a As from 1970 including non-Jewish family members of immigrants.
b As from May 15, 1948.
c Except for first line.
d Including "unknown" cases.

### TABLE 1.4

**DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT OF ISRAEL'S POPULATION: 1948-1981**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic characteristic</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Jewish population</th>
<th>Arab population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>European</td>
<td>Oriental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>June 1948</td>
<td>550,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of major group</td>
<td>June 1948</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total population</td>
<td>June 1948</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy</td>
<td>About 1948</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>35-40 a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total fertility rate</td>
<td>About 1948</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6.3 a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual rate of natural</td>
<td>About 1948</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20 a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase per 1,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net immigration</td>
<td>June 48-June 51</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>337,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>End 1951</td>
<td>940,000</td>
<td>465,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of major group</td>
<td>End 1951</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total population</td>
<td>End 1951</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy</td>
<td>1952-66</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual rate of natural</td>
<td>1952-66</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase per 1,000</td>
<td>1952-66</td>
<td>236,000</td>
<td>334,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net immigration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>End 1966</td>
<td>1,196,000</td>
<td>1,149,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of major group</td>
<td>End 1966</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total population</td>
<td>End 1966</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life expectancy</td>
<td>1967-81</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total fertility rate</td>
<td>1967-81</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual rate of natural</td>
<td>1967-81</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase per 1,000</td>
<td>net immigration</td>
<td>361,000</td>
<td>87,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>End 1981</td>
<td>1,588,000</td>
<td>1,731,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent in major group</td>
<td>End 1981</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total population</td>
<td>End 1981</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of population in</td>
<td>End 1981</td>
<td>31 b</td>
<td>34 b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel and occupied areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a: These figures relate to the period before immigration. During 1948-51, life expectancy and the annual rate of natural increase for the Oriental Jewish population was approximately 66 years and 40-45 per 1,000 population, respectively.

b: This distribution was calculated by including 1,180,000 Arabs in the territories administered by Israel after 1967, representing 23 percent of the combined 1981 populations of the state and Israel and the Occupied Areas of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Note: All population numbers are rounded. The Christian population is equal to the total non-Muslim Arab population for population figures and Christians only for all other data. Jewish data include estimated data for the Israeli-born parents (third generation) by ethnicity, which are not collected by the Central Bureau Statistics.

15 *Statistical Abstract of Israel* (Various issues), Central Bureau of Statistics; and authors' estimates, based on official censuses and registration in Dov Friedlander and Calvin Gold Scheider, op. cit., p. 22.
As shown in Table one and two, at the end of 1982, Israel's total population was 4.1 million (4,063,600), of whom 83 per cent (3,373,200) were Jews and 690,400 were non Jews, mostly Arabs. The Jewish populations is made up predominantly of immigrants who arrived after the establishment of the state of Israel and their Israeli born descendants. In 1982, 23 percent of the Jewish population had been born in Europe or America; 19 per cent in Asian or African countries; and 58 percent were native born.

Among the native born, 28 percent were born to European or American parents; 45 percent of African or Asian parents; and 27 percent were third generation. Israel's population growth rate in 1982 stood at 1.8 per cent, and was almost entirely due to "natural increase" (the excess of births over deaths.)

Of the 79 per cent of Israel's population who were born abroad or whose fathers were born abroad, over half by now come from Asian and African countries. While the vast majority of Jews who moved to Palestine before the establishment of the state of Israel came from Europe -- especially Eastern and Central Europe -- the pattern changed significantly with the founding of the state in 1948.\textsuperscript{16}

Until recently, immigration has been the most important source of population growth for the Jewish sector, particularly in the earlier years of statehood. As seen in table one, from 1950 to the mid-1960s and again in the mid-1970s, the over growth rate for Israel's Jewish population far exceeded its rate of natural increase (the excess of the birth rate over the death rate, leaving out of account the contribution of net migration to

population growth or decline). As is evident from tables, though natural increase has been much higher for the Arab population, Jewish immigration has maintained the balance in the overall growth rates for the two groups, so that the proportion of Jews in Israel's total population at the end of 1982 (83 percent) was virtually the same as at the end of 1948 (81 percent).

But immigration can no longer be counted on to keep up Jewish growth rates. The Jewish immigration has declined dramatically since the early 1970s. In 1982, fewer than 14,000 immigrants arrived, compared to 56,000 a decade earlier in 1972.\textsuperscript{17}

Further, emigration has increased in recent years. Although it is impossible to calculate the number of emigrants, the evidence indicates that immigration barely exceeded emigration between 1980 and 1982. The decline in immigration partly reflects the waning of Israel's attraction for Jews living elsewhere, as economic conditions and political and security problems have become more difficult since the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

Emigration has increased for the same reasons. Indeed, despite the importance of Zionism as an ideological factor in migration to and from Israel, socio-economic and political factors have largely determined the pace and direction of migration in recent years. Conditions that prompt emigration may change in the future, but immigration is unlikely ever to resume on a large scale. This is because Jewish communities in African and Asian countries have been depleted by earlier migration to Israel and other countries and Jews in most other countries have not been under strong pressure to emigrate in

\textsuperscript{17} Dov Friedlander and Calvin Gold Scheider, op. cit., p. 12.
recent years.\footnote{Ibid, p. 15.}

The data in table one and two report on the absolute numbers of immigrants. If their relative numbers per 1,000 Jews in Israel are considered, the declining trend of immigration is more strongly emphasized. Since the total of Jews in Israel has grown markedly, the same absolute number of immigrants corresponds now to a lower immigration rate than in the past. In the peak year 1949, when 24,000 Jews arrived, the rate of immigrants 266 per 1,000 of Israel's average Jewish population (including the Israeli born) in that year. Relative to the number of Jews already living in Israel at the beginning of 1949, the increment was, of course, even greater: 316 per 1,000. In contrast, for the average of recent years (1985-1988) the yearly immigration rate was only three per 1,000.

The data in table two are gross immigration figures. But deducting emigration of Jews from Israel, the net total of external migrations is obtained. In the past, most emigrants were the backwash of recent immigration. During the 40 years 1948-1988 a gross total of 1,800,000 immigrants arrived, while the net total of external migrations of Jews to and from Israel amount to about 1,400,000 (the figure includes children born abroad to returning Israelis). In the mid 80s the annual net balance of external migrations of Israel's total Jews was barely positive.

In early 1948 on the eve of independence, the total population of Palestine was about two million, of which one-third was Jewish. The end of the British Mandate and
declaration of statehood in May 1948 altered the demographic situation considerably. Geographically, the newly established Jewish state occupied part of Palestine. Moreover, 5,000,000 Arabs living in areas included the new state fled as fighting between Israel and its Arab neighbours erupted into a full-scale War of independence. Hence, the population of Israel in June 1948 consisted of 806,000 people -- 650,000 (81 percent) Jews, and the rest Arabs.

As table four shows, 85 percent of the Jewish population was of European origin. One of the more important political and demographic implications of Independence was the shift in the control over immigration to Jewish authorities. This touched off one of the most remarkable waves of migration in modern history, the so called "mass immigration." Within three years, the Jewish population of Israel was doubled.

The first to arrive were European Jews who had been rerouted to Cyprus by the British authorities when attempting to immigrate illegally. Also among the first were refugees from Germany, Austria and Italy who had been waiting in refugee camps all over Europe, and Jews from Eastern Europe where its feared that the right to emigrate would soon be cut off. These were joined by the first post-Independence immigrants from the Middle East, especially Yemen, Aden and Algeria, where repercussions of the Arab-Israeli conflict were making conditions untenable for long-established Jewish communities.

All told, 100,000 immigrants arrived in 1948, most of them in two or three months at the end of the year, implying an enormous immigration rate of 17 per 100
relative to the initial population. The total for 1949 was about 250,000: from Turkey, Libya, the entire Jewish community of Yemen (35,000), and Poland and Romania as these countries opened up for Jewish emigration. These diverse streams continued in 1950, with immigrants from Romania, Poland and North African countries dominating. Finally, 175,000 more arrived in the first half of 1951, about 100,000 from Iraq alone.\textsuperscript{19}

This ended the wave of mass immigration, dominated in the beginning by migrants from Europe and then by Oriental Jews from North Africa and Asia. Most immigration was prompted on the one hand by the enormous reservoir of Jews eager to migrate to Israel and, on the other, by the extraordinary efforts made to bring in the largest possible number of Jewish immigrants in the shortest possible time, despite the hardships that would inevitably follow.

The first newcomers, primarily from Europe, were displaced persons or other survivors of the Holocaust. As the above mentioned tables suggest, soon, however, the proportion of Asian-Africans rose and by 1951 became preponderant in part because of a ban on Jewish emigration from the Soviet satellite countries of Eastern Europe during Stalin's last years. For the whole of this brief period the percentage of arrivals from Europe and from Asia-Africa were virtually balanced. A striking feature in this situation was the transplantation to Israel of the overwhelming majority of certain Diaspora Jewries, the outstanding instances being Iraq (123,300 persons during 1948-51), Yemen

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, p. 21.
and Aden (48,400), Bulgaria (37,200), and Libya (30,000).²⁰

By the end of 1951, the Arabic speaking countries of Asia had been nearly emptied of Jews, and the potential subsequently remaining in this continent for migration to Israel was limited. Most of the large immigration of Asian-African provenance that continued in the following years actually came from North Africa, especially Morocco and Tunisia.

After a relative lull during 1952-1954, when African Jews predominated among the comparatively few arrivals, a second, though far more modest, immigration wave -- 165,000 -- came during 1955-1957. It comprised an African majority, but also had many Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe during the post-Stalinist thaw and after the abortive Hungarian uprising of 1956.²¹

Following years of 1958-1960 saw another reduction in the number of immigrants, with a majority of arrivals coming from Europe. There was a fresh rise of the wave of immigrants during 1961-1964 which brought 228,000 persons to Israel, including most of the Jews who had until then remained in Morocco, as well as numerous Romanians. By the six day war in 1967 the sources of potential immigration had changed. Eastern European and North African reservoirs were largely dried up, leaving Western countries and the Soviet Union. Of the 250,000 Jews given exit visas from the

²⁰ Uziel O Schmelz, Sergio DellaPergola and Uri Avner. op. cit., p. 10.
²¹ Ibid, p.11.
Soviet Union in the 1970s, only 160,000 came to Israel.  

As the tables show, the 1948-51 period was the period of African and Asian influx. This immigration, unlike any previous immigration, consisted of whole communities which meant that the newly arrived community could still maintain a high degree of interaction among its members, avoiding contact with the larger society. This was especially so if the social environment was perceived as being dramatically different from their own, as was the case in Israel.

Thus, it becomes clear that the period of mass immigration, between 1948-51, established some of the basic contours of Israeli society, expanding major social, political, economic, and cultural institutions, that came to further strengthen a system the roots of which had taken place during the British mandate period and which was inherently of discriminatory nature against Oriental Jews. It was this period that irreversibly created what came euphemistically to be called the social "gap" between the Ashkenazim and Mizrahi (eastern) communities.

Another major immigration wave began after the 1967 war, mostly from Eastern Europe (the Soviet Union and Romania) and from Western countries, mainly the United States. These areas contained the largest Jewish populations outside of Israel and therefore they were the major potential sources of Jewish immigration. Between 1972 and 1979, 267,582 immigrants arrived in Israel, 51 percent from the Soviet Union and eight percent from the United States. Of the 153,833 immigrants to Israel between 1980

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22 Asher Arian, op. cit., p. 19.
and 1989, 65 percent were from Europe and the United States, 11 percent from Ethiopia, and six percent from Iran.\textsuperscript{23}

Restrictions on immigration of Jews from the Soviet Union and the option of alternative destinations (particularly to the United States) reduced the flow of Russian immigrants to Israel until 1989. This wave of immigrants entered Israel in the post-1967 period of economic growth and geographic extension, which was also characterized by a new national political and military self confidence.

What is significant to note here is that this wave of immigrants, majority being from Europe and America, were taken better care of by the government as compared to the earlier waves, majority being Oriental Jews. Higher standards of immigrant integration within the society emerged during this period. Attention to adequate housing, jobs, and provisions for university-level education for the children of immigrants contrasted with the elementary health care and minimum living accommodations provided to previous immigrant waves.\textsuperscript{24}

**PRESENT IMMIGRATION WAVE**

The latest immigration stream to Israel began in 1989 and has continued through present, and significant numbers of Russian Jewish immigrants emigrated from the former Soviet Union (Immigration restrictions reduced the number of Russian Jews entering the United States during this period). Between 1989 and 1992, 475,000 Jewish


\textsuperscript{24} Ibid, p. 50.
immigrants arrived in Israel, most from areas of the former Soviet Union. The number of this new wave of immigrants (although not the rate relative to the base population in Israel) was the largest since the period of mass immigration that occurred soon after the new state came into being. It is the largest ever migration to Israel from any one country during such a brief time period.

An additional 15,000 Ethiopian Jews were also airlifted to Israel in a few days, and twice that number entered the country from Africa from 1989 to 1992. Although small in number, these immigrants symbolize Israel's continuing commitment to be the political haven for refugee Jews from around the world.

What is again significant here to note is that even after almost 50 years of the existence of the state of Israel, these new immigrants still feel discriminated against and alien in the promised land. Ethiopian Jews have a significantly different cultural, religious, and economic background compared to other immigrants and to the native-Israeli-born population, with a lower level of exposure to the health and welfare systems of Western nations and a lower level of formal education. They have occupational skills that are not translated into so-called competitive post-industrial, service economy of Israel. The potential for further Jewish immigration from Russia is significant, given the large number of Jews still living there and the uncertain economic and political conditions under the Confederation of Independent States that emerged in place of the Soviet Union in December 1991.

The end point of this migration stream was not obvious as of the early 1990s, but
by 1992 there were clear indications of a slowdown in the rate of immigration. During a total of 77,000 immigrants entered Israel, 43 percent as high as number entering in 1991 and 39 percent of the volume in 1990. A similar pattern emerged in 1993.25

It becomes clear that still the new immigration waves represent a continuing challenge to Israeli society and, as in the past, serious short-term problems of housing and education have been generated by the volume of recent immigration. Within the recent wave of immigrants the Russian Jews are in a advantageous position compared to their Ethiopian counterparts undercurrents of ethnic conflicts continue to remain.

CULTURAL CLASHES AT THE OUTSET: ORIENTALS AS "PRIMITIVE AND BACKWARD"

As mentioned earlier, Israeli society and institutions, as they existed in 1948 prior to the establishment of the state of Israel, were best suited to absorb European immigrants than Oriental Jews. Consequently Oriental Jews were put at a disadvantage in the position of low starters. Orientals who were to migrate later were also to be similarly disadvantaged. With their large numbers in the early years of immigration, combined with high fertility and rapidly declining mortality, Oriental immigrants quickly became a large and increasing proportion of the Jewish population but held out a lower socio-economic status in the society. Their arrival changed the pre-Independence cultural and demographic homogeneity of that population.

Due to the strangeness of the culture, Oriental immigrants were educationally,
socially and psychologically unprepared for adequate adjustment to the new society.

Through American and European influences, general economic aspects, and in particular industrialisation, took on decidedly Western characteristics. Its Universities were staffed almost entirely by academicians of Western culture and persuasion. Literature followed a Western thought pattern and English became one of the predominant forms of communication, acquiring thereby the status of the second official language in the country.  

In their looks, dress, diet, speech and education, the Oriental newcomers differed from their European counterparts. Most, for example, spoke Arabic as their first language, while Yiddish was the mother tongue used at home by many pre-Independence immigrants. Socio-economic differences have not disappeared completely since.

For example, Oriental Jews had a considerably different family structure compared to their Ashkenazim counterparts. While Ashkenazi olim often consisted of either individuals or small nuclear families, Sephardic immigration consisted of larger nuclear families and often extended families. Strong family and communal ties often meant that once a family leader, often the eldest male, made a decision, other relatives, including distant ones, would follow suit. For example, if a leader such as a grandparent settled in a particular immigrants' camp, children, grandchildren and in-laws would

26 Solomon Poll and Ernest Krausz, op.cit. p. 113.
27 Dov Friedlander and Calvin Gold Scheider, op. cit., p. 23.
gravitate to the same camp even if conditions were better elsewhere.  

Oriental immigrants had comparatively large families with many more children on the average than Ashkenazi families which imposed heavier burdens on the breadwinner of the family and society in general which was supposed to provide additional services, such as health care and schools.

As discussed earlier, members of the Yishuv had created many of the institutions necessary for the functioning of a modern (as opposed to traditional as well as typical oriental) society in accordance with Socialist Zionist ideology. Such institutions created situations and cultural contexts which were inherently discriminatory against huge number of immigrants from Asian and African countries.

Upon their arrival in Israel, Asian and African immigrants were faced with alien culture and institutions. For example, a father who often possessed skills not in demands in his new country of the emerging economy, would be reluctant to shift to what was regarded as demeaning work, or perhaps was too old or infirm to engage in physical labour. He was, consequently unemployed or under employed.

As a result the children frequently had to go to work at an early age to supplement the family income. Bereft of educational opportunities, these youngsters would in twenty years time find themselves in conditions of poverty and near-poverty as a result of their being able to secure only the poorer, less-skilled jobs. In addition, the necessity of child

28 Avraham Shama and Mark Iris, op. cit., p. 37.
29 Ibid. p. 38.
labour was to mean a loss of status for the father, since such a situation was an acknowledgment of his inability to provide for his family.

These new immigrants came from a society which was different in many ways, not the least which was its emphasis upon ascriptive qualities and characteristics, as opposed to achievements. A person's status was measured according to his ancestry and family ties rather than his own abilities. As is typically the case in traditional societies, the role of women was relegated to the role Jewish society had traditionally declared to be the province of women: bearing and raising children, cooking, keeping house, managing domestic affairs etc.

Women were prevented from entering from labour force, in part because the household duties, especially the raising of the children, definitely constituted a full-time job, and in part because social values decreed that the Sephardic women stay at home, even if they had spare time and were willing to work. The Sephardic daughters were perceived as young women who were to be protected and sheltered from dangerous outside influences. Their future role in life was to be married at an early age and have children. Therefore, formal education for women was given low priority by the Sephardim, nor were there any attempts of providing informal education to prepare them for participation in a modern society.

Also one more point needs to be emphasised here. By and large Oriental societies were Patriarchal where the father was the source of authority and the family decision-maker. The undisputed head of the family, his decisions would be binding on the rest of
the family members including the adults and his married sons and daughters. As a figure endowed with great respect by the other members of the family, he was the responsible leader and represented the family in all negotiations which affected it.

Thus, when a Sephardic family had to interact with absorption bureaucracy, it was perceived as the father's duty to execute this task. However, as the bureaucracy was universalistic and therefore by nature geared to treat all immigrants as equal individuals, the result was that the Oriental father was treated as just another person, and not given the special respect due to the head of the family. Consequently, additional interaction with administrators was often perceived as a threat to deeply rooted family authority patterns.

Another characteristic of Sephardic society was its religiosity. This went beyond individual observance of religious law and custom, in the Oriental communities the rabbis exercised considerable authority. The whole life of these communities revolved around the synagogues. More than a place to pray, the synagogue was a social and political centre in the sense that social interaction took place there, and all decisions on community life were made there. This pattern highly resembles that of the nineteenth century Eastern European shtetl (small Jewish village). But the Ashkenazim who came to Israel did not transport such a religious power structure with them; such structures had largely ceased to exist.

Sephardic communities, motivated to migrate for religious reasons, attempted to transplant their religious power structure to Israel, but found these institutions challenged and seriously weakened by the prevalent secular, socialist ideology. To a certain extent.
the diminution of rabbinical power without the development of alternate leaders produced a partial power vacuum in the Oriental communities.

Coming from traditional, non-industrialized world, mostly from Arab world and North African countries, Oriental Jewish immigrants were generally less educated and unskilled by Western standards. Their health was poor, life expectancy at birth in societies from which they came was often as low as 35-40 years and most of them had worked in small family-run businesses. After immigration to Israel, this close link between work life and family life was broken as most working men became hired labourers or employees in larger industrial enterprises. In Israel, education was compulsory for at least eight years. Oriental Jews' educational levels increased later and as a result there were some changes in later years in the mortality, fertility and marriage patterns of Afro-Asian Jews.

Sephardic occupational patterns were quite different from the prevalent Israeli distribution. Sephardim were small jewelers, merchants and craftsmen. For example, it was estimated that 70 percent of Iraqi male immigrants were either small merchants or had not trade at all. Very few were either office workers or industrial workers. Almost none were farmers. Small scale entrepreneurship, the notion of a man being his own boss, was highly valued. To be a salaried employee, to work under someone else, was regarded as demeaning, low status employment, even if such a salaried job paid more money than could have been realized through self-employment. In the "old country" Sephardim

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30 Dov Friedlander and Calvin Gold Scheider, op. cit., p. 23.
would typically commence studying a trade at an early age and engage in that same occupation throughout their adult lives, bringing their sons into that same trade. The natural outgrowth of such narrowness of occupational experience was a low degree of adaptability to different trades and occupations, and also a strong resistance to change.\textsuperscript{31}

Upon arrival in Israel, many oriental immigrants were confronted by an economic structure which necessitated the change of their occupations. The situation was further complicated by the required change being a multi-dimensional one. Not only were the old occupations to be abandoned, but were replaced by jobs, such as those in agriculture, which were not only different but they were regarded as degrading. Furthermore, the cherished concept of self-employment was to be replace by a salaried employment. As could be expected, some people were unable to adapt to a new economic structure, especially the older immigrants who had been engaged in the same occupation since adolescence. Being older, these men often had larger families to support. The result of these two factors was that these families constituted a large part of the future welfare cases of Israeli society.

When the Oriental Jews were making their decisions as to whether or not they would migrate to Israel, they had very little reliable information on which to make their choice. Available sources consisted of material from Zionist \textit{schlichim} (emissaries), who naturally portrayed idyllic conditions in Israel. Another source was broadcasts of Israeli radio, often listened to in secret in Arab countries. Although the absolute number of radio

\textsuperscript{31} Avraham Shama and Mark Iris, op. cit., p. 40.
receivers available was low, word of mouth quickly transmitted the substance of these
broadcasts to a much wider audience. In such a two-step flow of information process, it is
quite natural that those who listened to such programmes were the ones who were most
interested in, and favourably disposed towards, the idea of living in a Jewish state. As
recipients of information, they received and retained their information selectively. Thus
they would read into the broadcasts, which originated from Zionist sources, whatever
agreed with their opinions, and retain only that. It was these selectively retained positive
thoughts which were verbally spread to relatives and acquaintances.

The Bible had Laos served as a source of information. Although centuries old, the
deePLY religious Sephardim regarded it was a living document, and thus Israel became
Eretz Savat Chalav u'Dvash - The Land Flowing with Milk and Honey. In certain cases,
such as Iraq, the decision to migrate, once made, was irrevocable; often the assets of
those who opted to leave for Israel were seized. In almost all cases, Oriental immigrants
were unable to bring their full resources with them. Despite this economic loss, the
alternative of migrating to newly established Israel was still perceived as more desirable
than remaining in the Diaspora.

The immigrants were very much surprised to discover that Israel was not as rosy
as they expected it to be. They were expected to change crowded with other families in
tents, they were dependent on state welfare for food, had their family and community
authority patterns challenged, with all of this transpiring in a highly secular environment.
Inevitably comparisons were made between their previous status in the country of origin
and their current and potential status in Israel, with the process often culminating in regret and frustration. As the decision to migrate was a final one, and the people had few resources, many immigrants had no alternative but to remain. Further, these feelings often resulted in a deeper sense of alienation, and increase the tendency towards intra-rather than inter-group interactions.

Although the deep religiosity of the Sephardim was the major incentive to their migration, it should also be noted that anti-Jewish outbursts in various Arab countries also served as stimuli. These sometimes assumed major proportions. Thus, the Iraqi Jewish community endured an outbreak in 1941 which left as many as 180 Jews dead. The Jews of Libya counted over 100 of their number dead after a sudden outbreak in 1945. The passage of the U N Partition Resolution produced additional anti-Jewish violence; 76 Jews died in Aden alone. Such violence produced a greater predisposition to make aliya. However, for most of the Oriental Jews, fears for personal safety were not the most decisive factor in the decision to go to Israel.

On the contrary, nearly equal in numbers to the Sephardic immigration the aliya, mainly from Romania and Poland, was not composed of whole communities, for these communities had been shattered by the Holocaust. Instead, this migration was composed of whole individuals and nuclear families, often families with one or more members missing or dead as a result of the war.

Family structure was for the most part based on modern, western norms. While the father was still the head of the household, he did not exercise power in as autocratic a
manner as did his Sephardic counterpart. The wife shared in decision making matters of the family to a certain extent and children were more free to question their parents and engage in meaningful discussions. They could afford to defy the authority of father and question him on matters crucial to family concern and their future. While contacts with relatives were maintained, it was not an Ashkenazi norm to make a major decision based solely on what a senior relation had earlier done when confronted with a similar situation. Family size was significantly smaller among European immigrants, whose ranks also included a higher proportion of unmarried adults.

When compared to their Oriental counterparts, the European immigrants were more modern and secular, something Socialist Zionism was founded upon. Formal education was more widespread, and did not emphasize religion to the extent that Sephardic education did and religious ties to Israel were less important while the ideological significance of Zionism was greater. Also as modernised individuals, the Ashkenazim were more prone to evaluate people on the basis of their abilities and achievements rather than relying upon ascriptive criteria. As a consequence of this, women were both permitted and encouraged, at times even required, to participate more fully in society. While many Ashkenazi women continued in the familiar female roles of wife and mother, others took an active part in various endeavors, such as government, agriculture and industry.

The advantageous position of the Ashkenazi immigrants also became strong as the occupational patterns of immigrants from Europe did not reflect the typical
distribution of a modern society. Disproportionately large segments of the population had been engaged in retail trade and the clothing industry, with relatively few engaged in heavy industries. However, these people had been exposed to, and interacted with, a more modernized economy on a greater scale than had the Oriental Jews. One factor which aided the process was the disintegration of traditional Jewish communal life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Holocaust resulted in a complete disruption of occupational patterns.

Furthermore, the dislocation of virtually all aspects of Jewish life over a period of several years had placed the Ashkenazim in a highly abnormal situation. Consequently, they were flexible and receptive to the idea of change, not only in terms of adopting new vocations but also in terms of readiness to migrate. To continue living in their countries of birth was unthinkable for many of the survivors and there were too many painful memories and in many cases it was known that non-Jewish neighbours had actively collaborated with Nazis. Thus, alternative price to change was low and one had little or nothing to lose by leaving the old country as starting afresh could only lead to some kind of improvement.

The above were also the major variables that shaped the hopes and expectations of European immigrants who expected Israel to be a homeland and sanctuary. Being unencumbered by large families, and possessing a mental attitude set which made them more receptive to change, enabled Ashkenazim to become acculturated more swiftly than the Oriental immigrants. Such a process was also facilitated by the fact that Israeli
society was more asking to that which the Ashkenazim had known, as opposed to its
differences when compared to Sephardic society.\textsuperscript{32}

Given that upon arrival itself, these differences were so large, any uniform
treatment of the immigrants by the absorption institutions was destined to have widely
varying efficacy and create problems. Equal treatment of two widely disparate cases is in
fact discriminatory because it will produce unequal results. The bureaucracy set up to
deal with absorption of immigrants was inspired by European norms and culture,
established by Europeans and staffed largely by Europeans. It was therefore better geared
to function with European clients, all the more so because with people arriving by the
tens of thousands in such a short period of time there was no chance to plan alternate
strategies. Furthermore the resources at hand were quite limited.

Upon arrival of immigrants first priority was given to provision housing, while
employment opportunities were given second place. Many people were settled in the
1948-50 phase in houses abandoned by Arabs who had fled during the war. Expulsion of
Arabs in order to use their homes as housing for the immigrants was not a premeditated
government policy. Rather, use of these homes was a spontaneous decision. The Arabs
had fled, the demand for housing was acute, and so vacant houses were used.

As it is, mass immigration also involved heavy costs, both immediately and over
the long term. Economic hardships in Israel following the War of Independence and mass
immigration were severe: inflation, high unemployment among newcomers as the few

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid, p. 44.
available jobs were given to demoralised soldiers when the war ended in mid-1949, and shortages of everything, especially housing. As the supply of abandoned Arab housing came to an end, immigrants were gathered in transit camps, where they were housed in tents and hastily constructed barracks.\textsuperscript{33}

Many dwelling units were in cities like Lod, Ramleh, Jaffa, Haifa and Akko. Settlement of Jews in these areas was useful for defense purposes as it established a Jewish presence in deserted quarters of urban areas. As settlement in these areas was basically on a first come, first served basis, Ashkenazim were prime beneficiaries, since they were the more numerous immigrant group in the immediate post-independent period,\textsuperscript{34} whereas Sephardim were later to be resettled in the areas on the fringes, mostly desert areas on the periphery of the cities.

The general distribution of Israelis shows an over-representation of Ashkenazi in bigger cities (mainly Haifa and Tel Aviv) and, to a lesser extent, in the central area of Israel (the periphery of Tel Aviv). Afro-Asians are more numerous in older towns on the outskirts of larger centres (half their total population) and even more so in further areas like the Negev or Gaiilee where they inhabit new moshavim (cooperative farms) and "Development towns."\textsuperscript{35}

In other words, Afro-Asians are under-represented in those parts of the country

\textsuperscript{33} Dov Friedlander and Calvin Gold Scheider, op. cit., pp. 21-22.
\textsuperscript{34} Avraham Shama and Mark Iris, op. cit., p.46.
\textsuperscript{35} Eliezer Ben-Rafael, Beyond the Melting of Edot: Ethnic Conflict And Social Reality in Israel. Jerusalem, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. 1980, p. 1.
which include two-thirds of Israelis (Haifa, Tel Aviv and Central area) and over-represented elsewhere. In the big cities themselves they form the vast majority of lower-class neighbourhoods.\(^3\)

In early 1952, a quarter of a million immigrants lived in transit camps, most of them latecomers in the immigration wave. For the better-educated, skilled European immigrants the stay in transit camps was usually brief. But many non-European immigrants lingered on and were less integrated into the mainstream of Israeli life as the camps evolved into 'development towns'.\(^4\)

Urban settlement for these immigrants was to have several consequences apart from provision of shelter. First, these areas were already integrated into a system of municipal services such as water supply and sewers. Even though these services may have been marginal in quality, their existence obviated the necessity of establishing such services. Second, earlier arrivals were better able to secure the few available jobs, and these jobs were for the most part located in just such urban areas. Third, the school systems were already in existence. Although absorbing a number of immigrant children in each school led to certain problems, such as language barriers and overcrowding, these obstacles were relatively minor.

Also Oriental Jews were further in disadvantageous position as many of the European immigrants were aided by relatives already established in Israel who were able to provide both material and psychological support. As they were the first members of the

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\(^3\) Ibid. p. 2.
\(^4\) Dov Friedlander and Calvin Gold Scheider, op. cit., p. 23.
mass immigration, and as many were survivors of the holocaust, it has been argued that these people were supported and openly received by the Yishuv out of a combination of sympathy, communal ties, and perhaps a sense of guilt.\(^{38}\)

**NEGATIVE IMAGES OF ORIENTAL COMMUNITIES**

When the Jewish immigrants from Africa and Asia arrived in Israel, they had to face not only the usual social psychological problems of being uprooted and readjustment, but were also the victim of the negative images formed at the outset about them by political leaders and Jews of European origin. Added to this problem was these immigrants' contention that their being uprooted was, of necessity, associated with the very establishment of the State.\(^{39}\)

Given the differences between the two groups in language, culture and custom, there was only limited voluntary social interaction between the two groups and there were images formed about which persisted for a long period of time. The negative images formed at the outset of the immigration period were to create difficulties for Sephardim in the future.

The task of European Zionism as it was discursively described was to "raise" the cultural levels of non-European Jews to European standards, without being "brought down" to their "primitive" levels.\(^{40}\)

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\(^{38}\) Avraham Shama and Mark Iris, op. cit., p. 46.

\(^{39}\) Poll Solomon and Krausz Ernest, op.cit. p. 113.

Though there was no denying the fact the African and Asian immigrants were less educated, less aware and traditional in their ways of living, such were the horrible negative images and prejudices formed about them that upon arrival in Israel, Mizrahi immigrants were sprayed with DDT to "disinfect" and "delouse" them. 41

David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of the country, who remained at the helm of Israeli affairs throughout the State's first 15 years of existence, told Robert Moskin of Look magazine in 1965:

(Jews) from Morocco have no education. Their customs are those of Arabs. They love their wives, but they beat them.... May be in the third generation something will appear from the Oriental Jews that is a little different. But I don't see it yet. The Moroccan Jews took a lot from the Moroccan Arabs. The culture of Morocco I would not like to have here. And I don't see what contribution present Persians have to make. 42

Such deep-rooted was the attitude of people at the helm of affairs against the Oriental immigrants in the early years that a few months later Ben-Gurion told Eric Rouleau of Le Monde:

we do not want Israelis to become Arabs. We are in duty bound to fight against the spirit of the Levant, which corrupts individuals and societies, and to preserve the authentic Jewish values as they crystallized in Diaspora. 43

In 1949, Ben Gurion in an article that he wrote for the Israeli year book, state that the Jews of Europe were "the leading candidates for citizenship in the State of Israel." He explained the meaning of the Holocaust as follows:

41 Ibid, p. 56.
43 Ibid, p. 20.
"But more than Hitler hurt the Jewish people, whom he knew and hated, he injured the Jewish State which he never anticipated. He had annihilated the carrier and the main and central constructive power of the Jewish State. The state was established and the people who longed for it were not there." 44

And not only in the initial period, but the negative image of the Oriental Jews continued for decades to come. in 1971, faced with a wave of violent wave of demonstrations organised by the newly founded Black Panthers Movement, Golda Meir, the then Prime Minister, made a considered statement in the Knesset in which she said that she would be the last person in the world to shy away from the reality and pretend that the communal gap did not exist.

After asserting that there could be no greater distortion of the truth than to say that the gap was the result of Israeli policy, she tried to answer the question as to the roots of the existing situation. She said:

many immigrants from the Islamic countries brought deprivation and discrimination with them in their "baggage" from their countries of origin.... The Jews who came to us from the Islamic countries were of a higher level than the populations from which they came; but it was their fate to live in countries that have not yet developed intellectually, industrially, and culturally, and they were deprived of the opportunity to develop their special characteristics, to express their intellectual capacities, and to acquire the knowledge and education that were given to those coming from the developed countries of Europe and America. (statement in the knesset)45

Ben Gurion even went up to the extent of calling these Jews from the third world countries "savages" venting the already common views on these immigrants at a meeting

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44 Joseph Massad, op. cit. p. 56.
with writers and intellectuals in 1949, stating that

    even the immigrant from North Africa, who looks like a savage, who
    has never read a book in his life, not even a religious one, and doesn't
    even know how to say his prayers, either wittingly or unwittingly has
    behind him a spiritual heritage of thousands of years. 46

Another representative sample of the kind of idea the Israeli leadership had
formed of the Oriental Jews who were being "ingathered" is furnished by Berl Locker,
the then Head of the Jewish Agency Executive. Locker's statement was made in a spirit
of generosity and expansiveness in the course of an article in the Jewish Agency's
monthly Zion of August 1951 where he wrote:

    Has it ever happened in history that a people which had worked very
    hard for several decades to obtain a place in the family of nations and
    which had at long last achieved its liberation and independence, then
    followed this up by making a supreme effort to bring to its country
    another people, another race, which will soon surpass it in numbers and
    become the ruling element in the state. 47

One of the crueler chapters of that period - which continues to resonate among
Mizrahim to this day - involved the kidnapping of hundreds of Yemeni children from
transit camps in Israel and giving them to childless Ashkenazi couples for adoption. Sick
Yemeni children were taken from their parents to hospitals; the parents, prevented from
visiting, were later told that their children had died. 48

This discourse assigns European Jews the role of adults who had attained
development after having endured a difficult childhood, and who are now in a position to

46 Ibid, op. cit. p. 56.
47 Rejwan Nissim, op. cit. p. 19.
48 Joseph Massad, op. cit., p. 56.
"help" third world children reach European-style civilization. This was the general established attitude in the early years of mass immigration from Middle East and North African countries.

The above are only a few samples, but they are representative of the kind of attitude the East European Zionists had -- and seem to continue to have -- towards immigrants from the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, who in this case constitute the "out-group."

Since the European Jews could wield power and determine facts and decide policies while "raising" the cultural and economic levels of non-European Jews, we can safely say that the present lower socio-economic status of Jews in Israel can be described as a fallout of a cultural and ethnic gap or a manifestation of the existence of two cultures since the independence days the seeds of which were sown much before the State of Israel came into existence in 1948.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Following are the major points that can be extracted from this chapter.

1: The growth of Zionist ideology with the ever-present anti-Semitism of many European countries led to Jewish immigration to Palestine in substantial numbers in the period from 1882-1948.

2: Many of the institutions, necessary for the functioning of a modern (as opposed to traditional) society were created during the British mandate period. These
institutions were structured in accordance with socialist Zionist ideology, which later posed problems of adjustment for Oriental immigrants. They created situations which were inherently discriminatory against many of the Sephardic immigrants who were to arrive in such large numbers in the post-Independence period.

3: Society and institutions in Israel, as they existed in 1948, were better suited to absorb European immigrants than Oriental ones as the former were better equipped to enter a state apparatus they were not alien to.

4: Since European immigrants were first to arrive in post-independence period and the settlement in better areas was basically on a first come, first served basis, Ashkenazim were prime beneficiaries. Sephardim were later to be resettled in the areas on the fringes, mostly desert areas on the periphery of the cities or away from them. Also, as most of the Ashkenazim had required skills for jobs in a modern state, they had to spend less time in transit camps that helped them settle fast whereas Sephardim had to linger in these camps for quite long periods.

5: Oriental Jews by and large were not the committed Zionists and their migration to Israel was a logical fallout of their traditional religious values. They were also politically were not very active and they had greater opportunity costs in migrating.

6: Ashkenazim shared more values and attitudes with existing Israeli society than
did the Sephardim who had traditional way of life that made them less adaptable.

7: For no fault of theirs, the Oriental immigrants were the victims of the negative images formed about them which created problems for them and continue to haunt them. Even the ruling political class had negative attitude towards Jews coming from Asian and African countries which influenced policies affecting them.