

My Future Is in America



MY FUTURE IS IN AMERICA



Autobiographies of Eastern European Jewish Immigrants

Edited and Translated by Jocelyn Cohen and Daniel Soyer

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著者:Cohen, Jocelyn (EDT)/ Soyer, Daniel (EDT)

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In 1942, YIVO held a contest for the best autobiography by a Jewish immigrant on the theme "Why I Left the Old Country and What I Have Accomplished in America." Chosen from over two hundred entries, and translated from Yiddish, the nine life stories in "My Future is in America" provide a compelling portrait of American Jewish life in the immigrant generation at the turn of the twentieth century. The writers arrived in America in every decade from the 1890s to the 1920s. They include manual workers, shopkeepers, housewives, communal activists, and professionals who came from all parts of Eastern Europe and ushered in a new era in American Jewish history. In their own words, the immigrant writers convey the complexities of the transition between the Old and New Worlds. An introduction places the writings in historical and literary context, and annotations explain historical and cultural allusions made by the writers. This unique volume introduces readers to the complex world of Yiddish-speaking immigrants while at the same time elucidating important themes and topics of interest to those in immigration studies, ethnic studies, Jewish studies, labor history, and literary studies.

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