

## Book Reviews

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*The Remembered and Forgotten Jewish World: Jewish Heritage in Europe and the United States* by Daniel J. Walkowitz. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2020. 304 pp.; 26 b&w illustrations, notes, bibliography, index; clothbound, \$120.00; paperback, \$34.95; eBook, \$34.95.

Daniel Walkowitz is no stranger to scholars of public history, urban history, and the history of labor. Professor Emeritus of US social and cultural history at New York University, where he co-founded the public history program back in the 1980s, and author of numerous important works on memory, class, and identity, Walkowitz has done much to shape the development of public history, particularly that of the urban working classes. This volume, while drawing on themes he has developed elsewhere, sees Walkowitz turn a new, more personal, lens on public history as he traces the development of Jewish heritage through the movement of his own family from Eastern Europe to the United States during the early decades of the twentieth century. In his quest to trace his family's journeys, Walkowitz explores their history through the present: visiting villages, towns, and cities with which they were associated, searching out traces of the vibrant Jewish life of prewar Europe of which they were a part, and critiquing the ways in which Jewish heritage is represented in those places to twenty-first century audiences.

Although the four strands of Walkowitz's family are woven throughout the book, much of the focus is on the story of his paternal grandmother, Ida (Chaia) Walkowitz and her husband Zishe, who had arrived in the US from Łódź, Poland, in 1921. Fleeing persecution from the police for having been involved in organizing a union, they had followed the textile industry first to Copenhagen and finally to Paterson, New Jersey, where they finally settled. Ida is central to the story because of what her life reveals of an aspect of Jewish heritage that has become largely forgotten. This was the story of communities of industrial workers that had travelled across Europe and finally made their homes in London's Whitechapel or New York's Lower East Side, the story of a secular form of Jewishness, of a vibrant Yiddish culture, and of the Bund.

Walkowitz's quest to trace his family's journey from their home in central Europe to Paterson is also a quest to find traces of this secular, socialist Jewish culture they brought with them. Given the rapid growth in heritage tourism that has emerged in many parts of Europe over the past two decades, driven largely by

wealthy Americans anxious to trace their European roots and by the growth of the heritage, culture, and tourism sectors in a response to the deindustrialization of many of these regions, Walkowitz was keen to discover how Jewish heritage was being imagined and interpreted in regions associated with his family. His travels therefore constitute a survey of Jewish heritage in eleven towns and cities across Europe, tracing what has been developed and what has been lost, whose stories are being told, and why those stories.

In each place visited, Walkowitz engages with whatever Jewish heritage he can find. In the smaller towns of Poland and Ukraine this involves employing the services of an individual tour guide, or sometimes just a knowledgeable local, to show him the sights associated with their Jewish past. In larger cities he joins official walking tours and visits museums. In many of these places he discovers that the culture associated with his own family and the communities of which they were a part has now almost vanished without a trace. In its place are the dominant narratives of the Holocaust or of Jewishness as a religious identity, narratives driven by the market at which they are aimed. Heritage, it seems, has to sell. In some cities, however, he is pleasantly surprised at some of the ways in which the vibrancy and diversity of Jewish life and culture is represented. Museums of Jewish life in Belgrade and Warsaw, walking tours in London, and the Tenement Museum in New York City, for example, narrate a Jewish past and identity that is much richer, and more robust, than the one generally sold to tourists seeking Jewish heritage. Although not entirely uncritical, Walkowitz finds in these examples more of the quotidian experience of ordinary Jews and that vibrant secular culture that has all but disappeared from most heritage narratives.

An engaging and lively read, and a valuable source for any scholar of public history, this book represents an important intervention in reassessing Jewish history and how it is represented in the modern world. It asks important questions, such as: what stories are projected and where were the silences? Whose narratives have been privileged, and whose are sidelined? And who gets to decide? It demonstrates effectively the extent to which, in Walkowitz's own words, "the politics of the present frames how guides, curators, and other commercial and public cultural producers tell stories of the past."

Olwen Purdue, Queen's University Belfast

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*Archival Silences: Missing, Lost and, Uncreated Archives* edited by Michael Moss and David Thomas. Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2021. 272 pp.; illustrations; clothbound, \$160.00; eBook, \$44.05.

*Archival Silences: Missing, Lost and, Uncreated Archives*<sup>1</sup> is a welcome addition to important conversations about the concept of silences in archives. With

1 Punctuation in original