



The Jewish Body: An Anatomical History of the Jewish People (Jewish Encounters Series)

Melvin Konner

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Part of the Jewish Encounter series

A history of the Jewish people from bris to burial, from “muscle Jews” to nose jobs.

Melvin Konner, a renowned doctor and anthropologist, takes the measure of the “Jewish body,” considering sex, circumcision, menstruation, and even those most elusive and controversial of microscopic markers—Jewish genes. But this is not only a book that examines the human body through the prism of Jewish culture. Konner looks as well at the views of Jewish physiology held by non-Jews, and the way those views seeped into Jewish thought. He describes in detail the origins of the first nose job, and he writes about the Nazi ideology that categorized Jews as a public health menace on par with rats or germs.

A work of grand historical and philosophical sweep, *The Jewish Body* discusses the subtle relationship between the Jewish conception of the physical body and the Jewish conception of a bodiless God. It is a book about the relationship between a land—Israel—and the bodily sense not merely of individuals but of a people. As Konner describes, a renewed focus on the value of physical strength helped generate the creation of a Jewish homeland, and continued in the wake of it.

With deep insight and great originality, Konner gives us nothing less than an anatomical history of the Jewish people.

From the Hardcover edition.

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