

"inferior" group on the subordinate status of another must not be underestimated (and Mexican Americans, as a conquered people, might be included). To omit the female sex is to remove the whole of psychosexual tensions between groups and the sociosexual or socioreligious domination within groups. It also excuses the author from seizing his own opportunity to analyze "these everyday social relationships and their potential for transformation" in full. "Black women," he quotes from Grier and Cobbs' *Black Rage*, "have a nearly bottomless well of self-depreciation . . . prepared by society . . . a prefabricated pit which they have no hand in fashioning." And elsewhere, "the most alienated workers are not the most revolutionary, for the necessary confidence in their own power is lacking." Adam does not go down that pit and reach the most alienated, nor does he examine the attitudes still extant within Judaism to maintain the "inferiority" of their female believers.

"Strategies Coping with Domination" is intended as the centerpiece. It is an interesting chapter, but it too disappoints a little. Although Mr. Adam is among the first to put all these conclusions together, there is nothing very substantial or original; more important, he does not prove his assertion that "coping strategies dissolve into methods to alter or resist domination." Indeed, if they did, domination would have been more altered, more resisted, and less "coped with."

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MELVIN G. HOLLI and PETER d'A. JONES (Editors). *THE ETHNIC FRONTIER: GROUP SURVIVAL IN CHICAGO AND THE MIDWEST*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977, 422 pp., \$7.95.

The reader seeking fresh and intellectually stimulating material on American ethnic history will find *The Ethnic Frontier: Group Survival in Chicago and the Midwest* a rewarding book. Editors Melvin G. Holli and Peter d'A. Jones have assembled a collection of first-rate original scholarly articles that provide new insights into issues of group survival, assimilation, and conflict in the United States.

The Midwestern focus of the essays provides an opportunity for new perspectives. Edward Mazur's essay on ethnic and class cleavages among Chicago's Jews has fresh interest, not because of the novelty of the theme, but because the theme is documented in a Midwestern rather than in the usual Northeastern setting. Louise and Nuevo Kerr's splendid essay, "Mexican Chicago: Chicano Assimilation Aborted, 1939-1952," breaks new ground in theme as well as locale. The Kerrs demonstrate that, unlike their

counterparts in the Southwestern states, the Mexican Americans in Chicago were moving toward assimilation, following the pattern of East European ethnic communities in the years preceding World War II. Assimilation was "aborted" by repercussions of the Los Angeles Zoot Suit Riots, by renewed immigration, and by changes in community leadership.

A theme treated ably and with originality in many of these essays is ethnic politics, both within the ethnic community and between ethnic communities and mainstream America. Victor Greene explores internal community leadership among Swedes, Poles, Italians, and Jews, focusing upon the sources of the leaders' power and prestige as well as the nature and goals of the leaders' activities. He concludes that even "conservative" leaders directed their communities toward greater participation in American life. Edward Kantowicz suggests that Chicago's numerically powerful Polish community pursued religious and political autonomy at the expense of the coalition building that would have given them more influence in the larger community. In contrast, according to Charles Branham's essay, politicians from Chicago's minuscule nineteenth century black community (which numbered only 1.8 percent of the total population as late as 1900) had no choice but to function within mainstream coalition politics, doing what they could for the black community within this larger framework. Thus both value systems and power factors (such as numerical strength or lack thereof) were among the variables determining the nature of the political activities of ethnic groups.

A number of the essays explore the possibilities of cooperation, even amalgamation, among ethnic groups, as well as the more familiar issues of conflict between ethnic groups and mainstream society. Jacqueline Peterson's excellent work, "Wild Chicago: The Formation and Destruction of a Multiracial Community on the Midwestern Frontier 1816-1837," explodes the myth that the arrival of whites meant the instant disappearance of Native Americans. According to Peterson, early Chicago was a mixed society of French, British, American, and Indian settlers united by common dependence on the fur trade and a common social life revolving around whiskey, dancing, and other pleasurable leisure activities. This multiethnic community was destroyed, not by ethnic conflict, but by cultural conflict. When an influx of aggressive, profit-seeking newcomers resulted in the removal of the Indians west of the Missouri, so many white spouses and racially mixed persons rejected the new acquisitive culture and departed that over half the registered voters of 1830 were thought to be in Indian territory by the 1850's.

The issue of culture conflict within an ethnic context is raised even more pointedly in the compelling and ground-breaking essay by Hugo P. Leaming, "The Ben Ishmael Tribe: A Fugitive 'Nation' of the Old Northwest." An amalgam of what the author calls "the three subject peoples of the South's slavery society"--blacks, poor whites, and the remnants of destroyed Indian

nations--the Ben Ishmaelites appeared in Indiana in the early nineteenth century. They survived there as a migratory, noncapitalistic people (they refused to work for wages) with their own distinctive religion and social structure for a hundred years. As the society around them became urbanized and industrialized, the Ben Ishmaelites were stereotyped as immoral, lazy, and degenerate, and efforts were made to take their children away from them. In 1907, the first compulsory sterilization law in the world was passed in Indiana, its object the Ben Ishmaelites, and it was this law that led to the final dispersion of the tribe and its probable assimilation into urban black communities. Leaming uses the records of charitable societies, literary sources, interviews, place and family names, and architectural evidence to reconstruct the story of the Ben Ishmaelites. In addition to raising important questions about ethnic amalgamation and cultural conflict, his article is a model of careful and creative social history.

The originality, diversity, and richness of detail of this collection is marred by its failure to provide substantive treatment of women. There are two exceptions: Leaming's article deals with the important leadership role of women among the Ben Ishmaelites, and Arnold Hirsch's essay describes women's participation in anti-black housing riots. Most of the essays, however, deal with ethnic America as essentially a male universe. As scholars sensitive to diversity and skilled in dealing with complexities, ethnic historians must deal with gender as well as with class, ideology, and ethnicity in gathering, analyzing, and interpreting their material.

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JOHN ANTHONY SCOTT. *HARD TRIALS ON MY WAY: SLAVERY AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IT, 1800-1860*. New York: Mentor Books, New American Library, 1974, 293 pp., \$1.95 paper.

In the beginning the history of slavery was written in political and institutional terms, and very little attention was paid to what the day-to-day participants in this odious adventure had to say. With time, historians realized they had to take into account personal views, feelings, and reminiscences of the participants, but this realization brought about predominantly the recollections and opinions of white people. This was so because it was generally accepted that most black people were illiterate and had little to say for themselves. It was understood also that when they said anything, it would be exaggerated and self-serving and, consequently, would be of little historical value. Exceptions, of course, were made for people like Frederick Douglass,