

The first chroniclers of the New York intellectuals to take these articulate and brilliant figures seriously, and to try to specify their cultural and historical significance, were the New York intellectuals themselves. Beginning with memoirs like Alfred Kazin’s *Starting Out in the Thirties* (1965) and Norman Podhoretz’s *Making It* (1967), and especially with Irving Howe’s *Commentary* article on “The New York Intellectuals” (1968, revised in *The Decline of the New* [1970]), attention has been paid to a group of writers, critics, and scholars—nearly all Jews, mostly the children of immigrants living in New York—who first came to maturity as early as the onset of the Great Depression. They sometimes engaged in bitter disputes with one another, occasionally were not on speaking terms. But the shots that they fired were at point-blank range. Because they shared certain assumptions and values, because the inflections of their voices were so familiar to one another, and because they cared so deeply about how their own immediate circle responded to their work, they can be as easily identified as earlier coteries in American cultural history. Their world is as distinguishable as the magistracy of the Puritan divines, the utopian communities of the Transcendentalists, the avant-garde bohemia of Greenwich Village.
The genealogy of ideas as well as the accidents of birth split the New York intelligentsia into three "generations"; and although it is impossible to agree upon the full composition of its membership, a consensus has emerged that its persistence as a coherent group is over. Partly because of the actuarial tables, partly because the anti-Stalinism that it largely invented became so widespread during the Cold War, partly because deradicalization generated so much diffusion, this group has long been in a state of decomposition. Many of its pivotal figures are still vigorously at work as critics and polemicists. But the community that they once formed is a corpse that is barely twitching; and no provocative equivalent of the Moscow trials, no war or other international crisis, is likely to jump-start it to life.

An obvious sign of demise is that younger scholars have been writing books on these sometimes still living figures, making them fully a part of American intellectual and even political history. Indeed so many of these younger academics are producing dissertations, monographs, and specialized studies on individual thinkers that they and the synthesizers are running the risk of lip-syncing one other's books. In a crowded field, these two similarly titled books deserve special consideration. Alan Wald's is the most painstaking political account of this group, while Terry Cooney's is the most complete study of the genesis of what Richard Hofstadter termed the "house organ of the American intellectual community," Partisan Review.

Wald's volume is truer in spirit to the vigorous contentiousness of Partisan Review, and even its offbeat politics is something of a throwback to the radicalism that spawned the magazine in the 1930s. It is also far more ambitious and synoptic, carrying the story past Partisan Review itself and up to the neoconservatism that characterizes many surviving New York luminaries. Cooney's book is more restricted in scope, focusing upon the "heroic" phase of the vicissitudes of Partisan Review, and stopping around V-E Day, when the journal no longer vibrated with the effort to combine radical politics with experimental art. By then its place in the history of "little" magazines was secure. Cooney's book, though more reflective and elegant than Wald's, is far less deeply felt. What it lacks is partisanship, though The Rise of the New York Intellectuals displays the academic virtues of balance and soundness, even yielding to a certain blandness in its summations. The
story of these intellectuals is a bit more colorful, and richer in social comedy, than Cooney's account has permitted it to be.

Consider for example what a satirist might have made of so dominant a figure as Philip Rahv—the awesomely influential literary arbiter who never even graduated from high school, the champion of the modernist sensibility who disparaged the work published in his own magazine, the writer of exhilarating and exquisite prose who spoke with a massively thick Russian accent, the cynical bully of the editorial office who shrank from the political challenges that his own radical views ought to have dictated, the independent dissident whose estate at his death was bequeathed to the State of Israel, the ornery curmudgeon who would have been astonished that more than one car followed his hearse to the cemetery near Brandeis University, where he had taught after nearly half a lifetime of disdain for the sterility of the academy. Such wayward human complications are barely allowed to transfix the reader of either of these books.

Their main themes ought to be familiar to scholars of modern American intellectual history. Wald's work is an attempt to explain how "a group of individuals who mainly began their careers as revolutionary communists in the 1930s could become an institutionalized and even hegemonic component of American culture during the conservative 1950s while maintaining a high degree of collective continuity" (p. 10). This stress upon the trajectory from left to right was earlier presented in dramatic terms in John P. Diggins's Up from Communism (1975), though not written from a Marxist perspective; and several memoirs of the New York intellectuals themselves have deliberately retraced their own roads from radicalism. Cooney's book locates cosmopolitan values at the center of the Partisan Review circle of editors and contributors: "a resistance to particularisms of nationality, race, religion or philosophy.... They celebrated richness, complexity, and diversity. Central to the ideal was a spirit of openness and striving—openness to variety and change; striving for a fuller understanding of the world and for higher and more inclusive means of expression" (p. 5). This is a convincing interpretation, but it is an extension of David A. Hollinger's analysis of the Jewish intellectuals who flourished earlier in the century, an essay first published in American Quarterly in 1975 and reprinted in his collection, In the Ameri-
The value of both the Wald and Cooney volumes derives less from any originality of argument than from the richness of detail that both authors so copiously provide.

If anything, they offer too much detail, the exfoliation of their research sometimes threatening to grow so wildly that the reader may long to reach for a machete. Cooney's study is already two-fifths over before Partisan Review has managed to free itself from the coils of the Communist Party. Only after that break, to which he devotes the close examination that earlier historians lavished on the Protestant break from the church in early modern Europe, did Partisan Review become important to radical intellectual history, much less general American culture. A hermetic quality mars Wald's account even more blatantly. The manifestos of the radical intellectuals of the 1930s and early 1940s are sifted so diligently, and their party broadsheets are weighed with such retrospective fascination, that Wald may have forgotten that the impact of these polemicists was usually confined to one another. The obscure Herbert Solow is described as a "charismatic journalist" (as though he were Herbert Bayard Swope or Edward R. Murrow), but such radicals did not alter the course of the republic. The Trotskyist party contained 1,520 members at its peak in 1938, skidding to 1,095 in 1940. A couple of years later, with the combat between the Cannonites and the Shachtmanites ripping asunder the Fourth International in the United States, the Socialist Workers Party numbered 645, the cadres of the Workers Party a few hundred less (p. 165). Such figures resemble the size of some classes at the University of Michigan, where Wald teaches, rather than a plausible vanguard of the international working class.

Not even Wald can claim that, for all the scarlet fever to which the intellectuals once succumbed, they acted very differently than other American editors and writers during the Great Depression. Judged by the standards of the civil rights and antiwar activists of the 1960s, these "revolutionaries" were astonishingly tame. They never got arrested for violating any of the laws of the repressive state; they rarely, if ever, resisted injustice by any direct expression of grievance; they never put themselves in any danger; and with a few exceptions (like Harvey Swados), they preferred to escape from the working class rather than identify with its plight. In their theoretical journals, they came on with the ferocity of pit bulls; in practice, they had all the formidable
aggressiveness of toy poodles. Wald does not quite ponder this discrepancy, which suggests that the distance traversed toward the liberal anti-Communism of the 1950s and the neoconservatism of the 1980s was not so long a march as The New York Intellectuals often suggests.

The author's knowledge of the politics of the New York intellectuals is nevertheless so intimate that it borders on the encyclopedic. He names names—what the birth certificates recorded before key figures anglicized their names, what their party names were, what their *noms de plume* were in *Partisan Review* or *New International* or *Politics*, and which characters are based upon which intellectuals in novels like Tess Slesinger’s *The Unpossessed* (1934), Mary McCarthy’s *The Oasis* (1949), and James T. Farrell’s posthumous *Sam Holman* (1983). Oddly enough, though Wald teaches in a department of English, his treatment of particular works of fiction is somewhat thin; and his aesthetic judgments and elucidations are rather devoid of authority or privileged insight. For the animating force behind this book is clearly political—a case for the prosecution, in which Wald demonstrates that (1) the New York intellectuals expressed themselves with greater intensity and for a longer revolutionary period than they later cared to admit; and (2) their lapse from radicalism represented a betrayal of their own vocation as intellectuals committed to a more just society. One of his major aims is to make anti-Communism intelligible by showing its origins in a radical criticism of both American capitalism and the Soviet state.

Wald’s candor is praiseworthy: “my political sympathies are with Marxist commitment” (p. 22). That is why the militants of the Socialist Workers Party come off best in his account, because they pledged allegiance to “revolutionary anti-Stalinism.” But the author’s neo-Trotskyism disables him from noticing the depth of the failure of such cadres to fathom the historical “laws of motion.” Trotsky and his followers denied that the capitalist states could defeat the Axis powers without becoming totalitarian themselves, and that the Bolsheviks who managed Russia could survive the Second World War. Both predictions were manifestly false. Nor could the Trotskyists wriggle out of the contradiction that, though “bureaucratic collectivism” made the Soviet Union reactionary, its expansion and domination of its neighbors was somehow “progressive”—a vindication of Soviet imperialism.
No wonder, then, that even readers who can only admire Wald's prodigies of research and his *Sitzfleisch* will have trouble taking seriously the political stance of the author, whose expectations of revolutionary change seem as compulsively quixotic as, say, the presidential campaigns of Harold Stassen. Wald's perspective also prevents him from feeling anything besides contempt or derision for other forms of anti-Communism, whether liberal, conservative, or reactionary. Thus the powerful evidence that Alger Hiss and the Rosenbergs were guilty of espionage is brushed aside (p. 410, n. 10), perhaps because HUAC and the FBI were so heavily involved in those cases. To have been egregiously wrong about the durability of both American capitalism and the Soviet state *and* about the Second World War might appear solid enough reasons for deradicalization.

Cooney's concerns are primarily cultural rather than political, as he deftly weaves his way through the debates over the emergence of new literary forms and perceptions. The unexplained denial of access to the papers of *Partisan Review*, housed at Rutgers University, seems not to have handicapped him. For his book amplifies knowledge of how the journal helped to create a more sophisticated American culture, heightening receptivity to European literature and to the pressures of political change. An historian at the University of Puget Sound, Cooney is particularly struck by the suspicion that the New York intellectuals felt toward the hinterland, which they associated with nativism, bigotry, and parochialism, as opposed to the cosmopolitanism that these talkers in the city advocated. The author highlights their sense of superiority—rarely warranted by much direct acquaintance with rural or village America itself—toward all that was not in New York itself. Long before Saul Steinberg's celebrated *New Yorker* cover had mocked the disproportionate configurations that the nation assumed west of the Hudson River, these intellectuals were absorbed in making their particular subculture sovereign. The title of the third volume of Alfred Kazin's autobiography was almost defiant in its proclamation: *New York Jew*.

Cooney devotes part of his ninth chapter to the subject of Jewishness; and it is quite penetrating, showing how various writers and critics wrestled with the meaning of their own ethnic origins. Consistent with Cooney's argument, they generally ended up as cosmopolitans, largely *because* they belonged to this *am-segulah*. The Jewish
wanderer, Delmore Schwartz and Clement Greenberg and others declared, had become a representative figure in a civilization permeated with estrangement and the sense of exile, just as the Jewish writer was endowed with special sensitivity and insight into the condition of alienation. As intellectuals, such Jews had propelled themselves away from the pious traditions of their immediate ancestors; as Jews, such intellectuals felt themselves outsiders within a Christendom whose cultural and political foundations were crumbling. Doubly estranged, the editors and contributors to Partisan Review were therefore specialists in the afflictions of modernity. Wald’s volume skips lightly over the relevance of Jewishness to the politics of these thinkers; neither book is explicitly designed to enhance an understanding of the American Jewish heritage.

In this respect more pertinence can be found in Alexander Bloom’s Prodigal Sons: The New York Intellectuals and Their World (1986), with which the volumes under review will inevitably be compared. But the studies of both Wald and Cooney must be consulted by any scholar piqued by the fate of Jewish intellectuals, and even more by anyone intrigued by the vagaries of modern cultural history. “Like many another American,” Kazin asserted in the Contemporary Jewish Record in 1944, “I have had to make my own culture”; and in constructing it out of Jewish memories, plus the English metaphysical poets and the Russian novelists and the New England Transcendentalists, he personified the eclectic grandeur of what is most admirable in the legacy of the New York intellectuals.

Stephen Whitfield is the Max Richter Professor of American Civilization at Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. He is the author of numerous scholarly essays and six books, most recently American Space, Jewish Time (1988) and A Death in the Delta (1988).
The rise of the Zionist movement almost a century ago precipitated heated debates over an issue that continues to haunt modern Jewish sensibility: the return to the Jewish homeland. One recalls the vitriolic opposition to Zionism both in Central and Western Europe at the turn of the twentieth century by Jews who reaffirmed the nationality of their countries of citizenship. One remembers, too, the opposition of most of the East European Orthodox leadership to the movement of return to the Holy Land spearheaded by secularists. If the former feared negative political repercussions and loss of national status in their existing homes, the latter objected to the nontraditional methods used and goals proposed for the revival of the ancestral home. In the United States, the stature and counsel of Louis Brandeis helped mitigate the discomfort some felt over the charge of dual loyalty. His 1915 speech, “The Jewish Problem and How to Solve It,” which asserted that being a Zionist made a Jew a better American, deflected to some degree the perception of Zionism as a dire threat to one’s Americanism. And yet, ironically, Brandeis’s position underscored the fundamental problematic of the concept of Jewish homeland for twentieth-century American Jews: one could fully support the Jewish return to the Jewish homeland without feeling it necessary to live there. But if so, the question arose, What meaning does the notion of Jewish homeland have, especially for those unwilling to live in it?

Since the creation of the State of Israel, reflection on the meaning of the Jewish homeland has only intensified, as Jewish political and intellectual introspection on the relationship between Israel and Jewish communities outside of Israel has deepened. Israelis often seem confounded by the disinclination of Jews “to come home.” American Jews, for their part, often grope for ways by which to express their
unwavering fealty to Israel while still remaining at home in America. Moreover, the questions and metaphors concerning this relationship prove highly contentious: do American Jews live in galut, that is, exile, or in diaspora, the more neutral, nonjudgmental term? Is Israel the center of world Jewish life, ministering to scattered Jewish communities on the periphery, or is it only one center among equals, only equivalent in eminence, say, to America, but not more “special”? In a recent issue of Moment magazine, its former editor, Leonard Fein, was severely castigated in a letter to the editor for having dared to suggest that the American Jewish center is Israel’s equal. Clearly, the topic of galut, of homeland and homelessness, in the face of a reconstructed, politically sovereign Jewish state beckoning Jews home is emotionally charged, intellectually challenging, and existentially compelling.

Arnold Eisen has experienced the full gamut of these emotions. Having written eloquently in the past on the crucial significance of Israel for him, the American Eisen with a doctorate from Hebrew University tried to settle in Israel, teaching at Tel Aviv University. He has since left and is now on the faculty of Stanford University. He himself notes the highly personal implications of the Jewish homeland calling him home, observing that “over the years [I] found myself on both sides of this conversation: an ‘Israeli’ among American Jews, an American among Israelis; at once in exile and at home among both” (pp. xii – xiii). One senses the passion of conviction and the sentiment of pathos in this book, which makes it all the more engaging.

Arnold Eisen’s absorbing, penetrating work probes the nature of Jewish discussion on the issues of galut and homelessness/homecoming in modern times. Beginning with an evaluation of the premodern (or early modern, depending on one’s historical perspective) Spinoza and Mendelssohn on the theme, Eisen then critically assesses the approaches of leading European Israeli Zionist theoreticians of modern and contemporary times—spiritual or cultural Zionists, political Zionists, religious Zionists—as well as those of American Jewish thinkers. The list is a veritable who’s who of modern Jewish thought, and includes Moses Hess, Ahad Ha’am, Micah Joseph Berdiczewski, Simon Dubnow, A. D. Gordon, Martin Buber, Theodor Herzl, Jacob Klatzkin, Yehezkel Kaufmann, Franz Rosenzweig, Abraham I. Kook, Zevi Y. Kook, Isaiah Leibowitz, Aharon Lichtenstein, Nathan Rotenstreich, Eliezer Schweid, Gershom Scholem, Louis Brandeis, Solomon Schechter, Jacob Neusner, Ben Halpern, Mordecai Kaplan, Jakob J.
Petuchowski, Joseph B. Soloveitchik, Abraham J. Heschel, and Emil Fackenheim.

But the book is no mere synopsis of viewpoints, although it is that too. Rather, Eisen argues that the modern and contemporary debate over the meaning of exile, Jewish national existence, and the return to the Jewish national home would benefit from a serious encounter with the ideas and images of the classical Jewish tradition on these issues. This encounter, to some extent, has taken place. Indeed, Eisen suggests that much of the language and many of the conceptualizations of the modern discussion either consciously borrow from, rebel against, or unwittingly parallel that of the religious tradition. But to better crystallize these connections to and divergences from the tradition, Eisen in the first part of the book sets out to provide the religious background which, he avers, dominates all subsequent normative reflection on galut through the ages.

Eisen selects three texts which he feels highlight critical “moments” in the development of the religious-intellectual tradition of galut. The first is the Book of Genesis, which underlines human homelessness and alienation, both physical and metaphysical: expulsion from the Garden, estrangement from the earth by Adam's descendants, the later patriarchal wanderings through and out of the land, and the settlement in Canaan only to be followed by the enslavement of Jacob’s descendants in Egypt. If Genesis depicts varieties of exile and rootlessness, Deuteronomy stands as its antithesis, holding out the hope of a marvelous homecoming, replete with the tangible blessings of fertility, inheritance, and a stable political center. In short, an ideal society. But the realization of this promise, Deuteronomy reminds, can only occur with proper Jewish living; improper socioreligious and moral behavior will bring forth ineluctable national disaster. The homecoming is contingent and not absolute: it can be reversed and exile returned, as the vivid imagery of Deuteronomy’s texts of reproof caution. This book, as other prophetic works, stands as both a warning and an explanation for the inexplicable: the people can be exiled from their home as an expression of divine disfavor; homecoming can be turned into homelessness, a thought that has persistently animated Jewish religious thought.

Roman domination of the homeland is the occasion for Eisen’s third classical source: the rabbinic tractate Avodah Zarah, which finds the rabbis responding to new realities. Whereas the homecoming of
Deuteronomy presupposed the extirpation of idolatry from the model society to be created, first- and second-century C.E. Palestinian Jewish life had to come to terms with a society pervaded by idolatry. Although physically at home, the people on the land were nevertheless in exile from their ideal state. Hence Avodah Zarah, in Eisen’s interpretation, finds the rabbis confronting the problem of Jews living in galut while still resident in their own land. By outlining the permissible limits of Jewish interaction with idolaters, the main subject of Avodah Zarah, the rabbis carved out a sacred order of Jewish time and space that was both impenetrable and independent. They therefore succeeded in constructing a portable Judaism that could be lived anywhere, in the homeland or out of it. But in doing so, they established a highly ambivalent relationship to the Jewish homeland. Although the homeland, within the conceptual matrix of this portable Judaism, was still central, although the hope for an ideal messianic homecoming was still fervently prayed for, the land was neither necessary nor sufficient in order to live a life of Torah. Consequently, the metaphysical ideal of living a Torah life won out over the political need for an independent Jewish land; a Jew could be homeless politically but at home metaphysically. Without explicitly saying so, Eisen’s analysis effectively suggests that the rabbinic definition of Judaism, typified by the laws in Avodah Zarah, spawned the historic tension between Jewish religious tradition and Jewish nationalism that has been pointed to so frequently by modern intellectuals.

Eisen affirms that these three “moments” of galut serve as archetypes for the Jewish preoccupation with the idea of homelessness and homecoming in later centuries. The promised land in the full political sense could end the metaphysical aberration of the spirit, but not necessarily so. One could live in exile in one’s homeland, just as one could find metaphysical at-homeness outside the Holy Land by living a Torah life. Territory was therefore not the ultimate solution to alienation, but territory on which one followed the dictates of Deuteronomy.

Eisen’s analysis of Genesis, Deuteronomy, and Avodah Zarah is incisive, illustrating his masterful midrashic capacity for textual interpretation. Although I am unconvinced by Eisen’s interpretation of Avodah Zarah, which reads too much like eisegesis than exegesis—the conception of galut imputed to the rabbis in this tractate, in my esti-
mation, is more Eisen's than theirs—nevertheless, it is bold and imaginative and ought to be appreciated for what it attempts.

Eisen's discussion of the modern and contemporary thinkers on galut is excellent, and demonstrates his great acuity in getting to the heart of their positions. Moreover, his analyses, pointedly evaluating how near or far from the Jewish tradition these intellectuals have strayed, is admirable and persuasive. Ironically, as Eisen notes, Jewish tradition dominates the discourse of those who contend with the issue of Jewish homeland and who crave meaning and legitimization for their views.

Spinoza demystified galut by rejecting the chosen people and the chosen land altogether. Moses Mendelssohn transformed galut into more symbolic terms by legitimating Jewish civil life among the gentiles in order to win emancipation, thus redirecting Jewish religious thought away from the land. Spiritual Zionists like Ahad Ha'am pointed to the need to overcome exile by the return home of a selective minority of Jews who would establish a spiritual center for the sake of the communities on the periphery. Such thinking, although in some measure consistent with the Jewish tradition's understanding of the homeland as a true spiritual center, nevertheless rebelled against the tradition by transforming the meaning of the "spiritual" from the realm of religion to secular culture. Political Zionists, on the other hand, such as Herzl, Klatzkin, and Ben-Gurion, dismissed the notion of a spiritual center in favor of a self-contained national center whose goal was a normal, politically sovereign state. They broke radically with the tradition, even though they used biblical language and metaphors from the tradition to describe the state.

Writing from the vantage of the 1980s, Eisen concludes that the meaning of homecoming as offered by both political and spiritual Zionism has lost its appeal. Political Zionism, in reality, affords no meaning to the state as already created and is essentially dead, whereas the thought of spiritual Zionists, who try to provide an ideologically transcendent goal for the state, is moribund. As Eisen sees it, the question for them is clear: can there be meaning to a Jewish homecoming to the ancestral land not rooted in the tradition, which, at bottom, is the very source of credibility for the homecoming ideal that secularists either deny or reconstruct? Eisen is dubious, and his point is well taken. The weakest link for all secular Zionists, such as the socialist
Ber Borochov, whom Eisen does not treat, is justifying why the land of Israel. The secularist answer, severed from the religious tradition, no longer seems convincing.

Yet even traditionalist Jews who carry the religious tradition forward also have difficulty with defining the contemporary homecoming. Hence religious Zionists, such as Abraham Kook, Isaiah Leibowitz, and Aharon Lichtenstein, have found themselves on the horns of a dilemma: They have to explain and religiously internalize a homecoming that is political but not religious; in other words, they have to confront the complex issue of the relationship of religion to the state. Exactly what kind of homecoming is it that is physical but not metaphysical, material but not spiritual, and one that can be applauded for meeting Jewish historical imperatives even though not fulfilling the Deuteronomic ideal?

American Jewish reflection on the homecoming offers entirely different perspectives and differs fundamentally from that of Israelis. The thinkers Eisen surveys demonstrate the broad parameters of their orientation: Israel does not necessarily solve the Jewish problem of homelessness; America is different, it is not exile; and furthermore, America and Israel are equal centers of Jewish life. The Zionist idea of return to the land has not captured the imagination of American Jews for whom religious tradition, however understood, still is projected as being entirely sufficient to contend with metaphysical homelessness.

Is there continuity between Zionism and Judaism? That is the question which coming home to the Holy Land has evoked, Eisen argues, and the answer is difficult to come by. For many, if not most, there is not, or at least only a partial continuity. The contemporary Jewish homecoming in concrete terms has achieved magnificent results; yet when its ideological impulses over the last century are placed in the context of the Jewish religious tradition on galut and homecoming, its ultimate status as a source of values and meaning to spark a mass return to the land seems questionable. The tension, even conflict, between the classical religious tradition and Jewish nationalism is just not easily resolved—by anyone or any movement.

This book constitutes a first-rate contribution to Jewish intellectual thought and reinforces Eisen’s stature as one of the most nimble-minded scholars of modern Jewish thought on the scene today. If I have any
quibbles, they are over secondary issues. Eisen unfortunately neglects a whole body of halachic literature on the issue of the mitzvah of aliyah and *kibbush ha'aretz* (conquest of the land) from medieval to modern times that would have added an important dimension to the analysis of homecoming from the viewpoint of the religious tradition. The three “classical” sources are not enough. Moreover, Eisen’s highly refined, conceptual analysis obscures historical issues and the impact of the *galut* phenomenon—here almost exclusively treated as an ideological question—in Jewish history. The religious tradition did not lead to a Jewish homecoming in the past when the opportunities arose, nor did the significance of the land stem Jewish departure from the land at other times: the vast majority of Babylonian Jews stayed behind in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E.; Jews in Hellenistic times migrated out of Palestine, as evidenced by the vast numbers situated in the Mediterranean basin at the turn of the millennium; medieval Jews by and large did not return to the Holy Land after major expulsions; and modern Jews, similarly, voted with their feet for America as opposed to a return to Eretz Yisrael. What is the significance of this historical flight from and avoidance of homecoming, and is it only related to the ideology of homecoming? Modern Jewish reflections could have been related to historical precedents, not merely to ideology. Then too, the analysis of the reflections of the moderns and contemporaries should have taken cognizance of the crucial dates 1948, 1967, and 1973. Is there any difference in the discussions about homecoming before and after these years? If the categories of spiritual and political Zionism seemed more reasonable in the 1950s than they do in the 1980s, why is that so? Finally, a note of comparative politics might have sharpened the analysis. Does any country spend as much time debating its own raison d’être as does Israel? Why the incessant concern over the “meaning” of the country—is it a function of the inherent and unique religious nature of Jewish nationalism and its persistence or because the nation is still so politically immature and young? The tradition makes demands of the people; that merely reinforces Eisen’s point. Jews can’t escape it, even if they are unclear as to how best to articulate the relationship between Jewish religion and Jewish nationalism. Few Israelis wish to break all ties to the Jewish past and the religious culture on which it is based; yet how to be free nationally
yet show honor to the religious tradition from which the concept of Jewish homecoming evolved—that is the burden of the religious past on the historical present.

—Benny Kraut

Benny Kraut is head of the Judaic Studies Program at the University of Cincinnati. Among his numerous publications are *From Reform Judaism to Ethical Culture: The Religious Evolution of Felix Adler* (1979) and *German-Jewish Orthodoxy in an Immigrant Synagogue: Cincinnati’s New Hope Congregation and the Ambiguities of Ethnic Religion* (1988).

Milton Hindus, a charter member of the Brandeis University faculty, has produced a book of great distinction in this retrospective collection, which includes works written as early as 1941 and as recently as 1986. Reality, he tells us, “is hard to pigeonhole” (p. 97), and indeed there is no way to define a writer or a thinker—the oeuvre must stand as its own definition. Even so, a sentence by Harvard’s Irving Babbitt which Hindus quotes with reverence (it is “one of Babbitt’s sterling sentences” [p. 101]) applies to Hindus’s own work: “In the last analysis, what a man owes to society is not his philosophy, but a good example” (ibid.). Certainly that is congruent with what Hindus seems bent on in these essays, which, notwithstanding the book’s title, are all “personal,” even the most rigorously scholarly of them.

Society means a great deal to Hindus, and the question of a debt to society would not strike him as absurd. His is a Socratic view of society; he speaks of “the compact of eternal society, which is between those who have lived before us, those who are now living, and those who will live on after us” (p. 126). Hindus is in that sense a true conservative. His tone can be astringent, but tends to avoid stridency or rancor—he seldom allows himself a diatribe, though in a 1983 essay on Céline he excoriates “our own time, in which all concepts of decency, measure, restraint, ‘the inner check,’ have been so degraded that no suggestion can be regarded as completely beyond the pale or through its extremism capable of making anyone taking it seriously blush” (p. 158).

A good example is what Hindus admires and prizes. Hindus himself offers a good example in more than one respect. This man of East European immigrant parentage and Yiddish memory may be said to exemplify the astonishing transfiguration which has taken place in American Jewish life: in his own recollections he charts the passage from the inevitable immigrant awkwardness to a stylistic and intellectual grace I find reminiscent—mutatis mutandis but in its mandarinism, too—of Virginia Woolf’s achievement in *The Common*
Reader series. Readers will encounter in his work sophistication, charm, cosmopolitan sensibility, reticence, and a memorable idiosyncrasy in speech and thought. It cannot be said of Hindus as of the Buddha that he is “concerned mainly with his message and only very incidentally with the language in which it [is] delivered” (p. 124), though Hindus clearly is an intellectual Jew to whom “the most important life is that of the mind” (p. 9). He is also an intellectual Jew who knows what it is for a Jewish identity to be, “if permitted to survive at all, . . . hard-pressed” (p. 155), even when he can take no pride in disloyalty to his own kin (p. 54).

Hindus provides cogent discussions of ancestral values (“the culture [of Eastern European Jews] was hardly an irresponsible one. It was a family-oriented, responsibly social, and basically believing world, even when the religious tie to the synagogue . . . had worn somewhat thin” [p. 20]), of campus radicalism in the 1930s (“Anyone listening to our discussions might have been terrified by the scale of our visions, and by the callousness and brutality with which we proposed to transform them into realities—until it was realized that we were actually powerless” [p. 51]), of his celebrated uncle Maurice Hindus (“With all its faults, he had formed deep attachments to [Russia,] the country in which he had been born and to its people, and leaving them was ‘like tearing something out’ of his very soul”[p. 28]), and of Babbitt, Whitman, Reznikoff, Proust, Céline, Whittaker Chambers, Frost, Plato, and Thoreau.

He makes many arresting comments on politics: “in order to represent a political viewpoint, it is not necessary to be the wisest or best person in the party; it is simply necessary to say fearlessly what is on people’s minds but what they dare not say for themselves”(p. 40); “nothing (at least not in politics) can be understood with the intellect alone”(p. 44); politics “works, as art does, more by an appeal to the heart than to the intellect of man” (p. 53). Hindus is a conservative, though perhaps not a neoconservative: his model is the Socrates of whom A. E. Taylor says, “he respects the consciences of TO KOINON [the commonwealth] as well as his own” (p. 128). Hindus rejects Thoreau as representative of “inflamed individuals who set their own sense of what is right above that of other men” (p. 129). Thoreau’s “advocacy of what has since been called ‘passive resistance’ to the state may be little less mischievous than armed insurrection in destroy-
ing the ‘domestic tranquility’ promised by the American Constitution” (p. 129). Thoreau’s conviction that “under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also in prison” calls forth this response from Hindus: “It sounds well enough until we stop to think” (p. 130), and almost always he does stop to think.

Occasionally he exhibits what I would take to be a blind spot: for instance, his peremptory dismissal of Philip Roth as guilty of “self-defamation” (p. 83) or the sangfroid which allows him to denounce the self-immolation of Vietnamese Buddhists “for very questionable political motives” (p. 120). For the most part, however, Hindus does stop to think. That he has done so is evident in his account of the French anti-Semite Louis-Ferdinand Céline. Hindus speaks of his attraction to Céline, whom he visited in Denmark after World War II and about whom he published The Crippled Giant in 1950. “The deepest roots of my attachment to Céline may be impossible to trace. Jewish self-hatred? ... It is not whom or what one loves that is important, as Proust tells us, but the great fact of loving itself” (p. 154). But the attachment troubles him. Ultimately, he concludes, Céline “belonged to what was new and fresh and alive and indelible in literature” (p. 155) and “Even in his most benighted and delirious ravings there are redeeming flashes of wit and insight” (p. 160). Céline’s “visions seemed the most accurate rendering of the fantastic, maddening world in which we found ourselves” (p. 152).

Hindus’s conservatism holds few charms for me, but no political disagreement can obscure his immense intelligence and clarity. These essays will handsomely repay readers long after our generation has passed into oblivion.

—Stanley F. Chyet

Stanley F. Chyet is professor of American Jewish history and director of graduate studies at the Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Los Angeles. Among his recent publications is Israeli Poetry: A Contemporary Anthology (with Warren Bargad).
Together with Milton Steinberg and Abraham J. Heschel, Will Herberg was one of the more interesting and influential thinkers on the American Jewish scene in the fifties. Born in 1901 (the date is sometimes given as 1909) in a little village near Minsk, he was brought to the United States as a child. Early in life he became a Marxist and a member of the Communist Party. He did not, however, like the way in which Marxism was translated into practice in the Soviet Union, and therefore he affiliated with the wing of the party led by Jay Lovestone, expelled from the official Communist Party by Stalin himself. He was active organizationally and educationally on behalf of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers Union. Severely shocked by the Nazi-Soviet pact, and intellectually stimulated by Reinhold Niebuhr, Herberg began to feel that what had attracted him to Marxism in the first place was the concern with social justice. However, social justice appeared to him now to lack a sound basis in Marxism, and in secularism in general; and he began to look for a more secure basis in religion, that is to say, in the Judeo-Christian heritage. He thereupon interested himself in the teachings of religion, and particularly in the writings of some modern religious existentialists. Thus he was one of the first writers in American Judaism to draw attention to the thought of Franz Rosenzweig—decades before Rosenzweig’s Star of Redemption was made available in an English translation. Out of these interests and concerns, Herberg wrote his Judaism and Modern Man, which was published in 1951—a book which both influenced a rising generation of American Jewish theologians and aroused the criticism of those who were still steeped in the older, more rationalist tradition of classical liberalism.

In 1955, Herberg followed up his work on Jewish theology with a treatise on the sociology of religion in America: Protestant, Catholic, Jew. There was, he argued, an “American religion,” which could be had in one of three versions: Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish. If one
wanted to be a good American, he stated, one had to identify oneself with one of the three versions of the American religion. Jews in America, therefore, would survive as a religious rather than an ethnic entity; and the rush, at that time, of temple and synagogue building as well as the move of Jewish socialist-secularist families to the suburbs, where they enrolled their children in the Hebrew and religious schools of the local temples, rather tended to support Herberg’s findings. (The ongoing secularization of the Republic may have somewhat “dated” Herberg’s conclusions in the meantime, but when the book appeared in 1955, it was generally hailed as a true description of reality. Besides, it still has to be shown that Jews qua Jews will survive in America as anything but a religious community.)

Herberg’s increasing fame as a religious thinker and sociologist of religion ultimately led to his obtaining a professorship at Drew University. Politically, he continued his “rightward” move—without in any way giving up the quest of social justice that had initially drawn him to Marxism. For some time before he died, in 1977, Herberg was a member of the Conservative group around William F. Buckley’s National Review, a journal which he served as religion editor.

Will Herberg wrote a great deal more than the two books which we have mentioned. All told, 672 published items are listed in the bibliography which Harry J. Ausmus, professor of history at Southern Connecticut State University, compiled for his Will Herberg: A Bio-Biography (1986).

The book by Ausmus under review here is basically an extended version of the 1986 volume. The latter contained a chapter of one-paragraph “annotations” summarizing the contents of selected works by Herberg. The present volume “annotates” in chapter-lengths rather than, as the earlier volume did, in paragraph-lengths. That is both its advantage and its drawback. Since Herberg worked in so many different areas of human endeavor, politics, history, religion, philosophy, theology, literature, sociology, and religion, it is unlikely that many readers will peruse Herberg’s writings in areas other than those of their own particular interest. The advantage of Ausmus’s book, therefore, lies in the fact that it brings to the attention of many readers books and articles by Herberg which, in the normal course of events, they might never encounter otherwise. This advantage is enhanced by the chronological sequence of the book, which thus provides us with
an intellectual and spiritual biography of the man.

The drawback is the inevitable précis character of Ausmus’s book. Ausmus tells us, and occasionally interprets, what Herberg said. Since this is Herberg, as it were, at “second hand,” many pages tend to be somewhat laborious, particularly in the long run. But it becomes downright irritating when, for example, Ausmus undertakes to tell us what Herberg tells us that Rosenzweig tells us that Judaism tells us! The irritation becomes stronger when one begins to suspect that Ausmus is not quite as at home in judaicis as one would need to be in order to assess adequately the material under consideration. (Herberg himself, in spite of Ausmus’s claim to the contrary, does not seem to have been much of a Hebraist. At any rate, the Jewish material in Judaism and Modern Man is generally drawn from secondary sources.)

Yet Ausmus’s book performs a useful function in making the interested reader look up Herberg’s original writings in those areas which arouse the reader’s particular fascination. For, whatever else he was or was not, Herberg was a fascinating and complex personality—so complex, in fact, as Martin E. Marty points out in his somewhat ambivalent foreword to this volume, that Herberg’s was indeed an “unfinished, never-to-be-finished journey.”

—Jakob J. Petuchowski

Jakob J. Petuchowski is the Sol and Arlene Bronstein Professor of Judaeco-Christian Studies and Research Professor of Jewish Theology and Liturgy at the Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio. He has written or edited over thirty books, among them When Jews and Christians Meet (1988).
Writing in May 1946, Dr. Chaim Greenberg, an important Labor Zionist and witness before the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, took a dim view of commissions which, in his estimate, attempted to impose peace on Palestine. By taking what he called “the easy road of compromises and quasi-compromises,” the six Britons and six Americans composing the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry (AACI) had failed to find the illusory “truth” wedged between intractable Arab and Jewish beliefs. Nevertheless, he hoped the Committee’s report and recommendations would be accepted despite their limitations, since they charged the British Labour government under Prime Minister Clement Attlee with immediately transferring to Palestine 100,000 European Jews, Holocaust refugees, who could no longer remain in Europe (see Jewish Frontier 13 [May 1946]: 3–15).

More than forty years have passed since Greenberg wrote with great intensity of the AACI and its findings, but until recently little had been done by scholars to place the work of this commission in historical perspective. This historiographical gap has been addressed in Allen Howard Podet’s Success and Failure of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1945–1946, perceptively subtitled Last Chance in Palestine. Based upon extensive archival material in the United States, Great Britain, Italy, and Israel, it is a complex, generally well-written study of diplomacy gone wrong, missed chances, failed opportunity, and occasionally even-handed, debatably brilliant statesmanship. Podet’s thesis is clear: there could have been peace, but Attlee and his subordinates lacked the qualities of insight, tenacity, courage, and flexibility to bring it across. According to the author, the vehicle for peace was the AACI, a dozen amateur diplomats with no particular “hidden agenda” and no career ambitions, whose unique achievement was their viewing of the Palestine picture as the sum of its Jewish, Arab, British, American, and Soviet parts (pp. 2, 348). Though the majority of the commissioners were sixtyish, several were in their for-
ties, and one, M.P. Richard Crossman, was thirty-eight. Perhaps the most remarkable of the group were Crossman himself and two Americans, San Francisco lawyer Bartley C. Crum, and former League of Nations High Commissioner for German Refugees James G. McDonald. Following their service on the AACI, all three published books which reflected upon the Committee’s history, aspirations, accomplishments, and frustrations.

Having been “on the job” for approximately three months, from January 7 through mid-April 1946, the AACI, jointly chaired by two judges, Sir John E. Singleton, a Briton, and Joseph C. Hutcheson, Jr., a Texas Democrat, heard testimony in Washington, D.C., London, the Middle East including Palestine, Frankfurt, Munich, Nuremberg, Prague, Vienna, and a number of European assembly centers for displaced persons (p. 220). Apparently Committee members were briefed by either the British Foreign Office or the American State Department (p. 127) with regard to the possibility of a Soviet-Arab rapprochement should Jewish refugees and Zionist statists prevail. In their final form, however, the Committee’s recommendations were remarkably well balanced. Among the ten proposals were the recision of White Paper restrictions on Jewish land sales in Palestine, the immediate entry of 100,000 refugees, continued legal immigration beyond the 100,000 under “suitable conditions,” outlawing both Jewish and Arab violence, suggesting that Palestine be one of many alternatives for displaced persons, and the placing of Palestine under a British trusteeship supported by the United Nations. Ostensibly, such an arrangement would perpetuate the British presence in Palestine and eliminate the possibility of the Soviets moving in. Professor Podet calls the report of the AACI “a masterpiece of compromise and negotiation, of research and analysis,” primarily because it appealed to Jewish activists who were not quite “statists,” Arab activists who were not quite inflexible, Britons who were not quite cynical, and Americans, including President Truman (see pp. 299 – 302, 332), who were at once humanitarian, evangelical, and romantic. Whether there were enough of these to shape a consensus capable of withstanding irresistible force, explosive confrontations, and immemorial antipathies is anyone’s guess, but it is an intricately argued and ultimately compelling thesis.

Although the AACI was part of the overall diplomatic failure of Anglo-American cooperation between 1945 and 1948 (pp.
350–351), it taught Great Britain and the United States some valuable lessons. After a quarter century of “trial and error,” Washington and Whitehall were obliged to face the reality that commissions, mixed or otherwise, don’t work. Certainly they had been sufficiently tested: the King-Crane Commission of 1919, the Commission of Enquiry following the Wailing Wall riots of 1929, the Peel Commission of 1937, the Woodhead or “Re-Peel” Commission of 1938, and finally the AACI of 1946. Sometimes the commissioners were compromised at the outset, as in 1919; sometimes the commissioners “rubber-stamped” prevailing government attitudes, as in 1929; sometimes the commissioners abjured a leadership role and merely reacted to events, as was the case in 1937 and 1938. One might say, after examining Professor Podet’s book, that the 1946 effort offered the best hope of success, but it fell short because nonbinding committee recommendations had never been taken seriously and, in point of fact, the AACI may have offered too little, too late. As I read The Success and Failure of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, I became convinced that an even more decisive flaw in the commission was not of its own making, but derived from the failure of the British and American foreign policy bureaucracies to support its work adequately. Rather than deal with the lacunae of Arab Jewish history and Middle East psychology, American Loy Henderson of the State Department’s Near East Division and Britons Ernest Bevin and Harold Beeley at the Foreign Office urged certain of the Committee to consider above all the impending Cold War and the shadow of Soviet domination. At least behind the scenes, then, the practice of gamesmanship was more avidly pursued than statesmanship, when the latter was most needed to solve the enigma of Palestine.

Whether I criticize or commend the role and actions of Britain in these crucial years, I understand the burden under which that nation labored. In the case of the United States, its postwar diplomatic initiatives with regard to Jews, supposedly undertaken as a “caring” and “concerned” nation above reproach, were systematically compromised and undercut by a failure to lift quota restrictions for refugees and the earlier, duplicitous behavior of President Franklin Roosevelt. In the light of American inconsistencies, this country’s pushing and prodding of England to honor its commitments strikes a discordant note. Keeping all these thoughts in mind, read Allen Podet’s The Success and
Failure of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1945–1946. It is the best summary available on the AACI and complements the related work of Howard M. Sachar, Zvi Ganin, Martin Gilbert, and Michael J. Cohen.

—Stuart E. Knee

Stuart E. Knee is associate professor of history and director of the Jewish Studies Program at the College of Charleston, South Carolina. He is the author of The Concept of Zionist Dissent in the American Mind 1917–1941 (1979) and Hervey Allen: Literary Historian in America 1889–1949 (1988).
When David Philipson published his widely read book *The Reform Movement in Judaism* in 1907, he wrote it as a vigorous advocate rather than as a historian with some claim to objectivity. He was then a rabbi in Cincinnati, a member of the first graduating class of Hebrew Union College, and a past president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. He had known the founding fathers of the "classical" period and had participated in formulating the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885. To him, Reform was the wave of the future. It was the purified system of thought and prayer which all Jews would eventually come to embrace, and America was its chief nurturing ground. No wonder that Reform had displaced the outworn forms of Orthodoxy; it was good and noble and altogether beautiful. Nowhere in the book was there a critique of the movement, nor was it significantly related to political and social circumstances; nowhere, for instance, was there any discussion of the fact that by 1907 (or by 1931, when the revised edition of the book appeared) Reform was exclusively identified with the upper middle class. Its heroes are rabbis, and its crucial events rabbinical conferences and their discussions. However, the rabbis are presented without biographical background, and therefore their points of view seem to arise out of a vacuum. Philipson's classes at the College (which I remember well) were redolent with a sense of Reform triumphalism—even though by the mid-thirties the nature of Reform no longer fit the Philipsonian description.

A new and entirely different book on the movement has therefore long been overdue, and it is a pleasure to report that Michael A. Meyer has at last filled the lacuna. He is a historian of established reputation, and his earlier *History of the Modern Jew* has prepared him admirably for the difficult task he set for himself. Like Philipson, however, he has labored under the handicap of being a professional servant of the Reform community: he is professor of Jewish history at Hebrew Union College — Jewish Institute of Religion. He therefore may be expected to approach his subject with a sympathetic bias, but then, all histori-
ans write from a personal point of view. There is no “objective” history, even as there is no “history as such.” It is never anything more or less than a construct of the writer’s mind, which in Michael Meyer’s case turns out to be a good thing.

For he is a person of erudition and honesty, not afraid to describe events and their actors the way he sees them and, most important, always relating them to his main theme: Reform in the sociopolitical context of its time, a response to modernity on a variety of levels. And fortunately, he also writes well, and therefore his rich and tightly packed volume is easy to read. His book not only takes us to the early 1970s, it is also vastly different in tone and approach from Philipson’s effort. Only in one respect are the two alike: they both speak of Reform in Judaism, and not in the Jewish people; for both see Reform as a religious movement.

For this reviewer, some especially memorable chapters of Meyer’s book (winner of the 1989 National Jewish Book Award for History) were those dealing with Isaac M. Wise and David Einhorn. Meyer draws Wise vividly and gives him his due without making larger than life, thereby providing a corrective to James Heller’s biography. But then, the multitalented Heller was writing about a predecessor in his own pulpit of Bene Yeshurun in Cincinnati, and that created built-in limitations. Meyer is much freer in his assessment of the man who has come to be known as the “founder of American Reform.” He tells us that Wise’s secular education and rabbinic training were both defective, and that he had no known degree in either discipline. But what he lacked in depth he made up in enormous vigor and institutional skill, in his ability to communicate by written and spoken word, by his overarching desire for unity and his willingness to compromise. Even his opponents finally acknowledged the unique position which he acquired in American Jewish life. His long-time opponent Bernard Felsenthal wrote with grudging admiration: “It is he who defines the course in which Judaism in this country has to run. It is he who gives shape and color and character to our Jewish affairs. He is the central sun around which the planets and trabants are moving” (p. 263).

David Einhorn was a very different personality, and Meyer admirably succeeds in contrasting the two most influential leaders: the populist Wise, who was given to compromise, and the elitist Einhorn, who refused to swerve from principle; the one willing to adopt an often
traditionalist stance while being (in Meyer's words) a "closet radical,"
the other a radical in every respect; the one waffling on the issue of
slavery, the other putting his safety and job on the line; the one em-
bracing America in every respect, the other never completely at ease in
it and even stating frankly, "Germany is my home" (p. 248). Meyer
provides us with an intriguing insight into the fate of the two prayer
books which Wise and Einhorn produced. At first Wise's Minhag
America seemed to win the day, but in the end it was Einhorn's Olat
Tamid that became the model for the Union Prayer Book. (There was
also an interesting aspect of "turf" protection involved, and Meyer
does not hesitate to speak of it.)

For Einhorn, revelation was an ongoing discovery of what God has
always made available to humanity; it was "more process than event,"
and in his view the essence of Judaism antedated the people of Israel
(p. 246). For Wise, Sinai was the event that shaped both Judaism and
Israel. Still, both Wise and Einhorn agreed on seeing Reform as a
continuum within the realm of spiritual discovery, a view that became
an issue in the next generation of leaders.

In fact, Einhorn's two sons-in-law, Kaufmann Kohler and Emil G.
Hirsch, represented this polarity. Kohler's Jewish Theology—a work
which to this day has not been displaced—stressed Reform as contin-
uity, while Hirsch spoke pointedly of Reformed Judaism, thereby em-
phasizing its essentially different and novel nature.

There are some things I miss on Meyer's broad canvas. Like Philip-
son before him, he focuses on rabbis and their debates and only rarely
(as with Lily Montagu and Claude Montefiore) on the laity. Thus, it
would have been instructive if Meyer's discussion of the American
Council for Judaism and its Houstonian execration had told us in
greater detail about the Lessing Rosenwalds and what motivated
them. Also, he does not examine the impact which an ever more pro-
perous and ever less Jewishly informed laity had on the thrust of the
movement; he does not dwell on the decline of the Reform temples
from their pinnacle of communal prestige, which has brought to their
leadership a second-level echelon, often rich in ambition and money
but lacking in Jewish knowledge and a sense of the broader communi-
ty.

Further, I would have liked to see an analysis of Reform triumphal-
ism, which until very recently characterized a good deal of the move-
ment's regnant attitude, at least in the United States, and which has dramatically receded before the new wave of Orthodox ascendancy.

There are other elements I miss, such as a description of the important rescue of teachers and students which the College undertook during the Nazi days. Among those brought over from Germany were Abraham Joshua Heschel and Fritz Bamberger, as well as a group of young men two of whom would later become presidents of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

There is another aspect of Reform history I would have liked to have seen examined by Meyer. To this day, the presence or absence of the yarmulke has been in North America (though generally not elsewhere) the bellwether of the movement. Its return has heralded a turn to the right, and Meyer notes this properly. But nowhere do we find a discussion of why it was the head covering which assumed such a central place in Reform identification and why the movement invested its presence or absence with such emotional content. Thus, Meyer overlooks an opportunity to discuss the importance of the yarmulke not only as the most visible point of assimilation to the Christian environment but also as an immediate point of difference from other Jews. He might have called attention to experiences of the kind that marked the Reform congregation in St. Paul, Minnesota, where in 1880 the appeal to remove the hat was roundly defeated, but only a few years later unanimously accepted after a large group of Yiddish-speaking, caftan-clad Jews had arrived from Russia.

One more area in need of further clarification: the Reform movement was, until the days of the Columbus Platform, the child of German immigrants. In the 1940s and 1950s its member of German stock were absorbed by the new majority of Jews who traced their origins to Eastern Europe. But what was it about these German Jews that had an effect as late as the early 1980s, when the presidents of all four Reform bodies (the College, the Union, the CCAR, and the World Union) were German-born? This question bears examination, for it may elucidate something about the nature of the German-Jewish experience which today has all but vanished from sight.

Meyer ends his study with the early 1970s, though even when he deals with the preceding period he feels constrained to abstain from mentioning personalities. For instance, he discusses the "covenant theologians" and indicates that they have had a great influence on the
movement. Yet he does not mention their names—most likely because he is dealing here with contemporaries whom he does not wish to single out. Had he done so and taken the matter further he could have shown that out of this small group emerged men who made a difference in the further development of Reform, for they came to occupy key positions and write the basic books for the movement.

One can understand the author's hesitancy. He is still part of Reform's institutional life, and mentioning some while omitting others might create for him some undesirable interpersonal tensions. That, of course, is the problem when a book such as this is written from within rather than without a particular Reform institution. Thus he feels free to enter a judgment about Maurice Eisendrath's lack of yiddishkeit (p. 382), while abstaining from rendering a critique of Nelson Glueck, the first president of the combined College-Institute.

But even within such limitations Meyer has done extraordinarily well, and I for one hope that he is making copious notes so that upon his retirement he may give us another volume which will evaluate the latest and no less fascinating period of the Reform odyssey.

—W. Gunther Plaut

Nahum Goldmann will be remembered forever for his historic role in bringing about the conclusion of the Luxembourg Agreement with West Germany, which played a decisive role in postwar Jewish-Israeli-German relations. He also was instrumental in adjusting the Biltmore Program to the more realistic demand for a Jewish state in a part of Palestine and in promoting American and international support for that solution, but remained unsuccessful in all his efforts to bridge the gap between Jewish statehood and Israel's hostile Arab neighbors. The successes as well as the failures of the great Jewish leader are the subject of this recent book on Goldmann by Raphael Patai, a contemporary of his who began writing his study when Goldmann, whom he had personally known for many years, was still alive.

Among Goldmann's three main "missions to the Gentiles," Patai deals most extensively with his advocacy of the partition of Palestine in order to bring about the creation of a Jewish state. Although there had been other precursors of partition (e.g., Victor Jacobson) Goldmann, who in the mid-thirties was still a junior member of the Zionist Executive, became one of the most outspoken supporters of this solution when it was recommended by the Palestine Royal Commission under Lord Peel. Despite the support of Chaim Weizmann, David Ben-Gurion, and Goldmann, the Twentieth Zionist Congress refused to endorse partition, although it empowered the Executive to clarify with the British government the "specific terms" of the proposal to establish a Jewish state. It is quite possible that even a minuscule Jewish state—if it had existed during World War II—might have rescued at least a part of the doomed Jews of Europe. But the author should have admitted that the short-lived partition plan was jettisoned by the British not because of the wavering Zionist leadership but essentially because of their fear of the hostile Arab reaction in a period of growing confrontation with the fascist powers.

After emigrating in the spring of 1940 from Geneva to the United States, Goldmann took a prominent part in Jewish and Zionist war-
time activities. From May 1943 he served as head of the Jewish Agency’s Washington political office, where he was later assisted by Eliyahu Epstein (not Eilat); together with Stephen Wise, the titular head, he led the World Jewish Congress. Soon he clashed with Abba Hillel Silver, the brightest star on the horizon of American Zionism. In contrast to Silver, who demanded that all political work in Washington be directed by the American Zionist Emergency Council (AZEC), Goldmann insisted upon the independence of the Jewish Agency office and was supported in this issue by Silver’s opponents in the Zionist leadership. In 1946–47 Goldmann played a major role in promoting support for partition among his fellow members of the Zionist Executive, in changing the mind of the influential non-Zionist American Jewish Committee president, Joseph M. Proskauer, and in trying to convince the American administration of the validity of that solution. It was no easy job to impress partition upon Dean Acheson, who had never shared Justice Brandeis’s and Felix Frankfurter’s Zionist sympathies and who never became a friend and supporter of Israel, as he recalled in his Present at the Creation. Goldmann, perhaps the most experienced Zionist diplomat besides Weizmann, also tried hard to change the mind of the British foreign secretary, Ernest Bevin, but in this case his efforts were in vain. Moreover, Goldmann’s diplomatic success in Washington in August 1946 notwithstanding, the administration’s and President Truman’s attitude to partition and to the creation of a Jewish state continued to change back and forth until the last days before the historic vote on November 27, 1947, and even thereafter, as shown by Z. W. Ganin and other students of the period.

Patai’s assessment seems somewhat one-sided. In the final analysis, Goldmann’s diplomatic skill, together with all the moral and legal arguments in favor of a Jewish state in a major part of Palestine, would not have sustained a positive attitude and guaranteed the American recognition of Israel on May 14, 1948, without the continuous public pressure created by the political action of AZEC, headed by Silver. Patai also prefers not to mention Goldmann’s last-minute involvement in efforts to postpone the proclamation of Israel’s independence and to secure a truce between the Arab states, the Arab Higher Committee, and the Jewish authorities. Goldmann often argued that such a postponement might have prevented the endless Arab-Israeli warfare. But it is also possible that it might have forestalled the restoration of Jewish statehood for good.
American Jewish Archives

Whether one accepts Patai’s evaluation of Goldmann’s decisive part in convincing the United States that the Jewish state must be established or prefers a more balanced approach which also takes into account the important role of Abba Hillel Silver, Goldmann’s great adversary, there is no doubt about the central role he played in securing the Luxembourg Agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany as well as the successive arrangements with regard to individual indemnification, which has exceeded many times the original sum awarded to Israel and the Jewish organization. This will remain forever his most remarkable achievement, and the author has relied, in addition to Goldmann’s autobiographies, on a number of important German memoirs, which without exception have been very positive about the Jewish leader’s personality and skill.

Goldmann, who broached the subject of German reparations as early as 1941, when no one took the victory of the Allies for granted, overcame in the early fifties the Jewish community’s strong opposition, even in his own World Jewish Congress, to dealing directly with Germany. He took care to guarantee the Diaspora its place in the subsequent settlement by setting up the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, which he chaired. Although Israel had started making efforts to obtain reparations on its own, Goldmann soon became involved in the preparation for Chancellor Konrad Adenauer’s crucial statement in the Bundestag on September 27, 1951, and even more in paving the way for the subsequent German-Israeli negotiations in Wassenaar and their meaningful conclusion. In his youth the young Ostjude had been fascinated with German culture, literature, and philosophy. At the end of his long life, he spoke German better than any other language. And although he later recanted what he had written in his proimperialist articles serving the kaiser’s propaganda in World War I, he was never ashamed of his emotional links to the country and the culture in which he grew up. This background was, of course, of great help to him in establishing a special relationship with Adenauer, despite the deep gap between their Weltanschauungen and views on international affairs. Goldmann’s intervention helped to solve recurrent crises before he, together with Moshe Sharett and Adenauer, signed the Luxembourg Agreement on September 10, 1952. Goldmann’s direct approach to Adenauer remained very important for many years, and he was instrumental in providing
for a number of improvements of individual indemnification and restitution payments during the sixties and seventies. Still, the portrayal of this chapter would be more complete if the author had also mentioned David Ben-Gurion’s role in overcoming strong Israeli opposition to direct negotiations with Germany. Without Ben-Gurion’s decisive stand diplomatic efforts would probably have remained to no avail.

Patai also deals extensively with Goldmann’s more positive attitude to Israel’s Arab neighbors and to the Palestinians, an attitude which diverged from the mainstream of Israel’s foreign policy, and his attempt to meet with Egyptian President Nasser. Since his early years Goldmann had been aware of the problem of the Arab population in Palestine, and he later supported the idea of a Near Eastern confederation which was to include Israel together with the neighboring Arab states. In contrast to most Israelis, he believed that only Arab unity could provide for peace and thought that by meeting Nasser, the most powerful Arab leader, he could contribute to that goal. Even more utopian was Goldmann’s idea of a “totally neutralized Israel, guaranteed by many powers of the world—above all also by the Arabs.” (His support of Israel’s neutrality caused him to oppose initially its joining the United Nations in 1949.) Because of overwhelming opposition to his ideas he became more and more embittered and frustrated during the last years of his long life. This reviewer cannot share Patai’s conclusion that in the eighties Goldmann’s basic ideas, both of cooperation between Israel and her neighbors and of an international guarantee as a step toward neutralization, have already begun to become the policy of the government of Israel. Yet whereas some of the solutions proposed by Goldmann still seem very unrealistic, they do not detract from his political foresight with regard to the overwhelming significance of a long-range Arab-Israeli peace agreement.

Nahum Goldmann was always fully aware of his important role on the Jewish scene—from his cultural and literary activities in the Weimar Republic through his Zionist and World Jewish Congress leadership up to his futile attempts to change Israel’s policies toward its Arab neighbors and the Palestinians. Relying on personal interviews and on Goldmann’s repeated autobiographical statements—and Goldmann rewrote and readjusted his autobiography several times—Patai uses the psychohistorical method to explain his behavior
and some of his most significant characteristics. According to the author, Goldmann’s self-assurance, his confidence in his ability to measure to the world’s leading statesmen, and even his enduring success with women can be mainly related to his warm and happy early childhood in his grandparents’ home in the Lithuanian-Russian shtetl of Visznevo. This reviewer does not feel competent to pass judgment on the validity of psychohistory. But if one uses that method one also should ask oneself whether the pampering and coddling of the young grandchild, deprived of paternal authority (he would later join his parents in Frankfurt), did not contribute to some weak spots in the future leader’s personality. Patai refrains from posing these kinds of questions.

Patai’s book, which appeared on the eve of Israel’s fortieth anniversary, deals with several important chapters in Goldmann’s long life, but as Patai himself has stated, it is not a biography. The last decade has been a fruitful one in the field of political biographies of major Zionist and Israeli leaders: Jehuda Reinharz and Norman Rose have dealt with or written on Chaim Weizmann, Shabtai Teveth with Ben-Gurion, Anita Shapira with Berl Katznelson, Melvin Urofsky with Stephen S. Wise, and most recently Marc Lee Raphael’s long-awaited biography of Abba Hillel Silver has appeared. Hopefully, Patai’s study on Goldmann will encourage a younger historian to devote himself to telling the full story of this exceptional and brilliant figure, the last of the giants, who was active in the life of his people for more than seven decades.

—Shlomo Shafir

Shlomo Shafir is the editor of Gesher, the Hebrew journal of the World Jewish Congress. He has also served on the staff of the Israeli daily newspaper Davar, and was its Washington correspondent from 1964 to 1968. He is the author of numerous scholarly publications in English, Hebrew, and German and is currently completing a manuscript on the image of Germany in American Jewish life after 1945.
Israel Friedlaender was not a victor. And so, like other casualties of the historian’s pen, his influence was little acknowledged in print, that is, until Baila Shargel sought to tell his story in *Practical Dreamer*. This book is part of the Moreshet (Heritage) series, an appropriate context, since all of the titles included in the series have been written by alumni or faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS). The subject of this well-researched intellectual biography, Israel Friedlaender (1876–1920) is considered by his biographer to be an unrecognized leader who was, for most of his life, a faculty member at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America during its renewal in the early years of this century. Although he never gained the acclaim he so richly deserved, he indeed influenced generations of men and women who studied in the Seminary’s rabbinic program and its Teacher’s Institute until a bullet ended his life during a mercy mission to the Ukraine in 1920. In this substantive volume of 223 pages, Dr. Shargel has carefully mapped out Friedlaender’s widespread influence in his brief but busy career. Identifying the critical turning points in his life, Shargel guides the reader at each and every crossroads, just to the point where we are almost able to penetrate his soul and predict the major decisions which molded his character.

Friedlaender was a man to be reckoned with; he taught and he took action, clearly dissatisfied with those who simply sat in the classroom and prophesied the future of Judaism. It is perhaps this rare quality that makes his life so intriguing and his early death so tragic.

Born in Poland, Friedlaender studied in Germany; he had really only just begun his academic career when Solomon Schechter invited him to join the rejuvenated JTS as professor of Bible at the young age of twenty-seven. Although trained in the field of Semitics, having abandoned his aspirations for the rabbinate some years earlier, Friedlaender quickly set about his task in 1903. Prophetically disillusioned about Jewish life in Germany, he was optimistic about the future of
American Jewry and spoke his mind often on all accounts. He lectured widely and, for those who were interested, he taught extracurricular courses in Arabic and modern Hebrew literature, generally focusing on his own folk hero: Ahad Ha’am. Many of his most popular talks were published in the leading Anglo-Jewish periodicals of the day. A charismatic teacher, he gave generously of his time and his talents to all who would come and listen.

This generosity was not simple altruism, as Dr. Shargel astutely points out. In order to cope with one professional disappointment after another, Friedlaender pushed himself, striving to reach an all-consuming pace of literary and communal projects. When, for example, he was led to believe that he would be named the first president of the then newly founded Dropsie College, only to find that his archrival Cyrus Adler was given the position, Friedlaender returned to a number of scholarly projects which he had temporarily abandoned while building his teaching career at JTS. (Later, Adler would outdistance him again in his appointment as Schechter’s successor at JTS.) It was during this same period that Friedlaender joined forces with Judah Magnes as the first chairman of the New York Kehillah’s trend-setting Bureau of Jewish Education. In this setting, he contributed some of his best efforts to the incipient field of American Jewish education.

Israel Friedlaender literally dedicated his life to Jewish education and the Americanization of immigrant Jews. He worked hard to create the American Jewish Congress and, as an Ahad Ha’amist, he became the undisputed spokesman for American Zionism. Yet Friedlaender seemed to have a knack for knocking the status quo and its leaders. Thus, when the opportunity for advancement came his way, somehow it was always pushed just beyond his grasp by someone wielding power in the Jewish community. This tragic flaw eventually led to his untimely death. Friedlaender had been appointed to a JDC Red Cross Mission to Palestine in 1918, at the suggestion of Louis Marshall. Opposing the appointment, Stephen S. Wise and Richard Gottheil together accused Friedlaender of pro-German tendencies, which he, of course, flatly denied. Nevertheless, Wise and Gottheil’s vociferous protests and their positions of influence disallowed Friedlaender’s appointment. As a sort of recompense, Friedlaender was allowed to go to the Ukraine in 1920 with a JDC delegation to dispense funds to Jewish victims of the war and subsequent pogrom.
fellow delegate, Rabbi Bernard Cantor, met their deaths. The facts surrounding their fate are unclear, but they were apparently ambushed and killed either for political reasons or for simple robbery.

Israel Friedlaender was never a truly happy man. Although he had a large and apparently loving family, he worked hard his entire professional life only to be rewarded by his premature death. Baila Shargel is therefore to be commended for bringing Israel Friedlaender’s many previously unnamed accomplishments to light. Within the shadow of his death (as well as the guilt that his death obviously brought to the American Jewish community), she has clearly captured the essence of the man as a scholar and a public figure.

As evidenced by Friedlaender himself, Shargel has demonstrated that the roles of scholar and public figure were inextricably bound up in his unique personage. He spoke what he believed. Eventually, Dr. Friedlaender gave up his interests in scholarly research in history and Bible in order to face the critical social problems of the Jews. Although the sweeping change was probably unconscious, according to Shargel, as a result of this new emphasis he became a driving force in many vital areas, especially in the then burgeoning field of American Jewish education. He combined the best of John Dewey’s cultural pluralism with Ahad Ha’am’s spiritual Zionism in order to provide immigrant Jews with an education that would lead them to become the “new” American Jew.

Friedlaender was true to his Jewish past, fully cognizant of the complicated challenges facing Jews in the contemporary world of the early twentieth century. At odds with most Reform Jews, especially those “uptown Jews” affiliated with the Educational Alliance who sought full and complete acculturation, he sought to meet creatively the challenges of the day without compromising Jewish ritual tradition and East European ethnicity, both of which he held very dear. He coined new terminology (borrowing from the emerging disciplines of psychology and sociology); he created magnificent metaphors; and he spoke out unrestrainedly at every opportunity. As Dr. Shargel points out, “Like all of Friedlaender’s ventures into the public arena, [the] object was to inspire in American Jews the will to maintain the best qualities of their tradition.”

Although he generally had no regard for what he perceived as Reform Judaism’s minimalist approach to facing the problems of Ameri-
can Judaism, as witnessed in many of his published lectures, he did feel that one Reform rabbi, Judah Magnes, had hit upon the ideal solution. Only through communal organization, agreed Friedlaender, could polarization in American Jewish life be prevented. And so, as the founding chairman of the Kehillah’s Bureau of Jewish Education (and destined eventually to succeed Magnes as chairman of the entire Kehillah project had it prospered), he joined with Magnes and others, such as Mordecai Kaplan and Samson Benderly, to bring order from the chaos that had heretofore been the state of Jewish education. As stated by the author of *Practical Dreamer*, Dr. Friedlaender firmly believed “that only a Jewish educational system set up on a sound pedagogical basis would prevent the assimilation of the children of the ghetto.”

This “sound pedagogical basis” was John Dewey’s educational philosophy of cultural pluralism as translated into Jewish education by Samson Benderly and his group of Columbia/JTS-trained educators who have come to be known as the “Benderly Boys.” Together they built an educational system which, for the most part, is still in force in North America today. Solomon Schechter, at the same time, wanted the Seminary and not the Kehillah to be the focal point of American Jewry. A visionary in his own right, Schechter had created the famed JTS Teachers Institute and appointed Mordecai Kaplan and Israel Friedlaender as the primary instructional staff, but their student body was eventually composed primarily of Benderly trainees who were also studying under (John Dewey’s successor) William Heard Kilpatrick at Columbia University Teachers College. Perceived almost as an act of academic treason, it was while Schechter was on a sabbatical leave during the academic year 1910–1911 that the Kehillah’s Bureau of Jewish Education was founded, clearly usurping the influence of the Teachers Institute at JTS. This act and the controversies which followed as a result seem to have sealed Friedlaender’s fate at the Seminary; he would never succeed Schechter at the helm of JTS even though he was one of the heirs apparent. Fostering Schechter’s consternation, Friedlaender correctly maintained that the future of Jewish education lay in the hands of those who were concurrently trained in *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and modern education. This training was to be complemented by work in the field, what has come to be called practice-based education (e.g., in the Kehillah under Benderly). Those who were only trained in the classroom, no matter how extensive was
that training, could not hope to meet the challenges of a Jewish community overwhelmed by the demands of the early decades of this century when Jewish survival was at stake. This perspective of Friedlaender remains ever constant among Jewish educators today, even those at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

In her book, Dr. Baila Shargel has truly given us a profound insight into the life of one of the pivotal people in American Jewish history, especially in the vital area of Jewish education, understood both as an academic discipline and in the general sense. She has recreated his artistry for us in the pages of this book. Through her extensive research and understanding of the history of the period under study, she has also shown us his plight and his pain. For all of this, we are indebted to Baila Round Shargel for her scholarship and her sensitivity. Her own love for Jewish education and commitment to Jewish survival through *talmud torah* clearly stand behind her every word. She has given to us, the spiritual heirs of Israel Friedlaender, the legacy of this giant of a man, one which might have otherwise been lost in the archives of our recent past.

—Kerry M. Olitzky

Kerry M. Olitzky is director of the School of Education at Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, New York. He is the author of numerous works on social gerontology and Jewish education. He serves as editor of the *Journal of Aging and Judaism* and as executive editor for *COMPASS: New Directions in Jewish Education*. 
Dear Editor:

Some of your readers might be interested to know that a bibliographic error crept into Thomas G. August's essay, "Family Structure and Jewish Continuity in Jamaica since 1655," in the Spring/Summer 1989 issue of American Jewish Archives. On page 31 it is noted that "the first English-language text on Judaism, DeCordova's Reason and Faith of 1788," was produced in Jamaica.

Actually, the first English-language text on Judaism was published in 1706 in London. It was written by Isaac Abendana, a Sephardic Jew, who was a teacher of Hebrew at Oxford University (Jewish Encyclopedia, volume I, page 53). The Abendana volume is a 200-page book, titled Discourses of the Ecclesiastical and Civil Polity of the Jews, and it was published by Samuel Ballard.

Yours truly,
Norton B. Stern
Editor
Western States Jewish History

This volume of essays is dedicated to the memory of Yehuda Rosenman, the long-time director of the American Jewish Committee's Jewish Communal Affairs Department, who died in 1987. The essays deal with demography, culture, intermarriage, the family, and communal leadership within the American Jewish community. The authors include such well-known scholars as Nathan Glazer, Steven Cohen, Charles Liebman, Jonathan Woocher, Deborah Lipstadt, and Egon Mayer.


This volume is the Cowans' answer to Irving Howe's *World of Our Fathers*. Where Howe was almost entirely concerned with left-wing politics, the Cowans remain apolitical (which is what they claim most of their one hundred interviewees to be!): where Howe delved deeply into the historical sources, they prefer to let the voices of their parents' generation (East European Jews born between 1895 and 1915) speak, albeit in a composite manner. The result is an attempt at a kind of *Alltagsgeschichte*, an effort to view the history of this generation in its simplest, daily life routine. Certainly, there is much of interest in this book. The chapters about schooling and sexual mores are interesting and insightful. But more is needed in the direction of Irving Howe's scholarship and the use of more extensive archival and secondary sources to allow us to understand fully the place of our parents' lives in America, and of America's place in who they were and what we have become.


This volume was originally presented as a Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Hamburg under the direction of Professor Günter Moltmann, the senior Americanist in the Federal Republic of Germany and a specialist in German immigration to America. That, in itself, would be an indication that this work should be a good piece of historical research and writing.

Essentially, one will not be disappointed with the revised manuscript version which has now been published. Just concerns himself with the transit history of the "New Immigration," the story of the nearly eighteen million immigrants from eastern, southeastern, and southern Europe who came to America between the years 1881 and 1924. Just has utilized a number of previously unpublished archival sources in Hamburg and Bremen to demonstrate that the passage of these millions of Jews, Italians, and Slavs from their homelands through Germany to America was often a miserable one. Just focuses on the competitiveness of various steamship lines, the agents who lured the immigrants into booking with certain steamship companies, and the attitudes of the German authorities themselves as he develops the first part of his book.
The second part deals with the problems of the reception given to the immigrants upon their arrival in the United States. This part of Just's book is the weakest, essentially because he has written it for a German audience which, unlike the American one, has seen relatively little published on the question of American native attitudes to the “New Immigration.” Just's analysis here is essentially superficial.

Much of Just's work focuses on East European Jewish immigration to America (although to his credit he extends his focus to other immigrants groups as well), and one is therefore surprised that Just seems to be unfamiliar with the work of Pamela S. Nadell, whose Ohio State University dissertation, finished shortly after Just's own, also focused on the immigrants' journey to America and also focused on the steamships and agents. Beyond this, recent work by Trude Maurer (on the anti-Semitic background of German “medicine police” and their attitude toward Jewish immigrants who passed through Germany on the way to America) and Rivka Lissak (who is reassessing the “liberal” role of so-called liberal pro-immigration organizations in America) will modify some of Just's conclusions. Nevertheless, Michael Just has made a useful contribution to the historiography of the “New Immigration,” and especially of the East European Jewish element within it. It is hoped that his book will help historians in the Federal Republic of Germany to better understand this interesting and relatively unknown aspect of Wilhelminian politics and history.


The story is familiar: a small, North American town and an aging, rapidly disappearing Jewish community. There are so many memories, so many ghosts of things past, and only a future without a future to which to look forward. Then there is the enterprising young graduate student, Jewish in identity only, who stumbles upon the community and then becomes a part of it, consumed by it. Alison Kahn was that graduate student and she has produced a most readable oral history of one Canadian Jewish community which found someone with whom to share those memories.


Argentine Jewish history and literature have yet to remove the stamp of passion that defined them with the appearance of Alberto Gerchunoff's paean to the search for the Jewish place in the Argentinean national mind, *The Jewish Gauchos* (1910).

But looming over this most lyrical love song of the dream of Jewish belonging to the Argentine nation are six decades of reality which stretch from the 1919 pogrom-like “Tragic Week” to Péron to the Jewish “Disappeared.” Naomi Lindstrom examines the Argentine Jewish literary expression through the works of eight authors and does it in a most impressive manner.


With the publication of *The Jews of Oregon*. Jewish Oregonians may now take their rightful place among the Jewish communal and state histories that have emerged, with growing proliferation, over the past several decades. This volume is a gem. From it we learn that Rabbi Stephen S. Wise refined many of his progressive ideas during his pulpit years in Portland (1900—1906) and that the search for a “normal” Jewish existence led a group of Jewish
idealists from Odessa, Russia, to found an agricultural commune near Glendale in southern Oregon and to name it New Odessa.

New Odessa did not last long, but the Jews of Oregon have survived and flourished. Thanks to Steven Lowenstein's clever mix of text, oral histories and photographs we now have a better idea why that survival and growth were possible.


*Shades of the Sunbelt* is an important addition to the growing scholarly efforts at understanding the post-World War II ethnic and urban experiences in the South. Especially important are essays by Randall M. Miller and George E. Pozzetta that introduce and close the volume, and essays by Deborah Dash Moore and Ronald H. Bayor which focus on the Jewish experience in the post-1945 South.


A few years ago a saying emerged which caught the imagination of many Americans and seemed to strike a collective anti-materialist/anti-big business nerve. “Less is more” was the battle cry.

Someone apparently forgot to tell the Texans. Natalie Ornish’s volume is in the Texas tradition of “bigger is better” and with a vengeance. Beautifully illustrated, printed on gorgeous paper, and the result of a dozen years of research, *Pioneer Jewish Texans* is the first history of Texas Jewry ever written. It is a real work of scholarship and one only wishes that Ms. Ornish had focused somewhat more on Texas’ impact on its Jewish citizens. Nevertheless, this is a contribution produced in a style that is bigger, better and very much Texas.


The 1989 edition of the *American Jewish Yearbook* contains two very important articles, among several, by Sylvia Barach Fishman on “The Impact of Feminism on American Jewish Life,” and by Jack Wertheimer on “Recent Trends in American Judaism.”


Ruth R. Wisse has performed a miraculous art of rescue. She has rescued the Yiddish poets of New York’s Lower East Side from four decades of obscurity. She has given us back our immigrant Jewish literary culture, its characters, its publications, its meaning, its ideologies. Mani Leib and Moshe Leib Halpern, two of the most influential members of a marvelous group of talented Yiddish poets and writers known as *di Yunge* (the Young) become young once more. We can now read their passionate thoughts and feelings in the superb translations offered by Professor Wisse. We can feel the hopelessness of the creative dilemma—to write or to starve. That they could do both, work in the sweatshops of New York for endless hours and then create such beauty of the word, is an inspiration and a reminder of what the Jewish spirit is capable of achieving.