

Elliot K. Ginsburg
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Ann Arbor, MI 48108

EDUCATION

Ph.D., August 1984 in Religious Studies. Concentration in Judaica. University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. *Thesis Topic*: "The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah." Adviser: Dr. Arthur Green.

M.A. in Religious Studies. Fall 1980. University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

B.A. in Philosophy, May, 1974. University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois. Graduated *magna cum laude*.

AREAS OF TEACHING

Kabbalah and Hasidism; Medieval and Modern Jewish Thought; Judaism as Religion; Perspectives on the Holocaust; Jewish Spirituality; Approaches to the Study of Religion; Myth, Ritual and Symbol; Emotion and the Senses in Religion; Ritual and Community; Embodiment and Gender in Mystical Traditions; Israel and Palestine

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Kabbalah and Hasidism; History of Jewish Spirituality; Mysticism and Popular Piety; Midrashic and Kabbalistic Hermeneutics; Ritual Theory; Emotion and the Senses in Judaism; Mappings of Time in Judaism; Piyyut (Liturgical Poetry), Popular Culture and Musical Performance

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Associate Professor of Jewish Studies and Jewish Thought, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Appointment in the Department of Near Eastern Studies. Association with the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies and the former Program on Studies in Religion. July 1991-

Member of the ALEPH Ordination Program Steering Committee, Director of the Jewish Mysticism track, 2001-present; Director of the ALEPH Beloved Land: Israel and Palestine through the Kaleidoscope program, 2017-present. Director of Study and Mentor, 2001- present. Taught a broad range of courses on Jewish mystical traditions, spiritual and devotional practice, and contemporary renewal.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Books

Current writing project: 2 volume study on the cycle of the Jewish Spiritual year, through the eyes of 5 hasidic masters. This is a work of engaged scholarship, both a historically contextualized study and “close reading” of the ebb and flow of spiritual life, as mapped out by these masters; and a work of constructive re-casting, as I enter into dialogue with these masters, and limn spiritual practices and novel interpretations through the lens of a multi-tiered, four-worlds approach.

The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989. 341 + xx pages. New printing, Littman Press, Cambridge, England, 2008.

Sod ha-Shabbat: The Mystery of the Sabbath. From the *Tola'at Ya'aqov* of R. Meir ibn Gabbai. Translated and with a critical commentary. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989. 264 + xvi pages.

Selected Articles

“On Entering the Spiritual Life: Jacob’s moment of deeper Waking in the *Degel Mahaneh Efra'im*,” for the Elijah Interfaith Institute cross-traditional collection on Entering the Spiritual Life. (Online publication, July 2012) <http://hermes-elijah.org/index.php/courses/item/109-2j5-elliott-k-ginsburg-jacob-s-moment-of-deeper-waking>

“Mystical Letters, Hebrew,” in A. Norich and J. Miller, *Critical Terms in Jewish Language Studies*, University of Michigan, 2011, pp. 33-35. “Leaping and Waiting: Reflections on a Slonimer Text: A Shpatzir in Four Movements” in G. Milgram, ed. *Seeking and Soaring: A Festschrift in honor of Rabbi Shohama Harris Wiener*, (New Rochelle, Judaism Press, 2009), pp. 210-231. (Revised version, published 2014)

“Sabbath and Love in Jewish Tradition” in the *Encyclopedia of Love in World Religions* edited by Yudit Kornfield Greenberg, (ABC CLIO Press, Santa Barbara: 2008), Vol. 2, pp. 517-520.

“Fragrance, Olfactory Symbolism and the Song of Songs,” *Love in Jewish traditions*,” in the *Encyclopedia of Love in World Religions* edited by Yudit Kornfield Greenberg, (ABC CLIO Press, Santa Barbara: 2008), Vol. 1: pp. 237-239.

“On the Registers and Resonances of Jewish Myth”. Foreword to Howard Schwartz’s, “Tree of Souls: A Jewish Mythology” (Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. xxv-lxiii.

“The *neshamah* is always praying’: Towards a Typology of Prayer in Jewish Mystical Tradition (a first offering),” in *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church vol. 3. Liturgy and Life*, eds. B. Neil and G. Dunn (St. Pauls/Australian Catholic University Press, 2003), pp. 353-392.

“Beyond Words: Approaching Silence in Hassidic Prayer” in *Writings from the Heart of Jewish Renewal* (Philadelphia, PA: 2003), pp. 24-33.

“The B’nai Yissaschar on the Meaning of Being Yisra’el”. *New Menorah Journal*, No. 67, Spring 2002, pp. 9,13.

- “A Little that Contains a Lot’: On Spice Containers and the Unfolding of Inspiration at Havdalah” in B. Gomberg and S.S. Yudovin, *The Havdalah Spice Container* (Spertus Institute/Spertus Museum, Chicago, Illinois), 1998, pp. 7-11 and 16.
- “Rituals of Preparation [in Zoharic Kabbalah]”, in Lawrence Fine, ed. *Essential Papers in Kabbalah*. New York University Press, 1995, pp. 400-437.

ACADEMIC HONORS & GRANTS

- Wornom Grant, Religious Education Association for “Beloved Land: Israel and Palestine through the Kaleidoscope,” a multi-perspectival educational initiative for Jewish rabbinical students and clergy. Awarded November 2019.
- Frankel Institute Fellow, Fall 2010 for *Vé-yesh sod la-davar* (The Word’s the Thing): A Thick Description of Jewish Mystical Prayer Practices
- W.W. Kellogg Foundation, Grant for Outreach Scholarship: Jewish Mystical Teachings and Contemplative Practice (2003-04)
- Recipient of the Sanford Seltzer Chair in Jewish Mysticism, HUC-UAHC, 1998-2003
- Fellow of the Institute of the Humanities, University of Michigan, 1994-95. Rackham Grant, University of Michigan. Summer 1993.
- National Endowment for the Humanities Travel to Collection grant. For Spring-Summer 1993.
- National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend. June-August 1991. For a chapter length study of the motif of mystical marriage in the teachings of one of the earliest known kabbalists, Judah ben Yaqar.
- H.H. Powers Travel Grant, Oberlin College. For manuscript research in England, June 1991. Declined.
- Research and Development Grant-in-Aid, Oberlin College, Summer 1990. For study of kabbalistic texts and manuscripts.
- Research and Development Grant-in-Aid, Oberlin College, Summer 1989. For study of kabbalistic manuscripts.
- National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for College Teachers, 1987-88.
- Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute for Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (in the Department of Jewish Thought), 1987-88.
- Ford Research Fellowship. Administered by Oberlin College. Fall Semester 1988.
- H.H. Powers Travel Grant, Oberlin College. For research in Eastern Europe and Israel. Summer 1986.
- National Foundation for Jewish Culture Post-doctoral Publication Grant. December 1985. Research and Development Grant-in-Aid, Oberlin College, Summer 1985. For study of kabbalistic manuscripts.
- Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture Dissertation Fellowship 1981-83.
- University of Pennsylvania Teaching Fellowship, 1974-78 and 1979-1982.