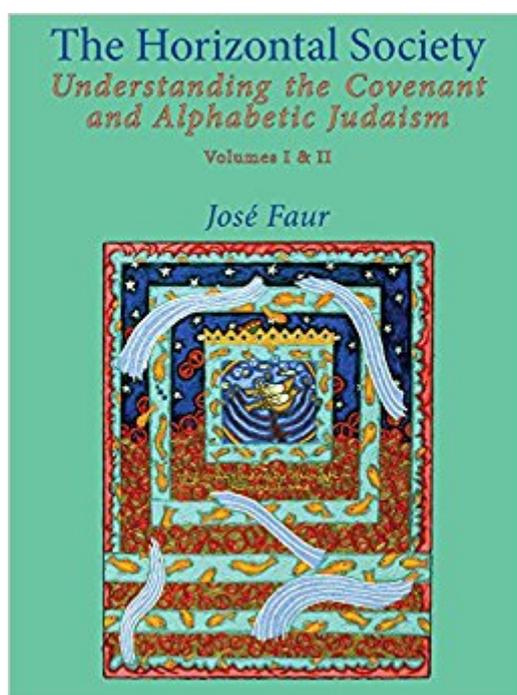


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The Horizontal Society: Understanding The Covenant And Alphabetic Judaism (Vol. I And II) (Emunot: Jewish Philosophy And Kabbalah)



Synopsis

The Horizontal Society is an exposition of rabbinic thought as exemplified by Maimonides. The thought streams of Greece, Rome, and Christendom serve as a contrast. This work is in the Hebrew rhetorical tradition of melisa. The main text in five sections—•The God of Israel, The Books of Israel, The Governance of Israel, The Memory of Israel, and The Folly of Israel—•focuses on these core matters. It includes numerous references to orient the reader. The mode is similar to the author's previous work, such as *Golden Doves with Silver Dots: Semiotics and Textuality in Rabbinic Tradition*, interacting with the latest thought from today's academy. This book illustrates the horizontal organization of the Jewish people. Other social organization is based on hierarchy. Two principles made this difference possible for Israel. First, the Hebrew Scriptures alone propose that every human being is created in the image of God. This necessitates the absolute equality of every human being. Second, the Sinai covenant establishes the Law as the supreme authority. Whereas in other societies, might is the source of authority, in Judaism authority is limited by the Law. These principles were summarized by the last Prophet of Israel: "Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously, profaning the covenant of our fathers?" (Mal 2:10). There is a subdivided bibliography of forty pages, including both Jewish and "Western" sources. The scholarly apparatus includes indices of terms, names, and subjects. There are also seventy appendices of interest to rabbinic readership.

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This book provides a lot of food for thought, of the written covenant as liberation from coercive rule and the root of anti-semitism as the fear of tyrants that a written covenant cannot be amended.

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