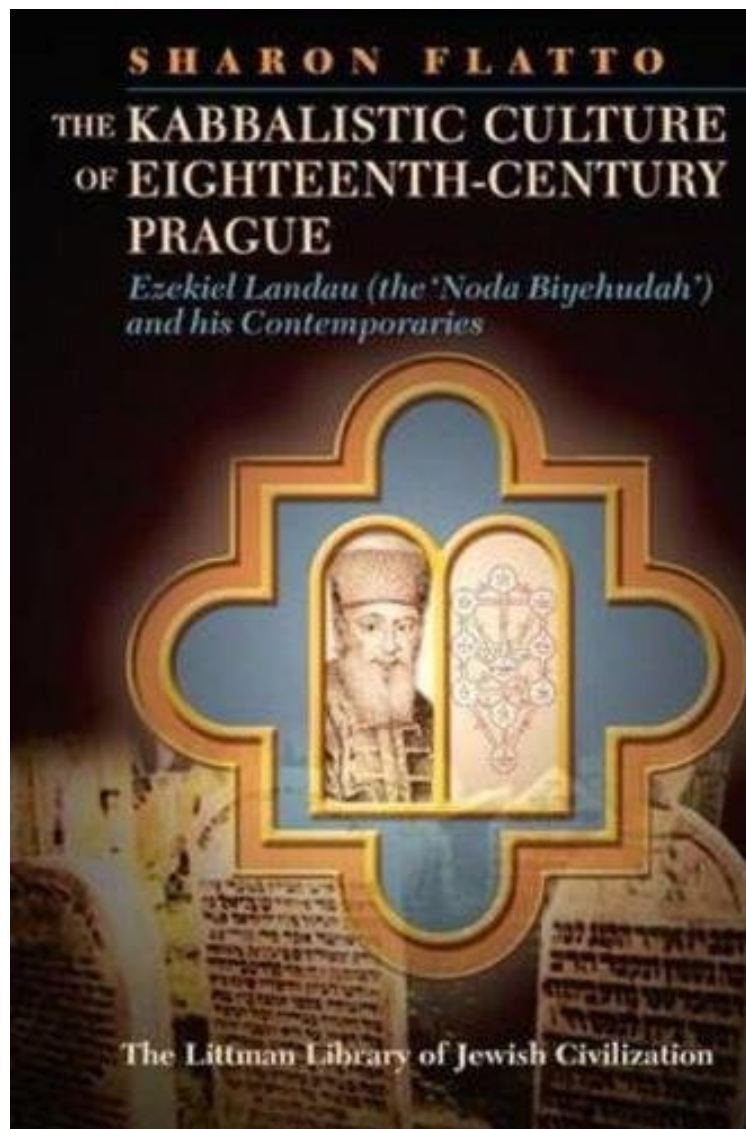


(Download ebook) Kabbalistic Culture of Eighteenth-Century Prague: Ezekiel Landau (the 'Noda Biyehudah') and His Contemporaries (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization)

Kabbalistic Culture of Eighteenth-Century Prague: Ezekiel Landau (the 'Noda Biyehudah') and His Contemporaries (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization)

Sharon Flatto

*ebooks | Download PDF | *ePub | DOC | audiobook*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1981372 in Books 2015-09-03Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 6.10 x .60 x 9.10l, .88 #File Name: 1906764794280 pages | File size: 58.Mb

Sharon Flatto : Kabbalistic Culture of Eighteenth-Century Prague: Ezekiel Landau (the 'Noda Biyehudah') and His Contemporaries (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Kabbalistic Culture of Eighteenth-Century Prague: Ezekiel Landau (the

'Noda Biyehudah') and His Contemporaries (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Story of a Drab Era
By Michael Lewyn
The first half of this book focuses on Jewish life in 18th-century Prague, and the second half focuses on Rabbi Ezekiel Landau's interest in kabbalism (Jewish mysticism). R. Landau, the Chief Rabbi of Prague, was a brilliant man most known for writing lots and lots of responsa (rulings on Jewish law). Landau and other Prague rabbis favored ascetic practices such as lots and lots of fasting (even on the Sabbath!), often based on kabbalah. Reading this made me realize how grim life must have been in that place and time; although there were no major massacres of Jews, they faced oppressive taxation, government rules that forced many Jews out of Prague, and a rabbinate whose major interest was to tell them to be as miserable and to fear the afterlife. No wonder Jews flocked to all manner of unusual movements, both the heretical (such as the false messiah Sabbatai Zevi and the sex-obsessed Jacob Frank) and the more moderate (such as the Hasidim, who also spread mysticism but were a bit less puritanical than the mainstream rabbinate).
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Marden Paru
This about is about an important ancestor in our family
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By MICHAEL
Great author

Kabbalah, an esoteric lore whose study was traditionally restricted, played a surprisingly prominent and far-reaching role in eighteenth-century Prague. In this book Sharon Flatto uncovers the centrality of this mystical tradition for Prague's influential Jewish community and its pre-eminent rabbinic authority, Ezekiel Landau, chief rabbi from 1754 to 1793. A towering eighteenth-century rabbinic leader who is best known for his halakhic responsa collection the *Noda biyehudah*, Landau is generally considered a staunch opponent of esoteric practices and public kabbalistic discourse. Flatto challenges this portrayal, exposing the importance of kabbalah in his work and thought and demonstrating his novel use of teachings from diverse kabbalistic schools. She also identifies the historical events and cultural forces underlying his reluctance to discuss kabbalah publicly, including the rise of the hasidic movement and the acculturation spurred by the 1781 Habsburg Toleranzpatent. In telling this story, the study offers the first systematic overview of the eighteenth-century Jewish community of Prague, and the first critical account of Landau's life and writings, which continue to shape Jewish law and rabbinic thought to this day. Extensively examining Landau's rabbinic corpus, as well as a variety of archival and published German, Yiddish, and Hebrew sources, it provides a unique glimpse into the spiritual and psychological world of eighteenth-century Prague Jewry. Reconstructing the intellectual world and traditional society in which Landau lived, this study reveals the dominance of rabbinic culture in Prague during this transitional period, the ongoing significance of kabbalistic ideas and practices, and the city's numerous distinguished figures and institutions. Its analysis of the spiritual trends that animated this culture demonstrates that Prague's late eighteenth-century rabbinate was more influential, more conservative, and less open to modernization than has been recognized. Debunking the widespread scholarly portrayal of Prague as primarily under the influence of the modernizing West, Flatto shows that this key central European city was shaped more by traditional east European Jewish culture than by Western Enlightenment thought. By unravelling and exploring the many diverse threads that were woven into the fabric of Prague's eighteenth-century Jewish life, the book offers a comprehensive portrayal of rabbinic culture at its height in one of the largest and most important centres of European Jewry.

'Challenges the conventional portrait of Landau as a staunch opponent of esoteric practices and reveals the centrality of kabbalistic thought in this key central European city.' *Shofar* 'Offers a fascinating picture of Jewish culture in eighteenth-century Prague . . . based on rigorous analyses of texts and a wide-ranging collection of sources. This volume gives the English reader a fine introduction to central European rabbinic culture and sheds new light on hasidism and on modernization in Jewish religion. It does so in a very readable and clear manner.' Shaul Stampfer, *Religious Studies* 'A very good book. The scholarship is first rate, with every claim backed up by evidence. The presentation is also excellent, being well organized, clear and above all interesting . . . the author is to be congratulated and the book firmly recommended.' A.H. Lesser, *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 'Constructs a map of Landau's views on kabbalistic matters . . . that changes how we look at eighteenth-century Judaism . . . Flatto's book is crucial for any attempt to understand eighteenth-century Jews.' Joseph Davis, *Jewish History* 'Remarkable intellectual biography . . . a major contribution to the understanding of the diffusion and the role of Kabbalah in Europe in the eighteenth century. The book renews our knowledge of the cultural history of Ashkenazi society and, especially, of the Jewish community of Prague during the premodern period . . . An innovative aspect of Flatto's book is the study of Landau's relationship to mysticism, which was not without some ambivalence . . . an important contribution to the study of the cultural history of Jewish communities in Europe in the eighteenth century. [The book] leads us to reconsider the transformation of Jewish culture, viewed as a complex whole made up of a plurality of influences, of cultural and religious components, and full of contradictions and tensions. This remarkable research demonstrates that the transformation of Jewish society was far from linear.' Jean Baumgarten, *H-Judaic*
About the Author
Sharon Flatto is Associate Professor and Director of the Graduate Program in the Department of Judaic Studies at Brooklyn College, City University of New York, specializing in early modern Jewish history, early modern and modern Jewish thought,

and kabbalah. Her research interests include mysticism in early modern Prague; early Hasidism; and the modernization of east and central European rabbinic culture. Professor Flatto received her Ph.D. in Jewish history from Yale University, after which she held a Postdoctoral Fellowship at Brown University. She has taught at Yale University, Queens College, Brown University, and Brooklyn College. The recipient of many awards and grants, she has contributed to learned journals and written articles for the YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe.