

**Portland State University
Oregon School of Judaic Studies
Summer 2004**

Literature in Translation

Latin American Jewish Experience through Literature

English 099/410/510 (82460/82461/82462)

June 21–July 15, 2004, MTWR, 10:30 am–12:50 pm

227 Neuberger Hall

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Office hours: By arrangement. Please speak with me in class to set a time

Description

Jewish literature gives voice to waves of immigrants who have called Latin America home, while remaining connected by religion, language, and heritage to Western and Eastern Europe. From the Spanish and Portuguese conquests to the present, we study the multiple diasporas that have made the Old World-New World Latin American mix, using fiction and memoirs in translation, films and music. With Hispanic and Brazilian cultures as a backdrop, we address important questions of diaspora and identity such as, Who is a Jew?, and What role does Jewish identity play for people adapting to predominantly non-Jewish societies?

Texts:

SC = Ilan Stavans, ed. *The Scroll and the Cross: 1,000 Years of Jewish-Hispanic Literature*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

R = Reader (Smart Copy, 1915 SW 6th Ave., 503-227-6137)

Requirements for Graded Students:

Attendance and Participation (10%):

Please come to class having completed the day's readings and ready to discuss them.

Reflection Pieces (3 x 10% each = 30%):

On the days indicated on the calendar, turn in a short essay (1-2 pages, typed, double-spaced please) containing reflections about the material read and discussed during the previous week. I am especially interested in what you find thought-provoking, interesting, surprising, and/or troubling about the readings.

Oral Presentation (20%):

Summarize what you feel are the important points of a particular reading, explain your conclusions, and prepare a question or questions to stimulate

class discussion. The presentation may also include pertinent biographical information about the author whose work you are discussing. Length of the presentation should be 10 minutes.

Final Paper (40%):

Write on a topic you wish to explore in more depth (3-4 pages for undergraduate, 5-7 for graduate students). The topic can come from class discussion or an aspect of the readings not examined in class. The paper may focus on one particular work or compare an issue that arises in multiple works. It should be a more in-depth study of, for example, a character, episode, or literary technique than those discussed in the reflection pieces. In addition to whatever texts from the syllabus you use, the paper must also include at least **one bibliographic source**. Please confirm your topic with the professor by Thursday, July 8.

Calendar:

6/21: Introduction

SC: Stavans, Introduction (1-28)

6/22: Spain/Jews/New Christians: Sephardim in Latin America, Past and Present

SC: Ferdinand and Isabella, "Edict of Expulsion" (94-98); Francisco de Quevedo, "To a Nose" (134-135); Homero Aridjis, "Sepharad, 1492" (257-264)

R: Trudi Alexy, *The Marrano Legacy* (61-69)

6/23: Crypto-Jews in the Colonial Era

SC: Luis de Carvajal the Younger, "Autobiographical Essay" (103-133)

6/24: Jewish immigration and settlement in Latin America

SC: Marshall Meyer, "Thoughts on Latin America" (208-218)

R: Rita Gardiol, "A Brief Overview of Argentine History Relative to its Jewish Population" (xvii-xxx)

Recommended: Judith Laikin Elkin, *The Jews of Latin America* (19-22, 215-229)

6/28: Argentina: Early Jewish literature **Turn in Reflection #1**

SC: Ruben Darío, "Israel" (140-141); Alberto Gerchunoff, "A Jewish Gaucho" (142-150); Samuel Eichelbaum, "The Good Harvest" (155-158), R: Gerchunoff, "The Sad and Lonely One" (17-25); "Fresh Milk"

(29-31); "The Story of Miryam" (61-64)

6/29: Argentina: Modern literature by and about Jews

SC: Jorge Luis Borges, "The Secret Miracle" (162-168)

- R: Ricardo Feierstein, *Mestizo* (76-91, 95-117, 121-125)
- 6/30: Argentina: Dictatorship and Repression
SC: Julio Cortázar, "Press Clippings" (179-189); Jacobo Timerman, *Prisoner without a Name, Cell without a Number* (190-197)
R: Alicia Partnoy, *The Little School: Tales of Disappearance and Survival in Argentina* (fragment)
- 7/1: Holocaust
SC: Salomón Isacovici, *Man of Ashes* (198-207); Tino Villanueva, "At the U.S. Holocaust Museum" (281-285); Marjorie Agosín, "Dear Anne Frank" (296-297)
R: Sonia Guralnik, "Sailing Down the Rhine" (76-80); Agosín, "Praire" (211-214)
- 7/5: No class
- 7/6: Brazil **Turn in Reflection #2**
R: Moacyr Scliar, "The False Messiah" (69-76); "Plagues" (389-403); Clarice Lispector, "Love" (117-125); Ambrosio Peres, "Judaism in the Amazonian Jungle" (175-182)
- 7/7: Peru
SC: Mario Vargas Llosa, *The Storyteller* (219-238); Isaac Goldemberg, "The Jew's Imprecise Sonnet" (280)
R: Goldemberg, *The Fragmented Life of don Jacobo Lerner* (119-123, 125-133)
- 7/8: Cuba
Confirm paper topic
 Video: *Adio, Kerida*
SC: Ruth Behar, "The Jewish Cemetery of Guabanacoa (298-300)
R: Behar, "Juban America" (199-223)
- 7/12: Cuba and the Caribbean **Turn in Reflection #3**
SC: Pinkes Berniker, "Jesús" (169-178)
R: Ester Rebeca Shapiro Rok, "From Belarus to Bolondron" (230-240)
- 7/13: Chile
SC: Ariel Dorfman, *Heading South, Looking North* (265-279)
R: Barbara Mujica, "Gotlib, Bombero" (137-152); Marjorie Agosín, "The Seamstress from St. Petersburg" (113-115)

7/14: Mexico

Video: *Novia que te vea (Like a Bride)*

SC: Angelina Muñiz Huberman, "The Merchant of Tudela" (239-244);

Rosa Nissán, *Like a Bride* (245-249)

Recommended: SC: Benjamin of Tudela, "Jerusalem" (247-250)

7/15: Venezuela and Guatemala

SC: Alicia Freilich de Segal, "Recollections of a Criollo Zionist" (250-256);

Alcina Lubitch Domecq, "Résumé Raisonné" (286-295)

7/19: **Paper due by 12 noon in Sociology Department office** (217 Cramer Hall)