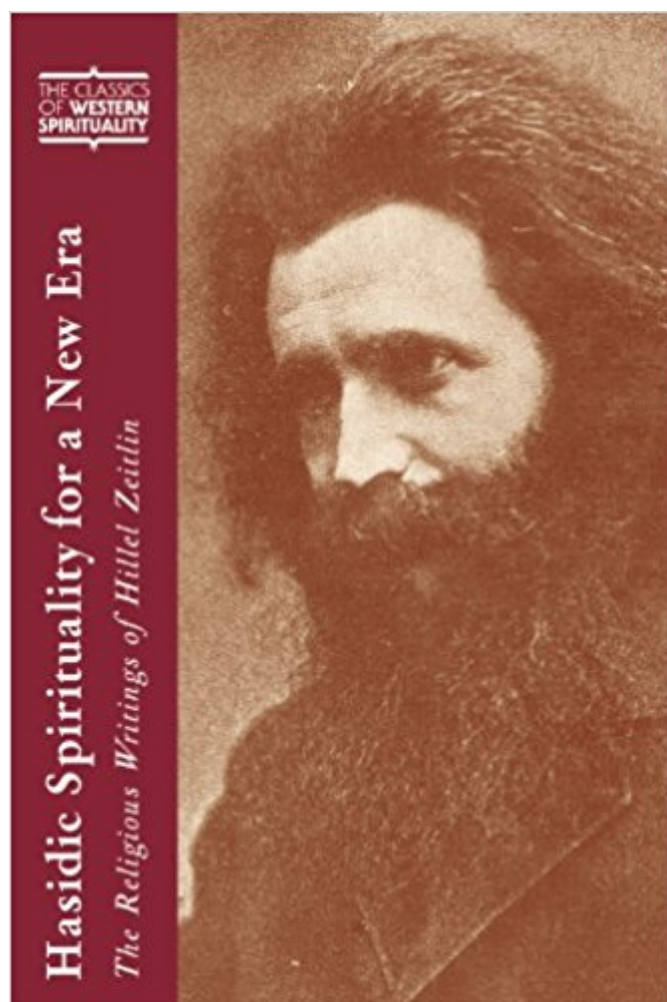


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Hasidic Spirituality For A New Era: The Religious Writings Of Hillel Zeitlin (Classics Of Western Spirituality) (Classics Of Western Spirituality (Paperback))





Synopsis

A preeminent scholar of Jewish thought and spirituality presents the first-ever English translation of selected writings of the Hasidic martyr of the Warsaw Ghetto, Hillel Zeitlin (1871-1942).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Arthur Green is Rector of the Rabbinical School and Irving Brudnick Professor of Jewish Philosophy and Religion at Hebrew College in Newton, Massachusetts. Recognized as one of the world's preeminent authorities on Jewish thought and spirituality, he is the author of several books, including *Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl* (Classics of Western Spirituality). Rabbi Green received his PhD from Brandeis and an MHL and rabbinic ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

This diverse collection of translations from a brilliant poetic soul, who stood at the crossroads of Hasidic mysticism and modernity, addresses just about all of the key issues of concern to contemporary students trying to integrate the diverse spiritual forces that impact our lives and way of thinking. Hillel Zeitlin -- in his own way, like Rav Kook and later Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel -- came from a devout home, was exposed to the Haskalah in full force during his youth, but eventually created within himself and via his incisive, impassioned writings a bridge between worlds in which the true spirit of the Chassidic masters could be transmitted. And this at a time when that spirit was beginning to dissipate in the religious communities of Eastern Europe. The style of

translation is clear and literary, not "academese," but the annotation and informative introductions will satisfy the scholar as well. Dr. Green gave this collection the title "Hasidic Spirituality for a New Era" -- one of his lifelong pursuits -- and that's just what it is. Some highlights are Zeitlin's imaginary interview with the Baal Shem Tov; "Fundamentals of Hasidism," his lucid encapsulation of early Hasidic mystical doctrine, which remains unmatched until today; profound reflections on "Judaism and Universal Religion" (in response to William James); and a group of prayer-poems, several inspired by Rabbi Nathan of Bratslav's Likutey Tefillot, translated by another Judaica scholar with a fine literary gift, Joel Rosenberg. Plus the physical book is an aesthetic pleasure (not least of all the wild-looking cover photo).

This is one of the most important Jewish books I have ever encountered. Arthur Green has done a great service by translating Hillel Zeitlin's profound writings and by finally allowing the English reader to encounter Zeitlin's brilliant, deeply honest religious thinking.

This book is an eye opening bittersweet look into the Jewish spiritual world in Europe between the World Wars. The spiritual intensity and grace exhibited by Hillel Zeitlin as he met his fate is inspirational. The book as a whole describes a genuine spiritual quest that helps others who want to follow in the path of "Yavneh". I only wish it was longer with some examples of his Zohar translation project's mystical aspirations fleshed out in more detail.

The book is simply transcendent. Zeitlin is shown to be both a product of his unique time and a mystic capable of transcending time. Green's translation, as always, is skillful and on the mark. Green causes Zeitlin's lips to move from the grave and will surely cause him to be remembered as one of the great modern Chasidic thinkers of the 20th century.

Fascinating. A thinker and teacher worth listening to and thinking along with, and his essay on the fundamentals of Hasidism is excellent, worth the purchase of the whole book.

Wonderful book. Joel Rosenberg's essay on Heitlin's poetry is not too be missed. Fascinating and inspiring for those of us interested in neo-Hasidism.

A voice of great spirituality, from a time not so long ago, but so far away

Rabbi Green's work is illuminating

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