



## Jews and Shoes

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**Jews and Shoes** From Brand: Bloomsbury Academic

Shoes are an integral part of Jewish material culture. Although they appear in some of the most foundational biblical stories, they are generally regarded as no more than lowly, albeit essential, accessories.

*Jews and Shoes* takes a fresh look at the makings and meanings of shoes, cobblers, and barefootedness in Jewish experience. The book shows how shoes convey theological, social, and economic concepts, and as such are intriguing subjects for inquiry within a wide range of cultural, artistic, and historic contexts. The book's multidisciplinary approach encompasses a wide range of contributions from disciplines as diverse as fashion, visual culture, history, anthropology, Bible and Talmud, and performance studies. *Jews and Shoes* will appeal to students, scholars and general readers alike who are interested to find out more about the practical and symbolic significance of shoes in Jewish culture since antiquity.

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## Editorial Review

### Review

After reading Jews and Shoes, one will no longer view that essential part of the wardrobe as a mere item of necessity. Jewish Book World This highly original volume makes itself indispensable as much through the extraordinary range of perspectives as through the lucidity and insights of the individual papers. It highlights how an appreciation of biblical roots and later religious commentary gives us an understanding of later folklore, theatrical and literary creativity, and ultimately contemporary politics. Rickie Burman, Director, The Jewish Museum, London Moving with ease from the sacred to the profane, from canonical works to the realm of public culture, from social to cultural history, Jews and Shoes invests great significance to what might seem at first blush to be utterly ordinary. No one, after reading this book, will however think of shoes as just 'being there.' Nahshon's Jewish shoes shows how everything has a history worth analyzing and reading about. Hasia R. Diner, Paul S. and Sylvia Steinberg Professor of American Jewish History, New York University Jews and Shoes is a remarkable and wonderful offbeat collection of pieces on shoes (or the lack of them) from Moses' refusal to wear them to Ernst Lubitsch's evocation of WWI Berlin's Jewish world of shoe selling. A wild mix of cultural history (Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett and her father Mayer's images of shoe making), anthropology (Rivka Parciack on Jewish tombstones in the shape of shoes), and literary study (Andrew Ingall on Bruno Schulz), this is a great book of everyone who wears shoes, is Jewish or is Jewish and wears shoes. Sander L. Gilman, author of The Jew's Body From ancient biblical references, to contemporary Jewish law, the book takes the reader on a journey that highlights the religious, social and political significance of footwear in Jewish life. Footwear News I, too, was amazed at how this "footnote" of a topic yielded so much as a survey for the Semites. Rhonda Lieberman, Bookforum A fascinating new book provides a shoe and tell of the many connections between footwear and the Jewish people. Pauline Dubkin Yearwood, Chicago Jewish News I found the essays engaging and, at times, absolutely fascinating ... I applaud the volume, especially its creativity and new insights, as a lively contribution to Jewish studies. Try it on for size. I did, and it was a wonderful, delightful stroll. Shofar This book provides valuable lenses through which to examine the shoe in Jewish cultural and religious history: as the social biography of an ever-present object, as an historic examination of Jews in society, as a themed sampling of significant Jewish literary and artistic expressions, and as a material entree into worlds of immateriality. Nashon moves the reader through cultural histories, disparate lands, and artistic imaginations to track the footprints that Jews have made on the history of the shoe. Museum Anthropology

### About the Author

**Edna Nahshon** is Associate Professor of Hebrew at the Jewish Theological Seminary and Senior Associate, Center of Hebrew and Jewish Studies, Oxford University.

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