
Book Reviews

Grose, Peter. *Israel in the Mind of America*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983. xiv, 361 pp. \$17.95

There are two countries in our time where a specific spiritual background with regard to Jews and to Jewish restoration in Palestine has influenced in some way political attitudes about Zionism and the establishment of Israel: Great Britain and the United States. The description of that background and its complex historical roots, the explanation of its role in the formulation of modern policies, and the analysis of the combination of interests and sentiments which in each case produced a certain political line and influenced a certain political outcome—these are among the most complex tasks that the historian or political scientist may undertake.

With regard to Great Britain, there is an impressive body of historical research that deals with the sources of British interest in the Jews, in the Holy Land, and in the connections between both. Important contributions have been made by Nahum Sokolow, Franz Kobler, Barbara Tuchman, Me'ir Verete, and others. Historical research about the United States has advanced less, perhaps because the special relationship between both sides, Israel and America, has only lately become clear-cut. There is also the added factor that it is not a closed historical issue, as it is in the case of Zionism and Great Britain, but a continuing and still developing situation.

Peter Grose's book contains, therefore, the first attribute of a good historical work—an excellent theme. As Grose states in his concluding chapter: "Even as they go their own way, in pursuit of their own national interests, Americans and Israelis are bonded together like no two other sovereign peoples." He might have added that among Israelis there is a highly developed consciousness about that special relationship. It is difficult to suggest another country today where Americans are as naturally accepted and understood as in Israel.

Nevertheless, Grose has hardly proven such a conclusion in his

work. In spite of this, however, he has written a book that is important, highly interesting, extremely informative, and certainly worth reading.

One man's delight being another man's despair, it is difficult to decide how one should judge the fact that Grose loves to tell a good story—more perhaps than to analyze coldly and methodically the components of a given historical situation. The fact is that Grose has an unusual talent as a *raconteur*, and some of his stories, although true, verge—as a good tale should—on the border of the unbelievable.

Such a tale is told about Benjamin V. Cohen. "Ben" Cohen was one of the most interesting figures in the American political establishment during the Roosevelt and Truman years, a trusted adviser of both presidents, who remained active through the presidency of John F. Kennedy. Incidentally, the Zionists owed Ben Cohen a huge debt: living in London back in 1919–1920, he had been the main formulator, on the Zionist side, of the text of the British mandate for Palestine. Grose tells how on May 14, 1948, when the State of Israel was being proclaimed in Tel Aviv, Ben Cohen was asked by the Israeli representative in Washington, Eliahu Epstein (later Eilat), to help in the formulation of his request for American recognition for the Jewish state. He complied and the letter was sent to the White House. Shortly afterwards Ben Cohen was asked by David Niles and Clark Clifford to examine the positive response of the White House. Ben Cohen found himself in the unique situation of consulting for both sides.

There is a quality of deceptiveness in Grose's writing: one is lulled into too easy a frame of mind by his vivid descriptions of events and people. Some of his analyses of political situations and public leaders are among the sharpest to be found in the literature on the theme. Grose's descriptions are usually based on solid research, a scholarly undertaking that serves but never dominates Grose's fine-tuned instinct for people and human situations. His descriptions of Roosevelt and even more so of Truman, as well as of many others, are among the best available. From the easy flow of his narrative an evaluation of a man suddenly appears, along with his motivations, strengths, and weaknesses. One is surprised how detached, wise, and highly convincing these evaluations appear.

Grose is well served by his personal experience and knowledge about the inner workings of the American foreign service, especially

those sections of the State Department that dealt with the Middle East from the 1920's to the 1940's. He possesses a fine understanding of the very peculiar American brand of anti-Semitism, especially of the kind found in the American Protestant upper class, in his words, "the genteel anti-Semitism of Wall Street and the New York and Washington clubland." Grose believes that anti-Semitism, more than a sober understanding of Middle East realities, influenced many of the second- and third-echelon American policy-makers when dealing with issues involving Jews, Zionism, and Palestine. Without overstating it, he presents his case in a highly convincing way.

One of the results of Grose's book is that one ends up doubting if there were any similarities between British and American policies regarding Zionism and Palestine.

British interest in the Jews and in the Holy Land was firmly anchored in a certain stratum of the leading British political establishment, with representatives in the Cabinet, Parliament, and the press. Lloyd George, Balfour, Churchill, Sykes, Smuts, Milner, and many others were interested in or committed, each in his own way, to the dream of Jewish renaissance in Palestine.

In the United States, on the other hand, no one single leading public figure was really interested in the Jewish hopes for Palestine. From Wilson to Roosevelt to Truman, American presidents were basically indifferent. From Lansing to Marshall, the secretaries of state were basically hostile or doubtful about a Jewish national home or state in Palestine. The heads of the sections at the State Department did their very best to thwart the Zionists' intentions. And in the late 1940's the Department of Defense and the newly created CIA participated in a choir of negative opinions and tried to prove that support for Jewish statehood was against the best interests of the United States.

In its details, the historical picture presented by Grose is worthwhile knowing. But the final impression that one gets after reading his book is really the opposite of what seems to have been Grose's original intention in writing the book. The reader ends up wondering, given Grose's absorbing picture to the contrary, how it came to be that the United States supported the establishment of Israel and how the ties between the two countries actually grew stronger and more "special."

—Evyatar Friesel

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Umansky, Ellen M. *Lily Montagu and the Advancement of Liberal Judaism: From Vision to Vocation*. New York and Toronto: Edwin Mellen Press, 1983. xvii, 283 pp. \$39.95

The frontispiece of this book is a photograph of Lily Montagu, dressed to conduct services for the Jewish Religious Union. Without the make-up revealing her gender, the picture would be in no way extraordinary; merely a Reform or Liberal rabbi posing in customary professional attire. Jewish women, however, have only very recently been eligible for the rabbinate; during Montagu's lifetime (1873–1963) such options did not exist. The photograph, then, depicts her playing a unique and unaccustomed role for her sex—that of spiritual leader.

Ellen Umansky's study describes and analyzes Lily Montagu's religious leadership, stressing the origins and nature of her theology, with some attention as well to her social work, organizational activities, and impact on Liberal Judaism.

Lily Montagu's case demonstrates that even social and professional prominence are not enough to guarantee women a place in history. She came from a wealthy, politically important, and socially prominent Anglo-Jewish family. Her father, Samuel Montagu, First Lord Swaythling, was a self-made millionaire and banker, who served in Parliament for fifteen years, and was an early, though not a constant supporter of Theodor Herzl. Her own achievements were impressive. After a career as a social worker, when she founded the West Central Girls' Club (1893), she and Claude Montefiore established the Jewish Religious Union (1902), which became the key organization for disseminating Liberal Judaism in England. In 1926 she started the World Union for Progressive Judaism, sponsor of Liberal Jewish congregations in Europe, South America, Israel, South Africa, and Australia. Through the World Union she organized conferences and was in touch with Jews all over the world. As a lay minister, she conducted services, wrote frequently on spirituality and theology, and published eleven books, including two novels and a biography of her father.

And yet when Umansky decided to make Lily Montagu the subject

of her dissertation, historians and scholars of religion discouraged her, questioning Montagu's significance. Moreover, the sources had apparently disappeared. In the preface, Umansky tells the story of her search for Montagu's papers. Unfortunately, Eric Conrad, Lily Montagu's nephew, gave away many of her letters after composing a short memorial to his aunt. Umansky finally located Montagu's sermons in a box in a closet at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, her open letters to members of her girls' club in the possession of that institution, and some documents remaining with Eric Conrad. From these sources she put together a dissertation, now this book. It is difficult to imagine that she would have had the same problems writing this religious and intellectual biography if a man had founded the Liberal Jewish movement in England, or that other scholars would not immediately have recognized the importance of studying such a person.

In her opening chapter Umansky discusses the Anglo-Jewish community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, pointing out that British Jews were secularized and acculturated to a much greater degree than continental Jews. Because of this, she argues, community leaders were more open to the influences of British feminism and the movement for women's higher education, and thus were more accepting of female religious leadership than Jews in the rest of Europe. Jewish women in England, too, were in touch with these developments in the secular and Christian communities and thus more likely to seek leadership in their own.

Lily Montagu had little formal education in any tradition, but was very well read in Victorian literature, poetry, politics, and philosophy. She found nothing interesting or spiritually exciting in the observances of the Orthodox ritual she performed as a member of her parents' strictly traditional household. Instead, her major sources of inspiration were Matthew Arnold, Robert Browning, Thomas Carlyle, George Eliot, and Giuseppe Mazzini. From her reading of these Victorian authors, Lily Montagu developed a theology which can only be described as Social Gospel Judaism.

From Arnold she took the idea of righteousness or moral action as the foundation of religion; God was "the power not ourselves that makes for righteousness." Carlyle's gospel of work and duty, and his individualism appealed to her, as did Eliot's emphasis on duty and service through personal development and self-affirmation. She

quoted Browning most frequently, impressed with his optimism and his universalism. The work of Mazzini, the Italian patriot, also informed her theology, with his ideas of association and unity.

Lily Montagu's theology was so universalistic, so imbued with Victorian ideas of individualism, striving, and duty, that one may well ask what if anything made it Jewish. Although she read no traditional Jewish writers, she was imbued with Reform Jewish ideology through the work of Claude Montefiore. Montefiore, like Reform Jews elsewhere, believed that Judaism was an historic religion, and should change with the times instead of committing its practitioners to observing static and meaningless rituals. He said that the Jews were indeed "chosen," but only to spread God's word, ethical monotheism, to the rest of the world. Presumably they would, at some point, accomplish this mission; Judaism would then become a kind of universal theism, best represented by the writings of the prophets.

Despite her Liberal theology, Lily Montagu's original intent in founding the Jewish Religious Union was to hold together the Orthodox, Liberal, and indifferent British Jews through special and interesting services and other programs. After six years, however, she, Montefiore, and the other activists in the JRU conceded defeat. In 1909 they renamed the JRU, adding to its original title the words "For the Advancement of Liberal Judaism." Montague became lay minister to the West Central Section, a congregation which developed from her worship services at the Girls' Club.

Clearly Lily Montagu was not an original religious thinker, and Umansky does not inflate her subject's intellectual importance in order to justify the book. In fact she points out Lily Montagu's heavy and not always accurate reliance on the work of others, and stresses her lack of development. In the latter years of her life she still quoted Montefiore (who died in 1938), Browning, et al., despite her insistence that Judaism was an ever-changing religion. Her ideas were so secular that they seemed hardly to be Jewish at all. She was an anti-Zionist, and consistently underrated, even in the face of overwhelming evidence, the threat Adolf Hitler represented to European Jewry.

Instead Umansky tells us that the significance of her study lies first in helping us understand the Liberal Jewish movement in England, and beyond that in formulating hypotheses about the response of Jewish women to emancipation and modernization. Considerable literature

exists on the decisions made by male Jews to remain Orthodox, become Liberal Jews, Zionists, socialists, or even converts, but we do not know much about the choices of Jewish women, particularly of the educated middle and upper-middle classes.

Umansky, who has written elsewhere on Jewish feminism, points out the difference in the available options for men and women in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Orthodoxy had no role for the educated woman. Some scholars have noted a higher conversion rate among upper-class Jewish women, due to the fact that the secular or the Christian world offered them more opportunities to use their talents. And yet, for women like Lily Montagu, craving spiritual fulfillment, a secular or Christian life was impossible. Devoted to her family, particularly to her father, and proud of her heritage, she needed to find a way to be Jewish and modern and religious.

Many Jewish men faced the same conflicts and family disapproval that Lily Montagu experienced. Yet their opportunities for education, leadership roles, and the development of public and private self-confidence were greater, whether they chose to remain in Orthodox Jewry, join the Liberal movement, or the secular world. Certainly, Liberal Judaism allowed women more ritual participation than Orthodoxy. Yet rituals mattered little to most Liberal Jews. The Liberal and Reform spiritual leadership was as male-dominated as Orthodoxy until the 1970's. Thus, Lily Montagu's creativity in defining a role for herself as a religious leader is unusual and important. Unfortunately Montagu was too male-identified to think about women's position in Judaism in any but the most conventional terms. She regarded her own work as "second best" to the career of Jewish wife and mother, a status she never attained.

Ultimately Montagu's private choices and public achievements rather than her theology appealed to Umansky, and caused her to write this book. This provocative and carefully researched study, with its assessment of the plight of modern Jewish women in the years before the feminist movement and the ordination of women rabbis, will appeal to readers as well.

—Lynn D. Gordon

Professor Lynn D. Gordon teaches in the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at the University of Rochester. She is

currently working on a biography of Annie Nathan Meyer, whose efforts were instrumental in the founding of Barnard College.

Francis, Doris. *Will You Still Need Me, Will You Still Feed Me, When I'm 84?* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984. 252 pp. \$18.50.

Punning a lyric from an old sixties Beatle tune, Doris Francis has combined her background and experience in cultural anthropology and social gerontology in writing this marvelous book entitled *Will You Still Need Me, Will You Still Feed Me, When I'm 84?* Careful not to prepare a purposive document, the author methodically studied two similar elderly Jewish communities: one in Cleveland, Ohio; one in Leeds, England. An aging planner for the City of Cleveland and a professor of anthropology at its Institute of Art, Francis brings to light various attitudes toward aging which are pervasive in Western culture. Though the text lacks some luster in language, it is scientific in that the author employed proper methodology in her research and is, therefore, a welcome addition to a growing number of multidisciplinary aging studies. Especially informative are the summaries following each chapter, as well as chapters 6 and 7 *in toto*, which provide the reader with analyses of field notes and programmatic suggestions for both communities under scrutiny. As such, this volume can serve a student well in any undergraduate course on social research and ethnicity in aging.

In an attempt to explain different reactions to old age, Professor Francis explored the economic, social, and kinship experiences of these two groups of elderly Jews. The inhabitants of both communities began their lives in Eastern Europe around the year 1900. They, therefore, came to their present environs as immigrants, though the society in Leeds is small and stable, compared to the more upwardly mobile and dispersed Jewish community of Cleveland. Thus, the elderly residents of Cornell (the fictitious name of the Cleveland neighborhood) came to the specific area, already over sixty-five, having moved several times in their lives, and with their offspring living in the suburbs. These residents live in an age-segregated high-rise apartment building built in the midst of a decaying neighborhood; the ethnic flavor, once evident, long since gone.

In Leeds, an industrial city comparable to Cleveland, a housing development was built for the elderly in the mid-1950's to prevent an anticipated breakdown of the neighborhood. Leeds was a community of continuity whose elderly citizens had already lived there over twenty years. As such, the community retained its ambiance with its synagogues, schools, and social clubs as part of the very framework of the community. The supportive environment of familiarity remains an important ingredient for successful aging, to be sure.

Any reader of *Will You Still Need Me?* can readily determine the countless hours of field work and research emanating from these 252 pages. Unfortunately, all of the apparent research has not been fully digested in the text. And gross generalizations about Judaism and individual Jewish communities really do cloud the author's treatment of her own field notes. The dialogue inserts that record Francis's interaction with these elderly inhabitants, found more prominently toward the end of the book, express in their own unique way the soul and soaring spirit of the elderly. More would have been welcome. Nonetheless, Doris Francis has tested her hypotheses by returning to both communities some time after her initial study in order to determine the "truth" of her predictions, a sound technique which was borne out.

As predicted, the Leeds elderly fared far better than did their American cohorts, due to a combination of factors. First, the supportive kinship factor which overwhelmingly exists in Leeds is not quite as apparent in Cleveland. Relatives, especially adult children and grandchildren, are helpful, particularly during brief periods of convalescence. And, of course, the system of socialized medicine in place in Great Britain eases the individual through the process of aging as he/she faces chronic illness. Second, the traditional Jewish ethic, again more obvious in Leeds than in "Cornell," provides a firmer foundation on which the person can grow old. Third, the upward mobility among Cleveland Jewry (and American Jewry) appears to undermine the process of aging as it drives a stake deeper, further separating the generations. This is not the case in Leeds, where affluence has not taken hold of the second and third generations. We know from this study and other research that just as the genetic factor of heredity affects individual life expectation, the interaction the present elderly had with their own parents directly influences that which they now have with their adult children.

The elderly in England and in the United States in general, and in these communities in particular, face one major compound problem, a problem which Professor Francis astutely identifies as the lack of role models and behavioral expectations for the elderly. As an anthropologist, she correctly notes the need for both—needs which this generation is defining for itself in the hope that the next generation of elderly will not be forced to do so.

This fine book can be heartily recommended to various groups of people. For the historian, it offers insight into the lives of people who actually lived through major episodes of the modern period—the veritable stuff of history. For the social gerontologist, the text provides an excellent cross-sectional study comparing two communities of people facing the pains and pleasures of growing older. And for the person simply interested in Judaica, *Will You Still Need Me?* offers a taste of two very significant Jewish communities, testimony in part to the truly global nature of Jewish life. More than all of these factors, this study by Doris Francis gives us all pause to reflect on the universal process of our own aging and the need for gaining purpose and direction from Jewish tradition. We can all profit from the insight of the elders who speak to us from these pages.

—Kerry M. Olitzky

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Brief Notices

Alpert, Carl. *Technion: The Story of Israel's Institute of Technology*. New York and Haifa: American Technion Society, Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, 1982. ix, 439 pp.

David Ben-Gurion once referred to the Technion—Israel's oldest institution of higher learning—as “the cornerstone of the State of Israel.” It is difficult to conceive of any academy of higher learning in any other Western nation which could truly merit such a description. From its ranks have emerged Israel's engineering, scientific, and medical elites whose research has had international implications.

Carl Alpert's history has very correctly blended the institutional history of the Technion with the larger history of the Israeli state. It is astonishing to see how the Technion's history mirrors the growth of Israel from its Palestinian to its contemporary status. The volume reflects the social, economic, military, and human factors which mark the complex development of the Jewish homeland. One thing becomes very clear from Alpert's analysis: just as Israel belongs to the entire Jewish people, the Technion is truly the “Engineering University of the [entire] Jewish People.”

Bush, George S. *An American Harvest. The Story of the Weil Brothers—Cotton*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1982. xiii, 495 pp. \$25.00

Cotton is no longer king, neither in the South nor in the United States. At one time the United States not only “grew more cotton than any other nation, but spun most of it.” This was true in 1878 when Isidor and Herman Weil (pronounced in the South as “Wheel”), Jewish immigrants from Bavaria, founded Weil Brothers in Opelika, Alabama.

This is no longer true, as the cotton business succumbed, as have so many others, to the lure of cheap foreign labor. Indeed, most American cotton houses have not survived, but Weil Brothers—Cotton in Montgomery has, in part because they have understood the nature of change in their industry and because of the thrifty, low-profile nature passed on from generation to generation of Weils. This is a most readable business history, and an important contribution to our understanding of the Jewish role in southern economic life.

Davis, Lenwood G., Compiled by. *Black-Jewish Relations in the United States, 1752-1984: A Selected Bibliography*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984. xv, 130 pp. \$29.95

The question of black-Jewish relations has taken on major significance since the presidential campaign of the Reverend Jesse Jackson. But the question had even greater significance in the late 1960's when the issue of community control of education in parts of New York brought fear, anger, and charges of black anti-Semitism to the attention of blacks and Jews.

The relationship between blacks and Jews has never been a simple one. Professor Davis's bibliography makes this clear. Although both groups have carried minority status within American society, American Jews enjoy a sense of upward mobility and economic success never granted to blacks.

Although this is not a comprehensive bibliography by any means, and was not meant by the author to be such, it is an important contribution to an issue which needs and deserves the

broad historical perspective provided by Professor Davis's 230-year bibliographic review of black-Jewish relations in the United States.

Goldman, Eric A. *Visions, Images, and Dreams: Yiddish Film Past and Present*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1983. xiv, 224 pp. \$39.95

The revival of interest in the Yiddish language has now completed its first decade in American Jewish life. While the revival is not in itself a grounds well, the number of Yiddish courses and courses on East European Jewish life coupled with the presence in one location of literally hundreds of thousands of widely scattered and nearly forgotten Yiddish books, has caused a certain interest in things Yiddish.

Eric A. Goldman's revised doctoral dissertation is a further indication of this interest. The volume is a worthy complement to Judith N. Goldberg's *Laughter Through Tears: The Yiddish Cinema*, which also appeared in 1983 (reviewed in Brief Notices in November 1983). Goldman devotes three full chapters to the American Yiddish film.

Jewish Book Annual (Volume 42). New York: JWB Jewish Book Council, 1984. 321 pp. \$18.00

The 1984-85 edition of the *Jewish Book Annual* includes articles by Alvin S. Rosenfeld on American Jewish literature, Emanuel S. Goldsmith on Yiddish poetry and American Jewish identity, Judaica from American university presses by Amnon Zipin, the new Jewish Theological Seminary library by Menahem Schmelzer, and the literary contributions of Mordecai M. Noah by Jonathan D. Sarna.

Libo, Kenneth, and Irving Howe. *We Lived There Too*. New York: St. Martin's/Marek, 1984. 347 pp. \$24.95.

American Jewish history has perhaps not yet undergone the polarizing and often paralyzing debate over the writing of American history that has so affected the major discipline. The struggle is between the narrative historians, those whose phrases are often literary and whose insights dwell on political figures and cultural elites, and the social historians, those who view American history "from the bottom up" and who rely on the gritty, gutsy tales of prostitutes and criminals, miners and factory workers, among others, to determine the nature of the American experience.

But, perhaps imperceptibly, this debate is a constant source of tension, even among those historians of the American Jewish experience who find little apparent contradiction between the two major historical approaches.

Yet Kenneth Libo and Irving Howe in their two important documentaries, *How We Lived*, and the present volume, have brought into relief the essence of the entire debate. What constitutes the real history of the Jewish experience in America? Is it Howe's elegance in interpreting New York Jewish life in the impressionistic and analytical style he so superbly crafted in *World of Our Fathers*, or the hardly elegant (for the most part) but "real" words of the characters themselves as they looked at the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds around them? Can we better understand the experience of Jews in the urban environment of New York or in their westward migration over three centuries as documented in *We Lived There Too* through the high political analysis of the narrative historian or through the often misspelled and ungrammatical letters and faded photographs which form the basis of social history and this documentary? The debate, should it ever catch on, might prove to be fascinating.

Pinsker, Sanford, and Jack Fischell, Edited by. *Holocaust Studies Annual* (Volume 1: *America and the Holocaust*). Greenwood, Fla.: Penkevill Publishing Co., 1984. 181 pp. \$15.00

Holocaust Studies Annual can claim to be the first American annual devoted to Holocaust studies. But it is by no means the only one. The *Simon Wiesenthal Center Annual* (reviewed elsewhere in Brief Notices) and a new publication sponsored by the United States Holocaust Memorial Council have joined or will join this volume as annual or quarterly publications on the Holocaust.

This first volume of *Holocaust Studies Annual* offers a number of interesting articles on, among others, American authors and the Holocaust, the question of rescue in the American Jewish Conference, the New York intellectual, Dwight Macdonald and the Holocaust, and the case of Panama, the Canal Zone, and Jewish rescue efforts between 1939 and 1941.

Simon Wiesenthal Center Annual (Volume I). Chappaqua, N.Y.: Simon Wiesenthal Center in cooperation with Rossel Books, 1984. 250 pp. \$17.95

A number of important scholars have contributed to this first volume published by the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles and edited by Alex Grobman. Among them are Henry Friedlander, Sybil Milton, Christopher R. Browning, John S. Conway, and Yisrael Gutman. Of special interest to the American Jewish experience is the article by Alex Grobman on American Jewish chaplains and the survivors of the Holocaust, April–June 1945.

Simons, Leonard N. *Simon Says: Selections From His Writings and Talks*. Birmingham, Mich.: Leo M. Franklin Archives of Temple Beth El, 1984, 334 pp.

Leonard Simons celebrated his eightieth birthday in 1984. This volume is his *Festschrift* with a twist. Instead of having others write about Leonard Simons's accomplishments—and they are many in the city of Detroit and elsewhere—it was thought best to let Leonard Simons speak for himself. We are grateful for such wisdom. Grateful because Leonard Simons's first rule in speaking and writing has been to "never bore your audience." Those who read this volume will see just how faithfully Simons has followed his own best advice.

There are others all across America like Leonard Simons. They are Jews who have taken the essence of Judaism to heart and have given of themselves freely—both as benefactors and as volunteers—to causes within the Jewish community, their local community, and the nation.

Most of them, however, would rather remain anonymous or silent, giving because of some vague ethical and religious imperative which clings to a part of their being. Not so Leonard Simons. Where he can, when he can, he tells the world why it is important to reach out to others, to give without question when the cause is correct. That imperative permeates his entire being.

There is at the end of this volume a page which contains one of Leonard Simons's many sayings: "There is a big difference between sticking your nose in other people's business and putting your heart in other people's problems." All the rest is indeed commentary.

Whitfield, Stephen J. *Voices of Jacob, Hands of Esau: Jews in American Life and Thought*. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1984. 322 pp. \$25.00

The fourteen essays published in this volume represent Stephen J. Whitfield at his literary and perceptive best. That is not unusual, because Whitfield rarely appears in any other condi-

tion. For several years he has quite literally been the most refreshing, clever, and prolific voice on the subject of American Jewish culture.

The essays in this volume have appeared elsewhere, in journals ranging from *Judaism to Midstream* to *American Jewish History*. Now that they can appear together, it becomes obvious just how important have been Whitfield's pronouncements on American Jewish intellectuals and the question of totalitarianism, on Jews as American radicals, on Jews and the performing arts (especially comedy), or on Jews and the southern experience.

It is fair to state that the range of his knowledge is impressive, the fluidity of his literary expression truly remarkable. Comparisons are far more difficult and dangerous—but let us try: radical chic may have its Tom Wolfe but American Jewish culture has its Stephen Whitfield.