



A History of Jewish Life from Eastern Europe to America

Milton Meltzer

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Tens of thousands of Jews were injured or killed in the pogroms of the early 1880s and those of the early 1900s. Ninety-five percent of the Jewish population was restricted to a life of poverty and starvation in the ghetto and barred from schools and universities. Ultimately, four million Jews left Eastern Europe between 1880 and 1924, three million of whom settled in America. Monumental though this mass migration was, it is even more surprising to learn that twice as many Jews decided not to leave Eastern Europe, despite the horrid conditions they endured. This puzzling statistic lends even sharper emphasis to the reasons surrounding the biggest movement of people in world history. Milton Meltzer has gathered eyewitness accounts, diaries, letters, documents, songs, maps, poems, and memoirs, weaving them into an historical narrative that details the Jews' motivation to abandon their old world and venture into a new one. It is a story that will at once educate and inspire the reader, delight and disappoint, while restoring a world practically unfathomable to today's American Jews, most of whom can find their roots in that rich and wondrous past.



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