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Winter 2015

**JWST 323 “The Israeli Novel in Comparative Context:  
William Faulkner and A. B. Yehoshua”**

**T/H 1:05-2:25 McTavish St. #3700, room 437**

**Description:** A. B. Yehoshua, Israel’s leading novelist, has been called the “Faulkner of Haifa.” Yehoshua considers Faulkner to be the most important novelist of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Acknowledging his indebtedness to this post-bellum writer of the American South, Yehoshua has particularly noted that Faulkner’s innovations helped him transition from writing short stories to more complex novels that Yehoshua began crafting in the late 1970s. In this course we will pair three novels by Yehoshua with three by Faulkner to assess the similarities and differences in their respective styles, structures, and historical contexts. We will begin with a short story by Faulkner, “A Rose for Emily,” about which Yehoshua published a close analysis, and use this to initiate a vibrant conversation between and with these literary giants.

**Evaluation:** Attendance and participation 20%; three essays worth 20%, 25% and 35%: first essay (~5pp) on *The Lover* and *As I Lay Dying*; second essay (~7pp) on *As I Lay Dying* and *A Late Divorce*; last essay (7-10pp) entering into conversation with scholarly assessments of Yehoshua’s relationship to Faulkner.

**Texts available in Paragraph bookstore on McGill College/Sherbrooke:**

William Faulkner:

*The Sound and the Fury* (1929)  
*As I Lay Dying* (1930)  
*Absalom! Absalom!* (1936)

A.B. Yehoshua

*The Lover* (1977)  
*A Late Divorce* (1982)  
*Mr. Mani* (1990)

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January 6: Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" and A. B. Yehoshua's analysis of it (handouts)

Jan 8: *The Lover* parts 1 & 2

Jan 13 *The Lover* parts 3 & 4

Jan 15 complete *The Lover*

Jan 20 read *As I Lay Dying* (in its entirety)

Jan 22 essay workshop

Jan 27 First paper due: comparative analysis of a topic of your choice in *The Lover* and *As I Lay Dying* (1500 and 1700 words-- ~5pp)

+ bring *The Sound and the Fury* so that we can begin reading it together.

Jan 29 *The Sound and the Fury* (first and second chapters—"April 7<sup>th</sup> 1928" and "June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1910")

Feb 3 *The Sound and the Fury* (third and fourth chapters—"April 6<sup>th</sup> 1928" and "April 8<sup>th</sup> 1928")

Feb 5 discussion of encyclopedia articles as springboard for further discussion

Feb 10 *A Late Divorce* first three chapters ("Sunday," "Monday" and "Tuesday")

Feb 12 *A Late Divorce* "Wednesday," "Thursday Night" and "Friday, Four to Five P.M."

Feb 17 Complete *A Late Divorce*

Feb 19 essay workshop (revisit encyclopedia articles too)

Feb 24 Second paper due: comparative analysis of a topic of your choice in *As I Lay Dying* and *A Late Divorce* ((between 2100 to 2300 words-- ~7pp)

+ read and discuss Nehama Aschkenasy's essay (handout in class)

Feb 26 *Absalom! Absalom!* (chapters 1-3)

March 10 *Absalom! Absalom!* (chapters 4-7)

March 12 complete *Absalom! Absalom!*

March 17 Find and read the biblical account of King David's relationship with his son Absalom (read all of Samuel 2—preferably in the JPS translation of the Bible)—class discussion on Faulkner's engagement with this source.

March 19 *Mr. Mani*, first conversation (Hagar-Yael)

March 24 *Mr. Mani*, second conversation (Egon-Andrea)

March 26 *Mr. Mani*, third conversation (Lt. Horowitz-Col. Woodhouse)

March 31 *Mr. Mani*, fourth conversation (Efraim and Sholom Shapiro)

April 2<sup>nd</sup> *Mr. Mani*, fifth conversation (Avraham Mani and Rabbi Hanania and Doña Flora)

April 7 & 9 essay workshops

April 15 final paper dealing in some way with all the novels we read and entering into conversation with/expanding Nehama Aschkenasy's assessment of the Yehoshua/Faulkner relationship (max. 3000 words--7-10pp)

The paper should be slipped under my office door (Leacock 831) on April 15 between 8am-5pm