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The Star and the Stripes: A History of the Foreign Policies of American Jews by Michael N. Barnett (review)

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Barnett, Michael N. **The star and the stripes: a history of the foreign policies of American Jews.** Princeton, 2016. 348p bibl index afp ISBN 9780691165974, \$35.00; ISBN 9781400880607 ebook, contact publisher for price.

Barnett's densely supported history of the foreign policy beliefs of Jews in the US begins with a chapter explaining the critical influences of prophetic/cosmopolitan Jewish thought versus tribal/particular thought about the "Jewish problem" and the "Jewish question." Chapters 2–6 track the historical ebb and flow of the inclusive version of Jewish thought that Barnett (international affairs and political science, George Washington Univ.) ties extensively to US Jews' foreign policy, which mirrored the expanding democratic civil liberalism of the US and other Western nations. The author asserts that the uncertain position of transnational peoples, such as Jews, makes them more likely to support liberal positions to secure their safety and access opportunities. The most interesting section deals with US Jews' differing attitudes toward Zionism and Israel. Barnett's last chapter deals with factors impacting modern US Jewish foreign policy and sometimes includes disturbingly sweeping generalizations: "American Jews want a Jewish identity heavily laced with prophetic tradition. ... Israeli Jews tend toward tribalism. American Jews would like to make the world a better place; Israeli Jews are too consumed with building and defending an ethnonational state to worry about much else." Overall, this text supplies much-needed coherence to the topic.

--A. Lieberman Colgan, West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Summing Up: Highly recommended. Most levels/libraries.