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Tepper, Aryeh. *Progressive Minds, Conservative Politics: Leo Strauss's Later Writings on Maimonides*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013. \$85.00 (9781438448435). Also available as an eBook.

The title of this book may be a bit misleading. The "progress" involved does not deal with contemporary leftist politics. Progress in this context represents Rambam's idea of progress towards truth within Judaism over time. It also refers to the development of Leo Strauss's ideas about Rambam. Leo Strauss was a serious (though non-orthodox) Jew and one of the twentieth century's most influential political philosophers. Aryeh Tepper (PhD in Jewish Thought, Hebrew University and lecturer at BenGurion University) argues that insufficient attention has been paid to two of Strauss's late writings on Rambam: "How to Begin to Study The Guide of the Perplexed" and "Notes on Maimonides' Book of Knowledge." The former is particularly opaque and Tepper goes through a careful, even minute, analysis of this work. He concludes that Strauss's ideas on Rambam evolved: his later writings reveal that he did not see Rambam (as he once did) writing to protect an intellectual elite and positing a simple conflict between Jerusalem (revealed religion) and Athens (philosophy), but rather he viewed him as a thinker who recognized significant fissures within both Judaism and Greek philosophy. According to Tepper, Strauss ultimately saw Rambam as aiming to reform the Hebraic religion by cleansing it of its remnants of paganism without abandoning it or destroying it altogether. This decision to reform rather than overthrow accounts, in part, for the word conservative in the title of the book. For academic collections.

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