

Leah Garrett: Monash University

Special Topics: Jewish Literature of Subversion

Before the Holocaust, the Yiddish speaking world played a critical role in the transmission of culture from East to West and West to East, lying as it did in the Pale of Settlement between Russia and Western Europe. Jewish authors rewrote *A Thousand and One Nights*, *Don Quixote*, *Aesop's Fables*, *King Lear* and many other texts, transforming them into writings with Jewish and European characteristics. They also played with genre traditions, presenting seemingly mainstream narratives from a subversive standpoint. In this seminar we will study the Jewish subversive tradition, with an eye to how the writings challenged the basic precepts of how literature worked by deconstructing many elements of the novel and short story. The writer's critiques were leveled both internally at Jewish writing, and externally, at European and American discourse. We will thus read many of the works in conjunction with the original text that the Jewish one was actively subverting.

Evaluation: Grading will be based on class participation, preparation, and a research paper. The research paper is due the final day of class and should be 15-20 pages with at least three outside critical sources. Each student will also be required to lead one of the classes. In advance of the class, each student will be required to assign a piece of critical theory. The student leader will focus her/his seminar not only on interpreting the text, but on suggesting ways that the theory can

3/26: Introduction

3/28: Joseph Perl's Revealer of Secrets:
Introduction,
pp. 1-30
Xeroxes

4/2: Perl: 30-111

4/4: Perl: 111-185

4/9: Perl: 185-243

4/11: The Brief Travels of Benjamin the Third: Introduction and 301-326

4/16: Finish Benjamin

4/18: Tannhauser: xeroxes of ballad and Heine, coursepack Wagner

4/23: Coursepack: Peretz

4/25: Xerox: Itzik Manger's Poetry

4/30: Coursepack: Chekhov and Shapiro, Xerox: Isaac Babel's The Kiss

5/2: Xerox: I B Singer stories

5/7: Xerox: Jewish Kaddish, and Kaddish by Allen Ginsberg

5/9: see under: love Momik chapter.

5/14: see under: love, pp. Bruno chapter

5/16: see under: love, pp. Wasserman chapter

5/21: see under: love, pp. 303-376

5/23: see under love: finish book

5/30: Xerox: Envy or Yiddish in America

6/4: Research papers due. Discussion of papers.