

FRANCE (Heb. פְּרַאנְצְיָה and צִרְפֵּת), country in Western Europe. This entry is arranged according to the following outline:

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This article deals with the history of the Jews living within the territory corresponding to present-day France; the territories beyond the present frontiers (more particularly those of the north and southwest) which were subjected to the authority of the kings of France for short periods are not considered here. The provinces neighboring on the kingdom of France or enclosed within it before their incorporation within the kingdom (in particular *Brittany, Normandy, *Anjou, *Champagne, *Lorraine, *Alsace, *Franche-Comté, *Burgundy, *Savoie, *Dauphiné, the county of *Nice, *Provence, *Comtat Venaissin, *Languedoc, *Auvergne, Guienne, *Poitou) are dealt with. Those areas which formed part of these provinces, but which are today beyond the borders of France, are not included.

From the First Settlements until the Revolution

THE ROMAN AND MEROVINGIAN PERIODS. The earliest evidence of a Jewish presence in France concerns an isolated individual, perhaps accompanied by a few servants; he was *Archelaus, the ethnarch of Judea, who was banished by Augustus in the year 6 C.E. to *Vienne (in the present department of Isère), where he died in 16 C.E. Similarly, his younger brother Herod *Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, was exiled to *Lyons (if not to a place also called Lugdunum on the French side of the Pyrenees) by Caligula in 39. A story taken as legend (intended to explain the origin of the prayer *Ve-Hu Rahum*) states that after the conquest of Jerusalem, the Romans filled three ships with Jewish captives, which arrived in *Bordeaux, *Arles, and Lyons. Recent archaeological findings tend to find a basis for this legend. Objects identified as Jewish because of the *menorah* portrayed on them have been discovered around Arles (first, fourth, and early fifth centuries), and in Bordeaux and the neighboring region (third and early fourth centuries). Written sources, previously treated with some reserve, affirm that during the Roman period Jews had been present in *Metz (mid-fourth century), *Poitiers (late fourth century), *Avignon (late fourth century), and Arles (mid-fifth century).

Evidence is abundant from 465 onward. There were then Jews in Vannes (Brittany), a few years later in *Clermont-Ferrand and *Narbonne, in *Agde in 506, in *Valence in 524, and in *Orléans in 533. After Clovis I (481–511), founder of the Merovingian dynasty, became converted to Catholicism (496), the Christian population increasingly adopted Catholic doctrine. From 574 there were attempts to compel the Jews to accept the prevailing faith. In 576 Bishop *Avitus of Clermont-Ferrand offered the Jews of his town (who numbered over 500) the alternative of baptism or expulsion. His example was followed in 582 by Chilperic I, king of Neustria (the western part of the Frankish kingdom). In *Marseilles, where Jews from both these areas found refuge, there was also an attempt at forced conversion. Little information is available on a similar attempt made by Dagobert I between 631 and 639; had this been successful, the Jews would have been excluded from almost the whole of present-day France. However, this seems to have been far from the case; though documents make no

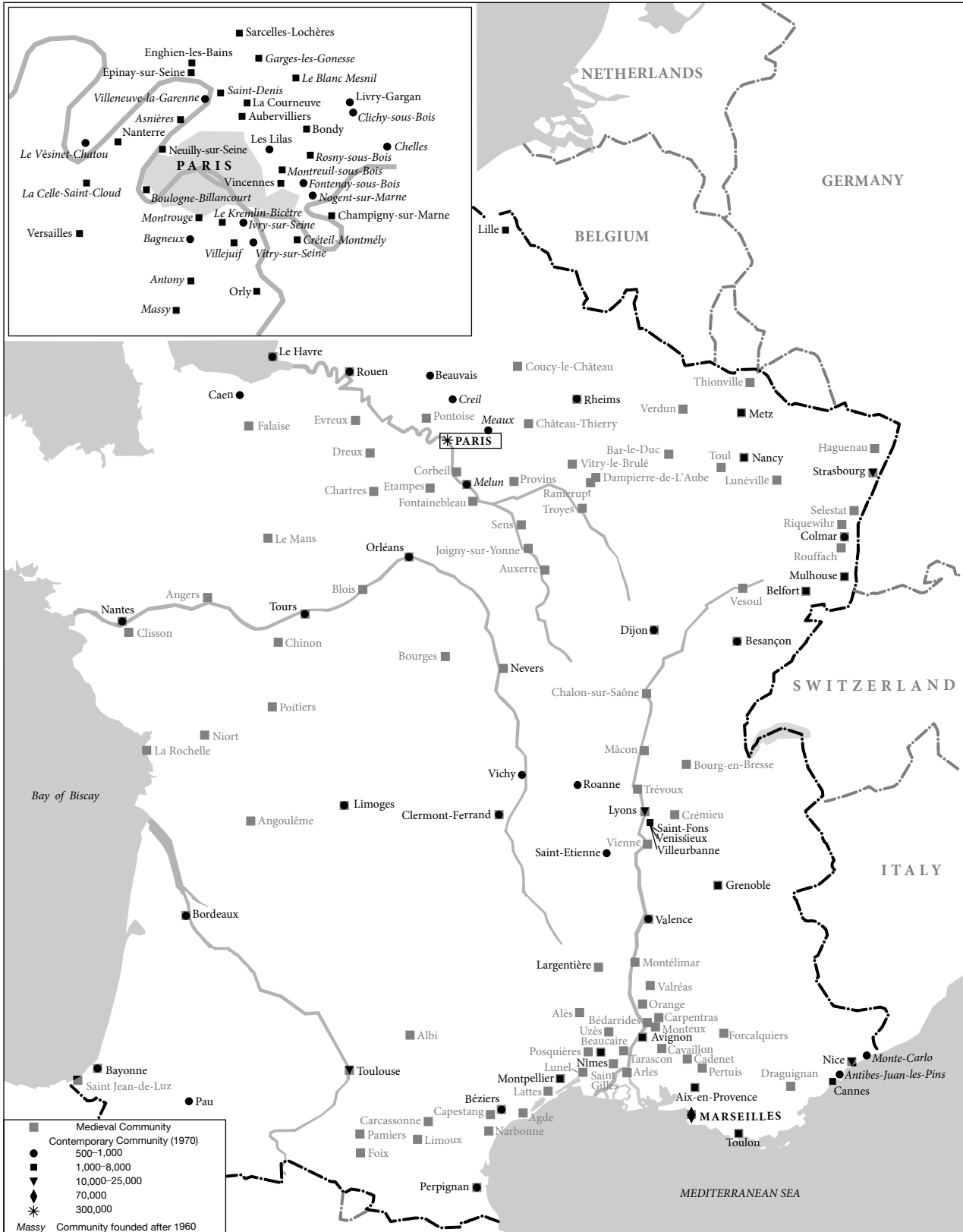
mention of Jews for some time, there is a similar lack of information about other social and ethnic groups. Little is known of the Jews of Septimania (in southwest Gaul, then a Spanish province). The Jews there were spared the forced conversions and subsequent violent persecutions which befell their coreligionists in Visigothic *Spain.

During this period the number of Jews in France increased rapidly, initially through immigration, first from Italy and the eastern part of the Roman Empire and then from Spain, especially after Sisebut's persecutions, which began in 612. However, the increase in numbers was also due to Jewish proselytism, which found adherents mostly among the poorest classes and in particular among slaves.

At that time the Jews were mainly engaged in commerce, but there were already physicians and even sailors. In the absence of written Jewish sources, archaeological evidence once more provides information on the France of this early period. On a seal from Avignon (fourth century) the *menorah* is reproduced, although only with five branches. The same motif appears on the inscription of Narbonne (687/8), which also points to a scanty knowledge of Hebrew at the time; the whole text is in Latin with the exception of three words, *Shalom al Yisrael*, which are incorrectly spelled. Nothing at all is known of the internal organization of these Jewish groups, except for the presence of synagogues (*Paris 582; Orléans before 585), but it is known that there were contacts between them. The Marseilles community maintained relations with those of Clermont-Ferrand and Paris and even, beyond the borders, with that of Rome.

In spite of the attempts at forced conversion, relations between the Jewish and Christian populations seem to have been free, a state of affairs demonstrated by the repeated efforts of the church authorities to prohibit these relations. The main prohibition, frequently repeated, was on Jews and Christians taking meals together (Vannes, 465; Agde, 506; Épone, 517; etc.); another, aimed at separating the population further, forbade the Jews to go out-of-doors during the Easter holidays (Orléans, 538; Mâcon, 583; etc.); and finally – a measure designed to prevent Jewish proselytism – possession of not only Christian but also pagan slaves by the Jews was restricted or forbidden (Orléans, 541; Clichy, 626 or 627; etc.). Further, though at first sight negative, proof of good relations between Christians and Jews is provided by the frequent religious *disputations, discussions which were characterized by the great freedom in argument accorded to the Jews (particularly between King Chilperic I (561–84) and his Jewish purveyor *Priscus, 581). Another positive testimony – though this may be largely a pious invention – is to be found in the participation of the Jews in the obsequies of church dignitaries (Arles, 459 and 543; Clermont-Ferrand, 554).

FROM THE CAROLINGIANS UNTIL THE EVE OF THE FIRST CRUSADE. The reign of the Carolingians was the most favorable period for the Jews in the kingdom of France. *Agobard's attempted forced conversion of Jewish children in Lyons and



Main Jewish communities in France in the Middle Ages and in the latter 20th century. Insert shows detail of region surrounding Paris.

the district around 820 brought the bishop into disfavor with Louis the Pious (814–840).

The important Jewish settlement in the Rhone Valley, which had been in existence during the Roman and Merovingian periods, increased and expanded through the Saône Valley. Continued immigration from Italy and Spain was a source of demographic growth, as was proselytism affecting also the higher social classes; the best-known example is *Bodo, deacon of Louis the Pious, who converted to Judaism in Muslim Spain. From the second half of the tenth century and, at the latest, from the second half of the 11th century, there was also a trend toward migration to England.

The most intensive economic activity of the Jews of France, especially in the commercial field, belongs to this period. Some were accredited purveyors to the imperial court and others administered the affairs of Catholic religious institutions. Privileges granted to the Jews by the Carolingian emperors became the model for those coveted by other merchants. Their great concentration in agriculture and especially viticulture enabled them practically to monopolize the market; even the wine for Mass was bought from Jews. The few cases of moneylending known from this period were in fact connected with this agricultural activity; they were related to deferred purchases of agricultural estates intended to round off existing Jewish estates. In view of the wealth of general information available on the Jews of this period, the paucity of evidence concerning physicians suggests that there was a great decrease of interest in this profession. In the public services, Jews were employed both in the subordinate position of tax collector and in the most respected office of imperial ambassador (*Isaac for *Charlemagne; Judah for Charles the Bald).

The personal privileges and ordinances granted by the Carolingians assured the Jews complete judicial equality. Moreover, any attempt to entice away their pagan slaves by converting them to Catholicism was penalized; their right to employ salaried Christian personnel was explicitly guaranteed; any offense against their persons or property was punishable by enormous fines. Even more, the Jews enjoyed a preferential status, because they were not subjected to the ordeals (“judgments of God”) which normally formed part of the judicial process. An imperial official, the *magister Judaeorum*, who ranked among the *missi dominici*, supervised the meticulous enforcement of all these privileges.

The activities of the church councils had little effect during this period. The Councils of Meaux and Paris (845–6) sought to legislate on the subject of the Jews, and a series of hostile canons concerning them were drawn up; these were in fact a kind of canonical collection and the work of *Amulo, Agobard’s successor to the see of Lyons, and the deacon *Florus of Lyons, faithful secretary of both bishops. However, Charles the Bald (840–77) refused to ratify these canons. Another center of intensive Jewish settlement and powerful anti-Jewish reaction was *Chartres, where at the beginning of the 11th century, Bishop *Fulbert delivered a series of sermons to

refute the Jewish assertion that, since there might yet be Jewish kings in distant lands, the Messiah had not yet come. Toward the close of the same century, *Ivo of Chartres inserted a series of violently anti-Jewish texts in his canonical collection. All of these, however, precisely by their concern to combat Jewish influences on the Christian faithful, emphasize the cordiality of the relations prevailing between Jews and Christians.

The so-called “Carolingian Renaissance” in the intellectual sphere had no counterpart on the Jewish scene, but strangely enough, subsequent tradition also attributes the impetus of Jewish learning in the West to Charlemagne (768–814). Just as he actually brought scholarly Irish monks to France, he is said to have brought the Jewish scholar Machir from Babylon. What is known of Hebrew works circulating in France derives from the testimony of Agobard, but, being a polemist, he mentions only those works he criticizes: a very ancient version of **Toledot Yeshu*, a parody of the Gospels, and **Shi’ur Komah*, a mystic work. The real upsurge of Jewish learning in France began during the 11th century. In the middle of the century, Joseph b. Samuel *Bonfils (Tov Elem) was active in Limoges, Moses ha-Darshan in Narbonne, and, a little later, *Rashi in Troyes. From the outset, the scholars’ works comprised the principal fields of Jewish learning: liturgic poetry, biblical and talmudic commentaries, rabbinic decisions, grammar, and philology. The glory of Limoges and central France in general was shortlived, but Narbonne and Troyes heralded the great schools of Jewish scholars in both the extreme south and the extreme north of the country. The radical change in the situation resulted from the general upheaval which swept across the Christian West from the beginning of the 11th century and paved the way for the Crusades. Two local persecutions, in *Limoges at the end of the tenth and in the early 11th century, may be connected with the general persecution which raged through France from 1007 for at least five years. Launched by the clergy, it was rapidly supported by King Robert II the Pious (996–1031), then propagated by the general Christian population. The pretext for the riots was the accusation that the Jews of Orléans had joined in a plot against Christians with Sultan al-Ḥākim, who had indeed destroyed the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Thus the object of universal hatred, the Jews of France were then, if the sources are correct, either expelled from the towns, put to the sword, drowned in the rivers, or put to death in some other fashion, the only exceptions being those who accepted baptism. When one of the Jewish notables of France, Jacob b. Jekuthiel, intervened with Pope John XVIII (1004–09), the latter sent a legate to France to put a stop to the persecutions. Those Jews who had been forced to accept baptism immediately returned to Judaism. A similar situation arose in 1063: the “Spanish crusaders,” who had set out to fight the Muslims, began by persecuting the Jews of southern France. On this occasion, however, they met with the opposition of the princes and the bishops, who were congratulated by Pope *Alexander II for their stand.

FROM THE FIRST CRUSADE UNTIL THE GENERAL EXPULSION FROM PROVENCE (1096–1501). The First Crusade (1096–99) had little immediate effect on the situation of the Jews, but it was in France that the first murderous persecutions occurred, accompanied by forced conversions in *Rouen and Metz (but not in southern France, as some scholars have asserted recently). Although the brunt of the brutalities was borne by the Jews of Germany, it was in Rouen that the crusaders justified their persecutions of the Jews: “If it is our desire [so they said] to attack the enemies of God after having covered lengthy distances toward the Orient while before our eyes we have the Jews, a nation whose enmity to God is unequalled, we will then follow a path which leads us backward.” The first written legal act of a king of France which is extant is *Louis VII’s decree of 1144 in which he banished from his kingdom those Jews who had been converted to Christianity and later returned to Judaism, that is those who – from the Christian point of view – had “relapsed into heresy.” The Second Crusade (1147–49) gave rise to a controversy between *Bernard of Clairvaux and *Peter of Cluny on the question of the Jews; although they were spared the confiscation of all their belongings, as the abbot of Cluny had recommended in order to finance this expedition, they were nevertheless compelled to make a considerable financial contribution.

France’s first *blood libel occurred in *Blois in 1171, when 31 Jews – men, women, and children – were burned at the stake after a parody of a trial, and in spite of the fact that not even a body was produced as proof of the murder. A series of similar accusations followed in Loches, *Pontoise, Joinville, and Épernay. Although Louis VII declared to the leaders of the Jewish community of Paris when they appealed to him that he regarded the ritual murder accusation as pure invention and promised to prevent the renewed outbreaks of similar persecutions, popular rumors continued to indict the Jews. According to his biographer, King *Philip Augustus (1180–1223), when only six years old, learned from his playmates that the Jews were in the habit of killing Christian children. The hatred thus nurtured prevailed, and he acted upon it soon after his accession to the throne. In 1181 he had all the wealthy Jews of Paris thrown into prison and freed them only in return for a huge ransom. In the following year (1182) he decreed their expulsion from the kingdom and the confiscation of their real estate. If the number of Jews affected by this measure was comparatively small, this was the result of the small size of the actual kingdom of France and the lack of royal authority over the nobles of the neighboring provinces, where the exiles found immediate refuge. Such a haven, however, was not always safe from the tenacious hatred of the king of France. Thus, in 1190, he pursued the Jews in Champagne (in *Bray-sur-Seine or in Brie-Comte-Robert) and exterminated a whole community which had the temerity to condemn one of his subjects to death for assassinating a Jew.

Driven by financial considerations, Philip Augustus authorized the return of the Jews to his kingdom in 1198, extort-

ing from them what profit he could. Possibly another concern was also involved: from 1182 Philip Augustus had considerably expanded his territory. In all the lands incorporated within the kingdom, he found Jews living among a population which raised no objection to their presence, and he might have seriously angered the populace by expelling the Jews. Since he tolerated the Jews in the newly acquired parts of his kingdom, their banishment from its heart was no longer justified. Two months after their readmission, the king reached an agreement with Thibaut II, count of Champagne, on the division of their respective rights over the Jews living in their territories.

The Third Crusade (1189–92), which had such grave consequences for the Jews of England, did not affect those of France, but the crusade against the *Albigenses in southern France also spelled ruin to the Jewish communities. That of *Béziers, in particular, mourned many victims when the town was taken in 1209; the survivors crossed the Pyrenees and re-established their community in *Gerona.

During the reign of *Louis IX (1226–70), severe anti-Jewish persecutions took place in 1236 in the western provinces, in Brittany, Anjou, and Poitou, which were not subject to the direct authority of the monarch. In 1240 Duke Jean le Roux expelled the Jews from Brittany. During the same year the famous disputation on the Talmud took place in Paris. Properly speaking, it was a trial of the Talmud inspired by a bull issued by *Gregory IX in 1239. The verdict had already been given in advance: the Talmud was to be destroyed by fire, a sentence which was carried out in 1242. In Dauphiné, which was still independent of the kingdom, ten Jews were burned at the stake in *Valréas in 1247 following a blood libel. Anti-Jewish agitation which resulted in the imprisonment of Jews and the confiscation of their belongings spread to several places in Dauphiné. There is no reason to believe that Louis IX had intended to expel the Jews or that he had even issued an order to this effect. Yet his brother, *Alphonse of Poitiers, to whom the king had ceded the government of several provinces, ordered the expulsion of the Jews from Poitou in July 1249. However, the order was not rigorously applied or it took effect for a brief period only. Nevertheless, the territory governed by Alphonse was the scene of the first local expulsion: from Moissac in 1271. Louis IX and Alphonse of Poitiers rivaled one another in their brutal methods of extorting money from the Jews. The king, ostentatiously scrupulous of benefiting from money earned through the sin of usury, dedicated it to the financing of the Crusade. With the same pious motive Alphonse of Poitiers incarcerated all the Jews of his provinces so that he could lay his hands on their possessions with greater ease. *Philip III the Bold, who reigned from 1270, was responsible for a widespread migration of the Jews when he forbade them, in 1283, to live in the small rural localities. The accession of *Philip IV the Fair (1285) was ushered in by the massacre of *Troyes, once more following on a blood libel; several notables of the community were condemned and burned at the stake in 1288. In 1289, first *Gascony (which was an English possession) and then Anjou (governed by the brother of the king of France)

expelled the Jews. In 1291, Philip the Fair hastily published an ordinance prohibiting the Jews expelled from Gascony and England from settling in France.

Although Philip the Fair denied the clergy in general (1288) and the inquisitors in particular (1302) any judicial rights over the Jews, this was not the better to protect them but merely because he objected to sharing his authority in any way. It was therefore probably royal judges who tried the first *host desecration cases brought against several Jews of Paris in 1290. In order to guarantee the greatest financial gain from the expulsion order of 1306, Philip the Fair issued oral instructions only. After the imprisonment of all the Jews (July 22, 1306) and the seizure of their belongings, numerous written ordinances were issued by the royal chancellery in order to secure for the king, if possible, the sum total of the spoils. Over this very question of the Jews, the resurgent royal authority was revealed; indeed, the expulsion order won the successive support of an ever-growing number of lords until its provisions even spread to the territories of those lords who had not been consulted. As well as in the provinces which still evaded royal authority – Lorraine, Alsace, Franche-Comté, Savoy, Dauphiné, Provence with the principality of *Orange and Comtat Venaissin, the counties of *Roussillon and Cerdagne (Cerdaña) – the Jews banished from France found asylum in the present territories of Belgium, Germany, Italy, and Spain. Philip the Fair granted safe-conducts to a number of Jews to enable them to stay in his kingdom or return to it; they were to assist him in collecting the debts which had been seized. In 1311 they too were “permanently” expelled. Although the expulsion itself encountered scarcely any objections on the part of the lords, this was far from the case when the king tried to seize all the booty for himself: bitter disagreements often followed, as in Montpellier.

The recovery of all the spoils was still far from complete when *Louis x the Quarreler (1314–16), son and successor of Philip the Fair, considered allowing the Jews to return (May 17, 1315), which actually came into effect before July 28, 1315. A decree of that date, repudiating the “evil advisers” who had incited his father to expel the Jews and justifying Louis’ decision to recall them because of the “general clamor of the people,” defined the conditions of Jewish residence for a 12-year period. Under Philip v the Tall (1316–22) anti-Jewish massacres were perpetrated by the *Pastoureaux in 1320, and the Jews of *Toulouse and areas to the west of the town suffered heavily. There the king, his officers, and the church authorities combined in efforts to suppress the movement, principally because it was a serious threat to the social order. Popular mania against lepers spread to the Jews in several places in 1321, particularly in *Tours, *Chinon, and Bourges (or elsewhere in Berry). Without even a legal pretext, Jews were put to death in all these places, 160 in Chinon alone. As well as the confiscation of the belongings of the Jews thus “brought to justice,” an immense fine was imposed on the whole of French Jewry. The expulsion – no text of the decree ordaining it remains – took place between April 7 and Aug. 27, 1322.

In 1338 and 1347 over 25 Jewish communities of Alsace were the victims of persecutions which were limited to the eastern regions. On the other hand, the massacres connected with the *Black Death (1348 and 1349), struck Jewish communities throughout the eastern and southeastern regions, notably in Provence, Savoy, Dauphiné, Franche-Comté, and Alsace. It was only due to the intervention of the pope that the Jews of Avignon and Comtat Venaissin were spared a similar fate. In Franche-Comté, after they had been accused of spreading the plague, the Jews were imprisoned for long periods and their possessions confiscated; they were expelled in 1349, although they reappeared there at the latest in 1355. In that same year Dauphiné was practically incorporated within the kingdom of France, yet the Jews of this province continued to enjoy their former freedoms and immunities.

The crown never revealed the financial motive behind the readmission of the Jews so blatantly as in 1359. *Charles v (1364–80), regent for his father John II the Good who was held prisoner in England, then authorized their return for a period of 20 years simply in order to use the taxes to enable him to pay his father’s ransom. Following the example of Louis the Quarreler, he allowed the Jews to reside in France for limited periods only, although in his case the residence periods which had been granted were more faithfully abided by. In 1360 John the Good (1350–64) ratified the authorization granted by his son.

When Charles v succeeded to the throne, he confirmed, in May 1364, the 20 years which were initially granted and prolonged the period by six years, then by a further ten years in October 1374. When *Charles VI (1380–1422) took over the government himself, in February 1388 and March 1389, he ratified the prolongations granted by Charles v; he did not ratify either the five or the six years accorded by Louis of Anjou, acting as regent for him (1380–88). Thus, after the decree of Sept. 17, 1394, stipulating that thenceforward the Jews would no longer be tolerated in the kingdom of France, the departure of the Jews became effective in 1395 (between January 15 and March 18), 36 years after the first concession for a new residence period granted by Charles v. Properly speaking, this was not actually an expulsion but rather a refusal to renew the right of residence. However, obviously it resulted in the departure of the Jews from the kingdom of France.

From 1380 the Jews were the victims of bloody persecutions, which followed in the wake of popular risings in several towns of the kingdom, especially in Paris and Nantes. There was a similar occurrence in 1382. Although the king exempted the Jews from returning the pawns which had been stolen from them on this occasion, he also granted a hasty pardon to the rioters. In 1389 the king allowed the town of Eyrieu the right of deciding for itself whether it would admit the Jews or not; although such a prerogative was subsequently granted to the towns of Alsace in general, this was at that time an exception within the kingdom. There was, however, no reason to regard this as a harbinger of the forthcoming generalized departure of the Jews. On the contrary, as late as July 15, 1394,

the king issued a reasonably favorable decree to the Jews of Languedoc. When Charles VI terminated the residence of the Jews in his kingdom on September 17, he claimed that there had been “several grave complaints and outcries” concerning “the excesses and misdemeanors which the said Jews had committed and they continued to act in this manner every day against the Christians.” He added that investigations had confirmed that the Jews had “committed and perpetrated several crimes, excesses, and offenses,” particularly against the Christian faith, but such a justification for his action does not seem plausible. However, on this occasion there was no financial motive behind the expulsion, for it was not accompanied by confiscations. The move therefore remains inexplicable. This time the Jews of Franche-Comté shared the fate of their brothers in the kingdom, although the province did not then belong to the king of France.

From the second half of the 14th century, the voluntary movement of Jews from Dauphiné assumed ever greater proportions. The dauphin attempted to coax them back by offering fiscal advantages, but without success. By the early 16th century no more Jews lived in Dauphiné. In Savoy the situation of the Jews deteriorated throughout the 15th century: Jewish books were seized in 1417; there was a local expulsion from Châtillon-les-Dombes in 1429, a bloody persecution in 1466, and a general expulsion decree in 1492. In Provence, the greater part of the 15th century, especially during the reign of René I the Good (1431–80), was a favorable period for the Jews, aside from a few local incidents, for example in *Aix-en-Provence in 1430. Conditions changed from 1475 on when, for the first time since the Black Death, there were anti-Jewish outbreaks in several places. Between 1484 and 1486 attacks against the Jews occurred in numerous localities (notably in Aix, Marseilles, and Arles). After Provence was incorporated in France (1481), town after town demanded the expulsion of the Jews until the last remaining Jews were hit by a general expulsion order in 1498 which was completely enforced by 1501. There were therefore practically no Jews left within the present borders of France, with the exception of Alsace and Lorraine, Avignon, Comtat Venaissin, and the county of Nice.

THE COMMUNITIES IN MEDIEVAL FRANCE. Benjamin of Tudela records valuable details on the southern communities of the third quarter of the 12th century. According to his figures – confirmed for Narbonne by other contemporary sources – in six communities there were 1,240 heads of families, that is more than 6,000 souls. Another document of the same period, the list of the martyrs of *Blois, notes there were about 30 families or about 150 souls in this community, which would have been totally unknown if it had not been for the tragedy which befell it. The greatest number and widest dispersion of Jews in France was attained during the third quarter of the 13th century. There were about 150 localities inhabited by Jews in Île-de-France and Champagne, about 50 in the duchy of Burgundy, about 30 in Barrois – in spite of its small area – and many others. From 1283, as a result of the prohibition on

residing in small places, the communities in the towns grew larger. The total number of Jews continued to increase, and some have estimated that about 100,000 Jews were affected by the expulsion of 1306. Migration resulting from this banishment and the losses during the Black Death – both by the plague itself and in the persecutions which it sparked off – considerably reduced the Jewish population until the middle of the 14th century. There was a slight increase from then on, especially after the authorization to return in 1359. However, after the 1394/95 expulsion from the kingdom of France and the subsequent expulsions from the other provinces or voluntary departures due to hostile pressure combined with ever greater fiscal extortions, only about 25,000 Jews at the most remained during the 15th century. By 1501 they numbered a few thousand only. If Catholic missionary activity did achieve some tangible results – due mostly to coercion if not outright violence – this was the least factor in the demographic decline of the Jewish community.

From the 12th century onward, moneylending became increasingly prominent as a Jewish occupation. It was particularly pronounced – to the point of being sometimes their sole activity – in the places where the Jews settled at a later date or after the readmissions to the kingdom of France. In the main, these were private loans, with a multitude of creditors and a small turnover. In the east and southeast the Jews were principally traders in agricultural produce and livestock. Throughout the south, particularly in Provence, there were a relatively large number of physicians who, in addition to practicing among Jews, were sometimes also appointed by the towns to take care of the Christian population. The agriculture, and especially viticulture, subsisting mainly outside the kingdom, supplied the needs of the Jewish population and only exceptionally the general market. Petty public officials, watchmen, toll-gatherers, etc., were found especially in the south, but rarely after the 13th century (one of the few exceptions was the principality of Orange). Halfway between commerce and public office was the activity of broker, often found in Provence.

The regulations of the Fourth *Lateran Council (1215), interpreted as the compulsory wearing of the Jewish *badge, were at first imposed in Languedoc, Normandy, and Provence (by councils held in 1227, 1231, and 1234); a royal decree enforcing this in the kingdom of France was not promulgated until 1269. However, compulsory residence in a Jewish quarter dates from 1294 in the kingdom of France, although only from the end of the first half of the 14th century in Provence. Although the French crown often sought to protect the Jews from Church jurisdiction – especially that of the inquisitors – it imposed the legal disabilities or measures of social segregation which had been first advocated by the church itself. Following the example of the *magister Judaeorum* of the Carolingian period, “guardians” of the Jews were often appointed; in the kingdom of France there was one for the Languedoc and another for the Langue d’Oïl which included approximately the regions situated to the north of the River Loire. Their au-

thority extended to all legal suits in which Jews were one of the parties. Jewish internal jurisdiction was increasingly limited; thus in Provence even simple administrative matters in the synagogue were brought before the public tribunal. A special form of oath (see *Oath, more judaico) was laid down for Jews who were witnesses or parties to a trial.

In the 13th century Christian polemical writings increased considerably: in practice Judeo-Christian disputations were relatively free and still quite frequent. After early warnings, followed by the explicit church prohibition on the participation of laymen in such discussions, they became increasingly rare. The Jews lost none of their sharpness in these confrontations: the most outstanding examples are the *Sefer ha-Mekanne* and the polemic treatise which goaded *Nicholas of Lyra into a reply.

The Jewish communities organized themselves with increasing efficiency. Although the earliest confirmation of internal statutes dates from 1413 (Avignon), these were certainly current practice long before then. As well as these statutes – which regulated internal administration through elected officials (actual power lay in the hands of the wealthiest), financial contributions toward communal expenses, and religious obligations – sumptuary regulations were often laid down, intended to limit the ostentatious display of riches. The first synods (gatherings of communal representatives) are known from the middle of the 12th century. At the synod of Troyes in 1150, the representatives of the French communities were joined by officials from German communities. The 1160 synod, also held in Troyes, convened only representatives from the kingdom of France, Normandy, and Poitou. Therefore it is evident that this was not a firmly established institution convened at regular intervals. If, as seems apparent, these synods normally involved the attendance only of communities directly concerned, it is astonishing that the synod of *Saint-Gilles (1215) convened the representatives of the communities between Narbonne and Marseilles only to discuss a problem of the greatest importance for the whole of Jewry living in Christian countries: how to prevent the promulgation of the projected anti-Jewish canons by the Fourth Lateran Council. With the proliferation and increase of Jewish taxes, the civil authorities rapidly realized that a Jewish inter-communal organization covering the area under their authority served their interests; it became the task of this organization to assess and to collect all the taxes levied on the Jews. Although some communities tried to make use of this arrangement to reach a direct, and more advantageous, agreement with the authorities, when misfortune struck an isolated community, others often spontaneously revealed their active solidarity. Thus, at the time of the tragedy of Blois, the communities of Orléans and Paris brought relief to the persecuted.

SCHOLARSHIP IN THE MIDDLE AGES. The leading centers of Jewish scholarship were found in Île-de-France (principally Paris, then *Dreux, *Melun, Pontoise, *Corbeil, Coucy-le-Château, and Chartres) and in Champagne (led by Troyes,

then *Dampierre-sur-Aube, *Vitry-le-Brulé, *Joigny-sur-Yonne, Joinville, *Château-Thierry, and *Ramerupt); there was also a concentration of centers of learning in the Loire Valley (Orléans, Tours, and Chinon). As well as this, there were a number of schools in Languedoc (headed by Narbonne, then Argentièrre, *Beaucaire, *Béziers, Lattes, *Lunel, *Montpellier, *Nîmes, *Posquières, *Capestang, and *Carcassonne) and in Provence (with Arles, Trinquetaille, and Marseilles, then Salon and Aix-en-Provence). A few other provinces were also active, though on a much more modest scale; in the wake of Ile-de-France came Normandy (with *Evreux and *Falaise and possibly also Rouen) and Brittany (Clisson); in the wake of Champagne, Burgundy (with *Dijon); following Provence, Comtat Venaissin (with Montoux and *Carpentras), as well as Orange and Avignon; and after Languedoc, Roussillon (with *Perpignan). Lorraine (with *Verdun, *Toul, and Metz) and Alsace (with *Strasbourg and *Sélestat) assured a link between northern France and the Rhineland. By contrast, Dauphiné (with only Vienne), and especially Franche-Comté and Savoy, hardly played any part in this intellectual ferment.

The north was principally the home of talmudic and biblical commentaries, anti-Christian polemics, and liturgical poetry. In the south scholarly activities extended to grammatical, linguistic, philosophical, and scientific studies, and innumerable translations (mostly from Arabic, but also from Latin). Of particular importance were the mystic circles which gave an impetus to the kabbalist movement. Both north and south produced decorated and even richly illuminated manuscripts.

FROM THE EXPULSION FROM PROVENCE TO THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION. As soon as the Jews had left the southeast or been converted to Christianity and thus become permanently absorbed within the general population, the southwest witnessed the arrival of secret Jews, the *Conversos. From 1550, these “Portuguese merchants” or “New Christians” were granted letters patent by Henry II, who authorized them to live in France “wherever they desired.” They settled mainly in Bordeaux and in Saint-Esprit, near *Bayonne. They were subsequently to be found in small places nearby: *Peyrehorade, *Bidache, and Labastide-Clairence, and toward the north in La *Rochelle, Nantes, and Rouen. However, of all the Marranos who arrived in France from the beginning of the 16th century, only a tiny minority remained faithful to Judaism. Since they sought to evade detection by externally practicing Catholicism while maintaining their Iberian language and customs, they were suspected in Bordeaux in 1596 of attempting to deliver the town into the hands of the Spaniards, and in 1625 their possessions were confiscated as a reprisal for the confiscation of French belongings by the king of Spain. They were also subjected to particularly severe taxes, which rose to 100,000 livres in 1723 in exchange for new letters patent; for the first time these recognized them as Jews, although they did not grant them the right to practice their religion openly. The Jews of Comtat Venaissin had taken in some Spanish refugees on a

temporary basis only, as was the case with the parents of *Joseph ha-Kohen, the author of *Emek ha-Bakha*, who was born in Avignon but lived there only during his early years. The communities of Comtat Venaissin were themselves threatened with expulsion on several occasions. These decrees were not finally enforced, but the Jews were nevertheless compelled to leave all towns in the Comtat with the exception of Avignon, Carpentras, *Cavaillon, and *L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue. Even there, the quarters assigned to them were constantly reduced in area so as to limit the Jewish population.

Jews seem to have lived in Lorraine without interruption although in small numbers only. After the French crown had occupied the region, progressively greater facilities were offered to the Jews to induce them to settle there. From three families in Metz in 1565, their number increased to 96 families in 1657. In the meantime, as a result of the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), the three towns and bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun were formally ceded to France. Although theoretically the expulsion order against the Jews of the kingdom still remained in force – and it was even reiterated in 1615 – the Jews in those parts of Lorraine which had become French were allowed to remain.

This was the first time since 1394 that Jews found themselves legally living in the kingdom of France. However, they were still confined to the town, or at best to the province, in which they lived. Considerable areas of Alsace were also incorporated within the kingdom of France by the Treaty of Westphalia. There also a firmly established Jewish population was not put in jeopardy by the new French administration; on the contrary, it was more effectively protected than in the past. In 1651, Jews from Holland settled in *Charleville, which belonged to the Gonzaga dukes (they had already admitted Dutch Jews for the first time from 1609 to 1633). Jews fleeing from the *Chmielnicki massacres in the Ukraine and Poland in 1648 arrived in Alsace and Lorraine. The general demographic decline which was a result of the Thirty Years' War (1618–48) explains the tolerance they encountered. Jews also arrived in the extreme southeast of France, where the duke of Savoy, to whom the county of Nice belonged, issued in 1648 an edict making Nice and *Villefranche de-Conflent free ports. Once more this was an indirect result of the Thirty Years' War, a search for an effective method of filling the economic vacuum it had created. Jews from Italy and North Africa immediately profited from the settlement facilities offered by this edict, strengthening the old Jewish community which had existed without interruption from the Middle Ages. However, Italian Jews who hoped to benefit from the apparently similar facilities offered in Marseilles by the edict of *Louis XIV in 1669 were disappointed; they were compelled to leave after a few years.

From the 17th century, the Jews of Avignon and Comtat Venaissin extended their commercial activity: besides frequenting the fairs and markets, mainly in Languedoc and Provence, they also attempted to remain in those towns and even to settle there. Following complaints from local mer-

chants, the stewards of the king intervened on every occasion to remove them and restrict their presence at the fairs and markets as much as possible. With greater success, some Jews of Avignon and Comtat Venaissin – soon followed by Jews of Alsace – exploited the facilities granted to the “Portuguese” Jews, and from the beginning of the 18th century settled in Bordeaux. There they traded in the town or its environs, principally in textiles and to a lesser degree in livestock and old clothes.

From the beginning of the 18th century, some Jews began to settle in Paris, arriving not only from Alsace, Metz, and Lorraine, from Bordeaux, and from Avignon and Comtat Venaissin, but also from beyond the borders of France, mainly Germany and Holland. They were tolerated in Paris but no more. Even though they had benefited from most civil rights in their provinces of origin, they enjoyed no such privileges in the capital. In theory, if a Jew died in Paris his estate was confiscated in favor of the king and his burial had to be quasi-clandestine. In order to protect their rights and, initially, to obtain their own cemeteries, the Jews organized themselves into two distinct groups: southern Jews from Bordeaux, Avignon, and Comtat Venaissin, and Ashkenazim from Alsace, Lorraine, and a few other places. This was an early manifestation of the split which was later evident during the struggle for emancipation and afterward.

Just before the whole of Lorraine became part of France (1766), the request of some Jews of Lorraine to be admitted to the guilds gave rise to a lawsuit in which the advocate of Nancy, Pierre Louis de Lacretelle (1756–1824), called for their recognition as Frenchmen with rights equal to those of other citizens (1775). Although this suit was lost, nevertheless it left a powerful impression on the public who, from the beginning of the century, had become aware of the Jewish problem through the pronouncements of the great thinkers of the century, beginning with *Montesquieu. In 1781, Herz *Cerfberg, the representative of the Jews of Alsace, had the work of Christian Wilhelm von *Dohm (1751–1820), *Ueber die buergerliche Verbesserung der Juden* (“On the Civic Amelioration of the Jews”), translated into French. The first concrete result was Louis XVI's edict, drawn up in 1783 and published in January 1784, abolishing the humiliating “body tax” which for centuries had likened the Jews to cattle. In 1785 a competition by the Metz Société Royale des Arts et Sciences on the subject “Is there any way of rendering the Jews more useful and happier in France?” reflected this new trend of opinion, while strengthening it even further. The competition was initiated by P.L. *Roederer, a member of the *parlement* of Metz, and the best answers were submitted by the royal librarian Zalkind *Hourwitz (who defined himself as a “Polish Jew”), the advocate Thierry, and Abbé *Grégoire. Finally, in 1788, the minister *Malesherbes, who had successfully headed the commission charged with arranging civic rights for Protestants, was entrusted by Louis XVI with a similar mission with regard to the Jews.

[Bernhard Blumenkranz]

The Modern Period

THE REVOLUTION. On the eve of the French Revolution some 40,000 Jews were living in France. Those of the “German nation” were mainly concentrated in Alsace-Lorraine or Paris, while the “Spanish, Portuguese, or Avignonese” Jews were chiefly concentrated in the south. The former who, excepting residents of Nancy, almost exclusively spoke or wrote in Yiddish, formed the vast majority (84%) of French Jewry while the latter were closer to French language and culture, less observant in religious practice, and more nearly integrated within local society. These various groups would no doubt have been fairly satisfied to obtain civic rights provided that they were consonant with the continuation of their internal communal autonomy. After much petitioning and long-drawn-out parliamentary and public discussion, the Jews of France finally became French citizens, the Portuguese Jews on Jan. 28, 1790, and the Ashkenazim on Sept. 27, 1791. The law of 1791, however, although conferring civic rights on Jews as individuals, was coupled with the abolition of their group privileges, i.e., their religious-legal autonomy.

Later the communities in France suffered from the Reign of Terror (1793–94) in company with the other religious denominations. Synagogues were closed down and the communal organization abolished as a consequence of the general tendency to suppress all religious institutions. When the synagogues reopened their doors, the character of the former communities had already greatly changed. The opening up of the ghettos and the abolition of restrictions on residence encouraged many Jews to leave their former areas of residence and to reject, either entirely or partly, the discipline imposed by their erstwhile community.

MEASURES OF NAPOLEON. This anarchy, which led to complaints by former creditors of the dissolved Jewish communities, strengthened Napoleon Bonaparte’s determination to provide the Jews of France with a central organization supervised by the state and loyal to it, following the example of the arrangements he had already introduced for the other religions. Napoleon wished to create a Jewish “church organization” and at the same time to “reform” the Jewish way of life and Judaism, toward which he had an attitude of barely controlled hostility. Napoleon considered that the Jews were a “nation within a nation,” and their emancipation had not produced the anticipated results. The Jews would therefore have to be corrected and regenerated; in particular a solution had to be found to solve the problem of usury, still a major Jewish occupation, especially in Alsace. With this in view, therefore, in 1806 he convened an assembly to serve as the “States General of French Judaism” (the *Assembly of Jewish Notables). Its first session was held on July 26. The Assembly had to reply to 12 questions put to it by the commissioners appointed by the government who were instructed to verify whether Jewish religious law held any principle contrary to the civil law. Having been informed of the deliberations of the Assembly and the answers it delivered, Napo-

leon determined on having them formulated into a type of religious code. He decided to convoke a Grand *Sanhedrin – a gesture which was also within the framework of his European ambitions – whose religious authority could not be called in question. The Sanhedrin, composed of 45 rabbis and 26 laymen, met on Feb. 9, 1807, and dispersed two months later on March 9, having fulfilled its role by codifying “religious” decisions in the spirit of the answers to the 12 questions delivered by the Assembly of Notables. The Sanhedrin then gave way to the Notables, who continued their task with the intention of proposing the establishment of an organization of the Jewish religion and measures to control Jewish economic activities.

THE CONSISTORIAL SYSTEM. The proposed regulation was amended by the Conseil d’Etat and promulgated by imperial edict in 1808, inaugurating what is usually called the consistorial system. This provided that a *consistory should be established for each department of France having a Jewish population of at least 2,000. Each consistory was constituted of a council composed of a *grand rabbin*, another rabbi, and three laymen elected by a small number of “notables.” A central consistory composed of three *grand rabbins* and two laymen was to have its seat in Paris. Contrary to the provisions governing the organizations for the other recognized religions, expenses for religious purposes were still to be met by Jews. Thus, the new Jewish bodies were obliged, *ipso facto*, as inheritors, to repay the debts contracted by the former Jewish communities, whereas the other religions had been relieved of this burden. The consistorial system partially re-created the Jewish communities, and provided them with a means of action. It also constituted the recognition of Judaism as a religion, centralizing its organization, and placing it under strict government control. While the consistory was empowered to exercise absolute and exclusive authority in Jewish affairs, it mainly concerned itself with the strictly religious aspects. The consistory was supported by the rabbinate, which according to law was responsible for teaching the Jewish religion and the decisions of the Sanhedrin, promoting obedience to the civil laws, preaching in synagogue, and offering prayers for the imperial family. Although the authority of the rabbis was limited entirely to the religious sphere, it was nevertheless channeled into the service of the state.

These administrative measures were accompanied by complementary economic regulations. A decree abrogating a postponement previously granted on May 30, 1806, to persons owing money to Jews was issued, but it also laid down a mass of restrictive regulations. All debts contracted with Jews were to be annulled or liable to be annulled, reduced, or postponed by legal means (1808). As a result, a large section of the Jewish population of France, already in difficult circumstances, was brought to the verge of ruin. Any Jew who wished to engage in trade or commerce had to obtain a license to be renewed annually by the prefect of the department in which he resided. Further measures were issued in an attempt to compel the

Jews of France to assimilate into French society by regulating their place of residence. Thus a Jew who had not previously been resident in Alsace was prohibited from settling there. A Jew might settle in other departments only if he exercised a profession regarded as useful. In order to preserve the educational value in performing military service in company with their non-Jewish compatriots, Jews drafted for the army were prohibited from procuring substitutes. Another decree which, however, confirmed an existing situation, made it obligatory for Jews to adopt surnames in the presence of an official of the registry. The central consistory was set up on July 17, 1808. Its three *grand rabbins* were the president and two vice-presidents of the Sanhedrin, David *Sinzheim, Joshua Ben-zion Segré, who died shortly afterward and was replaced by Emanuel *Deutz, rabbi of Coblenz, and Abraham Vita *Cologna, rabbi of Mantua. After the death of Sinzheim in 1812 and the resignation of Cologna in 1826, Deutz remained the only *grand rabbin* in the central consistory until his death in 1842. Subsequently only one *grand rabbin* served for the whole of French Jewry.

OFFICIAL RECOGNITION. The Restoration was not received with hostility by the Jews of France. The Napoleonic regulations, while having the merit of organizing communal affairs, had nevertheless represented a step backward in revolutionary ideals. Without major difficulties they were able to ensure that the Napoleonic decree determining their activities and means of livelihood, commonly referred to by Jews as the *décret infâme*, was not renewed after the expiry of its ten-year time limit (1818). Soon the need for new rabbis became a matter for concern. Until the Revolution rabbis for the Ashkenazi communities had been trained in the yeshivah in Metz, in the small local yeshivot of Alsace, or otherwise drawn from abroad. The Sephardi communities in the south generally recognized the authority of the Dutch or Italian Sephardi rabbinates. The closing of the Metz yeshivah under the Revolution had greatly curtailed the recruitment of rabbis. Thus, from 1820 numerous attempts were made to obtain permission for the opening of a rabbinical school in Metz to supply the needs of all sectors of French Jewry. In 1829 the Ministry of Religions authorized the opening of a central rabbinical seminary in Metz. It was transferred to Paris in 1859, where it continues to function. Judaism was placed on the same footing as the other recognized religions when the chamber of peers passed a law making the Treasury responsible for paying the salaries of ministers of the Jewish religion (from Jan. 1, 1831). Thus almost the last sign of anti-Jewish discriminatory legislation in France disappeared.

ASSIMILATION. These political successes did not conceal the profound crisis through which French Jewry was passing. Many Jews born after the grant of emancipation were unprepared for the new world they were now facing. A wave of conversions followed, in which members of the most firmly established families left Judaism. Deutz's own son, notori-

ous for his role in the arrest of the duchess of Berry, and his son-in-law David *Drach, who had pursued rabbinical studies and directed the Jewish school in Paris, both embraced Christianity, the latter even taking orders. The eldest son of the president of the Bas-Rhin Consistory, Marie-Theodore *Ratisbonne, became converted in 1826. He subsequently took orders and in celebration of the conversion of his youngest brother founded the order of Notre Dame de Sion to be devoted to missionary work among the Jews. The brother, who was an active member of the order, later built a monastery in Jerusalem. Although the lower ranks of the Jewish population were hardly affected by these conversions, such cases were numerous among their leaders.

The disappearance of the generation which had known the Revolution and taken part in the work of the Sanhedrin, coupled with the new spirit of liberal democracy, and the pressure in the new communities by arrivals from the rural areas of Alsace and Lorraine now necessitated a reform of the consistorial system. By an order in council of May 25, 1844, French Jewry continued to be directed by the central consistory, which was henceforth composed of the *grand rabbin* and a lay member from each departmental consistory. The electoral college was enlarged in 1844 and 1848, when every Jewish male aged over 25 obtained the right to take part in the elections of the departmental consistories. The Paris consistory finally obtained an increase in the number of its representatives on the central consistory because it had a large population under its jurisdiction. This system continued, apart from some minor modifications, until 1905, with the separation of church and state (see below).

ABOLITION OF THE "JEWISH OATH". The final obstacle to complete equality for Jewish citizens was removed with the abolition of the humiliating oath *more judaico*. The various courts that had been called upon to decide whether it was necessary for Jews to take the oath in that form had rendered conflicting decisions. It was only on the advice given to the rabbis by Adolphe *Crémieux, who became a member of the central consistory in 1831, to refuse to take the oath in this form that some progress was made. The Supreme Court of Appeal decided on its abolition in 1846. In the same period the debts of the former Jewish communities were finally settled by partial repayments effected by the successor communities.

WELFARE AND EDUCATION. While French Jewry was concerned with defense of its rights and its religious organization, it also promoted charitable and educational activities. The local charitable committees were generally offshoots of the traditional Jewish mutual aid societies or of the *hevrot* (see **hevrah*), which did not surrender their independence without hesitation or declared hostility. In the educational sphere, the first real development took place under the Restoration with the opening of Jewish primary schools. From 1818 schools were opened in Metz, Strasbourg, and Colmar. A boys' school had been functioning in Bordeaux from 1817 and a girls' school

from 1831. In Paris the first Jewish boys' school was established in 1819 and the first girls' school in 1821. Parallel to these primary schools, the community also opened technical schools, at first in order to prepare their pupils for apprenticeship and later providing direct specialized training. The first Jewish trades school (*Ecole de Travail*) opened its doors in Strasbourg in 1825, and was followed by that of Mulhouse in 1842, and of Paris in 1865. This network grew in importance until the law making primary education compulsory was passed in 1882, and the church and state were separated in 1905, thus depriving it of state financial support.

PROTECTION OF JEWISH RIGHTS. The Jewish community in France was shocked into action to protect Jewish rights by the *Damascus Affair in 1840 and subsequently by the outbreak of anti-Jewish disorders in 1848. The hostile attitude shown by the French government and also by French public opinion when Jews in Damascus were accused of ritual murder, as well as the complicity of the French consul there, deeply stirred French Jewry. Crémieux therefore joined Sir Moses *Montefiore from England in a mission to Alexandria to intercede with *Muhammad Ali on behalf of the Damascus Jews. In February 1848, the peasants in Sundgau in Alsace took advantage of the general unrest to attack the Jews, some of whom managed to escape to Switzerland. The incidents spread northward, Jewish houses were pillaged, and the army was called out to restore order. Both this and the Damascus Affair strengthened the feeling among Jews in France that in certain situations they could rely only on self-defense. The formation of the provisional government, which included two Jews, Michel *Goudchaux and Crémieux, dispelled some of these anxieties, but Jewish concern was again heightened with the election of Prince Louis Napoleon to the presidency of the republic, and later his accession to the imperial title, since many feared that he would restore the discriminatory measures introduced by his uncle.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ADVANCES. These fears proved unfounded. The Second Empire was a calm period for the Jews of France. Instances of anti-Jewish discrimination were the result of the influence of the Catholic circles surrounding the empress rather than of a determined will to start an anti-semitic campaign. Jews, like other "nonbelievers," were often excluded from the universities. The social rise of the French Jews which had begun under the Restoration also continued under the Second Empire. In 1834 Achille *Fould became the first Jew to sit in the Chamber of Deputies, soon to be followed by Crémieux. The greatest and most rapid achievements were often through the civil service, candidates for which generally had to pass tests and competitive examinations. In 1836 Jacques *Halévy was elected a member of the Academy of Fine Arts. *Rachel, one of the greatest actresses of her time, never concealed her Jewish origin. In the commercial sphere, it was a period of success for the *Rothschild family and its head, Baron James, as well as for the *Pereire brothers to whom the

Rothschilds were later violently opposed. Practically every career, including the army, was open to Jews.

NEW TRENDS IN JUDAISM. Events did not proceed without provoking the same unrest within the French community as had gripped German Jewry. The problem arose of maintaining Judaism in an open, modern society, and the influence of the *Reform movements from across the Rhine soon made itself felt. The French rabbinate was of a generally conservative frame of mind. Its members, who almost entirely hailed from the small towns of Alsace and Lorraine, were scarcely enthusiastic over the new ideas and the rabbinate found itself in retreat before the layman. A meeting of *grand rabbins* was held in Paris from May 13–21, 1856, to establish a common policy with which to confront the growing trend away from Judaism. The camps were clearly divided well before the meeting: the Alsatian communities, which were the most numerous, opposed the introduction of substantive reforms, for which they felt no necessity. However, since each consistory was represented by only one delegate, the majority of the representatives tended to opt for modifications. To prevent a breach, it was resolved that decisions would be taken according to a simple majority, but that the question of their application would be held in abeyance. The assembly decided to limit the number of *piyyutim*, to organize synagogue services for the blessing of newborn infants, to conduct the funeral service with more ceremonial, and to instruct rabbis and officiating ministers to wear a garb resembling that worn by the Catholic clergy. It was also resolved to make greater use of the sermon in synagogue, to reduce the length of services which were to be conducted in a more dignified manner, and to introduce the ceremony of religious initiation, particularly for girls, whose religious instruction was to be inspected and approved. The assembly also called for the transfer of the rabbinical seminary to Paris. Regarding the controversy which had arisen over the use of the organ in synagogue, it was decided that its use on Sabbath and festivals was lawful provided that it was played by a non-Jew. Its introduction would be subject to the authorization of the *grand rabbin* of the department concerned, at the request of the local rabbi. A breach in the community was therefore avoided at the price of compromises and half-measures. The different elements in French Jewry continued on good terms since the doctrinal independence of the local rabbi remained intact. Subsequently more ambitious attempts at reform were cut short by the Franco-German war of 1870–71. The French defeat cast an odium, a priori, on anything that smacked of German importation. As a result, French Jewry found itself in a state of arrested reform. Although moving away from Orthodoxy it remained firmly attached to the idea of an integrated community. To this day French consistorial Judaism has maintained great religious diversity, a situation which has always curbed the few attempts to establish dissident, Reform or Orthodox, communities. This flexibility later enabled the integration of immigrants from North Africa. The leading role still played in French communal affairs by the

Rothschild family also helped to give the community a large measure of stability.

ALLIANCE ISRAËLITE UNIVERSELLE. The *Mortara case in 1858 once again brought up the question of freedom of conscience and reminded French Jewry of the Damascus Affair and the troubles of 1848. It again demonstrated the importance of organizing Jewish self-defense, this time on an international scale. The French Jews, who had been convinced that they had succeeded in assimilation by reconciling fidelity to Judaism with the gains achieved by democracy, felt compelled to react. However, it was typical of the existing situation that action was taken outside the framework of the central consistory which had by then withdrawn into a religious and representational role. In 1860, a group of young Jewish liberals founded the *Alliance Israélite Universelle with a central committee permanently based in Paris. The activities of this body were mainly directed to helping communities outside France and it had the great merit of again demonstrating that Jewish solidarity extended beyond modern nationalism.

ALSACE-LORRAINE AND ALGERIA. The 1870 war not only revived Franco-German hostility and put an end to many of the hopes for greater unity, but cut off from French Jewry its vital sources in Alsace and Lorraine. There was also the problem of integrating the Alsatian Jews who had opted to stay in France. This immigration considerably increased the importance of the communities in Paris and that part of Lorraine which had remained French. It also led to the creation of new consistories in Vesoul, Lille, and Besancon. The effects of the war also speeded up the naturalization of the Jews of *Algeria, where at the time of the French conquest there were a number of old-established communities. The French authorities took their existing arrangements into account but limited the powers of the "head of the Jewish nation" by attaching to him a "Hebrew council." The powers of the rabbinical courts were also restricted. However the Jews of Algeria officially remained part of the indigenous population with a personal status which was variously interpreted. In 1870, on the eve of the war with Prussia, and following numerous petitions by the Jews in Algeria, the imperial government was on the point of declaring the collective naturalization of Algerian Jewry.

The Government of National Defense sitting at Tours, at the pressing insistence of Crémieux, then minister of justice, proclaimed this naturalization by a decree issued on Oct. 24, 1870. Having become French citizens, the Jews of Algeria gave up their personal status and were on the same footing as the Jews of France. The consistorial system, which had been introduced in Algeria in 1845, was modified to permit a more active participation of the members of the Algerian community in the consistorial elections. The appointment of rabbis and *grand rabbins* was made by the central consistory.

ANTISEMITISM. Withdrawn into itself but enriched by the Algerian accession, the Jewish community of France soon had to face a formidable test. The advent of the Third Republic was

not received by Jews with unmixed enthusiasm. Concerned at the progress of secularism and of movements demanding reform, royalist and clerical circles in France attempted to create an anti-Jewish diversion. Antisemitic newspapers began to appear. In 1883 the Assumptionists established the daily *La Croix* which, with other publications, set out to prove that the Revolution had been the work of the Jews allied with the Freemasons. This trend was strengthened by the socialist antisemitism of the followers of *Fourier and *Proudhon. The various shades of antisemitism converged in Edouard *Drumont's *La France Juive* (1886), which became a bestseller. After the collapse of the Union Générale, a leading Catholic bank, the Jews in France provided a convenient scapegoat. In 1889 Drumont's ideas culminated in the formation of the French National Antisemitic League (see *Antisemitism: Antisemitic Political Parties and Organizations). In 1891, 32 deputies demanded that the Jews be expelled from France. In 1892 Drumont was able, with Jesuit support, to found his daily *La Libre Parole* which immediately launched a defamation campaign against Jewish officers who were accused of having plotted treason and of trafficking in secrets of the national defense. It also blamed Jews for the crash of the Panama Canal Company, creating a scandal which greatly increased its circulation. It was in this climate that Captain Alfred *Dreyfus was arrested on Oct. 15, 1894, on the charge of having spied in the interests of Germany. Many aspects of the affair are still unclear, although Dreyfus' innocence has been fully recognized. In any event, the affair went beyond the individual case of the unfortunate captain to rock the whole of France and Jews throughout the world.

In France the matter at stake was not the survival of the Jewish community: even its most virulent adversaries did not desire its physical disappearance, although cries of "death to the Jews" were uttered time and again by Paris crowds. On its part, the Catholic and right-wing press, and especially Drumont's *La Libre Parole*, frequently published "facts" about the machinations of a "World Jewish Syndicate" aimed at world domination. The Dreyfus case hastened the crystallization of the ideas of Theodor *Herzl, then press correspondent in Paris and a bewildered witness of the unleashing of antisemitism in a country reputed to be the most enlightened in Europe. The affair, by opposing the general trends of public opinion in France, led to a crisis of conscience rarely equaled in intensity. Its repercussions caused an upheaval in French political life with similar consequences for Jewish life.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE. The disproportion between the origin of the affair and its consequences does not fail to astonish. In 1905, as a result of the victory of Dreyfus' supporters, a law was passed separating church and state. With the other recognized religions, the Jewish religion lost its official status, and state financial support was withdrawn with the abolition of state participation in religious expenses. Like the Protestants, but in contradistinction to the Catholics, the Jews accepted this resolution with goodwill. It would also have been difficult for them to oppose those who had supported

Dreyfus. At the same time *Grand Rabbin Zadoc Kahn* died. His strong personality had dominated Jewish life since his election to the chief rabbinate of Paris in 1869 and a few years later to the chief rabbinate of France. His astonishing activity had revived French Judaism after the truncation of Alsatian Jewry, and he had interested Baron Edmond de Rothschild in the colonization of Erez Israel. The central consistory, disoriented after the passing of the 1905 act, thus had to transform itself while preserving its former framework as far as possible. Synagogues built with public subsidies were nationalized, but were immediately placed at the disposal of the successor religious associations. The central consistory became the Union des Associations Cultuelles de France et d'Algérie ("Union of the Religious Associations of France and Algeria"), and its office adopted the name Central Consistory. The regional consistories disappeared, but the large communities were changed into consistorial or religious associations. Practically all the departmental consistories remained in existence when the offices of the successor associations adopted the name consistory. The internal hierarchy, sanctioned by a century of tradition, continued. The perpetuation of the system, however, did not alter the fact that the organization of the Jewish community of France rested purely on a voluntary basis and on the recognition of a central authority freely accepted. In fact the French Jewish community became a federation of local communities which maintained a few joint central services, such as the chief rabbinate of France and the rabbinical seminary. Although this system increased the possibilities of fragmentation and disruption, the force of tradition maintained the moral authority of the various consistories, which became the principal, but not the exclusive, representation of a community undergoing a fundamental demographic transformation.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES. During the 19th century, the relative importance of the Avignon communities had greatly decreased. The four Comtat communities had dispersed, their members moving to Marseilles and the large towns in southern France. The Bordeaux and Bayonne elements had never been very numerous. The extension of the French borders toward the north and east had opened up the country to a large Jewish immigration from Holland and the Rhineland. The Jewish population of Paris in 1789 numbered 500, out of the total French Jewish population of 40,000 to 50,000. There were 30,000 Jews living in Paris in 1869, out of a total of 80,000 for the whole of France. In 1880, following the loss of Alsace and Lorraine, 40,000 out of a total of 60,000 French Jews were living in Paris. This proportion has remained substantially unchanged. The pogroms in Russia of 1881 gave rise to a wave of Jewish emigration to the free countries and marked the beginning of the Russian, Polish, and Romanian immigration into France. A second wave of immigration took place after the abortive 1905 Russian revolution. From 1881 to 1914 over 25,000 Jewish immigrants arrived in France. The Russian element was in the minority. From 1908 a large Jewish influx also began from the Ottoman countries, chiefly from

Salonika, Constantinople, and Smyrna. However, for a large number of immigrants, France served as a country of transit and not of refuge.

WORLD WAR I. The advent of World War I halted this immigration. In uniting all the forces of the nation, the war also put a stop to the antisemitic campaigns. The necessity for maintaining a common front (*union sacrée*) brought all the religions together. For some Jewish soldiers the war was to be a means of rejoining their families after the reconquest of Alsace and Lorraine. The victory restored to French Jewry these most vital communities. They had preserved their former consistorial organization since they had been in German territory in 1905 when the law separating church and state was passed. The French government, following a policy of pacification and taking into consideration the strong religious attachment of the population, did not apply the law to the regained territories. Thus religious life there continued to be organized on the old system.

INTER-WAR YEARS. After the war, Jewish immigration from the former Ottoman countries was resumed with greater intensity. The Jews from Turkey and Greece settled chiefly in Paris and in the large cities of the south. However, the largest immigration came from Eastern Europe in the wake of the Ukrainian and Polish pogroms. Romania also provided a significant number of Jews. Once again the Russian and Lithuanian elements were not numerous. This trend increased after 1924 following the prohibition of free immigration into the United States. From 1933 many Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany passed through France en route for America or Palestine. The number remaining in France was relatively insignificant. It is estimated that there were 180,000 Jews resident in Paris in 1939, one-third of them belonging to the old French Jewish community. By then the use of Yiddish had become widespread and the "Ashkenazation" of the community had increased. The freedom of religious organization, which the law separating church and state had ratified by abolishing the official organization of religion, had enabled the different groups of immigrants to organize an appropriate framework for their religious and social life. Thus in 1923 the *Fédération des Sociétés Juives de France* (FSJF), a body which united the majority of *Landsmanschaften*, was created. However, these organizations did not impair the prestige of the old-established French Jewish communal bodies. The new bodies lost much of their meaningfulness as their members assimilated into French life, and with the progress of social security which deprived them of much of their usefulness. Many of their members subsequently joined the ranks of the established community.

ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, AND SOCIAL POSITION. In the economic sphere, the position of French Jewry continued to improve. After 1850, the number of Jews engaged in crafts increased considerably, and many Jews entered the technical professions. Few were attracted to agriculture. In the period

before World War I Jewish painters and sculptors had made the Paris school famous (see *Paris School of Art). Among a brilliant galaxy, the names of *Pissaro, *Soutine, *Pascin, *Kisling, *Chagall, and *Modigliani are well known. Sarah *Bernhardt, who was eventually baptized, brought luster to the French theater. Outstanding in literature and philosophy were Adolphe *Franck, Salomon *Munk, Henri *Bergson, Emile *Durkheim, Lucien *Lévy-Bruhl, Marcel *Proust, and André *Maurois.

Purely Jewish studies were not abandoned. From 1880 the *Société des Etudes Juives regularly published a learned periodical, *Revue des Etudes Juives*, and was responsible for the publication of the classic works of Heinrich *Gross (*Gallia Judaica*, 1897) and T. *Reinach (*Textes d'auteurs Grecs et Romains relatifs au Judaïsme*, 1895), and a modern translation of the works of Josephus. The French rabbinate published a magnificent translation of the Bible. On the other hand, talmudic studies in France ceased. The process of social assimilation continued, and in 1936 Léon *Blum became the first Jewish premier of France.

[Simon R. Schwarzfuchs]

Holocaust Period

On May 10, 1940, the Germans invaded France. *Paris fell on June 14. The armistice, which was signed two weeks later, divided France into an Unoccupied Zone in the South, and an Occupied Zone (subdivided into "general" and "forbidden" zones and several restricted areas) in the northern half of the country. The departments of Nord and Pas-de-Calais were attached to German military administration based in Brussels, while Alsace-Lorraine was annexed to the Reich. A new regime, based in Vichy, under the leadership of the World War I hero Marshal Philippe Pétain, took over the reigns of government. No official figures exist on the number of Jews living in France at the beginning of the war, since Jews were not singled out in the census and the documents on official and illegal entry or departure of refugees are unreliable. It is estimated that there were about 300,000 Jews in France prior to the invasion. During World War II, the Jews in France suffered from the combined impact of the Nazi "*Final Solution" and from traditional French antisemitism. By and large, French antisemitism did not tend toward physical extermination, but its existence unquestionably helped the Nazis in carrying out their scheme. A small coterie of French racist ideologues, largely in the Occupied Zone, expounded radical anti-Jewish sentiments. Most importantly, indifference to the fate of the Jews on the part of both Vichy government officials and French citizens led to callousness and disregard for the Jewish plight.

ANTI-JEWISH MEASURES AND ADMINISTRATION. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that the Vichy regime initiated many of its anti-Jewish policies and laws without any direct orders from and often in opposition to the German occupying powers. Much of the groundwork had been laid by laws passed by the Third Republic in its last years of existence restricting

and controlling foreigners. With the defeat of France in June 1940, the Vichy government took the initiative to deal with the "Jewish question." In August 1940, it repealed the Marchandau law, originally passed in April 1939, which had effectively outlawed antisemitic attacks in the press. The *Statut des juifs*, first enacted in October 1940 and then revised in June 1941, closed off top governmental positions to Jews. Its definition of Jews proved to be even more restrictive than those imposed by Nazis in Germany. Additional laws soon followed that effectively eliminated Jews from the liberal professions, commerce, the crafts, and industry. The Vichy regime also instituted a census in the Unoccupied Zone, and empowered the State to place all Jewish property in the hands of non-Jewish trustees. By late 1940, it is estimated that some 40,000 people were interned in camps, the vast majority of whom were foreign-born Jews. At the same time, German officials introduced various anti-Jewish measures in the Occupied Zone. The first *Verordnung* (ordinance) of Sept. 27, 1940, ordered a census of the Jews. Other ordinances soon followed, which placed Jewish property in the hands of so-called provisional administrators; extended the discriminatory category of "Jew" to individuals of Jewish origin who were not of the Jewish faith, and prohibited a number of economic activities. A proclamation issued by the German military authorities in December 1941 announced inter alia a fine of one million francs to be paid by the Jewish population, the execution of 53 Jewish members of the Resistance, and the deportation of 1,000 Jews (in fact, 1,100 Jews were actually deported on March 27, 1942, as a result of the proclamation). In 1942, German authorities established a curfew for Jews between 8 P.M. and 6 A.M., prohibited them from changing residence, and enlarged still further the scope of the definition of "the Jews." An ordinance of May 29, 1942, ordered all Jews to wear a yellow *badge. It was soon followed by a prohibition against Jews using public places, squares, gardens, and sports grounds. Jews in the Occupied Zone were also restricted to one hour a day to make their purchases in shops and food markets.

The German *Verordnungen* were valid only in the Occupied Zone. Even after the Germans took control of all of France in November 1942, they were not extended to the newly occupied areas. Thus, for instance, the yellow badge never became compulsory in southern France. The statutes, laws, and ordinances of the Vichy government, on the other hand, were valid throughout the country, as was the rubber stamp *Juif* ("Jew") on identity cards. Whereas German measures were directed without exception against all Jews, the Vichy measures mainly affected Jews who were either foreign nationals or stateless, and later Jewish immigrants who had recently become French nationals. French Jews of long standing were generally spared, sometimes by means of the exceptions made in favor of ex-servicemen and individuals of outstanding merit. At the same time, the various discriminatory laws strongly suggest that the Vichy regime wished to consign all Jews to a subservient role and to subject them to severe restrictions.

With an eye to coordinating policies in the two Zones, the Gestapo and specifically the Paris branch of *Eichmann's IV B under the leadership of ss-Hauptsturmfuehrer Theodor Dannecker set about to create both a French government agency for anti-Jewish affairs and a *Judenrat, which would act as the French counterparts of the German IV B branch and the *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland. With only minimal prompting and without prior submission to the German military administration, in March 1941 the Vichy government set up the Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives (CGQJ), headed by Xavier *Vallat, an extreme-right member of parliament. Vallat was a French politician and an antisemite in the French tradition, who believed that Jews were responsible for the very existence of democracy and the Third Republic, which had undermined France. After serving a year, he was dismissed after German authorities decided that he was too lax in carrying out anti-Jewish measures. Vallat was succeeded by the rabid antisemite Darquier de *Pellepoix. Under Darquier, the CGQJ accelerated the pace of "aryanization" of Jewish property and forged stronger links with the German authorities. The Vichy government also created an official body called the *Union Générale des Israélites de France (UGIF) in November 1941 to represent French Jewry during the German occupation. It had two divisions – one in the Occupied Zone and one in the free one. The role of the UGIF continues to be the subject of much controversy. While helping to save many children and providing material aid to Jews in French internment camps, it generally proved unwilling to actively confront either German or Vichy authorities. Until at least 1942, leaders of the UGIF were convinced that government authorities would never betray the basic principles that allegedly underlie French society.

DEPORTATIONS AND FORCED LABOR. As the Germans accelerated their anti-Jewish activities in France after the *Wannsee Conference, held in January 1942, they recognized that though Vichy authorities were prepared to enforce the regulations to persecute "foreign" Jews, they were often reluctant to act against French Jews. For that reason, it was decided that any action taken against native Jews would be carried out by the Gestapo itself, whereas the French police would be responsible for the roundups of immigrant and foreign Jews. In June 1942, the Third Reich decided that France would supply 100,000 Jews, to be taken from both zones, for extermination. A series of roundups ("*rafles*" in French, "*Aktionen*" in German) soon followed. The most notorious roundup took place on July 16–17, 1942, in Paris and its suburbs. Carried out by French policemen and sanctioned by Premier Pierre Laval, it led to the arrest of 12,884 men, women, and children, most of whom were interned in the Velodrome d'Hiver, a large indoor sports arena in the south of Paris. Many more "*rafles*" took place both before and after the so-called "Grand Rafle" of the "Vel d'Hiv," as it became known. A major roundup of foreign Jews in the Unoccupied Zone took place between August 26 and 28. The great majority of the victims had settled

in the southern part of France, where they had joined several thousand French Jews who had also fled from the Germans. The cities of Toulouse, Marseilles, Lyons, and Nice thus had large concentrations of Jews. Smaller towns, such as Limoges and Périgueux, also sheltered hundreds of Jews.

With the exception of a small number of wealthy individuals, the refugees from abroad were interned either in detention camps, such as Saint-Cyprien, Gurs, Vernet, Argelès-sur-Mer, Barcarès, Agde, Nexon, Fort-Barraux, and Les Milles, or in smaller so-called *Détachements de prestataires de travail*, i.e., forced labor detachments. Thousands of foreign Jews who had volunteered in 1939–40 for the French army were not demobilized after the armistice, but kept for a time in similar forced labor battalions, both in France and in North Africa (Djerada, Djelfa, and on the Mediterranean-Niger railway project). Their living and work conditions were similar to those of criminals sentenced to hard labor.

Jews generally were sent from internment camps to concentration camps in preparation for their deportations east. There were two main concentration camps for foreign Jews, Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande near Paris, and a few smaller ones. *Drancy, a northern suburb, was the main transit camp to *Auschwitz. Some Jews were also deported from the Compiègne camp and a few deportation trains left from Pithiviers, Beaune-la-Rolande, and such towns as Angers, Lyons, and Toulouse. Deportation came in several waves, beginning on March 27, 1942, and was largely handled by the military administration. The second deportation during the summer and fall of 1942 followed the main roundup throughout the country. A third wave during the spring of 1943 came after the clearance and destruction of the Vieux-Port quarter of Marseilles. After the Germans occupied the former Italian zone in southeast France in the fall of 1943, many Jews who had found sanctuary there after German authorities took control of all of France in November 1942 were arrested. In Nice alone, about 6,000 Jews (out of 25,000) were deported. The first deportations of foreign Jews to Auschwitz occurred in March 1942. A convoy of French Jews soon followed them. Beginning in June 1942, the deportations were accelerated, and they continued almost without interruption throughout 1943. The unification of the two zones meant that the implementation of the Final Solution could now proceed without interruption and without differentiation between foreign-born and French Jews. The last convoy departed France in August 1944. An estimated 85,000–90,000 Jews, two-thirds of whom were immigrant and non-citizens, were deported in 100 convoys, largely to Auschwitz. Barely 3,000 of these survived. In addition, a few thousand Jews were deported or executed for political and resistance activities.

RESCUE AND RESISTANCE. Jewish institutions, such as *HICEM, helped a few of the foreign Jews to emigrate overseas. The fact that the Vichy regime never officially prohibited emigration even after the occupation of the south meant there were opportunities for Jews to escape across the

Pyrenees and the Swiss border. Traditional religious and philanthropic Jewish organizations such as the largely native *Conseil israélite de France* and the immigrant *Fédération des sociétés juives de France* continued their activities, mainly in southern France. The French rabbinate also arranged for religious and social assistance, which carried out in part by rabbis active in the resistance movement, such as René Kappel. Other institutions cared for the social and physical well-being of the internees. As persecution became more severe and as the pace of deportations increased, mutual-aid organizations such as the *Fédération des sociétés juives* increasingly combined their material aid with resistance activities, such as the falsification of identity and ration cards, and of addresses; and aid to those who had escaped deportation.

The Jews of France played an important role in the resistance to Nazism, both in French movements across the political spectrum – from Gaullist to Communist and Trotskyist groups – and in specifically Jewish groups, such as those organized by the Zionists and the Communists. The active role of the Zionists and the Communists in resistance gained them entry into the established Jewish community. The Zionist youth movements established a united *Mouvement de la Jeunesse sioniste* and later the *Armée juive*. Initially, the French-Jewish scout movement, the *Eclaireurs israélites de France* (EIF), was attracted to the ideology of the Vichy regime and particularly to the myth of Marshal Pétain. With the onset of deportations in 1942, however, the Scouts increasingly turned to active resistance, first aiding in the hiding of hundreds of children, and then engaging in armed struggle. Together with the *Armée Juive*, they established the OJC (*Organisation Juive de Combat*) Robert Gamzon (Castor), the national director of the Jewish Boy Scouts of France, largely contributed to this evolution. Other groups that were active in aiding Jews, especially children, were the *Oeuvre de secours aux enfants* (*OSE), and the Women's International Zionist Organization's (*WIZO) office in the Paris area. Jewish Communist groups, such as the *Mouvement National contre le Racisme* (MNCR), created in 1942, which benefited from the support of the French Communist Party, also played an active role in resistance. In contrast to other groups, which emphasized Jewish self-defense, they tended to view Jewish resistance to Nazism as part of the general struggle against Fascism.

During the course of the war, the attitude and behavior of the majority of French citizens toward Jews gradually shifted from open hostility or apathy to sympathy and support. At first, most Frenchmen approved of the discriminatory laws, especially against foreign-born Jews, as part of their general approval of Marshal Pétain's program of national revival. In time, however, the increasing brutality of the Vichy and Nazi policies beginning in 1942, which included the deportations of native-born Jews including women and children, and the fact that roundups were no longer limited to German-occupied areas, led to growing opposition to and resentment against the regime's anti-Jewish policies. Many individual Frenchmen hid children and adults, often at the risk of their own lives. For

the first time, there were statements of opposition from established leaders. Before 1942, the French Catholic Church had remained silent in the face of Vichy's anti-Jewish pronouncements and policies. Alerted by Jewish religious authorities, a number of Catholic prelates, such as Monsignors Jules-Gérard Saliège and Pierre-Marie Théas, now strongly condemned the deportations of the Jews from their pulpits. In local areas, convents and monasteries offered shelter to Jews, particularly to children. For the most part, the Church hierarchy did not attempt to proselytize the Jewish children under their care, though some families did convert those whom they had taken in. The Protestant churches, numerically very small in France, were even more actively opposed to the persecution of Jews. Pastor Marc Boegner, president of the National Protestant Federation, denounced the *Statut des juifs* and the expropriation of Jewish-owned property in the Unoccupied Zone. The largely Protestant areas of the Haute-Loire, Hautes-Alpes, and the Tarn in Central France became centers for active rescue of Jews. Of special note was the village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, whose efforts to hide Jews have been chronicled in numerous film documentaries and films.

[Lucien Steinberg / David Weinberg (2nd ed.)]

Early Postwar Period

NATIVE POPULATION AND WAVES OF IMMIGRATION. France was the only country in Europe to which Jews immigrated in significant numbers after World War II. In 1945, there were some 180 000 Jews in France. The community was composed of established Jewish families and immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe and Mediterranean countries. In 25 years the Jewish population tripled. Between 1945 and 1951 many Displaced Persons passed through France, and some settled there. In 1951 there were 250 000 Jews in the country. Between 1954 and 1961, approximately 100,000 Jews moved to France from Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt (1956), and Algeria. After the Bizerta incidents (in Tunisia) and the independence of Algeria (1962), immigration increased. By 1963, almost the entire Jewish community of Algeria (110,000 persons, all French citizens) had moved to France. Moroccan and Tunisian Jews continued to arrive in the late 1960s with a last peak following the Six-Day War (from the summer of 1967 to the summer of 1968, 16,000 Jews from Tunisia and Morocco sought sanctuary in France). French-speaking Jewry had undergone a new geographical distribution, diversification in occupations and social status, a change in community structure, and a fundamental reorientation in religious, ideological, and cultural trends.

Approximately 50% of the Jews who left North Africa settled in France, so that by 1968 the Sephardim were in the majority in the French Jewish community.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION. In 1939 the Jewish population was concentrated in Paris and the surrounding region, Alsace-Lorraine, and several large towns. In 1968 about 60% of the Jewish population lived in Paris and its surroundings, about 25% in the Midi, and the rest were scattered throughout

France. Five provincial towns supported important communities: Marseilles (65,000), Lyons (20,000), Toulouse (18,000), Nice (16,000), and Strasbourg (12,000). Between 1957 and 1966 the number of localities in which Jews lived rose from 128 to 293. The dispersal of the immigrants from North Africa, which answered the need to absorb them into the economy, resulted in the establishment of Jewish communities throughout the country. In 1968, 76 rather isolated communities contained fewer than 100 Jews, and 174 communities numbered less than 1,000 (such communities were particularly numerous in the Paris district).

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STATUS. French Jewry succeeded in normalizing its economic status during the first two or three years following the liberation. Each successive wave of immigration, however, included a large group of impoverished persons who were forced to make recourse to social services run by the community or the state. Among both Ashkenazim and Sephardim, rapid and important changes in social status took place. Artisans from Eastern Europe or North Africa abandoned their traditional occupations in the second, if not in the first, generation in order to find jobs in modern industry, where the need for technical skills was great and through which a rapid rise on the social scale was possible. This trend was encouraged by the education offered in the seven *ORT schools, whose pupils were mainly from immigrant families. About 80% of North African Jews continued in the same occupation they had pursued in their countries of origin, and their influx into France slightly modified the distribution of occupations and social status of French Jewry. An estimated 15% of Algerian Jews were clerks employed at all levels of public administration; these were absorbed into urban administrations. Despite the resettlement loans granted by the government to repatriated citizens, some small businessmen and artisans had to abandon their previous status as self-employed persons and become salaried employees. Social advancement was rapid among North African Jews who were French nationals, as racial barriers that had seriously handicapped their advancement under colonial rule did not exist in France. Their settlement there opened new prospects for them, and many made their way in the liberal professions, commerce, and industry. The economic absorption of Moroccan or Tunisian Jews was more difficult. Nevertheless, they also chose France as their new country of residence as a result of their varying degrees of assimilation into French culture in their native countries. The social status and occupational distribution of French Jewry resembled the principal traits of the Diaspora in the West, i.e., a preponderance of members of the liberal professions, white-collar workers, businessmen, and artisans.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION. The period from 1945 to the end of the 1960s was a one of reconstruction of the community organization. The Consistoire Central Israélite de France et d'Algérie, the major religious organization, had to face numerous demands. Orthodox in orientation, it was the official representative of French Judaism, responsible for the training,

nomination, and appointment of rabbis, religious instruction for young people, the supervision of *kashrut*, and the application of religious law in matters of personal status. In order to answer the new needs related to the sharp increase in the Jewish population, the Consistoire set up a program of new synagogue building projects (les Chantiers du Consistoire) and had to accompany the development of a more intense religious life (organizing the network of *shehita* and *hashgahah*, supplying more rabbis and *talmud torah* to teachers...). While in the 1950s the consistory synagogues generally practiced Ashkenazi rites (and a few the Portuguese or North African rituals), by the end of the 1960s a majority of the consistory synagogues had switched to North African rites. North African Jews often formed their own communal organizations, but were represented in all the consistorial organizations. After 1945, most of the pupils of the Ecole Rabbinique and the rabbinical seminary, the Séminaire Israélite de France, were of Egyptian and North African origin. The Union Libérale Israélite, affiliated to the World Union for Progressive Judaism, was no less active. It had greater influence in more assimilated circles of established and North African families and trained its ministers at the Institut International d'Etudes Hébraïques. Lastly, there were the independent religious bodies, including Sephardi and North African communities practicing their various local rites, Poles, and *hasidim* and *kabbalists*. Despite the amount of effort expended, only a small minority of French Jewry practiced their religion. There were, however, hundreds of associations and institutions of a cultural, social, or philanthropic nature. From 1945 efforts made to coordinate and channel the rather anarchic development of such organizations met with a measure of success. On a political level, the Conseil Représentatif des Juifs de France (CRIF), founded in 1944, was an example of such an effort. Created clandestinely during the war, it meant to illustrate the unity of the French Jewish community through its various trends, religious and non-religious, old established natives and newer immigrants, etc. In 1968, it was composed of 27 important organizations of diverse trends, including religious, Zionist, Bundist, and even Communist bodies. According to its statutes, the Council's aim was "to protect the rights of the Jewish community in France"; it also played an active role in fighting antisemitism. On the social and cultural level, the Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU), founded in 1949 to centralize the various efforts of the community, rapidly became the central organizational body of French Jewry. It coordinated, supervised, and planned the community's major social, cultural, and educational enterprises, which it financed through its unified fund-raising campaign and the contributions of the *Joint Distribution Committee. Its community services played an important role in the integration of Jewish immigrants, and its numerous community centers aimed at involving peripheral elements without religious affiliations in community life. After the Six-Day War, the FSJU and the Appel Unifié pour Israël (United Israel Appeal) coordinated their activities and formed the Appel Unifié Juif de France, a joint fund-raising

venture. Varied ideological and political orientations, from the assimilationists to the Zionists and from the left wing to the right, were freely expressed in the French Jewish community. Although the Landsmanschaften of Eastern European immigrants gradually died out, associations of immigrants from North African countries multiplied.

CULTURAL LIFE. The diverse cultural trends of French Jewry were expressed by its 40 or so weekly and monthly publications. In 1968, there were ten daily, weekly, or monthly publications in Yiddish. After 1945, due to the activities of the *Conference on Jewish Material Claims, many books on Jewish and Israeli subjects were published annually by large French publishing houses; there was also a weekly Jewish radio broadcast and a regular television program. Most French Jews preferred to provide their children with a secular state education. Less than 5% of Jewish schoolchildren studied in the Jewish day schools at all levels, but the numerous youth movements and organizations tried to attract as many young people as possible. Under an agreement between the French and Israel governments, Hebrew could be taught as a foreign language in the *lycées* (state high schools). Ten universities included Hebrew in their curriculum, the universities of Paris and Strasbourg taught Jewish history, literature, and sociology. All the major Zionist youth movements were represented in France. The French Zionist Federation included various Zionist parties; however, it was decimated by internal feuds and its influence was weak. Nevertheless, more and more French Jews expressed their solidarity with Israel.

Despite a certain latent but rarely virulent antisemitism (research conducted by the Institut Français de l'Opinion Publique in December 1966 showed that about 20% of the French public held seriously antisemitic opinions), Jews felt well integrated into French society. The efforts of numerous Jewish organizations did not retard the rate of assimilation. After the Six-Day War (1967), the explicit anti-Israel stance of de Gaulle and his government (see below), came as a shock to French Jewry. The feeling of uneasiness increased when the anti-Israel utterances of de Gaulle, his officials and commentators assumed a half-disguised, sophisticated antisemitic quality, particularly through hints at the Jews' "double loyalty." It reached its peak when de Gaulle, at a press conference (Nov. 27, 1967), defined the Jews as "*un peuple d'élite, sûr de lui-même et dominateur*" ("an elite people, self-assured and domineering"), thus giving a great impetus to overt expressions of latent antisemitism. This dictum aroused a wide public controversy in France and abroad. The chief rabbi, Jacob Kaplan, voiced his protest, reaffirming Jewish attachment to Israel and stressing that it did not contradict in any way the fact that the Jews of France are loyal Frenchmen. De Gaulle later told the chief rabbi that his words were not meant to be disparaging. At the same time, from the other extreme of the political scene, came the violently aggressive anti-Israel propaganda of the *New Left and of the "students' revolution" of May 1968, who supported Arab-Palestinian terrorism against Israel, though

many of the movement's leaders were themselves young Jews (Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Marc Kravetz, Alain Krivine, and others). This agitation was the cause of embarrassment to most French Jews, not only because of its enmity toward Israel but also because of its extremist ideology of violence (Trotskyism, Maoism, anarchism, etc.), which could have easily aroused an antisemitic reaction in the mainly conservative French middle class, to whom most Jews belong. Physical clashes between Jews and Arabs in certain quarters of Paris, mostly provoked by pro-Palestinian North Africans, added to the malaise. As a result, migration from France to Israel, by both French and Algerian Jews, considerably increased in the late 1960s.

[Doris Bensimon-Donath]

Later Developments

DEMOGRAPHY. The Jews of France maintained a stable population variously estimated at 500,000–550,000 from the late 1960s to the early years of the 21st century (the former figure being the 2002 estimate based on a study by the Israeli sociologist Erik Cohen). Another 75,000 non-Jews were estimated in 2002 to be living in Jewish households. Following the decolonization of the former French possessions in North Africa, the Jewish population of France doubled between 1955 and 1965. Afterwards immigration was numerically insignificant. However, French Jewry changed from having an Ashkenazi majority to a Sephardi one (70 percent in 2002). France has taken in only a limited number of Jews who, since 1989, have left the former Soviet Union.

By the early 1990s the second as well as the third generation was French-born and educated. They were, of course, French, but maintained a conscious Jewish identity. The demographic trends among the Jewish population of France are similar to those of most other Diaspora countries: aging, low birth rates along with significant changes of the family units. Mixed marriages are an accepted fact and there are also increased numbers of couples living together and of divorces.

Some 50 percent of French Jews lived in Paris and its suburbs. Among the provincial communities the largest were those of Marseilles, Nice, Toulouse, and Montpellier in the south, Lyons and Grenoble in the southeast, and Strasbourg in Alsace. Jews also lived scattered throughout the country while having a tendency to congregate in middle-sized cities owing to the attraction of a better organized community life. In all, 72 percent of French Jews lived in just nine of its 30 départements

French Jewry constitutes the largest Jewish community in Europe. After the breakup of the Soviet Union and the mass emigration of Jews from there, France, in 1995, became the second largest Diaspora community (after the United States). Representing about 1 percent of the total French population, the Jews are only the third largest religious group: their number is greatly exceeded by the approximately 5 million Muslims, some stemming from the former French colonies, others French citizens. "Feujs" (young second and third generation Jews) and "Beurs" (young second and third generation Mus-

lims) live in certain sections of the large cities and their suburbs, where at times they clash and at times live amicably.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE. During the 1970s there were significant developments in the sphere of all-day Jewish education. Both in Paris and in the provinces numerous primary and secondary schools, as well as kindergartens were opened. Parallel to the network controlled by the FSJU there were schools operating in accordance with the most Orthodox currents, such as the Otzar Hathora. In 1976 the FSJU and the Jewish Agency created the Fonds d'Investissement pour l'Éducation (FIFE), which, with the support and participation of a number of religious organizations, led to a significant expansion of the network of Jewish day schools. By 1979, approximately 10,000 children attended all-day Jewish schools, the most important of them having concluded agreements with the government whereby it covered the fees of the teachers who give general education.

According to a study made by Erik Cohen in 1986/88 (see bibliography), the number of full-time Jewish educational institutions – from nursery school to high schools – doubled from 44 in 1976 to 88 in 1986/87, at which time, 16,000 children and teenagers attended full-time Jewish schools. This trend has continued: by 1992, 20–25 percent of school-age Jews attended full-time Jewish schools. If one adds the *talmud Torahs* (preparatory courses for bar mitzvah and bat mitzvah), the youth movements, and other Jewish recreational organizations, 75 percent of Jewish youth have some more or less long term formal Jewish education.

Non-practicing Jewish families had, in the 1980s, a more favorable attitude than in the past to full-time Jewish education, but, more than the others, the religious circles have the maximum commitment to Jewish education. According to Cohen's study, in 1986/87, about one-third of the Jewish day schools were affiliated with organizations such as Lubavitch, Otzar Ha-Torah, or Or Yossef. In 1994, the FSJU opened the André Neher Institute intended to train educators who wish to work in the Jewish educational networks. This new institute stressed the recruitment of teachers of Jewish subjects who receive at the same time training in the university and pedagogical system charged with training teachers in France.

The majority of Jewish youth, however, study in public schools whose underlying principle is secularism, having as its objective the education of children and young people of every religion and every origin, with mutual tolerance. For over a century, the free, secular school has played an essential role in the integration of children born to every wave of immigration in French society. Still, the evolution of the French society by the end of the 20th century also echoed in the realm of the state schools. From the end of the 1980s, a broad public debate took place on the question of “conspicuous” religious signs worn by a few schoolchildren (mainly the Islamic veil for girls). The majority of those Jews who expressed themselves on the question strongly supported traditional French secularism as a protection for all minorities against certain over-

assertive groups; nevertheless, some Jews – and among them the Consistoire Central, although for a very short period – were tempted by the idea of getting some exemptions made official, such as the exemption from school for observant Jewish children on Saturday. However, in 2004 a law finally banned all religious symbols from schools.

In the public school system, Hebrew was taught at a number of high schools as a foreign language which fulfills the matriculation requirement. In the universities, the study of Hebrew, Jewish languages, and Jewish civilization is now well represented.

The year 1992 was for the Jews of France the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the mass deportations: the Holocaust is at the heart of Jewish memory. During this decade, there was a significant increase in research studies into the responsibility of the Vichy government for the persecution of the Jews. President Mitterrand was called upon to admit officially France's responsibility for this persecution.

The year 1994 was the 600th anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews from France by Charles VI. A scientific colloquium presented information on this tragic period of the Jewish people.

The years 1994 and 1995 were marked above all by the celebrations of the 50th anniversary first of the Liberation of France and then of the extermination camps and finally of the victory of the Allies over Nazi Germany. While President Mitterrand had kept in 1992 the date of July 16th (the day of the big roundup of Jews in Paris in July 1942) as the official anniversary of the persecution of the Jews in France, President Chirac pronounced in 1995 a memorable speech acknowledging the responsibility of the French state in the tragic fate of the Jews. Jews and Jewish organizations were obviously associated with these national and international celebrations. Remembrance of the Holocaust is broadly presented and disseminated by the media. The Jews stress not only the persecution, but also the Resistance. There are increasing numbers of works dealing with what transpired and, more specifically, survivor accounts. The *Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine (CDJC) participates in an international project launched by Steven Spielberg, director of *Schindler's List*, for collecting Holocaust survivors' videotaped testimony.

The intellectual and cultural vitality of French Jewry is attested by artistic, literary, and scientific output. Each year, 200 to 300 works on Jewish themes are published in France. They cover the gamut of the field of Jewish studies, from the translation and interpretation of traditional texts of Jewish thought to the study of contemporary Jewish issues. At the same time, novels with Jewish themes are published and plays, movies, and works in the plastic arts are produced. The interest in Judaism and its culture is shared by the Jewish and non-Jewish public.

COMMUNITY. The Six-Day War was to a large extent a turning point for the French Jewish community. After 1967, the role played by Israel in the Jewish self-identification became even

more central in France whereas Jewish institutions became increasingly involved in Jewish world politics. From 1970, the Conseil Représentatif des Juifs de France (CRIF, which changed its name to the more precise one of Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France), expanded its range of activities. In the wake of the 1967 and 1973 wars in Israel, it took a new impulse under the dynamic leadership of Professor Ady *Steg. It played an important part in the struggle against antisemitism and was active in support of Soviet Jewry. While by 1970 the number of affiliated organizations reached 34, the CRIF became more and more active in the public life, representing the Jews as a sort of sociological – and not purely religious – group. The impulse of the 1970s was confirmed in the three following decades, with the development of a regular dialogue with the authorities, symbolized since the 1980s by the yearly dinner at which the CRIF receives the French Premier. The last third of the century was also a period of enhanced development for the Fonds Social Juif Unifié, (FSJU), the main community organization in France, which collects and distributes funds for Jewish welfare and cultural activities. After the intense effort of the post-war reconstruction and the integration of a heavy immigration in the 1960s and 1970s, the FSJU had to adjust to the end of the support it had been granted by American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee while investing heavily in the development of formal education through Jewish schools and going on playing a major part in the organization and planning of the community social services in times which were not of full economic prosperity. At the same time, the FSJU statutes underwent a reform in favor of more democratic representation. In the religious sphere the most important event of the 1980s was the retirement of the chief rabbi, Jacob Kaplan, and the election for a seven-year period of Rabbi René Samuel *Sirat as his successor in June 1980. Born in Bone (Algeria), Sirat was a Sephardi and a university graduate; he placed the main stress on Jewish education and the spiritual renewal of French Jewry. This renewal took different forms. Whereas for some it consisted of a return to religious practice, in the case of others it meant the search for Jewish identity and a renewal of Sephardi and Yiddish culture. Together they embraced a significant number of individuals and an intense renewed literary activity is manifest.

In the 1980s organized community life was characterized by the rise of ever-increasing numbers of Sephardi Jews to positions of leadership and by a certain return to religion in strong opposition to humanistic and secular initiatives. The organization of the Jewish community of France continued to reflect the ideological heterogeneity of its members.

The consistories, which are in charge of the organization of Jewish religious worship and observances, tended to extend their spheres of activities.

In 1988, Joseph Sitruk, born in Tunisia, was elected chief rabbi after René Samuel Sirat and continued in that position into the 21st century. Jean-Paul Elkann was president of the Central Consistory in the 1980s. In June 1992, Jean-Pierre Bansard was elected. Born in 1940 in Oran, Algeria, and president

of a financial company, Bansard represented a new Jewish leadership. In 1995 Jean *Kahn took over.

A most significant change, however, took place in the 1990s in the Board of the Association Culturelle Israélite de Paris (ACIP), which is the most important regional consistory in France. A new team of a stricter Orthodoxy than its predecessor, headed by Benny Cohen, was elected, calling vigorously for a return to religious practice. This new tendency is strongly opposed by some of their coreligionists who affirm their Jewish identity only in a cultural mode. There are also more Orthodox Jews: in Paris, as in other cities, ultra-Orthodox groups and notably the Lubavitch Ḥasidim took root during the 1980s. They have established their neighborhoods and made their Judaism “visible” through billboard campaigns at Jewish holiday times and through lighting Ḥanukkah candles in large public places in Paris.

At the end of 1992, the new team of the ACIP changed some of the rules governing their association. As voted on December 20, 1992, the ACIP, which became the “consistory of Paris and the Ile de France,” sought to reinforce its position as the heart of the central consistory organization and increase its powers with an eye on stricter observance of the *halakhah*. This transformation met with lively opposition on the part of representatives of more liberal tendencies within the consistory spheres themselves. Between 1992 and mid-1994 the debate was harsh between the more or less orthodox trends and finally a new president, Moïse Cohen, was elected who attempted to refocus the ACIP around its religious mission in a spirit open to the different trends in Judaism.

By the end of the 20th century, the CRIF had confirmed the trends that had affected it since the 1970s. It encompassed some 60 Jewish organizations, among them the most important in the country. After Alain de Rothschild, its presidents were Théo *Klein, Jean *Kahn, Henri Hajdenberg, and Roger Cukierman (from 2001). CRIF not only fought against antisemitism but also expanded its activities in the sphere of defense of human rights. In 2002 it organized a massive rally in Paris under the banner “Against Antisemitism. For Israel.” Moreover, since 1986, first Theo Klein and then Jean Kahn served as president of the European Jewish Congress (CJE) created at the initiative of the World Jewish Congress. Since 1989 CJE has developed activities involving French Jewry, directly or indirectly, on behalf of Jewish communities in the ex-communist bloc. In 1992, Jean Kahn, within the framework of his functions, took part in humanitarian actions in the territory of former Yugoslavia.

The Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU) celebrated in 2001 its 50th anniversary. This is the most important organization supporting and coordinating French Jewry’s social, educational, and cultural activities. From 1982 David de Rothschild was its president.

Among the large Jewish organizations in France the Alliance Israélite Universelle (AIU), founded in 1860, plays an important role in the cultural domain. Prof. Ady Steg became its president in 1985. In September 1989 the AIU inaugurated a

new library which is now the largest Jewish library in Europe. It also has a College of Jewish Studies focusing its activities on in-depth study of Jewish thought in its various expressions. The year 2000 brought a major development in the picture of institutions in France with the creation of the *Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah* (the Endowment for the Memory of the Shoah, FMS). Although one cannot strictly consider the FMS as a Jewish community institution, it has started to play a major role in most important fields of the Jewish life. The FMS has been granted an inalienable endowment of some 393 million euros, a sum that corresponds to the wealth left in banks, insurance companies, etc. by the Jewish families who did not survive the Shoah in France. Only the product of the endowment is to be spent. In the first years of its existence, the FMS, whose president is Simone *Veil, started an impressive program which encompasses the transformation of the Jewish Shoah Memorial in Paris into an international museum, archive and research center on the Holocaust, social programs for survivors, support to cultural initiatives such as the House of Yiddish in Paris, training programs on Judaism for teachers in state schools, and more.

This overview of the large organizations gives only a partial picture of actual Jewish life in France. There are several hundred Jewish organizations in France, some with thousands of members, others with only a few dozen. Moreover, despite the impressive number of organizations, only 30–40 percent of the Jews have relations with the so-called organized community.

Since the end of the 1980s on, some Jewish secular and humanist movements have been organized, at least among the Ashkenazi Jews, and more recently, also among Sephardim.

It may be asked if one may speak of “a Jewish community” in the case of France. Heterogeneous in origins and orientations, embedded in a social, cultural, and political environment which offer aspirations different from those presented by Judaism, the French Diaspora does not constitute a community, in the strict sense. To be sure, at the local level or as voluntary societies based on origin or ideological sector, communities can come into being; they provide a firm foundation on which to affirm one’s quest for Jewish identity. But this search exhibits different facets, even though, in France today, Jewish life is essentially crystallized around three poles: religion; culture; and the attitude to the State of Israel.

ANTISEMITISM. From 1978 the extreme right increased its racist and antisemitic attacks, including the desecration of monuments and Jewish cemeteries, hostile antisemitic inscriptions, and generally xenophobia in the context of economic crisis. Those responsible were extremely small groups who openly proclaim fascist doctrines. On Friday October 3, 1980, a bomb which exploded outside the synagogue on Rue Copernic, just before the conclusion of the services, killed three persons. Although this outrage was attributed at first to the French extreme right, it became clear after a while that the source was to be found in the Middle East. The reaction was

immediate. Both in Paris and in the provinces public protest meetings took place in which Frenchmen of all the political trends and opinions participated. Middle Eastern terrorism struck again two years later, in August 1982, at the popular Jewish restaurant Goldenberg. Apart from the terrorist alarms coming from the Middle East, the 1980–1990 period was also marked by different events and trends that raised the issue of a possible renewal of antisemitism in France. Apart from the well-known antisemitism of the far-right, the development of the differentialist racialism of the *Nouvelle Droite* drew quite a lot of attention. The 1982 war in Lebanon favored some far-leftist, “anti-zionist” discourse that was on the verge of antisemitism. In the same period a wave of so-called revisionist works and publications questioning the Holocaust, produced by the far-right, the far-left, and pro-Palestinian circles, aroused very strong emotion. Despite the strength of the legal anti-racist apparatus in France, it was brought to further completion in 1990 by the Gayssot law which repressed the questioning of the existence of crimes against humanity and the publication and distribution of racist anti-Semitic and revisionist writings. Some revisionist university workers were found guilty of questioning the Holocaust, but the suppression of antisemitic writings was insufficient.

Terrorism and antisemitic incidents marked the 1980s. At the beginning of the 1980s, a wave of terrorism raged with the bloodiest attack against Jews carried out in August 1982 against the Jo Goldenberg restaurant. At the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s, desecrations of synagogues and, above all, cemeteries were prevalent. The most serious incident took place in Carpentras in 1990. At the end of 1992, the desecrations increased, particularly in Alsace where German Neo-Nazism and the French extreme-right cooperate. Only rarely have those guilty of these attacks been apprehended.

Other incidents were connected to the Holocaust past. In 1987 the trial against Klaus Barbie had widespread publicity. Sentenced to life imprisonment, Barbie died in prison on September 25, 1991. (See *Barbie Trial.)

Barbie was German, but the case of French Paul Touvier is more complicated. Touvier, head of the Lyon militia and Gestapo collaborator, was arrested in May 1989. On July 11, 1991, the Paris court (*Chambre d'accusation*) decided to release him. On April 13, 1992, this same court gave Touvier a general acquittal. This decision was accompanied by an interpretation of the Vichy role in the persecution of the Jews, considering it as totally subordinate to German authority. This decision unleashed fierce emotion in France and was repealed, at least in part, on November 27, 1992, by the Paris High Court of Appeal. The trial against Touvier, for the murder of seven Jews in June 1944 proceeded and in 1994 he was convicted and condemned to life imprisonment.

In November 1991 the media announced that the card file of the census of the Jews made in 1940 by the Vichy police had been found by the lawyer Serge Klarsfeld in the Ministry of Veteran Affairs. For 50 years historians have searched for this card file which had been said to have been destroyed. The file

was transferred to the National Archives where it was studied by a commission of historians. On December 31, 1992, the Ministry of Culture made public the results of its study: this card file deals only with those Jews arrested and/or deported. The census made under the Vichy government seems to have been in fact destroyed in 1948 or 1949.

There was a decrease in terms of major antisemitic events in the 1990s, although the phenomenon of the profaning of graves continued (but not only in Jewish graveyards). But by the end of the 1990s one became aware of a new disturbing situation in schools among very young people. Against the French tradition of assimilation, there seems to have developed a “community attitude” in some schools in certain areas, with an increase of violence – first verbal and a strong trend to antisemitism. With the second Intifada in Israel, an ethnic type of anti-Jewish violence seemed to be on its way, carried out by people who perceived themselves as the “true” victims, both of history (colonization, slavery) and the present (poverty, racism).

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SITUATION. French Jews continued actively to support Israel.

The results of the Israeli elections of May 1977, which returned Menahem Begin, caused considerable dismay. Begin was considered the classical representative of the ultra-nationalism of the extreme right, so extreme and uncompromising that his coming to power was likely to bring about a new conflict in the Middle East. Daniel Mayer, a former Socialist minister and ex-president of the League of Human Rights, ceased to write his regular column in the Zionist periodical *La Terre Retrouvée*, which he had contributed for many years, on the grounds that from now on his socialist convictions would make it impossible for him to defend the Israeli cause under the new regime.

The visit of President Sadat to Jerusalem, however, and the Camp David agreement improved the image of Begin. Many French Jews, while expressing their sympathy with the State and concern for its survival, nevertheless criticize both the internal and foreign policies of the Israel government.

The French economy went through great changes from the 1980s to the 1990s. It became information oriented and automated, with a considerable increase in its production capacity. The battle against inflation succeeded and the currency was stabilized. The economy played an important and influential role in the creation of the European Economic Community whose borders opened on January 1, 1993, to free movement of goods among the 12 member-countries. European political union is more difficult to put into effect: in France, the September 20, 1992, referendum on the treaty of the European Union, called the Maastricht treaty, barely received a majority (51 percent); voting in favor was supported by several Jewish personalities.

This modernization of the economy had a corollary in increased unemployment. At the end of 1992, the threshold of three million unemployed was reached. Jews, too, were af-

ected by this calamity, and social cases and problems reappeared. Poverty was also found among the Jews; in December 1992, Jewish social services launched an appeal called Tsedaka to collect funds to bring relief to 25,000 needy Jews.

From 1981 to 1995 France's president was François Mitterrand and its various governments had a socialist majority (except for the period of “cohabitation” from 1986 to 1988 during which the right-wing government was led by Jacques Chirac). From 1995 Jacques Chirac was president. Elections at different levels of political life are held frequently in France, and Jewish voters are regularly solicited by the political parties. Following an old tradition, the main Jewish organizations do not give any directions on how to vote. Nevertheless, some of them warn against voting for the FN. Jews constitute about 1 percent of the French electorate. Their votes can only play an important role in specific localities such as Paris and Marseilles. On the basis of analyses of voting behavior, it is known that the Jewish vote is spread among all parties, while within the machinery of every party Jews are active.

With the Mitterrand era coming to an end, his final “confessions” greatly troubled Jewish society which, first and foremost, appreciated his friendly relations with the Jews and the State of Israel. In fall of 1994, the book by Pierre Péan, *Une Jeunesse française. François Mitterrand 1924–1947*, confirms rumors about relations between Mitterrand and the Vichy regime after his rejoining the Resistance and especially about certain meetings up to 1986 with René Bousquet, secretary general of the police in the Vichy government, who played an important role in the deportation of French Jews in 1942. Initially condemned by the High Court of Justice in 1949, Bousquet was immediately exempted from the sentences imposed on him by this same judicial body; he reintegrated into his political and financial milieu. Accused of crimes against humanity in 1991, René Bousquet was assassinated in June 1993. The ongoing relations between Mitterrand and Bousquet became an “affair” disseminated largely by the media. Yet, President Mitterrand expressed no regrets over his meetings with Bousquet, despite the exertion of pressure on him by several well-known individuals such as Elie Wiesel. Some Jews were embittered by this “affair.” They were well disposed towards the new president, Jacques Chirac, who when mayor of Paris was known for his good relations with Jews, but they also recalled his former friendship with Saddam Hussein.

[Doris Bensimon-Donath / Nelly Hannson (2nd ed.)]

Relations with Israel

France played a major role on the Middle Eastern scene especially from World War I (see *Zionism; *Sykes-Picot; *Lebanon; *Syria; *Israel, State of: Historical Survey) until 1948. However, between the two world wars, France played a relatively minor role in Zionist policy, since the Zionist movement naturally directed its major political efforts toward London and Washington. Closer ties were established between the *yishuv* and Gaullist “Free France” during World War II, against the background of the Nazi conquests and on the basis of con-

tact between the *yishuv* and the Free French in the Middle East. After the war, these ties were reinforced by their joint opposition to British policy. During the early post-war period, various French leaders provided moral and material support for the legal and “illegal” immigration of Jewish refugees to Palestine. France supported the UN partition resolution of Nov. 29, 1947, and played a decisive role in the internationalization of Jerusalem and its surroundings (mainly in order to protect the Holy sites and Christian religious institutions). France recognized the State of Israel *de facto* in January 1949 and *de jure* in May of the same year when Israel became a member of the UN. In the mid-1950s, developments paved the way for a closer cooperation between Israel and France. The tireless efforts of Shimon Peres, then director general of the Ministry of Defense, led to the conclusion in 1954 of arms agreements (tanks, artillery, aircraft) which were both beneficial for Israel’s defense needs and for France’s arm industries. The uprising against French colonial rule in Algeria (November 1954) gave a new impulse to the cooperation between both countries. It reached its climax with the Sinai Campaign (1956) when France, in partnership with Great Britain, coordinated their attack against Nasserite Egypt. Both countries shared a common interest in trying to weaken Egypt, because Nasser supported both the Algerian fellaghas and the Palestinian *fedayins*. Although the Suez campaign was a political failure, Franco-Israel friendship blossomed. France became Israel’s major supplier of arms during that period, and remained so until the Six-Day War (1967). In 1957, France began to help Israel build the nuclear reactor in Dimona (Negev). A whole range of technical and scientific cooperation agreements were signed which enhanced cultural relations between the two countries. They included the establishment of chairs in French language and literature at Israeli universities and in Hebrew language and literature at a score of French universities; the teaching of French as a third language in Israeli secondary schools; exchanges of scientists, students and artists, and joint scientific projects. The advent to power of the General de Gaulle (1958) did not mark an abrupt break with previous policy. Only the close cooperation in nuclear matters and between the general staffs was phased out. French arms continued to be sold to Israel which was seen by de Gaulle as a strategic asset against Soviet expansion in the Middle East. Economic links were strong. In 1966, French exports to Israel amounted to \$35,000,000 (imports did not exceed \$19,000,000). Tourism from France to Israel reached the figure of 40,000. The reconsideration of French policy began slowly. On the occasion of Ben-Gurion’s visits to France in 1960 and 1961, de Gaulle, who called Ben-Gurion “the greatest statesman of this century,” hailed Israel as “our friend and ally.” However, he firmly rejected a formal military alliance which Ben-Gurion wanted to conclude in 1963. At that time, de Gaulle has already begun a rapprochement with the Arab countries. After Algeria gained independence, the French president thought it was high time to resume diplomatic relations with Arab countries. Although there was a gradual shift

in foreign policy, nothing foretold the about-face position taken by de Gaulle during the crisis which ended up with the Six-Day War (June 1967). In mid-May 1967 after the withdrawal of the UN truce observers at the request of Egypt and the closing of the Straits of Tiran to all shipping to Eilat, de Gaulle stated clearly to Abba Eban, minister of foreign affairs, that the situation was not a *casus belli* and that Israel should not take the initiative to go to war. To prevent the outbreak of a war, France announced an embargo on arms deliveries to “all Middle Eastern states,” a decision which in practice hurt only Israel. This unilateral cancellation of French commitment towards Israel was seen in the Jewish state as a betrayal. De Gaulle justified his stand by arguing that Israel was militarily stronger and that the war would have long term destabilizing effects. He deeply resented the fact that Israel did not heed his advice on the eve of the 1967 war and went so far as to describe Israel in a famous press conference in November 1967 as a “warrior State determined to become larger.” The Six-Day war was a breaking point in Israeli-French relations and put an end to a close cooperation which lasted almost 15 years. This abrupt change was misunderstood by many French people in the press, among politicians (even some Gaullists), among public opinion and, of course, in the Jewish community. It even aroused certain uneasiness when de Gaulle called the Jews “an elite people, self-assured and domineering...” After 1967, French-Israeli relations steadily deteriorated. De Gaulle’s resignation in 1969 did not change much. Under Georges Pompidou’s presidency (1969–1974), France drew nearer to the Arab world. The growing dependence on Arab oil and the attempts to penetrate the Arab markets economically (including through arm sales) moved France further way from Israel. Pompidou stated that Israel had the right to live in peace within secure and recognized borders but was also one of the first Western leaders to speak of the “rights of the Palestinian people” and used the nascent European political cooperation to promote the French position in the EEC. Valéry Giscard d’Estaing made some positive gestures towards Israel: lifting of the arms embargo, official visit of the French foreign minister to Israel.... However, these moves cannot conceal the fact that France had clear pro-Arab leanings. A PLO office was opened in Paris (1975), and France was instrumental in the adoption by the Europeans of the Venice declaration (1980) which spoke of the Palestinian right to self-determination and called for PLO participation in the peace negotiations. At the same time, France had deep reservations regarding the Camp David accords because they were seen as leading towards a separate peace between Egypt and Israel, not to a global settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. These political stands strained relations with Israel. The election of Francois Mitterrand as president of France in May 1981 brought with it the hope that there might be a change favorable to Israel in French Middle East policy, because Mitterrand had a liking for the Jewish people and spoke in positive terms of Israel. The official visit he undertook in Israel in March 1982 – the first ever of a French president – was highly symbolic of his attachment

to "Israel's unshakeable right to live" as he said during his speech at the Knesset. He welcomed also the Israeli president Haim Herzog for an official visit in 1988. However, this more cordial attitude towards the Jewish state went hand in hand with a deepening of French defense of the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people which had the right to have its own state, alongside Israel. President Mitterrand invited Yasser Arafat, in May 1989, for an official visit in Paris which aroused the opposition of the French Jewish institutions. He became more explicitly critical of Israel after the start of the first Intifada (1987) but returned a second time in Israel in November 1992. After the signing of the Oslo accords (1993), political relations improved notably. Paris became even a meeting point between Israelis and Palestinians. The economic part of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement was signed in Paris in April 1994. However, the lull was only temporary. Relations once again became strained after the advent to power of Binyamin Netanyahu in 1996 and, later on, with the start of the second Intifada in 2000. On the one hand, France denounced the re-occupation of Palestinian territories by the Israeli army and the confinement of Yasser Arafat; on the other hand, Israel denounced the alleged passivity of French authorities towards antisemitic actions undertaken, at least partially, under the false pretext of "solidarity with the Palestinians." The uneasy situation of the French Jewish community, French foreign policy and Israeli policies in the West Bank and Gaza intermingled dangerously. The new French government (right wing), set up in 2002, tried to improve relations with Israel, with such actions as the creation of a high council for research and scientific cooperation (2003) and official visits to France by Moshe Katzav and Ariel Sharon. These measures have bettered the general atmosphere between both countries which, on the economic level, have sustained relations (economic exchanges went up from €1.2 billion in 1992 to €1.8 billion in 2003).

[Alain Dieckhoff (2nd ed.)]

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