

Impact, with its keen analysis, compelling narrative, and sensitive treatment of a delicate issue, is a noteworthy contribution to the fields of Jewish studies, Canadian history, and ethnic studies.

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Genizi, Haim. *The Holocaust, Israel, and Canadian Protestant Churches*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002. 320 pp.

The Holocaust, Israel, and Canadian Protestant Churches is a comprehensive examination of the responses of the Protestant churches in Canada to the Holocaust and the State of Israel. The thesis, resting on the twin evidential pillars of the Protestant churches' relative silence during the Holocaust and their critical attitude to the establishment of Israel, argues that the churches' unwillingness or inability to wrestle with their own ideological and theological baggage resulted in a contradictory, unbalanced stance towards the issues of the Holocaust and Israel. While Christian guilt and a sense of humanitarianism may have propelled Protestant support for Jewish refugees in the wake of the Holocaust, this was quickly superseded by Protestant anti-Zionist opposition to the State of Israel. The book ably incorporates both religious history and intellectual history, as Genizi himself grapples with the "complications and ambiguities" of the history of the Middle East crisis and its impact on Christians and Jews.

While the book is based in large part on archival sources from the United Church of Canada, Genizi incorporates material from other Protestant and Jewish archival sources from both published religious periodicals and journals and unpublished, internal Protestant literature in order to craft a well-documented argument. The book is a welcome addition to the current historiography on Canadian Protestant churches and provides an expansion on and departure from Alan Davies' and Marilyn Nefsky's earlier work on the Holocaust, Nazism, and Canadian Protestantism.

And it offers an updated, academic alternative to Reuben Slonim's *Family Quarrel: The United Church and the Jews*.

Dividing his study into four major sections, Genizi discusses the Protestant Council of Churches and Israel; the United Church, the Holocaust, and Israel; the United Church and the Canadian Jewish Community; and other Canadian Protestant Churches, the Holocaust, and Israel. In each section, Genizi discusses numerous issues and events from the 1930s to the 1990s. These include: qualified Protestant support for Jewish refugees during the Holocaust; the negative Protestant response to the creation of the State of Israel; Protestant support of the Arab cause in Palestine; the actions of United Church figures such as Claris E. Silcox, Ernest Marshall Howse, Robert McClure, and especially, A. C. Forrest. Genizi is most detailed in his discussion of the damaging statements and actions of Forrest and their repercussions for Jewish-Christian relations in Canada.

Genizi also incorporates the responses of the Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Baptists to the Holocaust, the creation of the State of Israel, and the ongoing Middle East crisis, although these churches are dealt with more cursorily than the United Church. While the various Protestant churches' responses are examined individually, in all cases, Genizi argues, the churches' ideological and theological biases, which encompassed an anti-Zionism steeped in an even more deeply rooted antisemitism, prevented them from adopting a balanced approach. Genizi does not hesitate to confront the difficult ambiguity of philosemitism and anti-Zionism, nor does he avoid the delicate proposition that antisemitism is not the inevitable corollary of anti-Zionism. Yet he concludes that the Protestant churches' inability to acknowledge the religio-historical justification for the existence of Israel combined with their pronounced myopia regarding Christianity's inherent bias against Jews has prevented Protestant criticism of Israel from being objective.

While the content of the book is interesting, its thesis provocative, and its ideological approach generally balanced, organizationally, the book is problematic. It is chronologically

disjointed, repetitious, and punctuated by excessive sub-headings in most chapters. This makes for a choppy narrative, reminding the reader that sub-headings are often the resort of writers who cannot organize their material properly. While the text is, for the most part, well written, the evidence of an editor-author debate over the words “unbalanced” and “imbalanced” has resulted in the unfortunate, repeated use of the non-word, “umbalanced.”

Nonetheless, Genizi offers a compelling story and an intriguing intellectual argument. The book speaks directly to current debates in Jewish and Christian academic circles. It is to Genizi’s credit that, in his exploration of the contradictions within Canadian Protestant churches’ stance on the Holocaust and Israel, he addresses the ideological and theological baggage of both Judaism and Christianity. The result is a thoughtful, balanced study.

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Biderman, Morris. *A Life on the Jewish Left: An Immigrant’s Experience*. Toronto: Onward Publishing, 2000. xvi + 288 pp.

In *A Life on the Jewish Left*, Morris Biderman reminisces about his devoted work and political activity in Canadian leftist circles from the 1920s through the 1980s. The book concerns especially his membership in the Communist Party and his leadership of the United Jewish People’s Order (UJPO), a fraternal organization that offered health and death benefits, an interest-free credit union, and Communist-led political activity. This is a personal memoir in which the reader is made privy to the author’s daily personal struggles and political activities. Biderman was involved in the major milestones of Canadian-Communist history and had the opportunity to meet many of the important players. These reminiscences record aspects of the fight for workers’ rights in Canada during the early decades of the twentieth century. The book, however, is a personal