

Book Reviews

Diner, Hasia. *In the Almost Promised Land: American Jews and Blacks, 1915-1935.* Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977. xvii, 271 pp. \$17.50.

Hasia Diner's *In the Almost Promised Land* breaks new ground within the growing field of scholarly and popular literature on the history of black-Jewish relations in the United States. Since she draws her information with equal sensitivity from both the Yiddish and Anglo-Jewish press as well as from the correspondence of major Jewish leaders with their counterparts within the black community, her work is the first full-length delineation of the attitudes of both immigrant and Americanized Jewish leaders towards blacks in the two decades spanning the death of Booker T. Washington and the Harlem Riots of 1935 and between the lynching of Leo Frank in 1915 and the rise of Nazism's specter upon the world scene twenty years later.

Diner opens her investigation by describing and documenting Jewish newspaper reactions to the various attacks and problems which troubled blacks. She also fully chronicles the role Jews played in the civil rights and black labor movements. And she is quick to note not only the pronounced volume of concern which Jews articulated, but also that Jewish sympathies towards and levels of participation in black causes far exceeded those of other white groups in America. Altogether her findings lend strong credibility to the commonly held but, until now, unsubstantiated perceptions by and of Jews as unique in their long, unbroken history of support for black crusades.

But Diner is out to do more than simply to chronicle what Jews did. Her major concern is with understanding why Jewish leaders were so uncommonly committed to solving problems not their own. Here she rejects the standard view of the roots of Jewish support for the civil rights movement—both in its early phases and in its heyday of the 1950's-1960's—as exclusively an outgrowth of that group's deep sense of altruism and humani-

tarianism growing out of its prophetic tradition of social justice advocacy and its own millennia-long history of suffering. Jewish leaders of the 1915–1935 period, Diner argues, most certainly paid lip-service to high moral ideals, but beneath the rhetoric lay a well-defined set of group interests being promoted.

Advocacy of black crusades, she argues, provided American Jewish leaders with a medium for confronting “certain dilemmas engendered by their own ambiguous position within the United States” (page XV). When Jews, for example, addressed themselves to the problem of the black’s economic and civic disabilities, they were speaking to issues which affected not only the gravely-troubled black but the marginal Jews as well. The Jew’s declared struggle for another’s civil rights permitted him to strike out indirectly against anti-Semitic manifestations without opening the Jewish question to public scrutiny and debate.

Similarly, the Jewish financing of black self-help institutions served as a means through which Jewish leaders hoped to dispel the prevalent stereotype of Jews as “greedy, clannish misers, always out for themselves.” (p. 154) Finally, the championing of black causes was a way in which Jews sought to deal with the rising tide of second generation assimilation. Through the race issue, Diner argues, leaders attempted to illustrate Jewish moral and ethical superiority to those becoming estranged from the ritual and immigrant cultural forms of the faith.

It should be emphasized that Diner is in no way critical on moral or ethical grounds of what she sees as the primary rationale for the Jewish position on black issues. Her argument is solely with those who would depict Jews as motivated by social and cultural impulses fundamentally different from those directing other minority and interest groups.

If self-interest motivations drove Jews towards blacks in the earlier period, it also directed the contemporary retreat from full-hearted involvement. Jews, Diner argues, did not leave the civil rights movement solely or primarily because blacks turned separatistic, redefining Jewish humanitarian assistance as paternalistic, unwarranted and unnecessary. Rather, the end of Jewish participation was dictated as much by changing trends from within the Jewish group as from without.

The decline in Jewish insecurity and timidity in confronting

their haters here in post-war America has—according to Diner—obviated their need to use blacks as surrogates in fighting domestic anti-Semitism. More importantly, the experiences of the Holocaust and the troubled history of the State of Israel have had the combined effect of turning Jewish interests inward, of redirecting their priorities, energies and emotions to their own group's concerns. The avowed anti-Zionist outlook adopted by some Third-World Black groups has certainly not strengthened Jewish ardor for support of civil rights. But even more important is the changed Jewish view of their role and position in the world and their redefined set of self-interests to which Jews now admit but which (for Diner) have always dictated their position on black problems in the United States.

But how does one prove that a hidden agenda of self-interest lay beneath the tide of altruistic and humanitarian rhetoric? This difficulty inherent in any study of leadership activity is a problem which Diner, unfortunately, fails to confront adequately. Rather than search for the crucially important, internally directed documentation or the private memoranda, letters and statements through which leadership expressly sets for itself or explains group policy, Diner is content simply to ascribe specific sets of social, political or psychological motivations to individuals and groups unsupported by the necessary hard evidence. Diner observes, for example, that despite their general anxiety about urban violence, Yiddish journalists consistently avoided speaking out on the subject of black crime against Jews and sought—in general—to soft-pedal all instances of black anti-Semitism. She attributes this tendency to either the political unwillingness or psychological inability of writers and editors to admit that tensions did indeed exist between their community and blacks. But she offers not a single statement from any spokesman from the Jewish dailies articulating, either publicly or privately, their supposed anxiety over the effects of black attacks upon the course of intra-group relations to buttress her explanation. It may well be that the hard evidence called for here simply does not exist. The fundamentally important minutes of Jewish press editorial board meetings bearing on this question are no longer extant—if such records were ever available. But this does not absolve the historian from seeking alternate forms of documentation. And

Diner's meagre attempt to demonstrate Jewish press consternation over anti-Semitism by merely showing how deeply committed the press was to promoting group harmony is no real substitute.

This inability to provide real proof for her characterizations is seen most graphically in her method of determining that self-interest dictated the marching orders for Jewish participation in civil rights campaigns. Here, unable to produce a single contemporary source seconding her position, she offers as evidence the unsubstantiated contention that advocates of universal equality and brotherhood were actually sincere in their rhetoric, but unaware of the often subconscious self-serving drives motivating their pronouncements. It is only in retrospect, Diner argues, by studying the patterns of what Jewish leaders did, that historians can perceive what truly pushed Jews to support causes not their own. As a result of this and other similar weaknesses, the reader emerges from *In the Almost Promised Land* feeling that Diner is probably correct in her understanding of the roots of Jewish civil rights activism, but unable to tell for sure.

It must also be noted, additionally, that in limiting her study to the statements and actions of recognized Jewish leaders, Diner has overlooked or omitted other contemporary voices which spoke out and acted explicitly in favor of an entirely different set of Jewish self-interests. Jews of that era, like those of today, were never monolithic in their approach to America's black question. And there were those within the Jewish community—like those residing in this country's first racially changing northern neighborhoods—who perceived blacks as early as 1900 not as friends, clients or allies but as definite threats to their economic and social positions. They included, for example, the Jewish members of New York's West Side Improvement Association, who sought to block blacks from settling in Upper Manhattan. These landowners were pilloried by the Jewish press for placing land values ahead of human values, but they were apparently unmoved by the censures. Their story and that of those who may have sought to solve their own Jewish question by linking themselves with native-white and other ethnic groups in opposing black aspirations remain to be examined fully to complete the study of the multiplicity of Jewish attitudes towards blacks during the early years of this enduring intergroup encounter.

Whatever its methodological problems and limitations in scope, *In the Almost Promised Land* remains, however, a most significant work. It is a landmark volume marking the emergence of a new attitudinal approach on the part of writers examining the course of Jewish-black relations. Ms. Diner's is the first major contribution to an emotion-laden field of historiography which remains remarkably clear of either self-effacing apologetics or self-serving polemics. She succeeds, where others have failed, in avoiding all common didactic or polemical pitfalls which have plagued this discipline. She stays free of discussions of how Jews should have acted in the past or ought to act now towards blacks. And she adroitly side-steps the common temptation to project from her limited evidence any simple solutions to the complexities of Jewish-black relations. She harbors no illusions and demonstrates no pretensions that her work will or should alter popular attitudes on this most perplexing social dilemma. Most importantly, by arguing self-interest as a constant in the Jewish approach towards blacks, Diner has demonstrated that at least for one writer, the era of scholarly advocacy of the tendentious commonality of fate concept linking Jews and blacks has finally ended. She has made us aware of and has charged us to study further the complexities of intergroup encounters and the often competing aspirations of minority groups. It is in this last context that *In the Almost Promised Land*—with all its lacunae—makes its most enduring scholarly and social contribution.

JEFFREY S. GUROCK

Jeffrey S. Gurock teaches American Jewish history at Yeshiva University, New York City.

Singerman, Robert. *Jewish and Hebrew Onomastics: A Bibliography.* New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977. xii, 2 L., 132 pp. \$17.50.

This is an exhaustive survey of the literature on Jewish and Hebrew personal names, a superb reference tool for anyone

interested in pursuing this intriguing subject. Its value is enhanced by the appended index to the surnames whose origins are discussed by Norbert Pearlroth in his "Your Name" column in *Jewish Post and Opinion* from September 7, 1945, to September 24, 1976. The bulk of this slender volume is a cataloguing of all books and articles dealing with names used by Jews. Unfortunately, the compiler gives us no evaluation of the titles he lists. His aim has been to give us as complete a catalogue as possible of the subject. As such, this book serves as a useful supplement to Benzion C. Kaganoff's *A Dictionary of Jewish Names and Their History* (New York: Schocken Books, 1977), which tells us much more of what an average reader wants to know about names, but contains only a limited bibliography. It also supplements Dan Rottenberg's list of family names to be found in archives and encyclopedias which make up the bulk of his helpful *Finding Our Fathers* (New York: Random House, 1977).

MALCOLM H. STERN

Malcolm H. Stern is the genealogist of the American Jewish Archives.

Friedman, Saul S. *The Incident at Massena. Anti-Semitic Hysteria in a Typical American Town.* New York: Stein and Day, 1978. x, 216 pp. \$9.95

Massena was a relatively unimportant border community in upstate New York. Its Jewish population was small and lived in peaceful coexistence with its Christian neighbors until the night of September 22, 1928. It was then that a small Christian child was reported missing and an intense search for her was begun in a wooded section of the town. After several hours of searching, the trail remained cold. Shortly thereafter, someone, it is not entirely certain who although evidence points to an immigrant Greek ice cream shop operator, introduced a watered-down version of the blood libel—the allegation that Jews murder Christians in order to obtain blood for the Passover or other rituals.

The town's rabbi was called in for questioning by irresponsible

public officials and Jewish businesses were searched. All of this occurred on the eve of Yom Kippur, the Jewish holiday of atonement. Even when the missing child reappeared, after having lost her way and having spent a long and chilly night sleeping in the open, Jewish men and women on their way to synagogue services were taunted by a few local citizens who persisted in the blood accusation.

It is to Professor Friedman's credit that he has been able to place the Massena incident within a wider context and has been able, therefore, to survey the history of the blood libel charge from its early European medieval beginnings. It is unfortunate, however, that the publisher has chosen to subtitle this volume as "Anti-Semitic Hysteria in a Typical American Town." There was no hysteria apparent in the Christian community and only nervous anxiety in the Jewish one. There were, in fact, only a small number of misguided townspeople caught up in the midst of the blood rumor. Neither was Massena a "typical American town," if "typical" is the description of Massena provided by Professor Friedman himself: "Massena was a volcano of economic jealousy, prohibitionist and anti-prohibitionist fanaticism, anti-Semitism, anti-Catholicism, and assorted mesozoic hatred." Granted, some of these attributes might well be found in any number of Middletown, U.S.A.'s. The overall description, however, is more befitting of a "typical" town in Germany at the height of the Third Reich.

There are also a number of statements in the book of a highly questionable nature. For instance, it was not, as is stated, "assimilationist elements" of the American Jewish Committee who "walked out" in 1942 "to establish . . . the American Council for Judaism" (p. 177), but rather anti-Zionists of the Central Conference of American Rabbis who had laid the groundwork for the American Council months before. One is also left with the impression from reading this book that Rabbi Stephen S. Wise was already in the pulpit of New York's Reform Congregation Emanu-El when he "broke with the board of trustees in one of those perpetual fights over who really should lead the congregation" (p. 150). While still a rabbi in Portland, Oregon, Wise actually refused to accept the call to Temple Emanu-El because he was not assured freedom of the pulpit.

Finally, there is the question of continuity which Professor

Friedman has raised with regard to American Jewry's silence and ineffectiveness during the murderous years of the Holocaust: "What happened in 1928 between the two principal Jewish groups and their leaders presaged future events: the anomie and friction, the backbiting and conniving that would deprive American Jewry of effective action during the Holocaust" (p. 176). What he is referring to is a conflict between Louis Marshall of the American Jewish Committee and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise of the American Jewish Congress as to which national Jewish organization would be the "official" voice of American Jewry in the Massena incident. But the gravity of the charges is so great, the implication of American Jewry's guilt so traumatic, that more is needed than simply a listing of undocumented charges by Professor Friedman against various prominent American Jews.

Was Massena an important event in the history of American anti-Semitism and the American Jewish experience? It is interesting to note that the author first learned of the incident while reading a footnote in Joshua Trachtenberg's *The Devil and the Jew*. Massena does not rank in importance with the Hilton-Seligman affair, or with Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent*. It simply demonstrated another example of certain lingering tendencies in American society: ignorance, ineffectual and irresponsible public servants, medieval anti-religious mythologies. It was to the credit of American Jewry's national organizations that they protested the Massena event loudly and with prolonged vigor.

ABRAHAM J. PECK

Abraham J. Peck is the assistant director of the American Jewish Archives.

Brief Notices

Berger, Graenum. *Black Jews in America*. New York: Commission on Synagogue Relations. Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, 1978. xiv, 218 pp. \$5.00

American followers of the Israeli social and political scenes know that one of the most troubling issues nagging at the social fabric of Israeli life is the question of "who is a Jew?" This was vividly demonstrated in the 1960's by the arrival in Israel—by way of Liberia—of several dozen black Americans from Chicago who called themselves "Black Hebrew Israelites" and claimed all the benefits of Israel's Law of Return. They were not recognized as Jews by the Israeli religious authorities, but allowed to remain indefinitely, probably because the Israeli government did not wish to become involved in charges of racial discrimination.

The "Black Hebrew Israelites" form only a small part of the amorphous group known as Black Jews in America. Graenum Berger has written a very useful documentary history of the existence of Black Jews in American life since pre-colonial times. Very little is known about the Black Jews in a scholarly sense. Berger investigates the varying claims that many of these black groups have made concerning their professed origins as Falasha Jews in Ethiopia, as converted slaves of Jewish slave-owners, or as "original" Hebrews who did not need to prove their Jewish origins. It is disheartening to read of the bitterness expressed by those blacks who have received proper conversion to Judaism towards white Jews who have been less than hospitable to their co-religionists. Dr. Berger has written a book which will no doubt cause scholars of the American Jewish experience to research many of the areas only briefly mentioned in this documentary, especially the reactions of Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jewry to the phenomenon of Black Jews in America.

Coppa, Frank J., and Thomas J. Curran, Edited by. *The Immigrant Experience in America*. Boston: Twayne Publishers (A Division of G.K. Hall & Co.), 1976. 232 pp.

This collection of nine essays on the general topic of immigration evolved from a series entitled "The Immigrant in American Life" produced by the Summer Semester television program in 1973. Among the questions with which the essays deal are the following: "Why did millions of immigrants, most voluntarily, some involuntarily, decide to leave their homes and resettle in the United States? What conditions drove them from their roots to a foreign land? How were they received in the New World?" Included in these essays is one entitled "The Jews: From the Ghettos of Europe to the Suburbs of the United States" by Morton Rosenstock.

Cumming, John. *Little Jake of Saginaw*. Mount Pleasant, Michigan: Rivercrest House, 1978. x, 142 pp.

Jacob Seligman, the "Little Jake" of this book, was one of many German Jews who emigrated to America in the period immediately following the German Revolution of 1848. Little Jake was a clothing merchant who became something of a folklore

figure to his fellow citizens of Saginaw, Michigan. "Little" was a term that could be applied to his name only, for the rest of Jacob Seligman's activities may be described as grandiose, larger than life. He was a promoter of magnificence, turning the image of Little Jake's Clothing Store into one which rivaled the size and activities of the greatest department stores of his time. Marching bands, give-aways, tremendous newspaper advertisements were only some of the promotions employed by this master showman to drum up a little business. "Little Jake" surely deserves a niche in the historical record of the Jews in America. We are fortunate that John Cumming has secured it for him.

Dimont, Max. *The Jews in America*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978. 286 pp. \$9.95

Robert St. John has stated with regard to this book that "Dimont, the iconoclast, has shattered a hundred myths, challenged a lot of wishful thinking, and made thought-provoking predictions." The author has made good use of his secondary sources, but apparently has not consulted much in the way of primary materials. His "shattering of myths" and challenges to a "lot of wishful thinking" must be evaluated in the light of this approach to the history of the American Jewish experience.

Eichhorn, David Max. *Evangelizing the American Jew*. Middle Village, N.Y.: Jonathan David Publishers, 1978. v, 210 pp. \$12.50

While scholars have long been aware of the missionary attempts by Christians to convert American Jews, little has been written on the subject which allows us to understand fully the nature of these efforts as well as the groups and individuals involved. Dr. Eichhorn's book is an important step in this direction. It describes the activities of Christian missionary societies from the pre-colonial period to the present, and includes a chapter on such current groups as Jews for Jesus, Bnai Yeshua and the Messianic Jews.

Eisenberg, Azriel, and Hannah Grad Goodman, Edited by. *Eyewitnesses to American Jewish History. Part II: The German Immigration, 1800-1875*. New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1977. viii, 148 pp. \$3.00

Some years ago, Professor Jacob R. Marcus divided American Jewish history into four periods: Colonial Period and Sephardic Immigration; German Immigration; Eastern European Immigration; and the American Jew. The editors of this volume have accepted this division and have set for themselves the goal of publishing a volume for each period.

This volume has been designed for schools, adult study circles, and for the home. The personal observations of the characters selected for this book are not only contemporary but they serve to produce a useful portrait of an important period in the history of the American Jewish experience.

Gartner, Lloyd P. *History of the Jews of Cleveland*. Cleveland and New York: The Western Reserve Historical Society and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1978. xv, 385 pp. \$15.00

With the publication of this *History of the Jews of Cleveland*, the distinguished historian of American Jewry, Lloyd P. Gartner, has once more solidified his reputation

as the foremost scientific chronicler of local Jewish community history. As with his previous histories of the Jews of Milwaukee (with Louis J. Swichkow) and the Jews of Los Angeles (with Max Vorspan), Professor Gartner has utilized the approach which attempts to tie together social, cultural and communal history. The result is a solid, scholarly account of Cleveland Jewry from 1840 to 1945. No doubt Lloyd Gartner's work will remain a model for future undertakings of this kind. And future local histories must be written, if only because they are the necessary foundations for the superstructure known as American Jewish history. Professor Moshe Davis makes this point clear in the *Afterword* to this book: "By isolating those elements which invest the Jewish community of America with its special significance . . . one can grasp more profoundly the meaning of the larger Jewish experience in America."

Goldman, Edward A., Edited by. *Jews in a Free Society: Challenges and Opportunities.* Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1978. xi, 175 pp. \$10.00

The articles in this volume are based upon a group of lectures presented by the faculty of the Cincinnati School of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion to the general community during the College Centennial year. Because of the convergence of the College Centennial and the national Bicentennial, each contributor used the insights provided by his own academic discipline to assess the situation of contemporary Jewish life in America.

Gordis, Robert. *Understanding Conservative Judaism.* New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 1978. xiv, 235 pp. \$12.50

With nearly two dozen published works to his credit, Robert Gordis is a most prolific and distinguished author. Professor of Bible and Rapaport Professor in the Philosophies of Religion at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Dr. Gordis is a longtime spokesperson for the Conservative Jewish movement. Certainly there are other spokespeople as well, and names such as Agus, Bokser, Greenberg, Kadushin and Siegel serve to demonstrate this point. But Rabbi Gordis' work is consistently among the most praised interpretations of a Conservative ideology. This book is no exception. It is a clear and precise statement on Conservative Judaism, its fundamentals, ideals and goals.

Greenberg, Simon. *The Ethical in the Jewish and American Heritage.* New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1977. xvi, 327 pp. \$15.00

Dr. Greenberg's book discusses the ethical component in human life and the role it has played in both American and Jewish history. He contends that the "still small voice" which aims at assuring that America remain "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal" and that the Jewish people remain "a kingdom of Priests and a Holy People" continues to revitalize the moral responsibilities of both.

Hacker, Louis M., and Mark D. Hirsch. *Proskauer: His Life and Times.* University, Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1978. xiii, 232 pp. \$16.25

This book is a well-written biography of Judge Joseph Mayer Proskauer, one of the most influential and distinguished American Jews of our time. Joseph M. Proskauer was many things during his long life: a lawyer, a New York State Supreme Court judge, a firm supporter of the policies of Alfred E. Smith, the "Happy Warrior" of the

Democratic Party, a president of the American Jewish Committee, an important liaison between Chaim Weizmann and Harry Truman, and, finally, at the age of eighty-eight, an emissary to Pope John XXIII and Vatican II. The authors consulted numerous important primary and secondary sources in the writing of this book, and it is to be regretted (for those interested in scientific scholarship) that they or the publishers did not choose to employ footnotes to document their work.

Jewish Book Annual, Volume 36 (1978-79). New York: The JWB Jewish Book Council of America, 1978. 236 pp. \$10.00

The new edition of the *Jewish Book Annual* contains interesting articles by, among others, Ruth R. Wise on the ghetto poems of Abraham Sutzkever, Lawrence Marwick on the Hebrew Collection in the Library of Congress, and Yaffa Eliach on the Holocaust in Hebrew Drama. There are also numerous bibliographies of new books on Jewish subjects.

Konvitz, Milton R. *Judaism and the American Idea*. Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1978. 223 pp. \$9.95

Professor Konvitz is convinced that there is still an "ideal America," one that "is deeply concerned with inequalities of opportunity; an America that wants to wage war on poverty, to remove its root and branch; that seeks equal dignity and opportunity for women; that desperately seeks to find ways to become color-blind. . . ." At the heart of these noble, still to be completed tasks, is the "American idea," a term given shape and substance by such early American thinkers as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Theodore Parker. The American idea "of inalienable rights, the equality of all human beings, equality of opportunity . . ." is unique, argues Konvitz, for who thinks of an English idea or a French idea or a Brazilian one? No one questions the right of these nations to exist. "But there are two exceptions," states Professor Konvitz, "the Jewish people and the Americans." The right of the Jewish people to possess their own national existence has always been open to challenge and the American nation has always aroused the curiosity of the world as to the question of its moral meaning. This study seeks to demonstrate that Jewish values and American ideals have worked together in order to create the promise of a just and righteous nation.

Levinson, Robert E. *The Jews in the California Gold Rush*. New York and Berkeley, California: KTAV Publishing House and the Commission for the Preservation of Pioneer Jewish Cemeteries and Landmarks of the Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum, 1978. xvii, 232 pp. \$15.00

At the turn of the twentieth century many Eastern European Jews came to America with the image of a land whose streets were paved with gold. What they found instead constitutes a great deal of the Jewish immigrant experience in our nation.

Nearly half a century earlier, other Jews, mostly immigrants from the German states, also came to America drawn by the image of gold. Unlike their Russian and Polish counterparts, they were not disappointed. Gold was to be found in California in 1849. Robert Levinson has relied on numerous primary and secondary sources to reconstruct the history of the Jewish Gold Rush community as it existed in the small inland communities of northern California. Professor Levinson demonstrates that these individuals turned almost at once from mining gold in order to become

retailers and clothing merchants and eventually to establish themselves as leading citizens of their communities.

Martin, Bernard. Edited by. *Movements and Issues in American Judaism. An Analysis and Sourcebook of Developments Since 1945.* Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978. vi, 350 pp. \$19.95

"All specific predictions about the future of the American Jewish Community are hazardous," Bernard Martin rightly states in his worthwhile introduction to this volume. But certainly, after reading the thoughtful and comprehensive essays in *Movements and Issues in American Judaism*, the reader is in an excellent position to make a very educated guess. Topics discussed concerning American Judaism after 1945 include Jewish demographics, Jewish communal and philanthropic organizations, the various religious "denominations" within Judaism, the Israeli state and America, Canadian Jewry, Jewish education, anti-Semitism and intermarriage. Among the authors whose essays are featured here, one may find Michael A. Meyer, Daniel Jeremy Silver, Sidney Z. Vincent, Eric Rosenthal, Eric Friedland, W. Gunther Plaut and David Polish. There is also a highly useful selected bibliography at the end of the book.

Miller, Randall M., and Thomas D. Marzik, Edited by. *Immigrants and Religion in Urban America.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1977. xxii, 170 pp. \$12.50

This collection of essays was originally presented as part of a series of symposia entitled "Religious Freedom: Churches and Ethnic Communities in the American City" held at Saint Joseph's College in Philadelphia. The essays in this volume reflect the integrating theme of the symposia, namely "the relationship between religion or religious beliefs and the ethnic experience in post-Civil War urban America." Included in the essays is one by Maxwell Whiteman entitled "Western Impact on East European Jews: A Philadelphia Fragment."

Mirsky, Norman B. *Unorthodox Judaism.* Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1978. xiv, 213 pp. \$12.00

Rabbi Norman B. Mirsky is a Reform rabbi with a Ph.D. in humanistic sociology. He is also a Jewish father and an American Jew who, as he puts it, is "worried about the future of Judaism and the Jewish people, yet longing for his children's self-fulfillment as American Jews." In this respect, he is like many young American Jews who are products of the tumultuous 1960's and 1970's. He is thus aware of a crisis (or crises) in the non-orthodox ranks of American Jewry fostered by the tremendous social and religious upheavals of the last two decades. The very important question that Professor Mirsky raises at the outset of this book, "how the Jew remains a Jew against the immense magnetic forces emanating from the larger non-Jewish society around him," is the oldest sixty-four-dollar question in the anguished psyche of Diaspora Jewry. Heretofore in Jewish history the answer may have been to withdraw further into the ghetto mentality, to become a secret Jew, or to face forced extinction. These answers do not solve the needs of today's "now" generation of American Jews. Jewish souls in conflict, continuing "to wrestle within and without to preserve their mystical covenant," is what Rabbi Mirsky's book is all about. All the "Jewish souls in conflict" unwilling to look back into traditional orthodoxy as a means of preserving their Jewish identities, are urged to look ahead with Rabbi Mirsky at the various

roads to unorthodox Judaism which are being created in the latter part of the twentieth century. The decision to enter upon one of these roads may be the most important choice that they as twenty-first-century American Jews may ever have to make.

Namias, June. *First Generation. In the Words of Twentieth-Century Immigrants.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1978. xviii, 234 pp. \$12.95

This book is described as being "the first collection of oral histories that deals with the American immigrant experience from a multi-ethnic approach." The volume focuses not only upon immigrants, those coming to another nation of their own free will, but upon refugees, who often had to flee their native land in order to avoid racial or religious persecution. There are several immigrants or refugees of Jewish background who describe their lives before and after their arrival upon American shores.

Noveck, Simon. *Milton Steinberg: Portrait of a Rabbi.* New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1978. xii, 353 pp. \$15.00

Rabbi Milton Steinberg made a deep and lasting impression upon the American rabbinic and upon the Conservative Jewish movement to which he belonged. It was not only the quality of his theological essays, writings which remain relevant to our present day, but also his "quality of genuineness," as Abram Sachar described it, which merit a full-length biography of Rabbi Steinberg. Rabbi Simon Noveck, Steinberg's successor at the Park Avenue Synagogue and his former student, has written a perceptive and sympathetic book detailing the life and thought of a gifted Jew and human being.

Postal, Bernard, and Lionel Koppman. *Jewish Landmarks of New York: A Travel Guide and History.* New York: Fleet Press Corporation, 1954, 1978. 287 pp. \$5.95

This revised edition of *Jewish Landmarks of New York* is in a way, as Jacob R. Marcus states in the *Foreword*, "... the only complete history of the Jews of New York—the chronicle of more than three centuries of our people in one of the greatest cities in the world."

Urofsky, Melvin I. *We Are One! American Jewry and Israel.* Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1978. xv, 536 pp. \$10.95

In many ways this book is the successor volume to Professor Urofsky's acclaimed *American Zionism from Herzl to the Holocaust*. It relates the history of American Zionism since 1942, interprets the relationship of American Jewry to Israel since that date, and attempts to "examine the complex set of relationships which form the unique bonds between the world's two largest Jewish communities."

Walters, Judith Allison. "Documents and Charts Relating to Certain Jewish Families . . . In Particular Grynszpan, Kmiotek, Melcer, Mycnamacher, Pyszna, Rozen, and Wejntrop, in the Towns of Przasnysz and Ciechanow, Warsaw, Poland." Order from Judith Allison Walters, P.O. Box 129, Bothell, Washington 98011. 58 pp. \$6.75

This ambitious undertaking was completed with help from Polish authorities and the microfilm holdings of the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City.