

The bulk of the narrative is on Rabbi Wise's fascinating life. Each chapter focuses on either a time period or a topic. Rudin portrays Wise's rabbinate in Portland, Oregon from 1900-1906 as important, but does not delve into his deep involvement in social services there. The book discusses the Emanu-El controversy, but does not uncover any new data. Several chapters cover Wise as the creator of the Free Synagogue and the Jewish Institute of Religion, through which he re-defined Reform Judaism for the 20th century. Rudin describes Wise's whirlwind of activity between 1920 and 1945, when he seemed to take part in every significant issue. The volume examines Wise's deep commitment to Zionism, including his opposition to Chaim Weizmann after World War I. It extensively covers Wise's role as "America's Rabbi" during the 1930s, including his relationship with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his early stance against the Nazis. This continued through World War II, when Wise publicized the Shoah while the government refused to officially acknowledge its existence. Alongside Wise himself, Rudin provides valuable information on numerous institutions and people, including the Ethical Culture Society; Justice Louis Brandeis; and Wise's best friend John Haynes Holmes.

*Pillar of Fire* includes numerous, often extensive quotations from Wise's powerful speeches and letters. Overall, it provides a friendly and complete overview, but it does not substantially expand what scholars already know. Despite this, it should be in all academic libraries, and in synagogues that can afford it.

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**Shir, Smadar. *Miriam's Song: The Story of Miriam's Peretz*. Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 2016. 398 pp. \$34.95. (9789652298355).**

Miriam Peretz, known as the "Mother of the Boys," represents a true symbol of a stoic mother having lost two of her sons in warfare. First Lieutenant Uriel Peretz (1976-1998) was killed in Lebanon. Twelve years later, her second son, Major Eliraz Peretz (1978-2010) was killed in an exchange of fire in Gaza Strip. She attributes the death of her beloved husband to "heartbreak." She and her husband with trepidation gave the second son, Eliraz, permission to serve in an elite fighting unit. Permission is required by the IDF because their first son was killed in uniform. The book is a tour-de-force in expressing the sadness and loss of losing children.

Peretz now spends her time volunteering for the IDF by giving lectures and classes. *Miriam's Song* expresses her pain and anguish, yet there is still joy in her life especially when spending time with her remaining children, their spouses and grandchildren. She was born a Moroccan Jew, and she overcame prejudice toward Moroccan Jews to become an outstanding educator which included many years as a principal of a school. No politics or political positions are taken in the book.

This book has similarities to *Raquela: A Woman of Israel* by Ruth Gruber which is the story of an Israeli woman who was a dedicated nurse and helped to make advances in infant care and children's health. Both stories highlight Israeli women of outstanding character, professional accomplishment, dedication, and a total devotion to country and family.

Ellen Share, Washington Hebrew Congregation Librarian, Washington, DC

**Simon, Marie Jalowicz. *Underground in Berlin: A Young Woman's Extraordinary Tale of Survival in the Heart of Nazi Germany*. Translated by Anthea Bell. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2015, 366 pp. \$28.00. (9780316382090).**

In 1942, at the age of 20, Marie Jalowicz became a "U-Boat" - a Jew living underground in Nazi Germany. This picaresque memoir recreates her experiences zigzagging through wartime Berlin and often hiding in plain sight.

Among Holocaust survivors' stories, this one stands out for a nuanced and sympathetic portrayal of the Germans—some, fervent Nazis; many, resisters who offered shelter. As the daughter of a respectable family, Marie was forced to dwell in lower-class neighborhoods among vulgar, deviant, or colorful characters. "I must tread carefully," she writes, "and adjust with lightning speed to the habits

and lifestyle of anyone who took me in." Events and encounters became surreal. "It is no use behaving normally in an abnormal situation," Marie learned. "One had to adjust to it instead." This meant sleeping in hallways, sharing rooms and rations, and relying on the kindness of protectors. She even traveled to Sofia, on fake name and passport, to marry a Bulgarian boyfriend (this fell through). Later she hooked up with a Dutch guest laborer. She views wartime life around her in a somewhat detached manner; bombings are described offhand, as if her area had been possibly less affected than others in Berlin.

There are photos of her (a striking young woman), friends, and relatives, along with a list of people she had interacted with and their fates. Her son describes her postwar life in East Germany as a professor and member of the New Synagogue, as well as her resolution to marry someone Jewish and educated. Because of its adult content, this book, though pleasantly readable, would be more suitable for a public or secular library with Holocaust collections.

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**Soloviechik, Meir Y. & Stuart W. Halpern & Shlomo Zuckier (eds).** *Torah and Western Thought: Intellectual Portraits of Orthodoxy and Modernity.* Jerusalem: Strauss Center for Torah and Western Thought; Maggid Books, 2015. 329 pp. \$29.95. (9781592644360).

This book is a well-written group of scholarly essays. The authors carefully analyze the writing and thoughts of ten great modern Jewish thinkers on the Torah. The audience is somewhat limited to those who can plough through a scholarly text, but the effort is worth it. The last chapter is of particular interest. Here Rabbis Shalom Carmy and Shlomo Zuckier write about Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein, son-in-law of Rabbi Joseph B. Solovieck ("the Rav"). Lichtenstein believed that scientific knowledge and the liberal arts are important to understanding the world. God created the world and anything that helps understand creation is part of Torah. This is a thought that sets modern Orthodoxy apart from the closed mentality of other Orthodox groups. This idea is echoed in the other chapters of this book. This book is highly recommended for academic libraries and other libraries with patrons interested in understanding modern Orthodox thought.

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**Soomekh, Saba, ed.** *Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews in America. The Jewish Role in American Life: An Annual Review of the Casden Institute for the Study of the Jewish Role in American Life. Volume 13.* Purdue University Press, 2016. 182 pp. \$25.00. (97815575376287).

Although the first Jews to settle in the United States were Sephardic, the major wave of immigration in the nineteenth century brought a major influx of Ashkenazim and they became the majority Jewish culture. There are, however, large Sephardic and Mizrahi communities in New York, Seattle, and Los Angeles, raising awareness of the languages and customs of these groups. This collection of studies by academics examines various aspects of Sephardic and Mizrahi culture in the United States and the impact it has on establishing Jewish and American identity. The articles are between ten and twenty pages long with bibliographies. The guest editor, Saba Soomekh, writes about the Maurice Amado Foundation, established to support Sephardic Jewish scholarship and education, which is based at the University of California, Los Angeles. Other articles look at the Ladino language, the proficiency of its speakers, and how multilingualism impacts their lives. There are also studies of Arab Jews in America, Iranian Jewish art, and the immigrant experience. A rabbi writes about the classic Sephardic spirit, which ignores the denominational divisions common in the United States. This is a small, but interesting collection that will be useful for libraries supporting programs in Jewish studies, Sephardic studies, and the social sciences.

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