



Yeshiva University

THE ZAHAVA AND MOSHAEL STRAUS
CENTER FOR TORAH AND WESTERN THOUGHT

Matriarchs and Memoirs

Zoom Time: Wednesday 12:15-1 PM

Course Description:

Our course will center around the landmark memoirs of Glikl bas Judah Leib (also known as Glückel of Hameln) written between 1691 and 1719. This literary work, written by a family matriarch for her progeny, rich in historical details and reminiscence, will be our guide through the challenges, changes, and developments of Early Modern Jewish life in Germany (and beyond). Its ethical teachings directed openly to the reader or more subtly conveyed through story and parable and its dialogues with the Divine will be put into conversation with texts from the broader corpus of Jewish philosophy that grapple with similar issues. Glikl's memoirs will also be contextualized within contemporaneous works written for Jewish women and by Jewish women related to morals, Halakhah, and women's prayer and supplication.

Course Objectives:

- Students will gain an appreciation of the historical context in which Glikl wrote her memoirs and the major features of Early Modern Jewish history reflected therein.
- Students will strengthen their critical reading skills through analysis of the text and will understand the role of parable and other literary devices employed by Glikl.
- Students will become familiar with classical approaches to major topics of Jewish philosophy, such as prayer, repentance, eschatology, suffering and theodicy through study of primary texts of Jewish thought and philosophy in conjunction with careful analysis of Glikl's treatment of these major issues throughout her memoirs.

Course Requirements:

Discussion/Participation: 10%

Assignments: 30%

Midterm (November 11th): 30%

Final Assignment (December 30th): 30%

Attendance Policy and Class Structure:

This course will run remotely for the entire semester with both synchronous and asynchronous components. Your participation and discussion grade will be factored based on your attendance on Canvas/Zoom during our live mandatory meetings **Wednesdays 12-12:45 PM** (synchronous) and your activity in online discussions and responses (asynchronous).

Guide to Synchronous Learning: Every student is expected to attend the class meetings through Canvas/Zoom and to participate in readings or class discussions that take place

Chaya Sima Koenigsberg

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Fall 2020

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therein. Your cameras should be turned on throughout the meeting time, with no distracting backgrounds please. Additionally, I respectfully request that you leave your cameras on, even if you need to briefly step away from the computer. Contact me if you are having technical difficulties so that your lack of video or sound is not misunderstood as inattentiveness.

Our live meetings will be abbreviated to help you avoid Zoom fatigue but are a *crucial* component of your learning and really should not be missed as I **do not intend to record these live meetings**. While I understand that there may be circumstances that require you to miss class please be sure to let me know in advance, if possible, and absence due to non-pressing issues (medical or familial emergencies) will affect your participation grade.

Our course has two foci – reflected in its cross-listing between Jewish history and Jewish philosophy. I intend the **midterm** to relate to the Jewish history material and reading assignments and the **final** assignment to reflect the Jewish philosophy component of the course. Additional assignments may reflect either element.

Readings:

Required Primary Reading:

Glikl Memoirs 1691-1719
presented by Chava Turniansky
(Brandeis University Press, 2019)
ISBN: 978-1-68458-004-0

Or

The Life of Glückel of Hameln
Trans: Beth-Zion Abrahams
(The Jewish Publication Society, 2012)
ISBN: 978-0-8276-0943-3

All secondary readings will be provided on Canvas.

Academic Integrity and Honesty:

All students are expected to follow and abide by the academic integrity and honesty policies of Yeshiva University in this course.

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Disabilities Statement:

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations should be in touch with the Office of Disability Services, rkohn1@yu.edu during the first week of class. Once you have been approved for accommodations, please submit your accommodation letter and discuss any specifics with me to ensure the successful implementation of your accommodations.

Academic Support:

Academic support is available to you if you are having any difficulties that could include the following but are not limited to these: understanding assignments, navigating research papers, issues with time management of your schedule and your life or general college adjustment, please make an appointment with Dr. Beth Hait. She is available Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9am – 6pm. To make an appointment, go to yu2.mywconline.com. Click on the arrow next to "Academic Advisement" and scroll down to "Student Academic Support".

Library Support:

Get all the support you need with research for your courses. The Yeshiva University Libraries (library.yu.edu) offer individualized consultations that will help you locate and cite journal articles, books, and other credible sources for solid papers, presentations, and reports. Skilled information-seekers succeed academically and in the workplace. Prepare for the future by contacting the library at https://library.yu.edu/ask_the_library.

Reading Schedule

(Glikl's Memoirs are comprised of seven 'books' or chapters which we will cover over the course of the semester. Individual topic/modules to be discussed within each book will be listed and accessible in Canvas)

Aug. 26: Introduction.
Aug. 31: Book I
Sep. 2: Book I
Sep. 7: Labor Day (No Class)
Sep. 9: Book I
Sep. 14: Book II
Sep. 16: Book II
Sep. 21: Fast of Gedaliah (No Class)
Sep. 23: Book II
Break for Chagim – Writing Assignment
Oct. 14: Book III
Oct.19: Book III
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Oct. 21: Book III
Oct. 26: Book IV
Oct. 28: Book IV
Nov 2: Book IV
Nov. 4 - 9: Topics
Nov. 11: Midterm
Nov 16: Book V
Nov. 18: Book V
Nov. 23: Book V
Nov. 25: Book VI
Nov. 30: Book VI
Dec. 2: Book VII
Dec. 7, 9, 14: Contemporaneous Books for Women and By Women
Dec. 16: Conclusion
Reading week
Dec. 30 – Final Assignment Due



Looking forward to a wonderful semester of inquiry and growth!

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