

**HBR4930: The Merchant in Translation:  
Translations of *the Merchant of Venice* into  
German, Yiddish and Hebrew**

<i>Instructor</i>	Dr. Dror Abend-David
<i>Meetings</i>	T 5-6 R 6
<i>Room</i>	TBA
<i>Office</i>	Pugh 337
<i>Office Hours</i>	M 5, W 4-5
<i>Email</i>	Da2137@nyu.edu
<i>Phone</i>	352-846-3845

**Course Description**

This course highlights the Central European detour that Shakespearean reception and the play, *The Merchant of Venice*, underwent in German, Hebrew Yiddish. Such a detour, with its various discomforts, is used to penetrate a current historical and political historiography, rendering Shylock a character that remembers various languages and locations, as well as multiple alternatives for political self-definition. This complex Shakespearean character speaks in many voices and for various purposes and is the only character that can provide the missing link between two contradictory Jewish stereotypes - a persecuted and victimized underling and a merciless and violent plaintive, holding out his knife to draw blood.

Following a short introduction to the Shakespearean Theater and a methodology for reading Shakespearean plays, the course will follow the history of *The Merchant of Venice* in German, Hebrew and Yiddish, in various locations, media and critical references. The discussion will consider the social, cultural and political effects as well as the mutual influences of these three languages on certain contemporary readings of the play.

**Grades**

(1) Class participation, including short weekly assignments (20%); (2) Written assignments (15%); (3) Student Presentation (5%); (4) Midterm paper (30%); (5) Final paper (30%)

**Grading Scale**

100-93 A	A - 4.0
90- 92 A-	A- - 3.67
87- 89 B+	B+- 3.33

83- 86	B	B - 3.0
80-82	B-	B- - 2.67
77-79	C+	C+ -2.33
73-76	C	C - 2.0
70-72	C-	C- - 1.67
67-69	D+	D+ -1.33
63-66	D	D - 1.0
60-62	D-	D- -0.67
S-U	73%	E – 0, WF – 0, I – 0, NG – 0, SU - 0

### **Required Texts**

Abend-David, Dror. *'Scorned my Nation:.' A Comparison of Translations of The Merchant of Venice into German, Hebrew, and Yiddish.* New York: Peter Lang, 2003.

\* Most of the articles and primary texts for this course will be posted on the course website. Please Note: The readings from most complete texts will be reduced to short excerpts in order to comply with fair usage, and to maintain a reasonable reading requirement.

### **Course Assignments**

**Participation and Attendance** – Class discussion will more often consist of active discussion and various activities than class lecture. Students are therefore expected to come to class prepared and ready to participate.

Attendance is mandatory and will be monitored according to the rules of the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Florida (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>). Each three unexcused absences will count for half a grade off the final grade in the course (e.g. from A to A-). Nine unexcused absences will result in a failing course grade.

For an excused absence: Please do not contact the instructor. Contact the office of the Dean of Students at [umattter@ufl.edu](mailto:umattter@ufl.edu). The office of the Dean of Students will alert your instructor (and your other instructors for the relevant dates).

**Weekly assignments** – Students will be asked to prepare weekly assignments, often creative and in groups. These assignments will address reading and/or class discussions.

**Written Assignments** – There will be three short individual written assignments. In these assignments students will usually be asked to respond to a short text or an article we will later discuss in class.

**Presentation** – There will be one short (5-10 minutes) presentation in which students will apply some of the material to texts of their own choice.

**Midterm and Final Paper** – Each student will choose, in consultation with the instructor, a paper topic that addresses some of the topics and texts that are discussed in class. The topics of the midterm and the final papers must be different.

Each of the two assignments (the midterm and final paper) represents 30% of the final grade in the course.

### Academic Honesty.

Students are expected to follow University of Florida Academic Honesty Guidelines.

These can be found at <http://www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/Rules/4017.htm>

Students may also wish to consult The University of Florida Student Guide Standard of Ethical Conduct found at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/stg/>

Students are also expected to follow the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures Academic *Honesty Guidelines*:

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. An academic honesty offense is defined as the act of lying, cheating, or stealing academic information so that one gains academic advantage. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action.

Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines include but are not limited to:

Cheating. The improper taking or tendering of any information or material which shall be used to determine academic credit. Taking of information includes copying graded homework assignments from another student; working with another individual(s) on graded assignments or homework; looking or attempting to look at notes, a text, or another student's paper during an exam.

Plagiarism. The attempt to represent the work of another as the product of one's own thought, whether the other's work is oral or written (including electronic), published or unpublished. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting oral or written materials without citation on written materials or in oral presentations; submitting work produced by an online translation service or the translation feature of an online dictionary as your own.

Misrepresentation. Any act or omission with intent to deceive a teacher for academic advantage. Misrepresentation includes lying to a teacher to increase your grade; lying or misrepresenting facts when confronted with an allegation of academic honesty.

Bribery, Conspiracy, Fabrication. For details see website below.

The UF Honor Code states: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

On all work submitted for credit the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action according to the judicial process.

For more details go to: <http://www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/Rules/4017.htm>

Students with Disabilities.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

**Reading Schedule:**

**Week I & II– Introduction**

Kindly Read: *The Merchant of Venice*

**Week III & IV – Reading Shakespeare and Reading *The Merchant***

Kindly Read: Greenblatt, Gross, Bloom, Shapiro and Derrida

**Week V & VI – A Theory of Translation**

Kindly Read: Benjamin, Berman, Robinson, Brisset and Abend-David (Introduction).

**Week VII & VIII – German**

Kindly Read: Abend-David (Ch. 1), Brennecke, Kahn, Larson

**Week IX & X – Yiddish**

Kindly Read: Abend-David (Ch. 2), Berkowitz, Morevski, Prager

**Week XII & XIII – Hebrew**

Kindly Read: Abend-David (Ch. 3), Don Yehiya, Kohansky, Oz

**Week XIV and XV – Summary**

Kindly Read: Abend-David (Epilogue)

**Bibliography**

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Spring 2017 Calendar – The Merchant in Translation

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Wk I</b>			01.04	01.05	01.06
<b>Wk II</b>	01.09	01.10	01.11	01.12	01.13
<b>Wk III</b>	01.16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	01.17 <b>1st Written Assignment</b>	01.18	01.19	01.20
<b>Wk IV</b>	01.23	01.24	01.25	01.26	01.27
<b>Wk V</b>	01.30	01.31 <b>2nd Written Assignment</b>	02.01	02.02	02.03
<b>Wk VI</b>	02.06	02.07	02.08	02.09	02.10
<b>Wk VII</b>	02.13	02.14 <b>Midterm Abstracts</b>	02.15	02.16	02.17
<b>Wk VIII</b>	02.20	02.21	02.22	02.23	02.24
<b>Wk IX</b>	10.17	10.18 <b>Midterm Paper</b>	10.19	10.20	10.21
<b>Wk X</b>	02.27	02.28 <b>Presentations</b>	03.01	03.02	03.03
<b>Wk XI</b>	03.06 Spring Break	03.07 Spring Break	03.08 Spring Break	03.09 Spring Break	03.10 Spring Break
<b>Wk XII</b>	03.13	03.14 <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Written Assignment</b>	03.15	03.16	03.17
<b>Wk XIII</b>	03.20	03.21 <b>Final Abstracts</b>	03.22	03.23	03.24
<b>Wk XIV</b>	03.27	03.28	03.29	03.30	03.31
<b>Wk XV</b>	04.03	04.04 <b>Presentations</b>	04.05	04.06	04.07
<b>Wk XVI</b>	04.10 Passover	04.11 Passover	04.12	04.13	04.14
<b>Wk XVII</b>	04.17	04.18 <b>Final Paper</b>	04.19		