

AJU BIB525 Final Assignment

T. R. Marvin, Fall 2018

Project Description

For your final project, you will be writing and presenting your own line commentary on a selection of the Torah text—adding your own column to the Miqra’ot Gedolot daf, as it were. Like your predecessors, you’ll be interacting with the other commentaries on the page—three or more commentators (per project, not per comment). However, you are not merely interacting in the manner of a supercommentary, that is, commenting on the commentaries: this is your opportunity to synthesize the (complex and multivalent) commentarial tradition and add your own perspective.

Your written commentary should be approximately 5 pages long. As such, you should select a portion of text suitable to the type of commentary you wish to write. As we’ve seen, line commentaries vary in their approach (from translation to essayistic) and your task is to select an identifiable approach that you wish to pursue. You might focus on language/grammar, context (peshat), midrashic-homiletical reasoning (derash), or elucidating philosophical or mystical meaning (sod). Depending on the approach and passage you choose, you might cover a few verses or a dozen. Keep in mind, though, that you are not writing an essay but a running line commentary.

You will present your approach orally on the last day of class: in approximately five minutes, give an overview of your topic, your approach, and the commentaries you’ve selected. Pick one comment to share with us—please bring a source sheet.

Topic & Approach – due Mon., Nov. 5

Decide on a segment of text to work on, as well as the general approach you will take. Let me know by email (a brief paragraph to which I will respond).

Prospectus – due Wed., Nov. 21

Select the (three, or more) commentaries you will be engaging with and summarize the points you will be addressing. You can write this in outline form, in paraphrase, or as a direct translation—whichever you would like input on. 1-3 pages.

Oral Presentations – in class, Wed., Dec. 12

Written Commentary – due Wed., Dec. 19