Sheila Delany, SFU, English

English 380: Literature in Translation: Medieval Jewish Literature

Summer 2000

Jewish culture has a continuous existence of nearly three millennia. This course isolates a small portion of it to read, in translation, work composed during the Middle Ages by authors from several countries and in several genres: parable and fantasy, lyric and lament, polemic, marriage manual, romance. Some of our material has not been translated into English before and is not yet available in print. We are fortunate to have brand-new pre-print copies of Meir of Norwich and especially of the famous Yiddish romance the Bovo-buch (in the course-pack)—an early modern version of a widely-read (non-Jewish) medieval text. Primary texts will be supplemented by scholarly books on which each student will offer a short class presentation.

Required Texts:

* Rabbinic fantasies. Imaginative narratives... Ed. David Stern and Mark Mirsky.
* Selected poems of Shmuel HaNagid. Trans. Peter Cole.
* SFU Coursepack.

Coursework:

Long paper (about 12 pages) 25%
Class presentation (about 20 minutes) 25%
Attendance/participation 20%
Final examination 30%
English 382 Cultural Studies: Medieval Jewish Literature

Spring 2002

Class schedule

JANUARY

Thurs 3. Introduction/terms/housekeeping.

Tues 8. MIDRASH and other fictions, in Rabbinic fantasies. We'll start with the rabbinic parables. Choose one to speak about briefly in class. When reading the parables, try to discern the theological or political point, and literary techniques. You will find it helpful to consult the relevant Biblical locus in Tanakh or other bible.

Thur 10. "Jonah and the sailors" in RF. Compare with the biblical book of Jonah (Xerox). What differences do you notice?

Tues 15. Midrash on the Ten Commandments. Read scriptural 10 C (Xerox).

Thur 17. "Asher in the harem" in RF.

Tues 22. "The Misogynist" in RF.

Thur 24.

Tues 29. "The Jerusalemite" in RF.

Thur 31. Film: "Christians, Jews and Muslims in medieval Spain."

FEBRUARY

Tues 5. LYRIC. Shmuel HaNagid. Yehosef's preface to "Tehillim." Choose one poem from Tehillim to present, very briefly, in class. Glance through biblical book of Psalms to account for Hanagid's title to this diwan.

Thur 7. Tehillim.

Tues 12. Tehillim.

Thur 14. Mishle. Eliassef's preface; glance through "Proverbs"; choose one poem to present to class.
Tues 19. Kohelet. Glance through "Ecclesiastes"; choose one to present.

Thur 21. Mid-semester break, classes cancelled.


**MARCH**

Tues 5. POLEMIC. Kimchi, Book of the covenant, through p. 51. Note Kimchi's methods and argumentative techniques.
Thur 7. " to end, including additions.

Tues 12. Film: "The great Christian-Jewish debate of 1263."
Thur 14. MARTYRDOM AND LAMENT. "Legend of the 10 martyrs," in R.F.
Tues 19. Crusade massacre and other laments. Choose one to present in class.
Thur 21.


Thur 28. TBA.

**APRIL**

Tues 2. Other (secular) poetry, in Xerox.

Thur 4. "
English 304 Studies in medieval culture: The romance of the couple  

Class schedule

Tuesday Sept. 3, Thursday Sept. 5. No class on either of these days; instructor absent. The missing four hours will be rescheduled at class convenience.

Tuesday September 10. Introduction, terms, housekeeping.


Tues 17. " Chapters 9-16.


Thur 3. "


Thur 10. "

Tues 15. Last movement: reconciliation. (lines 5236-end, 6924).

Thur 17. " Paper #2 due in class.


Thur 31. " stanzas 177-201.


Thur 14. "


Thur 21. "


Classes end Monday December 2. Tuesday December 3 might be a good time for the 4 make-up hours. Your last paper will be due at or before the final examination.

There is a class list for this class, messages to which will be displayed to the entire class and to me—so it is good for announcements and general discussion; the address is engl304-d1@sfu.ca