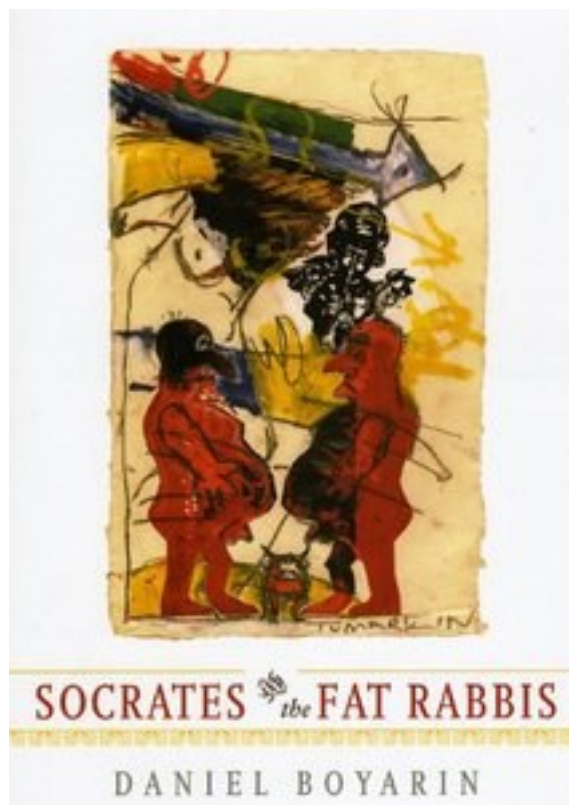


Socrates and the Fat Rabbis



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What kind of literature is the Talmud? To answer this question, Daniel Boyarin looks to an unlikely source: the dialogues of Plato. In these ancient texts he finds similarities, both in their unique combination of various genres and topics and in their dialogic structure. But Boyarin goes beyond the typological parallelism between the texts, arguing also for a cultural relationship.

In *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis*, Boyarin suggests that these dialogues are not dialogic

at all. Using Michael Bakhtin’s notion of represented dialogue and real dialogism, Boyarin demonstrates, through multiple close readings, that the give-and-take in these texts is actually monologic in spirit. At the same time, he shows that there are other elements that manifest genuine dialogicality. Boyarin ultimately singles out Menippean satire as the most important genre with which to understand both the Talmud and Plato, pointing out their seriocomic peculiarity.

An innovative contribution to rabbinic studies, Socrates and the Fat Rabbis makes a major contribution to scholarship on the discursive and cultural practices of the ancient Mediterranean.

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