

and what happened to the relatively high percentage of people who returned to Finland at the end of their working contracts. Further, the author, director of a Finnish Institute of Migration, has concentrated his research totally on New Zealand. But why did Finlanders leave their country? The chance to comprehend migration as a problem which has to do with both countries – the one losing emigrants and the other one receiving them as immigrants – has eluded him. In this respect, the theoretical and methodological uses of this book are perhaps rather limited.

This is above all a sociable book. The regional histories, the place names, the family lives, the intermarriages, the famous New Zealanders, the social and community activities it describes and depicts will appeal to those who write New Zealand's history from the coal face – alone, the New Zealand Society of Genealogists has around 8,000 members.

NOTES

- 1 Bade, James N. (ed). *The German Connection. New Zealand and German-speaking Europe in the nineteenth century*. Auckland 1993. Ballara, Bruno. *Presenza italiana in Nuova Zelanda*. Auckland 1975. Trlin, Andrew D. *Now respected, once despised. Yugoslavs in New Zealand*. Palmerston North 1970. Pobog-Jaworowski, Jerzy W. *History of the Polish settlers in New Zealand 1876-1987*. Warsaw 1990. Aminoff, Sten. *Sevenskarna i Nya Zeeland*. Växjö 1988. Bender, Henning; Larsen, Birgit. *Danish emigration to New Zealand*. Aalborg 1990. Weber-de Candolle, Irene. *The first Swiss in New Zealand*. Wellington 1967.
- 2 Koivukangas, Olavi. *Scandinavian immigration and settlement in Australia before World War II*. Kokkola 1972.- Koivukangas, Olavi; Martin, John S. *The Scandinavians in Australia*. Melbourne 1986.- Koivukangas, Olavi. *Sea, gold and sugarcane; Finns in Australia 1851-1947*. Turku 1986.
- 3 See the caption of the photograph on p109: "Britas pojkes pojke har kommit hem" (Brita's grandson has come home) is partly Swedish.

Response to Paul Morris

HAL LEVINE

I feel that Paul Morris has produced a rather idiosyncratic critique of our book *Far from the Promised Land?* (see *New Zealand Studies* vol 6, no 1). On the opening page Ann Beaglehole and I announce that our research is about the experience of 'being Jewish in New Zealand', so when the reviewer demands a 'view of the community, qua community' he misrepresents our objective to readers. Our research group chose to interview a relatively small number of people from a wide variety of backgrounds, in depth, to gain an understanding of personal Jewish identity in New Zealand. Such a corpus of data is neither representative nor useful for any statistical or normative evaluation of 'the community'. It does instead show something of the diverse ways that Jewish people in this country explain their Jewishness.

Paul Morris argues that the authors subscribe to 'a somewhat extreme version of the constructivist view of identity' but there he is again muddling the difference between communal and individual representations of identity. Our data show that personal Jewish identity in New Zealand incorporates themes of



self-reflexive choice which are current in the country's culture. Of course 'the decision to recognise ... that one is a Jew' necessitates the notion that there is an existing community of Jews, but we live in a time and society where it is uniquely easy to make the decision to disassociate from the community or from being Jewish at all. No community of Jews or gentiles exists in New Zealand that can force us to be Jews if we don't want to, nor tell us that our particular views of Jewishness, as odd as they may be from an orthodox religious point of view, lack authenticity. Even our most orthodox respondents realised perfectly well that adhering to the laws and customs of the Jewish religion was a choice they made.

The reviewer's statement that Orthodox Jews constitute the 'single largest identifiable sector of the community' is disingenuous. We give figures in the book that show that most Jews who affiliate to congregations in New Zealand do join an Orthodox centre, but this hardly makes these people Orthodox Jews. I am myself a member of such a congregation, but my motivations and beliefs could not be termed orthodox or even religious. From the very small numbers attending services, from discussion with people at the centre, survey data, and our interviews, we concluded that the membership of orthodox congregations far exceeds the number of Orthodox Jews. Yes, lots of us come in for Yom Kippur. I think that *Far from the Promised Land?*, which could have been subtitled 'Representations of Symbolic Ethnicity', provides good answers to why we do.

Above: Far from the Promised Land? explores ways of being Jewish in New Zealand. Jonathan Besser, pianist and composer, was one of the book's participants. Photograph: Paul Thompson.