

raises, it is unlikely that an academic book covering the same ground will be written. The text is well written, as one would expect from a veteran *New York Times* reporter, and shows understanding and a fair degree of sympathy. Students who wish to learn more about Hasidim, a rapidly growing subgroup of American Jewry, will find this book to be a useful introduction. It will also appeal to readers who are interested in traditionalist responses to modernity and to American religion more generally.

Shaul Stampfer
Hebrew University of Jerusalem

NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH: THE JEWISH RECEPTION OF COPERNICAN THOUGHT. By Jeremy Brown. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. xviii + 394, plates. \$82.00.

Brown, a professor of medicine by profession, has painstakingly gathered a wide range of sources that document the complex and sometimes surprisingly simple ways Jews responded to the new astronomy that deposed the earth from its place at the center of the cosmos and replaced it with a heliocentric world and in the process replaced the traditional Jewish picture of the world with one that was described by wise non-Jews whose knowledge did not come from Torah but from observation and experimentation. To present this topic requires deep knowledge of traditional Jewish texts, mathematics, and both premodern and modern astronomy as well as the ability to present complex issues clearly so that they can be understood by non-experts. Brown has done exactly this in his book. It offers fascinating insights into religious responses to new worlds of knowledge and of the ways Jewish reactions to Copernicus were similar to and different from other religious reactions. The importance of this book for understanding early modern and modern Jewish religion and for comparative studies is obvious. It is also a pleasant read with many attractive and interesting illustrations.

Shaul Stampfer
Hebrew University of Jerusalem

JUDAISM IN TRANSITION: HOW ECONOMIC CHOICES SHAPE RELIGIOUS TRADITION. By Carmel Chiswick. Stanford, CA: Stanford Economics and Finance, 2014. Pp. xi + 235; figures. Cloth, \$75.00; paper, \$22.95.

Few would claim that there are no connections between religion and economics, but surprisingly little good research has been done on links between Judaism and economics. This book is an exception, and hopefully it will be followed by others. Chiswick is a labor economist who looks at the dynamics of resource allocation, whether the resource is money, time, energy, or something else. At the same time, she is a “participant observer” in contemporary Jewish life, giving her a distinctive perspective on

this topic. The book has four parts. The first deals with economic concepts used and the historical background of American Jewry; the second with the utility of an economic perspective; the third with how trends in American Jewish behavior can be seen as the result of economic decisions; and the last part deals with implications of the author’s findings. Chiswick’s analysis of the “true costs” of being Jewish include attention to the price of religious education in time and tuition, the demands from religion on time, the economics of married life, concerns for financial and cultural legacy, and comparisons with the costs of Israeli Judaism. The result is a new perspective on familiar topics. Many of these dynamics can be seen in other religious groups as well.

Shaul Stampfer
Hebrew University of Jerusalem

JUEDISCHE GEMEINDESTATUTEN AUS DEM ASCHKENASISCHEN KULTURRAUM 1650–1850. Edited by Stefan Litt. Archiv juedischer Geschichte und Kultur, 3. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014. Pp. 562; plates. €130.00.

The key to Jewish life in Europe (and elsewhere) was the community structure. Most Ashkenazi Jewish communities had written statutes or constitutions that determined how they operated. Despite their importance for understanding communal and religious life, these documents are often difficult to access, and many have remained in manuscript form until this day. This volume brings together the basic statutes from twelve communities in the German lands, France, the Netherlands, Poland, and Hungary dating from 1650 to 1816. The statutes themselves are in Hebrew, making the bulk of the book accessible to Hebrew readers even if they do not know German. (Texts of five of the statutes appear also in German translation.) There is a supplement with a bibliographical guide to additional communal statutes, a very useful guide to abbreviations, a bibliography on the topic, and an index in German and Hebrew. This will likely remain the standard collection of documents of this type, making it a basic resource for any study of religious institutions among Ashkenazi Jewry in the modern period. The careful transcriptions of the texts and the copious notes reflect the high academic level of the edition.

Shaul Stampfer
Hebrew University of Jerusalem

BETWEEN JEWISH TRADITION AND MODERNITY: RETHINKING AN OLD OPPOSITION: ESSAYS IN HONOR OF DAVID ELLENSON. Edited by Michael Meyer and David Myers. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2014. Pp. xiv + 360. Cloth, \$39.99.

Jubilee volumes are by their nature rather diffuse. However, most of the twenty-one essays in this volume