

Integration and Name Changing among Jewish Refugees from Central Europe in the United States

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Background, Immigration, Integration

THE TERM "JEWISH REFUGEE FROM CENTRAL EUROPE", in this paper, refers to Jews from Germany and Austria who left their native lands in 1933 or later as a result of persecution by the National Socialist regime. It also includes Jews from Czechoslovakia whose mother tongue was German and who escaped after the annexation by Germany of the Sudetenland in 1938 and the establishment of a German Protectorate in 1939.

In order to appreciate what an adjustment to a new country meant to these particular immigrants to the United States, it is

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important to indicate to what extent the Jews of Central Europe had achieved integration when the National Socialists seized power.

Jews have been living in Central Europe since the Roman conquest, and some Jewish communities have been in existence for over a thousand years. In fact, Jewish settlers preceded German ones in some parts of Germany.¹ After centuries of oppression and life in the ghettos Jews at last began to obtain political, economic and social emancipation in the period of the French Revolution. Although complete emancipation, in law, was achieved in the course of the nineteenth century, reality was different in many respects and anti-Jewish feelings manifested themselves in various ways down to the twentieth century. In the German Empire, for example, with very rare exceptions, Jews could not obtain appointments as judges in the higher ranks or to civil service positions, appointments as supervisors of institutions of secondary education, full professorships at universities, commissions in the professional officer corps and the like. Baptism usually removed these obstacles. Official anti-Semitism had its counterpart in the anti-Jewish feelings of large masses of the people which never disappeared completely.

Overwhelmingly the Jews of Central Europe belonged to the middle class. Most of them lived in cities, and their occupations were typical of a middle class urban population. Businessmen, whitecollar workers and professionals predominated. In their respective fields Jews made a contribution to the greatness of their countries that was out of proportion to their numbers. From their ranks rose composers, poets, painters, economists, businessmen, statesmen and scientists of highest reputation, fame or influence — men like Felix Mendelssohn, Heinrich Heine, Max Liebermann, Alfred Ballin, Walter Rathenau, Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein, to mention but a few. Some of them had left Judaism as a religion. "Much of Germany's fame in the realm of science, scholarship and letters was due to them [that is, the Jews] . . . It is, indeed, one of the great ironies of history that a country that owed so much of its greatness to its Jewish citizens should have become their most relentless enemy, seeking actually their complete physical extermination."²

¹ Leschnitzer, Adolf, *The magic background of modern anti-Semitism*. New York, International Universities Press (c1956), p. 215, footnote 3.

² Davie, Maurice R., *Refugees in America*. New York, Harper (c1947), p. 6-7.

Still identifiable as a distinct group, the Jews of Central Europe were highly assimilated when compared to the Jewries of Eastern Europe and considered themselves an integral part of the nation. Their mother tongue was German. As a religious group they made their most distinctive contribution in the development of both the organizational structure of modern Jewish life and of Judaistic studies.³

Because of a low birth rate, a relatively high percentage of inter-marriages, and a lack of Jewish immigrants, the numbers of the Jews of Central Europe declined. Some scholars predicted their disappearance in a few generations. In Germany in 1933 they constituted less than one percent of the population, that is, 502,799 persons,⁴ and in Austria, at the same time, 2½ percent, that is, 200,000 souls.⁵

Thus, the integration attained by the Jews of Central Europe in the period of about 150 years, from the French Revolution to the advent of National Socialism, was of a mixed nature. On the one hand, the Jews, looking back to a settlement of several hundred years in these countries, had struck deep roots. They identified themselves with their countries and participated intensely in their affairs. In fact, the Jews of this area were among the most assimilated, if not the most assimilated, Jews anywhere. On the other hand, some sectors of the population challenged Jewish integration but did not interfere with it seriously.

That state of integration ended abruptly when the National Socialists seized the government and applied a policy of racial discrimination for which the Jews were not prepared. (A typical part of the new regime's discriminatory policy — though hardly comparable in importance to its criminal acts — was its order compelling all Jews to add the name Israel, and all Jewesses to add Sara, to their first names; in this context one might also refer to the order compelling Jews to wear a yellow badge.) The radical change from the status of full-fledged — and often honored — citizens of yesterday to that of pariahs of today came as a surprise and shock to most of them. About half of the Jews did not succeed in

³ Cahnmann, Werner J., *Jews from Germany in the United States*; book review. *Bulletin of Congregation Habonim* (New York) 17:4-6, March 1956.

⁴ Davie, p. 6.

⁵ "Austria". *Universal Jewish encyclopedia*. New York (c1948), 1:629.

leaving Central Europe in time; they were murdered by the National Socialists. The others escaped and were scattered literally to the four corners of the earth. Roughly 200,000 people — 140,000 from Germany, 60,000 from Austria and fewer than 3,000 German-speaking Jews from Czechoslovakia — found refuge in the United States of America.^{6,7}

Immigration opened an entirely new chapter in the lives of these persons. They had lost a very precious possession: a sense of belonging. For them integration in a new country was more than a practical necessity; it was, in fact, a psychological necessity. What were some of the conditions under which refugee integration in the United States took place, and what were some of the characteristics of the persons involved in this process?

In numbers, refugee immigration was an insignificant ripple compared to the tidal waves of immigrants that came to the shores of this country previously. Almost 9,000,000 persons migrated to the United States between 1901 and 1910, and after the restrictive quotas had been adopted, still more than 4,000,000 between 1921 and 1930.⁸

Refugee immigration differed from the other types of immigration also in other respects. Among earlier immigrants the peasant and the unskilled worker had predominated. Among the refugees, the predominant element was the middle class with correspondingly higher economic, educational and cultural standards. Also, the ability to leave Europe and to satisfy American admission requirements introduced selective factors not required several de-

⁶ For the immigration figures on Germany, see Grossmann, Kurt R., *What happened to the Jews?* In American Federation of Jews from Central Europe, Inc., *Ten years American Federation of Jews from Central Europe, Inc., 1941-1951*. New York, c1952, p. 47. For figures on Austria, see Essrig, Harry, *Jewish Americans*, in Brown, Francis J., *One America*. 3rd ed. New York, Prentice-Hall, 1952, p. 272.

⁷ According to the official Czechoslovak census for 1930, about one seventh of the 354,000 Czechoslovak Jews spoke German as their mother tongue. Even if the percentage should have been higher among the 3,298 Jewish immigrants from Czechoslovakia who arrived in the United States from 1938 to 1943, the German-speaking ones must have been fewer than 3,000. For a breakdown of Jewish and non-Jewish immigration from Czechoslovakia see Kisch, Guido, *In search of freedom*. London, Goldston, 1949, p. 292, footnote 115. For an analysis of the language factor in Czechoslovak Jewry see Blau, Bruno, *Nationality among Czechoslovak Jewry. Historia judaica*. (New York) 10: 147-154, October 1948.

⁸ Davie, p. 20

caedes before.⁹ Again, prior to the 1930's, the proportion of immigrants over 45 years of age was never as much as 10 percent, but with the refugees it was 16 percent from 1933 to 1937 and even 27 percent during the years 1939 to 1940. It is also noteworthy that the majority of the refugees were, or had been, married and that well over half, made up of older persons without regular occupation and of women and children, had no gainful occupation.¹⁰

Their reason for wanting to come to the United States was not a desire to better their material lot but the need to escape actual or anticipated persecution. The great mass had made a final break with the "old country" and accepted the United States as "our country".¹¹ Their desire to become assimilated, no less than their relatively small numbers, their wide geographical distribution and their educational and cultural background facilitated their adjustment greatly.¹²

The settlement of refugees all over the United States was encouraged by private relief organizations which foresaw greater economic opportunities in areas removed from the immigrant-preferred east coast and also wished to counteract the formation of anti-foreign trends of public opinion. Among the cities that saw the growth of fairly large refugee groups were New York (80,000 persons), Chicago (15,000), Los Angeles (8,000), Philadelphia (6,000), San Francisco (5,000), Boston (3,500), Detroit (2,000), Baltimore (2,000), Cleveland (2,000), St. Louis, Washington, D. C. and Newark (1,700 each).¹³ In Detroit, Boston, Chicago, New York and San Francisco refugees created their own religious institutions¹⁴ and also in Baltimore and Cleveland.¹⁵ In some areas, certain resi-

⁹ Handlin, Oscar and Mary F. Handlin, *The United States*, in *The positive contribution of immigrants*. Paris, UNESCO (1955), p. 32.

¹⁰ Kent, Donald P., *The refugee intellectual*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1953, p. 14.

¹¹ Davie, Maurice R. and Samuel Koenig, *Adjustment of refugees to American life*, in Carter, Hugh, *Reappraising our immigration policy*. Philadelphia, American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1949, p. 161.

¹² Davie, *Refugees in America*, p. 156.

¹³ Grossmann, Kurt R., *Die Einwanderung 1933-1955. Aufbau* (New York), April 15, 1955.

¹⁴ Hirshler, Eric E., ed. *Jews from Germany in the United States*. New York, Farrar Straus (c1955), p. 92.

¹⁵ Letter to the writer from Leo Baeck Institute, New York, January 30, 1956.

dential sections showed a heavy concentration of refugees as, for instance, the South Side in Chicago¹⁶ and Washington Heights in Manhattan, nicknamed "The Fourth Reich" by refugees.¹⁷

By a twist of fate the refugees came to the United States during a depression when countless Americans suffered severe economic distress. Even in prosperous times refugees could not have been absorbed without some lowering of their standard of living, but the depression multiplied their difficulties. If they were lucky enough to find work at all, it was inevitably poorly paid. The exigencies of a new life in a new world turned the ex-furniture-factory-owner into a messenger, the dentist into a door to door salesman, the lawyer into an elevator operator, the journalist into a night-shift man on the newsstand, the foreign language editor into a zipper cleaner or the antiquarian into a Good Humor ice cream man.¹⁸

Neither was the economic adjustment an easy one for those who were able to continue their old occupations or professions. Physicians and others preparing for examinations needed the support of friends, relatives or relief organizations to tide them over the difficult transition period. Women often proved more adaptable than men by accepting work as domestics and so contributing to the family budget.¹⁹ Even though the placement of the twelve Nobel Prize winners and the 103 men among the refugees outstanding enough to be listed in *Who's Who in America* created no insoluble problems, there were enough musicians, conductors, painters, photographers, writers, actors, producers, composers, teachers, and

¹⁶ Davie, p. 157.

¹⁷ Stock, Ernest, Washington Heights' "Fourth Reich". *Commentary* (New York) 13:581-588, June 1952.

¹⁸ For autobiographical accounts on the economic plight of refugees, written with a light touch, see Casparius, Edgar, *Odd jobs. Staatszeitung und Herold* (New York), *Sonntagsblatt*, November 1, 8, 15, 1953; also Warschauer, Ernst, *Memoirs of a refugee. Brooklyn Jewish Center Review* (Brooklyn N.Y.) 24:13-14, November 1942; id., *Homework for the professor, Brooklyn Jewish Center Review* 24:7, May 1943. Also see Behrendt, Ernst, *How do you like New York? Menorah journal* (New York) 28:99-103, 1940. For a breakdown of the occupational redistribution of 35 refugees coming from various backgrounds, and of 68 jurists, all living in the Los Angeles area, see Lourié, Anton, *Social adjustments of German Jewish refugees in Los Angeles*, Los Angeles, University of Southern California, 1953 (Master's thesis), p. 48, 88.

¹⁹ Roback, A. A., *Types of German émigrés I have met*. In his *Psychorama*. Cambridge, Mass., Sci-Art Publishers (1942), p. 249.

ex-government officials who could not easily find employment. The outlook was particularly bleak for elderly persons lacking flexibility to adjust to a country which did not look too kindly on any job seeker, native or foreign-born, of over forty years of age. Refugees also were not welcomed with open arms by employers who for a long time had practiced discrimination against both foreign-born Americans and native-born American Jews.²⁰ What with the opposition of competition-conscious professional groups, and the steady stream of propaganda emanating from National Socialist Germany, economic adjustment for many refugees became a back-breaking, all-consuming task.

However, the refugees included a number of persons who opened up new businesses, some of them founded with capital brought along from Europe, others started with almost no funds. To that extent they were a group that created employment. In general, refugees stepped into breaches left by the cessation of imports during the Second World War.²¹ Many refugee firms produced goods not previously manufactured in the United States, and introduced new processes, patents, secret formulas and new skills.^{22, 23}

It is also noteworthy that, owing to economic difficulties, the lesser known artists, writers and scholars directed their activities largely into the teaching field. They thus continued an almost traditional role inherited from earlier Jewish immigrants from Central Europe as "carriers and transfer agents of German scholarship and European culture".²⁴

It was this blending of the refugees' desire to adapt themselves to their new country, and their ability to provide certain services and goods, on the one hand, and America's capacity to absorb the newcomers and the products of their labor, on the other, which projected them into the mainstream of American life. In contrast to earlier immigrants refugees almost from the beginning made their living within the whole community and not within their own group. They offered their services to all and opened their shops and professional offices in the general business districts.²⁵

²⁰ Maass, Ernest, Why blame her? *Congress Weekly* (New York) 18:10-12, May 28, 1951.

²¹ Hirshler, p. 92.

²² Davie, p. 246.

²³ Rado, Emmy Crisler, Refugees at work. *Brooklyn Jewish Center Review* 23:5-6; June 1942. Also, Haber, William, The refugees in America. *Menorah journal* 28:205-213, 1940.

²⁴ Hirshler, p. 94.

²⁵ Davie, p. 46.

One of the factors promoting the refugees' economic integration was their knowledge of the English language. "It is safe to say that no other non-English-speaking immigrant group has learned English so rapidly and so well in a comparable period of time."²⁶ Most refugees had at least a rudimentary acquaintance with English; among the intellectuals, only slightly more than six percent indicated that they knew no English at the time of entry.²⁷

The group as a whole showed the greatest determination in mastering English — "an attitude characteristic of the refugees' approach to nearly all phases of American life".²⁸ Some refugees banned the German language from their homes in order to learn English that much faster;²⁹ others ostracized their mother tongue out of resentment against their persecutors who spoke the same language.³⁰ As with all immigrants, children of school and college age were the most influential propagandists for English, and in many families German conversations were frequently interspersed with English expressions.³¹

The English language was even more important in furthering the refugees' social and cultural integration. Only by knowing English could refugees communicate with their neighbors and absorb the spirit of their new country and of their times as fully as they did. Refugees had uncommonly extensive social contacts with Americans, and the proportion of those who established friendships was unusually high for an immigrant group.³² The smaller the town the refugees lived in, the more friends they made from outside their group, and the fewer were their refugee friends.³³ This is not to say that refugees had an easy time throughout making friends. Some of them were "very, very lonely" indeed, and the difficulties — as seen by refugee intellectuals — were 1) different cultural interests; 2) anti-foreign and anti-Semitic feelings as well as lack of funds for entertaining purposes, lack of time, language difficulties, and inability to meet persons of similar cultural interests.³⁴

²⁶ Davie, p. 166.

²⁷ Kent, p. 43.

²⁸ Kent, p. 49.

²⁹ Kent, p. 51.

³⁰ Roback, A. A., p. 248.

³¹ Maass, Ernest, *Ist Ihre Muttersprache Deutsch? Aufbau*, December 20, 1946. See also observations on the use by refugees of English, German, and the hybrid Anglo-German language "Emigranto" made by Lourié, Anton, p. 58–59.

³² Davie, p. 160.

³³ Kent, p. 71.

³⁴ Kent, p. 60–61.

By and large what has been called "the cultural migration" was successfully absorbed by America. Proof of this may be seen in the placement of so many refugees in positions of cultural influence, with little friction;³⁵ in the fact that so few of them chose to return to Central Europe after World War II;³⁶ and in the development and/or reinforcement of trends influenced by refugees.³⁷ Nevertheless, there were some failures, too — economically, socially and culturally. Some refugees suffered keenly from the lowering of status that life in America imposed on them. These persons tended to magnify their past achievements and to emphasize the good life they had once enjoyed — an approach not appreciated by Americans who normally take a person "as is" and are more concerned with the present than the past.³⁸

In other cases, Americans sensed an attitude of superiority in some refugees who held the preconceived notion that Europe was the sole source of an enlightenment that welled across the Atlantic along with the refugee.³⁹ That attitude was particularly resented by American Jews who thought such refugees to be ungrateful.⁴⁰

The offending attitudes, it has been pointed out, were based, in the last analysis, on behavior patterns prevalent in upper and middle class German society which most refugees were able to change in the process of adjustment.⁴¹

One factor in this adjustment was the founding, by refugees, of a number of organizations devoted to their special needs — religious, fraternal, charitable, cultural and political. In providing services, forums for discussions, media of communication and eco-

³⁵ Kent, p. 125.

³⁶ Neumann, Franz, *The social sciences. In The Cultural migration; the European scholar in America.* Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953, p. 18.

³⁷ Hirshler, p. 94-95.

³⁸ A joke that circulated among refugees illustrates the "former glory" approach of some of their fellow-refugees:

Three refugees in New York were reminiscing about Europe. "In Berlin," said the first, "I was president of the largest bank. Here I am a clerk in a warehouse." "In Vienna," said the second, "I conducted an orchestra of one hundred musicians. Here I am a music teacher in a girls' school." "So what?" said the third, "look at my poor little dachshund. In Europe he used to be a St. Bernard!"

For two different versions of this joke see Davie, p. 384.

³⁹ Kent, p. 122.

⁴⁰ Hirshler, p. 92.

⁴¹ Whyte, John, *American words and ways.* New York, Viking Press, 1943, p. VII, 129. See also Davie, p. 383-386.

conomic and legal assistance, these organizations helped refugees to obtain a foothold and to feel more secure in this country, in the companionship of individuals of similar origin and fate. Over the years, the change in the nature of their activities, the topics under discussion, and the increasing use of English, at the expense of German, in the conduct of their affairs reflected the absorption of the members in American life rather poignantly. In addition, refugees founded a weekly magazine, *Aufbau*, whose high standards attracted considerable attention.⁴² It had a circulation of 37,000 copies in 1951 and of 30,000 copies in 1957.

America's entry into the Second World War changed the situation of the refugees in several ways. Most of them had not been in the United States long enough to be able to acquire American citizenship — notwithstanding the fact that no other immigrant group had ever applied for their first naturalization papers as rapidly and as uniformly as the refugees. Accordingly they were classed technically as enemy aliens. This was a definite hardship for many of them. They were prevented from earning a living in many war industries and also had to submit to travel restrictions, finger printing, individual cases of denunciation and stringent investigations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.⁴³ But, simultaneously, the war dramatized the refugees' role as the first victims of Nazism and made their plight more understandable to many Americans.⁴⁴ Refugees made a direct contribution to the war effort both as members of the American armed forces, as scientists engaged on war projects, and as specialists serving with the armies of occupation. Within the United States increased economic activity facilitated the economic absorption of the newcomers.

When the Second World War had come to an end, the mass of the refugees had been absorbed into the mainstream of American life. Integration of most of them had been achieved. That is to say, the "gradual process by which immigrants became active participants in the economic, social, civic, cultural and spiritual affairs of America — the process by which they came to feel 'at home' and were Americanized to the point where we [native Americans] felt that they were no longer foreigners" had successfully run its

⁴² Grossmann, Kurt R., Why *Aufbau* is a success. *Congress Weekly* 18:10–11, February 5, 1951.

⁴³ Hirshler, p. 96.

⁴⁴ Handlin, Oscar and Mary F. Handlin, p. 35.

course.⁴⁵ America had opened her doors — not as widely as refugees and many others trying to save human lives had hoped — and had given shelter to thousands. The new country, its government, its people, and the specially created social service agencies, Jewish and Christian, had accepted these immigrants in the expectation that they would become useful citizens. And the refugees responded eagerly, knowing how much they owed to America and wanting to contribute to her development. In this interaction between country and refugees integration took place “with a speed and thoroughness unparalleled in the history of immigration”.⁴⁶

Name changing

As refugees changed into “New Americans”, they became aware of various integration problems. One of these was the name problem, or rather, the change-of-name problem. It was obviously a problem that engaged the attention of many of them, for in the course of the years several thousands changed their names.

There is nothing unique in this phenomenon because for a long time immigration to the United States has been accompanied by a tendency to change the immigrants’ names. The trend has been especially strong among persons — both actual immigrants and their descendants — whose names differed from Anglo-Saxon ones.⁴⁷ Sometimes such changes were undertaken not on the immigrant’s initiative but on the forceful suggestion of immigration officials unable to cope with complicated foreign patronymics.

A. Name changing and the law

So far as the laws of the United States are concerned, name changing is rather easy. “There has existed here no general hindrance to change of name, either gradual or abrupt . . . Instead of placing obstacles in the way of name changes, the tendency is to aid it. Thus as part of the naturalization proceeding, the law prov-

⁴⁵ White, Lyman Cromwell, *300,000 New Americans*. New York, Harper, (c1957), p. 23.

⁴⁶ Stock, Ernest, p. 581 (editorial note). See also the following comment, “. . . the actual adjustment which [the refugees] have achieved may be considered as the maximum adjustment possible for immigrants of their particular age, education, and length of stay in this country.” Lourié, Anton p. 4.

⁴⁷ Mencken, H. L., *The American language*. London, Cape, 1922, p. 328–329; also *Supplement II*, New York, Knopf, 1948, p. 405–462.

ides that the court, upon the petition of the applicant, may in its discretion make a decree changing the name of the alien, and his certificate of citizenship is issued to him in accordance therewith."⁴⁸

These laws are designed to help the individual find his niche in this country and to speed up his integration.⁴⁹ They recognize the fact that in some circumstances the integration of an individual can be enhanced by a change of name. Of course, name changes are not the only means to achieve integration but they are recognized as an important factor.⁵⁰

In the light of these attitudes and conditions, it is not surprising that name changes occurred also among refugees. The latter wished to integrate; such integration was favored by public opinion; name changing was one of the socially acceptable means of achieving integration; and facilities for changing were readily available. It is also understandable that the various studies on refugees contain

⁴⁸ Davie, *World immigration*. New York, MacMillan, 1949, p. 505.

⁴⁹ American name legislation has no counterpart in a country like Germany where name changing is difficult and no attempt is made to assimilate the foreigner as fast as possible. On the other hand, France after the Second World War based her new name legislation on another concept; she wished to remove all obstacles hindering the assimilation of foreign-born citizens-to-be, and a foreign-sounding name was one such obstacle. Applicants for French naturalization are now permitted to "gallicize" their names. (See United Nations. *Yearbook on human rights for 1950*, New York, 1952, p. 85). In Iceland, the authorities have gone even farther to achieve assimilation. Since 1952 aliens who are to be granted citizenship must adopt Icelandic names, in conformity with the law on names no. 54 of June 27, 1925. (Letter from the Embassy of Iceland, Washington, to the writer dated June 5, 1958. See also Fischer, Alfred Joachim, *Jews in Iceland*. *AJR Information* (London) 13:10, March 1958). The state of Israel, in turn, strongly favors adoption of Hebrew names by both old residents and new immigrants alike. Israelis are not only encouraged to take Hebrew names but in some cases put under strong pressure to do so. The aim is as much to further national cohesion as to wipe out reminiscences of Jewish life in the Diaspora.

⁵⁰ M. Sauvy lists 18 factors leading to integration. They include, among others, name changes, distribution among different occupations and social levels, friendship and romantic attachments to the local population, education, mass media of communication, play of children, military service, social success and the acquisition of property, mass production of standardized items such as clothes and food, and — a sense of humor. (See Barnard, William S. and Walter H. Bieringer, Report on UNESCO Conference of the Cultural Integration of Immigrants, Havana, 1956. *Interpreter releases* (New York) 33:167, May 21, 1956.

only a few, isolated references to name changing.⁵¹ This is so because more urgent problems — such as economic absorption, for example — demanded greater attention.

B. Sources of information on new names

Material for this study was derived from two main sources. First, for over a decade a search was conducted for changes that could be discovered by reading refugee publications, consulting membership lists of refugee organizations, interviewing their officials, talking to as many refugees as possible and by keeping both eyes open for any evidence suggesting that a name change had taken place. These sources yielded a list of some 1,000 changed names.

The second main source was a collection of 91 replies to a lengthy questionnaire on name changes sent to 300 refugees known to have adopted new surnames. This is a small number of replies and any statements based on them exclusively are so identified and should be understood to apply only to the sample survey.

C. Percentage of name changers

The percentage of refugees who changed their names in this country cannot be told with accuracy. It is highest among persons of advanced social status or aspirants to such status. For example, almost 15 percent of the 721 refugee intellectuals reached in Donald Kent's survey had changed their names in some way.⁵² In a comparable group, the American Jewish KC Fraternity whose 746 members were professionals or students in Germany, 14.3 percent had changed their patronymics.⁵³

Membership lists of non-academic refugee organizations show lower figures. Among the 1,000 members of Congregation Habonim in New York 6.7 percent have new surnames. A study of 2,000 refugee names undertaken by Rabbi Leo Baerwald, former spiritual head of Congregation Beth Hillel in New York, showed only

⁵¹ Kent, p. 152; Also Saenger, Gerhart, *Today's refugees, tomorrow's citizens*. New York. Harper, 1941, p. 121, 193.

⁵² Kent, p. 152. Kent's figures are based on questionnaires deposited with the Carl Schurz Foundation in Philadelphia. The Foundation considers the questionnaires confidential and did not grant permission to the writer to consult them. It is to be hoped that future name researchers will have access to them.

⁵³ *KC Address book*. New York, American Jewish KC Fraternity, 1953.

1.5 percent but, on the other hand, did not include such transliterations as Neumann-Newman, Stiefel-Steefel or Anfochs-Anfox. In Rabbi Baerwald's opinion, adding such names would not raise the total to more than 3 percent.⁵⁴

The correct figure may be assumed to lie somewhere between the highest and the lowest percentages indicated above. For example, the weekly *Aufbau*, which is probably more representative of all refugee strata all over the United States than any of the other sources mentioned, contains numerous proofs of name changes — in announcements of births, confirmations, engagements, marriages, anniversaries and deaths, business notices, success stories, search notices and the like. A spot check of five consecutive issues published in 1953, and five consecutive issues published in 1956 and covering 424 separate items showed that 4 percent of all listed names had been changed. Because it is not always evident how many individuals of the same family share the same new name, one may estimate that the final figure is somewhat above 4 percent.

D. Some characteristics of name changers

According to the sample survey, some of the characteristics of the name changers were as follows:⁵⁵

The largest number of name changers were between the ages of 25 and 29 at the time they immigrated. They were followed, in numerical strength, by age groups 40–44, 30–34, 35–39, under 19, 19–24, 45–49, and 50 and over, in that order. When all persons of over 45 years were lumped together, they equalled the age 25–29 class, that is, the biggest single 5-year group.

In their overwhelming majority, the name changers were married. Two thirds of the married couples had children, at one to three children per couple.

These persons spoke the following languages with their families: English only, German only, and both German and English, in that

⁵⁴ Letter from Rabbi Baerwald to the writer dated February 2, 1956.

⁵⁵ The importance of such generalizations should not be overestimated and should be read in conjunction with the following comment on a similar subject: "The average German émigré is supposed to be of such and such an age, to live on the second or third floor of an eight apartment building, to go once a week to the movies, and call on friends, etc. ad libitum. We might as well say that the average American eats three times a day, sleeps from 7 to 8 hours in 24, has a family, and listens to the radio at least once a day." Roback, p. 246.

order. A few spoke other languages such as Italian and French at home (a result of intermediate residence in other countries before coming to the United States). With outsiders, almost all of them spoke English, but a few spoke only German or German and English mixed.

More than half were members of Jewish religious organizations. Over a third indicated membership in Jewish organizations of a social-fraternal character. About one fifth belong to non-Jewish organizations of this type.

All had middle class occupations. There were physicians, dentists and optometrists, lawyers, accountants and statisticians, and such professional and technical workers as engineers, teachers, journalists, X-ray technicians and artists. The group included managers and administrators, that is, businessmen, executives, bankers, manufacturers and self-employed persons as well as clerical workers and salesmen.

Within the group, the number of persons holding salaried jobs in the United States was larger than it was when these people lived in Europe, and the number of independent positions held in the United States was smaller than it had been in the Old World. All persons who had immigrated as students had moved into gainful occupations.

E. Names changed most frequently

Certain surnames showed a greater affinity to change than others. That is to say, one single cognomen such as Cohn, for example, would be replaced very often by a different one, while some other cognomens were hardly ever changed. Cohn and Cohen appeared in a new form in the list more often than any other patronymic, contributing the following 32 variations: Brunswick, Cane, Carlton, Carsen, Clark, Clifton, Cole, Colland, Collin, Collins, Colten, Colwyn, Cone, Cord, Cornell, Corty, Coser, Cowan, Cryde, Cunard, Gerard, Hahn, Kay, Kelly, Kennedy, Linde, Marshall, Meeler, Riemer, Russel, Victor and Williams.

Other names frequently altered were Levi — there were 16 variations for Levi-Levy-Lewy — and Salomon — 12 variations. For example, Sadirni, Salm, Salten, Salton, Sandersen, Sands, Sanford, Santos, Seaman, Selton, Sloan and Stone were all derived from Salomon. At least seven variations were traced for each of the

following cognomens: Friedlaender, Goldstein, Israel, Katzenstein, Loewenstein, Rosenberg and Rosenthal. Loewenstein, for example, was replaced by Lawton, Lewis, Livingston, Lorris, Lowe, Lowens and Lownds. One must assume that each of these original surnames gave rise to still other transformations.

On the other hand, when similar names such as Rosenberg, Rosendorf, Rosenfeld, Rosenfelder, Rosenstein, Rosentiel, Rosenthal and Rosenzweig were considered as one name group and compared with other such groups, the order in the frequency of name changes was somewhat affected. In such an arrangement, the Rosen- group yielded more variations than any other unit. It was followed by the Cohn-Cohen-Kohn-Kahn group and the ones beginning with the syllables Levi-, Loewen-, Gold-, Gruen-, Hirsch-, Herz- und Wein-. (There were 38, 36, 23, 23, 17, 16, 15, 12 and 9 changes, respectively.) The groups beginning with Abraham-, Deutsch-, Licht-, Koenig-, Silber-, and Stein- accounted for seven variations each.

To illustrate: in the Hirsch- group names like Hirsch, Hirschberg, Hirschfeld, Hirschheimer, Hirschhorn, Hirschinger, Hirschkind, Hirschowitz, Hirschstein and Hirschweh were replaced by surnames like Field, Franklin, Hart, Harter, Harvey, Henley, Herford, Higgins, Hilton, Hirsey, Hirsh, Hixon, Hoffman and Stone.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Some of the names listed are among the most frequent surnames of German Jews. According to the records of the 10,623 Jewish war dead of the German armed forces in the First World War, the following appeared among the sixty leading names, in the order of frequency indicated:

<i>Names</i>		
No. 1	Levi-Levy-Lewy	280 names
No. 3	Cohn-Cohen	198 names
No. 8	Rosenthal	97 names
No. 16	Salomon	65 names
No. 19	Rosenberg	62 names
No. 24	Loewenstein	55 names
No. 47	Goldstein	31 names
No. 48	Friedlaender	30 names
No. 50	Israel	30 names
<i>Name Groups</i>		
No. 1	Cohn-Cohen-Kohn-Kahn, etc.	364 names
No. 2	Rosen-	311 names
No. 3	Levi-	292 names
No. 4	Gold-	173 names

(continued on p. 145)

F. Types of name changes

When these name changes are arranged systematically, they fall into the following categories:⁵⁷

1. Complete or partial translation

Names translated in their entirety include Braun-Brown, Froehlich-Gay, Freund-Friend, Fuchs-Fox, Goldschmidt-Goldsmith, Gutmann-Goodman, Gruen-Green, Hertz-Hart [the closest equivalent to Heart], Kaffe-Coffee, Neu-New, Neuhaus-Newhouse, Neumann-Newman, Reich-Rich, Rosenbaum-Rosetree, Silberschmidt-Silversmith, Schmidt-Smith, Schoenbach-Fairbrook, Schwarz-Ebon, Schwarzkopf-Blackhead, Weis-Wise, Weisberg-Whitehill, Wassermann-Waterman, Westfeld-Westfield.

In a partial translation, one half of the name – which may be the initial or the terminal one – is sacrificed and the remainder rendered into English. Preserving the first half, owing to the similarity of English and German, often preserves the old initial as well, as in Bischofswerder-Bishop, Braunschweiger-Brown, Creutzberger-Crossby, Hausschild-House, Koenigsberger-King, Lichtenstetter-Light, Muehlstock-Mills, Wasservogel-Waters, Wertheim-Worth, and Weissman-White. Retention of the terminal half turns Aufrichtig into Right and also produces Blumenthal-Dale, Futterweis-White, Himmelreich-Rich, Rosenberg-Hill, Seelenfreund-Friend, and Zuckerbaecker-Baker.

An interesting case is the name Schwarzschild, whose both halves each have a meaning. Both Black and Shield are derived from it. The Americanized surname Stone is also derived both from the initial syllable as in Steinberg and Steinberger, and from the terminal syllable as in Einstein, Goldstein, Hirschstein and Silberstein. And several different families originally called Dreschfeld, Freudfeld, Gruenfeld, Hirschfeld, Schoenfeld and Sternfeld respectively now share the name Field.

⁵⁶ (continued)

No. 5	Loewen-	125 names
No. 6	Hirsch-	101 names
No. 7	Wein-	63 names

Meyer-Erlach, Georg, Die 60 häufigsten jüdischen Familiennamen. *Jüdische Familienforschung – Mitteilungen* (Berlin) 8:500–503, Dezember 1932.

⁵⁷ The classification used here follows the terminology, wherever applicable, employed by James E. Alatis in his, *The Americanization of Greek names*, *Names* (Berkeley, Calif.) 3:137–156, September 1955.

2. *Phonetic respelling*

In this instance, some letters of the old name are replaced by others in an effort to make the spelling conform to English phonetics: Anfochs-Anfox, Klyff-Clive, Krehan-Crayon (a designer!), Schaul-Shawl, Stiefel-Steefel, Treu-Troy, Veis-Vise, and Weinschenk Weinshank. In other cases, the name as respelled reflects the American pronunciation of the old name, as in Preuss-Pruce, Scheur-Shewer, or Treumann-Truman.

3. *Shortening*

In most cases, the new names are shorter than the original ones. This reduction of letters is accomplished in a number of ways.

a) *Apocope* (dropping of end syllable or letters)

Among the syllables eliminated are -berger, -burger, -feld, -fleck, -finger, -heim, -heimer, -hirsch, -holz, -kamm, -kopf, -lein, -litz, -ki, -mann, -reich, -ski, -stein, -stern, -stueeck, -thal, -witz and many more. The shortened names appear in such forms as Argowitz-Argo, Benjamin-Ben, Bielschowsky-Biel, Bodenheimer-Boden, Bukofzer-Buko, Dobrowolsky-Dobrow, Duehrenheimer-Duehren, Eichtersheimer-Eichter, Frankenstein-Franken, Gundelfinger-Gundel, Gundersheim-Gunders, Heinzelmann-Heinz, Heysermann-Heys, Introgliator-Intro, Jutrosinski-Jutro, Kosterlitz-Koster, Litmanowitz-Litman, Markbreiter-Mark, Morgenstern-Morgen, Olitzki-Oli, Pollatschek-Pollat, Polajewski-Pola, Priebatsch-Priebat, Reingenheim-Rein, Rothhirsch-Roth, Stargardter-Star, Steinfeldstein, Sternreich-Stern, Schenkolewski-Schenk, Wilmersdoerfer-Wilmers, Winterberger-Winter.

Some name changers go one step further, that is, they apply phonetic respelling to the remaining name element, adding, subtracting or substituting letters, as the case may be. Tockuss (of Hebrew origin, meaning small of the back) becomes Tuck, Kaminski-Cummins, Doerzbacher-Dorzback, Tikotzki-Tick, and Zielenziger-Zeelens. There is Bauernfreund-Barr, Dukatenzeiler-Ducat, Friedlaender-Freed, Hirschheimer-Hirst, Orchudesch-Orr, Pintus-Pine and, through transposition, Hamburger-Burgham.

b) *Apharæsis* (dropping of initial syllable or letters)

Initial syllables are eliminated less frequently than terminal ones, perhaps because it entails, among other things, a change of initial. Changes of this sort are Deutschland-Land, Dingfelder-

Felder, Eichenbronner-Bronner, Eichtersheimer-Heimer, Eisenkraemer-Kramer, Feuchtwanger-Wanger, Friedlaender-Lander, Goldschmidt-Schmidt, Gunzenhaeuser-Hauser, Herzberg-Berg, Isselbacher-Bacher, Juliusburger-Burger, Kleimenhagen-Hagen, Nathansen-Hansen, Nathanson-Son, Rosenbaum-Baum, Rosenberg-Berg, Rothschild-Child, Spiegelthall-Hall, Wuerzweiler-Weiler and Zeilberger-Berger. Phonetic respelling is found among these "decapitated" names, too: Silberstein-Steen and Zuckermann-Kerman are two examples.

Here again, as in the case of some names partially translated, the elimination of the initial syllable gives a common Americanized surname to different families not related to each other. Heimer, for example, is the new name of both the former Eichtersheimer and Vorchheimer families, Stein of the former Katzensteins and Rothsteins, and Wald of the former Eichenwalds, Gruenwalds, and Schoenwalds. And, as in the case of the name Schwarzschild quoted above, two entirely different names can be carved out by different families from one original: Both Eichters and Heimer are taken from Eichtersheimer, and both Gundel and Finger are shortened versions of Gundelfinger.

Apharaesis can create a new given name and a new surname with one stroke: One Fritz Josephsthal is now Joseph Thal, and Julius Joachimsthal has changed to Julius Joachim Stahl. Combined with apocope, apharaesis turns Herzberger into Berg. When applied in conjunction with transposition and phonetic respelling, a name like Untermeyer, via Rmeyer-Reymer, evolves into Reimer.

c) *Syncope* (dropping of middle syllable or individual letters)

In this case, all discarded letters may be connected with each other. For example, cutting out the letters -faen- transforms Anfaenger into Anger, or dropping -chhei- shortens Forchheimer to Former. Of similar descent are Harburger-Harber, Heldenmuth-Helmuth, Herzfeld-Hereld, Jacobson-Jason, Leipziger-Leir, Lippmann-Linn, Nuernberg-Nunberg, Pniower-Power, Riesenfeld-Ried, Rossheimer-Rossmer, Wechselmann-Welman. In other cases, however, the discarded letters are cut out here and there wherever it suits the individual. Such names are Heilborn-Hilbon, Idstein-Isten, Joelsohn-Jolson, Loewengardt-Logart, Marmorstein-Martin, Oesterreicher-Ostier, Rosenstein-Rosten, or Rosenzweig-Roswig.

Syncope is sometimes followed by further elimination – or addition of letters. These steps lead, for instance, from Herzberg via Herberg to Herber, from Brinitzer via Briner to Brinner, or from Horowitz to Howitt. Also, a succession of apocope and syncope, as in Kastanienbaum-Kastanien-Kasten, or Katzenellenbogen-Kellen is not unusual. The same principle prevails in such modifications as Appelbaum-Apel, Bodlaender-Bolan, Cariewski-Carew, Danielsohn-Danson, Friedlaender-Frelan, Grabowski-Graw, Halberstaedter-Halstad, Lachmanski-Lans, Ladenburger-Lane, Landsberger-Lane, Mischkowski-Mishow, Orljansky-Orlan, Rosendorf-Roen, Rosenstein-Ross, and Twardowicz-Tardov.⁵⁸

When followed by phonetic respelling, syncope produces a change from Schirokauer (via Schirer) to Shearer, Neumetzger to Noymer, Schnaittacher to Snyder, Schaumberger to Shomberg, Sieradz to Sears, Theilheimer to Tyler, and Weinmann to Wyman. Syncope and partial translation transform Lilienfeld into Linfield.

Apharæsis, apocope and syncope cause the following change: Isaaksohn-Saaksohn-Saaks-Saks. One Isaaksohn family goes one step further, adopting the name Saxon. The name Czwikklitzer has been changed through apharesis (Wikklitzer), syncope (Wikler) and respelling into Wickler.

4. *Transposition*

Here the new name consists of all its original letters whose sequence, however, has been altered in some way, as in the name Arno derived from Aron, or Learsy derived (with a change from -i- to -y-) from Israel.

5. *Anglicization*

Any name change which gives the new surname the appearance of an Anglo-Saxon word or name might be termed Anglicization. Such surnames, for instance, are Pniower-Power or Stargardter-Star, each mentioned earlier as examples of syncope and apocope.

⁵⁸ The need for careful procedure in tracing name changes was brought home to the writer when he spotted the firm name of Bamberger and Harand in Forest Hills, New York. Knowing Mr. Bamberger to be a refugee from Vienna, the writer surmised that Harand might be another refugee whose name had been syncopated from Haberland. As it turned out, some members of the long-established aristocratic Harand family had been forced by the Nazis to flee Austria, but the name was an old one.

Of a similar nature are names in which one letter is replaced by another, as in Plaut-Plant, Caro-Carr, or Juda-Judd. In these cases, the new name is built on the old one, and there remains a close linguistic relationship between the two.

In this paper, however, Anglicization is above all meant to refer to surname which appear to be of Anglo-Saxon origin yet have no other visible link with the old patronymic than one or two identical initial letters. Names of this kind are Aufricht-Austin, Bettelheim-Bentley, Epstein-Eden, and Epstein-Easton. Also Foeldoesch-Fulton, Goldarbeiter-Goddard, Heinemann-Hart, Isaac-Irving (note that among American Jews Irving often replaces Isaac and also Israel as a first name), Jaschkowitz-Jackson, Katzenstein-Kerr, Levysohn-Lansing, Liebenstein-Lipton, Maschkowsky-Marcy, Neugarten-Nash, Oppenheim-Ogden, Podzaharadsky-Potter (there is also a Potter derived from Popper), Risel-Rice, Schulhof-Sutton, and Weichselbaum-Wallace. Another group of names in this category does preserve the first syllable but replaces the end syllable with one of Anglo-Saxon origin. Examples are Ansbacher-Ansley, Bertheim-Berton, Dryfuss-Dryden, Elsner-Elton, Finkelstein-Finley, Landsberger-Landis, Mittwoch-Mitford, Newratzki-Newton, Redlich-Redly, Silberstein-Silton, and Witkowski-Witton.

The conscious effort to Anglicize an Old-World name is still more visible when even the old initial is dropped and no trace whatsoever of the preceding cognomen remains, as in Aschenberg-Parker, Eckstein-Atkins, Goebel-Richmond, Guckenheimer-Holmes, Israelsky-Jonson, Levi-Hamilton, Meyer-Clifford, Nathan-Kenton, Steinberg-Cromwell, and Weinberg-Staple.

Anglicized cognomens, as a rule, are shorter than their antecedents. Exceptions like Cohn-Cunard, Hertz-Hartley, Herz-Harrison, Kahn-Kennedy, Katz-Katon, Marx-Maxton, or Totzek-Torrington simply confirm the rule.

6. *Personal background names*

Here the given name replaces the family name entirely. For instance, Lutz Rosenthal drops Rosenthal and assumes the name Lutz. Messrs. Gerhard Cohn, Harold Isaac and Heinz Muensterberger are now Mr. Gerard, Mr. Harold and Mr. Hines respectively. Miss Ingeborg Katz is now Miss Inge Borg (a parallel to the name

change from Fritz Josephsthal to Joseph Thal quote above). A writer and illustrator of children's books, Julius Potzernheim, by blending the initials of his first name and his surname, assumes the cognomen Jupō; he also substitutes a new first name and is now Frank Jupō.

Nicknames are also used. Herr Loewi was nicknamed "Ell" by his friends in Vienna, and now bears the name Ell legally.

7. *Names of female relatives*

Other background names are derived from the female members of the family, particularly wives and mothers. Such a switch entails a change from Cohn to Hahn, and Cohn to Marshall, Isakowicz to Weingarten, Lemberg to Bing, Levi to Werner, or Marcus to Dahl.

8. *Transmigration names*

In this category, names are based on individual experiences of refugees during transmigration, that is, after emigration from Central Europe but before immigration to the United States. For example, persons living in France for a while assumed French names there because, as one of them put it, "they provided a certain protection under the Vichy regime". Falk-Faure, Muehlstein-Multin, and Schwarz-Noir originated in this manner. One family which had been using a French translation of its name Buttermilch (beurre-lait) submitted that translation to phonetic respelling — hence Burlay. In a similar way, the change from Feuereisen to Ferro indicates some association with things Italian in the life of one individual.

Some English names rest on comparable foundations. They are often borne by transmigrants who spent the war years in the British armed forces. Such refugees were encouraged by the British War Office to assume English names so that the Germans would not know their origin in case of capture. In fact, the War Office issued a special Order to this effect.⁵⁹ Names like Cohen-Clayton, Fuchs-Fox Schwarzenberger-Sinclair and many others are traceable thereto.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ The British Army Council Instruction containing this Order is still a restricted document and not available to the public (Letter to the writer from the British War Office dated March 2, 1956).

⁶⁰ For a discussion of changed names of Jewish refugees in Great Britain, see Friedenthal, Herbert, *Von Moses zu Montgomery; jüdische Flüchtlingsschicksale in England. Jedioth hadashoth* (Tel Aviv), April 13, 1949. The author subsequently changed his name, too. See Freedon, Herbert, *Britain's new citizens*.

9. *Miscellaneous*

Many name changes will remain obscure as long as the individuals concerned do not reveal their origin. Why, for instance, should one Schwarzkopf change to White? Did he consider his old name too long and did he dislike any of the obvious means of changing it such as Schwarz, Kopf, Black and so on? At any rate, some of his friends commented on his choice as follows: "First ge dropped his head (-kopf); then he changed his color (Schwarz-)."

G. "Models" for new names

A number of persons reached in the sample survey indicated that the telephone book — the proverbial old source of inspiration for a new name — still fulfilled that function. Respondents referred specifically to the telephone directories of Cleveland, London, New York and San Francisco. In London, for example, a family about to embark for America could not make up their minds whether the name-to-be should be spelled Jarret or Jarrett. "We looked through the London telephone book, and when we saw that most Jarretts lived in good residential areas we settled for Jarrett."

In New York, two friends in search of a name, both having the surname Epstein, went to a drugstore together and leafed through the telephone directory. "My friend decided on Eaton; I decided on Easton."

In one case, a soldier adopted the name of a river in whose vicinity he was stationed during the war. Another refugee's source of inspiration was the name of a New York department store. In a third case a man noticed the name of the addressee on a shipping crate, liked it, and made it his own. Another person adopted the name of a character in a movie. Then again the name Ronalds which appeared in a *New York Times* obituary caught the fancy of one refugee who adopted the modified form Ronald.

H. Reflections on choosing the "right" name

Some individuals took pains to select the "right" name — a name that fitted their personal requirements and the conditions of the

Congress weekly 23:8-9, November 19, 1956. An additional name change in England has some interesting ramifications. Mr. Ross, a British army officer during the war, was the son of the German-born Zionist Felix Rosenblueth, Israel's first Minister of Justice who became known under his new name of Pinchas Rosen (Rosen, Hebrew word for "Count").

world around them. The sample survey contained comments such as "The Jewish character of our name was carefully preserved", and "A new name like Franklin would have been very close to our old family name. We rejected it, however, because we considered it 'too American' — not in keeping with our background." In a similar vein one refugee wrote, "When I immigrated, my knowledge of English was rather limited and I felt that I should not assume an English-sounding name". The same thought motivated a professional man who commented, "I did not change to a typically Anglo-Saxon name at the time because I did not speak English well. Today, having a good knowledge of the language, I would perhaps change to a more English name, especially in consideration of my son."

I. Evolution of some names

Each of the respondents in the sample survey indicated that he had picked out one single name, without trying out other name alternatives, and had stuck to it. In contrast, some persons not connected with the survey revealed that occasionally a "name evolution" takes place.

A secretary who had been put under pressure by her employer, a lawyer, to drop her Jewish name ("He did not want a Jewish name to appear so often on legal documents to be witnessed") tentatively decided to adopt Gordon instead. "Then I was told that I would probably be asked, 'What was your name before?' — because so many people had changed to Gordon. So I looked through the telephone book and picked Gilbert."

Mr. Sochaczewer, for example, as a transmigrant in Lisbon, often signed telegrams "Sochawer" because the Portuguese cable clerks used to manhandle the original. On arrival in New York, he contracted the name to Sawyer and was disappointed to have it pronounced Sauer or Sawyer. In the end, he adopted Sawyer.

In another instance, Heinz Pollak from Berlin was happy to discover that he needed to drop but two letters in order to bear the name of an American President: Polk. He did — but in the factory where he was then employed the workers promptly nicknamed him Pork. Heinz, by this time Henry, changed again and assumed the name of Pons. "Now everybody calls me Lily," he complained (an allusion to Lily Pons, the opera singer).

J. New names in the same family

Usually, the survey showed, a name change affected a whole family and its various members and not one individual alone. That is to say, in most cases not only the parents and minor children switched to a new surname, but adult children, brothers, unmarried sisters and even more distant relatives did likewise. Occasionally two related families whose original names had been entirely different all adopted the same new name. The impetus often came from the member of the family who arrived first in this country and changed his name. Nevertheless, name change behavior within the family did not always follow this pattern, old and new surnames continuing to live side by side. Children were usually more prone to acclimatize the family name than their parents but the reverse case is also on record. For example, in the Schoenbach family the father did and the son did not alter the name, and Fairbrook and Schoenbach appear as the names of the joint authors of Alvin James Fairbrook's book, *How to become a successful stamp dealer*. (Portland, Me., Severn-Wylie-Jewett Co., 1948).

Also on record are cases of changed names of brothers, and of brothers and sisters, in which each individual drops the old name and each adopts an entirely different one. For example, the new name of one of two brothers is Kent, that of the other Wells, both surnames deriving from Katzenstein. In a family named Weinstein, one brother bore the name of Westing, the other that of Weston. In one Epstein family, the new surname of one brother was Evans, of the second Evan, and of the third Edwards. Two brothers Kosterlitz renamed themselves Koster and Martin respectively. Mr. Kutner and Mr. Kay were also brothers, originally named Kutnewsky, and two brothers Kaminski gave themselves the names Kamins and Cummins respectively. An opera singer well known in Europe and America, Irene Jessner, and her brother by the name of Jarvis, both derived their names from Jellinek.

Without knowing the reasons why members of the same family living in the same country of refuge chose different surnames, their individual name preferences can hardly be explained. However, when brothers and sisters emigrated to different countries — and physical separation of families was a characteristic feature of the refugee migration — the adoption by each of a different surname is less of an enigma. Geographical distance, lack of communication,

particularly in wartime, and loss of contact made co-ordination of name changes more difficult. Among the cases on record of brothers living in different countries and adopting different surnames is the one of a Mr. Freund who emigrated to England and chose the name French there, while his brother, who went to the United States, took the name Dennis. Also, in a family named Halberstaedter one brother and his sister came to the United States where the brother preserved the name and the sister chose Halstad instead; their brother, who had gone to England, assumed the name Hulbert.

To some extent local, or rather national conditions accounted for the adoption of different names by members of the same family. In such cases, the common family name was "sacrificed" to the mores of the new country. That is to say, each name changer tried to select a name which was "acceptable" or easy to spell or pronounce in his particular country. For example, one brother in a family named Marschütz emigrated to France and assumed the surname Marchuetz, while his two brothers who came to the United States selected Marshall. Again, in Israel which favors the adoption of Hebrew names (see above, footnote 49), one individual by the name of Rosenfelder took the new name Vered (Hebrew for "rose"), while his brother in the United States chose the "Anglicized" form Rost. Finally, there was a case where one brother who went to England selected the name Fry, while his brother who came to the United States wished to stress his identification with the Jewish people and chose the name Yadede (Hebrew for "friend") — the original of both surnames being Freund.⁶¹

K. First-name changes

Often the first name was changed together with the family name, and most readily so when there was a very small difference between the German and the equivalent English given name. It was necessary to eliminate, add or substitute only one single letter to make such changes as Erich-Eric, Ernst-Ernest, Hermann-Herman, Franz-Frank, Eugen-Eugene, Georg-George, Günther-Gunter, and

⁶¹ In view of so much diversity of names in certain families it seems worth while mentioning that uniform name changes in different countries have also been recorded. For example, three brothers living in England, the United States and Brazil respectively, all adopted Koby in place of Kobylinski.

Theodor-Theodore. A little more of a change was required with names like Kurt (Curt)-Curtis, Friedrich-Frederick, Fritz-Fred, Hans-John, Gerhard-Gerald, Wilhelm-William and so on. In the third category, the individual based his choice on some similarity between an existing "American" forename and his original one, as in Max-Maxwell or Siegfried-Fred. Still others looked for names based on no other similarity than an identical initial: Bodo-Bernard, Heinz-Howard, Horst-Harold, Kurt-Kenneth. In the fifth category, apparently entirely unrelated names came to the fore, like Gerhard-Fred, Hans-Justin, Heinz-Robert or Kurt-Jack. Sometimes what seemed to be an entirely different name was actually one of several given names — but not the first — which the individual had received at birth. For example, one Hans Herbert X. changed to Herbert Hans X., and one Otto Jakob Y. to Jack Y.

Even when first names were changed, the original was not always completely eliminated. They sometimes survived as middle initials, as when Heinz became John H., or Rudolf adopted Jack R.

The one first name which appeared in more transformations than any other given name was Hans. Such variations included Hanford, Haynes (selected by a copy writer), Henry, Howard, John and Justin. And yet, quite a few people preserved Hans intact, and a few others did not change Curt or Kurt at all. Other unchanged first names were Alfred, Arthur, Bruno, Edwin, Erwin, Herbert, Joseph, Julius, Leo, Ludwig, Lothar, Manfred, Martin, Oscar, Paul, Philip, Peter and Walter. Most of these are as "American" as they come and the lack of change does not require an explanation. As for the others, one might assume that the bearers thought too highly of their first names or did not consider them sufficiently irksome to modify them.

Parenthetically it should be noted that first names were changed not only by refugees who adopted new surnames, but also by those who kept their family names. In fact, one refugee organization, the American Jewish KC Fraternity mentioned above (footnote 53), could be divided into two name groups of almost equal numerical strength: persons in the first group had changed only their first names; those in the second group had altered their surnames (some without and some with additional change of given name). These "change-the-first-name-only" individuals also resorted to substitutions such as Gerhard-Jerry and Gerhard-Gary, Guenther-Gene,

Heimer-Harold, Hellmuth-Hale, and the like. Is it too far-fetched to suppose that such changes were, at least in part, prompted by the great use of first names in this country, which is much more customary here than in Europe and renders the possession of a given name that is pleasant to the bearer of greater importance?

L. Reasons for name changing

According to the sample survey, more than one-fourth of the individuals reached had decided to change their names even before they came to this country. The reasons they gave for this decision were practically the same as those given by the majority which made the same decision only after immigration. What were those reasons?⁶²

Listed according to frequency in the sample survey, name changes were prompted by 1) difficulties of spelling and pronunciation; 2) a desire to break with the past; 3) anticipation of anti-Semitism in the United States; 4) the need, as an American soldier, to mislead the Germans, should the individual be captured; 5) the wish to have the same adopted surname as an earlier immigrant from the same family; 6) a desire to avoid ridicule; 7) the wish to protect oneself and also relatives in German-controlled countries; and 8) miscellaneous reasons.

The following comments on these reasons are based both on the statements made in the sample survey and on information from various sources.

1. *Difficulties of spelling and pronunciation*

It is a fact that many Americans have a hard time spelling and pronouncing non-English names unless, for some reason, they are well known. As Mencken has shown, non-English immigrants have

⁶² The question might be raised whether the replies received, particularly those concerning reasons for a name change, can all be taken at face value. For instance, an individual might not wish to "admit" that he was afraid of anti-Semitism and might prefer to state that his name was often misspelled. This possibility exists but it is unlikely that in the case of the sample survey it is of numerical importance. For one thing, the recipients of the questionnaire were under no obligation to reply. Also, in order to obtain frank statements and to avoid any embarrassment for the respondents, the latter were encouraged to send anonymous replies, if they so desired. The fact that many respondents, replying both under their full names and anonymously, wrote that they acted in anticipation of anti-Semitism indicates at the very least that many respondents were willing to "admit" that fear.

changed their names on a large scale, and only one-third of present-day Americans have English surnames by virtue of "English blood" in the male line.⁶³ Refugees also tried to avoid those difficulties. Some of them changed not only such involved surnames as Dzialoszinsky (now Dallos) but also fairly simple ones like Schalscha for example, because of complications of daily life. (Schalscha, to the annoyance of the bearer, was frequently mispronounced Skalka and eventually was spelled Shalsha).

Accident sometimes plays its part. One immigrant at first settled in the South. When the people around him had too much trouble with his name, he transformed Langenbach into Lang. Later he resettled in the Midwest where many Americans of German descent live and discovered that Langenbach would not have given him any trouble there.

On the other hand, a person by the name of Treuenfels reported that over the years he and his children had collected 39 misspellings of their name – but they kept it, anyhow. Thus the decision to change a name frequently misspelled seemed to depend to a large extent on circumstances and individual preferences.⁶⁴

2. *Desire to break with the past*

In the history of the Jews, there are few parallels of the disillusionment which overcame the Jews of Central Europe when their countries were taken over by the National Socialists. Some of them showed their feelings when they banned the German language from their homes. Others discarded the decorations which a grateful Fatherland had bestowed on them for military services in the First World War.⁶⁵ A third group reacted in a manner describe by an official of a prominent refugee social service organization: "At the end of 1938 I was released from the Dachau concentration camp and shortly afterwards came to the United States. I was so fed up with Germany that I wanted to drop my German

⁶³ Mencken, H. L., *The American language; Supplement II*. New York, Knopf, 1948, p. 402, 409.

⁶⁴ The remark made by an elderly Irishman who had been in the States since his boyhood illustrates the American habit of simplifying names. He spotted the name Maass and commented, "What do you need all those letters for? Why don't you change it to Mas?"

⁶⁵ Grossmann, Kurt R., In memoriam Herbert S. Schoenfeldt. *Aufbau*, July 6, 1956.

name, which was very easy to translate into English. But my son objected. 'I am proud of our name,' he said. 'It is well known. Don't give it up!' And so I kept my name."

But there were others to whom their own names had become anathema, and they did change them, in the spirit of one whose widow wrote, "My husband thought that our name was too German and was disgusted with it."

In addition, it was unpleasant for some refugees to bear German names at a time when their adopted new country was at war with Germany. In all probability it was also dislike of things German which led a number of refugees whose name contained the word "deutsch" to transform them, as in Deutsch changed to Dayton, Dennis, Dewton, Dexter and Dunn respectively, and in Deutschland changed to Land.

One such person, a manufacturer by the name of Deutsch who came to the United States from the Czechoslovak area inhabited by the Sudetendeutsche and annexed by Germany, assumed the surname Dayton. Hearing of this change, Jan Masaryk, Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia, quipped, "I understand. Mr. Deutsch is now Mr. Su-Dayton-Deutsch!"

3. *Anticipation of anti-Semitism in the United States*

It was known to many refugees that in the United States, the very country which became a haven for thousands of them, some forms of anti-Semitism existed. Consequently some of them decided to drop their Jewish family names in advance of actual immigration (see above, p. 156). More numerous were those who became aware of anti-Semitism after they landed in this country. Frequently they were advised by relatives, friends and employers (both Jewish and Gentile) to escape that handicap by assuming non-Jewish surnames. Some employers seemed to be motivated by fear that an employee with a Jewish name would be detrimental to their businesses, while other persons felt they were merely giving sound advice. As described by respondents to the sample survey, suggestions were made to them as follows:

"As long as you keep that Polish-Jewish name of yours, you won't get anywhere," said my cousin, "and unless you change it, I won't do a thing for you." (This respondent added, "I did change my name, but even so my cousin didn't help me.")

— “At the time I was a travelling salesman, my Jewish boss asked me to change my name because it sounded Jewish. As I had thought of a name change before, I decided to go through with it.”

— “I had worked for a number of years in a Wall Street brokerage firm. One day my boss called me to his office and said, ‘We have given you a promotion. And, by the way, have you ever thought of changing your name?’ ‘No, I haven’t;’ I said, ‘the name has been in the family for a long time and I am satisfied with it.’ He replied, ‘Yes, I understand, but the people you deal with need not know any more about you than the business requires. Think it over.’ And so I changed from . . . to . . .”

In a case not connected with the sample survey a refugee by the name of Salomon applied for an opening as church organist. The minister promised his help but suggested also a change of name. Salomon thereupon changed to Stone — but failed to obtain the position.

It also happened that a philanthropist deliberately planned name changes for refugees who had not even arrived in the United States. This person, organizer of a Jewish agricultural school in the South, without ever having seen the young farmers-to-be who were scheduled to join him, went over the list of their names. He drew up suggestions for “more American” names and presented them to the students upon their arrival. Some refused, some accepted. Among the latter, one Israelski changed to Irving, and one Dzubas to Durban.

Comment by one respondent was rather apologetic: “When I came to the United States in 1937 I was still suffering from my experiences in Germany. I was confused. Father Coughlin and his Social Justice Movement and the German American Bund were all very active. American Jews were quite disturbed. It was at that time that I opened my first store and wanted to put my name, which is quite Jewish, on the roof in big letters. I changed it at that moment.”

Apart from the sample survey, there is other evidence that some refugee name changers were concerned about anti-Semitism. For example, how else can one explain that some refugees changed names like Baruch, Brandeis and Einstein (now Barr, Brandon and Stone respectively) — respected names of famous personalities who, however, were prominently identified as Jews? Perhaps such

new names as Franks and Frankford, derived from another famous surname, Frankfurter, do not belong in the same class because part of the name root is still visible — yet one wonders why the bearers did not preserve so distinguished a cognomen.

4. *Protection in World War II*

During the Second World War, American military authorities often encouraged refugees in the armed forces to change their names, an encouragement also given by British military authorities to refugees in their armed forces (see above, p. 150). Its purpose was to prevent the Germans from meting out special punishment to refugees who might fall into their hands as prisoners of war. Several refugees reached in the survey stated that they were glad to have this additional measure of protection but were later disappointed to find that, in order to avoid many complications, they could not discard such surnames when the war had ended.

5. *Name of earlier immigrant in the family*

For persons having close family relationships it was natural to consider a change of name if the first immigrant had modified his. The first immigrant — who not infrequently had left Europe in the pre-Hitler era — could be assumed to know what was the “right” thing to do in this country. A common name reinforced the common bond. Occasionally the first arrival even insisted on a name change, either because he sincerely believed that he was doing his relative a favor, or because he was resentful of the re-appearance of the discarded surname.

6. *Objectionable surnames*

For Jewish refugees to bear a name resembling that of prominent National Socialists was often an absurdity. A change, for example, from Goebel (so reminiscent of Goebbels) to Richmond eliminated that incongruity.⁶⁶ Other names, entirely unpolitical, had different unpleasant connotations — such as Frankenstein. There were also certain Jewish names which did not sit well on their bearers because in the past the names had been misused to ridicule them.

⁶⁶ Similar name changes such as from Himlar to Hamilton, Fuehrer to Scheer, and Heitler to Hilton are reported by Helen P. Wulbern in *The how and why of name-changing*. *American Mercury* (New York) 64:718, June 1947. See also Adamic, Louis, *What's your name?* New York, Harper, c1942, p. 108.

Finally, changes of such names as Dambitsch (now Danby) hardly need an explanation.

7. *Political work*

Some refugees who had done political work at home changed their names in order to be able to continue that work abroad. Their aim was to protect both themselves and relatives at home who were subject to National Socialist reprisals. These persons did not always assume a new name with the intention of keeping it permanently, and a few of them reverted to their family names when circumstances permitted.⁶⁷

8. *Miscellaneous reasons*

Finally, there was dissatisfaction with the old name based on a variety of reasons. For example, a prospective bride insisted that her future husband change his name because she considered it ridiculous: the old name, translated into English, signified Green Woodpecker. Or there were some young refugees who felt a strong urge to emphasize their Jewish background — of which Nazism had made them particularly conscious — and adopted Hebrew names. New surnames like Yadede (meaning “friend”) derived from Freund, and Gilead, which replaced Goldmann, originated in this manner. “After desiding to abandon Markowitsch, I chose Ben-Ami (“son of my people”) because I wanted a name that was meaningful,” reported one individual.

M. “Co-Existence” of old and new names

Usually the birth of a new surname spells the death of the old one. However, “co-existence” cannot always be avoided. For example, physicians are required by law to display their diplomas in their offices. If a physician had changed his name in this country but his diploma carried his old surname, the two names continued to exist side by side. Occasionally a professional or a business man considered it an advantage to be listed in the telephone book under both the old and the new names. (For similar, practical reasons some refugees who changed only their first names also had double

⁶⁷ Among those who protected themselves with an assumed name was the writer Kurt R. Grossmann who at one time wrote under the names of Felix Burger and Kurt Randloff. See Tartakower, Arieh and Kurt R. Grossmann, *The Jewish refugee*. New York, Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1944, p. 604, 611.

listings, one with the "European" and one with the "American" first name). Most frequently, however, the old name came to life again when refugees met, exchanged information, relived common experiences and revived old memories. One of the persons reached in the sample survey stated, "I use the old name sometimes to identify myself as my father's son". Another one wrote, "Friends usually call me by my old name".

The fact that an individual had attracted the attention of the public in one way or another also tended to prolong the life of his old name. Articles or publications dealing with such a person's life or work often include information about his name change. Also, American editors are in the habit of writing "blurbs" which, among other things, often give the reader the birthplace of an article contributor. For example, such a blurb might begin "The writer of this review, Felix Morton, born in Vienna . . ." or "German-born author Felix Jackson . . ." The contrast between the Anglo-Saxon name and the Continental birthplace, in such cases, is obvious and little work is needed to trace Morton to Mandelbaum, and Jackson to Joachimsohn.

N. What name changers think about name changing

The great majority of the name changers stated that they were satisfied with their new names.⁶⁸ The reasons, listed according to frequency, were that the change:

- had a practical value, making it easy to spell, pronounce and remember the new surname;
- helped to achieve integration, social acceptance, prestige and peace of mind;
- eliminated the immigrant element contained in the original;
- eliminated the religious element of the original.

Dissatisfaction was voiced by a minority and rested on the ground that the name change:

- had not been radical enough and had created a name which still sounded "foreign";
- had been too radical and had led to a discrepancy between an Americanized name and a foreign accent;
- broke the family continuity;
- was unnecessary ("a Jewish name is no handicap");

⁶⁸ One person asserted, "I am perfect happy with name I choiced".

— had been undertaken on a temporary basis only, for the duration of military service, but could not be undone without creating new complications.

Both satisfied and dissatisfied name changers belonged to all age groups. A few individuals in both the “satisfied” and “dissatisfied” groups volunteered the statement that a name change in this country was not as important as they had assumed. Some of them, in fact, wrote that if at the time they had known as much about name changing as they knew now, they would have kept the old surname.

It was obvious that many name changers were reluctant to discuss the subject, at least with an outsider. First, over two-thirds of the people who received the name questionnaire and also a follow-up reminder failed to respond. Among these there were a few selected persons whose cooperation was specially requested by personal, individualized letters. For example, one of them was a psychoanalyst who suppressed the Jewish part of his hyphenated name but some twenty years before had written an article about Jewish family names (including name-changing) in America — which at that time he signed with his full, hyphenated name. Then there was a name changer whose refusal to reply began with the words:

“Before I answer your one hundred-odd “important” questions as to why Mr. Jones changed to Mr. Smith and Mr. Smith changed to Jones, let me ask *you* some questions . . .”

Such sensitivity to questions about name changes is not unusual. One refugee from Germany was asked why he had changed his name. “He blushed and replied that he did so because of his ‘strong desire to become an American.’ But at the same time it was rather obvious that this desire was coupled with a strong dislike of other refugees.”⁶⁹ Another individual whose pronounced German accent

⁶⁹ Saenger, p. 121. One observer has described the ambivalent attitude of some refugees towards other refugees as follows: “The newly arrived refugee, finding himself among foreigners, naturally sought to contact fellow-refugees with whom he could feel at home and relax from the continuous strain of having to cope with a foreign environment. But at the same time he was craving to terminate his refugee existence and merge into the new community. These conflicting tendencies created in him a peculiar ambivalence toward his group. Anxious to separate from his countrymen, he was at the same time emotionally dependent on them.” Lourié, Anton, p. 90. It has also been noted that “the expression ‘refugee’ from the lips of

clashed with his Anglo-Saxon name told the writer that he wouldn't dream of revealing his original name and added, "Whatever people tell you — don't believe them when they claim they acted for patriotic reasons". Where insecurity is even stronger such incidents as the following reportedly privately by a physician can occur: "I was staying in a New Jersey hotel frequented by refugees. One day the owner introduced a guest, Mr. X. who had changed his name, to another guest, but by mistake used Mr. X.'s old family name. X. turned white in the face, pulled the owner into a corner and berated him in no uncertain terms."

The feeling of insecurity was described by one name changer as follows: "Of course you feel uneasy the first two years. When somebody asks for your name, you blush and stammer. You have kind of lost your identity. But then you get used to it."

O. Reactions to name changing inside and outside the refugee group

The people reached in the sample survey were aware that their new cognomens did not go unnoticed by the world around them. Most of them reported having heard only favorable comments. This was natural since it would not be polite for an outsider to criticize a name change in the presence of him who has gone through some trouble acquiring a new surname and obviously disliking his old one.

Such favorable comments were said by the name changers to run along the following lines: "people considered it more practical;" "Jewish people said it was a good idea;" and "everybody was pleased about this step towards complete Amercanization."

On the other hand, unfavorable comments known to name changers were described in these terms: "the name change was said to be unnecessary;" "people wanted to know my reasons;" "native Americans dislike the new name which is less colorful than the old one;" and "members of my family in Europe dislike my new name."

The judge granting the change was reported by most individuals not to have commented at all but when he did, his remarks were

an American has a most distasteful sound to the immigrant; nevertheless, the word is freely used by the immigrants themselves . . . when they refer to one another." Stock, Ernest, p. 582.

more often than not unfavorable. This was in keeping with Davie's statement, "The usual procedure of an American court is to berate the applicant mildly and then to confirm his desire."⁷⁰ In addition, evidence was received from outside the sample survey that occasionally Jewish judges failed to approve a name change when they suspected that the applicant wished to hide his Jewishness.

A critical picture of a refugee who changes his name because he wishes to assimilate and climb the social ladder is drawn by Joseph Wechsberg in his short story, *The rules of the game*.⁷¹ The central character, a Viennese who comes to this country at the age of 34, changes his name from Blum to Bradford . . . : "His European friends hadn't approved of the change. Dr. Redlich, a lifelong friend of Walter's dead parents, had said that Blum was an old Jewish name, nothing to be ashamed of. 'It was good enough for your grandfather in Poland, and for your father when he moved to Vienna. It should be good for you here. It isn't even hard to spell.'

"It's not American," Walter had said. "It makes you conspicuous. People like you and I must try to submerge, Dr. Redlich. We must get Americanized fast. We haven't much time left."

"There's no sense pretending," Dr. Redlich had said sullenly. "Walter Bradford. Ridiculous. As soon as you open your mouth, they'll hear your accent —"

"My accent is all right," Walter had said quickly. "After all, my two years at Cambridge . . ." He had given an angry shrug. Dr. Redlich had a way of meddling in other people's affairs. "If you want to play the game, you've got to observe the rules.' . . ."

In essence, however, Walter remains an insecure individual. Wechsberg, himself a refugee from the German-speaking part of Czechoslovakia, builds his short story around an incident where Walter is asked for a "hair of the dog" and fails to understand the term. To admit his ignorance would be to admit that after years of intense trying he has not become Americanized the way he understands Americanization. Try as he might to observe the rules, he has not learned to play the game. The story ends on a note of deep frustration.

The subject of name changing among refugees also received the attention of *Aufbau*, in an editorial by Manfred George who approved

⁷⁰ Davie, Maurice R., *World immigration*, p. 505.

⁷¹ *New Yorker* (New York) 25:28-33, October 1, 1949.

of the idea in principle but warned his readers of certain dangers.⁷² In a reference to Louis Adamic's book, *What's your name?*, George alluded to the difficulties of some immigrants of earlier periods who were burdened with the knowledge that their foreign accents and their Anglo-Saxon surnames did not harmonize. As for refugees, he wrote:

"Many of the Jewish immigrants who came here in recent years also changed their names, the new name usually containing an echo of the original surname. Of course, there is no reason to change strictly Jewish names, for, like Italian names, these are generally known and respected. But there can be no objection if Jews starting a new life try to drop names which arrogant anti-Semitic officials in Europe at one time pinned on their forefathers.

"As a matter of fact, in the United States a sensible change of name is regarded favorably, as an external symptom of assimilation. The emphasis is on the word 'sensible.' The choice of a name demands tact. Only very naive and tactless persons go to extremes when they select a name. Immigrants who take names which are virtually the hereditary property of old families display the characteristics of the *nouveau riche* and of psychological insecurity. It is simply not done to adopt all of a sudden some such name as Wilson, Blair, Biddle, Jefferson, Revere, Cummings, Lincoln or Washington. Not only does the choice of such a name excite ill feeling, it also invites scorn and derision. And ultimately the mocking of the community kills what had originally been a sensible intention. A person who decides to change his name should be guided by three principles: moderation, tact and unobtrusiveness."

Conclusion

The direct or implied criticism by refugees quoted above of other refugees who change their names in order to hide their national-religious background does not stand in a class by itself. Such men as Adamic, for instance, had previously criticized immigrants of other nationalities and faiths whom they suspected of name transformation for comparable reasons. Among Jewish writers, some approve of name changing in principle while others vigorously denounce those name changers whom they accuse of escapism. The

⁷² George, Manfred, Müssen Sie Washington heißen? *Aufbau*, August 6, 1943.

latter critics deplore what they consider the sacrifice of one's heritage and the surrender to prejudice, while they also deny the effectiveness of the name change procedure.⁷³ These observations raise important ethical questions which deserve detailed study but are outside the scope of this paper.

From the sociologist's point of view, "both the martyr and the conformer [in matters of name changing] make a contribution to the structure of human society."⁷⁴

So far as name changing in the United States in general is concerned, the results of several investigations of its reasons may be summarized as follows: Name changing is an attempt of the individual to integrate with society. Three principal reasons can be observed: a desire to eliminate a difficult name which differs from the general linguistic pattern; a desire to hide one's ethnic and religious background; or a desire to avoid a name which has unpleasant connotations, arouses ridicule and so on.⁷⁵

Investigators have paid particular attention to name changers who felt that their patronymic was often the only clue for the provocation of adverse discrimination.⁷⁶ The foundation in actual life of such fears has been shown by, among others, Louis Adamic⁷⁷ and has been summarized by Judge Learned Hand in his words "Our names are useful or dangerous to us according to the associations they carry among those who hear them . . ."⁷⁸ Because an evaluation of themselves stops with an evaluation of their names, some persons come to regard their names as enemies.⁷⁹ Name changing,

⁷³ Cohn, David L., I've kept my name. *Atlantic monthly* (Boston) 181:42-44, April 1948; reprinted in *Reader's digest* (Pleasantville, N.Y.) 52:16-18, June 1948; Kugelmass, J. Alvin, Name-changing - and what it gets you. *Commentary* 14:145-150, August 1952; Katz, Shlomo, So you changed your name. *Congress weekly* 15:8-9, February 6, 1948.

⁷⁴ Arthaud, R. L. and others, The relation of family name preferences to their frequency in the culture. *Journal of social psychology* (Provincetown, Mass.) 28:34, August 1947.

⁷⁵ Stonequist, Everett V., *The marginal man; a study in personality and culture conflict*. Chicago, Scribner (c1937), p. 99.

⁷⁶ Arthaud, p. 20.

⁷⁷ Adamic, Louis, *What's your name?* Also Duncan, Hannibal G., *Immigration and assimilation*. Boston, Heath, (c1933), p. 701, 715, 771, 786-787, 859.

⁷⁸ Mencken, *The American language; supplement II*, p. 418.

⁷⁹ Schettler, Clarence, Does your name identify you? *Social forces* (Chapel Hill, N.C.) 21:72, December 1942.

they hope, will help them to achieve desired statuses, roles and participation otherwise impeded or prohibited.⁸⁰

The evidence gathered in this paper suggests that the three principal reasons mentioned above also influenced the name changers among the refugees. These individuals followed a trend that had operated among earlier and contemporary immigrants for a long time.

Inasmuch as the immigration of the refugees was the direct result of political events in Central Europe, the question arises whether their name changing was in any way related to those events. A certain relationship did, in fact, exist. That is to say, on the one hand some refugees, in a spirit of defiance, doubly resolved to keep their names — no matter what abuse National Socialists might have heaped upon them (see above, p. 158) — or, affirming their Jewish heritage, exchanged them for even more Jewish, that is, Hebrew ones (see above, p. 161). More often, however, the shock of Nazism tended to provide an incentive for name changing, though not necessarily the only incentive, as follows:

1. Some refugees tried to remove the symbolic link which they felt existed, or thought others might imagine to exist, between themselves and a Germany dominated by National Socialists. That link was a German name.

2. In all refugees the loss of their country created a strong psychological urge to integrate in America as fast as possible. Name changing made some refugees feel more "at home" or "better Americans."

3. National Socialism activated or re-inforced the desire of some refugees to escape what they considered the burden of Jewishness and a Jewish name.

4. National Socialists atrocities called for protective measures. Some refugee soldiers and some refugees living within the grasp of German armies adopted new names for self-preservation.

On a linguistic plane, name changing among refugees conformed by and large to the practices of other immigrants with comparable names. Both common-place and unusual names were adapted to the general name patterns, by various devices such as shortening,

⁸⁰ Broom, Leonard and others, Characteristics of 1,107 petitioners for change of name. *American Sociological Review* (New York) 20:39, February 1955.

translating or Anglicization. Much variety and colorfulness was thus eliminated from the list of patronymics of American citizens and citizens-to-be — as so often before. The numbers of more or less common names grew at the expense of the more distinctive and “visible” ones. Individuals adopted such common names intentionally: in order to avoid attracting attention, they purposely narrowed the gap between their original names and the more widely known ones, usually of Anglo-Saxon character.

The basic decision to change a name depended largely on the psychological make-up of the individual. It also depended, it is true, on external conditions but it is the impression of this writer that they were not always of first importance. For example, a good many name changers altered their names in order to avoid anti-Semitic prejudice, which does exist. Actually, if such prejudice were as strong as these persons felt it to be, one would expect a much higher percentage of name changing by refugees in a country where changing is so easy. The fact is, however, that changes of distinctly Jewish or German names are comparatively few compared to the unchanged ones.

What actually led to the decision were the characteristics of the individual, that is, his sensitivity to prejudice or to frequent misspellings of his name and similar irritations on the one hand, and his tenacity and pride in preserving the religious-cultural-national antecedents symbolized by his name.

Again, awareness of the problem differs from individual to individual. The gnawing doubts of some persons about their names had no counterpart in the minds of some others whose self-confidence was well developed and who, never disturbed by thoughts about such “trifles” as a family name, were successful in this country in spite of their cognomens.

Another factor was the prestige of a name which preceded its bearer to these shores. For a well known scholar, for example, to discard his name after landing in the U.S.A. would have been tantamount to obliterating his fame. In contrast, persons in run-of-the-mill occupations, often working in highly competitive fields, had nothing to gain economically but perhaps something to lose by preserving telltale names.

It is noteworthy that the minds of some refugees were made up before they ever set foot on American soil. Some had attempted

to change their names in Europe but had met with legal or administrative difficulties there.

Name preferences varied greatly. As a result, not infrequently a number of seemingly unrelated "Americanized" names all originated from one basic family name (Cohn, for example). In rare cases, a name abandoned as undesirable by one family was precisely the name selected as a desirable one by another family. (For example, one family dropped the name Appel in favor of Allan while another family by the name of Apfel adopted Appel instead; one family discarded the name Goldschmidt and selected Schmidt while another family dropped Schmidt and adopted Smith instead). Whether or not a name was "tolerable" depended on the individual bearer.

Name changing occurred more frequently among persons of professional background.

In the opinion of some name changers, Jewish names were not as much of a handicap, particularly in business, as they themselves had anticipated.

To a large extent the basic purpose of the name changers — to avoid inconvenience and "dwell in amity"⁸¹ — was fulfilled. Most persons reached in the sample survey expressed satisfaction with their new names. As a social device which heightened an individual's being at ease with his environment, name changing was often successful.

This is not to say that name changing and integration were synonymous. Many other factors were involved, above all the personality of the name changer. A minority of the people reached in the sample survey were dissatisfied with their new patronymics. They had either adopted a name not suited to their personal characteristics (as when a person who was very conscious of his strong foreign accent took on a typically Anglo-Saxon name) or had not sufficiently considered the implications of a change such as a feeling of loss of identity or continuity.

Some disappointments of this sort might be avoided in the future if immigrants were able to consult with competent persons on the feasibility of name changing.

The great mass of the refugees, it was pointed out (see above, page 139), was successfully integrated in a rather short time. Most

of them preserved their old names, and those who did not form but a small percentage. However, it would be misleading to conclude that name changing is of little importance in the integration process. The name changers acted in the belief that a new cognomen would enhance their adjustment. Their actions showed that in their image of America and of their role in the new country there existed certain tensions, difficulties, conflicts and also hopes of overcoming them. Of these conflicts, more persons may have been aware than the numbers of the name changers indicate. Whether that image was well founded is less important than that these persons believed it to be true and acted accordingly. The name changers mirror the fact that integration is neither an automatic nor an easy process and that ideas and facts alike play an important part in shaping its course.

⁶¹ Arthaud, p. 34.