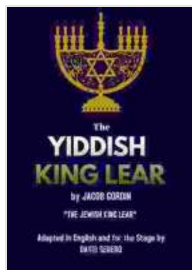


The Jewish King Lear: An Adaptation by Jacob Gordin

The Jewish King Lear is an adaptation of Shakespeare's King Lear by Jacob Gordin. The play was first performed in 1892 and has since been performed around the world. The play tells the story of Reb Shemuel, a wealthy Jewish merchant who divides his property among his three daughters. When his daughters mistreat him, he is forced to wander the streets as a beggar.



Yiddish King Lear : The Jewish King Lear by Jacob Gordin. Adapted in English and for the stage by David

Serero by Nicolas Billon

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 1270 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Print length : 105 pages
Lending : Enabled



Gordin's adaptation of King Lear is notable for its realistic portrayal of Jewish life in the late 19th century. The play includes many scenes of everyday life, such as a family dinner, a wedding, and a funeral. Gordin also uses the play to explore the themes of anti-Semitism and social injustice.

The Jewish King Lear has been praised for its powerful performances and its moving portrayal of the human condition. The play has been compared to other great works of literature, such as Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*.

Characters

- **Reb Shemuel:** A wealthy Jewish merchant
- **Gitel:** His eldest daughter
- **Esther:** His middle daughter
- **Rivkeh:** His youngest daughter
- **Yankel:** Gitel's husband
- **Moishe:** Esther's husband
- **Avrom:** Rivkeh's husband
- **The Fool:** A mysterious figure who provides commentary on the action of the play

Plot

The play begins with Reb Shemuel dividing his property among his three daughters. Gitel, the eldest, receives the most property, followed by Esther, and then Rivkeh. Reb Shemuel then asks his daughters to promise to take care of him in his old age. Gitel and Esther agree, but Rivkeh refuses.

Reb Shemuel is angered by Rivkeh's refusal, and he curses her. He then leaves home and goes to live with Gitel and her husband. Gitel and her husband treat Reb Shemuel well, but Esther and her husband are not as kind. Rivkeh, meanwhile, is filled with remorse for her actions.

One day, Reb Shemuel is visited by the Fool. The Fool tells Reb Shemuel that he has been foolish to trust his daughters. Reb Shemuel is angered by the Fool's words, but he eventually comes to realize that the Fool is right.

Reb Shemuel leaves Gitel's house and goes to live with Esther and her husband. Esther and her husband treat Reb Shemuel even worse than Gitel and her husband. Reb Shemuel is forced to wander the streets as a beggar.

One day, Reb Shemuel meets Rivkeh. Rivkeh is now a poor woman, and she is filled with remorse for her actions. She begs Reb Shemuel to forgive her, and he does.

Reb Shemuel and Rivkeh go to live together in a small cottage. They are poor, but they are content. Reb Shemuel has learned that true happiness is not found in wealth or possessions, but in love and forgiveness.

Themes

The Jewish King Lear explores a number of themes, including:

* **The importance of family:** The play shows how a family can be torn apart by greed and selfishness. * **The dangers of anti-Semitism:** The play shows how anti-Semitism can lead to persecution and violence. * **The power of redemption:** The play shows how even the most wicked people can find redemption.

Legacy

The Jewish King Lear is a powerful and moving play that has resonated with audiences for over a century. The play has been praised for its realistic

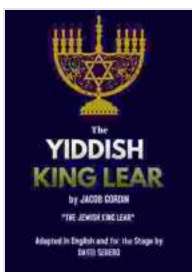
portrayal of Jewish life, its exploration of important themes, and its powerful performances. The Jewish King Lear is a valuable addition to the canon of Yiddish literature and a must-see for anyone interested in Jewish theater.

Image Gallery





A scene from the play The Jewish King Lear



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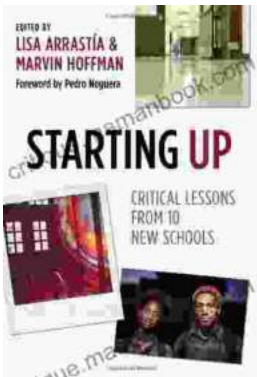
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