

# Jewish Immigrants and American Capitalism, 1880-1920: From Caste to Class

Eli Lederhendler

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Jewish Immigrants and American Capitalism, 1880-1920: From Caste to Class Eli Lederhendler Eli Lederhendler's Jewish Immigrants and American Capitalism, 1880-1920: From Caste to Class reexamines the immigration of Russian Jews to the United States around the turn of the 20th century - a group that accounted for 10 to 15 percent of immigrants to the United States between 1899 and 1920 challenging and revising common assumptions concerning the ease of their initial adaptation and image as a "model" immigrant minority. Lederhendler demonstrates that the characteristics for which Jewish immigrants are commonly known - their industriousness, "middle-class" domestic habits, and political sympathy for the working class - were, in fact, developed in response to their new situation in the United States. This experience realigned Jewish social values and restored to these immigrants a sense of status, honor, and a novel kind of social belonging, and with it the "social capital" needed to establish a community quite different from the ones they came from.



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