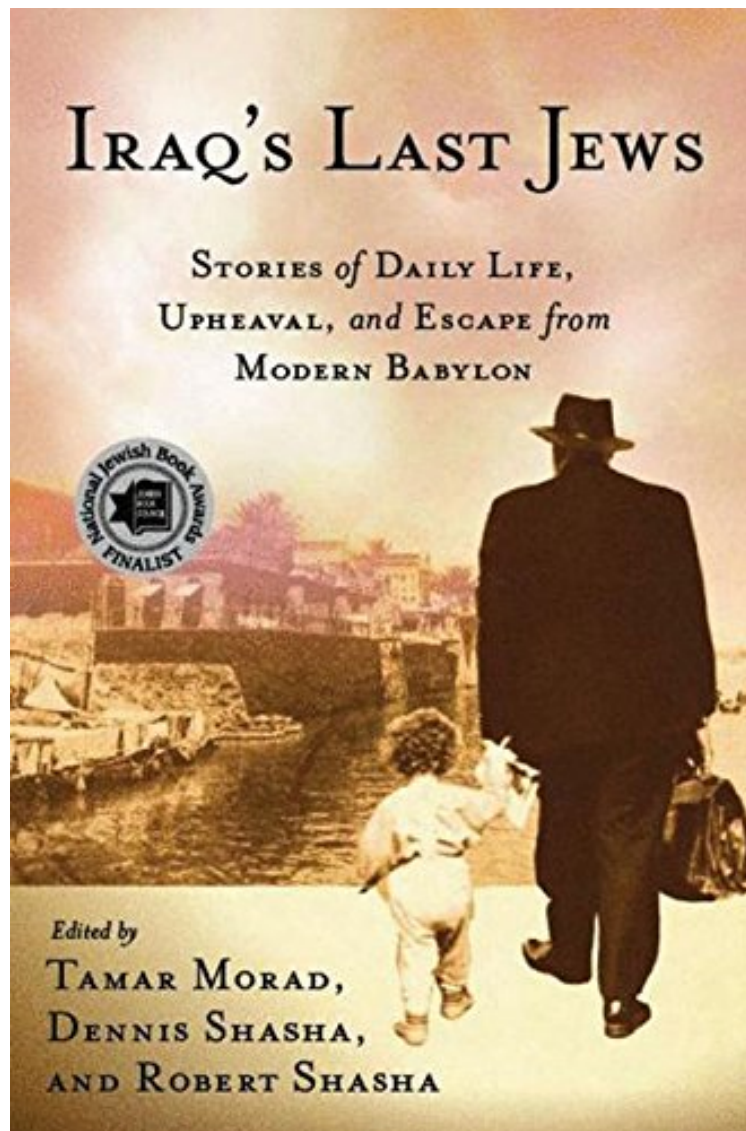


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Iraqs Last Jews: Stories of Daily Life, Upheaval, and Escape from Modern Babylon (Palgrave Studies in Oral History)

T. Morad, D. Shasha

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T. Morad, D. Shasha : Iraqs Last Jews: Stories of Daily Life, Upheaval, and Escape from Modern Babylon (Palgrave Studies in Oral History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Iraqs Last Jews: Stories of Daily Life, Upheaval, and Escape from Modern Babylon (Palgrave Studies in Oral History):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Witnesses of one of world's great displacements By Theodore Bosworth
The relatively rapid demise of the Jewish community in Baghdad, largely between the years 1940 and 1960, is well captured in these personal histories, which provide the context for the one of the great population displacements in modern history. While there are many parallels between the story of the Jews of Iraq and those of Germany, including their integration to the fabric of society, the role of the Jews in Iraq was ultimately far greater in regard to their cultural and economic participation in society. This is a riveting book because the witnesses are articulate and recount both their intimate relationship with their 2500 year history in Baghdad and their sense of alienation. By touching on the reasons for a sudden surge of antisemitism, the book sews together many disparate parts of world history at the time, including the goals of the British empire, the creation of Israel, and the surge in interest in communism among the working classes. I loved this book. One digests important historical information while reading simple and captivating personal accounts of heroism and disappointment.
10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Insider Point of View By solo2wings
Having been born in Bagdad, Iraq, I consider myself qualified to judge this book from the point of view of a participant in the events described by its characters. I am an Iraqi Jew who is no relation to either of the Shasha authors. Currently I live in Israel. This book is superb in its delicate handling of the memories of those who were the last remnants of a thriving and vibrant community. The authors let their characters describe their lives and those of their close ones as they saw fit, capturing their feelings, the importance of the events to the characters and without detracting from the total picture. I have read a lot of books in my lifetime, and many on the same period; this book has managed to capture the essence of the Iraqi Jewish community in Iraq in clear and unequivocal terms. Fahim Shasha

Iraq's Last Jews is a collection of first-person accounts by Jews about their lives in Iraq's once-vibrant, 2500 year-old Jewish community and about the disappearance of that community in the middle of the 20th century. This book tells the story of this last generation of Iraqi Jews, who both reminisce about their birth country and describe the persecution that drove them out, the result of Nazi influences, growing Arab nationalism, and anger over the creation of the State of Israel.

'These stories provide more than just the details of Iraq's former Jewish community; we learn so much about that country's larger history and culture Iraq's Last Jews is without a doubt the most surprising and informative book about that country's culture and history to date.' - The New York Post
'Editors Tamar Morad, Dennis Shasha and Robert Shasha have trimmed the narratives skillfully to present a composite picture of a once-thriving community...The small but significant acts of kindness and heroism that punctuate this tragic tale lend it an air of humanity and hope, as well as the fact that by its mere existence, there is the opportunity to learn from the mistakes of the past and forge a brighter future.' - The Jewish Journal, Boston
North 'The moving experiences, insights, and the story of how the Israelis spirited masses out of the country make this a very special volume that needed to be written.' - Jewish Voice and Opinion
'In this fascinating book, the last generation of Iraqi Jews tells their story in their own words. It's a tragic and profoundly moving account. This volume is a must-read for understanding one of the most important and overlooked aspects of the Middle East - the fate of Jews in Arab countries.' David A. Harris, Executive Director, American Jewish Committee
'Iraq's Last Jews is a thoroughly researched, riveting account of the last generation of Iraqi Jews. The editors have identified some of the most remarkable stories about this community, and in doing so have brought to light the rich, sometimes sad, always interesting history of the oldest Jewish diaspora in the world. This book will be of great value to all who care about the history of the Middle East, Iraq in the twentieth century, and the saga of the last Jews of Arab lands.' - David Landau, former editor-in-chief, Ha'aretz
'This important book opens a window onto the fate of the Jewish community of Iraq, which for many years had been obscured by attempts to hide the brutal policies practiced by state governments against the Jews. It is possible now to get a real picture of the suffering of the Babylonian Jewish community as expressed in these authentic testimonies. The appearance of this book in English is a great service to Western readers.' - Nissim Kazzaz, Ben Gurion University, member of the Academic Committee of the Babylonian Jewry Heritage Center, Or-Yehuda and the Association of Jewish Academics from Iraq in Israel
'...the volume begins to fulfill its aims for uncovering less-known history, and it elicits some important questions for readers and for publishers.' - Oral History
About the Author
TAMAR MORAD is a journalist who has worked at the Wall Street Journal, Jerusalem Post, and the Israeli daily Ha'aretz.
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