



Unfinished People: Eastern European Jews Encounter America

Ruth Gay

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Winner of the National Jewish Book Award, a seminal work of history on immigrant Jewish life in early twentieth-century New York.

Nearly three million Jews came to America from Eastern Europe between 1880 and the outbreak of World War I, filled with the hope of life in a new land. Within two generations, these newcomers settled and prospered in the densely populated Yiddish-speaking neighborhoods of New York City. Against this backdrop, Ruth Gay narrates their rarely told story—a unique and vibrant portrait of a people in their daily trials and rituals—bringing alive the vitality of the streets, markets, schools, synagogues, and tenement halls where a new version of America was invented in the 1920s and 1930s. An intimate, unforgettable account, *Unfinished People* is a singular act of expressing in words the richly textured lives of a resilient people. "A touching and funny evocation...marvelous in its detail.... This is history as day-to-day living—irrevocable and unforgotten."—Alfred Kazin

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