

## **In this issue of "Pe'amim"**

### **A Topic for Debate**

★ Prof. Shaul Shaked discusses in his article the problems concerning research and the academic teaching of the cultural heritage of Oriental Jewish communities.

The author is the head of the Ben-Zvi Institute and teaches in the Department of Indian, Iranian and Armenian Studies and in the Department of Comparative religion of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

★ The Late Professor Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson discusses the validity of the term "Oriental Jewry Heritage", a concept which he basically rejects. This article is a slightly edited version of a lecture presented by this recently deceased scholar at a conference on that subject held in 1976. The conference was arranged under the auspices of the Committee on Education and Culture of the Knesset, in which scholars and other public figures took part. This conference was a turning point in arousing public awareness to this field of activity.

The late Professor H.H. Ben- Sasson, one of the prominent historians in Israel, taught at the Hebrew University. He has the author of several books on Jewish history, and was active in many projects of scholarly and public interest.

### **Study and research**

★ Dr. Eliezer Bashan – discusses in his article the relations between Oriental Jewry and the Land of Israel during the period before the Zionist immigrations. During that period the main immigration came from Oriental countries.

The author teaches Jewish History at Bar-Ilan University, and is the director of the Institute for the Study of the Jews in the East and in North Africa of that University.

★ Dr. Amnon Netzer discusses in his article the beginnings of the Zionist movement in Iran. This is a little known chapter in the history of a Jewish community in Iran, and it holds topical interest in the light of the latest political events in that country.

The Author is the head of the department for Indian and Amrenian studies at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

★ Dr. Michael Abitbol discusses in his article the changes that occurred in the society and community of the Jews in the Maghreb countries at the end of the colonial period.

The author is a lecturer at the Institute of Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the director of the Centre for the study of North-African Jewry at the Ben-Zvi Institute.

★ Dr. Zvi Malachi discusses the life and work of Mohe Gidhon Abudiente, a Hebrew poet, a descendant of Marranos, who lived in Holland in the 17th century.

The author is a lecturer in Hebrew literature and is the director of the Katz Institute for the Study of Hebrew literature at Tel-Aviv University.

★ Prof. Shelomo Doshen, whose article is dedicated to the scientific evaluation of the late anthropologist Dr. Yitzhak Elam, gives a survey of the contribution of Israeli anthropology to the cultural research of Oriental Communities.

The author teaches social anthropology at Tel Aviv University.

### **A Scholars' Forum**

The first discussion in this section, which is meant to be a permanent feature of this journal, deals with one of the most important fields in the research of Jewish communities Jews languages, which are a basic element in the definition of individual communities.

The discussion comprises three lectures: Professor Haim Rabin discusses the general characteristics of Jewish languages; Professor Joshua Blau discusses classical Judeo-Arabic; Professor Haim Blanc discusses Modern Judeo-Arabic.

Following the three lectures a discussion took place in which seven scholars, belonging to different disciplines, participated, and rejoinders were given by two of opening speakers:

The speakers were: Professor Haim Rabin, of the Department of Hebrew Language; Professor Joshua Blau, Head of the Department for Arabic language and literature; Professor Haim Blanc, of the same department, in the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

A summerized abstract on sixteen Jewish languages in various countries of the Diaspora, past and present, is appended to the discussion.

Only a few points relating to this field are treated in this discussion. There will be further contributions, no doubt, in future issues of *Pe'amim*.

### **Original Sources**

★ Yosef Tobi discusses an unpublished original document of the beginning of the 19th century, which shows the structure of the leadership of the Jewish community in Yemen.

The author is a lecturer at Ben-Gurion University, Beer Sheva, and coordinator of research projects at the Ben-Zvi Institute.

### **Books**

★ Yosef Tobi publishes a review article on Professor Yehuda Ratzhabi's book "The Hebrew language of the Yemenite Jews", awarded the Bialik Prize for Jewish studies this year.

Very short reviews on books published in 1978 in the field of Oriental Jewry are given.

It is our purpose to have a much more substantial section of book reviews in future issues, an aim which could not yet be fulfilled for technical reasons.

Book publishers and authors are invited to send us books published in fields, related to the study of Oriental Jewish cultural heritage.

**What's on in research institutes**

First survey of what is being done in the study of Oriental Jewish history and culture in some Universities is given. A further part of the survey will be published in the next issue.

We shall try in the future to present from time to time detailed profiles of individual research institutes or centres. Research institutes in Israel and abroad are welcome to send us information on projects in operation or in planning, as well as news of conferences and meetings.