

Dear Editor:

I read the article India Journal and have a question. Are the Bene Ephraim, Bene Mensahe and the Bene Israel different? Are they just different names for the Jews of India?

Martha Weinstein

Dear Martha

Thanks for the interest. To clarify, the Bene Israel, the Bene Menashe and the Bene Ephraim are three very distinct groups. The Bene Israel are the Jews of western India and were recognized as Jewish by Israel's rabbinate in 1964. The Bene Menashe live in Manipur and Mizoram in northeastern India and claim descent from the Tribe of Menashe, a claim recognized in 2005 by Israel Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar. The Bene Ephraim are the smallest of the three; they live in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh and have not yet won recognition from the rabbinate. *AJL* spotlighted the Bene Ephraim community in the Spring Issue and this issue includes a feature on the Bene Menashe. Each group has a unique history of their own. Please look out for our Fall Issue with a piece on the Bene Israel.

Erica Lyons
Editor-in-Chief

Dear Editor,

I just want to thank you for referring me to your *Asian Jewish Life* Facebook web page! I love the interesting and entertaining news articles and videos that you put up on there from publications around the world. I am amazed that you can find these stories on a regular basis. I also think it is wonderful that people who are interested in the history and the culture of the Jews in Asia can mingle and interact in such friendly forum. I feel privileged to be a part of this growing Facebook community of people fascinated by the subject of Jews in Asia.

I have a question I want to ask you. I know you featured some truly splendid interviews and engrossing personal interest stories in your previous issues of *Asian Jewish Life*. But publications such as *Asian Jewish Life* also usually discuss films as well in the forms of reviews and critiques. Is *AJL* going to devote a section to movies in its next issue? Maybe you can recommend to us curious readers some quality movies (with both Jewish and Asian themes) that readers can watch...

Jessica McKinnon

Dear Jessica:

Thank you for your letter. I am glad that you are part of our growing Facebook community. We work hard to find stories and published around the share our same focus. As you have seen, the links provided send readers to sources that include Chabad News, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tablet Magazine, *The Jewish Chronicle*, *The Forward* and *The Jewish Telegraphic Association (JTA)*.

With respect to your interest in films, last issue we included a film synopsis on *Rafting to Bombay*. In this issue, two of our features highlight films, one discussing the documentary *Going Home* and the cover story discussing the animated *A Jewish Girl in Shanghai*. We are looking at two other films for future issues as well. We would welcome an experienced film critic onboard to provide regular pieces on individual films as well as broader trending articles. If you know of films that would be of interest to us and you would like to see in the magazine, please write in.

Erica Lyons
Editor-in-Chief



Hana's Suitcase published in Japanese manga (graphic novel)

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