



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

PHILOSOPHIC HOMILIES OF NISSIM OF GIRONA - 14704

Last update 12-09-2021

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Jewish Thought

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Zeev Harvey

Coordinator Email: zeev.harvey@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Tu 11:30-12:30

Teaching Staff:

Prof Zeev Harvey

Course/Module description:

One of the great medieval authorities on Jewish law, Rabbi Nissim ben Reuben of Girona (&eq; Ha-Ran, c. 1310-1376) is known for his Commentary on BT Nedarim, his Commentaries on Rabbi Isaac Alfasi's Halakhot, and his Novellae on various Talmudic tractates. However, he was also a profound and original philosophic homilist. His book of philosophic homilies, known as "Derashot Ha-Ran," had a significant influence on medieval Jewish philosophy – both directly and also indirectly, through his student Rabbi Hasdai Crescas and his student's student Rabbi Joseph Albo.

Course/Module aims:

We shall read together one homily from Derashot Ha-Ran. In the last month of the semester, we shall discuss the papers of participants.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

ability to analyze a medieval philosophic sermon

Attendance requirements(%):

100%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Reading and discussion

Course/Module Content:

A seminar paper (about 20-25 pp.) or a short paper (about 7-10 pp.). The paper is to be submitted by the final class (11.1.22). It may be on any subject connected with Derashot Ha-Ran, and may be written in accordance with various approaches, e.g., historical, analytic, or philological. A plan for the paper is to be submitted for approval by Wednesday, 23.11.21.

Required Reading:

Derashot Ha-Ran, ed. Aryeh Leon Feldman, Jerusalem 1967; revised edition (with the Commentary "Be'erot Moshe"), Jerusalem 2003.

Perush Ha-Ran `al ha-Torah, ed. Aryeh Leon Feldman, Jerusalem 1973.

Additional Reading Material:

1. Blidstein, Gerald J., "On Political Structures," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 22 (1980), pp. 47-58 (esp. 52-54).
2. -----, "Ideal and Real in Classical Jewish Political Theory," *Jewish Political Studies Review* 2 (1990), pp. 43-66 (esp. 54ff.).
3. Feldman, Leon, *Studies in the Life and Times of R. Nissim ben Reuben Gerondi*, Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, New York 1967 (Xerox Microfilm no. 69-548).
4. -----, "R. Nissim ben Reuben Gerondi -- Archival Data from Barcelona," in A. Mirsky, A. Grossman, and Y. Kaplan, eds., *Exile and Diaspora*, Jerusalem 1991, pp. 56-97.
5. Harvey, W. Z., "Nissim of Gerona and William of Ockham on Prime Matter," *Jewish History* 6 (1992), pp. 87-98.
6. -----, "Aspects of Jewish Philosophy in Medieval Catalonia," in J. Boadas i Raset and S. Planas i Marcé, eds., *Mosse ben Nahman i el seu Temps*, Girona 1994, pp. 141-157 (esp. 149-150).
7. -----, "Liberal Democratic Themes in Nissim of Girona," in I. Twersky and J.M. Harris, eds., *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature, III*, Cambridge, MA, 2000, pp. 197-211.
8. -----, "Rabbi Nissim of Girona on the Constitutional Power of the Sovereign," *Diné Israel* 29 (2013), pp. 91-100.
9. -----, "Rabbi Nissim of Girona on the Divine Court, Truth, and Justice," in A. Mermelstein and S. Holtz, eds., *The Divine Courtroom in Comparative Perspective*, Leiden 2014, pp. 69-75.
10. Klein-Braslavy, Sara, *R. Nissim ben Reuben de Gérone devant la philosophie de son temps*, Ph.D. dissertation, Sorbonne, Paris 1972.
11. -----, "Vérité prophétique et vérité philosophique chez Nissim de Gérone," *Revue des Études Juives* 134 (1975), pp. 75-99.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 20 %

Project work 80 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information: