the *Keter* moved from his imagination into print. Ben-Zvi is the head of the N. Ben-Zvi Printing Enterprises and is the most prominent commercial printer in Israel. His father was the official printer of Mandate Palestine. In the 1970s when Hebrew University's Magnes Press published the Aleppo Codex facsimile he fed the sheets. He became fascinated with the Codex and developed a desire to produce a Tanakh that could communicate the same sensibility as the original but was complete and a fine work of printing. He made many attempts over the years, but found that the available technology was not up to his vision. It was not until the nineties that the necessary technology arrived. Ben-Zvi was able to use more automation in the creation of a Tanakh than had ever been used before. By employing Zvi Narkiss, Israel's foremost typographer, Ben-Zvi found a master designer and aesthetician in addition to typographer.

It is regrettable that the quality of the printing of the *Companion Volume* (at least in the copies that I have seen) is not as high as that of the *Keter* itself. The layout is also a little slack in the bibliographies in the English language portion of the book. Still, it is possible that the *Companion Volume* will make the *Keter* more accessible to the Jewish world outside of Israel and that would overcome the import of any faults it might have.

●

Literary Criticism as Anything But Literary Criticism

Imagining Each Other: Blacks and Jews in Contemporary American Literature. By ETHAN GOFFMAN. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.

Facing Black and Jew: Literature as Public Space in Twentieth-Century America. By ADAM ZACHARY NEWTON. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Reviewed by ROBERT PHILIPSON

Ever since Nat Hentoff edited an anthology of essays called *Black Anti-Semitism and Jewish Racism* (1969),[1] the domain of Black-Jewish relations has established itself as a sub-specialty in the field of American studies. Of the many books and essays that have appeared on the subject, few have concentrated on the literature produced by Blacks writing about Jews and Jews writing about Blacks. The best-known of these is Cynthia Ozick's 1983 essay, "Literary Blacks and Jews."[2] This narrow shelf has suddenly gotten crowded by the recent appearance of two studies by young Jewish scholars. (Jews are much more interested in writing about Black-Jewish relations than are Blacks.) While both works might fall under the rubric of cultural studies, Ethan Goffman's *Imagining Each Other* treats literature as sociology while Adam Zachary Newton's *Facing Black and Jew*[3] wishes to go beyond "mere" literature and presents itself as its own primary text.

Stop me if you've heard this one before:

Jews came to the United States in search of religious freedom and economic opportunity. Blacks were brought here in slavery. The two groups came into significant contact toward

ROBERT PHILIPSON *is an independent scholar living in Oakland, California. He holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Wisconsin. His review of* Struggles in the Promised Land, *by Jack Salzman and Cornel West, appeared in the Fall 1998 issue.*

the end of the nineteenth century when the Black peasants of the Great Migration settled in the same northern cities that hosted the masses of Jewish immigrants from Russia and Eastern Europe. Soon an alliance developed between the elites of both groups to fight nativist prejudice and to promote civil equality. This so-called Grand Alliance culminated in the victories of the Civil Rights movement of the late fifties and sixties. "Then," to quote Michael Walzer, "came Black power, the 1967 Mideast war, community school boards, affirmative action, the Nation of Islam . . . and now there is only trouble and mutual recrimination."[4] This is the Official Liberal Version of Black-Jewish relations, and it provides the unacknowledged historical framework of Goffman's study.

As a framework it works well. Beginning with the period of waning Communist influence on intellectuals, the 1940s, Goffman traces the history of Black-Jewish relations through to the Crown Heights riots of 1991. He makes certain novels, plays, and poems representative of Black and Jewish perspectives at different historical junctures, prefacing his reading of these works with historical summary, commentary, and a brief presentation of relevant essays and works of non-fiction. In the first of these historical chapters, "Black (E)Masculinity and Anti-Semitism," Goffman analyzes Richard Wright's *Native Son*[5] as a foreshadowing of the Black anger that would propel African Americans away from the Grand Alliance. Even more interesting is his discussion of Chester Himes's *Lonely Crusade*,[6] in which he contends that America's emasculation of the Black male as breadwinner and protector of his family makes traditional antisemitism "tantalizingly relevant" because the scholarly ideal of the Jewish male reverses the dominant American cultural norm.

In the following chapter, "Jewish Assimilation: White Lies and Black Eyes," Goffman argues that the portraits painted of Blacks (and Africans) in Saul Bellow's "Looking for Mr. Green," *Henderson the Rain King,* and Bernard Malamud's "The Angel Levine" and "Black Is My Favorite Color"[7] are symptomatic of the assimilating Jew's inability to present Black people and landscapes as anything but instruments for the imagination of the perceiving eye.

And so it goes. Lorraine Hansberry's play, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window,*[8] illustrates an ideology of universalizing liberalism, while the poetry of Amiri Baraka and Nikki Giovanni conveys the outburst of antisemitism fostered by the Black nationalism of the 1960s. Jewish backlash is traced through an analysis of Bernard Malamud's *The Tenants* and Saul Bellow's *Mr. Sammler's Planet.*[9] Non-antisemitic Black responses to the upheavals of the 1960s are presented in Paule Marshall's *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People,* Alice Walker's *Meridian,* and two novels by John A. Williams.[10]

Here Goffman breaks briefly with the Official Liberal Version to acknowledge that Jewish-American radicals didn't disappear with the evisceration of the Communist and Socialist movements in the 1950s, by analyzing the writings of Jay Neugeboren and Grace Paley as a post-sixties continuation of a vision which hints at an eventual synthesis of radicalism and integrationism. In a chapter entitled, "Framentation and Multiculturalism," Goffman discusses the post-sixties writings of Lore Segal *(Her First American),* John Edgar Wideman *("Valaida"),* Gloria Naylor *(Bailey's Cafe),* and Ishmael Reed *(Reckless Eyeballing).*[11] The final chapter, "Parallels and Paralysis," offers Saul

Bellow's *The Dean's December*[12] as an example of (Jewish) neoconversative thought and Anna Deavere Smith's performance piece, *Fires in the Mirror*,[13] as a document of the closed ideologies that prevent Blacks and Jews from understanding one another at the end of the century.

None of this is as reductionist as it might sound. Goffman is intelligent, well-informed, and–thank God–a good writer. His presentation of Blacks and Jews at the various stages described by the Official Liberal Version is concise and convincing. In an earlier age, he might also have been a fine literary critic. Unfortunately, his project demands that he subordinate literature to history and sociology. For second-rate novels, Goffman's analysis brings to them an interest they might not otherwise have (e.g., Chester Himes's *Lonely Crusade* and John A. Williams' *The Man Who Cried I Am*).[14] When the sociology of Black-Jewish relations is the principal theme of a short story, as in Malamud's "Black Is My Favorite Color" or Paley's "Zagrowsky Tells,"[15] Goffman's perspective proves fine as an *explication de texte*. He also has interesting things to say about Black-Jewish relations as secondary elements of major novels. Let me say loud and clear, before I get to the criticisms, that, in the main, *Imagining Each Other* is a fine, well-organized, well-written book–a worthy addition to the Official Liberal Version of Black-Jewish relations.

As a book of literary criticism–the category proposed by its back cover–it is hamstrung by refusal to take aesthetics into account. "Aesthetic and social considerations . . . cannot be separated" (xiii), Goffman writes in his introduction, but he makes precious few aesthetic judgments. There is no way to tell from Goffman's discussion that Paule Marshall's novels are *much* better than those of Jay Neugeboren, that Richard Wright outstrips Chester Himes as a writer in every respect. Goffman might protest that the purpose of his book is not to pass judgment on works of art as aesthetic products but as part of a political and historical process. The problem is that complex and ambiguous works of art are inevitably flattened, and therefore misrepresented, by such an approach. Malamud's story, "The Angel Levine,"[16] is a case in point. Goffman reads the story as a failure of the assimilated Jewish author to portray African-American environments and subjectivities, but such an interpretation doesn't take into account the story's supernatural and surreal elements. In fact, literary-criticism-as-sociology is most comfortable with realism and has difficulty with everything else.

Perhaps it is this discomfort with non-naturalistic modes of writing that led Goffman to exclude two capital examples of Black and Jewish mutual representation: Ed Bullin's play, *The Taking of Miss Janie* (1972), and Stanley Elkin's remarkable short story, "I Look Out for Ed Wolfe" (1962).[17] Bullin's play features a would-be Black radical clubbing an aging, Jewish Beat figure to death, and Stanley Elkin's orphaned Jewish protagonist tries to auction off his Black dancing partner in a Black night club. It would be interesting to see how Goffman might fit these two non-realistic scenes into his structure.

Although Goffman draws his theory from a variety of sources, his choice of texts is, for the most part, strictly American. This can feel a bit short-circuiting, as when he asserts that Black and Jewish culture (which Black culture? which Jewish culture?) is post-colonial, but Goffman does an excellent job situating and contextualizing novels treating American topics. American literature

doesn't come in an impermeable container, however, and the inclusion of Paule Marshall, an American writer of Caribbean origin, complicates matters. Goffman's analysis of her profound novel, *The Chosen Place, the Timeless People* fails not only because the novel is so much greater than the ethnicities of its main characters, but because the conditions of Marshall's postcolonial Caribbean island are utterly different from those of Blacks and Jews in the United States.

One of Goffman's quirks that stems from his personal politics rather than his methodology is his reluctance to take a close, hard look at the 1960s antisemitism of the Black Arts poets. He finds ways of interpreting Amiri Baraka and Nikki Giovanni that turns such lines as "another bad poem cracking/steel knuckles in a jewlady's mouth" and "it's impossible to love/a Jew"[18] into allegories of the artist's rage against the middle class or a condemnation of liberal complacency. "Yet even though it defines itself largely against Jewish liberalism," he writes, "Black nationalism is not inherently antisemitic. An essentialist antisemitism, though sometimes difficult to distinguish from a specific contextual critique of Jewish politics, is a far different phenomenon" (107). I'm glad Goffman can make the distinction; the subtleties escape me.[19]

To be fair, Goffman recognizes the existence of Black antisemitism and, on the historical level, discusses its origins and results in a lucid, elegant, and fair-minded manner. One of the strengths of the study is its contribution to the understanding of antisemitism as endemic in Black nationalist discourse. It only fails to deepen its insights because of its methodological avoidance of psychology.

Goffman's theoretical opening chapter, "Monologues and Dialogues," is one of the most interesting and problematic. As a contemporary literary scholar, he must of necessity place himself within the multiculturalist, postcolonial purview. Much of it he gets right. "Trauma and recovery from trauma, the attempt to repair and reconstitute an identity, link the Jewish and African diasporas" (2). He correctly places the origins of these diasporic perspectives in the Enlightenment. He then cites postcolonial theory to explain the stages that the assimilating Black and Jew traverse: imitation of Western models, Western rejection, followed by the creation of national countermyths of essentialized Blackness or Jewishness. Goffman then asserts that W. E. B. DuBois' famous "double consciousness,"[20] the simultaneous self-evaluation using Western and ethnic criteria, is the condition under which assimilating Blacks and Jews live. Self-hating Jews become transgressive figures in European culture (Marx and Freud); African Americans such as Louis Armstrong and Martin Luther King force mainstream society into a revision of its own standards.

Let us grant Goffman's contention that marginalized, diasporic cultures are transgressive in nature and lead to cultural hybridity. African-American and Jewish-American literatures are then seen as challenging a Western canon which excludes them, offering instead a multicultural mix of texts from an increasing variety of perspectives. Goffman invokes both Deleuze and Guatari's concept of a minor literature and Bakhtin's theory of literary heterogeneity. By its very nature, modern literature undermines the hegemony of any single system. Furthermore, literature breaks through the solipsism of the individual psyche by presenting the consciousness of oth-

ers—or the Other. And here Goffman explicitly subordinates literature to sociology and politics: "Literature is one forum for society's multiplicitous clash of ideologies, a dialogue by which identity is demarcated, defined, refined, and redefined" (20). I have already spoken of the pitfalls of such an approach.

No methodology can avoid blind spots, and, in spite of its limitations, Goffman's book is the best literary gloss on the Official Liberal Version that is likely to appear for some time. It should not be the last word, but it will rank as one of the better ones.

If my praise is qualified for *Imagining Each Other* it will sound like a hosanna of glory compared to what I have to say about Adam Zachary Newton's *Facing Black and Jew.* That is because I am not part of the audience for whom this book is intended. With my Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Wisconsin and its *de rigueur* requirement of theoretical literacy – post-structuralism, post-colonialism, feminism, and other -isms–I do not have the background or intelligence to absorb Newton's argument. But there is another possibility–that Newton is a bad writer and a worse teacher. I will do my feeble best to present the project of *Facing Black and Jew* in the way that Newton conceived it, but his style, if it can be called that, is extremely alienating.

Unlike Goffman, Newton does not confine himself to works of African-American and Jewish-American literature that seek to represent the other. He juxtaposes novels by African-American and Jewish-American writers in order to bring out parallels that throw new light on Black and Jewish relatedness. This is done in conscious opposition to the reductionist discourse that has coalesced in the media and in sociopolitical commentary around Black and Jewish relations, a discourse for which Newton coins the ridiculous neologism, "blackjewishrelations."

Borrowing from the French Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, Newton calls this juxtaposition "facing," and you can tell from his strenuous use of epigraphs with the word "face" in them and his punning use of Pre*face* and Post*face* that Newton feels he is adding something monumental to critical vocabulary. This helpful quote from the back cover describes Newton's project. "Newton combines Emmanuel Levinas's ethical philosophy and Walter Benjamin's theory of allegory in shaping an innovative kind of ethical-political criticism." In his Pre*face,* Newton succeeds somewhat in glossing Levinas, but his invocation of Benjamin's notion of allegory is impossible to understand for those who haven't read the German writer's *Origin of German Tragic Drama* and "Theses on the Philosophy of History."[21] And here is how Newton brings the two concepts together.

> Allegory, in Benjamin's sense, and ethics, in Levinas's, have this in common: they both intervene in an inadvertently enchanted world. One could say, therefore, that Black-Jewish relations describe a world where allegory and face both *miscue,* where the one stands in lack of what medieval writers called the clarifying *integumentum*–the allegoresis–between persons, while the other cannot positively *show forth.* (xiv)

Got that? No? Put on your dunce cap and join me in the back of the class.

If the teaching is abstruse, the writing is nothing short of painful. Newton displays all the tics of High Theory: epigraphitis (in one case, three epigraphs to one subheading); relentless,

"in-jokey" wordplay; endless chapter titles; and ugly, unnecessary neologisms. On page 8 alone, one finds "surplusive" (a Derridean derivation?), "instantiation" (for "instance"), and "transgeographic peoplehood" (for "diasporic population").

From style to substance, let us turn to the project itself. Chapter 1 "faces" Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep.* Chapter 2 performs the same service for Chester Himes' *If He Hollers Let Him Go* and Saul Bellow's *The Victim.* Chapter 3 juxtaposes Philip Roth's *Operation Shylock* and David Bradley's *The Chaneysville Incident.* In chapter 4, various short stories by Bernard Malamud and John Edgar Wideman are put on the block. Newton goes postmodern in chapter five, commenting (not sure if he's actually "facing" here) on David Mamet's screenplay of his interesting failure, *Homicide,* and the O. J. Simpson trial.[22]

Before talking about the importance of the project as a whole, let us take a close look at one of the chapters to see Newton's criticism in action. "Literaturized Blacks and Jews; or, golems and Tar babies: reality and its shadows in John Edgar Wideman and Bernard Malamud"[23] has a nice ring to it. This chapter also recasts some of Goffman's work in *Imagining Each Other,* or, as Newton so inimitably puts it, "Black faces given voice by Jew, Jewish faces made sonant by Black" (111-112). Examining Malamud's "The Jewbird," "The Angel Levine," and "Black Is My Favorite Color,"[24] Newton finds them all lacking because their characters are insufficiently imagined in empathetic recognition of Black humanity. ("The Jewbird," one of Malamud's greatest stories, comes in for criticism not because the jewbird is an allegorized Black, even if his name is Schwartz, but because . . . nope, he lost me again.) Wideman, in "Valaida," "Fever," and "Hostages," succeeds where Malamud fails.[25] Newton doesn't explicate these difficult, fragmented stories (I retrospectively appreciated Goffman's lucid explication of "Valaida") but instead performs his theoretical ballet with an occasional assist from Bakhtin.[26]

The subtitle of Newton's book reads "Literature as Public Space in Twentieth-Century America." What I think this means is that literature (or film, or celebrity trial) provides the public space where the critic can bring about startling new insights into group identity and interrelatedness through the "facing" of texts that no one had thought to juxtapose before. Discussing African-American novels or Jewish-American novels as part of their own ethnic literary traditions "makes for a pinched and hamstrung criticism" (pace Henry Louis Gates and Robert Alter): "In the present readings, I aim for something less flattened. But as recognition becomes the shared optic for reading [If *He Hollers Let Him Go* and *The Victim*], so literary criticism, by the same token, cannot therefore be *merely* academic" (58).

Newton aims for an *ethical* criticism, one which judges works of art—oops, I mean texts—on a standard entirely different from trivial literary criticism. I can only assume that ethical criticism leads directly to policy implementation on federal, state, and local levels. Once again, I missed something here.

In his Post*face,* Newton criticizes Anna Deveare Smith for being so close with *Fires in the Mirror,* but, alas, getting it wrong. As with facing, Smith works with juxtaposition, but hers are invalidated because they rip their characters out of context, elide the historical, political, and class differences between the Blacks and Jews of Crown Heights, and offer impersonations to an audi-

ence which is not then forced to re-evaluate blackjewishrelations. *Facing Black and Jew,* by contrast, "position[s] African-American and Jewish-American cultures *vis-à-vis* or *face-to-face* such that their contact with one another is genuinely a matter of enlightenment, of discovery not performance" (167).

Does the emperor have *any* clothes? A few. Newton is a smart man; interesting comments and insights into the texts themselves sprinkle the book like tantalizing fragments of something that might have been actually both pleasurable *and* instructive. In the end, however, whatever insights the book might provide are sabotaged by a truly alienating discourse: bad philosophizing, a scholarly apparatus gone wrong (45 pages of notes to 168 pages of text), and an impenetrable thicket of jargon. Was there any editorial judgment exercised at all? Who's going to read this stuff?

As different, and varyingly successful, as these two books are, they're both premised on the assumption that literary texts can be used to make sociopolitical observations. Both rely on theory to provide the perspective that allows for such a procedure. Goffman underutilizes his theory while Newton errs in the opposite direction. Beyond these failings, how legitimate is the project itself? When one constructs a corpus around a sociopolitical "problem," such as Black-Jewish relations, won't literature always be subordinate to politics and sociology? Not necessarily. Creations such as "French literature," "African-American literature," and "Israeli literature" are just as much sociopolitical constructions as the body of work identified in these two books. However, for both Goffman and Newton, the sociopolitical dimension is the more "important" one, the one that structures textual interpretation. Oddly enough, the literary theory that has the longest history and most success with political readings of literature is one that barely registers on either professor's radar—Marxism. One need only look at the writings of Frederic Jameson[27] and Abdul JanMohamed[28] to see examples of political readings which are not only theoretically sophisticated but which open even the best literature up to greater appreciation.

Still, as a first round and introduction, *Imagining Each Other* is now an indispensable primer on the literature of Black-Jewish relations. There is more of this work coming. And as for *Facing Black and Jew* . . . it is either the poster child of literary criticism gone disastrously wrong or a pearl thrown before this particular swine. In either case, its eventual vindication or quick disappearance is an issue of the future. For the moment we are left with beginnings.

NOTES

1. Nat Hentoff, ed., *Black Anti-Semitism and Jewish Racism* (New York: Richard W. Baron, 1969).

2. Cynthia Ozick, "Literary Blacks and Jews," in *Art & Ardor* (New York: Knopf, 1983).

3. Ethan Goffman, *Imagining Each Other* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000); Adam Zachary Newton, *Facing Black and Jew* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

4. Michael Walzer, "Blacks and Jews: A Personal Reflection," in *Struggles in the Promised Land: Toward a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States,* edited by Jack Salzman and Cornel West (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 401.

5. Richard Wright, *Native Son* (New York: Harper, 1940).

6. Chester Himes, *Lonely Crusade* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1947).

7. Saul Bellow, "Looking for Mr. Green," in *Mosby's Memoirs and Other Stories* (Rpt. New York: Penguin, 1977), pp. 85–109; Saul Bellow,

Henderson the Rain King (New York: Viking Press, 1959); Bernard Malamud, "The Angel Levine," in *The Stories of Bernard Malamud* (Rpt. New York: Plume, 1984), pp. 277–289, and "Black Is My Favorite Color," in *The Stories of Bernard Malamud* (Rpt. New York: Plume, 1984), pp. 73–84.

8. Lorraine Hansberry, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window* (New York: Random House, 1965).

9. Bernard Malamud, *The Tenants* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1971); Saul Bellow, Mr. Sammler's Planet (New York: Viking Press, 1970).

10. Paule Marshall, *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People* (New York: Harcourt Brace & World, 1969); Alice Walker, *Meridian* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976); John A. Williams, *The Man Who Cried I Am* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967); and John A. Williams, *!Click Song* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982).

11. Lore Segal, *Her First American* (New York: Knopf, 1985); John Edgar Wideman, "Valaida," in *Fever: Twelve Stories* (New York: Penguin, 1989), pp. 27–40; Gloria Naylor, *Bailey's Cafe* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992); and Ishmael Reed, *Reckless Eyeballing* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986).

12. Saul Bellow, *The Dean's December* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982).

13. Anna Deavere Smith, *Fires in the Mirror,* producer, Cherie Fortis; directed by George C. Wolfe (Hipster Entertainment, Inc., Alexandria, VA: PBS Video, 1993).

14. Chester Himes, *Lonely Crusade* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1947); John A. Williams, *The Man Who Cried I Am* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967).

15. Malamud, "Black Is My Favorite Color," or Grace Paley, "Zagrowsky Tells," in *Later the Same Day* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1985), pp. 151–175.

16. Malamud, "The Angel Levine."

17. Ed Bullin, "The Taking of Miss Janie," in *Famous American Plays of the 1970s,* edited by Ted Hoffman (New York: Dell, 1972); and Stanley Elkin's remarkable short story, "I Look Out for Ed Wolfe," in *Criers and Kibitzers, Kibitzers and Criers* (New York: Random House, 1965), pp. 37–66.

18. "it's impossible to love/a Jew": Nikki Giovanni, "Love Poem"; "another bad poem cracking/steel knuckles in a jewlady's mouth": Amiri Baraka, "Black Art," *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature,* edited by Henry Louis Gates Jr., and Nellie Y. McKay (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1996), p. 1884.

19. Here are a few choice lines about Jews from Baraka's 1960s poem, "The Black Man is making new Gods":

> These robots drag a robot
> in the image of themselves, to be
> ourselves, serving their dirty
> image. Selling fried potatoes
> and people, the little arty bastards
> talking arithmetic they sucked from
> the arab's
> head.
> Suck you pricks. The best is yet to
> come. On how
> we beat you
> and killed you
> and tied you up.
> And marked this specimen
> "Dangerous Germ
> Culture." And put you back
> in a cold box.

(LeRoi Jones, *Black Magic: Collected Poetry, 1961-1967* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), pp. 205-206.)

20. See chapter 1 of W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk.*

21. Walter Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama,* translated by John Osborne (London: Verso, 1985); Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations,* translated by Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), pp. 255–266.

22. Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (New York: Random House, 1952); Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep* (New York: Robert O. Ballou, 1934); Chester Himes, *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Doran, 1945); Saul Bellow, *The Victim* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1947); Philip Roth, *Operation Shylock: A Confession* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993); David Bradley, *The Chaneysville Incident* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981); Wideman, "Fever," in *Fever,* pp. 1–17; Wideman, "Hostages," in *Fever,* pp. 41–57; Wideman, "Valaida"; Malamud, "The Jewbird," in *The Stories of Bernard Malamud,* pp. 144–154; Malamud, "The Angel Levine"; Malamud, "Black Is My Favorite Color"; and David Mamet's screenplay of his interesting failure, *Homicide* (Burbank, CA: An Edward R. Pressman and Cinehaus Inc. Film Production, 1992).

23. "Literaturized Blacks and Jews; or, Golems

and Tar Babies: Reality and its Shadows in John Edgar Wideman and Bernard Malamud," Newton, *Facing Black and Jew.*

24. Malamud's "The Jewbird," "The Angel Levine," and "Black Is My Favorite Color."

25. Wideman, "Valaida," "Fever," and "Hostages."

26. In "Hostages" he misreads a crucial detail, mistakenly identifying the first husband of the woman narrator as an Egyptian Jew. (He's actually an Israeli Arab.) It's a small point, but since Newton consistently assumes that his readers understand the texts as well as he does, never stooping to mere literary criticism, I have to wonder where else he may have gotten the mundane details wrong. (My unfortunate training in New Criticism, with its insistence on "close reading," reveals itself.) Brush off these flyspeck cavils! Newton nails it when he writes, "Wideman succeeds in insulating his black and Jewish narrators from facile literaturization" (139).

27. Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981).

28. Abdul JanMohamed, *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1983).

●

Jewish Thought in a Century of Crisis

Interim Judaism: Jewish Thought in a Century of Crisis. By MICHAEL L. MORGAN. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001.

Beyond Auschwitz: Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought in America. By MICHAEL L. MORGAN. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Reviewed by JACOB B. MICHAELSEN

After a century of crisis Michael Morgan asks, "where [do] Jewish life and thought find themselves in America at the turn of the twenty-first century" (xi). He argues that the challenges of modernity and the need to confront the Holocaust have undermined traditional conceptions of Judaism. Belief in an objective ground for the rules of conduct that sustained our ancestors and sustains traditional Jews today is problematic for modern Jews. Morgan believes that what is required now is a search for grounds capable of supporting Judaism well into the twenty-first century. In *Interim Judaism* he undertakes "a preliminary probing of the territory" (xi) and concludes that "[we] are at a moment of great uncertainty, lacking definitive answers; nonetheless, we recognize the mandate to a committed Jewish life" (xiv). Having studied with Professor Morgan at several UAHC Kallot, I find much in this volume that is familiar but now in a fully worked-out form. (These Kallot afford laypersons an opportunity to study the Torah, Talmud, and later commentary and much else with seminary and university faculty.) I believe his argument to be persuasive and accessible to a general audience. *Beyond Auschwitz* "is a book of philosophy and religious thought that involves a religious encounter with an episode in recent Jewish thought and life" (viii). It reflects the work of twenty years and poses some problems for the non-specialist, though much can be gained by struggling with them. The results of

JACOB B. MICHAELSEN *is Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of California at Santa Cruz. He is currently studying western religious-moral traditions and their role as necessary elements for the maintenance of the institutions of modern market economics. His article, "Remembering Anne Frank," appeared in the Spring 1997 issue.*