

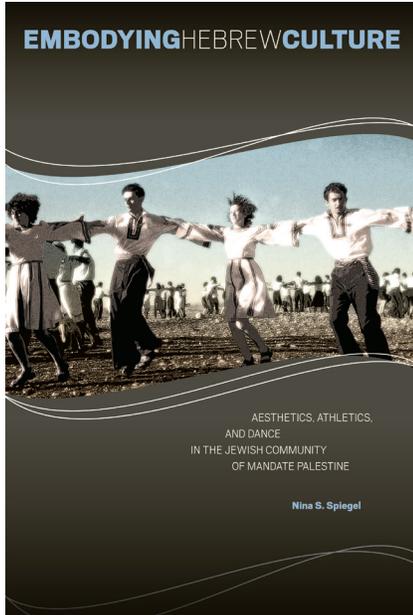


NEWS FROM WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

For immediate release

*Announcing **Embodying Hebrew Culture***

New from Wayne State University Press



BOOK INFORMATION

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DETROIT—*Embodying Hebrew Culture: Aesthetics, Athletics, and Dance in the Jewish Community of Mandate Palestine* by Nina S. Spiegel examines the Palestinian Jewish community of the British Mandate era to argue that it created enduring social, political, religious, and cultural forms. Through public events, such as festivals, performances, and celebrations, Spiegel finds that the physical character of this national public culture represents one of the key innovations of Zionism—embedding the importance of the corporeal into national Jewish life—and remains a significant feature of contemporary Israeli culture.

Spiegel analyzes four significant events in this period that have either been unexplored or underexplored: the beauty competitions for Queen Esther in conjunction with the Purim carnivals in Tel Aviv from 1926 to 1929, the first Maccabiah Games or “Jewish Olympics” in Tel Aviv in 1932, the National Dance Competition for theatrical dance in Tel Aviv in 1937, and the Dalia Folk Dance Festivals at Kibbutz Dalia in 1944 and 1947. Drawing on a vast assortment of archives throughout Israel, Spiegel uses an array of untapped primary sources, from written documents to visual and oral materials, including films, photographs, posters, and interviews. Methodologically, Spiegel offers an original approach, integrating the fields of Israel studies, modern Jewish history, cultural history, gender studies, performance studies, dance theory and history, and sports studies.

Susan Manning, Northwestern University, writes: “This is a book that I have wanted to read for a long time. Nina Spiegel demonstrates how British-Mandate Palestine constructed a public culture premised on corporeality and how new forms of folk dance, theatrical dance, sport, and festival embodied the tensions and debates of an emerging nation—one poised between past and present, East and West, sorrow and celebration. *Embodying Hebrew Culture* enriches and amplifies our understanding of performance and politics in twentieth-century culture.”

Students and teachers of Israel studies, performance studies, and Jewish cultural history will appreciate this detailed, multi-disciplinary volume.

About the author: Nina S. Spiegel is the Rabbi Joshua Stampfer Assistant Professor of Israel Studies at Portland State University. She holds a PhD in history from Stanford University, and her articles have appeared in publications such as *Jewish Cultural Studies*, *Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Review*, and *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*. She has also served on the board of directors of the Congress on Research in Dance.

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