

Department of Jewish Studies

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UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

SUMMER 2008

JEWISH MYSTICISM AND KABBALAH: GENDER AND SEXUALITY

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May 27 – June 20; MTWTh 1:30-4:15 PM

Scott Hall, Room 219

Instructor: Professor Azzan Yadin

The course has two main goals. First, to provide a survey of the history and evolution of the Jewish mystical traditions leading up to, and including, classical Kabbalah, culminating in the Zohar (*Book of Splendor*) in 13th century Spain. The main texts covered will be the Book of Creation (*Sefer Yetzirah*), the Book of Illumination (*Sefer ha-Bahir*), and the Zohar itself. The second goal is to examine the role gender and sexuality play in the way these texts represent both God and humanity. The focus here will be on the gendered nature and erotic dynamics within the divinity, and the way these affect human behavior. The class has no prerequisites and is appropriate for students with no background in Jewish studies. All the readings are in English.