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**RESEARCH ON SURVIVORS AND THE AFTERMATH
OF THE HOLOCAUST: A REVIEW ESSAY**

Bauer, Yehuda. *Out of the Ashes: The Impact of American Jews on Post-Holocaust European Jewry*. New York, 1989.

Hyman, Abraham S. *The Undefeated*. Jerusalem, 1993.

Genizi, Haim. *America's Fair Share: The Admission and Resettlement of Displaced Persons, 1945-1952*. Detroit, 1993.

Wyman, Mark. *DP: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-51*. London & Toronto, 1989.

Hass, Aaron. *The Aftermath: Living With the Holocaust*. New York, 1995.

Bar-On, Dan. *Fear and Hope: Three Generations of the Holocaust*. Cambridge, MA., 1995.

All six of these books are important and make significant contributions to the literature. The first four, however, deal with the history of the post-Holocaust period, while the last two focus on the psychological effects of the period.

Out of the Ashes by Yehuda Bauer, one of the foremost historians of the Holocaust, has already been recognized as an important addition to the literature. Taking as its starting point the liberation of Eastern European Jewry, it seeks to understand the impact of American Jews on the survivors. As it turned out, their involvement was significant. Soon after the initial shock regarding the magnitude of the catastrophe, organized Jewry—led by the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC); the Organization of Rehabilitation through Training (ORT); the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS); the United Service for New Americans (USNA); and the National Council for Jewish Women (NCJW)—sprang into action.

Bauer spends quite a bit of time, and with good justification, detailing the central role played by Dr. Joseph J.

Schwartz in assisting European Jewry. An ordained Orthodox rabbi and the recipient of a Ph.D. in Oriental Studies, Schwartz was a scholar, a man of action, and a person with a gift for persuading people to see things his way. As a result, the JDC, or “Joint”, became heavily involved in all of the policies and actions taken on behalf of the *She’erit ha-Peletah* in the post-war period.

The book details the involvement of the JDC with the other organizations, often siding with the JDC in its assessment of its role, even while admitting that it was far from perfect. The amount of money spent by the JDC on this cause ran into the many millions and Bauer sensitively and incisively explores the dilemmas faced by the organizations in deciding how it should be divided. Should the money go for Jewish farmers, for medical supplies, or for the then illegal immigration to Palestine?

It was a difficult and challenging time for American Jewry. The twin needs of the survivors as well as those of the emerging State of Israel had to be addressed. Which was to be the priority? In the end, both had to be tackled and the JDC did so. As Bauer notes, Israel was seen by the JDC more as a place of refuge for Jews than as a political entity. This was, of course, in keeping with its overall mission of rescue.

Bauer did not focus much attention on the role played by the passage of the DP Acts in the United States. The failure to pass such legislation until 1948 clearly had much to do with the work of the relief organizations and with the response of the refugees. Similarly, once immigration to Israel became unrestricted as a result of independence, the dynamic of such immigration shifted once again. One wonders what the impact would have been on the State of Israel, had the U.S. opened its doors even wider to those clamoring for admittance.

Out of the Ashes tells how this came about. And Bauer is balanced in his presentation, pointing out mistakes made along the way by the JDC. Of equal importance, however, is Bauer’s emphasis upon the role of the survivors in rebuilding their own lives and in their willingness to go on even as they

recovered from Jewry's greatest catastrophe in modern times.

Nevertheless, in attaching so much importance to the work of the JDC, the reader is left with the feeling that had the JDC not existed, the survivors' postwar adaptation would have been much poorer. Based on the research presented here, much of it from the JDC's archives, this reviewer would be inclined to agree.

Abraham Hyman, author of *The Undefeated*, is a genuine hero of the postwar period. A major in the U.S. Army who was second-in-command in the Office of the Adviser on Jewish Affairs, he was in a position to both know what was going on and to act upon such knowledge. Hyman also received a law degree from University of Chicago and served, during the critical years of 1950 to 1953, as General Counsel of the U.S. War Claims Commission.

Hyman's work centers on Jewish DPs in the U.S. Zone of Germany. We learn a great deal in this book about the DPs, the organizations they formed, and the activities they undertook, most notably a series of conferences designed to bring their needs to the attention of a wider public. The account is augmented by very moving photographs of the DPs. Like Bauer, Hyman praises the life-affirming perspectives that characterized the majority of the survivors.

The involvement of Presidents Truman and Eisenhower, George Patton, Fiorello LaGuardia, and other important personalities is both discussed and evaluated. Along the way Hyman makes the case for the centrality of Palestine in the minds of the DPs. For many this seemed to be the only answer. But, of course, as we know, and as Hyman freely admits, many DPs preferred America as their final destination for a variety of reasons—they had relatives there, they wanted to go to an established country, they were not Zionists, etc., etc.

It is understandable perhaps, but nonetheless a flaw in *The Undefeated*, that Hyman's admiration for the Army which he served may have caused him to gloss over the antisemitic attitudes that existed in the Army. He argues, somewhat defensively, that antisemitism was a fact of life during those years.

Nevertheless, for the refugees it was particularly galling to experience such attitudes after all they had gone through. And he also seems to protest too much about the generally respected Harrison Report which attacked the Army for its initial behavior towards the DPs.

Still, the Army's overall response to the DPs was very positive. In a sense, it demonstrates that institutional responses can sometimes overcome individual prejudices. This is especially noteworthy when one considers that such intolerance had, as others have pointed out, reached the highest levels of Army command.

While the book could have benefited from more careful copyediting (there are typos throughout), as well as an index, the fact remains that *The Undefeated* is an invaluable contribution to our understanding of the DPs' lives, one written by a true insider.

Haim Genizi's work, *America's Fair Share*, takes us further along the road to understanding what happened to the DPs by focusing on how they were admitted and resettled in the years 1945 to 1952. It is the most theoretical of the works under discussion because it places refugee aid within the broader context of such help in earlier historical periods. Genizi compares the assistance extended to the DPs with that given refugees who struggled to enter America in the 1933-1945 period.

As opposed to the other works under discussion here, Genizi's research is primarily about the Christian organizations' efforts to bring DPs to the United States. Using church-based archival materials, he sheds new light on the relationships between the groups and the U. S. government and on the discriminatory nature of the 1948 DP Act. Of course, this has already been discussed by Abraham Duker and others, but Genizi does it in much greater detail.

Reading this account one cannot help but wonder how many fewer would have gone to Israel, had the U.S. had a genuinely open policy with respect to admitting Jews onto its shores. It is clear that, in the eyes of many, Jews were branded

as both collaborators and communists by those opposed to their entry. The churches often used such stereotypes as excuses not to throw their support behind those trying to help Jews gain admittance to the U.S. Parenthetically, the Truman administration was more positively inclined to Jewish immigration than was Congress itself.

For those interested in the complex web of political infighting that took place between the various DP organizations this book is helpful, though not that clear in its presentation. As Genizi points out, the Catholic organizations responded more quickly than did the Protestants, but neither did as much as they could have, largely because of Cold War hysteria. In fact, it is clear from Genizi's work that the government cared more about admitting anti-communists than it did about persecuted Jews.

Mark Wyman has given us a well-researched description of the DP camps. Like Genizi he includes both Christians and Jews in his account. We learn here about the repatriation process and about the violent outbursts that occurred in some of the camps as residents protested against their conditions and tried to draw attention to their plight. In a sense, *DP* does for the individual Christian DPs what Genizi's book did for the institutions that served them and their needs.

There is a particularly useful chapter about DP children. Wyman talks about the schools that were set up in the camps and how they were run. And from this account it becomes clear that the schools were there not only to educate but, along with the clubs that existed, to counter the general harshness that marked life in the camps.

The DP Camps were more than a temporary home. As we know, they became communities, with their own newspapers, cultural events, schools, and the like. Through interviews and correspondence, Wyman makes all this come to life. Although Jewish DPs are treated as part of the general whole, Wyman makes it clear, in a separate chapter, that their suffering and dislocation was unique.

The Aftermath, by Aaron Hass, takes us into a different