**LIVR74: Yiddish Modernism 1907-1954. 15 högskolepoäng**

**LKM: Literature – Culture – Media – HT2015**

<http://www.sol.lu.se/kurs/LIVR74/>

**Jan Schwarz,**

**Associate Professor**

**Jan.Schwarz@sol.lu.se**

The course will be offered as combined campus and distance-learning course. You will be able to take the course on-line and/or in a campus class. The class will be taught in English and the texts will be available in Yiddish and in English translations.

**Course Description**

The key literary texts, modernist manifestos and criticism will be examined in the context of the flourishing of modernism in literature and the arts in Europe and the US in the first half of the twentieth century. We will read poetry and prose by some of the key figures of Yiddish modernism: Moyshe Leib Halpern, Yankev Glatshteyn, Aron Glantz Leyeles, Moyshe Kulbak, Peretz Markish, and Avrom Sutzkever. Modernist Yiddish theater will be surveyed through Yiddish films that sample Moyshe Broderson’s Kleinkunst teater and the Vilna Troupe. We will discuss how Marc Chagall’s art and theater murals played a central part in shaping Yiddish cultural modernism, particularly through the artist’s use of the Hebrew alphabets and religious images.

Week I. What is Modernism?

Week 2: Origins of Modern Yiddish Literature in the 19th Century: texts, contexts,

centers.

Week 3: Early Modernist Harbinger: I.L.Peretz, *Bay nakht afn altn mark* (1907)

Week 4-5: Yiddish Modernist manifestos: the Khaliastre and the Inzikhistn

Poetry: Glatshteyn, Broderzon, Greenberg, Markish

Week 6: Yiddish modernists in New York, 1920s: Moyshe Leib Halpern and Anna Margolin

Week 7: Visual modernism: March Chagall’s early work

Week 8: Kleinkunst theater and Cinematography: *Freyleykhe kabtsonim*

Week 9: Expressionism and Revolution: Moyshe Kulbak, *Meshiekh Ben Efraim*

Week 10-11: If Joyce Wrote in Yiddish: Glatshteyn’s Yash-novels

Week 12: Neo-Conservative Modernism: Bashevis’ Satan in Goray

Week 13: New York Modernists, the 1930s: Leivick, Glatshteyn and Leyeles

Week 14: Modernist Storytelling post-Holocaust: Sutzkever’s *Green Aquarium* (1954)

Week 15: Yiddish Modernism and Jewish Cultural Complex: trends, key texts, impact, translation

Week 16: Paper presentations

**Textbooks:**

American Yiddish Poetry, eds. Barbara and Benjamin Harshav (Stanford UP 2007)

Sing Stranger/A Century of American Yiddish Poetry: A Historical Anthology, ed. Benjamin Harshav (Stanford UP 2007)

The Penguin Book of Modern Yiddish Verse, eds. Irving Howe, Ruth R. Wisse and Khone Shmeruk (1987)

**Critical sources:**

Dan Miron, From Continuity to Contiguity: Toward a New Jewish Literary Thinking

(Stanford UP 2010)

Chana Kronfeld, On the Margins of Modernism: Decentering Literary Dynamics (University

of California Press 1996)

Benjamin Harshav, The Polyphony of Jewish Culture (Stanford University Press 2007)

Seth Wolitz, Yiddish Modernism: Studies in Eastern European Jewish Culture (Slavica Publishers, 2014).

Marc Caplan, How Strange the Change: Language, Temporality, and Narrative Form in Peripheral Modernisms (Stanford UP 2011)

Kathryn Hellerstein, A Question of Tradition: Women Poets in Yiddish, 1586-1987 (Stanford UP 2014).

*Marc Chagall: On Art and Culture*, edited by Benjamin Harshav, translated by Barbara and Benjamin Harshav. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003. 225 pp.

*Marc Chagall and His Times, A Documentary Narrative*, by Benjamin Harshav, with translations by Barbara and Benjamin Harshav. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004. 1026 pp.