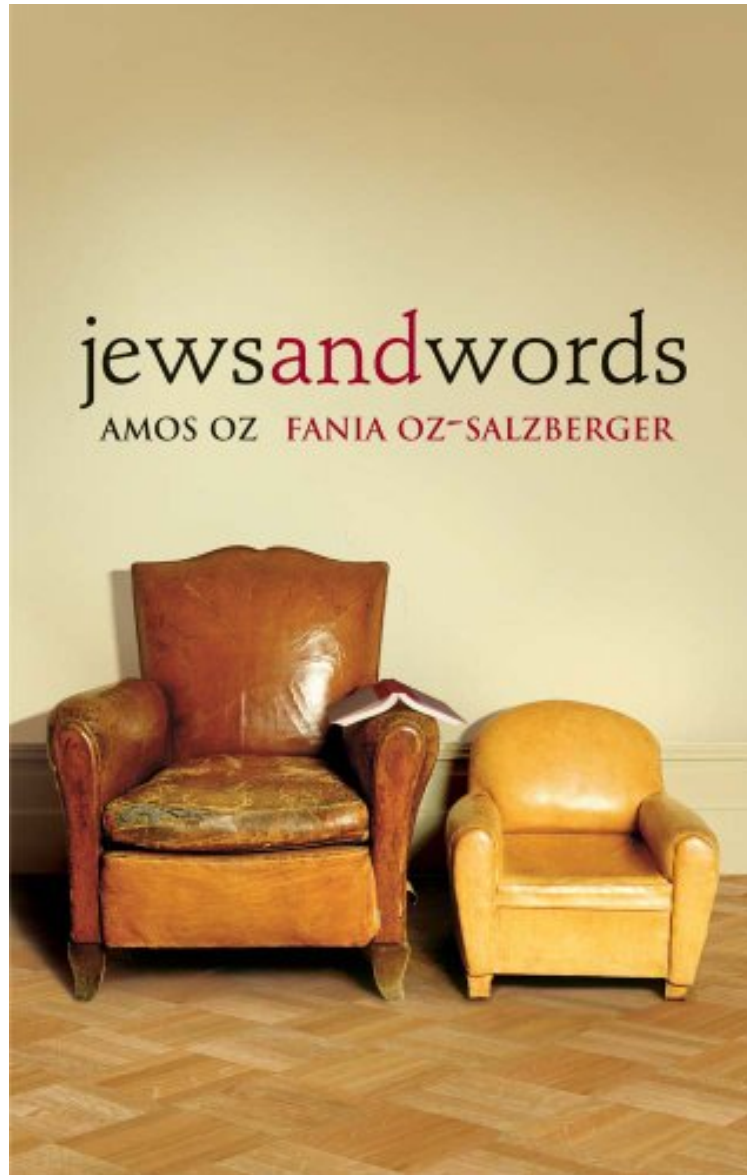


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## Jews and Words

*Amos Oz, Fania Oz-Salzberger*  
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#561227 in Books Fania Oz Salzberger Amos Oz 2014-02-25Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 7.59 x .67 x 7.09l, #File Name: 0300205848248 pagesJews and Words | File size: 40.Mb

**Amos Oz, Fania Oz-Salzberger : Jews and Words** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jews and Words:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. No, but yesBy Robert D. SchreibmanAs an atheist with some ties to my past, I like this book as it makes a tremendous amount of sense to me:it allows me more latitude and comfort in rejecting so much of what I grew up in and doing, and by making a choice to become a rabbi. Not that this is a

sinecure. It still makes intellectual demands I am not ready to agree with completely. But the book has examples that ring true. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful!!!! By Galit This book is beautiful. Its written in such a lovely and light way, so deep and thoughtful. It has been so thought provoking for me that I find myself quoting it when I write, yet it is such an easy bad time read..I have recommended it to anyone who came my way in the last while. I adore this book and will remember its ideas for many years to come. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Are words the core of who we are By Customer I enjoyed reading this book, the challenging questions Oz brings out and his ideation of answers. Can't say I agree with all but never the less I found it very interesting.

Why are words so important to so many Jews? Novelist Amos Oz and historian Fania Oz-Salzberger roam the gamut of Jewish history to explain the integral relationship of Jews and words. Through a blend of storytelling and scholarship, conversation and argument, father and daughter tell the tales behind Judaism's most enduring names, adages, disputes, texts, and quips. These words, they argue, compose the chain connecting Abraham with the Jews of every subsequent generation. Framing the discussion within such topics as continuity, women, timelessness, and individualism, Oz and Oz-Salzberger deftly engage Jewish personalities across the ages, from the unnamed, possibly female author of the Song of Songs through obscure Talmudists to contemporary writers. They suggest that Jewish continuity, even Jewish uniqueness, depends not on central places, monuments, heroic personalities, or rituals but rather on written words and an ongoing debate between the generations. Full of learning, lyricism, and humor, *Jews and Words* offers an extraordinary tour of the words at the heart of Jewish culture and extends a hand to the reader, any reader, to join the conversation.

From Booklist \*Starred \* Oz and his daughter, a historian, combine their considerable talents to examine the role words and language have played in binding the Jewish people to their heritage. Although neither is religious (nor, for that matter, a believer), both find rich meaning in the words of the Bible (as well as the commentaries that followed). They theorize that the reason Judaism has survived is more about texts than faith, with controversy built into them from the start. Exhibiting eye-popping feats of literary scholarship and stunning swoops into the minds of writers, readers, and rabbis, the authors clearly relish the richness of their topic. The familiar subjects are here (the role of humor in Jewish writing), but the duo goes much further than expected. What about the important part questions have played in the writings, starting with Genesis? A wonderful chapter recounts the role of women writers and shows how the author of Song of Songs might have been female. The text grapples with what it means to be a Jew, especially with God optional, and how Judaism might never have survived without the decision of fathers and mothers to impress the importance (and sweetness) of learning on children early and often. This is a book to read, think about, and discuss because, as the ending notes, every time we read a text, we author it in our own image. --Ilene Cooper Praise for Amos Oz's *A Tale of Love and Darkness*: "Both in his fiction and his essays, Oz has proven himself one of our essential writers, laying out for our observation, in ever-increasing breadth and profundity, the mad landscape of our time and his place always enlarging the scope of his questions while avoiding the temptation of dogmatic answers." Alberto Manguel, *Washington Post Book World* "A charmingly funny book not just humorous but sometimes downright hilarious. The essence of it is that the natural condition of the Jewish people and the source of their resilience is being in argument with the world, with one another and, to be sure, with God himself. But you cannot get the taste of this book, let alone its essence, without reading it." Martin Peretz, *Wall Street Journal* "A thought-provoking essay on language, literature and the eternal question of Jewish identity. . . . *Jews and Words* is filled with fascinating anecdotes and details. . . . A stimulating meditation on what it means to be a Jew and what it means to be a reader." *Wall Street Journal* "Playfully instructive. . . . Will appeal to lay readers interested in a nonreligious Judaism based on contemporary readings of traditional and more modern Jewish texts." *Publishers Weekly* "Filled with chutzpah, wisdom, humor, and common sense. . . . The authors have added meaningfully and joyfully to the continuum they celebrate. Readers will come away from this entrancing meditation needing to add comments of their own." *Jewish Book World* "*Jews and Words* [is] brimming with such unsentimental affection for these texts and the role they've played in the survival of the Jewish people that those with any interest in the subject are likely to find themselves captivated and inspired by the authors' undisguised enthusiasm. . . . A passionate, sophisticated argument for the central role of texts in Jewish survival." *Shelf Awareness* "A provocative mixture of scholarship, sly observation and wry writing that often glistens." *Kirkus* "Exhibiting eye-popping feats of literary scholarship and stunning swoops into the minds of writers, readers, and rabbis, the authors clearly relish the richness of their topic. . . . This is a book to read, think about, and discuss because, as the ending notes, 'every time we read a text, we author it in our own image.'" *Booklist*, Starred "Captivating, troubling and exhilarating all three of these adjectives apply with equal force to *Jews and Words*, an important and invigorating contemplation of the shared experiences and values that have always defined the Jewish people." Jonathan Kirsch, *Jewish Journal* "There are many ways to understand and use *Jews and Words*. It is a heart-stirring tribute to the enduring power of our religious writings, a spirited celebration of a certain kind of Jewish genius that has lasted just as long and a gloss on the Tanakh and the Talmud that allows us to approach the old texts from new points of entry. Above all, father and daughter, authentic and committed Zionists whose beliefs are the same as those

of the founders of modern Israel, offer us a way of seeing ourselves not as the victims of history but the makers of history."Jonathan Kirsch, Jewish Journal "[A] fascinating overview of Jewish intellectual traditions from a secular perspective. . . Readers with any background will find details and stories to engage with, argue with and think about."Mona Moraru, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette "Distinguished both by the clarity of its authors' arguments and the intellectual panache they display on the page. Its a little book, perhaps, but also an uncommonly delightful and learned one."Los Angeles of Books "These two high-powered Jewish intellectuals deploy their full inventory of literary, biblical and historic insights to their review of the vital role of words as a sustaining force in Jewish life. . . . This slim (232 pages), but insight-packed volume deserves a wide reading audience."St. Louis Jewish Light "[The authors] are both gifted storytellers and razor-sharp analysts of the human condition. . . . This relatively short volume is an unalloyed joy to read, to consider, and to pass on."Leonard J. Greenspoon, ID: International Dialogue "Ingenious and thrilling, Jews and Words manages to cram more than 5,000 years of prayers, songs, stories, arguments, praises, curses and jokes into the suitcase of a thin, page-turning work of . . . what? History? Anthropology? Literary criticism? Theology? All of these and more. It's a wonderful book."Jonathan Safran Foer "Jews and Words is a conversation between two people who love each other, informed by a wonderful sense of humor and a passionate yet measured analysis of language, people, and literature. Honesty shines through every paragraph of this terrific work."Yehuda Bauer Praise for Fania Oz-Salzbergers Israelis in Berlin: "An exciting, deeply moving, masterly book. It combines a wealth of knowledge with great emotional power."Zeruya Shalev "Jews and Words is a wonderful, a great essay. . . . The line, 'Ours is not a bloodline but a textline' is a drum beat."Jrgen Habermas "Jews and Words is thrilling and entertaining, challenging clichs and stereotypes at every page. Its tone is half serious and half humorous, mixing a mastery of its subject with an informal touch. It promises to be very controversial and widely read."Mario Vargas Llosa