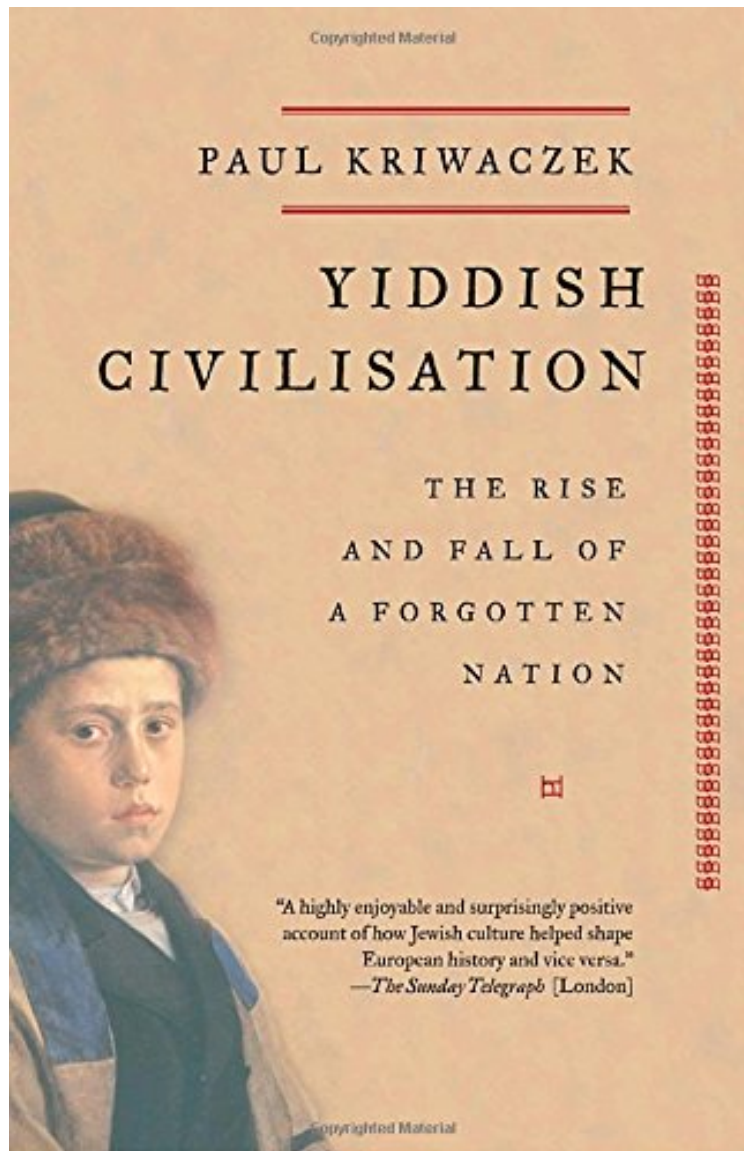


[FREE] Yiddish Civilisation: The Rise and Fall of a Forgotten Nation

# Yiddish Civilisation: The Rise and Fall of a Forgotten Nation

Paul Kriwaczek

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#261398 in Books Kriwaczek, Paul 2006-10-31 2006-10-31 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .80 x 5.10l, .84 #File Name: 1400033772400 pages | File size: 37.Mb

**Paul Kriwaczek : Yiddish Civilisation: The Rise and Fall of a Forgotten Nation** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Yiddish Civilisation: The Rise and Fall of a Forgotten Nation:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Not the usual "muddy" telling of the "Yiddish" contribution to Jewish Civilization. By Yankele Krawaczek's focus on the rise of the "Yiddish Civilization" provides an at times jarring, but always interesting point of view, against which to measure the usual foundation of histories that find

Yiddish important, but not at the centre of the rise of a "civilization." As a Yiddish speaker who is very close to his Eastern European roots --though born in North America-- the study made me give the book to my son and say -- "ok, here's something you can read that doesn't slide in the same mud as the usual Jewish studies. Enjoy." 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Considerable detail does not become tedious. This is an overview of the history of ...By Jack HThis book is most informative with a different perspective of the past. Considerable detail does not become tedious. This is an overview of the history of the Jewish people that does not pull punches, but is riveting and challenging. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Things that folk history didn't tell you....By JAKThis is mostly about what happened in the periods between the expulsions and the pogroms, and, while digressive, is quite fascinating

Paul Kriwaczek begins this illuminating and immensely pleasurable chronicle of Yiddish civilization during the Roman empire, when Jewish culture first spread to Europe. We see the burgeoning exile population disperse, as its notable diplomats, artists and thinkers make their mark in far-flung cities and found a self-governing Yiddish world. By its late-medieval heyday, this economically successful, intellectually adventurous, and self-aware society stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Kriwaczek traces, too, the slow decline of Yiddish culture in Europe and Russia, and highlights fresh offshoots in the New World. Combining family anecdote, travelogue, original research, and a keen understanding of Yiddish art and literature, Kriwaczek gives us an exceptional portrait of a culture which, though nearly extinguished, has an influential radiance still.

From Publishers Weekly Kriwaczek's charming but frustratingly rambling history places Yiddish in a very broad historical context. Admitting that he is neither "a learned Jew nor a professional historian," Kriwaczek (In Search of Zarathustra) cuts a broad swath through history as he moves, in the opening chapters, from the forum in Rome to the emergence of a distinct "Yiddish civilization" in medieval eastern Europe. Kriwaczek's insistence on defining Yiddish as a culture, or civilization, rather than a language is smart and useful it allows him to capture the intricacies of a very complicated history and to avoid a simple "black-and-white clash between gentiles and Jews" but it also means that his tapestry is sometimes too large. When he does narrow his focus on, say, the autobiography of Glikl of Hamlin, born 1646, whose memoir is the first major Yiddish work by a woman he is evocative and precise. While there is an endless amount of fascinating detail (Slavic fashions in shoes became trendy in 14th-century Europe), and all is presented in an enjoyable narrative, the book becomes more of a rumination on a number of related issues than a concise examination of a culture and a language. 16 pages of illus. not seen by PW; maps. (Nov. 3) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist \*Starred\* The Jews of Central and Eastern Europe may not have constituted a "nation" in the conventional sense because they lacked a central political authority and many of the other attributes of the modern nation-state. But they certainly were a civilization, with a common language, religion, and a myriad of shared cultural traits. Kriwaczek tracks the origins, flowering, and destruction of this unique, vibrant, and tenacious culture with a fine mixture of pride, regret, and eloquence. He begins with a haunting visit to the sites of several once-thriving Jewish communities whose current residents have virtually no memory of the Jewish past. Kriwaczek then proceeds with a chronological narrative, commencing with an interesting, often-surprising examination of Jewish centers in the Roman Empire north of the Mediterranean. He describes the gradual shift of Jewish life eastward after the slaughters of Jews in the Rhineland during the era of the Crusades. Out of this horror came the development of a rich culture centered upon religion and the Yiddish language. This is an outstanding survey of a civilization that endured against great odds but has now essentially vanished. Jay Freeman Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved A highly enjoyable and surprisingly positive account of how Jewish culture helped shape European history and vice versa. The Sunday Telegraph An outstanding survey. . . . Kriwaczek tracks the origins, flowering, and destruction of this unique, vibrant, and tenacious culture with a fine mixture of pride, regret, and eloquence. Booklist Evocative and precise. . . . An enjoyable narrative that captures the intricacies of a very complicated history. Publishers Weekly Informative and very entertaining . . . conjures up and re-creates baroque images and marvelous set pieces of feverish activity, long lost towns and shtetls [as well as] wonderful pictures of lost communities of Jews. The Irish Times