



Of Biblical Proportions

BY SEBASTIAN AGUDELO

Genesis 19:26

I mentioned her elsewhere, the pillar of salt
a literalist somewhere claims was radioactive
foam from nuclear blast Lord rained on people,
their debauchery, the limits of no limits.

She, told to pack up, go, to not look back.
And Moses, Moses prophet, Moses zealot,
Moses indignant at the golden calf, Moses
if literalist is what we want, reigning in

the ancient equivalent of a refugee camp
where loyalty, let alone faith, back and forths
to what chirms from tent to tent. He knows
the odds in forced marches, Moses does,

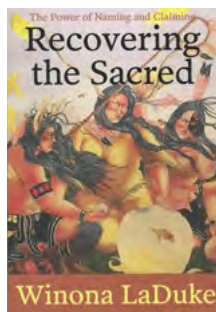
the confederacies, conspiracies and cliques
also that blow of a hammer, drive of a bat
instant in the looking back, the decency to turn.
It isn't about home, not even about longing

though literalist says she must've harbored
neighbors' sin, was complicit, compelled.
Really you just have to figure what guy
next door is up to. He doesn't have it coming.

An affinity, not an alliance, knowing
that injustice comes down as law
and pity the arraigned, stumble a moment,
the fire and brimstone, the burning plains.

Moses vicar, God's man and man of God,
can't have what's learned in the look back
but he, lawgiver, teacher, can't do a thing
except excise her name from the account.

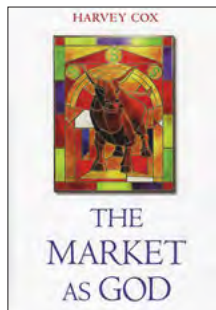
Tikkun RECOMMENDS



**Recovering the Sacred:
The Power of Naming
and Claiming**

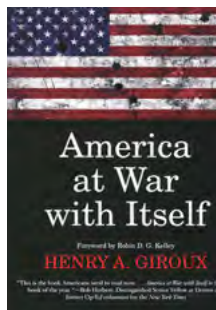
Winona LaDuke
Haymarket Books, 2016

With Americans experiencing a growing awareness of the persistence of racism in every aspect of our lives, we welcome Haymarket Book's republication of Winona LaDuke's important focus on the way the Native American community is healing itself from the ravages of the genocide inflicted upon them even as that community must now recover power to slow the latest assaults on their land and their rights by the energy industry. LaDuke highlights the way Native Americans are healing through recovering their own sacred traditions, and in that process are increasingly able to lead the way to slow climate change.



The Market As God

Harvey Cox
Harvard University Press,
2016



America at War with Itself

Henry A. Giroux
City Lights Books,
2017

The connection between a deeper spirituality and resistance to the destructive path of global capitalism comes into deep focus in the brilliant new book by Harvey Cox, a professor of divinity at Harvard. Cox shows how the glorification of the market, allegedly by secular and impartial economists, media, and politicians is actually a manifestation of worship for the new religion in which the competitive

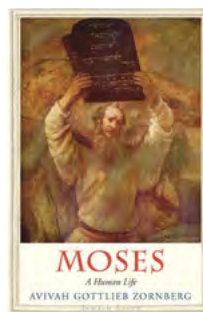
market is their god. Instead of serving a useful but limited purpose, the worshippers of "The Market" (capital letters appropriate to a god) have sought to give it supreme sovereignty, abolishing all consideration of our humanity that conflict with its power. Cox suggests a path of repentance, restoration, and recreation—restoring the market place to its much more limited and healthy place and the democratization of the economy as a whole. "Ordinary people and local communities would be directly involved in not just political decisions but all the decisions that affect their lives, including economic ones." Cox hopes in this process that we can reclaim for humanity "a God whose essential nature is itself pluralistic and who strives to compose a universe of free and responsible 'others'."

Henry Giroux has become the Left's most articulate and insightful critic of America's distorted political life, highlighting its authoritarian turn and the political illiteracy that our culture fosters and that the media helps channel into racism, the worship of money and power, and an ethos of survival-of-the-fittest that produces the foundation for renewed fascistic movements. The alternative is a critical pedagogy linked to an ongoing project of democratization and "the defense of public spheres capable of producing thoughtful citizens, critically engaged communities, and an ethically and socially responsible society (see also Giroux's "Defending Educators in An Age of Neoliberal Tyranny" in *Tikkun*, Fall 2016, vol. 31, no. 4). Giroux manages to link together almost every dysfunctional aspect of American society in a cohesive account that is really important to read!



**Reading Genesis:
Beginnings**

Ed. Beth Kissileff
Bloomsbury,
2016



Moses: A Human Life

Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg
Yale University Press,
2016

No matter how many times you read the Torah, you will never exhaust the ocean of commentary and reflective thought it continues to generate in every generation. Here are two books that add new and exciting directions for scholars and theologians, but are also important for anyone interested in understanding the ongoing appeal of the Jewish religious tradition.

In *Reading Genesis*, editor Beth Kissileff has brought together a treasure chest of

smart thinkers including Russell Jacoby, Ilan Stavans, Joan Nathan, Rebecca Newberger Goldstein, Alicia Suskin Ostriker, Sander Gilman, Dara Horn, Jacqueline Osherow, Seth Greenberg, and many more, and articles that range from "The Apple and Eve: A Neuropsychological Interpretation," "It Is Not Good for Man to be Alone," "Bloodlust," "The Face of the Other: Sarah-Hagar Then and Now," "The Binding of Isaac and the Arts of Resistance," "Imperfect Forgiveness: Joseph and His Brothers," and "The Death of Jacob: Responding to the End of Life." Many of these articles have appeared before in a variety of magazines, but bringing them together makes them handily accessible.

Avivah Zornberg's *Moses*, like much of her writing on Torah, draws heavily on the classical interpretations of the past, including the Midrashic and classical and modern religious thinkers, but also some of the most creative thinkers in other fields, and melds all that with a willingness to bring her own creative psychological wisdom to yield interpretations and new ways of seeing the old texts that are at once both provocative and exciting. Moses is seen as a friend of God who "intuits what kind of conversation God desires" and she finds Moses' lifelong anger is sometimes manifested "in the interest of compassion" and to avert God's anger, as Yochanan Muffs once taught. She sees him sometimes as "aggressively masculine: pushing, snatching, tearing, girding his loins" but also at times playing "a distinctly 'feminine' role." Zornberg's *Moses* is a richly dimensional character, and one that adds a deep new reading to the Torah text.

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IN THE NEXT ISSUE (SPRING 2017)

How to End Israel's Occupation of the West Bank After 50 Painful Years

We will present a variety of fresh perspectives on how to end the Occupation, respect Palestinian human rights, provide safety and security for both peoples, and create a path to reconciliation, mutual forgiveness, and a new spirit of generosity in the Middle East.

If you agree that this must be the goal, please join our interfaith (and secular-humanist-and-atheist-welcoming) Network of Spiritual Progressives at spiritualprogressives.org/join.



תיקון

TIKKUN (tē-kün) ...
to heal, repair and transform the world.
All the rest is commentary.