

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.

The book of the covenant. By Joseph Kimhi. Trans. Frank Talmage.

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.

Tues 26. A MARRIAGE MANUAL. Holy letter, prologue and chapters 1-3.

Thur 28. " chapters 4-6.

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 RF.

Tues 19. Crusade massacre and other laments. Choose one to present in class.

Thur 21. "

Tues 26. Meir of Norwich, "Piyut" on the expulsion from England. Note literary/rhetorical features.

Thur 28. TBA.

APRIL

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

Thur 4. "

English 304 Studies in medieval culture: The romance of the couple

Fall 2002

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.

Thur 12. The adulterous couple: Tristan and Isolde. Chapters 1-8.

Tues 17. " Chapters 9-16.

Thur 19. " Chapters 17-24.

Tues 24. " Chapters 25-32.

Thur 26. " Chapters 33-40. Paper #1 due in class.

Tues October 1. The married couple: Erec and Enide. Prologue and start first movement (marriage: lines 1-2765; p. 125 in Gilbert). Return and discuss papers.

Thur 3. "

Tues 8. Second movement: testing (lines 2766-5235, p. 200 in Gilbert).

Thur 10. "

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

Thur 17. " Paper #2 due in class.

Tues 22. The same-sex couple: Amis and Amiloun. Stanzas 1-40. Return and discuss papers.

Thur 24. " stanzas 41-122.

Tues 29. " stanzas 123-176.

Thur 31. " stanzas 177-201.

Tues November 5. The courtly love couple: Troilus and Criseyde. Book 1.

Thur 7. " Paper #3 due in class.

Tues 12. " Book 2. Return and discuss papers.

Thur 14. "

Tues 19. " Book 3.

Thur 21. "

Tues 26. " Book 4.

Thur 28. " Book 5.

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