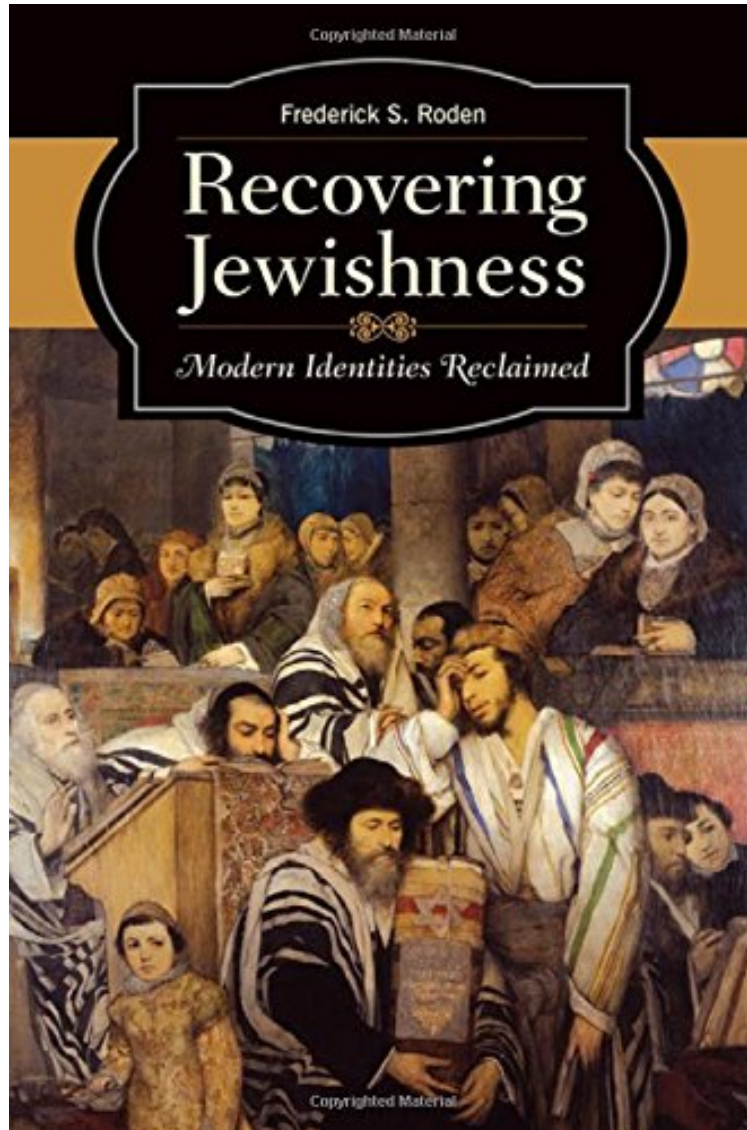


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Recovering Jewishness: Modern Identities Reclaimed

Frederick S. Roden

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Frederick S. Roden : Recovering Jewishness: Modern Identities Reclaimed before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Recovering Jewishness: Modern Identities Reclaimed:

Judaism and Jewish life reflect a diversity of identity after the past two centuries of modernization. This work examines how the early reformers of the 19th century and their legacy into the 20th century created a livable, liberal Jewish identity that allowed a reinvention of what it meant to be Jewish a process that continues today. Documents

how modern Judaism and the modern Jewish identity was built on diversity resulting from intermarriage and converts to Judaism over the course of two centuries Describes how individuals with remote connections to Judaism and Jewish identity are reclaiming those connections and reinventing what it means to be "Jew-ish," and are providing new models for those seeking to reconnect with Judaism Uniquely offers insightful critical analysis of the literature by converts to Judaism

"Roden writes clearly, explaining the literature and offering erudite commentary that will prompt readers to delve into the primary sources. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All academic levels/libraries." - Choice "Frederick S. Roden's *Recovering Jewishness: Modern Identities Reclaimed* examines the complex ways in which modern Jewishness has been experienced, rethought, and reconfigured, from the elaboration of Reform Judaism in the nineteenth century to the coercive invention of Jewish and 'mixed' racial identities by the Nazis to post-Holocaust embraces of Jewishness, both traditional and experimental. Roden's account is original especially in its emphasis not on a modern loss or fading of Jewish identity but on the expansion of possibilities for Jewishness that modernity brings, even if those possibilities also often entail losses and violence. Examining an impressively broad body of textshistorical writing, autobiography and memoir, theology, and fictionRoden makes an extremely valuable, always thoughtful and thought-provoking, contribution to the exploration of that perpetual and thorny question: 'What is a Jew?'" (Steven F. Kruger, Professor, Queens College and The Graduate Center, CUNY)"Jewish identity has always dwelled within extremes of dialectic: religion and ethnicity, tradition and invention, East and West, isolation and assimilation, purity and mixing, more. In this wide-ranging and important study, Frederick S. Roden grapples with the continual shifting of axes within Jewish doctrine and culture, as well as in views of Jews from the outside. Engaging and affecting, *Recovering Jewishness* is essential reading for scholars and readers concerned with issues of longing, belonging, difference, and self-differenceJewish and beyond. A necessary book." (S.I. Salamensky, Director, Humanities PhD Program and Professor, Global Humanities, University of Louisville)"As Professor Roden notes, the struggle to define and exemplify a distinctive Jewish identitywhether religious, ethnic, cultural, or even racialin the midst of a non-Jewish world is hardly a phenomenon of modernity, but rather dates back to Moses himself. Born a Hebrew, given an Egyptian name and raised in the Pharaoh's Court, the 'great Liberator and Lawgiver' who remains at the symbolic center of Jewish history embodied the dilemmas that continue to confront Jews today. In the apparent tension between particularity and universality, separatism and acculturation, *Recovering Jewishness* makes a compelling case for the universalist impulse in Jewish thought and experience that offers a confident, creative, and fruitful encounter and can lead to a promising future for Jewish hopes, dreams, and destiny." (Rabbi Howard A. Berman, Executive Director, The Society for Classical Reform Judaism)"Frederick Roden sensitively and insightfully maps the complexities and shifting formulations of modern and post-modern Jewish identity. Combining sophisticated scholarly reflection with vivid, empathetic voicings of the lives of a breathtaking range of people who have identified themselves as Jews, Roden's work gives new meaning to the well-worn phrase 'the Jewish people.'" (Joy Ladin, David and Ruth Gottesman Professor of English, Yeshiva University)About the AuthorFrederick S. Roden, PhD, is associate professor of English at the University of Connecticut.