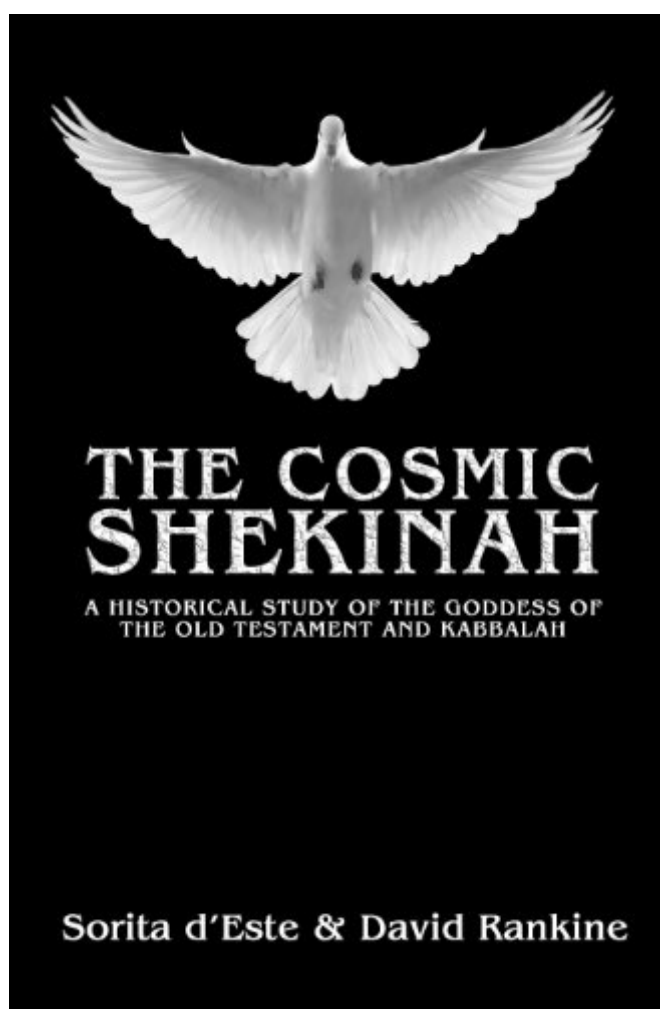


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The Cosmic Shekinah: A History Of The Goddess Of The Old Testament And Qabalah - Her Origins In Ancient Pagan Culture And Modern Manifestations



Synopsis

As a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. As a lily among brambles, so is my love among maidens. (Song of Solomon 2:1-2, C3rd-C2nd BCE) The Shekinah is the manifestation of the Wisdom Goddess of the Kabbalah, the Old Testament and Merkavah Mysticism. She encompasses the primordial light of creation, the wisdom of the serpent and the inspiration of the dove. She is the beauty of the lily and the embodiment of the Tree of Life. She is also the World soul, heavenly glory, mother of angels, inspiration for prophecy, and source of souls, as well as being the Shabbat Bride and the wife of God. In *The Cosmic Shekinah* the authors present a concise history of the different influences of earlier wisdom goddesses on the development of the Shekinah. These goddesses include the Sumerian Inanna, the Egyptian Ma'at, the Greco-Egyptian Isis, the Semitic Anat and Astarte and the Canaanite Asherah. They show that from these ancient sources the unnamed Wisdom Goddess and wife of God portrayed in the Old Testament and early Jewish wisdom literature arose. It is this unnamed Wisdom Goddess who would subsequently become the source for the development of the Shekinah as well as the Gnostic Sophia. The influence of the feminine divine as the Shekinah has continued to find expression, with the Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit of Christianity and the Sakina of Islam all being shaped by the enduring influence of the Wisdom Goddess. Through tracing her roles, myths and functions the authors show that in addition to her resurgence, the Wisdom Goddess has always been present throughout history, even when she has been suppressed and disguised by deliberate exclusion and mistranslation. Drawing on numerous sources including medieval Kabbalistic works, Hekhalot texts of Merkavah Mysticism, ancient literature such as the Egyptian, Sumerian and Ugaritic myths, the Old Testament, Gnostic texts and recent finds in Biblical archaeology, *The Cosmic Shekinah* draws attention back to the light of divine feminine wisdom. "The Shekinah drew on and exemplified the qualities of earlier wisdom goddesses from cultures such as those of ancient Egypt, Sumer and Canaan. This ground-breaking work explores the roots of the Shekinah in the cultures of the ancient Middle East, and shows how her influence has continued through the ages in both religion and magic into the modern world."

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Customer Reviews

The divine feminine, it is contained albeit on a quiet level in all three of the major monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, although they are male dominated. In the kabbalistic works of Jewish mysticism this is commonly known as the Shekina, or the divine presence. In gnostic Christianity it is known as Sophia, considered the Goddess of Wisdom. In Islam the Shekina is called Sakina. The book traces the very beginning of the feminine divine from the early pagan goddesses of the Middle East all the way to the development of Sophia the Wisdom Goddess. The Hebrew God had a wife. Jewish theology developed from strains of influence stemming from surrounding cultures like the Egyptians, Sumerians and Canaanites. In the Canaanite Pantheon, El, the head Canaanite God had a wife Ashera. In the Hebrew bible God's wife was also called, Ashera. Ashera would later give way to the Wisdom Goddess. The wisdom Goddess drew from such influences as Isis, Inanna, Maat and Ashera. They were Goddesses who taught mankind wisdom. The Wisdom Goddess would later transform into the Shekhina. The Shekhina drew primarily from the Near Eastern Wisdom Goddess. Many symbols associated with the Shekina were the dove, light, Trees, incense smoke and the burning bush. The Shekina is mentioned several times in Kabbalistic literature. By the way the authors make excellent references to the Kabbalistic literature and Near Eastern Sources. An examination of Jewish sources show that there are two Shekinas, an earthly and a heavenly one. The heavenly Shekina is wrapped around the male counterpart like a blanket of fire. The Earthly Shekina hovers in the earth and is the planets soul. It is the earthly Shekina that is in exile with the Israelites.

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