

Book Review

Hertzberg, Steven. *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845-1915.* Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1978. 352 pp. \$12.00.

At long last community histories are no longer a stepchild in the field of American Jewish studies. In the last few years a number of articles have appeared in which scholars have applied the quantitative techniques of the "new urban history" to the writing of histories of American Jewish communities. Steven Hertzberg's *Strangers Within The Gate City* is the first such book-length study to be published. Hertzberg's well-researched and methodologically innovative work gives us insight into the social history of a prominent Southern Jewish community. But the shortcomings of previous community histories, so perceptively discussed in Hertzberg's introduction, are only partially transcended in the body of his book.

Hertzberg's methodological innovation is his use of primary sources generally ignored in the past in the writing of American Jewish history. These include tax digests, census schedules, and city directories, as well as birth, marriage, naturalization, and death certificates. Such sources provided Hertzberg with information about the demographic, social, and economic life of nearly 2,000 Jews of Atlanta. He subsequently processed this data by computer. His study thus includes extensive discussion of demography, and economic and geographic mobility.

The major weakness of Hertzberg's book lies in his sometimes faulty interpretation of the quantified and historical data he presents. This is especially true of his attempts to place the Atlanta Jewish experience within the larger context of American Jewish social history. His conclusions are too often characterized by generalization and subjectivity.

Hertzberg chose to focus on post-bellum Atlanta because "no section of the United States has received less attention from students of American Jewry" than the Deep South. He rightly feels

that for the half-century stretching from Reconstruction to the outbreak of the First World War, the neglect is particularly acute. By his own admission, however, Atlanta's growth into an urban center was in certain basic respects atypical of the Deep South—which raises the question of Atlanta Jewry's representativeness among the Jewish communities of the post-bellum South.

Unlike such cities as Charleston and Mobile, Atlanta was a city without roots in a slavery-based economy. Atlanta, Hertzberg informs us, was rather "a creation of the railroads," growing "from a railroad terminus to a railroad junction to a railroad center." Founded as Marthasville in 1843, and renamed in 1845, Atlanta was a trading-post of fewer than 10,000 people on the eve of the Civil War. The city's population doubled during the war, and, of necessity, Atlanta became a manufacturing center. The city was largely destroyed by General Sherman's army, but was rapidly rebuilt, and within a decade had established itself as the major trading center of the eastern cotton belt. In a period during which older cities in the region were economically and demographically depressed, Atlanta experienced prosperity and growth more characteristic of the industrializing North. By 1910, the city's population had swelled to over 150,000. Unlike the cities of the industrial North, however, Atlanta's newcomers were not predominantly foreign-born. Rather, over ninety percent were native-born southerners, many of them blacks.

During the half-century Hertzberg writes about, Atlanta's Jewish community was never a large one. From a handful of families in 1860, the community grew to number 600 persons by 1880, and 4,000 by 1910. Through the 1880s, some seventy percent of the city's Jews were of German and Austrian origin. Occupationally, an equally high percentage were either merchants or traders. Between 1890 and 1910 over 2,000 Eastern European Jews moved into the community. In contrast to the pattern in the large Northern cities, where many Eastern European Jews became blue-collar workers, in Atlanta these later-arriving immigrants were as highly concentrated in the commercial trades as the earlier-arriving German Jews had been. Nonetheless, the Eastern European Jews of Atlanta constituted a distinct religious and cultural subgroup, and in the following decades the Jewish community experienced the usual tensions between acculturated German and newly-

arrived Eastern European Jews. The two largest congregations were the Hebrew Benevolent Congregation (the Temple) controlled by the German Jews, and Ahavath Achim controlled by the Eastern Europeans.

Hertzberg's study includes the extensive tabular analysis of many variables for the years 1870, 1880, 1896, and 1911. Besides place of birth and occupation, other factors he analyzes include: age, sex, marital status, wealth, and patterns of residence. The problem confronting historians using a quantitative approach has been how to integrate the facts and figures flowing out of the computer with more conventional sources and observations. Hertzberg's wise solution is to place his thirty-nine tables at the back of his book, thereby leaving the narrative unencumbered. But even the most diligent reader will find the tables difficult to get through, as a number of them are excessively complicated.

Hertzberg's impressive marshalling of historical and statistical data is marred by questionable interpretations. For example, Hertzberg's claim that "in their economic performance, the Jews of Atlanta surpassed not only their northern cousins but also their gentile neighbors" is based on his evaluation of the Jews' occupational status rather than their accumulation of wealth. The problem with his discussion of "skidders" and "climbers" is that he assumes that all merchants were of higher status than clerical workers or skilled artisans. It is apparently true that Atlanta's Jews were more likely than Jews elsewhere in the country to be merchants, but they were not therefore necessarily wealthier. In fact, in his data on wealth, one finds that among Russian Jewish men who arrived in Atlanta before 1896 and remained in 1911, over one-third had declared assets of less than \$50, and only one-fifth claimed to be worth more than \$5,000.

As far as the Jews' being accepted socially and politically, Hertzberg is convinced that "without forsaking their religious identity, the Jews of Atlanta participated extensively in the affairs of the general community and achieved a level of integration that their northern cousins could well envy." He repeatedly attributes this acceptance in large part to his claim that "the overriding preoccupation [of Southerners] with maintaining white supremacy tended to blur distinctions between different kinds of white men." The facts he presents simply do not support this contention. He

documents the fact that between 1890 and 1930 only one Jew was elected to local political office—and he was a fifth-generation southerner whose Jewishness was a well-kept secret. Moreover, elsewhere he notes that “only members of the [Jewish] elite had much contact with gentiles, and even these relationships tended to be formal and goal directed.” Furthermore, even for the most assimilated Jews, “club membership was a symbolic triumph that remained beyond their grasp.”

The channeling of anti-Semitism into hatred for blacks that Hertzberg supposes is belied by the Leo Frank case. The unpunished lynching in 1915 of this prominent Atlanta Jew, for a murder he did not commit, was more than a personal tragedy. It marked the climax of an anti-Semitic campaign severe enough to spur the founding of the Anti-Defamation League, and which, in Hertzberg's own words, “for several decades . . . hung like a threatening cloud over the [Atlanta] Jewish community, confirmation that economic success was no protection against bigotry.”

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Brief Notices

Bayor, Ronald H. *Neighbors in Conflict. The Irish, Germans, Jews and Italians of New York City, 1929-1941.* Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1978. xiv, 232 pp. \$14.00

An outstanding example of the integration of newer social historical methods with more traditional economic and political analyses, *Neighbors in Conflict* is a book replete with surprises. Everyone is familiar with the story of little Depression-era Jewish children who wandered out of their own ethnic neighborhoods only to be set upon by groups of other ethnics. That this type of struggle went on among adults, indeed whole ethnic groupings, is not surprising. What definitely is a surprise is the fact that in New York City, between the years 1929-1941, in the heyday of Hitler and Mussolini, and of the German American Bund, the major ethnic conflict occurred between the Jews and the Irish. Jews began, during the 1930's, to become numerous in two areas considered Irish avenues of upward mobility, namely teaching and the civil service. There was also tension between Irish Catholicism and a perceived Jewish socialism/communism. Finally, the Jewish community was outraged and frightened by the anti-Semitic Coughlinites and other right-wing groups. Despite its intermittent surprises, *Neighbors in Conflict* offers a constant flow of excellence in its narrative and methodology.

Belth, Nathan C. *A Promise to Keep. A Narrative of the American Encounter with Anti-Semitism.* New York: Times Books, 1979. xiv, 305 pp. \$11.95

Nathan C. Belth has really written two narratives. One is a general but effective history of anti-Semitism in American history and the other is an account of the actions taken by the Anti-Defamation League, the premier American Jewish defense organization, to counter the effects of that anti-Semitism. Belth's book is a useful introduction to an aspect of the American Jewish experience which demands further research and a fresh interpretation.

Berlin, William S. *On the Edge of Politics: The Roots of Jewish Political Thought in America.* Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978. 206 pp. \$18.95

Berlin is interested in the question of the political aspects of Jewish adaptation to America. He assumes that most Jewish immigrants to this country, whether they were Germans or Russians, came here with certain political opinions, however basic, among their cultural baggage. The author questions how those opinions fared against the prevailing ideas contained within American political thinking. He is especially interested in Jewish political thought within the context of "separation versus participation," the distinct antipodes of nineteenth and early twentieth century Jewish life in America.

Brauner, Ronald A., Edited by. *Jewish Civilization: Essays and Studies (Volume I).* Philadelphia: Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, 1979. 302 pp.

This volume of essays and studies is a response, according to the editor, to several

needs of the contemporary Jewish community, among them "to the hunger for meaningful . . . expositions of the varied facets of Jewish culture . . . and . . . to Mordecai Kaplan's challenging assertion that Judaism is best understood as an evolving religious civilization." Among articles of interest are those of Herbert Tobin on "New York's Jews and the Catskill Mountains, 1880-1930"; Richard L. Libowitz on "Some Reactions to *Der Judenstaat* Among English-Speaking Jews in the United States"; and Raphael Jospe on "Secularization and Religion in the American Jewish Community."

Chiel, Arthur A., Edited by. *Perspectives on Jews and Judaism. Essays in Honor of Wolfe Kelman*. New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 1978. 483 pp. \$25.00

This volume is a tribute to Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, the Executive Vice-President of the Rabbinic Assembly, for over twenty-five years of service to the rabbinic wing of the Conservative movement. Rabbi Kelman is described in this volume as being the "Conservative rabbinic statesman *par excellence*," and as a *talmid hakham*, phrases which indicate the measure of respect which he is accorded in the rabbinic world. Among the authors contributing to this *Festschrift* are Sefton D. Temkin, Elie Wiesel, Jacob B. Agus, Ben Zion Bokser, Chaim Grade, Abraham J. Karp, Jacob Neusner, and a *Personal Tribute* by Gerson D. Cohen.

———. *Day Book of Service at the Altar. As Lived by Samuel S. Cohon, 1888-1959*. Los Angeles: Distributed by Harellick and Roth/Booksellers. iii, 358 pp.

This volume is a factual record of the life and achievements of Rabbi Samuel S. Cohon. It is based upon his own correspondence, synagogue records and announcements, press clippings and the memoirs of friends. Rabbi Cohon was a tremendous figure in the world of American Jewish scholarship as well as a respected teacher. For more than thirty-five years he held the chair of Jewish Theology at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati.

Cordasco, Francesco, Edited by. *A Bibliography of American Immigration History*. Fairfield, New Jersey: Augustus M. Kelley, Publishers, 1977. xii, 475 pp. \$27.50

This is a reprinted version of a similar volume first published in 1956 but now updated by the author with several additions. There are numerous entries dealing with works on American Jewish immigration history. Most of the entries are annotated.

Dittmar, Kurt, *Assimilation und Dissimilation. Erscheinungsformen der Marginalitaetsthematik bei juedisch-amerikanischen Erzaehlern (1900-1970)*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1978. 512 pp.

This book is a contribution to the Anglo-American Forum series, whose main purpose is to "promote the interdisciplinary interpretation and understanding of English . . . language, life and letters." Dittmar is interested in the varying themes of marginality and their place in the literary output of American Jewish writers. He attempts to analyze marginality against the backdrop of the Jewish role in American literature and society.

Dobkowski, Michael N. *The Tarnished Dream. The Basis of American Anti-Semitism*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1979. x, 291 pp. \$22.50

In an important essay on the image of the Jew in German popular literature, the eminent historian of German anti-Semitism, George Mosse, urged his readers to "direct our

attention to cultural investigation." It was Mosse's contention that "only in this way will we be able to understand fully the continued influence of anti-Semitism which . . . seems to predate and to outlast its immediate political or social relevance."

Michael N. Dobkowski has taken Professor Mosse's advice to heart. In *The Tarnished Dream* he has undertaken a study of the image of the Jew in American popular literature. The reader of this important book is astonished at the depth and breadth of anti-Jewish attitudes among both the famous and unknowns of the American literary profession. As Dobkowski demonstrates, there was an anguish, an air of cultural despair, which not only was reflected by popular writers, but was expressed by such American Brahmins as the Lowells, Adamsons and Eliots. The object of that despair was the demise of the native born stock, the "great race" as Madison Grant termed it. The Jew, of course, was "instrumental" in its destruction. Perhaps most unsettling of all is the portrait that Dobkowski paints of the acute depersonalization of the American Jew, which the stereotypical literature helped achieve: "Jews became 'figures' merely, stripped of their uniqueness . . . to fit the stereotyped roles expected of them." This phenomenon corresponds closely to the situation in Germany during the Third Reich, where a movement such as National Socialism was able to incite hatred of the Jews by evoking a certain stereotypical image in the popular mind, devoid of real or human characteristics. That is why every German had a Jewish friend who was not like "those other Jews." Quite obviously, anti-Semitism in America during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries never evolved into the terrible endings engendered by its European counterparts. It is to Professor Dobkowski's credit, however, that he has shown us, at least in one respect, that we did not have far to go.

Hertzberg, Arthur. *Being Jewish in America. The Modern Experience.* New York: Schocken Books, Inc., 1979. xxii, 287 pp. \$16.95

Arthur Hertzberg has always "told it like it is," in terms of American Jewry. He has never minced words, either as an accuser or defender of what is and was bad or good about the American Jewish community. To some Hertzberg conjures up images of H.L. Mencken, a kind of Jewish "bad boy of Baltimore," railing about an American Jewish "Boobocracy." But to hold such a view of Hertzberg is to misunderstand him, totally. This is amply demonstrated by the group of essays published in this book. Professor Hertzberg has created in these pages a kind of paradigmatic Jew beset by a number of American Jewish problems and dilemmas. Rather than simply berate us for our lack of concern, Hertzberg asks us to confront those issues which he deems central to our continued existence as American Jews.

Kranzler, David. *My Jewish Roots.* New York: Sepher-Hermon Press, 1979. 88 pp. \$7.95

Perhaps the outstanding feature of this "how-to" on Jewish genealogy is its relatively inexpensive price. It includes standard sections on tracing one's roots. It is a useful supplement to fuller, more developed texts on the subject.

Leonoff, Cyril Edel. *Pioneers, Pedlars, and Prayer Shawls. The Jewish Communities in British Columbia and the Yukon.* Victoria, British Columbia: Sono Nis Press, 1978. 255 pp. \$15.00.

The author of this book is the Archivist of the Jewish Historical Society of British Columbia. Many of the photographs in this volume have not previously been published.

Cyril Leonoff's contribution is to be commended for the unusual manner in which it presents the history of this remote portion of Canadian Jewry, far removed from the centers of Jewish life in Montreal and Toronto. From the photographs, the biographical sketches, and the flowing chronological and thematic narrative, all blended into a single format, one derives a feeling for the history of Canada's prairie Jews.

Miller, Wayne Charles. *A Comprehensive Bibliography for the Study of American Minorities*. New York: New York University Press, 1976. (2 volumes) xix, 1,500 pp. \$95.00

The two volumes of this monumental reference work contain a total of 23, 300 entries, most of which are in an annotated form. A bibliographical essay that precedes each chapter highlights the most useful studies dealing with that particular ethnic group. The section on American Jewry is nearly seventy pages in length.

Mitchell, William E. *Mishpokhe. A Study of New York City Jewish Family Clubs*. The Hague, Paris, New York: Mouton Publishers, 1978. 262 pp.

In a time when even the Jewish nuclear family is no longer assured of an enduring cohesiveness, hardly anyone remembers the somewhat idealized extended family of the Old World. Jewish families in New York, coming as immigrants to an America which, because of urbanization and geographic mobility, threatened to destroy them, found refuge in the creation of family clubs, specifically the family circles of the older generations and the cousins' clubs of the newer ones. Both types of groups, as Professor Mitchell demonstrates, still exist today. As Professor Marshall Sklare points out in the *Foreword* of this book, "Jewish identity in the Diaspora is closely intertwined with the nature of the Jewish family." The existence of such family clubs may be an important key to the continuity and survival of the Jewish family in America at a crucial point in its history.

Norwood, Ella Feldman. *Not Bad for an Immigrant Boy*. New Haven: Oz Publications, 1979. 90 pp.

During his lifetime, Rabbi Abraham J. Feldman was a distinguished national figure in American religious circles. The senior rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel, Hartford, Connecticut, from 1925 to 1968, Rabbi Feldman attained the presidency of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Synagogue Council of America, and was co-founder and first editor of the *Connecticut Jewish Ledger*. He attained many other honors during his long service to Reform Judaism, his nation, state and city. Ella Feldman Norwood has written a sensitive account of memorable episodes in the life of her father.

Orbach, William W. *The American Movement to Aid Soviet Jews*. Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1979. x, 245 pp. \$15.00

Professor Orbach's work is an attempt to study the successes and failures associated with American efforts to aid Soviet Jewry, beginning with the post-World War II period. The author is sensitive to the question of internal tensions within the movement, especially between traditionalists and more modern activists. He is also aware of external factors important to such a movement, factors which reflect the actions of the oppressed as well as the oppressor and of world public opinion. Orbach also studies this movement in a comparative sense, analyzing previous American movements to help Armenians in World War I, victims of the Holocaust and the creation of Israel, among others.

Pratt, Norma Fain. *Morris Hillquit. A Political History of an American Jewish Socialist.* Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1979. xi, 272 pp. \$18.50

At the outset of the First World War, one of the last leaders of the German Conservative Party, Cuno Graf Westarp, stood and shook hands with deputies from the German Social Democratic Party. This was an event which merited attention—Westarp had never before recognized, much less talked to a socialist representative of the German Reichstag. The occasion, too, was momentous—the Social Democrats had just voted yes in favor of German war credits, thereby completing the last stage in their absolute decline as the party of revolution within German politics.

Imagine, then, a figure such as Morris Hillquit, an urbane, successful attorney and a devotee of German *Kultur*, who was at home among the ranks of the educated and prosperous bourgeoisie. Imagine such a man as a major figure in American socialism and eventually as the acknowledged leader of the American Socialist Party.

It is this study in contradictions which serves as the strength of Professor Pratt's political history of Morris Hillquit. A believer in the non-violent transformation of American capitalist society, Hillquit was nevertheless an outspoken advocate of resistance to American involvement in World War I. An active civil rights lawyer and trade unionist, he nevertheless took an almost benignly authoritarian attitude toward workers, and often discouraged the need for a working-class base for socialist politics. An Eastern European Jew who, according to Professor Pratt, "transferred his allegiance from the Jewish *folk* to the American people," Hillquit ultimately became identified as an unhealthy foreign element within American socialist ranks.

The author passes no final judgement on Morris Hillquit. This seems to be a sensible thing to do. Because there is so little documentation on Hillquit the man, Professor Pratt is unable to evaluate him fully in terms of both the public and private records. We are thus unable to understand Hillquit as a Socialist, Jew, and American. Nevertheless, as political history, this is an outstanding work.

Rosen, Gladys. Edited by. *Jewish Life in America. Historical Perspectives.* New York: Institute of Human Relations Press of the American Jewish Committee and Ktav Publishing House, 1978. xv, 198 pp.

The essays in this volume were originally delivered under the auspices of the American Jewish Committee. They were given as part of the Bicentennial celebration in order to illuminate the American Jewish experience. Among the authors whose lectures have been published in this book are Marshall Sklare, Moses Rischin, Gerson D. Cohen, Irving Howe and Richard B. Morris.

Rosenberg, Ethel and David. *To 120 Years! A Social History of the Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation (1856-1976).* Indianapolis: Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, 1979. x, 192 pp.

It is immediately noticeable to the trained eye that this volume is the creation of professionals. This is indeed a model for congregational histories, one which includes numerous important photographs. *To 120 Years!* is an objective examination of even the most controversial issues associated with the history of this outstanding Indiana congregation.

Rosenberg, Leon Joseph. *Sangers'. Pioneer Texas Merchants.* Austin, Texas: Texas State Historical Association, 1978. 135 pp.

The Sanger-Harris firm, which now has ten locations in the Dallas-Fort-Worth, Texas, area, is one of the finest department stores in the country. This volume chronicles the history of the original store, Sanger Brothers, which opened in the middle of the nineteenth century. It analyzes the successes and failures of this well-known Texas business concern.

Rosenbloom, Joseph R. *Conversion to Judaism. From the Biblical Period to the Present.* Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1978. xiii, 178 pp.

For almost as long as they have been a people, Jews have been the targets of attempts to convert them. Often these efforts were accompanied by physical intimidation, in which the choices were either to convert or face the penalty of death. In modern times, the methods of conversion have become more subtle, to the point where there are active missions to the Jews which are composed of former Jews.

It thus seems incomprehensible that Jews should want to convert others to their faith. In fact, conversion to Judaism has been largely a choice of non-Jews. In America, Orthodox and Conservative rabbis remain firm in their efforts to dissuade potential converts, and Reform rabbis, while hardly as firm, normally do not take the initiative in approaching potential converts. And so the popular myth has developed that Jews have never actively sought to convert.

Dr. Rosenbloom's book dispels this myth and demonstrates that until three or four centuries ago Jews had been active in conversion efforts and that in certain periods of Jewish history almost aggressive. This book brings the historical question of conversion to Judaism into its proper perspective. In light of increasing Jewish intermarriage, of Jewish reluctance to have children, of our inability to replace the six million lost in the Holocaust, this book is as timely as it is both scholarly and readable.

Sarna, Jonathan D., Edited by. *Jews in New Haven.* New Haven: Jewish Historical Society of New Haven, 1978. iv, 148 pp.

This is the first publication of what is hoped are many put out by the Jewish Historical Society of New Haven, Connecticut. It contains listings of archival and bibliographical materials relating to New Haven Jewry as well as articles by Arthur Chiel, Jonathan Sarna, Dan Oren, Roberta Friedman, and Werner S. Hirsch among others.

Speisman, Stephen A. *The Jews of Toronto. A History to 1937.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979. 380 pp. \$19.95.

With the publication of this book, there now is added another name to the small group of major historians, among them B.G. Sack and David Rome, of the Canadian Jewish experience. Dr. Speisman's history of Toronto Jewry to 1937 is well-written and based upon an impressive number of sources, including numerous oral interviews. One hopes that Speisman will continue to research the history of Toronto Jewry beyond 1937 in a subsequent volume.

Stein, Kenneth W. *A History of the Ahavath Achim Congregation, 1887-1977.* Atlanta: Standard Press, Inc., 1978. 89 pp.

Atlanta's Ahavath Achim synagogue, known to its congregants as the "Big Shule" or more recently as "AA," was founded in 1887, the year in which eighteen Orthodox Jews from Eastern Europe petitioned the Superior Court of Fulton County for permission to

charter the institution. Since that time, more than ninety years ago, Ahavath Achim has developed into a Conservative congregation of more than eighteen hundred members and contains one of the most extensive religious school programs in the country.

Stern, Paula. *Water's Edge: Domestic Politics and the Making of American Foreign Policy.* Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1979. xix, 265 pp. \$19.95

It is to the German historian Eckart Kehr that we owe the phrase "the primacy of domestic politics." It was Kehr's contention that the machinations of Wilhelmine Germany's political groups ultimately shaped the evolution of its foreign political policies. This concept of "linkage" is widely accepted, except for those few who still see foreign policy as the main determinant of domestic politics or those that seek a synthesis.

It is also Paula Stern's contention that domestic politics in America shaped this nation's foreign political dealings with the Soviet Union, both in the area of human rights (notably the question of Soviet Jewry) and U.S.-Soviet trade, each of which eventually became linked to the other. Dr. Stern concludes that one man—Senator Henry Jackson—was responsible for this linkage and that American pressure groups such as Jewish and labor organizations were able to help shape international dealings between the Russians and the United States.

Treloar, Wilbert H. *Cohodas. The Story of a Family.* Marquette, Michigan: The Northern Michigan University Press, 1977. 256 pp. \$6.95

In the Upper Great Lakes region of Michigan and Wisconsin, the family name Cohodas has become synonymous with large-scale banking corporations and produce distribution. Immigrant Jews from Poland, the Cohodas family, and especially the family patriarch, Sam, have earned national recognition, not only for their financial successes, but also for their integrity and generosity.

Urofsky, Melvin I., Edited by. *Essays in American Zionism, 1917-1948.* (Herzl Year Book, Volume VIII). New York: Herzl Press, 1978. 311 pp. \$12.50

After an absence of several years, the Herzl Year Book has once again appeared as a welcome addition to the historiography of American Zionism. This volume, edited by Melvin I. Urofsky, includes essays by, among others, Sarah Schmidt, Naomi Cohen, Carl Hermann Voss, Melvin I. Urofsky and Selig Adler.

Weisbrot, Robert. *The Jews of Argentina. From the Inquisition to Perón.* Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979. xiii, 348 pp. \$12.50

Robert Weisbrot's important study of Argentinian Jewry begins and ends on a similarly sad note, namely the suffering and pain of being a Jew, either in the form of a New Christian in the seventeenth century or a modern Argentinian citizen of the twentieth, in this Latin American nation. Sandwiched between this disheartening element of continuity is an extremely useful (although unscholarly) and well-written account of the world's fifth largest Jewish community.

The history of Argentinian Jewry parallels, in many ways, the establishment and growth of Jewish communities after 1880 in major parts of the Western Hemisphere: emigration as a result of anti-Jewish feeling in the old homeland; the desire for a new and better way of life; the emergence of a benevolent and idealistic benefactor such as Baron de Hirsch; and, finally, the encounter with a much larger and mostly Christian society.

Yet to speak of the parallel stages of development among Jewish communities in the Western Hemisphere today is no longer valid. Some of these communities are enjoying a veritable "golden age." Others, and especially Argentina, are experiencing a continuation of anti-Jewish hostility and physical violence. There is a combined onslaught against one's Jewishness in these latter communities by both the political left and right, the whims of the current *caudillo* dictator, his ministers and military, as well as the illogical rhetoric of minority fringes within the Roman Catholic church.

What then of the young Jews in Argentina? What of those that may well feel a new pride in being Jewish in a world where a Jewish state continues to survive against disastrous odds, where the ghetto mentality is practically extinct? What of this Jewish pride, this successful synthesis of a Jewish and Argentinian consciousness?

Such a paradigm of Jewish existence may well have its roots in any number of diaspora communities—but not in Argentina. "In Argentina," predicts the editor of a well-known Jewish journal in Buenos Aires, "Jewish life will disappear within fifty years."

Vincent, Sidney Z. and Judah Rubinstein. *Merging Traditions. Jewish Life in Cleveland.* Cleveland: The Western Reserve Historical Society and the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, 1978. 283 pp. \$10.00

With the publication of this volume, which includes an impressionistic narrative account of Jewish life in Cleveland from 1945 to 1975 and a pictorial record from 1839 to 1975, the Jewish community of Cleveland has made a genuine contribution to American Jewish communal history. This is especially true when seen in the light of Lloyd Gartner's *History of the Jews of Cleveland (AJA, April, 1979)*, an outstanding scholarly study of the community to 1945.

The Jewish community of Cleveland, accurately described as "one of the most creative and productive Jewish communities on the continent," has now extended the challenge to other Jewish communities throughout the Western Hemisphere to match or surpass this first-rate publishing achievement.