

men differ than those asked when studying the forces that subordinate women, these forces affect the same aspects of social and family life. For example, men are forced to leave school early to help support their families. Their wives are most often chosen for them. They are forced to subordinate themselves to their parents' will. Men in the research community, the author concludes, are no more liberated than women. Thus, it is clear that women cannot expect to be freed if men remain shackled to patriarchal hierarchies and obligations. This last position, as the author has presented it, left me with questioning thoughts, as I am not entirely convinced that women's liberation is dependent on men's liberation, although the two may be connected.

The book remains in the framework of traditional sociological research and feminist scholarship that engages in traditional objectives family, pregnancy, marriage, health and education and involves discussions of religion and gender. However, it lacks a cross-cultural perspective and looks at the research objectives from a Western perspective rather than a Middle Eastern one. The author admits that she cannot and will not tell the West Bank women how they should design their path to liberation. Consequently, the discourse of this study has limited itself in mapping the impact of the restrictions of Arab and Muslim tradition, as well as the Israeli occupation, in terms of oppression of these women's lives. The study provides us with a cultural fabric that evaluates the West Bank camp and village women from a missionary perspective. Women are presented as uncritical of the patriarchal, traditional or religious order, and rather as a female community that subjugates itself to male subordinators. From this perspective, the study implies that the situation is complicated not only immersed in the tension between traditional-modern patterns of conflict, but also caught in the Israeli occupation web but does so in a way that reifies the women. Within this framework, the study provides us with a solid account of the life experiences of the West Bank camp and village women, but remains unreflexive of the Western gaze.

Henriette Dahan Kalev
Ben Gurion University of the Negev

Fred A. Lazin, *The Struggle for Soviet Jewry in American Politics: Israel versus the American Jewish Establishment* (Lexington Books, 2005), 356 pp.

The struggle over the right for Jews in the former Soviet Union to freely emigrate was one of the most prominently advocated issues during the Cold War. Rallies drawing tens of thousands were held across the United States; the U.S. Congress passed resolutions and laws designed to pressure the Soviets; and American presidents linked emigration rights to détente nuclear arms control treaties. The force behind this cause was the world Jewish community, led by a powerful American Jewish lobby.

However, as this book demonstrates in meticulous detail, the debate behind the scenes as to where the Soviet Jews should go upon leaving the Soviet Union was as charged as the more public battle over the freedom to emigrate. This conflict pitted different American Jewish organizations against one another and against the State of Israel.

This book charts several key aspects of the campaign to allow Soviet Jews freedom to emigrate over the course of approximately a quarter of a century, from the mid-1960s to the end of the 1980s. The crux of the behind-the-scenes conflict was over the question of whether Jews leaving the Soviet Union should be sent directly to Israel, or whether they should be allowed the freedom to choose to immigrate to the United States. In adopting the latter position, American Jewish groups broke with Israel in a highly charged power struggle.

From the outset, the State of Israel viewed the two million Jews living in the Soviet Union as a potential source of immigration that could contribute to the State's demographic battle with the Arabs. Israel, fearing diplomatic backlash from the powerful U.S.S.R., worked quietly behind the scenes to raise the plight of Soviet Jewry in the American Jewish community. The issue was then presented to the American and world public forum as a matter of a minority people suffering persecution and being denied the right to rejoin their homeland. The problem, that is the focal point of this book, arose when Soviet Jews emigrated on visas to Israel, but chose instead to go to the U.S.

Throughout the period examined in the book, Israel asserted that Soviet Jewish émigrés should not be granted entry as refugees into the United States and demanded that American Jewish groups stop aiding their immigration and settlement in the U.S. The Israelis contended that the basis of the claim of a right to emigrate, and the reason for the Soviet government's willingness to let Jews leave, was the idea of family reunification in the Jewish homeland. By going to the U.S. instead of Israel, the émigrés negated the justification for their special status and endangered the chances of those who genuinely wanted to come to Israel. In going to the U.S.S.R.'s enemy, the United States, the émigrés offended the Soviets, while the use of Israeli visas for emigration was seen as dishonest and an insult to Israeli sovereignty.

American Jewish organizations, while sympathizing with Israel, took an independent stand on this issue that led to a conflict with the homeland that they so vocally supported. The position put forth by these groups was that the émigrés should have "freedom of choice." It was argued that no one should be forced to go anywhere. American Jews also called up memories of the Holocaust, when the doors to the U.S. and other countries had been shut to Jewish refugees, thus preventing the rescue of thousands. Representatives of American Jewish organizations also felt uncomfortable forcing Soviet Jews to go to Israel when they themselves preferred remaining in the United States.

The research in this book presents an interesting study of a clash between collective interests versus the defense of individual rights, which is central to political theory and

an important aspect of public policy. Israel's stance focused on collective interests. It was argued that, after absorbing uneducated and unskilled Jewish refugees from Arab countries, the State had a right to receive the better educated Jews from the Soviet Union. In other words, by fulfilling its obligations to help Jews in trouble, the Jewish State was entitled to certain collective rights. Israel also asserted that Soviet Jews going to the U.S. were more likely to be lost to assimilation, while in Israel they would be reunited with Jewish culture and the Jewish world denied to them in the U.S.S.R. Here again the view was toward the greater good of the Jewish people. Finally, those choosing the U.S. over Israel were portrayed as greedy and harming the struggle for Jewish national rights and using up precious exit visas that could have otherwise been used by those who genuinely wanted to come to the Jewish homeland.

In examining the Israeli position, it is worth noting the sociopolitical background against which this took place. From the foundation of the State in 1948 up until 1977, the government was dominated by the socialist Mapai Party (forerunner of today's Labor Party). The Zionist and socialist ideology of Mapai, which was shared by most of Israeli society, emphasized personal sacrifice for the good of the State and the Jewish people. It is within this context that one can understand the views presented by Israel during the first half of the period studied. The book characterizes the position taken by Prime Minister Menachem Begin, the Likud leader who led the government after the fall of Mapai, as somewhat less hard-line and more understanding of Soviet Jews who wanted to be united with family in the U.S. This change may be attributed to several things: Mr. Begin's personality, growing pluralism in Israeli society and the more classically liberal ideology of the Likud Party.

By contrast, American Jews' defense of "freedom of choice" for the émigrés can be understood in the context of their sociopolitical background. After suffering discrimination as immigrants to the United States, American Jews eventually became the country's most outspoken advocates of civil rights. Jews wholeheartedly embraced and espoused America's traditional liberal values and the individual rights guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution. Thus, while American Jews continued to be strong backers of Israel, they were bound to support the principles of individuals' rights that they had sought in the United States. In addition, the book points to the guilt felt by American Jews for their relative silence during the Holocaust as a factor in their actively supporting the right of Soviet Jews to enter the U.S.

At the peak of the conflict, during the 1970s and early 1980s, Israel moderated its stance and decided to back down to prevent a rift with American Jewish organizations, who were an important ally. However, when the Soviets opened their gates to mass Jewish emigration, the American Jewish organizations were forced to reverse their stand. As tens of thousands of Soviet Jews began to leave the U.S.S.R. in the late 1980s, it became clear that the preferred destination for the overwhelming majority of them was the United States. This created several problems for American Jews. First, they lacked the financial means to settle the growing number of immigrants. Second,

the American government had a limited number of places for refugees and did not want to accept all of those leaving the Soviet Union. Third, the American Jewish organizations wanted to avoid conflict with other American refugee organizations, which would have resented preferred status for the Jewish refugees. Finally, the American Jews also understood how important the massive number of immigrants would be for Israel. Consequently, American Jewish organizations abandoned the principle of "freedom of choice" and supported limitations on the number of Soviet Jews entering the U.S.

An interesting contrast is seen in the actions of two European countries, Austria and the Netherlands, that helped Jews leave the Soviet Union. These countries were far more consistent in supporting freedom of choice during the two and a half decades studied in this book. When American Jewish organizations tried to cooperate with Israel to steer more Jews to Israel, these two nations foiled their efforts by adamantly refusing to be a party to coercive measures.

Hence, despite espousing the liberal "freedom of choice" position, in the end American Jewish organizations, by and large, acted toward collective group, community and national interests. By opposing the Israeli position, the American organizations attained greater independence and power for their groups. In eventually abandoning the "freedom of choice" position, these organizations chose to preserve good relations with the U.S. government and other aid groups and not to risk anti-Semitic backlash that might hurt the American Jewish community.

While the Israeli position ultimately won out and the majority of Soviet Jewish émigrés came to Israel, primarily due to lack of an option of entering the U.S., it was not because the American Jewish community had succumbed to Israeli pressure. According to Lazin, the American Jewish community's agreement to limitations on the number of Soviet Jews allowed to enter the United States was a product of pressure by the U.S. government and the inability to provide economic support for the refugees.

A noteworthy comparison that arose in this book was with the Armenian community in the United States. Unlike the Jewish community, the Armenians did not help their brethren leave the U.S.S.R. According to Lazin, the Armenian-Americans viewed those leaving the Armenian homeland in the Soviet Union as traitors and did not wish to see them getting refugee assistance. The contrast between these two ethnic groups in pursuing collective interests is interesting.

In addition to the issue of collective versus individual interests, the research in this book is relevant to a number of other important topics. Foremost among them is the study of American Jews today as an ethnic group and as actors in the American political system. The ability of Jewish groups to influence Congress and U.S. presidents in their negotiations with the U.S.S.R. and make their agenda a key point in the negotiation between the two superpowers is truly impressive.

On a broader level, the research in this book contributes to the study of pluralism in the U.S. and the power of interest groups. This work also provides an important analysis of minority groups and their ties to their ethnic homelands. In addition, it provides an interesting study of the functioning of bureaucracy and organizations. More than once during this long struggle, American Jewish organizations were accused of being primarily interested in having Soviet Jews come to the U.S. in order to strengthen themselves. The infighting and rivalries between the organizations that were ostensibly supporting the same cause is telling. In addition, the Israeli government bureaucracy, a product of the centralist State during this period, is also criticized for making conditions difficult and uninviting for Soviet émigrés.

In charting the various dimensions of this highly charged issue, Fred Lazin sorts through an impressive amount of documentation, correspondence and files from a myriad of organizations. Furthermore, the author manages to chart out the intricacies of a conflict that had been presented rather simplistically by the various sides. Consequently, not only is it solid research that may easily provide a basis for future studies, it is also interesting reading.

Matt Evans
Northwestern University