

cessive generations of Jewish intellectuals interpreted and represented the loaded encounter between Jews, Jewish communal leaders and Russian authorities between 1827 and 1917. Starting with the infamous conscription act implemented by Tsar Nicholas I, Litvak demonstrates how Jewish intellectuals repeatedly turned to the story of Jewish recruits to justify and legitimize their own worldviews and, in many cases, political agendas. Beginning with a discussion of early praise for the Jewish recruit and his acceptance of the emancipation contract with the state by adherents of the Jewish enlightenment, the author continues by looking at the image of the Jewish recruit in later enlightenment literature in the works of such central figures as Yehuda Leib Gordon, moves on to an analysis of the Hebrew writings of cultural nationalists like J. Brenner (Yosef Hayim Brenner), and concludes with an examination of how the experience of conscription was woven into early incarnations of the Jewish historical canon in the works of S. Dubnow. By looking at the legacy of Jewish soldiers through the lens of Jewish literature written in Hebrew, Russian, and Yiddish, Litvak's study of history, culture, and memory has injected important theoretical approaches and considerations into the field of Jewish studies. Litvak adroitly demonstrates how so much of what has been written and what is then subsequently remembered about "the Jewish experience" in Tsarist Russia was not recorded, but, in fact, constructed.

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LEO STRAUSS AND THE POLITICS OF EXILE: THE MAKING OF A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHER. By Eugene R. Sheppard. The Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry Series. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2006. Pp. 188. Cloth, \$24.95, ISBN: 978-1-58465-600-5.

In this indispensable guide, Sheppard guides his reader from Strauss's early Jewish and Zionist writings, his critique of C. Schmitt (according to Strauss, Schmitt was still too liberal), books on Spinoza and Hobbes, *Philosophy and Law*, and *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, an early work written in exile from New York. Sheppard highlights the figure of "exile" as the key term with which to understand Strauss's early works. For Sheppard, exile stands in for the intractability of political and philosophical problems, the imperfection and even inherent evil of human beings, the inability to create a just society, and the precarious position of the philosopher. Call it pessimism or realism, it was this that compelled Strauss to reject modern liberalism. Unlike many Jewish readers of Strauss, Sheppard does not shy away from Strauss' early flirtation with ultraconservative politics, including an infamous letter to K. Löwith, in which Strauss openly espoused fascism. But why, Sheppard asks without ever providing a satisfactory answer, did Strauss import a sensibility conditioned by totalitarian rule into a liberal, democratic regime like the United States? And why should it be Strauss, and not Buber

or Scholem (or Arendt or I. Berlin), who emblemizes the modern Jewish condition?

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LITURGY, TIME, AND THE POLITICS OF REDEMPTION. Edited By Randi Rashkover and C.C. Pecknold. *Radical Traditions: Theology in a Post-Critical Key*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006. Pp. 264. \$30.00, ISBN 0-8028-3052-8.

A first-rate collection of essays by Jewish and Christian philosophers (Rashkover, Ward, Ochs, Bader-Saye, Kepnes, Gibbs, Quash, Wells, Magid, Davies, and Pecknold). Most of the authors uphold traditional liturgy as an alternative to modern (Western and secular) models of human subjectivity, temporality, and action in the world. Much attention goes to the aesthetics of liturgy, its basis in perception, participation, and theatrical performance. We learn that God acts in time and will redeem this broken world through liturgical practice. The Christian contributors seem more persuaded that the Kingdom is very near, whereas the Jewish contributors are more likely to note the inverse relation between the world as imagined in liturgy and the world as we live it. Unruffled by doubt or irony, the tone overall is both confident and urgent. Does liturgy have the world-redemptive significance ascribed to it? Liturgical expressions of praise and trust in God (especially vis-à-vis the redemption of suffering) are by and large taken at face value. Most of the contributions will strike critical readers as pop-eyed and militant, as failing to see the violence in their own language of redemption and participation, especially when it is posed as a one-sided critique of modernity.

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SHULAMIT AND MARGARETE: POWER, GENDER AND RELIGION IN A RURAL SOCIETY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE. By Claudia Ulbrich, translated by Thomas Dunlap. *Studies in Central European Histories*, vol. 32. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2005. Pp x + 326, maps. \$69.00, ISBN 978-0-391-04227-8.

This original and thought-provoking study, originally published in German in 1999 and superbly translated into English, describes the world of rural women in a small village near Metz in the eighteenth century. It is based mainly on court records, official documents as well as additional sources; consequently, it deals not only with elites but with a cross section of the community. The mixed nature of the population (Catholic, Jewish and some Protestant) makes a comparative approach possible. Of the seven chapters, two deal specifically with Jews (the history of the Jewish community and the lives of Jewish women) and one on Christian-Jewish relations. The rich documentation covers many aspects of women's lives; the wide-ranging references to secondary and theoretical literature, especially in German, can be quite useful. The author gives careful attention to