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Sommario/riassunto

Two creative centers of Jewish life rose to prominence in the twentieth century, one in Israel and the other in the United States. Although Israeli and American Jews share kinship and history drawn from their Eastern European roots, they have developed divergent cultures from their common origins, often seeming more like distant cousins than close relatives. This book explores why this is so, examining how two communities that constitute eighty percent of the world's Jewish population have created separate identities and cultures. Using examples from literature, art, history, and politics, leading Israeli and American scholars focus on the political, social, and memory cultures of their two communities, considering in particular the American Jewish challenge to diaspora consciousness and the Israeli struggle to forge a secular, national Jewish identity. At the same time, they seek to understand how a sense of mutual responsibility and fate animates American and Israeli Jews who reside in distant places, speak different languages, and live within different political and social worlds.