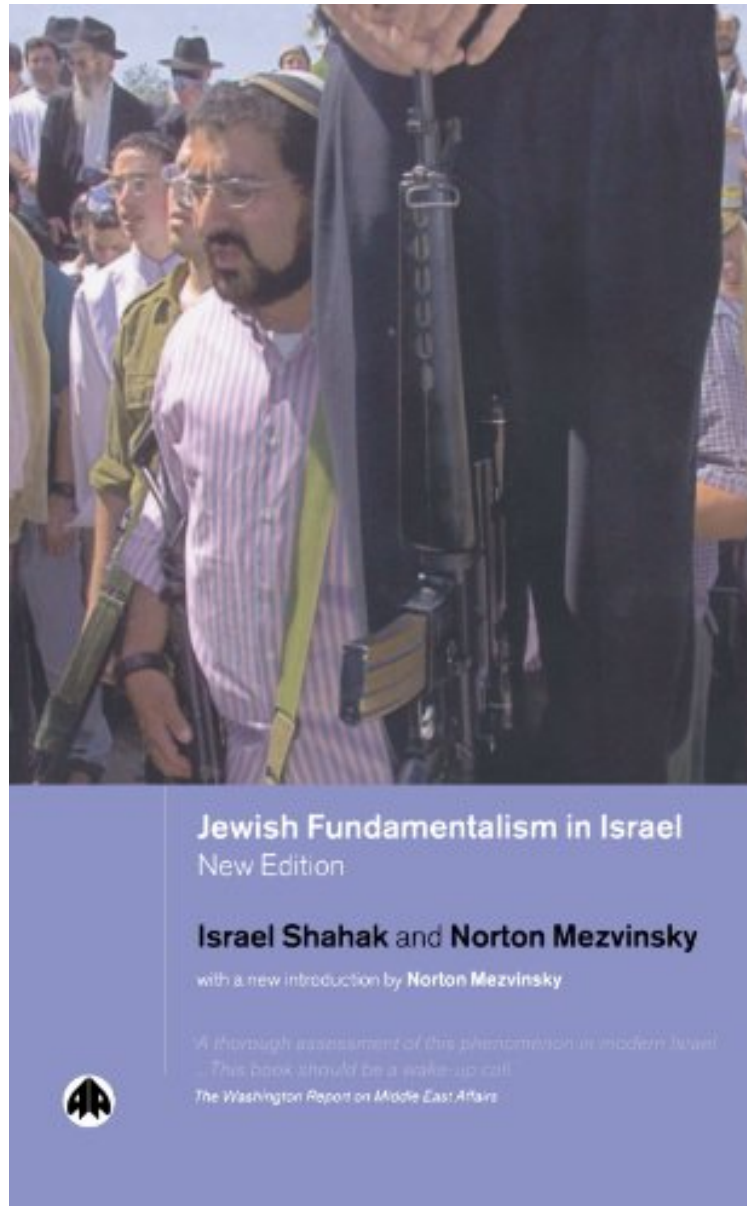


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## Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel (Pluto Middle Eastern Studies S)

Israel Shahak

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**Israel Shahak : Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel (Pluto Middle Eastern Studies S)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel (Pluto Middle Eastern Studies S):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Shahak is in the same mold as Jewish Prophets of old By Peter J.

PiaseckyI couldn't resist reading this book. My three favorite American intellectuals Noam Chomsky, Edward W. Said and Gore Vidal have in one way or another recommended it. This in itself is high praise. I find Israel Shahak's book a spring of fresh water in an arid intellectual environment of disinformation, propaganda and outright intellectual intimidation. For me Shahak is in the same mold as Jewish Prophets of old, warning Israel against a new catastrophe. I do not pretend to the intellectual heights of Shahak. I can only judge the accuracy of the book by comparing it to areas where I do have expertise, namely the history, as it pertains to the Lithuanian, Polish, Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires. The only portion of the book I found lacking was Shahak's knowledge of Petlura's government of Ukraine during the First World War. When I sent Shahak a short article about Petlura from a Symposium "Ukrainian Jews" he responded in a letter to me dated June 1, 1999, quote..."I am sorry for my mistake about the regime of Petlura. Your evidence, especially the translated documents, is very persuasive and I accept it. If possible I will change the next editions" Jewish History, Jewish religion" accordingly."...unquote. I found Shahak's book made me understand portions of the Bible which I had difficulty understanding. It provided the cultural context for an intellectual conundrum that I had in regard to the Old Testament. The two conundrums are the ethnic cleansing condoned by God of the Canaanites in Deuteronomy and the other was the dialogue between Jesus and the Canaanite women in Mathew 15:21-28, where he replies , quote..."I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."...unquote. It is only after reading Shahak that I finally understood the unchristian behavior of Jesus. He after all was not a Christian but a Jewish Rabbi, well versed in the Talmud with all of the cultural taboos associated with it in those times. He came to save the Jews and not the World. It was Paul (Saul), another well trained Rabbi who brought Jesus' reformed Judaism to the Pagan Mediterranean world and created Christianity. This book is replete with insights that only an intellect of rigorous and highly developed moral understanding of History could deliver. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Complete Guide to Understanding Israeli Thought. By felixnola One of the best books I've read in years. An absolute must for every American. If you want to understand the inner workings of the Israeli belief system and its religious underpinnings; this is the book for you. It is confusing and often difficult to understand or rationalize what occurs in Israel without historical perspective. Further, without a concise overview of Jewish religious belief; one is at a complete loss to understand why events continue to unfold in the irrational world of the middle east. I read this book in three days. While it is only upwards of 170 pages; the print is rather small; so, you do get your moneys worth. Very readable; and, a book you will not want to put down until you have completed it. This book brings together so much material in such a concise way that there is no room for poetic license. It's straight forward and the best educational tool on the ongoing issues I've ever read. 14 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Jewish Religious Intolerance In Israel. By New Age of Barbarism\_ Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel\_ by Israel Shahak and Norton Mezvinsky is a problematic book which nonetheless provides some important insights into the political situations of ultra-religious Jews in Israel. For one thing there is the abuse of the term "fundamentalism". Fundamentalism properly understood refers to a group of Protestant Christians who believe in the inerrancy of the Bible which must be interpreted literally. Jews and Muslims do not refer to themselves as fundamentalists. Secondly, the book is rather poorly written and contains quite a bit of left wing goofiness, which distracts from an otherwise interesting subject matter. The issue of intolerance among religious Jews in Israel is particularly disturbing. This book details much of that level of intolerance, particularly for the Palestinian population living in the land of Israel, but also for Gentiles in general and fellow Jews deemed heretics. Perhaps the most famous case of persecution of heresy among religious Jews is that of the philosopher Baruch (Benedict, Latinized) Spinoza who was excommunicated for going against the rabbinate. The authors try to make the claim that similar occurrences have happened throughout history (see \_Jewish History, Jewish Religion\_ by Israel Shahak) and continue to happen in Israel dominated by religious forces. The authors spend a great deal of time discussing various political parties including the Haredim and Gush Emunim. The conflict between secular Jews and the orthodox and ultra-orthodox sects becomes apparent in such issues as the conscription of Israeli youth to the military, where those studying for the rabbinate do not have to participate and are supported by the state. An even more radical viewpoint is expressed by the followers of Rabbi Meir Kahane, who moved to Israel from New York. Kahane advocated a radical form of Jewish supremacism and racism, basing his chauvinistic views on the arrogant myth of "the chosen". One follower of Kahane took his views seriously and gunned down a group of Arabs praying in a mosque at the Tomb of the Patriarchs, Baruch Goldstein. The authors show how the Jewish response to the Goldstein rampage was less than honest, many outright supporting what Goldstein had done. The authors also discuss the murder of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was perceived as a moderate willing to concede lands to the Arabs by the Israeli "far right". Another disturbing issue involves religious idolatry of the Temple Mount, on which sits a mosque which many claim must be destroyed to bring about the Messiah. (An interesting discussion of this issue in full and how it relates to Christian evangelicals may be found in the book \_The End of Days\_ by Gershon Gorenberg.) In sum, this book brings up some disturbing issues about the political parties in the land of Israel and should not be dismissed as mere "anti-Semitism".

This is a new edition of a classic and highly controversial book that examines the history and consequences of Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel. Fully updated, with new chapters and a new introduction by Norton Mezvinsky, it is

essential reading for anyone who wants a full understanding of the way religious extremism has affected the political development of the modern Israeli state. Acclaimed writer and human rights campaigner Israel Shahak was, up until his death in 2001, one of the most respected of Israel's peace activists. He was, in the words of Gore Vidal, the latest if not the last of the great prophets. Written by Shahak together with American scholar Norton Mezvinsky, this book shows how Jewish fundamentalism in Israel, as shown in the activities of religious settlers, is of great political importance. The authors trace the history and development of Jewish fundamentalism. They place the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin in the context of what they see as a tradition of punishments and killings of those Jews perceived to be heretics. They conclude that Jewish fundamentalism is essentially hostile to democracy.

'Illuminative, insightful and accessible, this is an important book that deserves as wide a readership as possible.' --  
Ethnic Conflict Research Digest