

Book Reviews

Moore, Deborah Dash. *At Home in America: Second Generation New York Jews*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1981. xiii, 303 pp. \$15.95.

At Home in America captures the direction and spirit of metropolitan-area Jewish neighborhood life outside the immigrant hubs of New York during the interwar period. Utilizing a disparate range of literary, periodical, communal, and oral sources—woven together efficiently by a historian of unique creativity and sensitivity—it is the first work to chronicle effectively the saga of that younger cohort of second-generation American Jews which began the march to suburbia. Equally important, it is a volume which contributes significantly to our understanding of the progress of Jewish identification in an era usually studied only from the perspective of the then-problematic Jewish minority-group status.

Moore is at her descriptive best in detailing the growth history of the new middle-class neighborhoods constructed in the outlying-boroughs and on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. She explores the role Jewish builders played in constructing modern apartments—complete with “spacious rooms, stained glass windows . . . self-operating absolutely fool-proof Otis elevators”—that provided the acculturated, upwardly-mobile American Jew with an “ethnic version of the American Dream.” Ever the good economic-urban historian, she is also quick to emphasize that the 1920’s did not bring equal prosperity to all Jews. The movement to what was then defined as suburbia involved Jews of many different economic stations, and as she notes, the Grand Concourse adjoined working-class Hunts Point, while the burgeoning community of Borough Park was not far from impoverished Williamsburg.

Far more significant than Moore’s conclusion that Jews moved, however, is that they migrated together—albeit with class distinctions—and there in the new neighborhoods created institutions consciously designed to facilitate the next generation’s synthesis of Jewish and American values and mores. In doing so they were repudiating

Louis Wirth's contemporary prediction that the Jew was destined to rapidly assimilate once acculturated and then removed from the immigrant ghetto. As Moore demonstrates, Jewish population concentrations in the outer boroughs were as pronounced as those on the Lower East Side. Moreover, while the social-religious efforts of Conservative synagogue-centers, and the successful campaign to legitimize Hebrew in the American heritage by including it in the public school curriculum, did not halt totally the inevitable inroads of assimilation, these proclivities and efforts offered Americanizing Jews a new, proud, unifying Jewish rootedness and identity quite different and far more resilient than that of their immigrant parents.

The 1920's, however, were not the time for beginning the struggle to perpetuate a second-generation identity, nor were the suburbs of that era the place for such efforts. Unfortunately, Moore's otherwise excellent study fails to note the important inner-borough background to interwar attempts to stem assimilation. As early as 1900 American-born, university-enrolled Jews on the Lower East Side, children of the first Russian-Jewish immigrants to reach these shores at the start of the 1880's, were already concerned with reconstructing the traditional synagogue along American lines in order to stem disaffection with the ancestral faith. Some of these Jews identified with the Jewish Endeavor Society, a project encouraged by the Jewish Theological Seminary. Others spoke out through the early Orthodox Union for English sermons and prayers, decorum, and most importantly, ancillary synagogue activities. These earliest initiatives laid the groundwork both for the inauguration of the Young Israel Synagogue downtown and in Brownsville and for the Institutional Synagogue in Harlem in the early 1900's.

Significantly, some of the individuals Moore correctly identifies as inspiring and leading the anti-assimilationist struggles of a later period began their communal careers here well before they and the younger segment of their generation acquired the economic resources to settle beyond the ghettos. Such evidence certainly argues for a wider periodization than Moore's for the study of a maturing second-generation Jewish life in New York.

That many of the second-generation individuals and Americanized institutions identified by Moore as predating World War I characterized themselves as Orthodox—we would today call them American

or Modern Orthodox—gives pause for comment on one additional unfinished aspect of Moore's work, her treatment of Orthodox Jewish adjustment patterns during the interwar years. While undeniably sensitive to the expressed desire of segments within that denomination to accommodate traditional Judaism to American life (her chapter on the evolution of Yeshiva College is a valuable case in point), Moore has not chosen the best example of this difficult process for close investigation. A more intriguing study would have been an exploration of what became of the synagogue-center concept within Orthodox precincts, and even more specifically, of the fate of the Young Israel movement during the interwar years. To be sure, Moore does note one Orthodox rabbi's negative response to the proliferation of late-Friday-night services among congregations beginning to identify themselves as Conservative. But more needs to be known about those synagogues which embraced America short of accepting the non-Jewish world's clock or its sense of appropriate prayer seating arrangements. In fairness, it may well be that such a study was envisioned but not completed and was stymied by the sorry state of record-keeping among Orthodox Jews a generation or so ago.

These criticisms—which in reality are primarily calls for future work by this and other historians—do not obscure the overarching value of a book which may well emerge as the standard work on its subject. For far too long, second-generation American Jews have been seen as disappearing from history or have been deemed too difficult to identify for historical study. Moore's book has provided us with both a methodology for future research outside of the New York milieu and a conclusive refutation of this "easy way out" in the study of a significant generation in the American Jewish experience.

— Jeffrey S. Gurock

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Schwarz, Jordan A. *The Speculator: Bernard M. Baruch in Washington, 1917–1965*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1981. 680 pp.

Bernard M. Baruch embodied the American dream at its most extravagant. Born in Reconstruction South Carolina, the son of a German-Jewish immigrant physician and an impoverished Southern belle, he became a New Yorker when in 1880 his family moved north. In the 1890's the young Baruch began to play the New York stock market, and within a decade—using methods which Jordan A. Schwarz's new biography of him thoughtfully warns would-be emulators are now generally illegal—he was a multimillionaire. Around 1912 Baruch, then in his forties and somewhat dissatisfied with mere money-making, turned to politics and contributed financially to Woodrow Wilson's first presidential campaign. Faced with the increasingly likely prospect that the United States would be drawn into the European conflict which broke out in 1914, from early 1915 he was a leading Democratic advocate of American military and industrial preparations for war. After American intervention Baruch won his reward: in March 1918 Wilson appointed him chairman of the War Industries Board, the official body which attempted to coordinate and regulate American industrial production in the best interests of the war effort. After the Armistice Baruch turned down the post of secretary of the treasury, preferring to accompany Wilson to the Paris Peace Conference as an economic adviser. Although during World War II he chaired the Rubber Survey Committee of 1942 and the committee which in 1944 studied postwar adjustment problems, and in 1946 served as chairman of the American delegation to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission, after 1919 Baruch, then just on fifty, never again held any major public office. As a private individual, however, he became something of a national institution, and for almost half a century was to fill the roles of self-styled "adviser to presidents" and representative *pro bono publico*, "park bench statesman," commentator on current events, purveyor of political and economic advice to all whom he felt might profit thereby, and a leading financial angel of the Democratic party.

In recent years Baruch's reputation has suffered an eclipse. The man whom in the 1920's George C. Marshall "enjoyed talking to . . . more than any other prominent character [except Newton D. Baker] . . . in Washington" has been widely regarded as, in John Kenneth Galbraith's words, "the most successful humbug since Henry Ward Beecher," vain, lightweight, a shallow self-promoter whose principal aim was to publicize a much-inflated picture of his own political sagacity and influence. "He was," wrote a somewhat uncharitable ex-mistress, "an obsessive conniver and manipulator who liked to be described as a mysterious Richelieu-like figure behind the scenes. There has been no more widely publicized secret string-puller in our history."

At least in some respects, Jordan A. Schwarz's new study of Baruch, the first scholarly full-length biography of him, dilutes the force of such derogatory comments. Summing up Baruch in 1965 Henry A. Wallace, an old adversary, wrote: "He did more good than harm but I doubt if the full truth will ever be printed." This book, which will certainly be the definitive work on Baruch's public career, comes as close to "the full truth" as any is ever likely to attain, in the process confirming Wallace's verdict. Prodigious, painstaking research in over eighty manuscript collections, including the daunting mass of Baruch's own huge accumulation of personal papers, has resulted in a monumental work which does BMB full—at over six hundred pages, perhaps even excessive—justice.

Schwarz presents his subject unsentimentally, giving full weight to the notorious vanity and egotism which led Galbraith to describe Baruch as "a man of self-inflicted self-importance." From World War I onwards the ex-speculator supported a phenomenal publicity machine whose maintenance, he estimated in the early 1940's, cost him an annual \$150,000 to \$200,000. At various times such leading journalists as Frank A. Kent, Arthur Krock, Samuel Lubell, Mark L. Sullivan, and many others graced his entourage, some on his payroll, others favored with financial advice, loans, hotel rooms, vacations, and choice inside information from the great man. For almost forty years the editor Herbert Bayard Swope was Baruch's inseparable companion and lavishly rewarded master-publicist, deploying a skill and budget probably unsurpassed by Hollywood studios to stage-manage his employer's indefatigable zeal for self-advertisement. Sedulous cultivation of the press ensured Baruch instantaneous and generally friendly

attention from leading quality newspapers and journals, especially the *New York Times*. Despite denials, a large staff generally wrote his numerous speeches and articles. John Foster Dulles earned \$10,000 in exchange for producing *The Making of the Reparation and Economic Sections of the Treaty*, supposedly Baruch's account of the American economic advisers' work at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919; ghost-writers, principally Lubell and Harold Epstein, were responsible for large sections of his memoirs, an earlier and unpublished version of which Marquis James wrote in the 1930's. Baruch also subsidized the writing of the War Industries Board's final report—reprinted at his expense early in World War II—and of Grosvenor Clarkson's official history of the WIB. Thousands of libraries and institutions throughout the United States received copies of these publications and of Carter Field's adulatory biography of Baruch.

Important though his hold on public opinion came to be, Schwarz demonstrates that Baruch's political reputation and influence rested not simply on calculated self-promotion but also on his wealth. Until the rise of organized labor in the late 1930's, he was the largest single financial contributor to the Democratic party's often threadbare coffers. Selected senators and congressmen, usually from the South and West, were recipients of his bounty. On major issues, especially financial and economic questions, key conservative Democratic senators, including Key Pittman of Nevada, Byron "Pat" Harrison of Mississippi, Joseph T. Robinson of Arkansas, and James F. Byrnes of South Carolina, rarely failed to consult Baruch. His political power reached its apogee during the final two years of Hoover's presidency when, as Schwarz's earlier monograph on the period has shown, he helped to persuade congressional Democratic leaders to support various Hoover-inspired measures, notably the establishment of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Although his failure to be "for Roosevelt before Chicago" and his distaste for many New Deal policies excluded him from the inner circle, Franklin D. Roosevelt's possibly erroneous belief that Baruch controlled the votes of sixty congressmen guaranteed him a modicum of attentive respect from the Democratic White House. Throughout the 1940's and even beyond, a Baruch pronouncement carried considerable clout on Capitol Hill, influence which politicians and presidents of both parties recognized and when possible gladly exploited. Baruch, who valued the prestige conferred by

presidential or administration favor, was rarely disinclined to oblige those in power.

Schwarz's Baruch is primarily the *homo oeconomicus*. Deftly and impeccably guiding the reader through the confused maze of half-a-century's American economic, monetary, and fiscal policies, Schwarz points out that Baruch, though a committed capitalist, "was frequently an outsider . . . in business" and not necessarily a barometer of either general or big business thinking. The stock-market operator attracted the disdain of such blue-chip bankers as the partners of J. P. Morgan & Company and the hostility of many other businessmen. In return Baruch on occasion argued that businessmen, especially big business and leading bankers, were overly greedy, and in the public or national interest should either restrain their appetite or be restrained. Baruch never, Schwarz believes, forgot the lessons of classical political economy, whose theory he learnt in Professor George B. Newcomb's classes at the City College of New York, and whose practice, on the stock market. He nourished a lifelong detestation of John Maynard Keynes, fueled in part by the British economist's patronizing criticism of Woodrow Wilson, Baruch's idol. Fundamentally an economic and fiscal conservative, advocating the law of supply and demand, balanced budgets, free enterprise, and the financing of expenditures through taxation, on rare occasions Baruch could tolerate deficit spending. Inflation in any form, by contrast, he never condoned. Schwarz suggests that as a speculator he found deflation and falling prices far more profitable than their reverse. In any event, in wartime and in peace, for fifty years Baruch waged a committed battle against all inflationary policies, endeavors which are this biography's most persistent theme and which Schwarz feels America's current problems make particularly relevant.

Second only to Baruch's anti-inflation crusade as a major thread of this work are his labors on behalf of wartime industrial mobilization. For any serious student of the subject, Schwarz's account of American economic mobilization during both world wars is indispensable reading. Baruch's most memorable public assignment was his 1918 chairmanship of the War Industries Board, where Schwarz believes he was more activist and less pro-business than Robert D. Cuff's excellent monograph on the organization suggested. His WIB experience remained crucial to Baruch's subsequent career. He quickly established a fraternal organization of ex-WIB officials, complete with its own gold

pin and annual reunions addressed by the chairman. Throughout the 1920's and 1930's his was a lone voice promulgating to the Army and those few others whom he could persuade to listen the lessons of national economic mobilization for war which his work during the previous conflict had instilled in him. Like Herbert Hoover and a few other "progressive" businessmen of the 1910's and 1920's, in peacetime Baruch, no disciple of "small is beautiful," believed in voluntary—but not enforced—cooperation among businessmen and between business and government, if necessary in disregard of the anti-trust laws. Indeed, in November 1918 Baruch with more speed than grace dismantled the WIB, within two months hastily ending virtually all governmental wartime direction of industry. During war, by contrast, he supported sweeping governmental management of the economy, the requisitioning of those raw materials and manufactured goods essential to the war effort, the imposition of wage and price controls to prevent inflation and profiteering, rationing, standardization, and heavy taxation, particularly of excess profits. War, he argued, was a time for national self-denial and social discipline, when the government's war production needs should take priority over civilian demand, even if this necessitated the compulsory conversion of industrial plants from peacetime to military purposes. Throughout the Second World War Baruch, though generally only an interested observer, propounded his philosophy of industrial mobilization; his advice, experience, time, money, and connections were freely at the disposal of many inhabitants of the chaotic and often antagonistic bureaucratic jungle of agencies that did duty as the official American war-production apparatus. Usually allied with the generals, lawyers, bankers, and businessmen who manned the War Department, Baruch strove to impose austerity upon the civilian population, expedite the war effort, and keep prices low. From the onset of the Cold War the Old Man again, though unsuccessfully, supported such measures, asserting that in fact if not by declaration the United States once more faced a wartime situation.

Though admirable, Schwarz's portrait of Baruch has its flaws. Perhaps reflecting his own preferences, his discussion of Baruch's foreign policy attitudes and activities occasionally gives excessive weight to economic considerations. Baruch himself later stated that on travels abroad and from his father, a refugee from Prussian Poland who at

fifteen fled the country to avoid conscription, he imbibed a hatred of Prussian militarism, facts Schwarz fails to mention when discussing Baruch's strong support from 1915 onward for military and industrial preparations for war against Germany. In what seems an even more glaring omission, Schwarz neglects even to consider the possible effect of Baruch's position and sympathies as one of America's leading Jews upon his attitude toward Hitlerian Germany, which he detested. From the mid-1930's onward, Baruch believed that war between America and Germany was inevitable. He strenuously advocated industrial and military mobilization in readiness for such a conflict, opposed the Neutrality Acts, and endorsed American aid to the Allies. Despite the contrary views of most leading American policymakers, including his close associates in the War Department, during 1944 and 1945 Baruch concurred in Henry Morgenthau's plan for the pastoralization and dismemberment of Germany and the destruction of her industrial base, and also called for the imposition of heavy reparations. Only increasing fears of Russia persuaded Baruch in 1946 to reverse himself and approve the economic rehabilitation of Germany as a bulwark against Soviet expansionism. Schwarz argues simply that Baruch feared cartelized, state-subsidized, and protected Germany manufacturers, taking advantage of favorable exchange rates and their own low wages, would compete "unfairly" with Americans for export markets, especially in Latin America; yet while from World War I onward the economic designs of other powers, especially the British Empire, aroused similar apprehensions in Baruch, he did not on that account anticipate war with them. Baruch was a far from totally committed Jew: his children were reared in his wife's Episcopalian faith, he claimed to be an American first and a Jew second, and though he gave large sums for Jewish war relief, it was only in 1946, when Israel was virtually assured of success, that he became a Zionist supporter. Nonetheless, the "American Disraeli" supported many Jewish philanthropies and observed high holidays; he was also a target for many anti-Semitic attacks and in Germany would have been a prime candidate for extortion and exile if not the gas chamber. Circumspect as the always-politic Baruch may have been in expressing his feelings, it seems unlikely that the Holocaust left him entirely indifferent.

It is, moreover, difficult to believe that whereas most leading New York businessmen of the 1920's "exhibited an internationalism of resig-

nation[,] Baruch demanded an enthusiastic internationalism." Faithful to Wilson's policies at the Paris Peace Conference, he continued to urge official American representation in the League of Nations and on the Reparation Commission, supported the reduction by the Allies of German reparations, and lobbied against the imposition of a protective tariff. Unlike many leading "internationalists," however, Baruch opposed the Washington Disarmament Treaties of 1922, possibly, as Joan Hoff Wilson has suggested of him and other Democratic businessmen, in revenge for the Harding administration's failure to join the Wilsonian League, but also because he felt that they permitted the Japanese, a "yellow race," to establish a sphere of influence in the Pacific. Unlike many prominent New York businessmen, he never supported the reduction or cancellation of Allied war debts to the United States, nor did he ever acknowledge the existence of any connection between the payment of those debts and of reparations. Baruch was not one of those American financiers and businessmen who played any part in the negotiation of the Dawes or Young Plans, and in the early 1930's he argued that the sources of the American depression were domestic rather than international.

In most respects, indeed, Baruch seems an unregenerate nationalist. Later, he opposed the Bretton Woods agreement of World War II, fearing that the World Bank and International Monetary Fund would prove agencies whereby European nations could take advantage of U.S. generosity to expand their economies and subsidize their exports, industries, and living standards at American expense. Only a burgeoning fear of Russian intentions induced Baruch, who had previously opposed the American loan of 1945-46 to Britain and expressed skepticism over Europe's supposedly desperate economic plight—"there are," he claimed, "too many Anglophiles, Francophiles and not enough Factophiles" among American diplomats—to support the Marshall Plan. Despite a lasting friendship with Winston Churchill, he always harbored deep suspicions of the British Empire, believing that the imperial preference system and government-sponsored cartels gave British industrialists an unwarranted advantage over American manufacturers and exporters. From World War I onward Baruch feared British designs upon international supplies of raw materials, especially oil; in 1947 he believed that the British had pulled their troops out of Greece in order to leave intact those protecting their Middle Eastern oil

wells. Inasmuch as he supported American intervention in both world wars and, provided it did not adversely affect any American economic or strategic interest, was no foe of his country's participation in international organizations, one could not term him an "isolationist." Reviewing his career, it seems most accurate to describe Baruch as an American nationalist who, due to the accident of his personal association with Wilson, supported U.S. membership in the League of Nations.

Throughout his life Baruch was to revere Wilson as his idol, to whom among subsequent presidents only John F. Kennedy could compare, and to use the principles which he had learned in this century's second decade as a political rule of thumb. While Schwarz recognizes this period's formative influence upon Baruch's thought, a more extensive initial discussion of his political philosophy, covering social issues besides corporate and economic questions, and mentioning the extent to which men of his type and era shared such attitudes, would have been welcome. Schwarz acutely observes that Baruch rarely took up ideas before they had become fashionable, a comment remarkably apposite in connection with his relatively late entry into the "progressive" movement. A thorough consideration of the belief in a national harmony of interests transcending special-interest groups, fear of class conflict, distrust of politics, elitism, sense of *noblesse oblige*, and commitment to "practical idealism" which characterized many contemporary middle-class reformers, not all of whom supported Wilson, might well have proved illuminating. As Schwarz later points out, throughout his life Baruch's ideas on commercial and economic issues—his perennial advocacy, for instance, of an apolitical supreme court of commerce to settle tariff policy, labor-management disputes, disagreement within and between businesses, and business-government relations, and of similar commissions to settle other important issues, and his belief that national policies should if possible benefit all constituencies approximately equally—reflected the influence of such thought. In view of the importance which family background often played in the making of a "progressive," Schwarz might have given less cursory attention to Dr. Simon Baruch's commitment to public service and his indifference to his son's financial achievements, attitudes which Baruch *filis* later averred were major factors in his decision to devote less time to business. Finally, since Baruch survived—

and often disapproved of—the New Deal, the Fair Deal, and the New Frontier, dying only as the Great Society programs came into operation, his biography presented a fine opportunity to explore the relationship between the various American reform eras this century, a coda twenty-five years on to Otis L. Graham's study of the old "progressives" and the New Deal. At a moment when the American government at all levels is perceived as embracing the principles of the pre-New Deal era, such a discussion would have been not untimely, and one regrets that Schwarz does not give this aspect of Baruch greater emphasis.

Such reservations notwithstanding, by any standards this biography is an outstanding accomplishment, gracefully synthesizing a vast and complicated mass of material, much of which a reviewer cannot even mention, and vividly depicting a character whom none other upon the American scene resembled. An unregenerate individualist, this prophet of corporate, economic, and social cooperation made himself into a public institution. At times Schwarz compares Baruch with both Eugene Meyer and Herbert Hoover. Meyer, however, bought himself the *Washington Post*, while Hoover spent eight years running the Commerce Department before becoming president of the United States. Other equally wealthy men ran for political office, established prestigious philanthropic foundations, or were associated with powerful financial or corporate institutions. By contrast Baruch, though he probably regretted his 1918 decision to decline the Treasury and in 1933 would have welcomed a cabinet portfolio, applied the majority of his energies to promotion of himself as a uniquely talented and knowledgeable individual. Schwarz maintains that in Washington he speculated in political influence much as he had once gambled in stocks on the New York exchange; if so, one must conclude that his later investments were probably less successful. Though superbly publicized, his political power was essentially peripheral and ephemeral, and he found it difficult to win official acceptance as a serious figure. In *The Best and the Brightest*, David Halberstam suggested that the true political insider rarely feels it necessary or even desirable to advertise his consequence. Within governmental circles Baruch's indefatigable efforts to win popular recognition as elder statesman and sage probably prevented his ever attaining the status of authoritative commentator on public affairs to which he aspired. Most of his time was passed, albeit often extremely agreeably, on the political sidelines.

Still, though his weaknesses provided much fodder for derision, Baruch scarcely deserves too harsh a verdict. His foibles were an expensive but harmless indulgence which many others found decidedly profitable; throughout his public career he was generally kind, affectionate, and exceedingly generous to a myriad of individual and institutional beneficiaries; on occasion, particularly but not only during World War II, numerous persons within and outside government found his advice shrewd and sound and his assistance invaluable; and frequently those politicians who mocked his insatiable vanity regularly turned to their own ends his eagerness to participate in public events. However great Baruch's desire for fame and recognition, he was less of a weather vane than is often suggested; over fifty years his basic principles remained fundamentally consistent and unchanged. Schwarz has given an impressive portrait of a colorful and picturesque figure, a notable addition to the motley gallery of variegated characters who have thronged the twentieth-century American political stage.

— Priscilla M. Roberts

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Herscher, Uri. *Jewish Agricultural Utopias in America, 1880–1910*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981. 197 pp. \$15.95.

One of the most fascinating aspects of American Jewish history is the story of the various agricultural communities that were established in the United States a century ago. The basic details of the ventures are vaguely familiar to students of American history, and from time to time articles appear chronicling the history of newly discovered colonies. What has been missing is a systematic treatment of these agricultural settlements. In 1943 Gabriel Davidson published *Our Jewish Farmers and the Story of the Jewish Agricultural Society*; seven years later Leo Shpall's lengthy article on the same subject appeared in *Agricultural History*. More recently, in 1971, Joseph Brandes considered the colonies established in New Jersey in his *Immigrants to Freedom*. All of these remain valuable studies, but a more comprehensive and scholarly volume on Jewish farmers has long been needed. To a large extent Uri Herscher meets this need in his *Jewish Agricultural Utopias in America, 1880–1910*.

As Herscher carefully notes, it is a myth to assume that no Jews farmed in Russia or Poland. It is not, however, safe to assume that Jewish agriculturalists in America were those who had farmed in the old country. In fact, there is no link between the two. Almost "without exception," Herscher observes, the Eastern European Jews engaged in agriculture in the United States were "inexperienced as farmers and were drawn from the artisan and intellectual classes" (p. 19).

Why were there efforts to encourage farming in the 1880's and 1890's? The utopian immigrants wanted to live off the earth. They hoped to eliminate anti-Semitism, which, they believed, was in part caused by the association of Jews with commercial pursuits. Moreover, farming would prove to the world that Jews could do physical labor. American Jews were receptive to these arguments because they considered agricultural colonies as places that could give useful jobs to the able-bodied poor who could not find suitable jobs in the cities. Since the number of Jewish emigrants leaving Russia increased dramatically after 1880, some American Jews viewed farming as a way to relieve urban congestion. Help from such philanthropists as Baron de Hirsch

and others for would-be farmers provided a further impetus for the colonies.

But the colonies were doomed to fail. Bad weather, social isolation, unsuitable land, and bickering amongst colonists were perhaps the most apparent reasons for the failure of the settlements at Sicily Island, Louisiana, New Odessa, Oregon, and Crémieux, South Dakota. The timing for the creation of the Jewish colonies could hardly have been worse. Low agricultural prices because of overproduction of crops, relatively high railroad rates to transport food products to market, and discontent from the Populists and others all marked the end of the nineteenth century. During the very years that utopian Jews sought to move to the farm the trend nationally was from rural areas to the city. So even with good weather and better land the Jewish colonies would have faced rather rough times. That the New Jersey agricultural colonies experienced some successes was largely attributable to their proximity to Philadelphia and the colonists' willingness to mix agriculture and industry.

Herscher is at his best describing the motivation of the colonists and the nature of their ideological rifts. He has read widely in a variety of sources in English and Yiddish—though the Shpall article in *Agricultural History* is conspicuously absent from his bibliography—and his conclusions are both plausible and well reasoned. The footnotes should prove invaluable to those wishing to find out more about specific colonies. Herscher's two appendices, which he has translated from Yiddish, make available important information neglected by non-Yiddish-speaking researchers. One wishes, however, that this book were at least twice as long. Excluding notes, bibliography, and appendices, *Jewish Agricultural Utopias* is a mere 121 pages long. One wants to know more about William Frey, the Russian Christian idealist, professor, and former tsarist army officer, who was the guiding force behind the New Odessa colony. Since this book will doubtless be the authoritative study of its subject, the reader is likely to wish that the author had been more comprehensive in discussing colonies. Admittedly there would have been the danger of repetition if all of these farming ventures had been chronicled in detail, but Herscher is unnecessarily succinct. All in all, these criticisms are minor and should not detract from the fact that *Jewish Agricultural Utopias* is an interest-

ing and well-reasoned book that provides insights on a subject too long ignored.

— Arnold Shankman

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Gartner, Lloyd P. *Hayishuv Hayehudi Beartsot Habrit Mireishito ad Yamainu* [The Jews of the United States from earliest days to the present]. Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1980. 146 pp.

After a series of important works on American Jewish communal history and Jewish education written in English, Professor Lloyd P. Gartner of Tel Aviv University has written his first book in Hebrew on American Jewry. The book specifically addresses Israeli readers and attempts to give them a succinct overview of American Jewish history from its beginning to contemporary times, encompassing Jewish social, economic, religious, and communal life. As Professor Gartner rightly points out, Israeli interest in the study of American Jews is a relatively recent phenomenon and the publication of Hebrew works in this field is still in its infancy; hence, an overview such as this is a clear desideratum.

The book itself is largely based on Professor Gartner's article on the Jews in the United States in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (vol. 15, cols. 1596–1648), although substantive additions and some internal reorganization of the material render it more than a mere translation. With only slight modification in periodization, the book keeps the essential historical framework of the *EJ* essay. Four of its six chapters survey the German Jewish immigration, 1820–1880; the Eastern European Jewish immigration, 1880–1920; the age of plenty and crisis, reform and peace, 1920–1945; and the postwar generation, 1945–1970. The other two chapters are new additions. The first, an introductory chapter, provides a sociological profile of American Jews, and highlights their special sensitivities to world affairs as well as their political, religious, cultural, and organizational activities in the United States. The second depicts the American Jewish community from its origins in 1654 through colonial times and up to 1820.

As a historical synopsis, the book succeeds admirably. In but a few sparing chapters, it manages to introduce an enormous amount of material and portray skillfully the basic contours of American Jewish experience against the backdrop of both American and world events. Patterns of Jewish demography, acculturation and assimilation, social and communal organization, intergroup relations, and the rise of

American forms of Judaism are all presented within the various historical and immigrant contexts with which the book deals. The Jewish contributions to American society are not lost in the narrative, nor is the impact of American culture on the Jews. While the student familiar with American Jewish history will find no startling revelations, he will nevertheless find the book quite useful as a digest and synthesis.

One suggestion: A second volume that would interpret and analyze conceptually some of the vital issues and trends in American Jewish life would certainly be a welcome complement to the present work. Questions and issues that could be addressed which would illuminate the American Jewish experience for the Israeli reader could include: What, if anything, is unique about the American Jewish diaspora experience—socially, communally, politically—from both a vertical and a horizontal Jewish historical perspective? What is specifically American about the various forms of American Judaism—how do they differ, if at all, from previous patterns of Judaism, and how do they engender a sense of ethnic solidarity? Moreover, of particular import to Israelis, how do we explain the incredible paradox that Zionism and Israel have won the moral, financial, and political allegiance of overwhelming numbers of American Jews but not their personal *aliyah*, despite an era with unprecedented practical opportunities for Jews to return to Zion? Further, how do we account for the vital role which Israel's existence plays in fostering American Jewish identity in light of Professor Gartner's own observation that Israel has not even won substantial American Jewish tourist interest, since only 10 percent of American Jews have visited the State! The fates of Israel and of American Jewry seem inextricably intertwined, and yet, the two communities seem to follow their own singular and often polarized socio-cultural paths. This merits some discussion. Finally, the impact of the Holocaust on contemporary Jewish consciousness and the way it is used to shore up American Jewish identity could also be explored; a discussion of the use and abuse of the Holocaust by American Jews might prove quite revealing about how a Jewish society structures its social existence and religio-cultural ethos in a free and democratic society.

It is clear that Professor Gartner's present work fills a great need in Israel in offering Israelis a lucid, insightful, and historically coherent account of American Jewish life. It is hoped that the book will spark further interest in the American Jewish experience among Israelis gen-

erally, and perhaps even stimulate the academic study of American Jewish history by Israeli scholars. Toward achieving the latter end, much yet needs to be done.

— Benny Kraut

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Brief Notices

Friedlander, Henry, and Sybil Milton, Edited by. *The Holocaust: Ideology, Bureaucracy, and Genocide*. Millwood, New York: Kraus International Publications, 1980. vii, 361 pp. \$35.00.

In 1977 and 1978 two symposia were held under the auspices of the National Conference of Christians and Jews at San Jose, California. They dealt with the significance and place of the Holocaust within the entire Nazi "phenomenon," a unique and much-needed approach. Most of the papers presented at the symposia sessions have been published in this interesting and important volume. There are outstanding essays by leading American scholars from several academic disciplines, among them Raul Hilberg, Franklin H. Littell, Henry L. Feingold, John S. Conway, Allan Mitchell, Lawrence Langer, Werner Angress, and the editors of the volume, Henry Friedlander and Sybil Milton.

Gittler, Joseph B., Edited by. *Jewish Life in the United States: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*. New York: New York University Press, 1981. xi, 324 pp. \$20.00.

This volume is a most important one. Without alluding to the fact, it is a clarion call for a multidisciplinary, multivolume history of the American Jewish experience. The field of American Jewish studies has long neglected such an approach, and no one historian is individually competent enough to explain all the varieties of the Jewish experience in this country. The contributors to this volume would be ideal members of an editorial board drawn together for such a project. The authors are Joseph B. Gittler on a general systems theory for the study of Jewish life; Sidney Goldstein on American Jewish demography; Morris N. Eagle on psychology and American Jewry; Everett Carll Ladd, Jr., on American Jewish social and political values; Samuel Z. Klausner on American Jewish sociology; Arcadius Kahan on the economics of the American Jewish community; Henry L. Feingold on American Jewish history; and Sol Tax on anthropology and the American Jewish community.

Gorelick, Sherry. *City College and the Jewish Poor*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1981. 269 pp. \$14.95.

When Columbia, Harvard, and other major American universities decided to impose a numerical quota on Jewish students soon after World War I, it was to keep from literally being drowned by huge groups of Lower East Side immigrants. In a sense, and by all accepted understandings of the Jewish experience with American education, this was a development related to the American Jewish passion for learning. Professor Gorelick has attempted to revise this notion in a book which must be read carefully and whose implications are bound to lead to a major reinterpretation of the Jewish immigrant experience from 1881 to 1924.

Specifically, Gorelick rejects two commonly accepted notions about immigrant Jews and American education. First is the notion that institutions of higher learning, such as New York's City College, allowed poor Jews to take their passion for education and turn it into professional success. Second is the belief that immigrant Jews came to America with "internalized middle-class values," and that a love of Talmud was easily transferred to a love for law and medicine. Rapid social and economic mobility through education is the stuff that myths are made of, according to the author. Instead, she claims, early immigrants did not care for higher education, since it was designed as to serve as a finishing school for proper Christian gentle-

men. Furthermore, there was such a great diversity among the early Jews from Russia—socialists, anarchists, and political types of all leftist colorations—that the term “inherited middle-class values” is nonsense. Instead Gorelick demonstrates that class mobility only followed class conflict, and that Jews had to work for change before they got change. Beyond this, in entering the world of American higher education, Eastern European Jews left a great part of themselves and their culture on the doorstep. Reform of education in New York was in great part due to the efforts of the German Jewish element, who hoped that education would serve as the great Americanizer, and deradicalizer, of the Russian Jew. It would be interesting to speculate whether the great crisis in American public education, the demise of the liberal college education, and the hunger of American Jews for their ethnic immigrant roots are part of the unraveling of that which the Americanizers hoped to achieve.

The Jewish Population of Rochester, New York (Monroe County), 1980. Rochester, New York: Department of Planning and Budgeting, Jewish Community Federation of Rochester, 1981. 61 pp.

This is a model community study employing scientific techniques in demography. The study is important certainly for the statistical information that it reveals. It is also important because the authors realize the need for such information “to plan programs and services in the coming years,” and because the authors possess a sense of history. They realize that “our community is in many ways a microcosm of the American Jewish community. This study will contribute . . . to the historical record of the Jewish experience in America.”

Litvin, Martin. *The Journey.* Galesburg, Illinois: Galesburg Historical Society, 1981. xi, 471 pp. \$10.00.

August M. Bondi was a member of the small but important group of Jewish “48ers,” German and Austrian liberals who opposed the reactionary rule of the Metternich era in nineteenth-century Central Europe. The “failed” revolution of 1848 was a further liberal defeat on the road to German imperialism and militarism, and was one of the largest nails driven into the coffin of liberal hopes for the creation of a democratic Germany. This failure of the “revolution from below” was solidified in 1879 when Bismarck fashioned an economic and political alliance between industry and agriculture. Liberalism as a political force was dead.

Yet the Vienna-born Bondi and other veterans of the liberal grab for power were in some ways able to transfer their idealism and democratic values to an America vastly different from their own continent. With the exception of a few immigrant rabbis, most of these individuals fit Isaac Deutscher's categorization of the “non-Jewish Jew,” men and women who used their political activism to go beyond Jewish identity into a sort of universalist self-image. In Bondi's case this was carried out through abolitionist sentiments and his eventual involvement with John Brown and his riders.

Martin Litvin's book is a well-researched biography of this noble and interesting figure in the history of American Jewry.

Metzker, Isaac, Compiled and edited by. *A Bintel Brief, Volume II: Letters to the “Jewish Daily Forward,” 1950–1980.* New York: Viking Press, 1981. x, 167 pp. \$10.95.

In 1906 Abraham Cahan created the *Bintel Brief* (Bundle of Letters) column in New York's *Jewish Daily Forward*. Cahan was an Americanizer, an individual who was willing to sacrifice nearly every vestige of European Jewish life (including the Yiddish language) for the creation of the new American socialist Jew. His column was advice to the immigrant lovelorn, those

convinced that America was the Promised Land but unsure how to get there beyond their physical presence. Cahan knew, or thought he did. This collection of letters to the modern column (Cahan died in 1951), unlike those of an earlier era, no longer includes pleas for advice about the departure of a husband to parts unknown or tales of woe about a young boy loving baseball instead of his violin. Instead they reflect the dilemmas of a new Jewish generation, sure of its American identity but no longer confident of its Jewish one. The letters also reflect the kinds of questions that highlight the impersonality of our modern society and the dilemma of growing old in America. While the questions and the situations have indeed changed since 1906, one receives the distinct impression that for the *Bintel Brief* the answers are still rooted in the years when it was trying to explain America to a generation of "greenhorns."

Paris, Erna. *Jews: An Account of Their Experience in Canada*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1980. 304 pp. \$15.95.

Jews: An Account of Their Experience in Canada is a highly readable effort to examine the micro- and macro-histories of a community yearning to know something about itself. Erna Paris has skillfully blended intimate portraits of Canadian Jewish life in Montreal, Toronto, and the Prairie Provinces with a survey of the important events in the national life of the community. She has also given us a most interesting glimpse into the left-wing politics and thought of the small group of Jewish socialists and communists who were active in Canada earlier in this century.

This is by no means a comprehensive history of Canadian Jewry. There is little or nothing on the development of Judaism in Canada, on Canadian Zionism, on Canada and the State of Israel, or on a number of other important topics. But Ms. Paris's volume was not intended to be more than what it is: an effort to allow many more Canadian Jews than ever the opportunity to understand themselves in the light of their experience. Erna Paris has raised many more questions than she has answered. For Canadian Jewish history, especially, that is a most positive development.

Schmier, Louis, Edited with an Introduction and Conclusion by. *Reflections of Southern Jewry: The Letters of Charles Wessolowsky, 1878-1879*. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1982. 184 pp. \$12.95.

The editor of this volume, Professor Louis Schmier, is a transplanted Northerner, a New Yorker, and a Jew, qualities which two or three decades ago would hardly have endeared him to the hearts of most Southerners. But the South of 1982 is a different place, and the Sun Belt phenomenon plus a deeper awareness by Southerners of the necessity for change in order to survive has allowed Louis Schmier to fit into his adopted region like the smoothest of kid gloves. Schmier, in fact, is a veritable one-man institute of Southern Jewish history. He is the only academic fully engaged in the study of the Southern Jewish experience, he is co-founder of the important Southern Jewish Historical Society, and he has created a pictorial exhibit on the Jews of Georgia which is a valuable addition to the historical documentation of the region.

Charles Wessolowsky (1839-1908) is brought back to life in the writing of Louis Schmier. In the comprehensive biographical sketch of Wessolowsky drawn by the editor, one can almost feel the tension in the dual identities inherent in the existence of the Southern Jew. In the series of letters written by Wessolowsky as he traveled to Jewish communities throughout the South in order to promote his newspaper, the *Jewish South*, B'nai B'rith, and the "family of Israel," one can begin to learn something of Jewish life in the South in the early years after the Civil War. One begins to understand its Judaism, its social and communal activities, the doings of its movers and shakers. Finally, in his conclusion, Schmier contributes a valuable essay on the

historiography of Southern Jewry and posits a number of probing questions about the nature and quality of its historical experience.

Urofsky, Melvin I. *A Voice That Spoke for Justice: The Life and Times of Stephen S. Wise*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1982. xi, 439 pp. \$49.00 (Paper, \$16.95).

Rabbi Stephen S. Wise was a figure larger than life. No one who heard him preach at his Free Synagogue, who heard the prophetic voice boom out the call for social justice in the fashion of Isaiah and Micah, could forget this giant of his time. Wise was as American as he was Jewish, and realized that each was a perfect complement of the other. He dared to do what few other men could. Who else would turn down a call to the most prestigious synagogue in the world, New York's Temple Emanu-el? Who else would espouse the Zionist cause with such vigor when his own religious movement and most of his rabbinic colleagues in that movement rejected it out of hand? Who else could be an intimate of presidents and at the same time arouse the hopes and emotions of young, lost children just freed from the horrors of the European Holocaust?

With such a place on Mount Olympus, the life of Stephen Wise would seem safe from the foibles of mere mortals. But Melvin I. Urofsky, one of the most prolific and gifted authors in the area of American Jewish history, has chosen not to avoid controversy. Instead, in what must be considered the authoritative work on Wise, Urofsky has confronted the controversy now raging about Wise, one that finds him particularly at fault in the generally woeful response of American Jewry to the Holocaust. Urofsky has done it fairly and with a good deal of impartiality. While he has not entirely set the record straight, his contribution is an important addition. One thing emerges from Urofsky's work beyond anything else. American Jewry was fortunate to have Stephen S. Wise while it did. The memory of his life and his work sustain us in a period of nongiants.

Weinfeld, M., W. Shaffir, and I. Cotler, Edited by. *The Canadian Jewish Mosaic*. Rexdale, Ontario: John Wiley and Sons Canada Ltd., 1981. 511 pp. \$27.95.

In the perennial search for the understanding of identity, the question "who is a Jew?" is closely followed by the nearly equally baffling "what is a Canadian?" Long before Americans began to understand the gravitational strengths of ethnicity, Canadians were living with relative comfort in the diversity of their geographic and cultural backgrounds, if one can exclude the tensions between Anglophones and Francophones. If America is a melting pot, or even a finely tuned and harmonized orchestra, as in Horace Kallen's view, then Canada is an artist's mosaic, an ethnic pattern of coexistence.

Even Canadians themselves have a difficult time accepting this identity, yet there is nothing to put in its place. Canadian Jews, too, suffer from this crisis of identity. In an effort to at least begin to understand what a Canadian Jew is, the editors of this excellent volume have offered the mosaic theme to study the diverse factors that constitute one of the largest, most important, and least understood Jewish communities in the world. The Introduction to this book, by William Shaffir and Morton Weinfeld, is especially instructive in its efforts to distinguish the differences between Canadian and American Jewries, an effort which was recently also undertaken by a historian of American Jewry, Jonathan Sarna.

In its attempt to combine such topics as Canadian Jewish history with studies of the social and political institutions of Canadian Jewry, with that community's subgroups, with its culture, and with a very candid view of the threats to its continued existence, *The Canadian Jewish Mosaic* has allowed the Canadian Jewish experience to become a much better understood one. The volume represents a quantum leap for the scholarly community interested in that experience, and for Canadian Jews who are interested in their past, anxious to understand their present, and concerned for their future.