



# *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

## *Syllabus*

### *Methods In Reading Humanistic Texts - 63620*

*Last update 08-09-2022*

*HU Credits: 2*

*Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)*

*Responsible Department: Jewish Education*

*Academic year: 0*

*Semester: 1st Semester*

*Teaching Languages: Hebrew*

*Campus: Mt. Scopus*

*Course/Module Coordinator: Prof Jonathan Cohen*

*Coordinator Email: [Yonathan.cohen@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:Yonathan.cohen@mail.huji.ac.il)*

*Coordinator Office Hours: Wednesdays 16:15-17:15*

*Teaching Staff:*

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Prof yonathan cohen

Course/Module description:

The course is meant to expose the student, and acquaint the student with the literary-philosophical method for the analysis of foundational humanistic texts bearing educational implications.

The content of this course will form a methodological basis for students who wish to write an MA thesis related to educational thought.

Course/Module aims:

To guide and train the student in the exact methods of text analysis associated, in English-speaking countries, with what has come to be called "close reading," and in the French tradition "explication de texte."

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

At the conclusion of the course, the student should be able to undertake a literary-philosophical analysis of texts of various genres in the humanities. He should be able to derive ideational insights from these texts after having given attention to the interaction between their form and their content.

Attendance requirements(%):

80

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Preparation, at home, of each text to be read in the following class. Close analysis of the required texts in class - involving the students in the analytic process.

Course/Module Content:

Theme of the Course: The heart of culture and education.

1. From the Bible: The Tower of Babel Story, Genesis 9:1-9.

(The advantages and disadvantages of a single cultural language)

2. From Greek Philosophy: The Parable of the Cave ( from Plato's Dialogue Republic)

(Rising above the conventional notions of society to a universal culture of philosophical reflection)

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3. *From the Talmudic Sages: The Story of Moses, Rabbi Akiva and the giving of the Torah (Menahot 29:b), (Interpretation as the heart of culture).*
  4. *From Medieval thought: From Maimonides, Introduction to the Chapter "Helek" in the Mishnah (The value of truth-seeking for its own sake as the apex of culture and education).*
  5. *From Early Modernity: Descartes, Meditations, Chapter One (The subject as the re-constitutor of culture).*
  6. *19th century – From John Stuart Mill's On Liberty, the Chapter on "Freedom of Thought and Argument" (Freedom of thought and discussion as the heart of culture).*
  7. *20th century – Martin Buber, "Hebrew Humanism," from the collection Israel and the World (New York, Schocken, 1976), pp. 240-252.*
  8. *John Dewey, Introduction to the English Edition of Experience and Education (Practical problems as the source for social and cultural struggle).*
  9. *Leo Strauss, "What is Liberal Education," (On the essence of culture, and the condition of modern culture).*
  10. *Adler, Mortimer, "Everybody's Business," in Fox, S., ed., Philosophy for Education (Jerusalem, Van Leer, 1983) (On philosophy and literature as the constitutors of a common cultural language).*
  11. *Agnon, S.Y., "Fernheim," (a short story on the disintegration of culture and mores).*
  12. *Kafka, Franz, (a mini-story on the failure of the human race to attain to cultural heights).*

**Required Reading:**

*Theme of the Course: The heart of culture and education.*

1. *From the Bible: The Tower of Babel Story, Genesis 9:1-9.*  
*(The advantages and disadvantages of a single cultural language)*
2. *From Greek Philosophy: The Parable of the Cave ( from Plato's Dialogue Republic)*  
*(Rising above the conventional notions of society to a universal culture of*

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*philosophical reflection)*

3. *From the Talmudic Sages: The Story of Moses, Rabbi Akiva and the giving of the Torah (Menahot 29:b), (Interpretation as the heart of culture).*

4. *From Medieval thought: From Maimonides, Introduction to the Chapter "Helek" in the Mishnah (The value of truth-seeking for its own sake as the apex of culture and education).*

5. *From Early Modernity: Descartes, Meditations, Chapter One (The subject as the re-constitutor of culture).*

6. *19th century - From John Stuart Mill's On Liberty, the Chapter on "Freedom of Thought and Argument" (Freedom of thought and discussion as the heart of culture).*

7. *20th century - Martin Buber, "Hebrew Humanism," from the collection Israel and the World (New York, Schocken, 1976), pp. 240-252.*

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11. *Agnon, S.Y., "Fernheim," (a short story on the disintegration of culture and mores).*

12. *Kafka, Franz, (a mini-story on the failure of the human race to attain to cultural heights).*

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

Additional information: