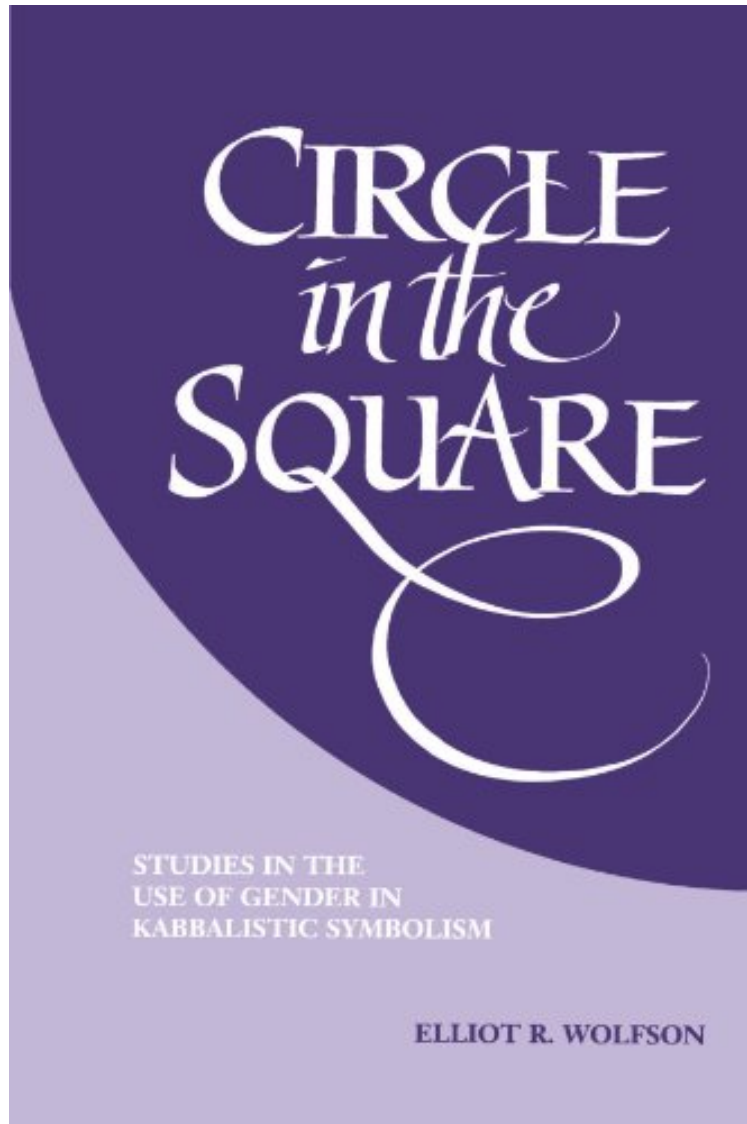


Circle in the Square: Studies in the Use of Gender in Kabbalistic Symbolism

Elliot R. Wolfson

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writes is erudite and insightful. Like the Kabbalah itself, you re-read each sentence you gain greater insight into the nuance. This early work lacks some of the polish of his later writings yet still shines brightly in his unique hyperarticulate fashion. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Dr. David Shluker great

This book deals with the issue of gender in Jewish mysticism showing the thematic correlation of eroticism and esotericism that is central to the kabbalah. "A tour de force in terms of historical range, analytic boldness, textual sources, and interpretive constructions. An important contribution in every sense to Jewish thought and interpretation." -- Michael Fishbane, University of Chicago "Wolfson has a knack for selecting particularly difficult texts and elucidating them for the reader." -- Daniel Matt, Graduate Theological Union This book deals with aspects of the gender imaging of God in a variety of medieval kabbalistic sources. It provides the key to understanding the phenomenological structures of mystical experience as well as the thematic correlation of esotericism and eroticism that is central to the kabbalah. The author examines the role of gender utilizing current feminist studies and cultural anthropology. He explores the themes of the feminization of the Torah, the correlation of circumcision and vision of God, the phallogocentric understanding of divine creation as a process of inscription mythologized as an act of sexual self-gratification, and the phenomenon of gender-crossing in kabbalistic myth and ritual. Collectively, the studies explore in great depth the androcentric phallogocentrism that is characteristic of medieval Jewish mysticism.

A tour de force in terms of historical range, analytic boldness, textual sources, and interpretive constructions. An important contribution in every sense to Jewish thought and interpretation. Michael Fishbane, University of Chicago "Wolfson has a knack for selecting particularly difficult texts and elucidating them for the reader. Daniel Matt, Graduate Theological Union" "A tour de force in terms of historical range, analytic boldness, textual sources, and interpretive constructions. An important contribution in every sense to Jewish thought and interpretation." -- Michael Fishbane, University of Chicago "Wolfson has a knack for selecting particularly difficult texts and elucidating them for the reader." -- Daniel Matt, Graduate Theological Union About the Author Elliot R. Wolfson is Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University. He is the author of *The Book of the Pomegranate: Moses de Leon's Sefer ha-Rimmon*; *Through A Speculum That Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism*; and *Along the Path: Studies in Kabbalistic Myth, Symbolism, and Hermeneutics*, also published by SUNY Press.