Rothberg International School
בית הספר לתלמידים מחו"ל ע"ש רוטברג

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM
האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים

Department of Summer Courses and Special Programs

המחלקה לקורסי קיץ ותוכניות מיוחדות

The Body in Jewish Thought (SPJT205/48892)

Dr. Eliezer Shore

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July 2 - 24, 2019

Mon, Tue, Wed: 13:00 - 16:00

45 Academic Hours, 3 Academic Credits

Room 304, Boyar Building (Rothberg)

Name of Lecturer:

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Reception Hours: By appointment.

Course Description:

Are we our bodies, or do we have bodies? Does G-d have a body, and if not, how do we understand the many depictions of Him found in scripture? Is the body a hindrance or a blessing to spiritual growth?

This course will examine the unique and variegated approach to the body in Jewish thought. Addressing five or six major body-related issues, we will examine their historical and philosophical development over the centuries. After a general introduction of the place of the body in ancient Jewish religious practice, we will learn about such topics as the Divine body, from its scriptural roots, through Rabbinic texts, down to medieval Kabbalah; issues of ritual purity and impurity (both men and women's);

asceticism, indulgence and the problem (or benefit) of food and sex; the body as a symbol and locus of meaning; and the gendered body and the "body of engenderment" in Jewish law and theology, among many other topics.

Students will see how issues of the body lie at the very heart of Jewish practice and belief, from the first bite of the proverbial apple to the long-awaited redemption and the final Resurrection.

Grading System:

1. Class participation is an integral part of this course. Both in-class participation and between-class preparation of texts count toward this. (A workbook of sources will be made available). (40%)

5. Final exam (60%). The final exam is comprised of short essay questions, drawn from classroom discussion and reading, and one long essay question, based upon student's unique, independent research in the course of the semester.

Course Outline:

Lectures are topic based, with 2-3 session periods devoted to each topic, depending on student interest, discussion and involvement. Readings for each topic include those which provide basic, background knowledge (such as can be found in online encyclopedias) as well as academic books and articles and those written by religious scholars. Primary sources are provided in translation.

Field Trip: Tuesday, July 23, 2019
Bus departure from Rothberg at 09:30. Expected time of return 18:00.

Background Reading on Classic Jewish Texts:

READING LIST

"Oral Torah." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, n.d. Web. 4 July 2016. **Google it**

Simon-Shoshan, Moshe. "What Is Midrash?" *Mizrachi World Movement*. N.p., n.d. Web. 4 July 2016. **Google it**

Topic 1: G-d's Body

A discussion of various views, from Biblical to Kabbalistic literature on the possibility of the Divine having a body:

Reading:

- Sommer, Benjamin D. "Introduction." *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009. 1-10. Print. **Main Library 1192.6 S66 2009; E-BOOK**
- Maimonides, Moses. *The Guide of the Perplexed*. Trans. Shlomo Pines. Chicago: U of Chicago, 1963. N. pag. Print. Chap. 1:10-1:13, I:26, I:25, 1:46. **Overseas Library 296.176 M911; ERESERVE**
- Seeskin, Kenneth. "Chapter 2: Describing God." *Maimonides: A Guide for Today's Perplexed*. West Orange, NJ: Behrman House, 1991. 19-39. Print. **Education Library 296.176.09 S44; ERESERVE**
- Ginzberg, Louis, Henrietta Szold, and Paul Radin. *Legends of the Jews*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2003. 1-2+. Print. 1-2, 47-61. **Overseas Library 296.889 G493; E-BOOK**
- Stern, David. "Imitatio Hominis: Anthropomorphism and the Character(s) of God in Rabbinic Literature." *Prooftexts* 12 (1992): 151-74. Web. **E-JOURNAL**
- Dubov, Nissan Dovid. "The Sefirot." *Www.chabad.org*. N.p., n.d. Web. 4 July 2016.
- Cooper, David A. "Mystical Creation." *God Is a Verb: Kabbalah and the Practice of Mystical Judaism*. New York: Riverhead, 1997. 59-64. Print. **Education Library 296.65 C66; ERESERVE**
- Holtz, Barry W. *Back to the Sources: Reading the Classic Jewish Texts*. New York: Summit, 1984. 315-30. Print. **Overseas Library 296.08 H758; ERESERVE**
- Steinsaltz, Adin. *The Thirteen Petalled Rose*. New York: Basic, 1980. N. pag. Print. Chaps. II: Divine Manifestation, 35-47; III: The Soul of Man, 51-65; VII: The Human Image, 111-122. **Overseas Library 296.19 S823; ERESERVE**

Topic 2: Made in G-d's image

Various discussions, from Talmudic to Modern, of what it means for human beings to be created in the Divine Image.

Reading:

- Cordovero, Moses Ben Jacob. *The Palm Tree of Deborah*. Trans. Louis Jacobs. New York: Hermon, 1974. 70-121. Print. **Overseas Library 296.653.11 C796; ERESERVE (p. 70-89).**
- Lorberbaum, Yair. "Imago Dei in Judaism: Early Rabbinic, Literature, Philosophy, and Kabbalah." *The Concept of God, the Origin of the World, and the*

Image of the Human in the World Religions. Ed. Peter Koslowski. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2001. 57-74. Print. **E-BOOK**

Topic 3: The body as a religious symbol

Beyond the general concept of the body being created in the Divine image, numerous texts, see each separate component of the body as being a symbol for a multitude of concepts – from the homiletic to the mystical.

Reading:

- Killian, Greg. "The Beit HaMikdash." *Http://betemunah.org/*. The Watchman, n.d. Web. 4 July 2016.
- Killian, Greg. "The Human Body." *Betemunah.* The Watchman, n.d. Web. 4 July 2016.
- Kramer, Chaim, Avraham Sutton, and Naḥman. Anatomy of the Soul. Jerusalem: Breslov Research Institute, 1998. Print. JOS on order
- Lewis, Patricia. *The Body as Symbol: Bringing Together Theories of Sex/Gender and Race for Theological Discourse*. Diss. Marquette U, 2010. 187-213, n.d. Print. **Google it**
- White, L. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis." *Science* 155.3767 (1967): 1203-207. Web. **E-JOURNAL**

Topic 4: Circumcision

A discussion of the history and meaning of circumcision, the ultimate "bodily symbol."

Reading:

- Cohen, Shaye J. D. "Chapter 1: A Canonical History of Jewish Circumcision," and "Chapter 6: The Reduction of Lust and the Unmanning of Men." *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised?: Gender and Covenant in Judaism*. Berkeley: U of California, 2005. 3-54, 143-169. Print. **Education Library 296.76 C644; E-BOOK**
- Eilberg-Schwartz, Howard. "Chapter 6: The Fruitful Cut." The Savage in Judaism: An Anthropology of Israelite Religion and Ancient Judaism. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1990. 141-76. Print. **Main Library BM 534 S28 1990; ERESERVE**
- Glick, Leonard B. ''This Is My Covenant'' Circumcision in the World of Temple Judaism." *Marked in Your Flesh: Circumcision from Ancient Judea to Modern*

America. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005. 13-33. Print. **Overseas Library 296.563.6 G560; ERESERVE**

Topic 5: Varieties of Desire

Approaches to sexual desire from Biblical times until late Kabbalistic and Hasidic thought.

Reading:

- Anderson, Gary. "The Garden of Eden and Sexuality in Early Judaism." *People of the Body Jews and Judaism from an Embodied Perspective*. Ed. Howard Eilberg-Schwartz. Albany: State U of New York, 2014. 47-68. Print. **Overseas Library 296.72 E34; ERESERVE**
- Biale, David. "Chapter 5: Eros and Spirituality in the Kabbalah." *Eros and the Jews: From Biblical Israel to Contemporary America*. New York, NY: Basic, 1992. 101-20. Print. **Overseas Library Y301.417 B576; E-BOOK**
- Kimelman, Reuven. "The Rabbinic Theology of the Physical: Blessings, Body, and Soul, Resurrection, and Covenant and Election." *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Ed. Steven T. Katz. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2006. 946-976. Print. **Overseas Library 933.02 C178; E-BOOK**
- Mopsik, Charles. "The Body of Engenderment in the Hebrew Bible, the Rabbinic Tradition and the Kabbalah." *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*. Ed. Michel Feher, Ramona Naddaff, and Nadia Tazi. New York, NY: Zone, 1989. 48-73. Print. **Main Library BF 161 F85; ERESERVE**
- Ribner, David S. "Determinants of the Intimate Lives of Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) Jewish Couples." *Sexual and Relationship Therapy* 18.1 (2003): 53-62. Web. **E-JOURNAL**
- Schofer, Jonathan. "The Beastly Body in Rabbinic Self-Formation." *Religion and the Self in Antiquity*. Ed. David Brakke, Michael L. Satlow, and Steven Weitzman. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2005. 197-221. Print. **Main Library BL 65 S38 R45 2005; E-BOOK**

Topic 6: The Ascetic Turn

The rise of asceticism in Talmudic, medieval and Kabbalah though.

Reading:

- "Asceticism - Western Asceticism - The Middle Ages." - *Self, Body, Church, and Practiced*. Science Encyclopedia, n.d. Web. 27 July 2016.

- Brown, Peter. "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity." *Journal of Roman Studies J. Rom. Stud.* 61 (1971): 80-101. Web. **E-JOURNAL**
- Fine, Lawrence. "Purifying the Body in the Name of the Soul : The Problem of the Body in Sixteenth-century Kabbalah." *People of the Body: Jews and Judaism from an Embodied Perspective*. Ed. Howard Eilberg-Schwartz. Albany, NY: State U of New York, 1992. 117-42. Print. **Overseas Library 296.72 E34; ERESERVE**
- Hanson, Sarah E. "Connections Between Body and Soul: The Asceticism of Medieval Saints." *The UCI Undergraduate Research Journal* 12 (2009): 23-34. Web. **Google it**
- Hundert, Gershon D. "Jewish Popular Spirituality in the Eighteenth Century." *Polin* 15 (2002): 93-103. Web. **ERESERVE**
- Swain, Joseph Ward. *The Hellenic Origins of Christian Asceticism*. Diss. Columbia U, 1916. 104-146. Print. **Google it**

Topic 7: The Modest Body

The body in society, throughout Jewish history and the clothing that covers or reveals it.

Reading:

- "Tzniut." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, n.d. Web. 4 July 2016. **Google it**
- Block, Sima Zalcberg. "Shouldering the Burden of Redemption: How the ""Fashion"" of Wearing Capes Developed in Ultra-Orthodox Society." *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues* 22 (2011): 32-55. Web. **E-JOURNAL**
- Yafeh, Orit. "The Time in the Body: Cultural Construction of Femininity in Ultraorthodox Kindergartens for Girls." *Ethos* 35.4 (2007): 516-53. Web. **E-JOURNAL**

Topic 8: Purity and Impurity

Menstrual laws and their contemporary application. The laws of Biblical impurity and their implications for cognitive and spiritual experience.

Reading:

- "Niddah." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, n.d. Web. 4 July 2016. **Google it**

- Eilberg-Schwartz, Howard. "Chapter 7: Menstrual Blood, Semen and Discharge." The Savage in Judaism: An Anthropology of Israelite Religion and Ancient Judaism. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1990. 177-93. Print. **Main Library BM 534 S28 1990; ERESERVE**

Topic 9: The Resurrection of the Dead: various understandings of this disputed Jewish "principle of faith"

Reading:

- Avery-Peck, Alan J. "Resurrection of the Body in Early Rabbinic Judaism." *The Human Body in Death and Resurrection*. Ed. Tobias Nicklas, Friedrich V. Reiterer, Jozef Verheyden, and Heike Braun. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2009. 243-66. Print**. Main Library BS 1700 A2 D48 2009; ERESERVE**
- Cruz, Joan Carroll. "Introduction." *The Incorruptibles: A Study of the Incorruption of the Bodies of Various Catholic Saints and Beati*. Rockford, IL: Tan, 1977. N.P. Print. **Overseas Library 282(09) C889; ERESERVE**
- Jacobs, Louis. "Resurrection." *The Jewish Religion: A Companion*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995. 420-22. **Main Library BM 50 J35 J4 1995; ERESERVE** Print. http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-resurrection-of-the-dead/
- Silberberg, Naftali. "The Resurrection Process." *Www.chabad.org*. N.p., n.d. Web. 4 July 2016.