

Literature in Translation 272/Religion 272

Spring Term, 2011

Readings in the works of 20th-century authors writing in Yiddish and Hebrew, such as the Polish author Isaac B. Singer, the Russian author Sholem Aleichem, and the Israeli novelists Amos Oz and A. B. Yehoshua. These writings are studied as literary expressions of religious themes and as responses to the historical and religious crises of modern Jewish life in Europe, the United States, and Israel. The class views four films for additional insight into Yiddish and Israeli culture. Students write two interpretive papers and daily analyses of the readings and films. This is a discussion-centered course.

Texts

Isaac Bashevis Singer, *Gimpel the Fool and Other Stories*

___ *Enemies: A Love Story*

Ansky, *The Dybbuk*

Sholem Aleichem, *Tevye the Dairyman*

Amos Oz, *A Perfect Peace*

A. B. Yehoshua, *The Lover*

Yehudit Hendel, "Small Change"

Course-pack

Course Requirements

- * Draft of first half of term paper: 10%
- * 20-page term paper: how the Yiddish and Israeli selections address questions of life and reality: 30%
- * 1-page analyses of daily reading assignments: 20%
- * Two film presentations by student groups: 10%
- * Informed class participation (and presentation of your reading analysis) 25%
- * Summaries of assigned introductory essays: 5%

Classes and Assignments

April

25 Introduction to course. Introduction to Yiddish history and culture

26 *The Dybbuk* by S Ansky

Read *The Dybbuk* entire (but not introductions) [A = write 1-page analysis]

Read David Roskies' "Introduction to the Dybbuk and Other Writings" (excerpt) (summarize)

27 Morning: view film "The Dybbuk" (Poland 1937)

1.30-3.30 pm in Leyburn 201: discuss the film; discuss "Tevye Strikes It Rich"

Read "Tevye Strikes It Rich" in *Tevye the Dairyman* [no analysis due]

28 *Tevye the Dairyman*

Read pages 35-131 [A]

Read Introduction (skip Part 3) to *Tevye the Dairyman* by Hillel Halkin (summarize)

29 *Gimpel the Fool*

Read "Gimpel the Fool" "Man from Cracow" "The Mirror" "The Little Shoemakers" "Joy" [A]

Read Eisenberg's "Isaac B Singer: Passionate Primitive or Pious Puritan?" (summarize)

2 *Enemies: A Love Story*, Part 1

Read *Enemies* pp. 3-149 [A=analysis]

3 Yiddish Films – Group Project

Student groups (4) view Yiddish films and prepare presentations for Friday

Films: "A Letter to Mother" "Tevye" "Hester Street" "Fiddler on the Roof"

4 *Enemies: A Love Story*, Part 2

Read *Enemies* pp. 151-280 (end) [A]

Work on group film presentations for Thursday

5 **at 9.40 Group film presentations**

Work on draft of first half of term paper (on Yiddish literature); meetings with instructor to discuss paper

6 Introduction to Israeli culture and literature and to our Israeli authors

* **Draft due** in class: first half of term paper

- 9 *A Perfect Peace*, Part 1
Read *A Perfect Peace* pp. 3-147 [A]
- 10 Israeli (Hebrew) Films – Group Project
Student groups (4) view Israeli films and prepare presentations for Friday
Films: “They Were Ten” “Sallah” “The Band’s Visit” “Waltz with Bashir”
Read *A Perfect Peace* pp. 148-173 (no written analysis required)
- 11 *A Perfect Peace*, Part 2
Read *A Perfect Peace* pp. 174-291 [A]
- 12 **at 9.40 Group film presentations**
- 13 *A Perfect Peace*, Part 3; and *The Lover*, Part 1
Read *A Perfect Peace* pp. 292-374 (end) [A: write your analysis on this book, not *The Lover*]
Read “A Disgrace to the Map of Israel” by Omer-Sherman (summarize)
Read *The Lover* pp. 3-58
- 16 *The Lover*, Part 2
Read *The Lover* pp. 58-201 [A]
- 17 *The Lover* Part 3
Read *The Lover* pp. 202-352 (end) [A]
Read “Outraged Humanism: the fiction of A.B. Yehoshua” by G Morahg (summarize)
- 18 “Small Change” by Yehudit Hendel (novella)
Read “Small Change” and the “Forward” [A] (no summary)
- 19 Concluding class discussion of major themes in the readings and films (required)
Work on final paper
- 20 Work on paper; meet with instructor
- 21 at noon: *Term **Paper due***