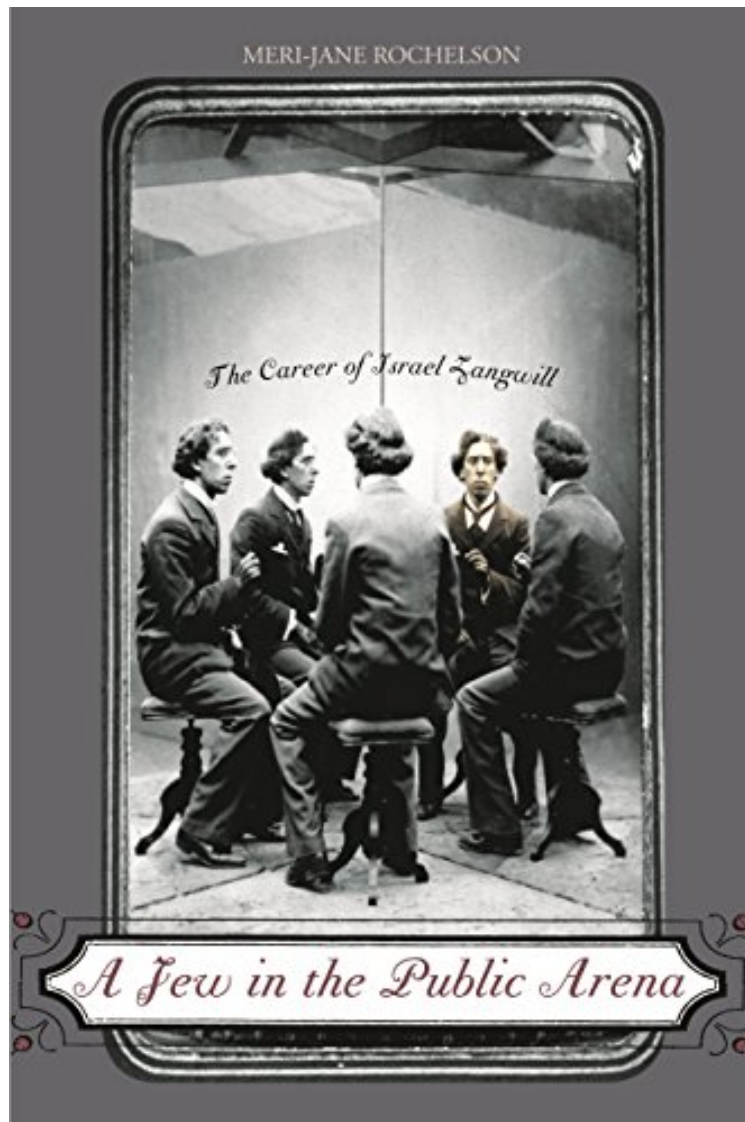


(Mobile ebook) A Jew in the Public Arena: The Career of Israel Zangwill

A Jew in the Public Arena: The Career of Israel Zangwill

Meri-Jane Rochelson

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Meri-Jane Rochelson : A Jew in the Public Arena: The Career of Israel Zangwill before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Jew in the Public Arena: The Career of Israel Zangwill:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Well-written and easy to read - a comprehensive account of this unusual individual! By Paul Shaviv Although nowadays barely known, Israel Zangwill was one of the best-known Jews of his time (1864-1926), coming to fame as the chronicler of Jewish life in the East End of London. He went on to a distinguished literary, dramatic and political career, and was a considerable public personality. I came to this book while preparing a short talk on Zangwill (August 2016 is the 90th anniversary of his passing). Apart from being the

most-up-to-date and thorough literary biography of Zangwill, it has a huge 'plus' -- the writing is clear, easy to read, and inviting! Prof Rochelson describes every facet of Zangwill's life -- his literary activity in the UK and America, his feminism (he was a leading supporter of the Suffragettes), his pacifism, and his work to find a 'National Home' for Jews (both in the Zionist movement and the ITO, which he founded). She is very perceptive and informative about all of the swirling ideological currents of Zangwill's milieu. Altogether a very enjoyable, informative work about this exotic and non-conforming individual.

After winning an international audience with his novel *Children of the Ghetto*, Israel Zangwill went on to write numerous short stories, four additional novels, and several plays, including *The Melting Pot*. Author Meri-Jane Rochelson, a noted expert on Zangwill's work, examines his career from its beginnings in the 1890s to the performance of his last play, *We Moderns*, in 1924, to trace how Zangwill became the best-known Jewish writer in Britain and America and a leading spokesperson on Jewish affairs throughout the world. In *A Jew in the Public Arena*, Rochelson examines Zangwill's published writings alongside a wealth of primary materials, including letters, diaries, manuscripts, press cuttings, and other items in the vast Zangwill files of the Central Zionist Archives, to demonstrate why an understanding of Israel Zangwill's career is essential to understanding the era that so significantly shaped the modern Jewish experience. Once he achieved fame as an author and playwright, Israel Zangwill became a prominent public activist for the leading social causes of the twentieth century, including women's suffrage, peace, Zionism, and the Jewish territorialist movement and rescue efforts. Rochelson shows how Zangwill's activism and much of his literary output were grounded in a universalist vision of Judaism and a commitment to educate the world about Jews as a way of combating antisemitism. Still, Zangwill's position in favor of creating a homeland for the Jews wherever one could be found (in contrast to mainstream Zionism's focus on Palestine) and his apparent advocacy of assimilation in his play *The Melting Pot* made him an increasingly controversial figure. By the middle of the twentieth century his reputation had fallen into decline, and his work is unknown to many modern readers. *A Jew in the Public Arena* looks at Zangwill's literary and political activities in the context of their time, to make clear why he held such a place of importance in turn-of-the-century literary and political culture and why his life and work are significant today. Jewish studies scholars as well as students and teachers of late Victorian to Modernist British literature and culture will appreciate this insightful look at Israel Zangwill.

Rochelson ably guides readers through Zangwill's fiction and drama, highlighting its strengths and conceding its weaknesses, but even more importantly, she captures Zangwill's public career as a defender of Jews, a supporter of women's rights, and an opponent of militarism, linking these roles to themes in his short stories, novels, and plays. -- Todd Endelman, William Haber Professor of Modern Jewish History, University of Michigan
Meri-Jane Rochelson's stellar literary biography of this author dubbed the 'Jewish Dickens' provides a uniquely rich backdrop for unfolding Zangwill's life as a modern man of letters. *A Jew in the Public Arena* brings together with intellectual acumen his impact on late-Victorian and early twentieth-century feminism, literature, Zionism, and print culture history. -- Susan David Bernstein, Sally Mead Hands Bascom Professor of English, University of Wisconsin Madison
About the Author
Meri-Jane Rochelson is professor of English at Florida International University.