

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

The Song of Songs as Cultural Text - 19893

Last update 04-09-2023

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: General & Compar. Literature

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof Ilana Pardes

Coordinator Email: mspardes@mscc.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: by appointment

Teaching Staff:

Prof Ilana Pardes

Course/Module description:

The Song of Songs as Cultural Text: Love, Religion, Secularism

What makes the Song of Songs such a prominent text for reflections about love in different cultural contexts? Why does it serve as a touchstone for the definition of both literal and allegorical loves? To what extent does the Song revolve around the question of the language of love and poetic epitome? The first part will be devoted to a consideration of major interpretive trends (allegorical exegesis, the literary approach, feminist criticism) and to close readings of the Song. Part II and Part III will revolve around two exemplary modern scenes of reception: American literature and culture (from Whitman's "Song of Myself" to Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon and Beloved) and Israeli literature and culture (from S. Y. Agnon to Daliah Ravikovitch). The discussion will also entail an exploration of adaptations of the Song in music, dance, and art.

Course/Module aims:

The objective of the seminar is to follow the intricacies of the exegetical history of the biblical text while developing the students' capacity to compare between diverse modes of reception

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

- To examine the exegetical history of the Song of Songs*
- To compare diverse interpretive contexts*
- To define interpretive strategies*
- To explain reading processes*
- To assess the interrelations between literature and religion*

Attendance requirements(%):

80

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Seminar

Course/Module Content:

The Reception of the Song of Songs – Introduction

The Garden of Metaphors and the Prophetic Marital Metaphor
The Question of Gender and Sexuality: Feminist Readings of the Song
Allegorical Readings: From Rabbi Akiva to the Zohar
Allegorical Readings: From Origen to Santa Teresa
The Literal-Aesthetic Turn: Herder
The Song in America: Whitman
The Song in African-American Culture – Morrison’s Song of Solomon
Morrison’s Beloved: Mother-Daughter Love
The Song in Israeli Culture: The Song and the Orient
Agnon’s Song of Song ; From “Betrothed” to “Edo and Enam”
Conclusion
Students’ Presentations

Required Reading:

See above

Additional Reading Material:

Yair Zakovitch, The Song of Songs, Mikra le-Yisrael (Hebrew)

Marvin Pope, The Song of Songs, The Anchor Bible

Grading Scheme:

Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 70 %

Active Participation / Team Assignment 10 %

*Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports
/ Forum / Simulation / others 10 %*

Attendance / Participation in Field Excursion 10 %

Additional information:

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