gions receive in this book. In chapter three, "European Religions on the Eve of Encounter," Judaism receives a survey of less than two pages beginning with the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. and ending with Moses Mendelssohn in the eighteenth century. In chapter 18, "Immigration and Religion," the author starts with the following sentence: "Until World War II, Canada was a visibly Christian country in just about every respect, the only exceptions being handfuls of members of other faith communities, Jews, Amerindians and Muslims, for example." (p. 377) After that dismissive beginning, the Jews of Canada are discussed in not quite five pages, most of which are devoted to a brief summary of the last two thousand years of the development of Judaism.

Religious studies in Canada began in the last century as a discipline which centered on Christian history and theology. Since then, it has developed an understanding that the study of Christianity is that of *a* central religious experience rather than *the* central religion. A reader who wants to examine the history of Catholic and Protestant Christianity in Canada will find this book highly interesting. Readers who want more than a brief glimpse of other religious traditions, however, will be sorely disappointed.

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Habib, Jasmin. *Israel, Diaspora, and the Routes of National Belonging*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004. 317 pp.

The messy tangle of nation, politics, and religion is of great interest these days. In *Israel, Diaspora and the Routes of National Belonging*, Jasmin Habib addresses an important question that is connected to all three of these areas, namely, "What is the relationship of diaspora Jews to Israel?" She takes as her starting point the notion that Jews who identify strongly with Israel are pro-Israel. Habib asks where the relationship with Israel originates and, more important, what its essence is.

The author writes from an interesting standpoint, since her own identity is complex: Israeli, Palestinian, and Canadian. The product of a mixed Jewish and Palestinian family, her roots in Israel are in many ways deeper than those of many of her subjects, yet very far removed from their lives in the North American Jewish community. As an activist and a scholar, Habib views identity issues through a unique lens.

Habib set out to learn about the diaspora Jewish relationship to Israel by attending Jewish community events related to Israel: public lectures, fundraising events, and cultural celebrations. There she carefully examined the public presentations of Israel and the ensuing discussions. She also accompanied three tours to Israel to observe North American Jews as they encountered the country and some of its problems.

The book has several significant strengths. First, it offers a nuanced portrait of diaspora Jews too often presented in generalized terms or as mere statistics. Second, the book will serve as a useful tool in understanding what constitutes a diaspora, beyond the obvious feature of physical dislocation. *Israel, Diaspora and the Routes of National Belonging* is also a contribution to anthropology, a field of study that has paid inadequate attention to Jews. Despite the criticisms and questions that follow, this work is compelling in its careful and colourful portrait of the diaspora construction of Israel.

The weaknesses of Habib's volume are no less significant than the strengths. Perhaps the most glaring is that most people know that diaspora Jews exhibit a range of political opinions about Israel, but this comes as a surprise to Habib and makes the reader question her qualifications for the study she has undertaken. At too many junctures the reader gets the impression of shock on the part of the author that diaspora Jews (or anyone, for that matter) can be both supportive of Israel and deeply critical of its policies. How, we might wonder, did the author develop her "straw-community" in the first place?

A second weakness is that Habib's informants are almost all politically liberal and, if affiliated with the Jewish

community, not observant Jews. That has a significant impact on their answers to her questions. Where are the more observant informants, and how might they have changed the picture Habib paints? And what about European Jews, whose experience of integration and relationship to matters of nation and territory are often quite different from those of North Americans? I am not suggesting that Habib ought to have studied the entire Diaspora, but simply that her sample of informants has influenced her findings in ways she may not realize.

Third, I wonder if it is really appropriate to label as "post-Zionist" the nuanced attitudes that Habib describes. Ought "sympathy for the Palestinians," which has been loudly voiced by a number of prominent figures in the Zionist movement (Martin Buber and Ahad HaAm, for example) from its earliest years, to be read as "post-Zionism?" Moreover, Habib herself notes that only a few of her informants with whom she spoke were knowledgeable enough to "discuss in depth the debates about the alternative or new history, or the Palestinian and non-Zionist counter-narratives of the founding of the state of Israel" (p. 262). But these issues are at the core of post-Zionism. Not being able to discuss them indicates that her informants were more ill-informed than post-Zionist.

In the final analysis, Habib's work is important—not flawless, but important—because it raises some painfully complex issues of nation and land. It is an interesting first step in refining the discussion of diaspora identity vis-à-vis Israel in the Canadian context. It should, however, be read carefully and critically.

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Kolber, Leo, with Ian H. Macdonald. *Leo: a Life*. Montreal and Kingston:McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003. 314 pp.

Everyone loves a good story, and retired Senator Leo Kolber has plenty of stories to tell. That's not surprising. He had ample opportunity to observe the "rich and famous". In his various