

torian who has written hundreds of articles and about thirty books during the last forty years. This sheaf of offerings, in six parts, is limited to essays in fields to which Dr. Patai has made contributions: folklore and literature, anthropology; Zionism, Israel, and the Middle East; and the Ancient Near East. The first part contains an appreciation of his life, description of his work, and a bibliography of his published writings.

Jubilee volumes are for special occasions, but the event for this book is not apparent from the title page, preface, appreciation, or anywhere else in the front-matter. The *Fest of the Festschrift* is finally identified in a footnote on page 85 as a "sincere tribute to him [Patai] on his seventieth birthday."

The essays in this volume vary in quality; some are dull, others will appeal only to the specialist, still others are interesting and will attract the general reader concerned with Jewish culture. Some are warmed-over and some that could have made a contribution, are too short to offer anything solid. In general, they are long on scholarship and short on novelty.

Dan Ben-Amos advocates a fresh examination and observation of folklore "as it exists in social reality" because it is a "culturally unique mode of communication." Since the author does not include Jewish folklore and fails to relate his theories to Jewish creativity in lore or myth, his essay is inadequate for this collection of studies that deal mostly with Jewish themes.

In this overall poor collection, the essays by Robert Gordis and Livia Bitton-Jackson stand out. By shedding light on four Yiddish usages that reflect internal and external factors in the life of Ashkenazic Jewry of Eastern Europe, Dr. Gordis makes a solid contribution to Yiddish etymology.

Livia Bitton-Jackson chronicles the presentation in fiction of the Jewish hero from the mid-eighteenth century to our times. Her essay is interesting and detailed enough to attract both the general and specialist readers.

The long article by Walter P. Zenner describing the world of the Syrian Jews in Brooklyn in the 1950's and early 1960's, was previously incorporated into his dissertation and offered in other publications. Jacob M. Landau's essay on the Young Turks and Zionism, and Simha Kling's portrayal of Haim Arlozorov, are of high quality. Landau offers material from Turkish sources not readily available in English about three Ottoman Jews who could have, but did not, influence the leaders of the Young Turk movement (between 1908 and 1919) to moderate their antagonism toward Zionism. Reviewing Arlozorov's brilliant career, Kling mentions a secret letter written to Chaim Weitzman in 1932 in which Arlozorov suggested that the Jews take over the government of Palestine and suspend democracy till they became the majority population. According to Ishaq ben Ami, author of *Years of Wrath, Days of Glory: Memoirs of the Irgun* (New York:

Shengold, 1983) this was seven years before the Jabotinsky plan for rebellion in Palestine that was set for October 1939. Kling's is an interesting article offering many details not widely known.

Cyrus H. Gordon's essay on the theoretical structure of Israelite society is too short and offers material that was already published in the 1960's. In the Hebrew section, Tuvya Preschel's essay on a strange seder custom and its origin is a warmed-over version of one published in the Hebrew weekly *Hadoar* of 9 Nissan, 1972. The author never mentions his old version anywhere in the article. His elucidation of this custom is not satisfactory, since he confuses two customs, and, in this reviewer's opinion, does not get close enough to the root of the problem to explain it fully.

Altogether a jubilee volume too modest for a man of Dr. Patai's stature. He deserved a better one, one of more lasting value.
George Wolf

The Forms of the Old Testament Literature: Vol XIII: Wisdom Literature: Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Esther
Roland E. Murphy

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This book is the first of a series of 24 volumes which are intended to present a form-critical analysis of "every book and each unit" of the Hebrew Bible. Form-criticism seeks to determine a text's genre, structure and setting. These basic questions precede and delimit the work of exegesis, but in actual practice it is sometimes difficult to separate the two. Indeed, these are the most interesting cases.

It is often in its stressing of the need for determination of genre, structure and setting that form-criticism performs its most useful service, rather than its often blind and one-sided application. As Prof. Murphy points out: "The most exact and careful analysis of forms and motifs must be carried out with a sense for the broader perspective. The mere occurrence of certain genres is not enough to determine the literary genre of the work." (p. 17) This new handbook should help in that task by easing the time expended on such classification.
—Y.E.

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