

Syllabus for Yiddish literature in Translation: A World Beyond Borders

This module runs in the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies at the University of Warwick and is convened by Dr. Rochelle Sibley.

TERM 1

Week 1 – Introduction to Yiddish literature

Selected readings from Ilan Stavans, *On Borrowed Words* (Chapter 2), Leonard Michaels "My Yiddish", Paul Kriwaczek, *Yiddish Civilisation* (Chapter 1) and Reb Nachman (1772-1810), "A Tale of a Rabbi and His Only Son" and "A Tale of a Prince"

Unit 1: Yiddish Warsaw and beyond

Week 2 – Y. L. Peretz, "Bontshe the Silent" (1906), "If Not Higher", "The Golem" and "The Dead Town"

Week 3 – I. B. Singer, *Satan in Goray* (1933)

Week 4 – I. J. Singer, *The Brothers Ashkenazi* (1936)

Week 5 – Sarah Hamer-Jacklyn, "The Holy Mothers" (1946) and Lili Berger, "The Teacher Zaminski and his Pupil Rifkele" (1993) and "Jewish Children on the Aryan Side" (1978)

Unit 2: Yiddish Beyond the Pale

Week 7 – Sholem Aleichem, *Tevye the Dairyman* (1894)

Week 8 – Rokhl Brokhes, "The Neighbour" (1922) and "The Shop" (1922-24) and "Golde's Lament" (1907)

Week 9 – Avrom Sutzkever selected poems from *Selected Poetry and Prose*, namely "In a Siberian Forest" (c.1937), "Grains of Wheat" (1943), "The Lead Plates of Romm's Printing House" (1943), "Sing no Sad Songs" (1944), "To the Thin Artery in My Head" (1944), "Who will remain, what will remain" (1974), "From trees, miraculously, we make paper" (1976) and "My Father's Yortsayt" (1990)

Week 10 – Kadya Molodovsky, selected poems from *Paper Bridges*, namely "Poor Women" (1925), "Marching" (1933), "My Paper Bridge" (1930), "In the Country of My Bones" (1937), "A Poem about Itself" (1941), "Dead Sabbath" (1946), "The Light of Your Table" (1963) and "My Language" (1965).

TERM 2

Unit 3: Soviet Yiddish

Week 1 – Dovid Bergelson, “On the Eve of Battle” (1923)

Week 2 – Moishe Kulbak – *The Zelmenyaners* (1936)

Week 3 – Peretz Markish, selected poems and Leyb Kvitko, selected poems

Week 4 – Yenta Mash, selected stories from *On the Landing*, namely "Mona Bubbe", "The Bridegroom Tree", "A Seder in the Taiga" and "By the Light of the Moon"

Unit 4: Yiddish in Diaspora

Week 5 – Yiddish London: Esther Kreitman, “Blitz” (1950), "Jim", (1950), “Becoming a Tramp” (1950) and “The New World” (1949)

Week 7 – Yiddish New York 1: Morris Rosenfeld, "Corner of Pain and Anguish" and "My Little Son" (c.1887), Mani Leyb, “I Am” (1955), A Leyeles, *New York* (1926) and Jacob Glatshteyn, “To A Friend Who Wouldn’t Bother to Strain his Noodleboard Because Even So It Is Hard to Go Hunting When Your Rifle is Blunt and Love Is Soft as an Old Blanket” (1937)

Week 8 – Yiddish New York 2: Yenta Serdatzky, “She Waits” (1922), Celia Dropkin, “The Acrobat”, “The Train Sings a Song” and “New York at Night by the Banks of the Hudson”, and Blume Lempl, “Correspondents” (1992)

Week 9 – Yiddish Canada: Rokhl Korn, “Shadows” (1957), Ida Maze, “Denah” (1970) and Chava Rosenfarb, “A Cottage in the Laurentians” (1984); Rokhl Korn, “On the Other Side of the Poem” (1962)

Week 10 – Yiddish Argentina: Mordechai Alpersohn, “The Guachito ‘Happy Moses’” (1943), Borekh Bendersky “An Evil Eye” (1954) and Mimi Pinzón, “The Courtyard without Windows” (1965)