



And Rachel Stole the Idols: The Emergence of Modern Hebrew Women's Writing

Wendy I. Zierler

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Pointing to an early instance in Hebrew literary history, *And Rachel Stole the Idols* takes its title from a biblical episode in which a daughter seizes control of a paternal spiritual legacy and makes it her own. This episode is the thematic key to Wendy Zierler's in-depth research of the ways modern Hebrew women writers—after centuries of silence—took control of the language of Hebrew literary culture, laying claim to icons of femininity and recasting them for their own purposes. Zierler picks up where other Hebrew scholars have left off, offering original analysis that brings feminist theory to bear on the study of modern Hebrew women writers.

In recognition that there is no single feminist approach, nor a universally accepted definition of gender, this book incorporates a broad range of feminist reading strategies—including Anglo-American gynocriticism, French feminist theory, and feminist critical methods in anthropology, biblical studies, and geography. The chapters within examine the translated work of women who made early and significant contributions to nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Hebrew literature. These range from prose writers Sarah Feige Meinkin Foner, Hava Shapiro, Nechama Pukhachevsky, and Devorah Baron, to poets Rachel Morpurgo, Rachel Bluwstein, Yokheved Bat-Miriam, Esther Raab, Anda Pinkerfeld-Amir, Shulamit Kalugai, and Leah Goldberg. Along with its provocative scholarship and large number of original translations, *And Rachel Stole the Idols* makes a vital contribution to Jewish women's studies, in general, and Hebrew literary studies, in particular, as the first book-length English-language study of its kind.

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