

Rifka's Resources Indian Judaism

Fernandes, Edna. *The Last Jews of Kerala: The Two Thousand Year History of India's Forgotten Jewish Community*. 2008. New York, NY: Skyhorse Publishing.

From the publisher: "Two thousand years ago, trade routes and the fall of Jerusalem took Jewish settlers seeking sanctuary across Europe and Asia. One little-known group settled in Kerala, in tropical southwestern India. Eventually numbering in the thousands, with eight synagogues, they prospered... their comfortable lives, however, were haunted by a feud between the Black Jews of Ernakulam and the White Jews of Mattancherry... Today, this once-illustrious people is in its dying days... The Last Jews of Kerala narrates the rise and fall of the Black Jews and the White Jews over the centuries and with the context of the grand history of the Jewish people. It is the story of the twilight days of a people whose community will, within the next generation, cease to exist. Yet it is also a rich tale of weddings and funerals, of loyalty to family and fierce individualism, of desperation and hope."

Gautier, Francois. "India, the land of refuge." *Indian Express*. June 5, 2000. Embassy of India New Media Reports.

http://www.indianembassy.org/press/New_Delhi_Press/2000_ndpf/india_refuge_june_5_00.html

Israel, Rachael Rukmini. *The Jews of India: Their Story*. 2004. New Delhi: Mosaic Books.
A history of the Jews of India; their religious beliefs, customs, and adaptation to Indian society.

Jewish Web Index: The Orient at <http://jewishwebindex.com/orient.htm>

Jews of India: a website of the Indian Jewish Congregation of USA at www.jewsofindia.org
Note especially the "Useful Links" page

Katz, Nathan. *Who Are the Jews of India?* 2000. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

From the publisher: "Of all the Diaspora communities, the Jews of India are among the least known and most interesting. This readable study, full of vivid details of everyday life, looks in depth at the religious life of the Jewish community in Cochin, the Bene Israel from the remote Konkan coast near Bombay, and the Baghdadi Jews, who migrated to Indian port cities and flourished under the British Raj. *Who Are the Jews of India?* is the first integrated, comprehensive work available on all three of India's Jewish communities."

Rediscovering India's Jews: An Interview with Sadia Shepard on WNYC's The Leonard Lopate Show. August 7, 2008. Listen to the broadcast at:

<http://www.wnyc.org/go.py?r=http%3A//www.wnyc.org/shows/lopate/episodes/2008/08/07%23segment105296>

"Sadia Shepard was raised a Muslim, so she was surprised to learn that her grandmother had actually been born Jewish as a member of India's small Bene Israel community of Jews. In her new book, *The Girl from Foreign*, she writes about her journey to India to learn more about her grandmother's life, the history of the Bene Israel, and her own intertwined cultural heritage."

Slapak, Orpa (editor). *The Jews of India: A Story of Three Communities*. 2002. Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England.

From the publisher: "Jews of India, one of the lesser-known and perhaps most interesting of the Diaspora, comprise the three geographically and ethnographically distinct communities examined in The Israel Museum's unique and authoritative volume *The Jews of India*. The Bene Israel, the largest group at approximately 24,000 members, inhabited the Maharashtra State on India's western coast; its ties with mainstream Judaism were reestablished in the nineteenth century. The smallest and oldest of the Indian Jewish communities, the Jews of Cochin have been a presence on the Malabar Coast of southwestern India for at least a thousand years. They numbered about 2,500 in the mid-1950's, just prior to their immigration to Israel. The Baghdadi Jews migrated from Iraq and Syria to large commercial cities in western and eastern India in the late eighteenth century. Numbering about 5,000 at the population's peak, Baghdadi Jews were largely assimilated into British colonial society, did not develop a distinct material culture in India, and so are a relatively minor presence in this book..."

Tobin, Diane; Tobin, Gary A.; and Rubin, Scott. *In Every Tongue: The Racial & Ethnic Diversity of the Jewish People*. 2005. San Francisco, CA: Institute for Jewish & Community Research.

From the book: "This book explodes the myth of a single authentic Judaism and shines a bright light on the thousands of ethnically and racially diverse Jews in the United States who live full and rich Jewish lives. It is impossible to read *In Every Tongue* without coming away with a deeper respect for and a broader understanding of the Jewish people today."