

known, despite its importance in religious history. The translation of the text is precise and clear, while the notes are copious and illuminating. This is an essential source for medieval European religious history and Jewish religious history.

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VERNACULAR VOICES: LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN MEDIEVAL FRENCH JEWISH COMMUNITIES. By Kirsten A. Fudeman. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010. Pp. xiii + 254; plates. Cloth, \$59.95.

This study by a fine scholar on the topic of the role of the vernacular in medieval French Jewry is a fascinating and an enlightening volume. The introduction discusses the field and provides the linguistic context, offering interesting connections between language and religious identity. Discussions of bilingual Jewish texts and what they show about Jewish and Christian society and of the messages and values of two wedding songs written in a combination of Hebrew and French are particularly engaging. Fudeman moves easily from analyses of contemporary scholarship to examining what was said (and not said) about the Jewish use of French in the medieval period to reconstructing the course of events in a false accusation of murder in Blois. Her conclusions about the oral nature of French among Jews raises many stimulating questions. The author shows how linguistics contributed to the maintenance of linguistic singularity even beyond the use of glosses in rabbinic texts. This is a significant contribution to medieval Jewish history and to the study of the popular religion of the period.

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Judaism: Modern

UNTOLD TALES OF THE HASIDIM: CRISIS AND DISCONTENT IN THE HISTORY OF HASIDISM. By David Assaf. Tauber Institute Series for the Study of European Jewry. Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2010. Pp. xxiii + 336. Cloth \$55.00; paper, \$35.00; Ebook, \$29.99.

This book, translated from the Hebrew version published in 2006, deals with events or characters in the history of Hasidism that were “concealed or deliberately suppressed.” The seven chapters deal with orthodox historiography, the converted son of the founder of Chabad, the tragic death of the seer of Lublin, the opposition (often violent) to Bratslav Hasidim, and the tormented lives of three Hasidic personalities; Akiva Shalom Chajes, Menachem Nahum Friedman, and Yitshak Nahum Twersky. The materials are often surprising. It must be remembered, however, that they illustrate potentials or exceptional cases but not the mainstream of Hasidism. Therefore, this book can be used as an illuminating supplement to standard sources on East Euro-

pean Jewish religious history but cannot replace them. It should also be noted that this is not a systematic survey of discontent in Hasidism. By dealing with a number of issues viewed by Hasidim as problematic, this volume serves as an important corrective to the many hagiographical works on Hasidism.

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ANTI-JEWISH VIOLENCE: RETHINKING THE POGROM IN EAST EUROPEAN HISTORY. Edited by Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Natan M. Meir and Israel Bartal. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011. Pp. xviii + 220. Cloth, \$34.95.

This volume contains eleven essays that deal with outbreaks of anti-Jewish violence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in eastern Europe. The introduction downplays the role of religion, direct or indirect, in outbreaks of violence on the basis of the view that “religions normally develop an everyday tolerance at the local level for other faiths, while preserving rivalries and maintaining a level of hate-speech.” Not surprisingly, most of the articles look elsewhere for explanations of violent outbreaks. The book is divided into three parts and each is rather novel. The first deals with pogroms during and after World War I, a relatively ignored topic. The second deals with Jewish responses to pogroms including attempts to prevent pogroms or to deal with them; the third and last part contains studies that deal with regional characteristics and attempts to explain the unique characteristics of various regions. The topic of blood libel and the Beilis case are the only topics related to religion that get some attention. In part, the lack of attention given to Jewish or Christian religious responses reflects the research interests of the individuals who wrote the papers. This seems to be a reflection of some of the current foci of scholarly interest. Although this book would be a very welcome addition to collections on Jewish history and society, as well as to the study of anti-Semitism, it is more limited in what it has to offer to collections that deal mainly with religion.

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THE ORIGINS OF JEWISH SECULARIZATION IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE. By Shmuel Feiner. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010. Pp. xvi + 330. Cloth, \$65.00.

There was a time when Jewish secularization was seen as the inevitable next step after the Jewish Enlightenment. Recent scholarship has shown that the internal challenges to tradition and Jewish belief began much earlier, and not only among the families of exiles from Spain such as Spinoza’s. In this book, Feiner brings together both original research and contemporary scholarship to give a broad picture of the origins of secularization among Jews. The introduction is a succinct but extremely valuable presentation both of the

issues and the early history of the phenomenon. In the following chapters, Feiner discusses hedonism among Jews as well as ideological movements such as Sabbateanism and what is termed as “neo-Karaism.” He then goes on to deal with the spread of deism and religious laxity, and then to the growing disregard for religion and the beginnings of a conservative response. The picture Feiner draws is essential for understanding the varieties of religious responses of Jews to modernity, not only in German lands but also in eastern Europe. This book is a very valuable addition to any collection dealing with modern Jewry or with secularization in Europe.

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THE KABBALISTIC CULTURE OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY PRAGUE: EZEKIEL LANDAU (THE “NODA BIYEHUDAH”) AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES. By Sharon Flatto. Portland, OR: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010. Pp. xiii + 268; Cloth, \$54.50.

The name of R. Ezekiel Landau (1713-93) is familiar to most students of Jewish history and even more to students of Jewish law. Landau was the rabbi of Prague, an important figure in Jewish communal struggles against Sabbateanism, and an extremely important legal decisor who is still regarded as an authority in deciding questions of Jewish law. The volumes of his response, *Noda Bi Yehudah*, are in print to this day. This volume focuses on the importance of kabbalah and of conservatism in eighteenth century Prague and the place of kabbalah in particular in the life and outlook of Landau. The first part offers a fascinating picture of Jewish culture in eighteenth century Prague and the threats to rabbinic culture from both mysticism and modernization. It is followed by discussions of the importance of Kabbalah in Landau’s thought. All of this is based on rigorous analyses of texts and wide-ranging collection of sources. This volume gives the English reader a fine introduction to central European rabbinic culture and sheds new light on Hasidism and on modernization in Jewish religion. It does so in a very readable and clear manner.

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SHAMANIC TRANCE IN MODERN KABBALAH. By Jonathan Garb. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011. Pp. x + 276. Cloth, \$45.00.

Although much recent research on Kabbalah has focused on the analysis of classic (and not so classic) texts and ritual behaviors related to Kabbalah, less attention has been given to what Garb terms “deeper states of consciousness” among Kabbalistic adepts. The author brings to the topic a mastery of the literature, an exceptional ability to parse texts closely, a sensitivity to the psychological aspects of the study of Kabbalah and a deep familiarity with the literature in religious studies and psychology on varying levels of consciousness. The final product is an original and

stimulating study that is extremely important for any serious student of Kabbalah or of the modern religious experience. The chapters of the book consist of a very original theoretical introduction and discussions of shamanism in its Jewish context, the place of trance in Jewish mysticism, shamanistic aspects of Hasidism, and trance in Hasidism. A final chapter on trance and ritual and/or Jewish law is followed by an epilogue and an appendix on psychoanalysis and Hasidism. This monograph invites cross-religious and cross-cultural comparisons, and the contents should be understandable to readers with limited familiarity with Judaism.

Shaul Stampfer
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FAITH AND FREEDOM: MOSES MENDELSSOHN’S THEOLOGICAL-POLITICAL THOUGHT. By Michah Gottlieb. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xi + 209; Cloth, \$55.00.

Moses Mendelssohn is one of the most prominent figures in modern Jewish history. His role in the Jewish enlightenment movement and his partial integration into German society are often regarded as turning points in Jewish history. His ideas—not just his example—were also of lasting importance, for Mendelssohn’s attempt to reconcile Jewish religious tradition with contemporary “Western” thought was a milestone in modern Judaism. The four chapters of this volume deal with Mendelssohn’s early philosophical thought; his philosophy of Judaism in the context of Spinoza, Maimonides, and his own contemporaries; and his response to critiques of his philosophy. Many students today focus on Mendelssohn’s career and his personal contacts with contemporaries. This volume offers an illuminating corrective by providing a stimulating discussion of the debate as to whether and how faith and reason can coexist. Gottlieb successfully deals with the tension between the contemporary relevance of past philosophical discussions and the need to objectively analyze the subject of his monograph. The result is a stimulating book that will be important to students of Jewish history and philosophy.

Shaul Stampfer
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THE REBBE: THE LIFE AND AFTERLIFE OF MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON. By Samuel Heilman and Menachem Friedman. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. Pp. xix + 343; plates. Cloth, \$29.95.

Much has been written about the Habad Hasidic movement in Judaism and Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902-94). This volume is one of the first major critical studies of Habad. The authors laboriously traced Rabbi Schneerson’s life and demythologized his biography. As the title suggests, they have also followed his role in the movement following his death. There is no question that this book will be the starting point for any future studies, and it is essential for any collection that deals with modern

Judaism—especially Hasidism and/or American Judaism. Indeed, the broad focus is central to the book. The first chapter deals with contemporary Habad and the second with the ascent of Schneerson to the leadership of Habad; only in chapter three does the actual biography begin. Most of the book is devoted to the development of Habad in America, Schneerson's emphasis on outreach, and the belief of his followers that he was to be the long-awaited Messiah. There is a great deal that is new in this very readable study and much that should interest students not only of Hasidism but also of charismatic religious groups in general.

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KOMMUNIKATION DURCH SYMBOLISCHE AKTE: RELIGIOESE HETEROGENITAET UND POLITISCHE HERRSCHAFT IN POLEN-LITAUEN. Edited by Yvonne Kleinmann. *Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur des oestlichen Mitteleuropa*, 35. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010. Pp. 305. Cloth, €48.00.

This is an important collection of fifteen papers (four in English, the remainder in German) dealing with the topic of religious heterogeneity and political regimes in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Most, but not all, deal with some aspect of Jewish life or relations with Jews in the Commonwealth. This book is an expression of the increasing sophistication of studies on East European Jewry. There is much greater awareness of the importance of context, a greater application of theory, and an understanding that theory can increase awareness of factors that can help explain phenomena and a dramatic broadening of the sources, especially archival sources, which are brought to bear on the historical realities. The book opens with a very perceptive introduction by the editor. Topics include theoretical and methodological approaches, religious heterogeneity and the practice of rule, and border construction and communication through symbolic acts. This book reflects the most current thinking and writing in central Europe and most of the papers are on a very high standard. There is a name index but, unfortunately, there is no topical index.

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L. L. ZAMENHOF (1859-1917): ESPERANTO, HIL-LELISMUS (HOMARANISMUS) UNDER DIE "JUE- DISCHE FRAGE" IN OST- UND WESTEUROPA. By Andreas Kuenzli. *Juedische Kultur* 23, Weisbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2010. Pp. 538; plates. €98.00.

Ludwig Zamenhof is best known today for his invention of Esperanto. In many circles, his Jewish identity is downplayed. Among his efforts to create a better world, however, he tried not only to invent a universal language but also to develop and disseminate a humanitarian philosophy called in Esperanto "*Homaranismo*," based to a large degree on the statements of the Hillel the Elder. His hope was that this approach would contribute to understanding between the

adherents of different religions and lead to a decline in anti-Semitism. This attempt was less successful than his attempt to develop a universal language. But as Kuenzli shows in this very impressive study, much can be learned from failures. The author describes the life, activities, and heritage of Zamenhof in richly documented chapters. Kuenzli devotes a great deal of attention to Jewish cultural history and to Zamenhof's involvement in religious questions. He provides a detailed description and analysis of Zamenhof's Homaranismo project of Hillelism and links it to Zamenhof's other activities. Kunzli's volume is unquestionably important for research libraries that deal with religious reform as harness for social improvement as well as with the variety of Jewish religious responses to modernity.

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THE MIXED MULTITUDE: JACOB FRANK AND THE FRANKIST MOVEMENT, 1755-1816. By Pawel Maciejko. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011. Pp. viii + 361. Cloth, \$65.00.

The Frankist movement was the last major expression of Sabbatianism. It has been studied by many, but this volume is the definitive history of the movement. Maciejko brings a sharp intellect, total mastery of the sources, a broad familiarity with the secondary literature, and a clear writing style to the topic. In the nine chapters of the book, Maciejko describes the background to Frankism, traces the career of Jacob Frank, the employment of the blood libel by the persecuted Frankists, the conversion of Jacob Frank and many Frankists to Catholicism, and the subsequent incarceration of Jacob Frank on charges of heresy. Maciejko analyzes Frank's changing religious thought, demonstrating that the conversion of the Frankists was accomplished with the active support of much of the rabbinic establishment, who preferred to be rid off what they saw as a group of dangerous troublemakers. He devotes a detailed chapter to the phenomenon or religious charlatans and another to masquerade—two critically important topics in Jewish religious history that have been long ignored. This is an essential reading not only for almost every aspect of modern Judaism, but for religious history in Central Europe as well. Maciejko is very careful with his sources but does not shy away from far-reaching conclusions.

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JEWISH RENAISSANCE IN THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION. By Kenneth B. Moss. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009. Pp. x + 384. \$42.00.

In this imaginative, brilliant, and beautiful book, Moss sheds much light on a long overlooked but critical chapter in Jewish, Russian, and east European histories. The book's main focus is the various efforts by a cadre of cultural activists who attempted to create new forms of Jewish culture in Hebrew, Russian, and Yiddish, and the extent to which these

cultural projects were rooted in various concepts of “the nation.” Thus, while earlier works addressing this historical region and period looked to political parties, leaders, and ideologies, Moss’s turn to culture as an expression of nationalism, modernity, and the modern, national self, opens an entirely new vista onto the study of Jewish society and culture in the Russian Empire as well as a slew of related issues including the secularization of Jewish society, the nexus between nation and culture, the tension between the nation and the individual, and the fate of Eastern Europe in the twentieth century. The end result is an elegant work of staggering brilliance and seemingly endless erudition.

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THE JEWS IN POLAND AND RUSSIA: VOLUME II 1881-1914. By Antony Polonsky. Portland, OR: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010. Pp. xvi + 492; maps. Cloth, \$59.50.

This is the second volume of a three-volume history of the Jews in Poland and Russia. It is devoted mainly to a relatively short period, the thirty years between the first major outburst of violent anti-Semitism in Tsarist Russia and the beginning of World War I, the key period of transition from a mainly traditional society to modernity. A great deal of attention is given to economic topics, to women, mass culture, and to urbanization and “Jewish spaces.” A very long chapter is devoted to Jewish religious life, and its scope is from the mid-eighteenth century until 1914. It contains of the few detailed analyses available in English on the development of modernized frameworks of Jewish religious life in Eastern Europe. This superb and very up-to-date book is very well written, carefully documented, balanced, and will be a standard reference in the field. It has a glossary and a wide-ranging bibliography, very useful maps, and statistical tables all of which make it a good starting point for any reading on East European Jewry.

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WOMEN AND THE MESSIANIC HERESY OF SABBATAI ZEVI: 1666-1816. By Ada Rapoport-Albert. Portland, OR: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2011. Pp. xvi + 386. Cloth, \$64.50.

The Sabbatian and Frankist movements were revolutionary in the roles women were able to play in the movements. Rapoport-Albert’s presentation and analysis of this phenomenon not only breaks down many stereotypes about the roles of women in Judaism and Jewish society in the past, but it is also a major contribution to understanding how Sabbatianism and Frankism spread and operated. The chapters of the book deal with the phenomenon of female prophets in the Sabbatian movement, historical precedents to this phenomenon, Sabbatian women as religious activists, their continued activity even after the apostasy of Sabbatai Zevi, trends to egalitarianism in Sabbatianism in general and in

the family of Jacob Frank, the theme of the “redemptive maiden” in the thought of Jacob Frank, and (possible) links between Frank and schismatic Christian groups. Rapoport-Albert argues that a vision of egalitarianism was a basic element of the Sabbatian vision. In the final chapter, she considers how and why Hasidism rejected this approach. This book is rich in original ideas and insights. While many of the topics call for further research, the rich documentation Rapoport-Albert brings to bear on the topic leave little room for doubt that a call for changed gender roles, to a greater or lesser degree, was a central element in the Sabbatian and Frankist movements. It is a very stimulating contribution to the literature on Kabbalah, on modern religious movements, on gender history, as well as on conservative responses.

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SINNERS ON TRIAL: JEWS AND SACRILEGE AFTER THE REFORMATION. By Magda Teter. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011. Pp. x + 331. Cloth, \$39.95.

This important study deals with the changing church policies regarding claims of abuse of sacred church objects and the consequences of these changes for Jews. While early modern Poland has often been portrayed as a place of relative religious toleration, Teter shows very different realities. By using trial records to a great advantage, she goes beyond descriptions based on laws, legal status, and religious texts to show the realities of religious dynamics of the time. The first chapter deals with the concept of the sacred and the place of sacred objects among Christians and Jews in Poland. Subsequent chapters deal with the theft of sacred objects, the legal prosecution of sins by church and secular authorities, the development of Poznan as a pilgrimage center linked to a claim of desecration of the host by Jews, links between the Catholic struggle against Protestantism and against the Jews as revealed in a case in Sochaczew, a trial in Bochnia on charges of host desecration, a case in Przemysl, and a closing chapter. Teter’s use of trial records to bring to life some of the realities of early modern Poland is quite effective. The result is a book that is an important contribution to our understanding of Polish Catholicism at a crucial period. It is no less important for an understanding of the realities of Jewish life and of Jewish perceptions of Christianity.

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Islam

CHRISTIANS IN AL-ANDALUS (711-1000). By Ann Christys. London: Routledge, 2002 (first paperback, 2010). Pp. xiv + 231; maps. Paper, \$44.96.

In this revision of her doctoral dissertation, Christys “sets out to look at the christian [*sic*] response to the islamic