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**Great Jewish Writers
(JSP/REL/LIT 131 & meets with ETS 184)**

An introduction to some of the best fiction written by Jewish authors such as S. Y. Abramovitsh, Sholem Aleichem, Franz Kafka, Isaac Babel, S. Y. Agnon, Elie Wiesel, Primo Levi, Philip Roth, and Bernard Malamud. Topics include modernization, rebellion against authority, alienation, childhood, superstition, and the Holocaust.

Schedule

- 13 Jan. Introductions
- 15 Jan. Delmore Schwartz, “A Bitter Farce” (Hand-out)
- 20 Jan. [No Class: Inauguration]
- 22 Jan. Selections from *Classic Yiddish Stories*
S. Y. Abramovitsh, “Fishke the Lame” and film clips from
the Yiddish film *Fishke the Lame (The Light Ahead, 1939)*
- 27 Jan. Sholem Aleichem, from the *Tevye Stories*: “Hodel”
and film clips from the Yiddish film *Tevye (1939)*
- 29 Jan. Sholem Aleichem, from the *Tevye Stories*: “Chava”
and film clips from *Fiddler on the Roof (1971)*
- 3 Feb. I. L. Peretz, from the Neo-Hasidic Stories:
“The Shtrayml,” “Kabbalists,” “The Rebbe’s Pipe”
- 5 Feb. I. L. Peretz, from the Neo-Hasidic Stories: “Teachings of the
Hasidim,” “If Not Higher,” “Between Two Mountains”

PAPER #1 DUE: Analyze Peretz’s use of narrative irony in these neo-hasidic stories (2 pages). Note: Literary irony involves “saying one thing and meaning another.” Do not discuss situational irony (when something is incongruous).

- 10 Feb. Franz Kafka, *The Complete Stories*, ed. Nahum Glatzer
 “Before the Law,” “An Imperial Message,”
 “The Great Wall of China,” “On Parables”
- 12 Feb. Franz Kafka, “The Hunter Gracchus” followed by “A Fragment”;
 Start “The Metamorphosis,” section I
- 17 Feb. Franz Kafka, “The Metamorphosis,” sections II and III
- 19 Feb. Franz Kafka, * “The Stoker” (course reader) and “A Country Doctor”
- 24 Feb. Isaac Babel, *The Complete Works*
 “Old Shloyme,” “Shabos-Nakhamu,” “The King,” “How Things Were
 Done in Odessa”
- 26 Feb. Isaac Babel, “The Story of My Dovecote,” “First Love,” “The
 Awakening,” “Guy de Maupassant”
- 3 March Isaac Babel, “Gedali,” “My First Goose,” “The Rabbi,” “Zamosc,”
 “The Rabbi’s Son”
- 5 March Review of Isaac Babel’s Stories
PAPER #2 DUE: Discuss the tension between tradition and
 modernity in two or three of Babel’s stories, showing how this is
 also reflected in literary form.
- [10-12 March SPRING BREAK—take Agnon along!]
- 17 March S. Y. Agnon, *A Simple Story*, chapters 1-20
- 19 March S. Y. Agnon, *A Simple Story*, chapters 21-37
- 24 March Elie Wiesel, *Night*, pp. 3-65
- 26 March Elie Wiesel, *Night*, pp. 66-115
- 31 March Aharon Appelfeld, “Badenheim 1939”
- 2 April *Primo Levi, “Vanadium” (course reader)

- 7 April Philip Roth, *‘‘Defender of the Faith’’ (course reader)
- 9 April [No Class: Passover—read Roth’s novel!]
- 14 April Philip Roth, *The Ghost Writer*
- 16 April Philip Roth, *The Ghost Writer*
PAPER #3 DUE: Analyze Roth’s use of ambiguity in connection with other literary techniques.
- 21 April [No Class: Mayfest]
- 23 April *Henry Roth, ‘‘The Surveyor’’ (course reader)
 *Bernard Malamud, ‘‘The Magic Barrel’’ (course reader)
- 28 April *Nathan Englander, ‘‘The Twenty-seventh Man’’ (course reader)
 *Grace Paley, ‘‘Goodbye and Good Luck’’ (course reader)
- 1 May Final Examination, 8-10 a.m. (no rescheduling, please)

Texts (in order of appearance):

- Classic Yiddish Stories of S. Y. Abramovitsh, Sholem Aleichem, and I. L. Peretz.* Ed. Ken Frieden. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004.
- Kafka, Franz. *The Complete Stories.* Ed. Nahum Glatzer. New York: Schocken, 1976 (or subsequent Schocken editions of *The Complete Stories*).
- Babel, Isaac. *The Complete Works.* Ed. Nathalie Babel. Trans. Peter Constantine. New York: Norton, 2002.
- Agnon, S. Y. *A Simple Story.* Trans. Hillel Halkin. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000.
- Wiesel, Elie. *Night.* Trans. Marion Wiesel. New York: Hill and Wang, 2006.
- Appelfeld, Aharon. *Badenheim 1939.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2001.
- Roth, Philip. *The Ghost Writer.* New York: Vintage, 1995.

* Course Reader available at The Copy Centers, Marshall Square Mall

Goals: While learning about Judaic literature and ethnic literary traditions, students should develop skills such as close reading and rhetorical analysis, critical thinking, and scholarly writing.

Papers should be 3-page (double-spaced) close analyses, focusing on literary aspects such as narrative techniques or figurative language.

Requirements and Grading: Three three-page papers (60% of grade); careful preparation of readings, regular attendance, and class participation (20% of grade); quizzes and final examination (20% of grade).

Final Examination: The final includes four sections that include 1) the definitions of literary terms; 2) identification of major authors, characters, and other elements in the stories read in this course; 3) identification and interpretation of passages from the stories; and 4) two short analytical essays.

Extra Credit: There will be opportunities for you to earn extra credit by attending pertinent lectures on Judaic Studies outside of class. After you go to an event of this kind, submit a one-paragraph synopsis to receive credit.

Plagiarism: Always acknowledge your sources, because plagiarism is a serious offense. Don't even think of taking anything off the web without using quotation marks. It's unethical, as easy for professors to catch as it is for students to steal, and the consequence is a failing grade. Or, in other words:

“The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort.” Further information at <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>.

Attendance: Your final grade will be adversely affected if you miss more than two classes. Save these permissible absences for when you really need them!

Disability-Related Accommodations: “Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary.” For further information, see the ODS website, <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/>