



February 2010

The Emergence of a Jewish-Feminist Spirituality

Michael F. Drummy

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/shureview>

Recommended Citation

Drummy, Michael F. (2010) "The Emergence of a Jewish-Feminist Spirituality," *Sacred Heart University Review*. Vol. 12: Iss. 1, Article 6.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/shureview/vol12/iss1/6>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the SHU Press Publications at DigitalCommons@SHU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sacred Heart University Review by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@SHU. For more information, please contact santoro-dillond@sacredheart.edu.

The Emergence of a Jewish-Feminist Spirituality

Cover Page Footnote

Michael F. Drummy is a graduate student in the Religious Studies program at Sacred Heart University.

MICHAEL F. DRUMMY

*The Emergence of a
Jewish-Feminist Spirituality**

Recent books and articles by Jewish-feminist authors have helped to lay the groundwork for important breakthroughs in contemporary Jewish spirituality. Women such as Rachel Adler, Susannah Heschel, Marcia Falk, Ellen Umansky, Judith Plaskow, Rita M. Gross, and Tamar Frankiel have attempted to introduce into the traditions of Jewish life, culture, and law new ways of relating to God, self, and others, based primarily on their involvement with and understanding of contemporary feminist thought.

In subjecting Judaism to a feminist critique, such women expose the great tension that exists for them as they seek to be faithful to both their religious tradition and their experience as women. The difficult choice to remain within a tradition that is almost exclusively patriarchal, largely misogynist, and which assigns clear and separate roles to men and women, is painfully evident in these women's work.¹ Each of them has had to struggle personally with various issues such as gender bias, loneliness, voicelessness, oppression, fear (their own and that directed toward them by anti-feminists), justice, and equality.

Many Jewish feminists have discovered deep within themselves and within their own religious heritage a spiritual power and strength which has enabled them to persevere. This emergent spirituality, borne out of great suffering distinct from that of Jewish men, is just now beginning to bear fruit and provide positive and meaningful paradigms of feminine spirituality for the generations of Jewish women to follow. Moreover, the efforts of contemporary Jewish feminists to fashion a vibrant spiritual life out of the fabric of their tradition and their experience as women is valuable not only for the women themselves, but also for Jewish men as it enhances and complements their participation in a fuller community of faith.

**Michael F. Drummy is a graduate student in the Religious Studies program at Sacred Heart University.*

Ultimately, such emergent Jewish-feminist spirituality will have an

effect, I believe, on the ongoing efforts of religious feminists in non-Jewish traditions to develop similar models of inspiration.

Before getting too far afield, it is important to point out that any success Jewish feminists may have been able to generate within their tradition can be attributed, at least in part, to some of the unique similarities that exist between feminism and Judaism, similarities which one rarely encounters between feminism and other world religions. First, the idea of "community" is essential to both Judaism and feminism. This point will be developed later on, but for now it is sufficient to note that both Judaism and feminism place great emphasis on the supportive community that links each member one to another in a profound way. Closely related to the concept of community is the experience of both the Jew and woman as "Other" – the Jew as objectified in this fashion by the larger cultural community, the woman by that of any male-dominated society supported by an androcentric consciousness.² Finally, the openness to dialogue that is characteristic of Jewish *halakhot* and *midrashim* lends itself to a flexible relationship with feminist thought. There thus appears to be some areas in Judaism and feminism where a common ground may be found to initiate discussion beneficial to both men and women within the tradition.

The danger, of course, as far as the feminist is concerned, is that superficial changes in liturgy or law might be construed as evidence that the "feminist" point of view has been recognized and respectfully "allowed" into the tradition. Allowing women to be part of a *minyán*, study Torah, lead public prayer, and acquire more personal control in the areas of marriage and divorce – as important as these may be – are seen by some feminists as reformist efforts which merely mask a patriarchal sex-caste system already intoxicated with the power it has over women. Fundamental questions about the structure and original intent of *halakhah*, Jewish community, human sexuality, and God-language need to be addressed if a meaningful transformation is to take place within Judaism which recognizes and promotes the equal participation of Jewish women. The patience and courage of Jewish feminists to undertake such a project in the face of long-standing derision and ignorance is to be commended.

This essay will therefore explore three dimensions of Judaism, focusing on the significance each might have for a Jewish-feminist

spirituality. The three areas are: images of the Transcendent; community, ritual, law; and sexuality and the sacred. Perhaps from the fertile depths of the spiritual silence that has been Jewish women's history for thousands of years a new awareness may be born that will help us all to a deeper understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Images of the Transcendent

In her article "Steps Toward Feminine Imagery of Deity in Jewish Theology," Rita M. Gross sets forth the basic dilemma for the Jewish feminist who wishes to explore uses of different imagery for the Transcendent that is true to her experience of the Ultimate.³ By opting to remain within her tradition, the Jewish feminist must deal not only with a preponderance of male images to describe her God, she must also be content to work within a fiercely monotheistic framework that views any attempt at de-masculinizing Yahweh as a return to paganism. Moreover, the Jewish God is, despite "His" absolute Otherness, intensely personal. "He" is at once immanent and transcendent. The extreme anthropomorphism of Judaism is thus another issue that every Jewish feminist must confront.

If the aggressive images of male dominance and androcentric attributes given to Yahweh could be understood in their *strictly* metaphorical sense, the issue of God-language within Judaism would be largely moot. However, as Mary Daly points out, such names, attributes, and images tend to hypostatize the experience of transcendence as reflective of one-half of the species, resulting in a reified form of deity that becomes identified with the very same names and attributes it is supposed to transcend.⁴ This constitutes idolatry in its purest sense, helping to perpetuate sex socialization that is oppressive to women. The question to be asked by the Jewish feminist concerning God-language, therefore, is not "How can I best preserve the tradition by introducing new language that is consistent with a monotheistic understanding of deity and my own experience as a woman?" but rather "Does [the language I hope to introduce into the tradition] *encourage* human becoming toward psychological and social fulfillment, toward an androgynous mode of living, toward transcendence?"⁵

For Judith Plaskow, the mere substitution of feminist imagery for God does not achieve these goals.⁶ To avoid what one might term a "feminist reification of God," Plaskow focuses on images of God not as dominating Other, but as empowering experience of transcendent immanence. She stresses inclusivity, creativity, fluidity, and community, all of which are elements of the feminist movement in one form or other. Citing Marcia Falk's work with the composition of new Jewish blessings, Plaskow demonstrates that women's experience as mothers and nurturers, and their unique sense of the interconnectedness and sanctity of all things, helps in understanding God as the source and sustainer of all creation, an idea that is certainly not inconsistent with Jewish monotheism.⁷ Indeed, in Falk's own words, this "eco-feminist" perspective supports the idea "that the authentic expression of an authentic monotheism is not a singularity of image but an embracing *unity* of a *multiplicity of images*, as many as are needed to express and reflect the diversity of our individual lives. . . . [M]onotheism means that, *with all our differences*, I am more like you than I am unlike you."⁸

Thus, *tikkun olam*, the traditional Jewish notion of the repair of a fragmented world, is the work which Jewish feminists see themselves as embracing by drawing attention to the interdependency of all life. The responsibility to care for all creation is a manifestation of the living God in our midst; by carrying out this responsibility we are participating *in God*. We are all part of one community, human and otherwise. Our survival as a species depends upon our recognizing this interdependence and acting to preserve it.

The work of *tikkun olam* reflects the earthiness of traditional Jewish spirituality. Jewish spirituality could never be understood as a "disembodied" spirituality, one in which a duality of body and soul existed. It is an engaged spirituality. It has always maintained a very concrete connection to the rhythms of biology and the seasons. It is expressive as much of the heart as it is of the head, of song as of thought. Understanding God as dominating Lawgiver and Sovereign emphasizes the total Otherness of deity; it leaves little room for experiencing God as intimate and compassionate, although such attributes are found in liberal quantity throughout the *Tanakh*. Jewish feminists, while recognizing the utter transcendence of their God, nevertheless maintain that, consistent with their experience *as women*

and as Jews, the framework for positively imaging God must include what Tamar Frankiel refers to as "immanent characteristics."⁹ A sense of power hidden beneath the surface, openness to the future, life-saving, redemptive, intimate – such qualities arising from women's unique experience reveal, when attributed to the historical God of the Exodus and of the Covenant at Sinai, a God not of domination but of empowerment, whose omnipotence is matched only by an enduring solicitude for all creation. Such images of God call forth in each of us a deep sense of responsibility as co-creating agents who drink from the fountain of being to the extent that we participate in it. Perhaps most importantly for women, their self-understanding is re-oriented by such images:

It is not as we are subjugated, as we feel our worthlessness and culpability, that we can act most responsibly and effectively, but as we know our own value, mirrored in the constancy of God as friend and lover who calls us to enter into the task of creation.¹⁰

Thus it can be seen that such an understanding of the Transcendent can help to elevate women's dignity and reinforce a "spirituality of connectedness" where respect for the sanctity of all creation is paramount. It is this non-hierarchical, relational image of God that many Jewish feminists hope will enhance their spiritual tradition.

Community, Ritual, Law

The importance of community for the Jew cannot be emphasized enough. The identity of even nominal Jews is inextricably linked with the identity of the universal Jewish community. To be a Jew means, first and foremost, to be a member of the community. There is no individual identity, no life, apart from the community. The special bond that exists among Jews because of the Covenant at Sinai (Exodus 19-24) is the outward manifestation of the distinct character of the Jewish people. They consider themselves the "chosen" of God, the special designation reserved for them by the Creator of the Universe whereby they are to become the vehicle of redemption for all creation. It is both a noble title to have bestowed and an awesome

responsibility to accept.

At the center of Jewish life and community is the Torah, the Law given to Moses at Sinai. It contains the precepts that one needs in order to live a life oriented toward God. A great deal of Torah deals with relations among Jews and with outsiders. The community draws its life and its identity from the way in which it conducts itself internally and how it reacts with non-covenantal people. If there are violations of the Law within the community (e.g., neglect of widows or orphans), the community is liable to be punished. This punishment may take the form of internal political turmoil or could equally come from outside the community in the form of persecution or war. Either way, it is the responsibility of the community to insure that justice, according to Torah, is realized.

Everything written or spoken after the Torah, including the Prophets and the later rabbinical writings and oral traditions, are really nothing more than commentaries on the original Torah. It is *halakhah*, then, understood in its broadest sense, that has helped to shape, form, nurture and fortify the community of Israel. By "Israel" I am not referring specifically to the geographical state, but to the universal Jewish community that was formed at Sinai and which, through practice and tradition, has evolved to this day in its present diasporatic form. Annual feasts and festivals such as Hanukkah, Sukkoth, and Passover are important elements in reminding the Jew of his or her heritage, of the common identity he or she shares with those who went before them in their efforts to be faithful to Torah. The weekly Sabbath is, for the devout Jew, a constant community-maintenance ritual filled with the simple sacramental qualities of fire, wine and bread. Psalms, blessings, and prayers are offered in thanksgiving to the God of Life. And the initiation rites for young male Jews with their *bat mitzvah* creates in a singular fashion a renewal of the community's purposes by presenting the young initiate with that holiest of abilities — to proclaim publicly the Torah from the synagogue *bimah*.

These rituals, feasts, and celebrations are more than cultural baggage left over from ancient times. They constitute the very heart of Judaism because they enable the participants not simply to remember the decisive events of their tradition, but *to relive them now*. The *brit milah* ceremony signifies the entry of the male child into the covenant

of Abraham by marking his flesh indelibly, thereby helping the Jew not only to recall God's promise to Abraham, but also to accept it himself in an irreversible way. The connection, therefore, between community, ritual, and law is, for the Jew, one of permanence and transcendence. God's presence is manifested in the faithful Jewish community; covenantal rewards are realized when the community, in obedience to the Law, continues to remember and revivify God's historic activity on its behalf.

The problem for the Jewish feminist with all of this is that, despite the tight-knit and outwardly religious quality of Jewish community, it marginalizes women. Judith Plaskow's stinging indictment of Jewish communal traditions, its exclusionary ritualistic practices, and misogynist *halakhah*, provides a sober counterpoint to the claim that Jewish community, ritual, and law are successful ingredients for a meaningful religious orientation.¹¹ Plaskow sees the Torah itself as a product of a misogynist, patriarchal culture that considered women powerless, barely human, unintelligent, and sexually provocative. Jewish women have always been considered non-normative creatures, lumped together with children and aliens. They had no rights and were regarded as property. To this day, an Orthodox Jewish woman can still not legally obtain a divorce from her husband, but he can divorce her with minimal cause. This non-normative status resulted in cultural, political, and spiritual marginalization: the woman seen as "the Other."¹² She is regarded in this fashion not only by the normative, patriarchal community of which she cannot consider herself a full member, but she also comes to regard *herself* this way and to experience reality as that which does not belong to her and to which she cannot relate in any meaningful sense. For "reality" in such a world is understood as that which the normative community has collectively established as the true and genuine. Non-normative persons have neither access to nor input into the shaping of such a "reality." Thus, the laws, rituals, and language of men become the world in which the Jewish woman lives, but lives as an outsider.

Exclusion based on sex from Torah study, Torah reading, leadership of the congregation, and daily participation in a *minyan* (quorum required for public prayer, traditionally reserved exclusively for men) are just some of the ways in which a Jewish woman

experiences herself as "less than" the normative Jewish male. But, as was noted earlier, despite some recent progress in these areas where women are concerned, there is something more fundamental that needs to change if the full range of human and spiritual rights of women are to be recognized and allowed to develop within Judaism. Thus, for Plaskow, "Over and above the value of participation in any particular religious activity is the spiritual aspect of community itself."¹³ Plaskow claims that God speaks to the Jewish people in and through the community, and did not form the community at Sinai just out of convenience. A Jew hears the voice of God within the community and develops his or her "personhood" as a responsible communal member. Observance of Torah and participation in ritual are ways of "be-ing" for the Jew, but if these are denied to the Jewish woman, she is rendered virtually shipwrecked, a nameless ache for fulfillment left unspoken.

For centuries, this has been the spiritual legacy of the Jewish woman. For Plaskow "There is no Jewish way to go off into the desert and have an independent relationship to God. Relationship to God is experienced and mediated precisely through the community that in reality and in memory maintains women's marginality."¹⁴ It is this "false memory" of women, enshrined in *halakhah* and relived weekly in synagogues and daily in male *minyans*, that Plaskow wishes to eradicate. Like Rachel Adler, she wishes to draw the Jewish woman — "the peripheral Jew, the Jew who wasn't there"¹⁵ — into the center of the community where she will actively help to reclaim and form her tradition, rendering it more intelligible and meaningful to her as a woman, and helping to enrich the religious life of the Jewish male by providing a more authentic, freer, and fuller expression of the Ultimate as it manifests Itself in her unique experience.

Plaskow, therefore, does not necessarily regard the liberal notion of "equality" as the goal for the new covenantal community. As a feminist, she is well aware of the problems of co-optation and tokenism that have undermined women's progress in the broader culture. Such dangers are no less present in Judaism, although they may arise in subtler fashion. Plaskow realizes that the hierarchical structure of Judaism, a function of patriarchal-influenced *halakhah*, needs to be re-examined. She thus raises the issue of the acceptance of "difference" within community, discussing ways in which a

fundamental realignment of community-consciousness will enable greater empowerment of women and insure that their voice will be heard in a significant way:

Jewish feminists want from the Jewish and feminist communities what women of color want from the feminist community, what self-affirming Jews want from the wider culture: equality in our particularity, acknowledgment of the many communities that shape our lives, acknowledgment of our complex history and experience, and attention to that history and experience in the formulation of cultural or religious norms and values.¹⁶

In examining the Jewish concept of "chosenness" and the Jewish self-understanding that results from this hierarchical perception of community, Plaskow reveals that such a self-understanding perpetuates the intrinsic and extreme ghettoization of women within Judaism. In other words, the male Jew, in perceiving himself as in some sense "different" than other non-covenantal people — as "the Other" — ironically enough views Jewish women in much the same way as the wider society views him. And everything in the tradition and the *Tanakh* supports such a view. It is a hierarchical understanding of community, and it leaves Jewish women doubly powerless. They become, in effect, "the Other's Other,"¹⁷ the most oppressed class within an already oppressed religious minority.

The negative self-esteem that comes to dominate a Jewish woman's consciousness as the result of this gender-oppressive dynamic can be debilitating and suffocating. The anxiety that a Jewish woman might experience if she considered abandoning her tradition, which for her represents identity, culture, and meaning, proves oftentimes too much to confront. But the equally overwhelming experience of powerlessness that is generated by lack of access to any meaningful role within her spiritual heritage can leave a Jewish woman feeling caught between Scylla and Charybdis.

It is significant, then, for Jewish women that Plaskow reconsiders the idea of chosenness as the model for Jewish self-understanding in terms of "the less dramatic 'distinctness.'"¹⁸ Summoning her

experience as a feminist in support of her argument, Plaskow prefers to speak of community in terms not of hierarchical differentiation, but of part and whole. She draws three implications from this part/whole model: 1) it provides greater unity to which different groups belong (i.e., distinctive parts within an organic whole); 2) differences are valued as necessary parts of the greater whole; and 3) willingness to express cultural differences without fear of reprisal or ridicule.¹⁹ In short, Plaskow hopes that, with such a different concept of community operating as the basis for Jewish self-understanding, Jewish men and women alike will be more likely to celebrate diversity rather than emphasize differences.

This approach to overcoming a separative understanding of community by introducing the part/whole model is a distinctively feminist idea. It is one example of how women's self-understanding and experience enables the tradition to undergo a positive and healthy transformation, assuming, of course, that such ideas are incorporated into the tradition. Plaskow and other Jewish feminists are by no means naive concerning the formidable opposition they face when trying to introduce new ways of thinking and understanding to a millennia-old institution such as Judaism. And yet most of these women feel that if such fundamental ideas as Jewish self-identity are cast in radically different terms, then all of the organizational and practical changes (e.g., reading and study of Torah, leading the congregation in public prayer, greater participation in central rituals) will, hopefully, be of lasting benefit to the tradition:

To be wholly present in our lives in all our power is to touch the greater power of being that is the final unity within which all particulars dwell. To deny our complex particularity as individuals or communities, is to diminish our connection to the God known in and through the experience of empowered selfhood.²⁰

Sexuality and the Sacred

Perhaps the best way to describe many Jewish women's experience of their sexuality is that of ambivalence. On the one hand,

Jewish women have traditionally been regarded by their male counterparts as possessing sexual power and mesmerizing qualities that reflect, in some mysterious way, the presence of Yahweh. On the other hand, women have also been declared unclean by Torah by reason of menstruation (*niddah*) and, in the Orthodox tradition, undergo *mikvah* (ritual purification bath) after each menstrual period. Jewish women have been identified with *yetzer hara*, "the evil inclination," because of their ability to seduce men and undermine the patrilineal system. The figure of the seductress Eve in the Garden of Eden is as good a model as any to represent this aspect of Jewish woman's identity. And in traditional synagogues, women and men are still separated by *mechitzah* so that the men are not be distracted by the women's charms during worship.

Gender discrimination may not be unique to Judaism, but it has been reinforced by this tradition in many ways, not the least of which has been to portray women as the embodiment of evil. For a tradition that has largely escaped the problems of dualistic thinking, with respect to women Judaism comes very close to neo-Platonism. By defining women's sexuality in a system dominated by phallogocentric symbols, rituals, and laws, Judaism pioneered the way for an acceptable form of religious misogyny that was later adopted by Christianity in what some may argue is an even more severe form.

From whence does such an offensive view arise? Primarily, it is from fear. The threat that both the ability to bear children and the monthly discharge of blood represents to a patrilineal culture is immense. Women are more closely connected with the source of life than are men. In order to maintain control of the hierarchical model of community so necessary to a patriarchal culture, women's biological capacities and differences must be regulated. Hence we see *halakhot* filled with negative precepts for the men concerning women ("Do not go near a woman" in Exodus 19:15, for example), while prescribing myriad positive duties concerning menstrual purification and childbirth for women. Jewish women seen by Jewish men as a foreign force, as "Other," have for millennia been silenced with regard to *their* sexuality, to *their* primary and uniquely different expression of human existence. They need to reclaim and name their sexuality anew.

But what is codified in civil and religious law is only expressive

of a deeper problem. For Audre Lorde, the promise of sexual fulfillment held out to women by men is false and illusory. It is based on an ethic of violence and exploitation that views women as mere sexual possessions of men. The potential power of the erotic within women is an untapped resource for cultural and social transformation. Women "have been raised to fear the *yes* within [them]selves, [their] deepest cravings."²¹ But men fear the energy which may be unleashed by women's unencumbered sexual expression, a fear which is due, at least in part, to the deep-seated, largely unconscious guilt that accompanies the projecting of a false consciousness onto women. Lorde calls for women "to live from within outward, in touch with the power of the erotic within [them]selves . . . allowing that power to inform and illuminate [their] actions upon the world around [them]."²² When this happens women will "begin to be responsible to [them]selves in the deepest sense."²³

How can this occur in the context of Judaism? For Tamar Frankiel, there are many figures in Hebrew scripture to support the claim that Jewish women are both deeply spiritual as well as authentically sexual. Citing Ruth, Naomi, Tamar, Sarah, and Queen Esther as examples, Frankiel demonstrates that these Jewish ancestresses combine a rare blend of insight, risk-taking, and sexuality which help us in considering them as models of feminine wisdom and power. Jewish women must somehow recover their sexuality, "retrieve it from the grasp of pornographic culture and rediscover its place in [their] lives."²⁴ Sexual power cannot be squandered, "it must be guarded and used in its own proper time."²⁵ The story of Judith illustrates this in exemplary fashion, climaxing with Judith holding the head of Holofernes in triumph. The message here, however, is not that women should claim power *over* men by the proper manipulation of their sexuality, but that sexuality is holy, it is sacred. It can be, for a Jewish woman, the profoundest expression of her spiritual self.

We are not speaking here merely in terms of biological sexuality, but more of the erotic power that lies within each woman, Jew and Gentile alike, to create, to give birth, to nurture, to respect life. It is present in everything she does, touches, feels, becomes, participates in. We speak here of a "spirituality of sensuality," where the bonds of community are strengthened through creative, healthy eroticism. The sexuality of Jewish women *could* be a vital, life-giving force in the

community, transforming the calcified values of patriarchal legalism into a new way of relating to God, self, and others. Indeed, sexuality and spirituality can be, for the Jewish woman, the two most powerful and life-sustaining forces in her life. Judith Plaskow, reflecting on this theme through her experience as a member of a women's *havurah* over the past decade, suggests that sexuality

is that part of us through which we reach out to other persons and to God, expressing the need for relationship, for the sharing of self and of meaning. When we touch that place in our lives where sexuality and spirituality come together, we touch our wholeness and the fullness of our power, and at the same time our connection with a power bigger than ourselves.²⁶

Notes

¹The writer recognizes and respects the disparate traditions (i.e., Orthodox, Conservative, Reform) which have developed *within* Judaism and attempts, where he deems appropriate, to distinguish among them. However, some general observations are made in the course of this essay regarding Judaism as a whole — as a “world” religion — irrespective of tradition. Such remarks, while perhaps not taking into account some of the doctrinal and liturgical differences which certainly exist among the three traditions, are meant to convey in an urgent sense the oppression that many Jewish women experience as members of *any* Jewish faith community. Some will invariably argue that, for example, the Reform tradition is not misogynist at all, or that Orthodox women are accorded full dignity within their tradition. To raise such objections, and to engage in further dialogue over the issues addressed by such objections, is precisely the purpose of an essay such as this. Hence, short of offending anyone, at least intentionally, it is hoped that this essay will provoke discussion on the role of women in all aspects of contemporary Judaism.

²For further discussion of the relation of these points, see Judith Plaskow, *Standing Again at Sinai: Judaism from a Feminist Perspective* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1990), pp. 90-95.

³Rita M. Gross, “Steps Toward Feminine Imagery of Deity in Jewish

Theology" in *On Being a Jewish Feminist: A Reader*, ed. Susannah Heschel (New York: Schocken Books, 1983), pp. 234-47.

⁴Mary Daly, *Beyond God The Father* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), pp. 19-22.

⁵Daly, p. 21.

⁶Plaskow, p. 138.

⁷Plaskow, pp. 142-43.

⁸Marcia Falk, "Notes on Composing New Blessings: Toward a Feminist-Jewish Reconstruction of Prayer," in *Weaving the Visions: New Patterns in Feminist Spirituality*, ed. Judith Plaskow and Carol P. Christ (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1989), p. 129.

⁹Tamar Frankiel, *The Voice of Sarah: Feminine Spirituality and Traditional Judaism* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1990), p. 48.

¹⁰Plaskow, p. 164.

¹¹Plaskow, pp. 76-87.

¹²Plaskow, p. 84.

¹³Plaskow, p. 85.

¹⁴Plaskow, pp. 85-86.

¹⁵Rachel Adler, "The Jew Who Wasn't There: *Halakhah* and the Jewish Woman," in *On Being a Jewish Feminist*, pp. 12-18.

¹⁶Plaskow, p. 95.

¹⁷Plaskow.

¹⁸Plaskow, p. 105.

¹⁹Plaskow, pp. 105-07.

²⁰Plaskow, p. 107.

²¹Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," in *Weaving The Visions*, p. 211.

²²Lorde, p. 212.

²³Lorde.

²⁴Frankiel, p. 30.

²⁵Frankiel, p. 31.

²⁶Plaskow, p. 197.