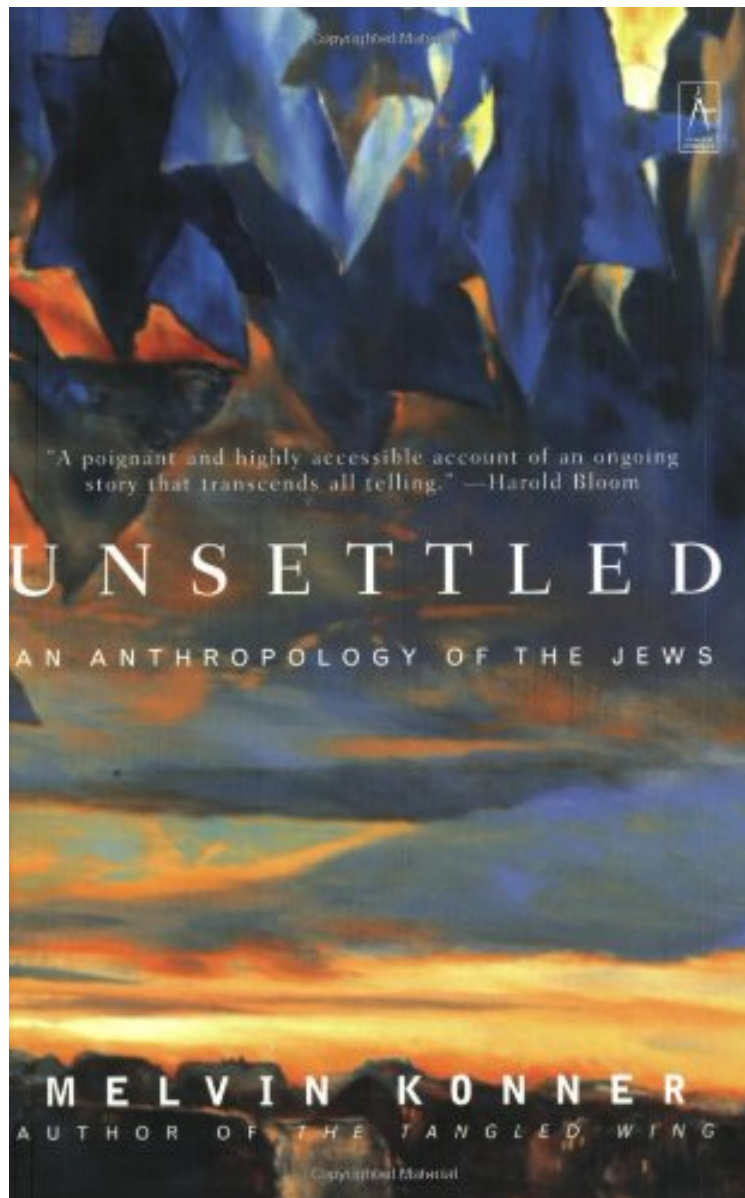


(Download ebook) Unsettled: An Anthropology of the Jews

## Unsettled: An Anthropology of the Jews

*Melvin Konner*

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**Melvin Konner : Unsettled: An Anthropology of the Jews** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Unsettled: An Anthropology of the Jews:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Jewish History - a different perspectiveBy New York LonghornThis is not a straight dry history book. It is an anthropological account of a people who have survived despite all odds. The

author delves into the intellectual, sociological and economical reasons as he goes around the globe to tell the story. There have been better histories told about the Jews of Eastern Europe but not necessarily from this perspective. However, the accounts of Jews in Ethiopia, China, Uzbekistan, to name a few are eye opening. The Bible calls the Israelites a stiff-necked people. Perhaps, without realizing it, the author explains that in essence, this is the reason for Jewish survival through the ages. No matter the tyrant, king, oppression, opportunity, the Jewish people kept to the principles of their faith. This is a good read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding one volume history of the Jewish people By Ron Dolgin A blend of broad based scientific, social and cultural history, including written accounts. Dr. Konner used a very readable, informative style. At the same time, with his documentation and in depth analysis, we have an authoritative account of the Jewish people. Contrary to current propaganda, Jews lived in Israel pretty much continuously since the bronze age. How to account for Jewish high achievement. An early Egyptian Pharaoh boasts of ending the Israelites. Early Chinese and Indian Jewish centers. Konner elaborates themes of Jewish lives across time, many places and offers a coherent account. Thankfully, his work is readable without slick and superficial constructions. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Neat Book By Steven K. What an insightful historically researched document. My only concern is the mention of Queen Ester winning a beauty contest. A beauty contest is not mentioned in the Book of Ester. What is said is the king summoned all the virgins and after a year's preparation they were ready for him to have his way with them. Beauty pageant aside, the author does a great job analyzing the history of the Jews based upon factual evidence.

Far reaching, intellectually rich, and passionately written, *Unsettled* takes the whole history of Western civilization as its canvas and places onto it the Jewish people and faith. With historical insight and vivid storytelling, renowned anthropologist Melvin Konner charts how the Jews endured largely hostile (but at times accepting) cultures to shape the world around them and make their mark throughout history?from the pastoral tribes of the Bronze Age to enslavement in the Roman Empire, from the darkness of the Holocaust to the creation of Israel and the flourishing of Jews in America. With fresh interpretations of the antecedents of today's pressing conflicts, *Unsettled* is a work whose modern-day reverberations could not be more relevant or timely.

From Publishers Weekly The history of Jewish culture is as variegated as any civilization that has witnessed the dawn and survived the ruin of many an empire, including its own. Rather than offer an exhaustive catalogue of major events and leaders in this highly readable history of the Jewish experience, Konner draws vividly on the lives of ordinary people for this cultural portrait. A professor of anthropology, human biology and Jewish studies at Emory University, Konner details how the crucible of dominant civilizations shaped Jewish religion, language and intellectual history. For instance, he shows how the clash between the Polish Empire and the Ukraine affected the rise of Hasidism in the 18th century. Each chapter is devoted to the study of one epoch in the development of Jewish life and culture and its contributions to the progress of surrounding cultures. In focusing on the post-Babylonian exile period, Konner discusses the biblical roots and significance of circumcision to show that for Jews, the ritual indicated their unique relationship with God. Other cultures, in Africa and elsewhere, he notes, practiced circumcision as a puberty and/or fertility rite, and returning to the biblical verses, Konner concludes fertility was an element of the Jewish ritual as well. Despite the many threats and challenges Jews have faced through the centuries, Konner concludes, "Jewish life will continue to be strong." He has written a celebratory but evenhanded tale, lauding the Jewish people's strength as he chronicles the adversities they've faced: "Jews, by dint of culture and history, are restless, critical, imaginative, resourceful, ambitious, cooperative, troubled by injustice, and committed to self-defense." Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist In what Konner labels "the grand sweep of Jewish culture in time and space," the author examines five related themes, including peoplehood (something quite different from religion), that have been a part of Jewish identity and of the myth of the Jews as a mild, ethical people who do not fight. He explores the thesis that the Jewish gifts to the world--monotheism, the Ten Commandments, and resistance against tyranny--were born of weakness in a group of tribes, producing allegiance to a single all-powerful God who could protect them. Konner also discusses the idea that the Jews did not come to Israel from anywhere else, but they have been there from time immemorial, suffering bitterly, but every generation celebrating life. The author, an anthropologist and the author of nine previous books, draws on archaeological findings, census data, diaries, oral histories, and religious texts to illustrate how the Jews influenced the non-Jewish world and how that world influenced them. His study is highly relevant and unflinching in its approach to controversial and difficult concepts. George Cohen Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved A poignant and highly accessible account of an ongoing story that transcends all telling. (Harold Bloom) Remarkable . . . It is certainly the best one-volume overview of Jewish history and identity available today. (Sander L. Gilman, Director of the Program in Jewish Studies at the University of Illinois, Chicago)