



Israelites in Erin: Exodus, Revolution, and the Irish Revival (Irish Studies)

Abby Bender

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From the late nineteenth century through the early twentieth century, the story of the Israelites' liberation from bondage in Egypt served as the archetypal narrative for the birth of the Irish nation. Exodus was critical to both colonial and anticolonial conceptions of Ireland and Irishness. Although the Irish-Israelite analogy has been cited often, a thorough exploration has never before been documented. Bender successfully fills this gap with *Israelites in Erin*. Drawing upon both canonical and little-known texts of the Literary Revival, including works by Joyce, plays by Lady Gregory, and political writings by Charles Stewart Parnell and Patrick Pearse, Bender highlights the centrality of Exodus in Ireland. In doing so, she recuperates the history of a liberation narrative that was occluded by the aesthetic of 1916, when the Christ story replaced Exodus as a model for revolution and liberation. In two concluding chapters, Bender deftly maps Exodus throughout Joyce's *Ulysses*, revealing how the text plumbs the biblical narrative for its submersed but frank and unsettling story of ambivalent, impure, ironic origins. With extensive research and remarkable insight, *Israelites in Erin* inaugurates a compelling new critical conversation.

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