

Jewish secularism (*yidishe vetlekhkayt*) have not fulfilled their promise.

The reviewer asks these questions and makes these comments, not to disparage the work of Mr. Arnold, but to express gratitude to him for squarely placing the issue of secularism on the community agenda and to remind its champions that this matter merits further serious attention, study, and earnest discussion.

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Bauer, Julien. *Les Minorités au Québec*. Montréal: Collection Boréal Express, 1994. 127pp.

This short volume traces changes in governmental attitudes toward minority groups within Québec on the federal, provincial, and municipal levels, particularly in the past half century. As Bauer states, his work is not intended as an exhaustive account of all of Québec's minority groups. It is, rather, an analysis of minority politics and the position of minorities in Québec society. In so doing, he hopes to guide readers to a better understanding of situations often presented in "contradictory," if not "biased" ways (p. 10). The book's six chapters explore various aspects of minority and immigrant experience including the consequences of immigration policies, the application of human rights legislation to minorities, access to government services such as education, and the development of the policies of "Multiculturalism" in addition to other new approaches taken by governments in the past few decades.

Examining various pieces of legislation and charters of rights, Bauer sees Québec society as divided into three groups: descendants of the "Founding Peoples," either French or English; aboriginal peoples; and the various ethnic and cultural communities who do not fit into either of the first two categories. Bauer notes that, from the outset, the status and rights of

the French, English and First Nations have been much more clearly defined than those of the others. Though the rights of minority groups have remained somewhat more ambiguous, they have undergone several changes in the past fifty years. In part, notes Bauer, the attempt to further define the rights and status of minorities can be attributed to the general call for better definition of individual rights and liberties following World War II (p. 37). In Québec, changes in the governmental policy toward minority groups have also been greatly influenced by the ongoing debate over language and independence. In the case of education, for example, at first minorities were pushed into English institutions. Later, in order to promote the French language among these same groups, regulations as to who could or could not educate their children in English were put into effect (pp. 55-61).

Another important aspect of the story of minority status in Québec involves demographics. Bauer notes that Québec society, whose birth rate is now relatively low, needs increased immigration to maintain its growth. While once immigrants were predominantly white and Christian, this is no longer the case. Québec has only recently come to terms with the fact that future immigration is going to diversify the population, at least of the urban areas, even more. Realizing this, the provincial government has made greater strides to accommodate minority groups (p. 53). Bauer lauds the greater acceptance with which minorities have been greeted in Québec, but he nonetheless warns against potential marginalization of minority groups. This is especially true when, as Bauer points out, public pronouncements often fail to differentiate between immigrants and their Québec born descendants, condemning the latter to remain permanent outsiders in the mind of the general public (p. 118).

In some ways the book's title is a misnomer since the minorities themselves are much less in evidence than is the majority (represented by the various levels of government surveyed) and this is perhaps the book's weakest point. More attention paid to the opinions of the minority groups themselves

would create a better balance, but Bauer's work, as stated, is essentially a top-down study of government attitudes and policies. One community that does receive relatively more attention is Québec's Jewish community and this is because Bauer quite rightly looks upon Québec's Jews as an important model for immigrant/minority development in the province. Readers should also not expect to find an extensive bibliography or notation; what there is, however, does provide a good starting point. Bauer does manage to present provincial/minority relations with dispassion and objectivity, pointing out both successes and failures. Overall, *Les Minorités au Québec* is an eminently readable and up to date account.

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Kattan, Naïm. *A.M. Klein. La réconciliation des races*. Collection «Les grandes figures» XYZ Editeur, 1994. 178pp.

A.M Klein. La réconciliation des races et des religions paraît dans une nouvelle série de biographies romancées consacrée aux “grandes figures” de l'histoire du Québec et destinée au grand public et en particulier aux adolescents. La série comprend jusqu'ici des ouvrages sur le grand guerrier Pontiac, sur le peintre Marc-Aurèle Fortin et sur le fondateur de Montréal, Chomedey de Maisonneuve. Ce qui est particulier à cette série, et qui constituera sans doute le gage de son succès, c'est que l'on fait appel à des écrivains reconnus pour rédiger les livres et ceux-ci choisissent un personnage pour qui ils ont une affinité toute spéciale. C'est ainsi que Naïm Kattan, auteur d'une quinzaine d'ouvrages, autant dans le domaine de l'essai que du roman, propose cet ouvrage sur A.M. Klein.

Reconnaissons d'abord à cet ouvrage son importance symbolique. Le fait d'inclure Klein dans une série qui vise à renouveler l'histoire du Québec est évidemment d'importance capitale. Klein, le poète, prend place à côté du peintre Fortin et des