

she left home at seventeen and went to Berlin, migrating to Paris in time for the Revolution of 1830. Her next stop was London, where she met Robert Owen, industrialist turned radical socialist, who advocated utopian communitarian reform. In 1836, along with other Owenites, she arrived in New York, and immediately found herself drawn to married women's property rights reform, followed by antislavery. Rose later became one of the most effective public speakers within the women's rights movement.

Anderson's main contention is that this core group of women, and others whom she calls the "periphery," constituted "the first international women's movement." She asserts that this group should not be "underestimated," because it "challenged the male dominance of Western culture and society in a way that would not be repeated until the late 1960s" (p. 27). Anderson properly demonstrates that these women had international contacts, and that some were more cosmopolitan than others; yet she fails to develop a convincing framework to explain what is meant by an "international movement." Actual relationships among the women remain sketchy; some befriended one or two other women, but nothing suggests that these women combined to constitute a distinct political or social movement. Disappointingly, Anderson does not sustain her analysis of the theoretical underpinnings of these women's writings. She ignores what these women understood quite well: that substantial differences among the legal and political conditions of their respective countries separated them in the most practical sense.

It is striking that concrete legal issues about "rights" are given scant attention in the book. Anderson's case would have been far more compelling if she considered how European feminists influenced activists in the United States, and vice versa. She certainly could have explored how specific national issues (definitions of citizenship, debates over property rights, wages, jury service, custody rights, domestic violence, and prostitution) were enlarged through an international perspective.

Intellectual traditions also divided these women: the most comprehensive work on women's religious and political condition written by an American feminist was Elizabeth Wilson's *Scriptural View of Woman's Rights and Duties* (1849), attacking moral philosophers John Milton, Francis Wayland, and a range of American biblical commentators. Yet Wilson is not included in Anderson's coalition. Anderson does not acknowledge that d'Hericourt's astute 1860 critique (published in America as *A Woman's Philosophy of Woman; or A Woman Affranchised* [1860]), adopts a different discursive strategy, and takes on a very different group of male intellectuals, including Jules Michelet, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, and Auguste Comte. Thus the book leaves the reader wanting a more fully developed cross-cultural, comparative study of the political environments that shaped these women's critiques of gender issues. For nineteenth-century activists, interna-

tionalism was built on the presumption of national identity and national difference—and this cannot be overlooked.

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DAVID G. ROSKIES. *The Jewish Search for a Usable Past*. (The Helen and Martin Schwartz Lectures in Jewish Studies, 1998.) Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1999. Pp. xii, 217. \$24.95. ✓

The Jewish masses, who, from the early nineteenth century, emigrated to America, passed a metaphorical crossroad that David G. Roskies calls the "Jewish Bermuda Triangle." If divers were lowered to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean midway between Hamburg and New York, they would find a million pair of phylacteries thrown overboard by Jewish men from ships taking them from the old world of Eastern Europe to the new world (p. 89). This was originally a critical remark by an Orthodox rabbi, fearful that values and normative patterns of behavior would be abandoned and opposed to the uncontrolled onslaught of America's temptations that commanded a painful price: assimilation and loss of faith. But it also eloquently illustrates two dimensions of modern Jewish life: the experience of uprootedness and the experience of secularization. They are, in fact, the focus of this captivating, perceptive book by Roskies, a historian of modern Jewish culture and scholar of Hebrew and Yiddish literature, whose identity was shaped by memories of his family's past in Eastern Europe, by the world of Jews in Canada and the United States, and by his empathetic mindfulness of developments in Israeli culture.

The central axis of this fascinating book is the experience of losing the past. Underpinning it is awareness of the intense crisis that gripped modern Jewry and spurred the transformation of their collective memory. Many of these Jews have lost the old Jewish world in Eastern Europe, and along with it, the commitment to religious practice, the acceptance of rabbinical authority, the Jewish library, and memories of the past. But this crisis, as Roskies shows us, is not destructive; rather, it poses an immense challenge to modern Jews, who have become secularized and now must shape for themselves alternative institutions, new ideologies, a new world of images, literature, poetry, and theater to feed the collective memory and reconstruct it.

Roskies maps for the reader the project of creatively rebuilding the collective memory. If there ever was a uniform collective consciousness, it has now been shattered; the cultural conflicts and the various splits into religious streams and political ideologies created differentiation. There is no longer a consensus among Jews about one past; in fact, they have many pasts, a whole, varied repertoire of memories shaped by the modern historical experience and harnessed to the needs of present-day life. There is a pasthood con-



structed by the socialists, one by the Zionists, one by American Jews linked to their Judaism through an ideal image of the *shtetl*, as it was depicted, for example, in *Fiddler on the Roof*, and there is yet another Israeli past linked to the local landscape.

Roskies's book is a study of modernity from the viewpoint of images. Unquestionably, this is a very productive approach that enables him to sensitively penetrate the consciousness of past generations and to understand from within the crisis wrought by modernity, as well as the attempts to overcome it. The heroes of the book are not professional historians but rather writers, poets, playwrights, composers, and singers who were intensely aware of the need to preserve certain forms of the past.

As if in a museum, Roskies takes us to several sites of memory, including Emmanuel Ringenblum's underground archive from the Holocaust period in Warsaw, which Roskies calls a "time capsule," a collection of life experience in the ghetto from a secular perspective; and the *shtetl*, which he regards as the most important invention of modern Yiddish literature. As he argues, it was actually the *shtetl* myth, not the real-life town, that played such an important role as a myth of roots for Jews of Eastern European descent. In a particularly absorbing chapter, Roskies takes us on a visit to the Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Queens, New York, where Jewish socialist leaders and well-known writers are buried, and points out the clear marks of secularity on the tombstones.

This book makes a valuable contribution toward an understanding of twentieth-century Jews' hardships, fears, hopes, and ways of coping with them. Anyone wishing to take a close look at modern Jewish identity or interested in the ways collective memory is constructed in circumstances of catastrophes, destruction and loss, emigration, secularization, a *kulturkampf* and the development of a national movement, will find it absorbing. The words of a leading ideologue, who tried to promote the utopian revival of Yiddish culture among Montreal Jews, aptly fit the spirit of the entire book: "We will forever search for the echo of chords sounded long ago that were never forgotten. Sounds, melodies, smells and memories. What we thereby seek is both our childhood, lost irrevocably, and that total *Yidishkeit* [Jewishness] that was possible under certain conditions once prevalent in the small *shtetl*, but impossible to reproduce here in the metropolitan American exile. That longing and happiness is an important psychic factor in our lives" (p. 146). I believe Roskies himself would have no trouble identifying with these words, and perhaps they deliver the main message of the book.

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MITCHELL B. HART. *Social Science and the Politics of Modern Jewish Identity*. (Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture.) Stanford: Stanford University Press. 2000. Pp. viii, 340. \$55.00.

In 1901, Max Nordau declared to his comrades at the Fifth Zionist Congress in Basel that "an exact statistical research of the Jewish people is an uppermost necessity for the Zionist movement" (p. 29). The following year witnessed the founding of the Verein für jüdische Statistik, dedicated to quantifying knowledge about world Jewry in the spirit of objectivity, science, and truth. In 1903, this organization's publication, *Jüdische Statistik*, announced a truth of the new century: "statistics . . . is the only, indispensable foundation for the understanding of human groups" (p. 28). The declarations of Nordau and *Jüdische Statistik* encapsulate the grand twentieth-century enterprise of Jewish statistical research, premised on the latest developments in social science and directed to the evaluation and reconstruction of modern Jewry.

In an inspired and judicious monograph, Mitchell B. Hart tells an intriguing story about the politicization and intellectualization of numbers since the late nineteenth century. Highlighting the period 1880–1930, Hart's study focuses on the intricate conjunction of social science and Zionism. From the start, politics guided the collection of Jewish statistics in Germany. Zionists at first, and Nazis later, had the most to gain from numbers that suggested the "degeneration" of Jewish people in modern societies. By focusing especially on declining fertility, the "master pathology" of modern Jewry (p. 74), and the related subjects of intermarriage and conversion, Zionist social scientists easily argued that assimilation meant the ultimate disappearance of the Jews.

The Verein für jüdische Statistik, although purportedly nonpartisan, was conceived by cultural Zionists who saw in social statistics a way to carry out essential "present-day work" (*Gegenwartsarbeit*), which meant action taken in the Diaspora to advance the Zionist cause. As a result of the new political organization of knowledge about Jewish life, the problems of intermarriage and conversion became sociologically rather than theologically urgent. The implications of this heuristic shift would be particularly manifest in the United States after World War II. There, statistics became a perennial launching pad for preservationist initiatives that included, to the posthumous satisfaction of the early Zionist statisticians, philanthropy to Israel.

The Zionist founders of Jewish statistical enterprise assimilated two features of modern Western society in their anti-assimilationist campaign: instrumentalist assumptions about social scientific knowledge and statistically based governmental policy making. By 1900, the processing of social statistics had become an element and emblem of progressive statecraft. Through quantified information, governments could monitor the migration, employment, and standard of living of workers; the ebb and flow of disease, insanity, and crime; and rates of fertility and immigration. On the basis of these statistics, policy was formulated. By creating statistical bureaus and producing social scientific knowledge about the migrating, industrializing