



Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies

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READINGS IN JUDEO-ARABIC TEXTS

MESAS 570 – JS 730

Fall 2006

Tuesday 4–7, Candler 212

Instructor:

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General: Emory University boasts the largest concentration of Judeo-Arabic scholars outside of Israel. To this end, we started in 2005 an interdisciplinary seminar in Judeo-Arabic studies. Each semester the emphasis is on a different discipline. Thus far we have conducted two seminars: in the Fall of 2005 Dr. David Blumenthal conducted the seminar and concentrated on Medieval philosophy and in the Spring of 2006 Dr. Marina Rustow led the seminar and concentrated on paleography and history. This semester I will concentrate on philology and linguistics as well as Judeo-Arabic translations of sacred texts.

Description: This course is designed to introduce students to Judeo-Arabic, which has been written and spoken in various forms by Jews throughout the Arabic-speaking world, which was the vast majority of the world's Jews during the Middle Ages. Judeo-Arabic can be examined through different disciplines such as philology, linguistics, history, philosophy, law, literature and more. In this course we will concentrate on philology and linguistics as well as on Judeo-Arabic translations of sacred texts, called the *šarḥ*.

We will practice reading Judeo-Arabic we will learn the principles of working with original manuscript material – including the branch of manuscript study called paleography, the study of old handwriting We will also examine the various issues connected to Judeo-Arabic orthographies. Furthermore, we will study sociolinguistic issues of Judeo-Arabic, including terminology, periodization, and the sociolinguistic setting of the 'religiolect' within Arabic in general. We will mostly read *šarḥ* texts and typically from Egypt. The *šarḥ* – literal translation of sacred texts from Hebrew into Judeo-Arabic is one of the most important genres of the language. The texts of the *šarḥ* are a rare window on the history of Arabic and its spoken dialects, since they preserve distinctive dialectal features of usage and pronunciation not found in classical Arabic

texts. They are also a major source for understanding translation issues and issues of religious identity among Egyptian Jews.

Goals: By the end of this course you will understand the intricacies of Judeo-Arabic and its place in the history of Arabic, on the one hand and its standing among other Jewish languages, on the other hand. You will be able to read a Judeo-Arabic text (most probably a *šarḥ* text) in manuscript form, and analyze it linguistically, identifying major deviations from Classical Arabic and identifying dialectal issues.

Books:

- Blau, Joshua. 1981. *The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judaeo-Arabic*. Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute.
- Blau, Joshua. 1980. *A Grammar of Mediaeval Judaeo-Arabic*. 2nd Edition. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press.
- Blau, Joshua. 2006. *A Dictionary of Mediaeval Judaeo-Arabic Texts*. Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities.
- Hary, Benjamin. 1992. *Multiglossia in Judeo-Arabic*. Leiden: Brill.

Below is an important bibliography of books and papers in the field.

Requirements:

Students will need to prepare Judeo-Arabic texts, including manuscripts, to be analyzed in class (see **Reading**). They will also read secondary materials for each session (see **Secondary**). At times students will read additional secondary materials and report to class (see **Reports**). Students will be tested twice during the semester on the progression of their skills in manuscript reading. Furthermore, students will write a research paper, which will include analysis of an unpublished manuscript of a *šarḥ* text.

Honor Code:

The Emory College Honor Code is in force at all times in this class.

See <http://www.emory.edu/COLLEGE/students/honor.html> (esp. Article 4)

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Tentative Schedule:

(Updates on reading and assignments may be provided throughout the semester in class)

- Tuesday, September 5 Introduction to Judeo-Arabic orthography:
Hebrew alphabet; Judeo-Arabic orthography
Reading: Saadia's Tafsir, Genesis, Chapter 40
- Tuesday, September 12 Definitions and terminology in of Judeo-Arabic
Reading: Saadia's Tafsir, Genesis, Chapter 40; Egyptian *šarḥ*, Genesis, Chapter 40
Secondary: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², s.v. Judaeo-Arabic: Medieval Judaeo-Arabic (Blau 1978); Judaeo-Arabic Literature (Vajda 1978); Dryefus 1997; Hary 1989; Hary 1992: 71-75
Reports: Blau 1974; Halkin 1960; Khan 2002; Polliack 1998; Steinschneider 1897-1901
- Tuesday, September 19 The genre of the *šarḥ* I
Reading: Egyptian *šarḥ*, Genesis, ms work I
Secondary: Hary 1994b: 375-377 and 382-387; Hary 2000a
- Tuesday, September 26 The genre of the *šarḥ* II
Reading: Egyptian *šarḥ*, Genesis, ms work II
Secondary: Hary 1991b; Hary 1994a
- Tuesday, October 3 Review and quiz
Reading: Egyptian *šarḥ*, Genesis, ms work III
- Tuesday, October 10 Fall Break – **No class**
- Tuesday, October 17 Continuoglossia in Arabic and in Judeo-Arabic I
Reading: Egyptian *šarḥ*, The Book of Esther, ms work I
Secondary: Ferguson 1959a; Ferguson 1959b; Hary 1996a; Hary 2003
Reports: Badawi 1973; Blanc 1960; Blau 1977; Hary 1992: 29-47; Ferguson 1996

- Tuesday, October 24 Continuuglossia in Arabic and in Judeo-Arabic II
Pseudo-Corrections
Reading: Egyptian *šarḥ*, The Book of Esther, ms work II
Secondary: Hary 2006
Reports: Blau 1963; Blau 1970; El-Hassan 1977; Kaye 1972; Newby 1971
- Tuesday, October 31 Middle Arabic; The periods of Judeo-Arabic
Reading: Egyptian *šarḥ*, The Book of Esther, ms work III
Secondary: Hary 1989; Hary 1997b; Khan 1992
Reports: Hary 1992: 49-69; 71-82; 103-114
- Tuesday, November 7 Early and Classical Judeo-Arabic; The Geniza
Reading: T-S 10.187, I
Secondary: Hary 1997a; Goitein 1999
- Tuesday, November 14 Judeo-Arabic Dialects
Reading: T-S 10.187, II
Secondary: Judaeo-Arabic Dialects (Cohen 1978); Hary 1994b; Hary 1996b; Hary 2000b
Reports: Blau 1961
- Tuesday, November 21 Orthographic traditions in Judeo-Arabic
Reading: Egyptian *šarḥ*, Passover *Haggadah*, ms work I
Secondary: Blau and Hopkins 1984; Hary 1990; Hary 1996c
Reports: Khan 1993
- Tuesday, November 28 Judeo-Arabic in its sociolinguistic setting
Reading: Egyptian *šarḥ*, Passover *Haggadah*, ms work II
Secondary: Hary 1995; Hary 2003; Stillman 1991
- Tuesday, December 5 Hebrew and Aramaic elements in Judeo-Arabic
Reading: Egyptian *šarḥ*, Passover *Haggadah*, ms work III
Secondary: Hary 1999
- Tuesday, December 12 Review and summary; Presentations of papers

HAVE A PRODUCTIVE SEMESTER AND
GOOD LUCK!

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