

Theodore A. Perry

Faculty Associate in Jewish Scriptures

EDUCATION:

Bowdoin College, B. A. in French, summa cum laude

Université de Bordeaux, France, Fulbright Fellow and

graduate student in French Literature and Philosophy

Yale University, M. A. in French Literature and Medieval Studies

Yale University, Ph.D. in Romance Philology

Brandeis University, Post-Doctoral Study in Near-Eastern & Judaic Studies

Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Post-Doctoral Study in Bible and Hebrew Literature

Jewish Theological Seminary, NEH Summer Institute on

“The Post-Biblical Foundations of Western Civilization”

Columbia University, NEH Summer Institute on “Love in

Renaissance Art and Literature”

Yale University, NEH Summer Seminar on “Dante

and the Philosophy of Education in the Middle Ages”

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

2013- Faculty Associate in Hebrew Scriptures, Hartford Seminary

2011-2013 Corcoran Visiting Chair in Christian-Jewish Learning, Boston College

1995-2000 Professor of Comparative Literature,
Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beersheva, Israel

1994-95 Cardin Chair in Jewish Studies,

Loyola College in Maryland

1986-87 Visiting Fulbright Professor

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

1980-1994 Professor of Modern and Classical Languages,

The University of Connecticut

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS (total: 12):

1. Art and Meaning in Berceo's "Vida de Santa Oria." New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968.

2. Léon Hébreu, Dialogues d'amour. The French translation attributed to Pontus de Tyard and published in Lyon, 1551, by Jean deTournes. Edited, with an introduction and notes, by T. A. Perry. University of North Carolina Studies in Comparative Literature, no. 59. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1974.

3. Erotic Spirituality: The Integrative Tradition from Leone Ebreo to John Donne. University: University of Alabama Press, 1980.

"one of the outstanding academic books of 1980-81" Choice Magazine (Journal of College and Research Libraries).

4. Santob de Carrión, Proverbios morales. A critical edition, with introduction and extensive commentary. Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1986.

5. ed., with Charles B. Faulhaber and Richard P. Kinkade. Studies in Honor of Gustavo Correa. Potomac: Scripta Humanistica, 1986.

6. The Moral Proverbs of Santob de Carrión: Jewish Wisdom in Christian Spain. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.

"Perry's deep knowledge of Rabbinic literature brings just the kind of enlightenment that the study of Shem Tov was crying for"

Francisco Márques-Villanueva, Harvard University

7. Dialogues with Kohelet. Penn State, 1993.

"an important contribution to biblical scholarship"

David M. Gunn, Columbia Seminary

8. Wisdom Literature and the Structure of Proverbs. Penn State, 1993.

"There is no other study of the structure of proverbs that can match this one in scope or in heuristic utility"

James L. Crenshaw ["the foremost authority in the United States on scholarship in Old Testament wisdom," Walter Brueggemann]

9. The Honeymoon is Over: Jonah's Arguments with God. Hendrickson, 2006.

"Perry provides a wonderful addition to Jonah literature, with surprises on every page." Barbara Green

10. God's Twilight Zone: Wisdom in the Hebrew Bible. Hendrickson, 2008.

11. Traces of Sepharad: Etchings of Judeo-Spanish Proverbs. By Marc Shanker. With Introductions by T. A. Perry and Antonio Munoz Molina. New York: Gravity Free Press, 2008.

12. Vanity of Vanity, Breath of Breaths: Qohelet's Guide to Joyous Living. An essay on the spirituality of Ecclesiastes. Forthcoming at Cambridge UP.

IN PREPARATION (BOOKS):

Figures of Speech, Figures of Thought: Rhetoric in the Hebrew Bible.

Dream-Kisses: Spiritual Eroticism and the Biblical Tradition. This is a sequel to my earlier Erotic Spirituality, working forward from the Song of Songs. Essays on Song of Songs, The Judeo-Spanish poetic tradition, Dante, the Plural of Ecstasy, and discussion of various interpretive strategies such as Levinas' and Ricoeur's.

Wisdom Continuations: Post-Biblical Traditions. A sequel to God's Twilight Zone.

Abot, The Foundations of Jewish Wisdom: A Literary and Pedagogical Commentary (250 pages completed)

SELECTED ARTICLES (SINCE 1987 ONLY):

"Quadripartite Wisdom Sayings and the Structure of Proverbs." Proverbium 4 (1987): 187-210.

"Judeo-Christian Forces and Artistic Tensions in Medieval Spanish Letters: The Case of the Libro de los buenos proverbios." La Chispa '87: Selected Proceedings. New Orleans, 1987.

"Dialogues with Kohelet: Towards a New Translation of Ecclesiastes." LIT 1 (1990): 191-98.

"A Poetics of Absence: The Structure and Meaning of Chaos in Genesis 1:2." Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 58 (1993): 3-11.

"The Coordination of ky / 'l kn in Cant. i 1-3 and Related Texts." Vetus Testamentum 55 (2005): 55,4: 528-41.

"Cain's Sin in Genesis 4:1-7: Oracular Ambiguity and How to Avoid It." Prooftexts 25 (2006): 258-75.

"Jewish Metaphysical Poetry?" Review Essay of Adena Tanenbaum, The Contemplative Soul: Hebrew Poetry and Philosophical Theory in Medieval Spain. Leiden: Brill, 2002, pp. 290 + xi-xvi. Prooftexts, 2006.

"On Solidarity with Creation: Job, Jonah, Levinas." Job of Uz: Suffering of the Righteous and the Justice of God. Eds. Michael M. Caspi and John T. Greene. Gorgias Press, 2012 (Proceedings of the SBL Convention).

"Jonah's Theology of Repentance." In Universalism and Particularism at Sodom and Gomorrah: Essays in Memory of Ron Pirson. Ed. Diana Lipton. Ancient Israel and Its Literature, Number 11. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.

"Death and Future Life: A Jewish Meditation." In J. Harold Ellens, ed. *Heaven, and Afterlife in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, Vol 1, *End Time and Afterlife in Judaism*, Chapter 9, Westport, CT: Praeger, 2012.

SELECTED LECTURES AND PAPERS (since 1985 only):

"Kohelet in Spain: Notes on Skeptical Theology." Invited lecture read at Yale University, December, 1985.

"Santob de Carrión y sus críticos." Invited paper read at Yale University, December, 1985.

"Conservative Centers: Stoics, Erotics, and Paremiology." Read at the 6th Beer-Sheva Colloquium of the Ben-Gurion University, June 3, 1986

"The Translation and Structure of Jewish Wisdom Sayings" (prolegomenon to a new translation of the Book of Ecclesiastes). Invited Lecture, delivered at Boston University, January 29, 1988.

"Wisdom Structures in Kohelet 3:1-8." SBL International Meeting, Sheffield, England, August, 1988.

"On Kohelet's Theology: Man's Time and God's Presence." Presented at the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Rome, July 15, 1991.

"Sephardic Exegesis." Presented at the Annual Convention of the Modern Language Association, San Francisco, Dec. 27, 1991.

"Montaigne y Kohelet sobre las Vanidades de este mundo: Hacia una filosofía sefardí." Plenary lecture, Simposio Internacional sobre Lengua y Literatura Sefardíes, Barcelona, November 9, 1992.

"Leone Ebreo's Contribution to European Literature." Read at the MLA Annual National Convention, NYC, Dec. 29, 1992.

"Annotating the Absurd: Kohelet's Maxims of Maximal Discontent." Read at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Washington, D. C., November 21, 1993.

"What is the Judeo-Christian Tradition? Towards Renewing the Inter-Faith Dialogue." Invited lecture, delivered at Loyola College, Baltimore, Maryland, March 23, 1994

"The Insertion of Genesis 38 and Judah's Rise to Power." Paper delivered to the Annual Convention of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 20, 1994, Chicago.

"Psalm 1 as a Dialogic Prologue." International Conference of the Society for Biblical Literature, Lausanne, July 29, 1997.

"Kohelet's Minimalist Theology." Leuven Biblical Colloquium, July 31, 1997.

"Cain's Sin and Oracular Double-Talking (Gen 4:1-7)." World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, August 4, 1997.

"Models of Erotic Spirituality in the Song of Songs Tradition."

Invited lecture, University of Pennsylvania, April, 1999.

"Jonah's Theology." Invited paper, International Conference of the Society for Biblical Literature, Rome, July 1, 2009.

"Qohelet's Very Final Words: A Judging God or Judging God." Paper delivered at the International Conference of the Society for Biblical Literature, Rome, July 2, 2009.

"Qohelet's Confession and the Path of Moral Philosophy." Paper delivered at the Annual Convention of the Society for Biblical Literature, New Orleans, November 22, 2009.

"Squirming Facts for Squamous Minds: Qohelet's Step from Anthropomorphism Towards the Outside." Paper delivered at the Annual Convention of the Society for Biblical Literature, New Orleans, November 23, 2009.

"Levinas' Theory of Exegesis: God as Meta-Metaphor." AJS Annual Convention. Boston, December 19, 2010.

"Qohelet, Levinas, and the Peshat or Literal Meaning of Hebel." SBL Annual Convention. London, July 5, 2011.

"Levinas on Job and Human Suffering." SBL Annual Convention, Seminar on Biblical Characters in the Three Traditions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam). London, July 6, 2011.

"Levinas as Exegete, God as the Metaphor of Metaphors." BC Department of Theology, October 5, 2011

"Levinas on Job and Human Suffering." SBL Annual Convention, Seminar on Biblical Characters in the Three Traditions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam). London, July 6, 2011.

"The Enigma of Ecclesiastes as a Pseudo-Authored, Transformational and Foundational Text." International Psychoanalysis Conference, Malmö, Sweden, August, 2011.

"The Book of Qohelet as an Enigma." Invited paper, Harvard University, January 30, 2012.

"Vertical, Lateral, and Peshat Metaphors in Qohelet: A Levinassian Analysis," Society for Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Chicago, 11/19/2012.

"Levinas on Enjoyment: A Philosophical Analysis of the Four Elements in Biblical Cosmologies." Association for Jewish Studies Annual Conference, Chicago, December 18, 2012.

"New Perspectives on Ecclesiastes." Invited Lectures, University of Virginia, February 10-11, 2013.

"Love of Wisdom and Wisdom of Love: The Song of Songs as a Wisdom Text." Invited paper at the World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, July 29, 2013.

"The Anatomy and Evolution of Discourse in Psalm 19." SBL Annual Convention, Baltimore, November 23, 2013,

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

I was responsible for organizing the 2012 Corcoran Chair Conference:

Levinas, Biblical Exegesis, and Literature, Boston College, March 18-19

This interfaith and interdisciplinary conference gathered together philosophers, theologians, and literary scholars. Its purpose was to study how the newly expanded Levinas corpus can help us be better readers of the Bible and literature in general.

In 2012-13 I organized two conferences:

1. Conference on **EVIL**. Sponsored in cooperation with the Departments of Theology and Philosophy. April 22
2. Conference on **The Psalter in Art, Music, and Interpretation**. April 14.

FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, GRANTS AND AWARDS:

James Bowdoin Scholar

Phi Beta Kappa, Junior year at Bowdoin

Fulbright Fellow, Université de Bordeaux

Woodrow Wilson Fellow, Yale University

NEH Grant for Younger Scholars for year's study in Israel

Society for Religion in Higher Education Grant, for year's study in Israel

Fulbright Senior Grant, 1985-86

Nominated by the Undergraduate Student Government as "Best Professor at the University of Connecticut" 1993

Provost's Grant for Semester's Leave of Absence for Research, 1993

Jerome S. Cardin Chair in Judaic Studies, Loyola College in Maryland, 1995

Corcoran Visiting Chair in Christian-Jewish Relations, Boston College, 2011-13

TEACHING FIELDS and RESEARCH INTERESTS:

The Hebrew Bible

Wisdom Literature

Comparative Literature

Religious Studies

Paremiology

Medieval Sephardic (Spanish Jewish) and Spanish Literature