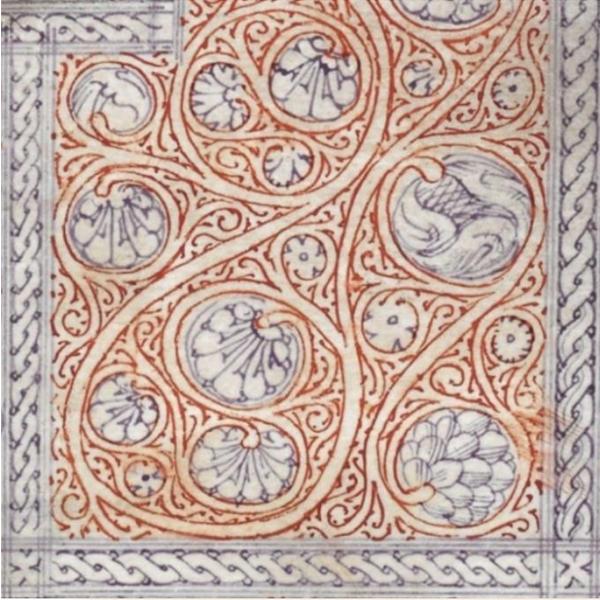


# Unfolding Time



Texts  
Practices  
Politics

British and Irish Association of Jewish Studies

Annual Conference



11 – 13 July 2022

King's College London, Strand Campus

**BIAJS**  
British and Irish  
Association for Jewish Studies



**EAJS**

European Association for Jewish Studies



BRILL

**KING'S**  
*College*  
**LONDON**

## Welcome

'The word unfolding has a double meaning. A bud unfolds into a blossom, but the boat which one teaches children to make by folding paper unfolds into a flat sheet ...'

Walter Benjamin

It is a particular pleasure to welcome you to this year's annual conference of the British and Irish Association for Jewish Studies. After more than two years that deeply affected our senses of time and space, not the least by taking much of our social and intellectual life online – and after an extraordinarily stimulating online BIAJS conference organised by Helen Spurling at the University of Southampton last year – we are returning to an annual meeting in person. It will be a return to the conference forms and rhythms that may be familiar to many of you, and I hope also to the joys of spontaneous encounters that come with them. But in many ways this is also a modest new beginning, a first attempt to find out how to host a BIAJS conference in the unfamiliar circumstances of the present moment. The conference team and I have attempted to plan with much circumspection, but some things may still look a bit less than perfect, and we will be grateful for your support and suggestions.

The conference topic invites participants to explore how Jews have shaped and shape their individual, familial and communal commitments, cultural and social lives, historical understandings and political projects by engaging imaginatively with time and 'time-like' matters. Walter Benjamin's words about the meanings of 'unfolding' resonate strongly, I think, with the richness and complexity of the texts and practices that form Jewish 'timescapes', and with the fresh and multi-faceted research on them that has emerged over the last decades.

At the same time, the conference also offers a forum for the discussion of current research in many further areas and highlights the work of new scholars, not the least through the 'New Scholars Reception' on Monday, to which you are all warmly invited.

This conference is the result of many collaborative and individual initiatives and contributions.

I would like to thank all conference participants for getting involved – and their willingness to travel, wherever possible.

This is the first time the conference offers a joint panel of BIAJS and the Jewish Historical Society of England, and I am grateful to Eva Frojmovic for organising the panel on Jewish Heritage in Ukraine, to Miri Rubin, President of the JHSE, for instantaneous support, and to Vitaly Chernovianenko, President of the Ukrainian Association of Jewish Studies, and his co-panelists for sharing their insights with us. Vivi Lachs, David Newham, Ilana Tahan and Nadia Valman offer exciting visits and tours – many thanks for inviting conference participants to explore what lies beyond the Strand.

It was a great pleasure to work with David Tollerton, BIAJS Secretary, and all the other BIAJS committee members. I am very grateful to the members of the conference committee at King's, who over the last two years never failed to come up with brilliant ideas and solutions: Robert Cohen, Yuval Evri, Wendy Filer, Neil Janes, Paul Joyce, Shalom Morris, Susy Rees, Emma Rozenberg, Ruth Sheldon, Jonathan Stökl, Adam Sutcliffe, Joan Taylor, Lindsey Taylor-Guthartz, David Torollo and Julian Weiss. Without Wendy Filer's and Susy Rees's amazing work, the conference would not begin on time. Marat Shterin and Linda Woodhead were very supportive from the start as Heads of Department. A special thank you is due to Jeanette Steemers, Vice-Dean (Research), for timely support. Without Callum Graham's meticulous work, this conference booklet wouldn't exist. The Faculty's Professional Services team for Theology & Religious Studies was a constant source of reassurance: with institutional memory about large conferences not very reliably preserved, Emilia Borowska, Juliette Boyd, Antonia Coote and Chelo Rodriguez always found time and expert ways to swiftly and generously guide and help us with preparations.

Thanks to Lisa Neville's extraordinary support in 2019, we always knew we had a conference venue, even as the pandemic interfered and the conference was postponed. Ruth Denton and Sarah Webster, also at King's Venues, Catherine Sharman, AV Services, Umul Hussein, Central Timetabling, and Nigel Baker, Campus Operations Manager, helped with excellent guidance and support over the last year. I would also like to thank those whose names we often do not know but whose dedication and time is essential for a meeting like this:

catering staff members, receptionists, security staff members, porters and cleaners.

For their generous support of PhD students and Early Career Scholars, I would like to thank the European Association of Jewish Studies. Brill and the Jewish Historical Society of England generously support the Reception on Tuesday. The Department of Theology and Religious Studies enthusiastically agreed to host the conference, and my colleagues generously tolerated my sometimes rather single-minded focus on 'unfolding' time.

I wish you very enjoyable and productive conference days -



Andrea Schatz, BIAJS President 2021–22  
Reader in Jewish Studies, Department of Theology & Religious Studies  
King's College London

## Conference Information

### For Presenters and Chairs

- **Conference papers** should be for 15-20 minutes to allow for c. 10 minutes of discussion. If your panel includes four speakers, the session can be slightly longer than 90 minutes. If you present as part of a larger panel or round-table, please contact the panel organiser to confirm the length of each presentation.
- **Before the session:** Please arrive in the room c. 15 minutes earlier to introduce yourself to other panel members and confirm the running order. Student ambassadors will assist with setting up PPT presentations.
- **Powerpoint presentations:** please bring them on a USB stick. It will not be possible to connect your own laptops.
- **Handouts:** You are welcome to bring handouts, but please note that there is **no option to print** at the conference venue.

- Chairs will use the [short biography](#) you provided for their introductions. Please let them know, if there are updates you would like to share.
- Chairs are encouraged to remind speakers 3 minutes and 1 minute before the end of the time slot to conclude. It is important that everyone has [the same opportunity](#) to speak and respond to questions.

## WiFi Access

- [Eduroam](#): This is the preferred option. If you have not set up Eduroam on your device before, please do so in good time before the conference. Your home institution will be able to assist.
- [The Cloud Network](#): Visitors can also connect to 'The Cloud': in the WiFi settings of your device, select 'The Cloud' and register if not used before.

## Covid Mitigation

- [Face coverings/masks](#): Please wear them, whenever possible. FFP2 masks and Lateral Flow Tests can be bought in drugstores (e.g. Boots, Superdrug) and pharmacies.
- [Lateral Flow Tests \(LFTs\)/Rapid Tests](#): Please test before arriving in the conference venue. At the same time, please keep in mind that a negative test may precede a positive test by just a few hours. LFTs cannot replace face coverings and social distancing.
- Please make use of ample space [in and around King's](#): there are two [Quiet Rooms](#) (the Small Committee Room and – on Tuesday & Wednesday – K0.19) for rest or work. Please also explore the beautiful spaces [outside](#): the new [Quad](#), the [River Terrace](#) and the [Somerset House Courtyard](#).
- [Conference rooms](#) are ventilated with fresh air.
- [Please respect](#) the needs of individual colleagues and bear in mind that everyone will want to return home safely and in good health.

## Health & Safety:

Campus Security: +44 (0)20 7848 81024 (for all emergencies on campus)  
 UK Emergency number: 999

At the Conference:



BRILL



**EUROSPAN**

An Independent Publishers Group Company



JOURNAL *of* JEWISH STUDIES



## Keynote Lectures

MONDAY 11 July, 17:15–18:15

Safra Lecture Theatre

**Vivian Liska****“The End or the Beginning”: The Interval Between Past and Future in German-Jewish Modernism**

“Jews,” Kierkegaard wrote, “are the most unfortunate of peoples because they are situated between memory and waiting.” In a reverse echo, Jacques Derrida reproaches Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi for wanting to reserve for the Jews “both the cult of memory and the openness to hope.” If “Jewish time” is, especially in philosophy and theory, associated with past and future rather than the present, it is because it presumably lacks – or projects onto a messianic future – the idea of *pleroma*, the “fullness of time.” This could explain why some of the most striking and complex figures for the rupture of continuity in modernity were formulated by German-Jewish thinkers and authors who invoked, alluded to or reconfigured aspects of the Jewish tradition to describe the rupture of tradition itself. My lecture will explore the Jewish underpinnings of Franz Kafka’s “I am the end or the beginning,” Gershom Scholem’s notion of “Life in Deferral,” Walter Benjamin’s “Angel of History” and Hannah Arendt’s “Gap between Past and Future.”

**Vivian Liska** is Professor of German literature and Director of the Institute of Jewish Studies at the University of Antwerp, Belgium, as well as Distinguished Visiting Professor in the Faculty of the Humanities at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She’s the editor of many books on Modernist literature, German Literature and German-Jewish Thought and directs the book series Perspectives on Jewish Texts and Contexts (De Gruyter). Her books include *When Kafka Says We. Uncommon Communities in German-Jewish Literature* (2009), *Giorgio Agambens leerer Messianismus* (2011), *Fremde Gemeinschaft. Deutsch-jüdische Literatur der Moderne* (2011) and *German-Jewish Thought and its Afterlife. A Tenuous Legacy* (2017).



## Sacha Stern

### Living in Multiple Time-Frames in Ancient and Medieval Jewish Society

How do societies and individuals function with multiple, conflicting ways of counting time? How did Jews in Antiquity and the Middle Ages manage their own time-frames in conjunction with those of broader society, and how did they manage diverse time-frames within Jewish society itself?

It has often been assumed that societies can only function effectively with a single time-frame, and that a multiplicity of time-frames causes confusion, division, and asynchronism, and inevitably leads to social break-up and schism. On this basis, Talmon argued that the Qumran sect separated from the Jewish mainstream because its calendar, based on a 364-day year, was different from the dominant lunar calendar. Even if this is true (which I dispute for several reasons), Qumran sectarians still had to live with the dominant calendar, if only in their commercial dealings with other people; their lives must still have been governed by diverse time-frames. Multiple time-reckoning was also a necessity in the Jewish Diaspora, for Jews whose calendar differed from that of dominant society. To this day, Diaspora Jews have mostly lived with more than one calendar.

Diverse time-frames have been managed by Jews in different ways. A fourth-century funerary inscription from Catania, Sicily, shows how Roman and Jewish time-reckoning practices could be seamlessly interwoven by Jews. In late medieval and early modern Europe, documentary sources and Christian calendars in Hebrew show how Jews integrated the Christian liturgical calendar in their daily experience of time; one also notes the gradual preference for Christian rather than Talmudic dates in late medieval Jewish medical compendia. Management of diverse time-frames is also visible within Jewish communities themselves. Although the Rabbanites insisted that only one calendar could be valid for all Jews, marriage contracts between them and Qaraites demonstrate that ideological views about correct time-reckoning did not prevent Jewish families from living simultaneously in different time-frames.

The idea of living in different time-frames is particularly challenging to the modern mind, as in modern society time is generally reckoned according a



single, universal global calendar (the Gregorian calendar, and the seven-day week). This is probably what induced Talmon to assume that Jews could not have lived with lunar and solar calendars simultaneously. Living with diverse time-frames was, however, an inherent feature of ancient society and of the Jewish experience through the ages, and it is prevalent again in contemporary multi-ethnic urban societies. The cognitive and organizational processes involved in using different time-frames simultaneously need to be better understood for appreciating how time was lived by Jews in their very diverse history.

[Sacha Stern](#), FBA, is Professor of Jewish Studies at University College London, where he has been since 2005. He holds a BA in Ancient and Modern History and a DPhil in Jewish Studies from the University of Oxford. His expertise includes ancient and early medieval Jewish history, rabbinic literature, and the history of ancient and medieval calendars, time reckoning, and related sciences. He has published several books including *Calendar and Community: A History of the Jewish Calendar* (2001), *Time and Process in Ancient Judaism* (2003), *Calendars in Antiquity* (Oxford 2012), and *The Jewish Calendar Controversy of 921/2* (Leiden 2019). He is Editor of the *Journal of Jewish Studies*. Since 2008 he has been Principal Investigator of six research projects at UCL funded by the ERC, AHRC, Leverhulme Trust, and Fritz Thyssen Stiftung, on various aspects of calendars in late Antiquity and the Middle Ages.



## A Round-Table (Pre-Conference)

TUESDAY 5 July, 17:30–19:00

Online

### Time in the Plural: Why Time Studies Matter in Jewish Studies

This round-table will bring together three leading scholars whose recent books explore the times and temporalities of rabbinic culture. They will discuss why “Time Studies” matter in Jewish Studies now: What can the rabbis’ legal reasoning and stories tell us about how they thought about time, and what could their insights mean for today? How do conceptions and organizations of time seek to establish identity and difference? How can time function to regulate embodiment in rabbinic literature? How is the division between modern/non-modern been racialized and gendered when it marks certain practices as outmoded? And finally, how can the interdisciplinary study of “time in the plural” enrich Jewish Studies, and vice versa?

**Lynn Kaye** is an Associate Professor of Rabbinic Literature and Thought at Brandeis University. Her book *Time in the Babylonian Talmud: Natural and Imagined Times in Jewish Law and Narrative* (Cambridge, 2018) was awarded the Association for Jewish Studies Jordan Schnitzer Book Award.

**Sarit Kattan Gribetz** is an Associate Professor in the Theology Department at Fordham University. Her first book, *Time and Difference in Rabbinic Judaism* (2020), received a National Jewish Book Award in Scholarship.

**Max Strassfeld** is an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Arizona. They are the author of *Trans Talmud: Androgynes and Eunuchs in Rabbinic Literature* (2022), which was published by the University of California Press.



## Panels and Abstracts

MONDAY 11 July

SESSION 1

9:15–10:45

1.1 'Life-Writing' in Bible and Midrash

K0.18

**Hannah Kate Capey**, 'Are you having a laugh?': Impossibility, Denial, and Ambiguity in the Abraham and Sarah Cycle

The connection between Chapters 17, 18, and 21 of the Book of Genesis has long been noted; themes of promise, annunciation, and laughter are common to all three episodes. Abraham laughs at the promise of a son in 17:17; the first time in the Hebrew Bible that a character is said to have laughed. Like Abraham, Sarah too laughs at the promise of a son in 18:12–13, and her denial of laughter is questioned in verse 15. The narratological use of humour is particularly evident in Chapter 21, where  $\text{קִיְשָׁר}$  (Isaac), named for the laughter of his parents, is definitively set apart as the heir of the Promise. There is much ambiguity, however, surrounding the meaning of 'laughter' in the biblical text; namely, exactly what *kind* of laughter is operating, and for what purpose? This paper, therefore, analyses three key pericopes; namely, 17:15–22, 18:1–15, and 21:1–12. In doing so, the role of laughter in the Abraham-cycle will be gleaned and its relevance articulated. Particular attention will be given to the contrasting responses to such laughter between principal characters in these episodes – between Abraham and Sarah, and Isaac and Ishmael.

**Hannah Kate Capey** is a second-year PhD student in Ancient History at the University of Southampton. She is an Ian Karten Scholar and Outreach Fellow in Jewish Studies at the Parkes Institute for the Study of Jewish/non-Jewish Relations. Her research focuses on 'laughter' in the book of Genesis, and its subsequent reception in the Second Temple period and pre-Islamic Rabbinic Literature. ([H.K.Capey@soton.ac.uk](mailto:H.K.Capey@soton.ac.uk))



## Benjamin Williams, From Gladiators to Fisticuffs: Updating Late-Antique Pugilistic Imagery in Midrash Tanḥuma ha-Nidpas

In Midrash Tanḥuma ha-Nidpas, the death of Abel at the hands of his jealous brother Cain is retold in an extended discourse that incorporates interpretations also known from Genesis Rabba. Among them is a parable (*mashal*) that daringly implies God's culpability in the first murder. In Genesis Rabba 22:9, God is likened to the host of a gladiatorial combat who decreed the loser's death while, in Tanḥuma ha-Nidpas Bereshit 9, God is a bystander who was blamed for failing to intervene in a fight. This paper will examine the relationship between the two parables. Analysing the text in Genesis Rabba, it will assess the knowledge of gladiatorial combat required to understand the midrash and consider its intended audience. The paper will also draw attention to the absence of gladiatorial imagery in the Tanḥuma and, noting demise of gladiatorial combat in the early-fifth century CE, consider the date at which the passage was redacted. In the light of recent studies of the Tanḥuma's propensity to criticise God for ethical dilemmas in Scripture, the paper will suggest that its version of the *mashal* is a later reformulation that strengthens the element of critique while exchanging references to an obsolete combat sport for imagery that would more readily be understood. By thus showing how the parable was crafted and recrafted, this paper will shed light on the relationship between Genesis Rabba and Tanḥuma ha-Nidpas and on how the latter updated its sources in order to explain Genesis 4 to a contemporary audience.

**Benjamin Williams** is Senior Lecturer in Biblical and Rabbinic Studies at Leo Baeck College and James Mew Lecturer in Rabbinic Hebrew at the University of Oxford. His research focuses on the development of rabbinic Bible interpretation, including the dating of late antique exegetical traditions; the transmission of midrash in manuscript and print, particularly in the Ottoman Sephardi communities in which the editiones principes were published; and the interpretation of midrash in Jewish and Christian commentarial traditions. He is the author of *Commentary on Midrash Rabba in the Sixteenth Century: The Or ha-Sekhel of Abraham ben Asher* (OUP).



## Natalie C. Polzer, The Story Cycles of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Akiva in Avot de Rabbi Natan Versions A and B: Proto-Biography or Redactional Coincidence?

By contrast with Greco-Roman literature, there is a notable absence of what we consider historical and biographical writing in classical rabbinic literature. Although rabbinic narratives abound with details from the lives of prominent rabbinic figures, nowhere have these been redacted together so as to present a chronologically arranged biographical sequence. Building on Devora Steinmetz's notion of 'systems of signification' for biographical sage stories in the *Bavli* ('Agadah Unbound', in *Creation and Composition*, 2010, p. 337), this paper investigates the traditions about or cited in the name of Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Eliezer in *Avot de Rabbi Natan* versions A and B (*ARN*). The presentation of these traditions suggests an underlying redactional biographical impulse, a claim supported by an examination of: (1) the roughly chronological presentation of *ARN* traditions concerning the two rabbis; (2) internal consistencies and connections between the content and characterization in different units. Some general questions about *ARN* and its redactional development will also be addressed. First, assuming that *ARN* is a didactic text that presents rabbinic figures as models for appropriate ethical behaviors, why are Rabbis Akiva and Eliezer so obviously paired? Second, does *ARN*'s representation of these rabbinic figures show signs of developing hagiography, and how so? Third, if a sort of proto-biographical drive can be identified in *ARN*, how does this illuminate its obscure transmission history and development?

Dr. Natalie C. Polzer is Associate Professor of Jewish Studies and Religious Studies in the Department of Comparative Humanities at the University of Louisville (USA). Her research focuses on different problems in classical rabbinic literature, which is analyzed using a synthesis of text and redaction critical scholarly methodologies and contemporary theoretical frames. Areas of interest include: rabbinic culture in Sasanian Babylonia, gender and its representation in classical rabbinic halakha and aggadah, the aesthetics and development of rabbinic narrative and the nature and development of the rabbinic aggadic text, *Avot de Rabbi Natan*. ([natalie.polzer@louisville.edu](mailto:natalie.polzer@louisville.edu))



**Tzachi Cohen**, From when does one recite Shema in the evening?  
Relative Time, Universal Time, Temple Time and Family Time in  
Mishnah Berachot 1:1

Towards the end of the second century and the beginning of the third century, R. Yehuda ha-Nasi caused a revolution of consciousness in Jewish law. The Mishnah, the first comprehensive halakhic composition, offered a new form from a comprehensive conception of a reorganization of the whole of Jewish law in light of centuries of creative meditation on Biblical verse (midrashim). As it encompasses the circle of the year and the circle of life, from birth to death and controlled until evening, on weekdays and holidays, it naturally also deals with the dimensions of time, its measurement and its boundaries.

The first mishnah actually deals with time and its various meanings. This mishnah's overt subject are the limits of the time when it is permissible to recite the "Shema", a portion of verses that construct a significant part of the evening prayer. This question leads to a complex discussion on a number of dimensions of time. The Mishnah confronts and crosses dimensions of temple time and astronomical time, as well as private and family time, young time and old time.

Surprisingly, in the midst of the halakhic discussion, a story is included in a mishnah, a tale concerning the sons of Rabban Gamliel, who were late returning from the banquet, a story in which time is also a central theme. The summary of the story is used by Rabban Gamliel for a sermon about the limits of time and the possibility of flexing them.

A study of Mishnah Brachot 1:1 will suggest that this Mishnah deals with the terms of time in various historical and cultural contexts. We will see how different dimensions of this sub-concept conceive, represent and even imagine matters of time through texts, narratives, genres (e.g. interpretation) and transfer them from one plane to another. Equally intriguing is the choice to place precisely a matter that time is such a central issue in it at the beginning of the composition of R. Yehuda ha-Nasi, and the meta-textual significance of this choice.



Another noteworthy subject is the special combination of story and law. Thus, the mishnah deals, among other things, with interpretations of time through personal, family and community practices - and examines their implications for the perception of time and the general boundaries of halakhah.

**Dr. Tzachi Cohen** teaches Hebrew and Rabbinic literature at Herzog College for Teachers and Ono Academic College, where he also serves as head of the Program for Master's Degree in Jewish Studies. He is a researcher of ancient Hebrew literature, and of ancient Hebrew magic. He is also a film critic and published poet. His Hebrew translation of the works of the philosopher Paul Ricoeur will be published later this year. His previous publications concern literary interpretation of Talmudic stories concerning a Jewish variation on a familiar foresight technique in the ancient world and Cultural readings of contemporary cinema. ([evic41@gmail.com](mailto:evic41@gmail.com))

### **Sarah Wisialowski, Time for Renewal: How Daniel 9 Changes History**

Can one bend time or even change time through the performance of prayer? This is question is the basis of my paper. In the Second Temple period, the writers and readers of prayer-texts were dealing with oppression from foreign rule and lack of autonomy, and thus were living in an age of constant crisis. For this paper, I will look at the ways in which prayer was used by Second Temple Jews as a way to bend time, and ultimately reverse their trauma.

The relationship between prayer and time is dynamic and ever-changing within the Second Temple period. The book of Daniel is a book of diaspora, in which although Daniel lives in a foreign place, under foreign rule, he never loses his identity as one of the Jewish people. This paper will examine how the paradigmatic confession of Daniel 9 became a means to confront the trauma of foreign powers while also acting as a way to recover a past, better time. Prayer acts for the purpose of disrupting the constant progress of time, thus allowing for introspection and renewal. The temporal spaces of the past, the present, and the future become distorted through prayer. This blurring provides the context for a prayer, or one who prays, to enact change. Throughout this paper, I hope to show that a prayer is able to rewrite, or 'curate', history, because of its impact upon time, and by extension, upon God.



[Sarah Wisialowski](#) a second-year doctoral student at the University of Oxford studying under the supervision of Professor Hindy Najman.

([sarah.wisialowski@oriel.ox.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.wisialowski@oriel.ox.ac.uk))

## **Hanoch Ben-Pazi**, A Prayer for the Future to Come: The Paradigm Shift in the Concept of Time according to Franz Rosenzweig

One of Franz Rosenzweig's philosophical projects in his book "The Star of Redemption" is a "New Thinking" about the concept of time. Rosenzweig's philosophy creates a change in the perception of the linearity of time, to the existential meaning of time.

The "turning point" for Rosenzweig is the personal experience of love – meaning: the possible experience of revelation. Revelation is real meaning for the present, and brings about 'eternity' into the 'present'. In this paper, I would like to take another step, and focus on Rosenzweig's concept of the future, which can be created by prayer - or the prayer for the future to come - the prayer for the eternal.

The pattern of the book "Star of Redemption", exemplifies a new philosophical approach towards the linearity of the concepts of time. The three states of time - 'past, present and future' - are replaced by theological concepts of 'creation, revelation and redemption'. But for Rosenzweig, the significance of this change is not merely the granting of religious theological meanings to the states of time, but the transformation of the existence of times into relational states - the "relationships" between God, Humanity, and the World. According to Rosenzweig's new thinking, time is not our chronological axis - that we can move and advance within it - but the possibility given to human beings to change time. In Henry Bergson's terminology, we may say that the future is not the 'elan vital' of time - it is not the momentum and continuity of the present towards the future. The future can enter into the present, and humanity's wish can go beyond the continuity of time, and may change the future.

The idea of prayer, the possibility of prayer, the daring of change in prayer – all play key roles in changing the concept of the future. This is exactly the way Rosenzweig opens the third part of the Star of Redemption. The prayer, which Rosenzweig speaks of, is not the one that declares human belief in God (such as the Credo or the *Shahad* or '*Shema Yisrael*'). Prayer is not a declaration of



love, or the Torah reading, or any solemn ceremony. The Prayer for Rosenzweig, and he aimed primarily at Jewish prayer – is the daring of a human being to turn to God – and request to change the future. Prayer is the human daring to go beyond the continuity of time, and to create a different future than expected in advance. In the deepest sense, prayer brings about a change in the fate of time, and therefore it can and does create hope.

**Professor Hanoch Ben-Pazi** is the Head of Dept. of Jewish Philosophy at Bar Ilan University (Israel). His research is dedicated to Contemporary Philosophy and Modern Jewish Thought, especially to the philosophical writings and Jewish thought of Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig, Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida. Among his many publications are the following books: *Interpretation as Ethical Act: The Hermeneutics Of Emmanuel Levinas*, Tel Aviv: Resling (Series of Philosophy) 2012 ; *Emmanuel Levinas: Educational Contract: Responsibility, Hopefulness, Alliance*, Tel Aviv: Mofet and Ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuchad, 2016. ([benpazh@mail.biu.ac.il](mailto:benpazh@mail.biu.ac.il))

### 1.3 Affect and Memory: In Dialogue with Walter Benjamin and Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi

K0.19

#### **Liza Michaeli**, *The Jewish Agon, in Holding*

What is the significance of feeling Jewish from the inside? How does this address identity with the experience of Jewish *masorah* and the cryptic time of Jewish feeling? The Jewish agon is a physically enigmatic difficulty. That is why Vladimir Jankélévitch, in his meditation "Judaism, an 'Internal Problem,'" suggests that "this complication" is "lived from the inside." Awareness of the feeling is indistinct by impression, it is distinct by movement: difficulty is moving, to be moved to life is difficult. This is the movement Jews live out and the movement by which Jews are lived. This is the intimate ethical time—the fermata—of the feeling, lived from the inside.

What does it mean to be an orphan in, or to belong to, this feeling? Does the feeling renew itself, and *how*? Principally, is this feeling betrayable?

This difficult indemonstrable feeling, this paper will suggest, is essentially Jewish, a Jewish feeling belonging to the heart. Belonging is not a fact that can be attested, it is not deducible, it is a feeling, it is a failure of fact: it is the



"affection," this paper shall wager, of this fact. The feeling carries a life of its own, the life of the term, the living term by which Jewish affection "holds" its own standard of participation. The Jewish agon is a matter of sense. It is given emotionally, existentially. To sense this is to be in the agon where *in* refers to *initiare*: this is not for all because it is not lived by all. It takes living through it.

From the intimate ethical time of this difficulty, this meditation will consider the involuntary capacity to hold this feeling and the self-renewal of Jewish tradition. It makes an intervention in phenomenology, psychoanalysis, and Jewish history and memory to consider a buried subtlety in the current of Jewish survival: not that of the person, but of the feeling.

[In conversation with Vladimir Jankélévitch, Sigmund Freud, Jean-François Lyotard, Gershom Scholem, and Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi]

[Liza Michaeli](#) is a writer, originally from Jerusalem. She is earning a PhD in Rhetoric, with Designated Emphases in Critical Theory and Jewish Studies, at the University of California, Berkeley. She works in phenomenology, psychoanalysis, movement, poetics, and Jewish ethics. She is writing a dissertation, "Recovering the pain" and a poetic manuscript on the essential difficulty of being alive. ([liza.michaeli@berkeley.edu](mailto:liza.michaeli@berkeley.edu))

### **Tsiona Lida**, *The Ascent of Fallen Jews: Affect and Historical Memory in Walter Benjamin and Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi*

This paper reads Walter Benjamin alongside Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi to examine the temporal and political orientations embedded within their historical writing. Despite overlapping concerns, these two thinkers do not appear to have been put in conversation previously. Using affect as an interpretive lens, I compare Benjamin's and Yerushalmi's orientations toward time (past and future) to distinguish the way that each conceives of 'hope', as well as to reveal what is at stake in historical temporality—namely, the possibility of redemption. In *Zakhor* (1982) Yerushalmi announced a 'rupture' between Jewish collective memory and modern historiography. History, Yerushalmi declares, supersedes sacred text as the arbiter of Judaism and becomes 'the faith of fallen Jews.' Despite this melancholic diagnosis, Yerushalmi's interest remains with transmission: what survives, what Jews hold



onto, nonetheless. Benjamin, in contrast, foregrounds loss and the ‘weak messianic power’ of history’s victims. Yerushalmi carries us away from death, whereas Benjamin beckons us there. I offer a close reading of ‘Theses on the Philosophy of History’ (1940) to demonstrate that affect is crucial to Benjamin’s criticism and conceptualization of history. I then analyze *Zakhor* alongside Yerushalmi’s related writings to argue for the political relevance of Jewish history’s affective underpinnings. Finally, I reflect on the rupture that Yerushalmi doesn’t quite address: Zionism’s break from Judaism. Benjamin offers a method of melancholic remembrance, while Yerushalmi salvages history for the purposes of fostering hope—hope that prefers to await improvement. In sum, this article analyzes temporal orientations that disclose the affective consequences of historical writing.

**Tsiona Lida** is a British PhD student in History at Harvard University. Her interests include emotions history, modern European intellectual history, and Jewish history. Tsiona’s research centers on the role of emotions in Jewish intellectual and political thought in the twentieth century, with particular attention to the Zionist context. At Harvard, she coordinates the Jewish Studies Graduate Workshop and the Jews in Modern Europe Seminar. Before starting the PhD, Tsiona completed her MA and MSc in History at the University of Edinburgh. She also studied at the Freie Universität Berlin, and at Harvard, where she was a Kennedy Scholar. ([tsionalida@g.harvard.edu](mailto:tsionalida@g.harvard.edu))

## 1.4 Jewish Heritage in the UK Context I

## Council Room

What do different groups, institutions and individuals mean by Jewish heritage in the UK context? The papers of the two panels on “Jewish Heritage in the UK Context” will address the shifting discourses and silences around Jewish heritage in the UK context, between museums, archives and monuments; between class and religion, memory and forgetting and rediscovery, between materiality and intangible heritage.



## **Alan Benstock**, Connecting Jewish Collections with Jewish Communities: A Case Study of Leeds City Museum

Alan Benstock is a PhD student at the University of Leeds researching religion in airports. He is a member of his synagogue in Leeds with a responsibility for its archives. He has run a number of lottery funded community based heritage projects. ([pr17alb@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:pr17alb@leeds.ac.uk))

## **Eva Frojmovic**, Paradoxes of Jewish Heritage in Solomon A. Hart's Album of Sketches (Leeds University Library)

Eva Frojmovic, Director of the Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Leeds, has published about Jewish art in the middle ages, especially Hebrew manuscripts, and about Christian visual representations of Jews. She also researches Jewish heritage, collecting, and museums. ([E.Frojmovic@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:E.Frojmovic@leeds.ac.uk))

## **David Newman**, Preserving Religious Heritage: A Tale of Four Synagogues and their Closure

David Newman is professor of Geopolitics at Ben-Gurion University in Israel. Originally from the UK, he has developed new research interests in the history of twentieth century Anglo Jewry, focusing on the communities and personalities of that period. In 2013, Newman, formerly Dean of the Social Sciences and Humanities at BGU, was awarded the OBE for promoting scientific cooperation between the UK and Israel. ([newman@bgu.ac.il](mailto:newman@bgu.ac.il))

### 1.5 'New Antisemitism' and Anti-Antisemitism

### River Room

## **Joseph Finlay**, Must Antisemitism Always Go Up? Counting Antisemitism in Britain Over Time

It has become commonplace in recent years to hear claims that antisemitism in Britain is at an all-time high, and such assertions appear to be repeated at least annually. This paper will attempt to contextualise such claims by placing them *in time*; looking at when and why British Jews began creating records of antisemitic incidents and tracing the results over the subsequent decades. It



will date the beginning of holding antisemitism statistics to the mid-1980s and analyse the cultural trends in play at that time and consider how political changes in the 1990s and 2000s might have changed the process. It will connect it to the changing nature of British Jewish approaches to communal 'Defence' and 'Security'. It will reflect on how levels of societal antisemitism in the period before such records might have been considerably higher but have been overlooked due a lack of statistics. This paper will attempt to historicise the notion of rising antisemitism in Britain and consider how even the 'new antisemitism' is already a phenomenon with a history.

**Joseph Finlay** is a PhD student at the University of Southampton, researching British Jewish responses to Race Relations and anti-racism in the postwar era. ([J.W.Finlay@soton.ac.uk](mailto:J.W.Finlay@soton.ac.uk))

### **Chana Morgenstern, The IHRA, Antisemitism and Palestinian Solidarity Organizing in UK Universities**

This paper will discuss the politics of Jewish-Palestinian and multi-cultural coalitions organizing to reverse and/or amend the problematic IHRA working definition of antisemitism in UK universities, with a focus on Cambridge University. I will look at recent (2021-22) coalition work that included Jewish, Palestinian, Arab, and other BAME faculty and students both at Cambridge and in the context of a broader national coalition. In Cambridge, part of the strategy was to interrupt recent debates and public discourses which seek to frame the general UK Jewish student body as targets of an antisemitic politics generated by pro-Palestinian progressive movements. In attempts to draw campus communities closer rather than divide them, the coalition initiated a conversation that sought to connect progressive Jews with Palestinians and BAME faculty and students. This included a discussion of an anti-racism policy and practices that include combatting antisemitism, while linking minority communities as opposed to potentially pitting them against each other. Staff and students also found much common ground surrounding the imperative of free democratic speech at the university. As another conflict broke out in Israel-Palestine in Spring 2021, the debate took on greater urgency and resonance. While IHRA policy was forced upon campuses without discussion, attempts to unseat it have resulted in a complex set of debates about how campuses can support the Jewish community alongside the Palestine one by



creating a platform for democratic conversation under a banner of equal rights and pedagogic decolonization. This paper asks in what ways such platforms might change the current political status quo on campus, and to what extent they have been eschewed by administrator and politicians in favour of a strategy that reinforces opacity and division.

[Chana Morgenstern](#) is Associate Professor in Postcolonial and Middle Eastern Literature at Cambridge University. She has published widely on Palestinian, Hebrew, Jewish and Arabic Literatures. Her monograph *Cultural Co-Resistance in Palestine/Israel: Collaboration Under Colonialism* is forthcoming in 2023. ([cm894@cam.ac.uk](mailto:cm894@cam.ac.uk))

### **Adam Sutcliffe, The Politics of Anti-Antisemitism at British Universities**

Despite the study of antisemitism being firmly established as a professional academic sub-field, and widely researched by experts in a number of fields, its definition and institutional handling have over the past decade become highly politicised and instrumentalised in the public debate of many countries, including the UK. Academics have not engaged effectively with this heated, polarised and often tendentious public discussion of antisemitism. Over the past couple of years universities have come under considerable pressure to adopt the widely critiqued IHRA 'working definition' of antisemitism, and in many cases universities have done so without consulting academics with expertise in this field, or those whose teaching is most likely to be affected by it. In this panel, the speakers will offer their thoughts, and contribute what we hope will be a wider participatory discussion, on how these controversies have played out on various university campuses over recent years. We will also ask what professional responsibility we have – as individual scholars of Jewish Studies, and also as an organised collectivity through BIAJS – to protect the study of antisemitism and other forms of prejudice as a field of objective academic enquiry, and to challenge the distortion and instrumentalization of the topic in the public sphere.

[Adam Sutcliffe](#) is Professor of European History at King's College London. He is the author, most recently, of *What Are Jews For? History, Peoplehood, and Purpose* (Princeton University Press, 2020). ([adam.sutcliffe@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:adam.sutcliffe@kcl.ac.uk))



## 2.1 Participating in the Story: Trans-temporal Enactments

K0.18

S  
2

### Jiani Sun, Narrative, Time, and Presence: A Reading of the Plague Cycle in Pseudo-Solomon

“Is there an atemporal logic lying behind the temporality of narrative?” Roland Barthes’ gripping question opens up new ways for us to grapple with the three-dimensional way of envisioning time in relation to narratives. Instead of regarding past, present, and future as given, is it possible to see a literary text construes, modifies, and imagines a temporal logic peculiar to its own? If so, what is the purpose of the logical time as if in resistance of the chronological time? In this paper, I want to focus on the plague cycle in Wisdom of Solomon (i.e. 11:1-14, 16-19) through the lens of logical time embodied in the creative rearrangement and combination of Pentateuchal narratives. There are three sections in the paper. First, I start with a careful literary analysis of the seven diptychs and identify the literary traditions underpinning the interpretations of Pentateuchal materials. Second, borrowing insights from the structuralists such as Roland Barthes and Viktor Shklovsky, I demonstrate how Wisdom constructs a logical time by taking the cues and points generated by manifold biblical narratives. Third, I argue that the effect of the logical time is to create a sense of simultaneity and presence that invites the readers to participate in the narratives. By situating themselves in the story scenes, seeing and witnessing the distinct outcomes of the wicked and the righteous, the readers are instructed with the constituents and outcomes of good and evil and learn to pursue virtue while shunning vice.

Jiani Sun hails from Shanghai, China. She is a DPhil student at the University of Oxford, supervised by Prof. Hindy Najman. Her current dissertation focuses on the Wisdom of Solomon. She is keen to explore the hermeneutical and philosophical dimensions of the exodus retelling in Wisdom. Her broader interests include biblical narrative, sapiential literature, biblical theology, history of scholarship, and philosophical hermeneutics.

[jjiani.sun@oriel.ox.ac.uk](mailto:jjiani.sun@oriel.ox.ac.uk)



## Meyrav Levy, Cognitive Participation in the Exodus Through Medieval Illuminated Mahzorim

According to Mishnah Pesachim 10:5, “In every generation a man is obligated to see himself as though he personally had gone forth from Egypt”. That is, at the core of Passover lies the duty to mobilize one’s mind and thoughts in order to imagine oneself participating in a biblical story, in another time and place. This trans-temporal consciousness can be activated by means that trigger the imagination and senses, such as the ceremonial tasting of foods during the Seder meal. My paper suggests that there are further powerful means that encourage an imaginative re-enactment of the Exodus narrative and are inherent in the communal prayer Passover performed out of illuminated Ashkenazi mahzorim (prayer-cycles). These ritual books, which were popular throughout Ashkenaz in 1250–1350, include piyyutim (liturgical poems) for each of the Jewish festivals and concomitant illustrations. On Passover, the textual-visual content of mahzorim communicate the Exodus narrative and its main theological ideas in a most effective and vivid way. It makes use of evocative sound textures, foregrounded rhetorical devices, tangible metaphors and a graphic poetic-visual language. All these stimulating devices, especially once they were realized through a performance in the synagogue, invite worshipers to be cognitively involved in the celebrated biblical event. Alluring Ashkenazi worshipers, who longed for a messianic redemption, to imagine themselves witnessing the deliverance from Egypt and vengeance on the enemies, may have been a stirring experience.

Meyrav Levy is a fourth-year PhD student and a doctorate fellow at the Institute for Jewish Studies at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität in Münster. In her thesis, she focuses on cognitive reception of illuminated Ashkenazi prayer-books, seeking to capture the sensorial-emotional experience of worshipers during the performance of prayer. By means of an interdisciplinary approach, she applies theories of cognitive reception in the fields of poetics, phonetics, imagery, performance and more. Her research is currently supported by a fellowship of the Leo Baeck Institute and the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes. ([zigylevy@gmail.com](mailto:zigylevy@gmail.com))



## Samira Mehta, Collapsing Time and Combining Histories: Michael Twitty's Seder Blending Israelite and African American Slavery

On his blog, Afroculinaria, the African American and Jewish public historian Michael Twitty uses the structure of the Passover Seder to tell of African American enslavement. In 2015, he wrote a piece for the National Public Radio's Codeswitch about the particular Seder that he created when Passover coincided with the 150th anniversary of the end of chattel slavery in the United States.

The Exodus of the Israelites has long held meaning for African American Christians, as noted by scholars of African American religious history. Jewish studies scholars, meanwhile, have written about both Passover and Jewish relationships to the Exodus. Twitty is doing something new — using the Jewish practices to intertwine both the story of his religious ancestors' enslavement and exodus from Egypt and his biological ancestors' enslavement and exodus from slavery in the US. In doing so, he pulls from Biblical time, which the traditional Seder deliberately brings into the present, and historical time, which African Americans are "supposed" to see as a past that they can forget. In merging his Jewish practice and Black heritage, Twitty creates a ritual container which acknowledges that, just as the Biblical Exodus echoes through Jewish experience, enslavement echoes through Black experience, and those experiences deeply shape the present. Doing this work through the Seder gives African American Jews the religious support for living with racism that African American Christianity has historically provided, while deeply grounding that experience in Judaism. Twitty reshapes Jewish temporal practice to meet the needs of Jews with diverse histories.

**Samira K. Mehta**, Assistant Professor of Women and Gender Studies and of Jewish Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder, researches the intersections religion, culture, and gender in the lives of Jews in the post-World War II United States. Her first book, *Beyond Chrismukkah: The Christian-Jewish Blended Family in America* (University of North Carolina Press, 2018) was a National Jewish book award finalist. Mehta holds a grant from the Henry B. Luce Foundation for a multi-year initiative to document the lives of Jews of Color through the collection of oral histories to be stored in a publicly accessible digital archive. ([Samira.Mehta@colorado.edu](mailto:Samira.Mehta@colorado.edu))

**Miriam Feldmann Kaye**, *The Sabbath as "Eternal Time" in Modern Jewish Philosophy: Abraham Joshua Heschel in Light of the Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl*

This paper will probe the philosophical origins and influences of the concept of Sabbath [Shabbat] as Eternal Time – as presented by the twentieth century Jewish thinker Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972). Shabbat is illustrated by Heschel as a time-phenomenon which “transforms the human sphere” through “transcending the soul” through religious acts and prayer. The pre-eminence of the idea of space, even of holy space - was largely rejected by Heschel in favour of the notion of Time – which he termed the “cathedral of time”.

This paper will focus on the central philosophical influence on Heschel’s notion of eternity. Indeed, Heschel’s philosophy of Shabbat could be aligned with one of the central ideas of the ‘phenomenological’ school of philosophy of modern times: “Time consciousness”. Such a discussion can enrich our understanding of Heschel’s portrayal of ‘time’ in his paradigmatic and temporal conceptualisation of Shabbat.

This paper will propose that Heschel’s thought on Shabbat finds greatest affinity with one particular phenomenologist, that of Edmund Husserl. Husserl was a German philosopher of Jewish origin, some of whose works were edited by and influential upon Emmanuel Levinas. Husserlian philosophy describes the “Internal Time-Consciousness” in the context of “transcendental” experience. In this sense, the Shabbat idea according to Heschel can be significantly enhanced through offering new insights through this phenomenological approach. In a broader sense, such a reading offers an original perspective on time as concept and practice in Jewish life and consciousness.

**Dr. Miriam Feldmann Kaye**, a winner of the University of Cambridge prize in Theological Studies, is a Lecturer in Jewish Philosophy at Bar Ilan University, and Visiting Associate Professor at Jewish Theological Seminary. Her fields of research are continental philosophy of religion, in particular, existentialism, phenomenology, deconstructionism and their intersections with modern Jewish thought, as well as interreligious theology. Her publications include her



Jewish theological study of the concept of “Anatheism” via Buber, Rosenzweig, Ricoeur and Derrida (*Journal of Religion and Theology*), and her book *Jewish Theology for a Postmodern Age*, (Liverpool University Press and Littman Library of Jewish Civilization).

### **Gilad Sharvit**, *History and Eternity: Rosenzweig on Repetition*

Franz Rosenzweig’s near-conversion experience of July 7, 1913, and his subsequent return to Judaism has long been dubbed as an archetypal story of the “discovery of Judaism” in modernity. The stakes of Rosenzweig’s transformative experience are still debated, yet it is fair to say that this night and the months that followed encouraged Rosenzweig to reconsider the significance of Judaism to his life, but also, and more generally, to human experience in the modern era. Rosenzweig’s response to this challenge partly materialized in *The Star of Redemption* (1921). In this monumental work, the Jewish people were assigned a special role in world redemption, alongside Christianity. They were given the task of anticipating redemption in the present. This role entailed a unique form of Jewish temporal existence: their relations to redemption demanded that they will reject historical life for eternal life.

This paper seeks to unpack Rosenzweig’s famous, but enigmatic, notion of “worldly unliveliness” and its profound suggestion of a uniquely Jewish temporality. My argument is that Jewish unliveliness, for Rosenzweig, was not a form of complete alienation from the world, but rather entailed an intensification of the relations of the Jewish people with time. I claim that this intense relationship could only be understood through careful analysis of Rosenzweig’s concept of repetition [*Wiederholung*] in *The Star of Redemption* (1921). My argument focuses on the role of the cycles of the weeks and the years in the temporal orientation of the Jewish people, specifically on the function of repetition in the negation of history. To unwrap Rosenzweig’s radical vision of time in *The Star of Redemption*, the paper discusses Rosenzweig’s theory of repetition in the context of modern philosophical works on repetition. The paper borrows specifically from Søren Kierkegaard’s theory of time and eternity in his *Repetition* (1843). In my reading, Rosenzweig, who worked in the “neighborhood of the Kierkegaard revival,” shared with Kierkegaard an understanding of the place of repetition in the construction of life in the midst of time.



**Gilad Sharvit** is assistant professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Towson University, Maryland. Sharvit is the author of *Therapeutics and Salvation: Freud and Schelling on Freedom* (Magnes, 2021) and coeditor and contributing author of *Freud and Monotheism: The Violent Origins of Religion* (Fordham, 2018) and *Canonization and Alterity: Heresy in Jewish History, Thought, and Literature* (2020). His upcoming book, *Dynamic Repetition: History and Messianism in Jewish Thought* is slated for spring 2022 publication with Brandeis UP. ([gsharvit@towson.edu](mailto:gsharvit@towson.edu))

### **Daniel M. Herskowitz**, *Franz Rosenzweig on Mission, Empire, and Redemption*

For a while, Franz Rosenzweig's reflections on redemption in Part III of *The Star of Redemption* were celebrated as a breakthrough moment in the history of interreligious relations. For Rosenzweig, Christianity, ever 'on the way', is tasked with bringing the world to redemption and God, while Judaism is 'already' redeemed. Christianity is the rays and Judaism is the fire in the Star of David. In my paper I argue that these reflections on redemption in *The Star* are rooted in and interlinked with his enduring support of imperialism as a vehicle for Christian mission toward the redemption of the world, as reflected in many of his earlier texts written during the First World War. I show that by wedging Christian mission, expansion of empire, and messianism, Rosenzweig was echoing many prevalent convictions in the Protestant discourse of the 'long nineteenth century' about the religious justification for imperialism. I suggest that Rosenzweig should be understood as a theorist of empire who, like many of his Christian counterparts, supported and justified imperial expansion because it provided an opportunity to fulfil the universal message of the Gospel and bring its truth to the nations through proselytization. There is, however, one crucial difference between Rosenzweig and his Protestant counterparts: unlike them, Rosenzweig did not believe that the conversion of the Jews was a stage in redemption; rather, the Jews signalled to the Christians where they were headed, existing in their unique eternity, already with God and redeemed.

**Dr. Daniel M. Herskowitz** is the British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the Faculty of Theology and Religion, University of Oxford. He was previously the Career Research Fellow in Jewish Studies at Wolfson College, University of Oxford and a postdoctoral fellow at the Religion Department, Columbia



University. He is the author of over twenty studies on modern Jewish thought, Jewish-Christian exchanges, political theology, secularization, and nationalism. His first book, *Heidegger and His Jewish Reception* (Cambridge University Press, 2021) was awarded the 2021 Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Young Scholars Award for Scholarly Excellence in Research of the Jewish Experience. ([daniel.herskowitz@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:daniel.herskowitz@theology.ox.ac.uk))

## 2.3 Narrating Nation Time

K0.20

### Adi Mahalel, *The Burrows and Chains in the Hebrew and Yiddish Works of Ayalti*

I discuss the first Yiddish novel, "Bum" un keytn, ("Boom" and Chains, 1936), by bi-lingual Yiddish-Hebrew writer Khonen Klenbort (1910-1988), who authored it under his penname Ayalti. The work's significance lies in the unfiltered light it sheds on the realities of pre-state Palestine and on the practices of the Zionist movement, in particular in its kibbutz form. Many of the issues raised in the novel pertain to our present time: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, nationalism, struggles over land and migration, the essence of progressive politics, etc. Anyone interested in the history of Israel-Palestine would find interest in this sharp and gripping novel. I will show the evolution of Ayalti, comparing this Yiddish effort to his earlier Hebrew novel *Ba-mehilot* (In The Burrows, 1934), which showed a much more sympathetic view towards Zionism than did the later Yiddish novel. My project fits into the wider enterprise of Yiddish-Hebrew literary scholarship by adding a critical counter narrative to the prevailing one, as Yiddish literature often does. Like Yiddish works from the American Yiddish radical Lower East Side or London East End's immigration narratives, it offers an honest, unromantic immigration story free of shmaltz. I plan to show the evolution of both the writer and of his characters from "good Zionist pioneers" to active resisters of the settlement project.

**Dr. Adi Mahalel**, Visiting Assistant Professor of Yiddish Studies, received his doctoral degree in Hebrew and Yiddish Studies at Columbia University. His forthcoming book on the radical period of Hebrew and Yiddish writer Y. L. Peretz will be published by SUNY Press. Adi's areas of interest include modern Hebrew and Yiddish literature, Jewish literatures in modern times, Jewish American theater, Israeli culture, film and media studies, and the crossroads



between culture and politics. He has taught courses in Jewish culture and language at Columbia University and at the YIVO Institute.

([amahalel@umd.edu](mailto:amahalel@umd.edu))

### **Miriam Neiger**, *Between Hungarian and Hebrew: The Poetic and the Political in Avigdor Hameiri's Translation of Imre Madách's Play *Az ember tragédiája**

In this presentation I would like to present the first Hebrew translation of the canonical nineteenth-century Hungarian play *Az ember tragédiája* [The tragedy of man], by Imre Madách. The translation, *Hazon Ha'adam* [דמיון האדם – The vision of man], by Avigdor Hameiri (Feuerstein), appeared in 1924 and was acknowledged by the Hungarian Academy.

Hameiri's transposition of a work steeped in Hungarian culture to Hebrew, which was undergoing a revival, took place while he was consolidating his own Hebrew-Zionist identity. That identity was characterized by what postcolonialism would term hybridity, because Hameiri also identified with Hungarian culture and was torn between the two. His translation using a biblical style tried to transform the play into a quasi original Hebrew work so as to create a symbolic fusion of the two cultures, as happened in the consciousness of the translator and also as defined theoretically in Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator." In translating the title, Hameiri changed the word meaning "tragedy" to a word meaning "vision." This paper suggests reasons for the change.

Avigdor Hameiri (1886, Austro-Hungarian Empire – 1970, Israel) was a poet, prosodist, playwright, translator, essayist, critic, songwriter, and the founder of the first satirical cabaret in Eretz Israel. He was considered one of the five first modernists in Hebrew poetry in Eretz Israel, one of the founders of its literary center, and also one of the first in other areas of culture. In 1968 he was awarded Israel's highest literary honor, the Israel Prize for literature.

**Dr. Miriam Neiger-Fleischmann** is an independent literary scholar, poet, and visual artist. She is currently completing a full monograph covering all of Avigdor Hameiri's poetry. She was born in Slovakia, in 1948 and came to Israel in 1949. She lives in Jerusalem. In 2015 she received a PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She has published four volumes of poems in Hebrew. Her poems have been translated into several languages. A volume of poems in



English, published in Nottingham, England, was titled *Death of the King and Other Poems* (2017), translated by Anthony Rudolf.

([miriamneiger@gmail.com](mailto:miriamneiger@gmail.com))

### **Gareth Evans-Jones**, *Hen Wlad Newydd (Old New Country): The 'Zionist Temporality' of Judith Maro in a Welsh Context*

Born in Dnepropetrovsk and raised in Haifa, Judith Maro, or Ida Yehudit Anastasia Grossman (1919-2011), relocated to Wales in 1949 and subsequently published creative prose in English and Welsh.

In her early years, Maro was characterised by a distinct drive and joined Haganah and Hashomer Hatzair. She was fuelled by staunch Zionist ideas and radical ideals. However, a few years later, she decided to migrate to Wales in the mid-20th century and became submerged in the Welsh language, culture, and political sphere. Throughout her subsequent writings, however, we see what could be termed as 'Zionist temporality' explored and applied to Wales in *Hen Wlad Newydd* (1974) – her collection of essays that will serve as the basis of this paper.

Considering Zionism in the context of specific time periods in the history of Wales enabled Maro to offer a distinct insight into the social, political, and cultural fabric of her adopted country, and this paper will explore that dynamic of interlinking religious and cultural spheres of the 'land of Zion' with a Celtic country. By doing so, we will appreciate fuller the application of the Palestinian Zionist ideas of the young Grossman into a western context with Maro, and demonstrate how striking and intriguing this particular creative relationship was, especially in regards to time and temporality.

The aim of this paper, therefore, is to demonstrate the vigorous relationship that existed in the writings of Maro between her homeland and new-land, especially in the context of 'Zionist temporality'.

**Dr Gareth Evans-Jones** is a lecturer in Religious Studies at Bangor University, North Wales, and predominantly lectures on Judaism, the Holocaust, and the problem of evil. He was awarded a PhD in 2018 for a thesis that explored the religious reaction of the Welsh in North America to the issue of slavery in the nineteenth century, with particular focus on texts from the Hebrew Bible. A monograph based on this will be published this year. His current research



focusses on the significant writings of a neglected individual, Judith Maro, who was an invigorating and passionate Israeli-Welsh author. ([g.evans-jones@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:g.evans-jones@bangor.ac.uk))

## **Orr Scharf**, End Point or Beginning? 1948 as the Harbinger of Multidimensional Temporality

Zionism is probably the most dominant form of messianism in recent Jewish history. As such, the founding of the State of Israel should have been received as the ultimate fulfillment of Jewish redemption. While Israel's official narrative reflects this view, messianic ideas and redemptive visions pertaining to Jewish presence in the Land of Israel continue to circulate and percolate to this day.

The paper will examine the messianic dimension of Zionism by unpacking some of the latent temporal and theological possibilities of 1948 as a redemptive signifier. My discussion will focus on the responses to the founding of Israel by members of the Brith Shalom movement -- S.H. Bergman, Martin Buber, Gershom Scholem – both before and after 1948, by comparing their early texts as Zionist advocates with later works from the years leading up to, and following the founding of Israel. The paper will argue that the concrete events of 1948 gave rise to a new, multidimensional form of Jewish messianism: some ideas remained a-temporal (Bergman's Zionism as *Kiddush Hashem*), some lost relevance (a binational vision), while others created a dialectic of opposites (the 1948 war as simultaneously an ethical catastrophe and a post-Holocaust response to Jewish persecution). The discussion will conclude with a reflection on the possible impact of such multi-dimensionality on the temporal horizon of Jewish messianism: does it remain lodged in inaccessible eternity, has it become embodied (partially or fully) in the present, or can it be linked to a foreseeable future?

**Dr. Orr Scharf** is faculty at the Cultural Studies M.A. Program, and research fellow at the Bucerius Institute for Research on Contemporary German History and Society, at The University of Haifa. He is author of *Thinking in Translation: Scripture and Redemption in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig* (De Gruyter, 2019), editor of volume 5 in the critical edition of Martin Buber's works, *Vorlesungen über Judentum und Christentum* (Gütersloh, 2017), and of the anthology *Hebrew Literature and its Cultural Impact* (Schocken, 2021). ([orr.scharf@gmail.com](mailto:orr.scharf@gmail.com))



What do different groups, institutions and individuals mean by Jewish heritage in the UK context? The papers of the two panels on “Jewish Heritage in the UK Context” will address the shifting discourses and silences around Jewish heritage in the UK context, between museums, archives and monuments; between class and religion, memory and forgetting and rediscovery, between materiality and intangible heritage.

### **Anna Douglas, Shirley Baker’s ‘Jewish Heritage’**

**Anna Douglas** is a curator, researcher and educator at the University of Leeds. In recent years, projects have involved re-working archives and collections of historical photographs, often through participatory process. Her critically acclaimed exhibition and book ‘Shirley Baker: Women and Children; and Loitering Men’ was commissioned by The Photographer’s Gallery, London (2015), before touring to Madrid’s PhotoEspagne festival (2016) and Manchester International Festival at the Manchester Art Gallery (2017) where it received record attendance. As a consequence of this research and curatorial work, a significant body of photographic work by a photographer woman, made in the last 50 years of the C20th, has been brought to cultural recognition, with work entering the collection of Tate Britain.

[a.f.douglas@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:a.f.douglas@leeds.ac.uk)

### **Bronya Tritschler, Langside (Glasgow) as Heritage**

[bronya.tritschler@gmail.com](mailto:bronya.tritschler@gmail.com)

### **Shannon Kirschner, Clifford’s Tower – Heritage Reshaped**

**Shannon Kirschner** is a former chair and trustee of the York Liberal Jewish Community, which inspired her interest in York’s Jewish history. As chair she helped advocate for increased public engagement with the massacre at Clifford’s Tower in 1190 as well as spearheaded a temporary exhibit on York’s Jewish history at the local Castle Museum. [shstone82@gmail.com](mailto:shstone82@gmail.com)



### **Alissa Symon**, *Israel and Diaspora Jews: A Changing Relationship*

Over the past five decades, diasporic Jewish involvement in Israel has changed tremendously. From a unified diaspora focused on providing funding and lobbying for the young Jewish state, to a divergent community (Pew, 2021; Kahn-Harris, 2014) that questions the state's conduct and its implications for Jews living abroad. This paper follows these trends and focuses on the numerous transnational political channels created by diasporic Jews to influence Israeli politics, while analyzing the changing relationship between Israel and diaspora Jews. Drawing on seventy elite interviews, mobile ethnography, and archival material, the paper analyses key Jewish organizations which operate in Israel: the New Israel Fund and the Tikvah Fund. On the right, the Tikvah Fund supports institutions and political training seminars which teach conservative ideology, with the goal of creating a 'Republican' elite in Israel; they believe 'the core of Judaism is conservative.' On the other side, the New Israel Fund works to fund civil society and shape Israel's moral image, in the belief that Israel's conduct on issues like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict 'is scandalous and contrary to Tikkun Olam.' The data have revealed that both foundations conceptualize Israel as the showcase of Judaism and want it to behave according to their perceived Jewish-political values. In addition, players within the foundations discussed blurring the boundaries between Israel and diaspora Jews as a direct goal of their activities. Tracing these elements in the relationship between Israel and diaspora Jews shows that diaspora Jews are taking proactive measures and developing new mechanisms to shape Israel, Israel's Jewishness, and the boundaries of Israeli sovereignty.

**Alissa Symon** is currently a DPhil candidate at the department of sociology in the University of Oxford, under the supervision of Dr Michael Biggs and Prof Yaacov Yadgar. Her thesis, titled 'Diasporic Intervention and Israeli Society' examines the political relationship between Israel and Diaspora Jews. Her research interests focus on issues connected to the homeland-diaspora paradigm, transnational political activism, and religious studies. Alissa is also a Woolf Institute PhD scholar, where she oversees the Living in Harmony project. Before her PhD, Alissa completed her MPhil at the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Cambridge.



## Robert Cohen, Jewish Journeys to Palestinian Solidarity – Surely, It's About Time

The title is designed to work playfully at two levels. The first draws on the common usage of the phrase “it’s about time” to express impatience for something to happen or to change and which often assumes a moral imperative. The second meaning alludes to the role that time itself may be playing in enabling/facilitating a rupture with previous norms of Jewish outlook and sensibility. Ultimately, the conference presentation will draw together both these meanings to propose a model of research which I will be undertaking as a PhD student at King’s College London.

I will contrast my own journey towards Palestinian solidarity as an undergraduate at Manchester University at the outbreak of the first Intifada in 1988/89 with the experience of young Jews during the spring of 2021 when the latest outbreak of Israeli/Palestinian hostilities erupted. I will highlight the role of information technology and social media in speeding up contemporary journeys on this issue for Millennial and Gen Z Jews and how ‘speed’ and delivery of information may also be linked to conceptions of authenticity and truth which may in turn be influencing an on-going evolution of Jewish self-identity.

In contrast to the impact of speed and immediacy through social media and the internet, I will also touch on the significance of the passage of time on Jewish collective memory. In particular, the distance from the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel and the wars of 1967 and 1973. These events are no longer within the lived experience of younger Jews, or indeed their parents. How might this be creating emotional space for Palestinian solidarity which could not previously exist?

Finally, how should we think of time in terms of understanding Jewish history? Is time a ‘linear line’ or better thought of as repeating ‘loops’? Are today’s young Jewish dissenters on Israel simply rediscovering earlier pre-Holocaust conceptions of Jewish identity both in terms of the what it means to be a Jew in the diaspora and how the long tradition of universal Jewish ethics should now be applied in the context of Israel/Palestine?

**Robert Cohen** is a PhD student in the department of Theology and Religious Studies at King’s College London researching contemporary UK Jewish



journeys to Palestinian solidarity – their causes and consequences. His undergraduate degree in Politics and Philosophy was gained at Manchester University and his MA in Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies at Lancaster University. Before embarking on his PhD, Robert worked for 30 years in journalism and corporate communications. ([robert.a.cohen@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:robert.a.cohen@kcl.ac.uk))

### **Hannah Ewence**, *A Timely Debate? Jewish Studies and Decolonisation*

Within the increasingly fraught, politically-charged environment of Higher Education, calling upon ones' institution to 'decolonise the curriculum' has become the calling card of any socially conscious, pedagogically diligent academic. Yet how should those working within Jewish Studies understand the decolonising agenda, and what angle should we approach this task from? Is Jewish Studies – in whatever discipline it sits – part of the 'problem' or part of the solution to the necessary corrections that need to take place within taught content and teaching practice? Is Jewish Studies – are Jews – victims of the omissions and subjugations caused by colonialist and neo-colonial epistemologies or do we need to 'own' the discipline's relative privilege and 'whiteness'? Beyond this, how can we look to the evident intersections between, for example, Jewish History and Black History, antisemitism and racism, the Holocaust and colonial violence? How can we use these intersections as stepping off points in the classroom to illuminate the topic's innate complexities? This paper will begin to probe these questions, hoping to engage the audience in meaningful debate on this timely – somewhat vexing – issue.

**Hannah Ewence** is Senior Lecturer in Modern History at the University of Chester. She is a specialist in the field of modern British Jewish history, with a particular interest in space and the intersections between Jewishness and other minority identities. Her recent monograph *The Alien Jew in the British Imagination, 1881-1905: Space, Mobility and Territoriality* was published by Palgrave in 2019 and she is currently working on a history of British Jewish suburbanisation. Hannah is also Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and is a led participant in her faculty's working group on APP and decolonisation. ([h.ewence@chester.ac.uk](mailto:h.ewence@chester.ac.uk))



## 3.1 Unsettling Temporalities

K0.18

S  
3**Rebekah Van Sant-Clark**, Weaving Displacement into the Past in the Book(s) of Esther

This paper will explore how Esther's Diaspora story is integrated into other biblical traditions in the targumim and the Greek versions of Esther, and how this presents the Diaspora context of the book of Esther as continuous with previous times of displacement in Israel's history. In particular, I will explore how the two targumim strengthen links to the wilderness wanderings in the Pentateuch as well as Israel's first king Saul as Esther's ancestor. In my paper I will focus on the targumim and how these versions of the book of Esther approach Esther and Mordecai's genealogical link to the tribe of Benjamin and the Saulide dynasty in a way that is distinct from other versions such as the Alpha Text and the Septuagint. I will explore how Esther's Diaspora story is entangled into narratives of homecoming and earlier rescue from harm in a way that conflates the concepts of exile and diaspora. I will argue that the conflation of the concepts of exile and diaspora in antiquity is poetically productive for how these versions of Esther imagine Israel's past, present, and future.

**Rebekah Van Sant-Clark** received her BA in Comparative Literature from Queen Mary University of London, then she completed the MPhil in Theology: Old Testament Studies here at Oxford. Rebekah is currently in the 4th year of her PhD in Theology and Religion, specialising in the Hebrew Bible, under the supervision of Prof Hindy Najman. Her PhD project focuses on the concepts of exile and diaspora in Isaiah, the book of Esther and Lamentations. ([rebekah.vansant-clark@oriel.ox.ac.uk](mailto:rebekah.vansant-clark@oriel.ox.ac.uk))

**Sherry Ashworth**, On Time and Reading the Book of Esther

The familiarity of the Hebrew Bible to its readers means that we generally come to it knowing what we are going to find. With narrative, this means that we know the endings to the stories. This paper argues that reading with hindsight significantly affects the way we read biblical narrative, and if we set about trying to free ourselves from this, we can understand biblical narrative in



new and richer ways. Here I will use the Book of Esther to exemplify what I mean.

Jews are able to read the Megillah as comedy because we know what happens at the end; the Jews are saved, and by a young woman, no less, guided by her wise uncle who outwits Haman, the pantomime villain.

But what if we didn't know the ending? This paper considers 3 textual cruxes of the Esther narrative, where reading it as if for the very first time affects our response significantly. These are: the virgins being gathered to the palace (2.8), Esther's night with the King (2.17) and the moment Esther approaches Ahasuerus (5.1).

I will argue that my reading method can problematise the comedy in the text, and question Esther being the docile instrument of Mordecai's heroism, revealing her as a vulnerable but capable young woman, quick to learn and able to slip into designated roles in order to ensure her survival. Before she saves the Jews, we see her learning how to save herself.

[Sherry Ashworth](#) is a third year, full time PhD student at the University of Manchester, researching Reading the Book of Esther through the lens of the Nineteenth Century Novel. In 2018 she was awarded the Bernard Jackson prize for the best MA dissertation in Jewish Studies. Prior to this, she wrote novels for adults and teenagers, and lectured in Creative Writing at Manchester Metropolitan University. She leads novel-reading courses at the Elizabeth Gaskell House in Manchester. She assists in teaching the conversion course at Manchester Reform Synagogue, where she is a member.

([sherry.ashworth@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:sherry.ashworth@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk))

## 3.2 Digital Mapping and Analysis in Jewish History

K0.20

### An EAJIS–Digital Forum Panel

#### **Anna Pobudejska**, *Translating the Enlightenment: Quantitative Analysis of Translations in the Polish Haskalah*

The digital shift in literary studies is due to the practicality and applicability of the tools even for non-experts who might benefit by deepening their own, intimate work with the literary text. Examples for the use of statistical methods



in the study of literature include frequency analysis or stylometry, known for its usage in identifying the potential authorship of the disputed works. More and more often, literary studies also use the tools of Social Network Analysis which allow for identifying the detailed network of connections between individuals of particular social circles. In this presentation, I will discuss the assumptions of my project in the context of using digital tools, such as frequency analysis, stylometry, and SNA. With the *stylo* R package, I am going to conduct a frequency analysis of signifier words, i.e. ones that are related to the sensitive context of emancipation, acculturation, or religion, as well as to analyze the ways of translating these terms between different languages. My goal is also to identify the writer invariant, which could allow for an insight into the potential authorship of documents from the Four-Year Sejm period and later. The use of SNA is to enable the construction of sociograms helpful in the analysis of the complex relationship between the members of the two Enlightenment movements, especially indicators such as homophily, mutuality/reciprocity, and transitivity. Nevertheless, the researchers also pay attention to the possible risks of using statistical tools in the humanities. Therefore, potential opportunities but also threats will be discussed too.

[Anna Pobudejska](#) is a first-year PhD candidate in the Taube Department of Jewish Studies, University of Wrocław. The working title of her dissertation is: 'Translations of the Polish and Jewish Enlightenment as a form of cultural transfer'. She holds an MA in Psychology from the University of Wrocław. Her doctoral work explores the corpora of translations between Polish and Jewish Enlightenment with a focus on the mutual reception of the two movements overlapping in the same area geographically. She is particularly interested in the usage of quantitative tools in literary and historical research.  
([ann.pobudejska@gmail.com](mailto:ann.pobudejska@gmail.com))

### **Oleksii Chebotarov**, Mapping Jewish Transmigration in Late Imperial East-Central Europe: Spatial Dimensions of Migration Governance, Networks and Transit Experiences

The scope of literature on Jewish emigration from Eastern Europe is exceptionally voluminous, but it remains relatively narrow, mainly exploring the migration of Jews in the context of the history of destination countries, but



more rarely of departure lands. What is overlooked in these studies is the question of how huge masses of the population moved to another part of the globe in half a century and the influence of these people on the transit regions through which they migrated. In the case of Eastern Europe, studies of migration through certain regions, as well as the impact of migrants on these territories, are extremely rare. Following a geospatial turn in historical disciplines and shift to studying the role of borders and borderlands in the field of migration history, this present research proposes a view of global Jewish migration from the perspective of the German-Austrian-Russian imperial border zones. The paper presents a geospatial analysis of three related aspects in the history of Jewish transmigration:

- migration governance and border regimes of three empires;
- networks of Jewish relief organizations;
- empirical cases of Jewish transit movement and stays in the border zones.

The research applies network analysis and digital mapping methods to the study of micro and meso-levels of migration processes and addresses the questions of how these methods contribute to the scholarship of Jewish migration history. Geospatial network analysis conducted using ArcGIS and R provides an opportunity to discover the relationships between actors and spatial characteristics of migration processes.

[Oleksii Chebotarov](#) (Ph.D., University of St. Gallen, 2021) is a Research Associate at the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe, University of St. Gallen. In the academic year 2021-2022, he holds a postdoctoral fellowship at the New Europe College in Bucharest. Moreover, Oleksii works in digital history projects of the European Association of Jewish Studies, Center for Urban History of East Central Europe, and Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization. His research interests include migration and borderland studies, Jewish, Ukrainian, environmental and digital history.

([oleksii.chebotarov@unisg.ch](mailto:oleksii.chebotarov@unisg.ch))

### **Elli Fischer**, [Tracing the Institutionalization of Hungarian Yeshivot through Subscription Lists](#)

Starting in the late 18th century, lists of subscribers or "Prenumeranten" who prepurchased Jewish books began to appear in the printed books themselves. In all, some 2,300 Jewish/Hebrew books were printed with such lists. These lists



are an untapped treasure trove of information on Jewish book culture and other aspects of Jewish culture and demography at the regional and local level. For the past few years, a research group based at the University of Wrocław and Haifa University, led by Prof. Marcin Wodziński, has been creating a database of Prenumeranten while simultaneously studying them as a historical source and pursuing new avenues of research suggested by our findings. This presentation will look at a particular subset of Prenumeranten, namely, lists of students attending Hungarian yeshivot in the late-19th and early 20th century. Approximately 120 books from a variety of genres include sub-lists from these yeshivot, and students are usually identified by hometown in addition to being linked to a particular yeshivah. This allows us to build a geographic profile, over time, for each yeshivah and to trace growth, movement, institutionalization, and shifting demographic profiles. In addition, by cross-referencing this data with other sources on Hungarian yeshivot, it will be possible to obtain economic and intellectual profiles as well.

**Elli Fischer** is an independent researcher, writer, translator, and rabbi. He is cofounder of HaMapah, a project that applies quantitative analysis to rabbinic literature, and is a principal researcher on the Prenumeranten Project, a digital Judaica project of Haifa University and the University of Wrocław. He is a founding editor of Lehrhaus, a web magazine of contemporary Jewish thought, and his writing has appeared in numerous Jewish publications. His primary field of inquiry is the construction of rabbinic influence and authority, and he is working toward a doctorate in Jewish History at Tel Aviv University. ([fischer.tirgum@gmail.com](mailto:fischer.tirgum@gmail.com))

### 3.3 Sound, Rhythm and Time

**K0.16**

#### **Vanessa Paloma Elbaz**, *The Sonic Cycles of Time in Moroccan Jewish Life*

Moroccan Jewish life remains until today quite bound by community, cycles and the enmeshed interaction of music and ritual. Judeo-Spanish songs from Morocco have primarily been studied as remnants from Spanish literary history, but after analysis of the manners in which the members of the communities perform them, a strict relationship between temporality and performance appears. My field research spanning from 2007-2019 in



Morocco's last Jewish communities demonstrates that performance contexts and moments become clearly aligned with lunar and solar cycles, as well as life cycles. This responds to concerns with Jewish temporality, but also with the cycles created with their Muslim and European Christian neighbours, classmates, business partners and associates. In the last century, Moroccan Jews have emigrated en masse, and their temporal sonic cycles have been disrupted thanks to the fracturing of the rhythms of communal life that existed in pre-Independence Morocco. Those that remained in Morocco have held onto the structures of communal time, punctuating holidays through cuisine and song. Albeit strong cultural influences from French and Israeli Judaism, Moroccan Jews have maintained their unique specificities through melodies, texts and narratives that are brought out for their particular moment, and no other. For the Moroccan Jew the strict upholding of temporality in relationship with sound establishes an order of creative engagement with the divine, nature and the self. This paper will explore the overlapping elements between Judeo-Spanish Moroccan repertoires and the relationship of Jews to religious time, agricultural time, and human time.

**Vanessa Paloma Elbaz** is a Research Associate at the University of Cambridge and Peterhouse and a Marie Skłodowska Curie Scholar at CERMOM, INALCO, Sorbonne Paris Cité. She founded KHOYA: Jewish Morocco Sound Archive in 2014 and recently launched [yalalla.org.uk](http://yalalla.org.uk), its pilot platform. She has been a Senior Fulbright Research Scholar to Morocco and a Research Associate of the Hadassah Brandeis Institute on Jews & gender at Brandeis University. The recipient of grants from the Posen Foundation, Matanel Foundation, American Institute for Maghrib Studies among others and the Inaugural Florence Amzallag Prize for Scholarship and outreach by the American Sephardi Federation. ([vpde2@cam.ac.uk](mailto:vpde2@cam.ac.uk))

### **Miranda Crowdus**, *Frozen in Time? Contemporary European Jewish Cultural Heritage Displays and Construction of Jewish Temporal Stasis*

Using an interdisciplinary perspective at the intersections of Jewish Studies and Ethnomusicology, this talk interrogates the construction of contemporary European Jewish Cultural Heritage (JCH) displays, by addressing their assumed notions of temporality and resulting conflicting representations and negotiations of Jewish identities.



The contemporary preservation and display of JCH in Europe constitutes an imperative for many non-Jewish organizations since it is viewed as a reflection of European inclusion and diversity. For non-Jewish European audiences, encounters with JCH tangible objects (synagogues, Torah scrolls, and other forms) often function as substitutes for contact with living Jews. This substitution is attractive since it is uncomplicated, hence, controllable and uncontroversial; moreover, it signals positive engagements with Jews and Judaism and by extension liberal values such as combatting antisemitism and promoting anti-racism. These constructions of Jewishness through concrete cultural objects are often characterized by temporal stasis. They represent and evoke an idealized, unchanging, Jewishness of the past that is presumed to be acceptable to non-Jewish audiences, but that bears little resemblance to lived Judaism – past or present.

Fieldwork reveals that the sonic-oriented properties of Jewish objects are often ignored since, sonically articulating their significance requires a knowledgeable intra-Jewish intervention, for instance, Torah cantillation or shofar blowing. Such interventions often negate the imposed temporal stasis including the public “benefits” of the encounter. Moreover, Jewish engagements with JCH displays are often contentious experiences owing to the temporal dislocation of objects from Jewish reality. This talk addresses these issues while proposing solutions to meet the needs of all involved.

**Miranda Crowdus** is assistant professor at the Department of Religions and Cultures at Concordia University where she holds the Research Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies and directs the Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies. She earned her doctorate at City University London in 2016 that focused on intercultural encounters in music-making initiatives in South Tel Aviv, Israel. Prior to her move to Canada, she spent five years in Hanover, Germany, as a research associate at the European Centre for Jewish Music. She is currently working on research on Jewish musicking and Jewish cultural heritage and cultural sustainability. ([miranda.crowdus@concordia.ca](mailto:miranda.crowdus@concordia.ca))

**Netta Schramm**, *Sound Beliefs: Yeshayahu Leibowitz, Ovadia Yosef, and Irving Greenberg’s Performative Legacies*

Imagine editing a book titled *The Complete Works of Nietzsche*. Would you include in the volume a laundry bill you found in one of his notebooks? This



question, posed by Michel Foucault, invites us to be more flexible about what we consider worthy of interpretation. Nietzsche's bill might interest a meticulous historian but would not be considered worthy of philosophical contemplation. The humanities favour books, manuscripts, or diaries, believing that "fleeting words" do not have scholarly value. If, in the past, oral invocations were "immediately consumed and forgotten" and therefore inaccessible for research, technological advancements have overcome the ephemerality of speech. My project argues for the inclusion of texts stored in audio or audio-visual formats in the study of modern Jewish thought. I ask what do oral texts add to our understanding of written works of theology or philosophy using performance theory and narratology. Furthermore, viewing and reviewing words, gestures, or situations, as captured on audio and audio video formats redefines "quotability" in the context of Jewish thought. I focus on Irving Greenberg, Yeshayahu Leibowitz, and Ovadia Yosef not only because they are three 20th century Orthodox leaders but because of their commitment to public speaking. Simply put, my project not only reads Greenberg, Yosef, and Leibowitz, it also watches and listens to them.

[Netta Schramm](#) is an advanced Ph.D. candidate focused on modern Jewish Thought at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. For two years, Netta was Minvera Fellow at Ludwig Maximillians Universität in Munich. She uses performance theory and narratology to read audio-visual archival materials of modern and contemporary Jewish thinkers. Previously she has focused on a Zionist adaptation of the Tsene U'rene, the hermeneutics of the Israeli television show *The Jews are Coming*, and the narrative structure of BBC audio drama *Miriam and Youssef*. Netta has published her research in *Jewish Film and New Media* (2021), *PaRDeS* (2019), and *Muza* (2017) and annotated a translation published in *CCAR* (2019). Netta holds a bachelor's degree in Physics and a Master's degree in Jewish Thought. Her MA thesis was awarded the Goren prize for Jewish renewal studies. ([netta.schramm@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:netta.schramm@mail.huji.ac.il))





## Pam Fox and Amy Hill Shevitz, *Seaside Holiday, Mountain Vacation: The Culture of Jewish Resorts in Britain and the United States*

Our presentation builds on Dr Fox's *Jews by the Seaside* (Valentine Mitchell, 2022), a social history of the Jewish hotels and guest houses in Bournemouth, a resort town on the south coast of England. In her book, Dr Fox notes how these establishments "were often compared to the legendary Jewish hotels operating at about the same time in the Catskill Mountains (referred to as the 'Borscht Belt' or the 'Jewish Alps') in upstate New York" in the United States (p. 61). While Dr Fox gives attention to this comparison (p. 318-22), our presentation will develop it further and discuss the rise, the heyday, and the decline of these hotels as a cross-cultural phenomenon in modern Jewish socialisation.

Dr Fox will begin with an overview of Bournemouth, followed by an overview by Dr Shevitz of the American analogues, focusing on the Catskills and (to a lesser extent) Miami, Florida. After a short historical review of Jewish resorts and holiday/vacation preferences, we will make explicit the comparisons between the British and American scenes and place them in the context of their specific historical, social, and cultural milieux. We will conclude with a few comments on the legacy of these hotels and the pertinence of this study to Jewish modernity.

Pam Fox is a social historian, who for the last twelve years has been researching and writing Anglo-Jewish history. She has published six books, including her most recent book on the Jewish hotels and guest houses of Bournemouth, *Jews by the Seaside*. Pam has developed a specialism in writing Jewish history based largely on memories derived from oral history interviews. She is dedicated to making Anglo-Jewish history accessible and exposing the underlying meaning of hitherto neglected aspects of Jewish life in the UK.

Amy Hill Shevitz has published extensively in American Jewish history, including an important regional history, *Jewish Communities on the Ohio River* (University Press of Kentucky, 2007). She is now concentrating on German Jewish history, finishing a triple biography of the three most important women in the life of the early twentieth-century philosopher-theologian, Franz Rosenzweig. Research related to this project has been published in *Modern Judaism* (2015) and the *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* (2020). She teaches at Loyola University Chicago. ([amy@shevitz.net](mailto:amy@shevitz.net))



## David Newman, The Role and Impact of Lithuanian Rabbis in Twentieth-Century UK

Although it is generally considered that the major impact of orthodox migration from eastern Europe during the twentieth century has impacted the large communities of North America and Israel, it is often forgotten that some of the major Lithuanian rabbinical authorities who left Europe during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, took place in Britain. A significant group of Lithuanian rabbis, including such names as Herzog, Hillman, Abramsky, Dessler, Lopian, Rabinowitz, Unterman (to name but some) became rabbis of communities throughout the UK – from Glasgow to London and from Liverpool to Leeds – and has a major impact on religious life in Britain during this period. They created a network of Rabbis who were in constant communication with each other, and many gravitated towards major positions within both the UK and Israeli communities (to where most of them retired), including two Chief Rabbis of Israel and two heads of the London Beth Din. This paper traces the social background of these rabbis, their interactions with each other and with the wider British community (and its Chief rabbis) and the lasting impact they left on many aspects of British religious practice and ritual to this day.

David Newman is professor of Geopolitics at Ben-Gurion University in Israel. Originally from the UK, he has developed new research interests in the history of twentieth century Anglo Jewry, focusing on the communities and personalities of that period. In 2013, Newman, formerly Dean of the Social Sciences and Humanities at BGU, was awarded the OBE for promoting scientific cooperation between the UK and Israel. ([newman@bgu.ac.il](mailto:newman@bgu.ac.il))

### 3.5 BIAJS Antisemitism Working Group: Open Meeting River Room

The Antisemitism Working Group (AWG) was established by the BIAJS committee to support members who experience, witness, or are concerned about antisemitism on their campus. In this meeting, the Chair of the AWG, Professor James Renton, will update members on our activities, and will lead discussion on these issues.



## TUESDAY 12 July

SESSION 4

9:00–10:30

## 4.1 Scribal Interventions

K0.18

**Luba Charlap**, *The Masora Activity as a Revolutionary Action and Its Textual, Interpretive, and Narrative-Halachic Implications*

Between the sixth and eighth centuries, a unique activity concerning the Biblical text occurred: the installation of the vocalization signs and the accentuation marks on the consonantal text. This activity - named *Masora* – took place in several regions of the Middle East: Babylon, southern Palestine, and in northern Palestine – in Tiberias. With the formulation of the text, and especially with the formulation of the dominant Tiberian Masora, the text of the Bible has been determined for generations. In this light, I see fit to define it as a revolutionary activity whose significance is difficult to overstate. To this activity, and to its implications – textual, interpretive, and sometimes even halachic, I would like to devote this paper.

In contrast to a parallel revolution that took place with the writing of the Oral Torah, that is, the editing of the Mishna, this action remained almost without echoes in the literature of its time. Even in later literature it was not similarly appreciated. But evidence of the textual decisions made near its time can be found in Talmudic literature.

In this paper, I come to distinguish between the pre-Masoretic period of the Biblical text and the post-Masoretic period, and to explore the implications of this transition on Halachic Jewish society, and perhaps beyond. I will examine the state of the Biblical text before and near the consolidation of the Masoretic text, according to some testimonies found in the Talmudic literature about disputes concerning words' vocalization and biblical verses' division (punctuation). I will first present the different textual positions possible, then deepen our research in analyzing the different opinions and trends that arise from these disputes. From this, we can appreciate the new textual era in the post-Masoretic period, understand the depth of this revolution, try to define



its character, and examine its implications that go beyond the text framework, by shaping the Biblical narrative and even halachic practice in Judaism.

**Luba Rachel Charlap**, Ph.D., is a Professor of Hebrew language and Jewish studies at Lifshitz College in Jerusalem, now in a position as Head of The Center of Textual Studies. Between 2009–2016 she served as the College's Rector. During the years 1990–2004 she was a lecturer in the Hebrew Language Department at Bar Ilan University. Among Charlap's recent publications are: *Language and Textuality in Byzantine Karaism – Grammatical Concepts, Biblical Text Traditions, and Hermeneutic Aspects, in the Constantinople Center (Late 11th–First Half of 14th Centuries)*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2019; "Lexical Root vs. Substantive Root – The Status of the Hebrew Alphabet as a Precursory System for Menahem ben Saruq's Root Concept", *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 65 (2020), 419–434. ([luba@macam.ac.il](mailto:luba@macam.ac.il))

### **Marc Michaels**, *Time can be a cruel mistress: The Transmission of the Masoretic Scribal Manual Sefer Tagin*

Scribes are encouraged to maintain the tradition concerning the decorative *tagin* (tittles) and "strange" letter forms that adorn nearly two thousand letters in the *Torah*. Yet this tradition, detailed in *Sefer Tagin*, was relatively rarely followed and has all but died out in modern times.

Over time, however, the innovations and the errors have multiplied, impacting on the document's practical usage. Coupled with stricter modern scribal rules, something that was revered in the past is now 'past its sell by date'.

Time originally lent it credibility as an ancient tradition passed down the generations, supposedly going back to Joshua. Yet, that same time has robbed it of its lustre with the negative repercussions of its deployment through diversity caused through the transition to *paraša* format and combination with other scribal rules in a veritable 'mix tape' of medieval Masoretic instructions.

Is this work lost in the mists of time, or can time spent in my PhD research potentially help rescue this largely lost art?

**Marc Michaels** is currently studying for a PhD at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at Cambridge University (Fitzwilliam College) under Prof. Geoffrey Khan and Dr Ben Outhwaite related to my scribal studies and Hebrew manuscripts, specifically around *Sefer Tagin* and scribal oddities.



Author of *Sefer Tagin Fragments from the Cairo Genizah - A Critical Edition, Commentary and Reconstruction*. Cambridge Genizah Studies Series, Volume 12, 2020. A practicing *Sofer S"TaM* writing and repairing holy texts for almost 30 years, presenting and writing on topics related to scribal practice ([www.sofer.co.uk](http://www.sofer.co.uk)). He is also a Strategy and Creative Director in a marketing agency. ([mpm68@cam.ac.uk](mailto:mpm68@cam.ac.uk))

## Moshe Pinchuk, *The Talmud Yerushalmi of Bologna - A Possible Vorlage of the Leiden Manuscript*

At the 17<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Jewish Studies Prof. Mauro Perani announced the discovery of two bifolios of *Talmud Yerushalmi* of *Seder Moed* in the Bologna State Archive. These bifolios were recently published with an introduction in a joint effort by Perani and Stemberger. They have been identified as belonging to the same manuscript as the bifolios of *Yerushalmi Nezikin* previously discovered in ASBO. These bifolios have been dated to Italy, late 11<sup>th</sup> century and are approximately two centuries older than the Leiden manuscript (completed 1289). Stemberger concludes that there is a very close connection between ms. Bologna and ms. Leiden. Since manuscripts of the *Yerushalmi* always were extremely rare, the probability that another manuscript now lost formed the intermediary link between these two is very small.

This paper has two parts:

1. Examine the value and uses of Bologna if it is the *vorlage* of Leiden. For example, to clarify illegible or erased text in Leiden and better understand the methods and quality of the Leiden scribe. And the different value and uses of Bologna if it is not the *vorlage* of Leiden. Its contribution towards clarifying and restoring the text of the *Yerushalmi*.
2. Discuss methodological considerations in determining if Bologna can be the *vorlage* of Leiden. One of the decisive factors are the textual differences that exist between the manuscripts. These differences will be categorized and evaluated, with some examples.

**Moshe Pinchuk** holds a doctorate in Talmud from Bar-Ilan University, and Rabbinic ordination from HaRav HaGaon Shlomo Fisher zt"l. His areas of research are Talmud Yerushalmi and Comparative anthropology, in particular



comparisons between Biblical and Rabbinic stories and parallels in Greek Mythology. He is the author of the online Talmud Yerushalmi reference database which has gained recognition as a powerful and essential research tool. Pinchuk is currently head of the Jewish Heritage center at Netanya Academic College; Head advisor to the Yeshivat Chachmei Lublin Museum (Lublin); Board member at Ganzach – Kiddush Hashem and has served on the regulatory team at MedyMatch (MaxQ-AI). ([moshe.pinchuk@gmail.com](mailto:moshe.pinchuk@gmail.com))

#### 4.2 Calendars, History and Historiography in Islamic and Byzantine Contexts

K.20

##### **Nadia Vidro**, *How Many Jewish Calendars?*

Modern calendar converters provide a date according to the “Hebrew calendar”. This Hebrew calendar is a fixed calculated calendar that was used by Rabbanite Jews since the early 10th century at the latest. But is this the only Jewish calendar? Today most Qaraite Jews use a slightly different calculation based on astronomical predictions of new moon visibility. The situation was even more complex in the Middle Ages when the Qaraite calendar was based entirely on the observation of natural phenomena, such as the local visibility of the lunar crescent and the ripening of barley crops in Palestine. Dates in the observational calendar are different between Qaraite communities and from the calculated calendar of the Rabbanites. Unlike the Rabbanites who believed that all Jews must use the same calendar and celebrate the festivals on the same dates, Qaraites accepted such calendar diversity as normal.

In this talk I will give a brief introduction to the medieval Qaraite observational calendar and will discuss the calendar diversity that it created within the Qaraite movement and between Rabbanites and Qaraites. I will consider the implications of medieval Jews running their social and religious lives with different time frames and will review strategies that they adopted to overcome difficulties in everyday life caused by calendar diversity.

**Dr Nadia Vidro** is a Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at UCL. Her main research interests are Hebrew manuscripts and medieval Jewish intellectual history. Her newest project is *Saadya Gaon's Works on the Jewish Calendar: Near Eastern Sources and Transmission to the*



West (2021–2023), funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and carried out in collaboration with LMU, Munich. The aim of this project is to edit and study, for the first time, the full surviving corpus of Saadya Gaon's writings on the Jewish calendar. ([n.vidro@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:n.vidro@ucl.ac.uk))

### Fred Astren, Medieval Jews and the Hijrī Era

Periodization schemes of Jewish history traditional as well as academic invariably mark the juncture of the rise of Islam as a divider between historical periods. This paper interrogates Jewish notions of historical time and periodization in relation to the advent of Islam and its empire, the caliphate. The point of departure is the use of different late antique and early medieval eras for counting the years, of which Jews used several, but only very rarely the Hijrī. Although rejecting the contemporaneous imperial era of the Muslims, Jews of the central Near East used the bygone imperial era of the Seleucids for centuries, both before and after the establishment of the caliphate. In fact, rabbinic notions of history came to mirror, if not internalize to some extent, both Seleucid and Muslim imperial eras. Rabbinic notions of history posit breaks in the transmission of Jewish tradition that are synchronous with these epochs: the end of prophecy and the end of the period of the Amoraim, respectively. An artifact of this mirroring is found in one of the two sections of a minor rabbinic text from the late eighth or ninth century, *Seder Tanna'im veAmora'im*. Its chronologically arranged lists of rabbis present a generation-by-generation genealogy of rabbinic knowledge that mark the periodization scheme under consideration. By examining responses to the Hijrī era by Jews and other conquered peoples in the first Muslim centuries, and through comparison with the history and meaning of the Seleucid era, medieval Jewish notions of chronology, and Jewish attitudes to empire and non-Jewish chronologies are revealed.

**Fred Astren** is Professor in the Department of Jewish Studies at San Francisco State University. His current book project, *Before the Geniza: Jews and the Early Middle Ages*, casts a Mediterranean gaze on Jewish history in the years 500-950. In print and forthcoming are book chapters on the failure of Visigothic anti-Jewish legislation in Spain, on the impact of ninth-century Arabic literary production on Jewish sectarianism, and a chapter in the *Cambridge History of Judaism* on non-rabbinic Judaisms in medieval Islam.



Astren is the author of *Karaite Judaism and Historical Understanding* (University of South Carolina Press, 2004). ([fastren@sfsu.edu](mailto:fastren@sfsu.edu))

## Saskia Dönitz, *Yosippon in a New Garb: Rewriting a Historiographic Classic*

This lecture will focus on the rewritten version of *Sefer Yosippon*, the Hebrew paraphrase of the works of Flavius Josephus, produced by a 14<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine Jewish scholar, Judah Mosqoni. Born and educated in Byzantium, he travelled to Egypt and Spain where he settled later. Mosqoni's redaction of *Sefer Yosippon* allows an insight into a renewed notion of history and memory in the Late Middle Ages. While the style of the early version was a biblical inspired Hebrew, Mosqoni completely rewrote the text into rabbinical Hebrew introducing phrases from Talmudic as well as Midrashic literature. On the other hand, Mosqoni added passages and texts that originated from non-Jewish sources, such as the description of the coronation of Vespasian or passages taken from *Yosippon's* original source, *Ps-Hegesippus*. This new version of *Yosippon* became the most popular one, it went into print and from there onwards was referred to as *Yosippon* while the preceding redactions remained in manuscript until modern times. This literary refurbishing of a historiographic Hebrew bestseller in the Middle Ages shows the need to adapt the description of the pre-diasporic history of the Jews and the destruction of the Second Temple as a foundational narrative for the self-understanding of the Jewish communities in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern time onward on the background of a Byzantine and Sefardic view on history.

Dr. Saskia Dönitz is a postdoctoral researcher at the Seminar for Judaic Studies, Goethe-University Frankfurt a.M. Her main focus is cultural history of the Jews in the Middle Ages, in particular the history of Byzantine Jewry and its literary heritage. She earned her PhD from Freie Universität Berlin with a book on medieval historiography (*Überlieferung und Rezeption des Sefer Yosippon*, Tübingen 2013). Recent publication: "Jews as Cultural Brokers between Byzantium and the West, 850-1200," in: S. Kolditz; N. Drocourt (eds.), *Brill's Companion to the Byzantine World: A Companion to Byzantium and the West* (Leiden: Brill 2022), 496-512. ([doenitz@em.uni-frankfurt.de](mailto:doenitz@em.uni-frankfurt.de))



## Nuray Ocakli, Romaniot Jews of Kastoria in the mid-15th Century Ottoman Registers: Life in Kastoria and the Journey to a New Life in Constantinople

This paper examines four 15th century Ottoman cadastral and military surveys to analyze the details of the Romaniot Jewish community's life in Kastoria and their cultural interactions with the Greek and Slavic population of the city. Also this paper aims to study the process of their deportation and the earliest stage of the new life in Constantinople. The first Ottoman survey of Kastoria registers detailed information about population structure and personal names of the Jewish community indicating their cultural interactions with the Greek and Slavic peoples of the city. However, after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, Kastorian Jews were deported to the new capital. One of the Ottoman surveys mentions that the first deportation attempt was a failure due to a reason, so the Kastorian Jews were registered once more in a 15<sup>th</sup> century military survey but after some time, they were deported to and registered by name in Constantinople as the most populous Jewish community of the city in the mid-15th century. This was a new era of cultural interaction and a different life experience for the Romaniot Jewish community of Kastoria in the transition period of Constantinople from Byzantine to Ottoman.

Nuray Ocakli has been teaching in the Department of History at Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University since 2017. She studied 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman tax and military surveys of Lower Danube Frontier under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Halil Inalcik and received her PhD from Bilkent University. Her researches focus on Ottoman tax and military surveys, personal and place names in the register books, Christian military organizations, and the socio-economic history of Macedonia. She conducted a research project on "Ottoman Heritage in Macedonia" in 2019-2021 in the Ottoman Archives. Her new project turns to "16<sup>th</sup>-century surveys of Jewish communities in Istanbul". Ocakli's forthcoming book chapters: "Daily life of Craftswomen in Traditional Industries of Late Medieval Kastoria: Furriers, Textile Weavers, Tailors, Merchants and More", in *A Vida Quotidiana da Cidade na Europa Medieval* (Lisbon, forthcoming 2022); "Profile of the Aya Nicola Church Community in the 1856 Demographic Census of Cibali Quarter: Merchants, Craftsmen and Skilled Workers from Kesriye (Kastoria), Naslich (Neapoli) and Grebene (Grevena)", in "Visions of Constantinople: The City and its Peoples" (2022). ([nuray.ocakli@izu.edu.tr](mailto:nuray.ocakli@izu.edu.tr))



### William Pimlott, British Yiddish and Its Decline

British Yiddish culture is often framed through a narrative of perpetual declinism. This paper aims to uncover, via British Yiddish press and memoir sources, what is at stake in these narratives of decline, simultaneously situating British Yiddish aesthetics and politics within global Yiddish cultural practices - and "rise and falls" and within recent historiography reassessing British decline.

[William Pimlott](#) is a postdoctoral research fellow at Birkbeck, University of London. He recently completed his PhD on the Yiddish press in Britain, 1896-1910, at UCL and is now working at Birkbeck on the Global Yiddish press. He has written for the *London Review of Books*, *In Geveb* and *Jewish Currents* and recently published an article in *Shofar*, with colleague Alex Grafen, on Leo Koenig and Yiddish Art History. ([w.pimlott@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:w.pimlott@bbk.ac.uk))

### Vivi Lachs, The Changing East End of Katie Brown's Edited Yiddish Sketches 1930-40s

Katie Brown (Gitl Bakon) was a journalist, editor and writer in the London Yiddish press from the 1920s to the mid-1950s. Scores of her humorous sketches were published in the 1930s, and edited versions of the same sketches re-published in the late 1940s. The movement of time reflected in the edits give an insight into how the huge political and social changes affected the immigrant East End community, and nuance our understanding of both the pre-war and immediate post-war periods.

[Dr Vivi Lachs](#) is a historian of the Jewish East End, a research fellow at Queen Mary, University of London and a Yiddish performer. She is the author of *Whitechapel Noise: Jewish Immigrant Life in Yiddish Song and Verse, London 1884-1914* (2018) and *London Yiddishtown: East End Jewish Life in Yiddish Sketch and Story, 1930-1950* (2021), supported by a Yiddish Book Centre translation fellowship. She co-runs the Great Yiddish Parade and the Yiddish Open Mic Café and leads tours of the old Yiddish East End. She sings and records with the bands Klezmer Klub and Katsha'nes. ([vivilachs@gmail.com](mailto:vivilachs@gmail.com))



## **Sonia Gollance**, 'A Tombstone that will Last for Generations': Time and Trauma Memorialization in Tea Arciszewska's *Miryeml* (1958)

Tea Arciszewska (c.1890–1962) developed her magnum opus, the modernist Yiddish-language play *Miryeml*, over the course of three decades. When she began writing her tragic drama in the 1920s as a Warsaw bohemian, it was meant to depict the traumatic impact of pogroms on children. By the time *Miryeml* was published in the 1950s, she was a survivor living in Paris and her play was understood to depict the devastations of the Holocaust. This paper analyzes the role of time in *Miryeml*—a play that seems to exist out of time, offering only vague details of the brutal historical events portrayed—and considers how Arciszewska's long process of creation helped shape her reception history.

**Sonia Gollance** is Lecturer in Yiddish at University College London. She has taught previously at the University of Göttingen, The Ohio State University, and the University of Vienna. Her book *It Could Lead to Dancing: Mixed-Sex Dancing and Jewish Modernity* (Stanford University Press 2021) was a National Jewish Book Award (USA) finalist. She is Managing Editor of Plotting Yiddish Drama, an initiative of the Digital Yiddish Theatre Project. Her ongoing translation of Tea Arciszewska's play *Miryeml* was supported by a Translation Fellowship from the Yiddish Book Center. ([s.gollance@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:s.gollance@ucl.ac.uk))

### 4.4 Migrants, Refugees, Settlers: Changing Forms of Longing and Belonging

Safra Lecture Theatre

## **Yair Wallach**, Rethinking Jewish Ashkenazi Migration to the Levant - through the Categories of integration and Acculturation

The study of Jewish Ashkenazi migration to the Levant focuses entirely on Palestine, and typically takes 1882 as a watershed that separates between religiously motivated migration and Zionist, nationally-motivated settler migration. This account continues to inform much of the writing on Ashkenazim in Palestine, despite challenges from scholars such as Gur Alroey, who has demonstrated that Zionism played a limited role in Ashkenazi migration to Palestine between 1904-1914.



This paper re-examines the conceptualisation of Jewish Ashkenazi migration by focussing on the Ashkenazi integration and acculturation in the Arab/Ottoman Levant, and by expanding the geographical frame to look more broadly at the Levant including Egypt and Lebanon. Studying Ashkenazim in Beirut, Alexandria and Cairo inevitably leads us to question the temporal, racial and spatial terms through which this migration had been understood.

I argue that while migration in the second half of the 19th century had national and settler-colonial dimensions, the compelling evidence for integration (in cultural, social, economic, and political terms) suggests that Ashkenazim should be understood first and foremost as migrants, who sought ways to find their place within the existing political and social order, rather than try to replace and undo that order. After 1920, the consolidation of the Jewish National Home in Palestine transformed Jewish migrants into settlers, inevitably impacting the status of Ashkenazim in neighbouring countries.

[Yair Wallach](#) is a senior lecturer in Israeli Studies at SOAS, the University of London, where he is also the head of the SOAS Centre for Jewish Studies. He has written on urban and material culture in modern Palestine/Israel. His book, *A City in Fragments: Urban Texts in Modern Jerusalem* (Stanford 2020) dealt with the street texts of late Ottoman and British Mandate Jerusalem. He has also written on Israel/Palestine and on Antisemitism for the *Guardian*, *Haaretz*, 972+, *Newsweek* and other publications. ([yw11@soas.ac.uk](mailto:yw11@soas.ac.uk))

### [Kinga Czechowska](#), *Between Hope and Despair: Polish Jews and British Policy towards Palestine in the 1930s*

In the 1920s, Polish Jews became the main group immigrating to Palestine. It was not only the popularity of Zionism that decided about that: there was a growing pressure to emigrate, accompanied, unfortunately, by the lack of territories ready to receive immigrants. The hopes of Polish Jews became strongly attached to Palestine at almost the same time that the British government started to introduce new anti-immigration restriction in its mandate territory.

How did Polish Jews respond to those politics? During that tumultuous decade, what was their attitude towards the country which once gave them the promise of the Balfour declaration? What was the range of their actions against British officials?



In my paper I will try to show that Polish Jews were interested in global politics and as early as 1930 started their efforts to prevent anti-immigration restrictions by mass actions of sending telegrams to the British government. In the following years, more radical views were expressed by some parties. The publication of the report by the Palestine Royal Commission in June 1937 led to a first escalation. Feelings of despair grew stronger in 1939 and were expressed in many different forms: from acts of vandalism towards British diplomatic posts to the official representation of Polish Jewry received by British ambassador in Warsaw Howard Kennard.

**Kinga Czechowska** – Doctor of Humanities, historian; researcher at the Institute of National Remembrance in Bydgoszcz (Poland). She has presented her findings at a variety of workshops, seminars and conferences, e.g. in Warsaw, Kyiv, Potsdam, Sussex and Oxford. She has received numerous scholarships for her research, most notably from the De Brzezian Lanckoronski Foundation and the Polonia Aid Foundation Trust. Her main research interests concern the history of Polish diplomacy, the history of Polish-Jewish relations and the history of the Holocaust. She is currently working on her first book *Polish Diplomacy and the "Jewish Question", 1932-1939*. ([Kinga.Czechowska@ipn.gov.pl](mailto:Kinga.Czechowska@ipn.gov.pl))

### Matteo D'Avanzo, *The Ethiopian Jews Under Italian Fascist Rule*

My research aims to understand what decisions have been taken against or in favour of Beta Israel by the colonial regime, if the experience lived during the Fascist period has led to a greater identification with Judaism, and whether it sped up the identification with the Zionist cause and later diaspora to the state of Israel. It analyses how the experience of the Italian colonial regime has been handed down and remembered among the generations of Beta Israel and whether it has left a trace in the history of this ethnic group. Therefore, the attitude of the fascist regime towards the Beta Israel helps researchers to understand in depth the peculiar attitude of Italian fascist colonialism and how the experience of this minority (in the light of the anti-Semitism and racism prevailing at that time) seems to have fluctuated between benevolence and general discrimination. This research delves into a specific case: the Ethiopian Jews during Italian Fascist occupation of Ethiopia (1936-1941). This project aims to investigate how Ethiopian Jews experienced the Italian Fascist rule and the policies of the Italian Colonial Government, and what elements may have



influenced their belonging to Judaism and then transition and emigration to Israel.

[Matteo D'Avanzo](#) is a Ph.D Student in History at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa, Italy. The title of his project is: "The Ethiopian Jews Under Italian Fascist Rule". He graduated in March 2020 in Political Science at the University of Milan with a final grade of 110/110 cum laude (supervisor prof. Elisa Giunchi). He has been Visiting MA student at the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at the University of Haifa (supervisor prof. Ido Shahar) from September 2019 to February 2020. He has been appointed from November 2020 to November 2021 subject expert in Comparative Constitutional Law (Middle Eastern Countries) at the University of Milan and on December 2021 he has been appointed subject expert in History and Institutions of Middle Eastern Countries at the University of Milan.  
([matteo.davanzo@sns.it](mailto:matteo.davanzo@sns.it))

#### 4.5 Jewish Country Houses in Pan-European Perspective

Council Room

### **Colette Bellingham**, Reading *The Red Book: Ferdinand de Rothschild and the Country House Album*

In 1877, Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild (1839-1898), a scion of the Austrian branch of the Rothschild banking family, built a stately home called Waddesdon Manor in the countryside of Buckinghamshire. Twenty years later, in the year before Rothschild's premature death, *The Red Book*, a commemorative photographic album dedicated to this house and its interiors, was produced in multiple copies. Illustrated with twenty-seven collotypes, *The Red Book* provides a visual tour of the forms and functions of Waddesdon Manor, producing a narrative account of the house as both a ritualistic and reflexive space. Juxtaposing themes of creation and preservation in photography at and of Jewish country houses helps to uncover how the culture of album production and circulation was employed to document, display, and circulate the images of houses and their collections. This paper will apply the temporal, spatial, and hermeneutic aspects unique to photographic albums to interpret how Ferdinand de Rothschild used *The Red Book* to simultaneously evoke his Jewish and European origins and construct



his afterlife in Britain through the presentation of inherited and collected objects that later became the Waddesdon Bequest at the British Museum. When mediated through the topographical framework of the album, I will argue that photographic depictions of his property and collections become self-conscious expressions of Ferdinand de Rothschild's own history, identity, and legacy.

[Colette Bellingham](#) is pursuing a Collaborative Doctoral Award project at the University of Oxford in partnership with the National Trust. For the past decade, Colette has worked in France as a specialist and historian of nineteenth-century photography. She has performed extensive research in photographic archives with a particular interest in early photographic techniques, networks, and fin de siècle visual culture. Colette received her MPhil in History of Art from the University of Cambridge and her BA in History of Art and History from the University of California, Los Angeles.

### [Silvia Davoli](#), *A Little Known Salonnière Juive: Ernesta Stern (1854-1926)*

This paper presents research in progress on the multifaceted and cosmopolitan figure of Ernesta Stern born Hirschel de Minerbi (1854-1926). A prolific writer, an amateur photographer and eclectic collector, she was also known by the nom de plume 'Maria Star'.

Born and raised in the enlightened Jewish community of Trieste, Ernesta married the wealthy Jewish banker Louis Stern. The couple lived between Paris (63, Rue du Foubourg Sanit Honore'), Cap St Martin on the Côte d'Azur where they owned the fabulous Villa Torre Clementina and Venice where Ernesta commissioned artist Raffaele Mainella the construction of Palazzetto Stern on the Canal Grande.

Thanks to some recently discovered archival resources, primarily consisting of photographic documentation produced by Ernesta herself and some autobiographical memoirs, it is possible to trace the intellectual, geographical and social trajectories within which Ernesta operated.

[Dr Silvia Davoli](#) specializes in the history of collections and patronage with a particular focus on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She is post-doctoral Research Associate at the Oxford University and Curator at Strawberry



Hill House (the Horace Walpole Collection). Silvia is also associate editor of the *Journal of the History of Collections* (Oxford University Press). She is currently working on a book on the Italo-French collector Henri Cernuschi that will be published by Brill Publications in 2023. ([silvia.davoli@gmail.com](mailto:silvia.davoli@gmail.com))

## Sietske Van der Veen, A Rothschild Legacy in Utrecht: Hélène van Zuylen van Nyevelt-de Rothschild and the Rebuilding of De Haar Castle

Due to its grand stature and exceptional architecture, De Haar castle, in Haarzuilens near Utrecht, occupies a unique place among country retreats in the Netherlands. The castle, now a museum, is famous for its un-Dutch extravagant interior and the glamorous life of its owners in the twentieth century. However, De Haar is hardly ever acknowledged for its Jewish past. In 1887, Hélène de Rothschild, born into the French branch of the Rothschild family dynasty, married the Dutch-Belgian Roman Catholic baron Etienne van Zuylen van Nyevelt van de Haar. Because of the inheritance her father had bequeathed to her, Hélène and Etienne were able to let famous Dutch architect Pierre Cuypers rebuild Etienne's ancestral castle, then a ruin, in pseudo-medieval style. Next to indicators of the Van Zuylen van Nyevelt past, references to the Jewish background of the baroness were incorporated in the construction of De Haar as well: the Rothschild coat of arms on the fireplace and several Stars of David on the beams of the Knight's Hall. Hélène also, against Cuypers's wishes, decorated many rooms in eighteenth-century French style, the comfort of which she had appreciated in the Rothschild palaces of her youth. During the restoration, which took twenty years, Hélène and Etienne travelled the world to collect art, furniture, ceramics and antiques for their castle, and organised masquerade balls for nobles, captains of industry, artists and even royalty.

[Sietske van der Veen](#) is a PhD candidate affiliated with the Jewish Country Houses project. At the Huygens Institute for the History and Culture of the Netherlands and Utrecht University, she studies the Jewish Dutch elite between 1870 and 1940. Prior to her doctoral research, Sietske worked as a freelance historian and journalist for several years. She obtained her MA in History from the University of Amsterdam. During her studies, she was a research intern at



the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies.  
([sietske.van.der.veen@huygens.knaw.nl](mailto:sietske.van.der.veen@huygens.knaw.nl))

### **Cyril Grange**, The Expropriation of the Castle and Winery of Moncontour and the Integration of its Jewish Seigneur in the Locality

The castle of Moncontour, located in Vouvray near Tours in the Indre et Loire region, is most famous for its vineyard, one of the oldest in the Loire Valley. The castle dates from the 14th century and has undergone several phases of renovation. Jules-Louis de Koenigswarter (1844-1919), bought the château in 1870, the year he married Angelica Franchetti (1849-1936). When war was declared, Jean Raymond (1885-1955), the fourth child of Jules and Angelica, was the owner of the property. The question of the Aryanisation of the vineyard and the château soon arose. The presentation will summarise the stages of the "spoliation" process and the interactions between the various players involved (Feldkommandantur, Indre et Loire Prefecture, Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives, Provisional Administrator). It will insist on the avoidance strategies put in place by the Jewish owner which, if they do not succeed in stopping the spoliation process in progress, allow it to be slowed down considerably. Finally, we will show how this Aryanization dossier allows us to measure the persistence of the attention and respect that the Jewish owner of the château and, moreover, of the vineyard, benefited from in a social environment that had become hostile for the most part.

**Cyril Grange** is Senior Researcher at the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS). He works mainly on social and economic history issues involving the Jewish upper class in Paris (19th-20th centuries). This theme has led him to take an interest in the anthropology of kinship and to participate closely in the development of the "Program for the Use and Computation of Kinship Data" (Puck) ([www.kintip.org](http://www.kintip.org), [www.kinsources.org](http://www.kinsources.org)). In 2016, he published *Une élite parisienne: les familles de la grande bourgeoisie juive (1870-1939)* (Paris, CNRS Editions). He is currently studying the mechanisms of dispossession and looting of the property of the Parisian Jewish elite during World War II.  
([cyril.grange@cnrs.fr](mailto:cyril.grange@cnrs.fr))

Discussant: **Laura Leibman**



[Laura Leibman](#) is Professor of English and Humanities at Reed College, VP of Program (AJS), and the author of *The Art of the Jewish Family: A History of Women in Early New York in Five Objects* (Bard Graduate Center, 2020) which won three National Jewish Book Awards. Her latest book *Once We Were Slaves* (Oxford UP, 2021) is about an early multiracial Jewish family who began their lives enslaved in the Caribbean and became some of the wealthiest Jews in New York. ([leibman@reed.edu](mailto:leibman@reed.edu))

5.1 A Plurality of Meaning: New Approaches to  
Reading Sex and Gender in Rabbinic Texts

K0.18

S  
5**Neil Janes**, *The Yefat To'ar: A Coerced and Liminal Halakhic Category*

The *yefat to'ar* is a legal paradigm found in Deuteronomy 21:10-14, in which Moses describes the process of forcing, through rape and capture, a non-Israelite woman to be married to an Israelite soldier. In rabbinic literature, the *yefat to'ar* is mentioned in two different lists of rules, one related to the Noahide commandments, with its earliest layers in tannaitic materials, and the other in an amoraic list of commandments describing an internal Jewish discourse of halakhic permissiveness granted by God to Jews in the face of the desire for prohibited foods and sexual behaviours. The presence of the *yefat to'ar* in both lists is a destabilising influence, since the woman who is the object of the law, is caused to inhabit a liminal space between the Jewish and the non-Jewish legal worlds. It will be argued that these texts reflect attempts on the part of the rabbinic community to exert control over the uncontrollable woman, who nonetheless is coerced in two ways: rape and conversion. It will be argued that the thrust of the texts reduces the liminal personhood to a binary condition of permitted/forbidden and overlays this on to the ethnic categories of Jew/non-Jew. Finally, the paper will consider how the discussion of this law can be understood in terms of the construction of imagined legal worlds, particularly regarding Noahide/Jewish legal systems. This will then allow a consideration of the nature of identity and the blurring of boundaries.

**Neil Janes** is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, King's College London where his research is a term-oriented study of אִפְתּוֹאֵר within Rabbinic Literature with a particular focus on the Babylonian Talmud. ([neil.janes@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:neil.janes@kcl.ac.uk))

**Tali Artman-Partock**, *How can we use rabbinic literature to support sexual abuse victims?*

In the past year, two very well-known figures in the Israeli Charedi (ultra-Orthodox) community committed suicide after their abuse of women and children of both sexes had been exposed. The abuse was reported very



differently in secular and Charedi media. The latter categorically rushed to save the honour of the aggressor, and the former focused on the victims. This paper will explore whether there are elements in rabbinic culture that led to the focus on the perpetrator rather than the victim's honour in the Charedi press, and further consider which rabbinic sources might allow us to create a different framework and narrative in support of the victims. I will argue that a close reading of the rabbinic revolution in the conceptualization of rape allows for the creation of such new frameworks.

[R Dr Tali Artman-Partock](#) is a Teaching Associate in Judaism in the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge and is Lecturer in Rabbinic Literature, Leo Baeck College.

### [Laliv Clenman, A Woman Would Marry a Woman: Reading Lesbian Marriages in Torat Cohanim](#)

Torat Cohanim (otherwise known as Sifra or 'The Book') famously includes the only prohibition of same-sex marriages between women in classical rabbinic literature. This paper will explore the way in which this early legal midrash constructs and contextualises such marriages, proposing that this rule forms part of a broader attempt to expand the prohibitions of Leviticus 18. This early exegesis further categorizes such unions as an established Egyptian practice, which the midrash seeks to forbid. Exegetical jurisgenesis thus imagines same-sex marriages between women into existence even as they are singled out for rejection as part of the *chuqim* (rules or inscribed practices) of the Other. This will be considered in relation to another early rabbinic conceptualisation of the woman as an active agent, namely that of a woman initiating a heterosexual marriage, as demonstrated in the Tosefta. I will further propose that the midrashic process in Torat Cohanim is characteristic of the school of R. Akiva, which despite its opposition to interpreting the individual prohibitions of Leviticus 18 and 20, freely subjects the introductory and concluding verses of these chapters to exegesis that results in bans of surprising categories, including lesbian marriages and intermarriage. I will conclude with a consideration of the afterlife of this text, where I will argue that its reception history takes a jurisprudential approach to this imaginative midrashic jurisgenesis.



Dr Laliv Clenman is Senior Lecturer in Rabbinic Literature at Leo Baeck College and Visiting Senior Lecturer in the Dept. of Theology and Religious Studies at King's College London.

## 5.2 Studying the Heavens with Christians to Keep Jewish Time on Earth

K0.20

### Israel M. Sandman, *The Easter Cycle in Medieval Sephardic Calendar Monographs*

At the beginning of my work on Isaac Israeli's calendar monograph, *Yesod Olam*, I gave a talk on 'Christianity in Medieval Jewish Calendar Treatises: Reading Between the Lines'. I used a preliminary comparison between Israeli's work, completed in Toledo in 1309/10, and that of Abraham bar Hayya of Barcelona, in his calendar monograph, completed in France in 1123. Now that the *Yesod Olam* project is over and I am preparing the results for publication, I would like to present my updated research on the topic.

Both monographs are primarily on the Jewish calendar; So why, in these monographs did both authors dedicate substantial space and careful analysis to the Christian calendar in general, and in particular to Easter and the 19-year cycle by which Christians worked out the date of Easter? Using these authors' texts together with their contexts, I discern a combination of four complementary motives, which I shall illustrate using examples from the texts, paratexts, and diagrams: 1) humanistic interest in the workings of other cultures; 2) a pragmatic need for Jews in a predominantly Christian society to know their neighbours' calendar (inter-calendar conversion methods); 3) the Jewish minority's self-identification as part of the general culture (commonalities between the Jewish and Christian 19-year cycles, and use mnemonics and diagrams comparable to those in Latin manuscripts); and 4) the Jewish minority's self-identification as different from and superior to the majority culture (Christian derivation from and straying from Judaism; Jewishness and humanness of Jesus).

Dr Israel M. Sandman's research centres on Hebrew manuscripts and premodern Jewish thought. He spent a decade at UCL's Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies researching, editing, and translating mediaeval Hebrew calendar monographs from the manuscripts. He is now preparing the results



for publication, while continuing to work with Hebrew manuscripts at the British Library's Department of Asian and African Studies.

([is.m.sandman@gmail.com](mailto:is.m.sandman@gmail.com))

## **Tzvi Luboshitz**, Counter-Hebraism: Christianity in the Eyes of a Jewish Kabbalist

Christian Hebraism was a broad phenomenon in which Christian scholars have engaged in various aspects of Judaism, either for the sake of curiosity or for contentious purposes. This talk will examine a unique case of "Hebraic Christianity": a commentary on various elements of Catholic society in the writings of the Italian Kabbalist R. Moses David Valle (1696-1777), a member of the circle of his more famous fellow R. Moses Hayyim Luzzatto (Ramchal).

Relying on kabbalistic symbolism, R. Valle explained that Judaism and Christianity stem from two different realms of the universe: Judaism is derived from holiness, while Christianity is derived from the unholy side; paradoxically, however, each side is an exact reflection of its opponent. Based on this assumption, Valle comparatively deals with the "kabbalistic secrets" behind various elements of Christianity: events in Jesus' life, chapters in the history of Christian Europe, motifs in iconography, church architecture and events in the Christian calendar. From his many references to the latter, it becomes evident that in Valle's view the Christian calendar is simultaneously parallel and contradictory to the Jewish one; therefore, on the cosmic level, one is no more "real" than the other.

While Valle's tone against Christianity is hostile, the systematic comparison between the two religions is a Jewish reflection of the interfaith dialog in the writings of Christian authors of the time, a polemical-comparative discourse that led to the growth of modern religious science and, finally, the wide acceptance of ideas regarding religious tolerance

**Tzvi Luboshitz** is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Comparative Religion at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is interested in Jewish mysticism and the intellectual history of early modern Europe. His MA thesis focused on the writings and thought of the 18th-century Italian kabbalist R. Immanuel Hay Ricchi. His Ph.D. dissertation focuses on Mysticism, Messianism, and Interfaith dialogue in the writings of R. Moshe David Valle, another Italian kabbalist. Tzvi published several articles, some of them based on his thesis. In addition,



during the academic year 2022, he taught an academic course at the Hebrew University on the interfaith dialogue in the Kabbalah literature ([tzvi.luboshitz@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:tzvi.luboshitz@mail.huji.ac.il))

## **Pavel Sládek**, *Astronomy, Kabbalah and Calendar in Ashkenaz, 1550-1650*

There are a number of manuscripts that document the growing interest in astronomy that could be observed among Ashkenazic scholars between 1550 and 1650. Among this narrow collection of works, two in particular stand out: The Hebrew translations of Sacrobosco's *Sphaera mundi* and Peurbach's *Theorica planetarum nova*. Mattathias Delacrut, Moses Isserles, Manoaah Hendel, and Hayyim Lisker wrote commentaries on these works. A handful of other scholars also demonstrated an interest in astronomy: The Maharal of Prague theorised about whether it was permitted to study astronomy, Mordecai Jaffe commented on the astronomical sections of Maimonides' *Hilkhot hidush ha-hodesh*, Yom-Tov Lipmann Heller taught astronomy to his son, and David Gans wrote an original introduction to astronomy in Hebrew. In his study on Moses Isserles, however, Y. Tzvi Langerman pointed to the isolation of these Ashkenazic scholars and to their derivative unimaginative attitude to the discipline. Based on Langerman's assessment, this paper enquires into the motivations behind the Ashkenazic scholars' interest in astronomy and seeks to analyse it more closely in the context of both Jewish and non-Jewish curricula. The works of Delacrut, Hendel, or Shabtai Sheftel Horowitz, as well as other manuscript evidence, indicate that the Ashkenazic scholars often studied astronomic texts together with the kabbalah, and that the interest in astronomy was coupled with a growing curiosity about calendric issues. Sacrobosco's and Peurbach's works were standard textbooks on astronomy used at sixteenth-century European universities, and they could be integrated in the Jewish curriculum because of their decidedly geocentric approach to the planetary motions, and because they served as introductions to advanced astronomic texts.

**Pavel Sládek** is an associate professor of Hebrew and Jewish studies program at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague. His research interests and publication topics include sixteen-century rabbinic literature, the history of Jewish book culture, and practices of reading in the early modern period. He has held fellowships at Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Jewish Studies



and at Houghton Library of the Harvard University. He is a co-founder of the Prague Centre for Jewish Studies and a member of the Executive Committee of the EAJIS. ([Pavel.Sladek@ff.cuni.cz](mailto:Pavel.Sladek@ff.cuni.cz))

### 5.3 Jewish-Christian Relations and Jewish Activism in the United States

River Room

#### **Irina Rabinovich**, *Interfaith Marriage Goes Wrong: Belle Kendrick Abbott's Leah Mordecai*

The literary preoccupation with interfaith marriages between Christians and Jews in nineteenth-century American literature reflects the social and cultural concerns that were at stake with regards to America's place as a 'Melting pot,' and the sensitive rapports between the dominant (Christian) culture and the Jewish minority. Most nineteenth-century novels dealing with intermarriage were written by Jewish-American writers. Looking at *Leah Mordecai* (1875), a quite distinctive novel, written by a Christian female writer, the Southern Belle Kendrick Abbott, this paper probes the question of how religious affiliations and notions of race reflect Christians' and Jews' attitude to mixed marriage and how such notions have transformed over time. Moreover, the paper aims at investigating Southern Jews' shifting depiction before, during and after the Civil War, an event that reshaped American history. In addition, it relates to Jews' involvement in and response to the Civil War. This study demonstrates that during critical historical occasions, anti-Jewish animosity has increased. Importantly, while the younger generation may have successfully overcome societal biases, American society as a whole, due to its conservatism, restrictive social norms and deeply-rooted stereotypes was in the last decades of the nineteenth-century still unprepared to embrace prospective unions between religiously and/or racially differing individuals.

**Dr. Irina Rabinovich** is a lecturer in the English Language Department at Holon Institute of Technology, Israel. Most of her research deals with the representation of women, especially Jewish female artists in 19th century British and American Literature. She has published numerous articles in various academic journals and presented papers at British, Jewish and American-Literature conferences. She is the author of *Re-Dressing Miriam: 19th Century Artistic Jewish Women* (2012). ([irener@hit.ac.il](mailto:irener@hit.ac.il))



## Rachel Kovacs, *Do Justice, Love Mercy, and Walk Humbly with Your G-d: Herbert Lehman as Statesman, Humanitarian and Champion of Social Justice*

Herbert H. Lehman rejected the financial dynasty of his birth for a lifetime of public service and support for progressive causes. This study explores how Lehman, savvy politician, and media strategist, led major humanitarian initiatives, despite vehement opposition. Using archival research, primary sources, and multimedia, the author tracks how Lehman aided Jews and non-Jews alike in “tikkun olom” and personified how to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your G-d.”

Lehman segued from Henry Street Settlement volunteer to progressive Democratic politician, enacting laws protecting workers, launching housing and other relief programs and, as head of the Joint/JDC, distributing aid to starving Jews in the USSR. He sparred with FDR over immigration quotas, struggled to loosen restrictions for Jewish refugees, and as Director-General of UNRRA, risked death, near occupied and Nazi-devastated areas, to deliver aid, despite attempts within the State Department to thwart his efforts. Although ambivalent about Zionism, he supported Israel as a haven for Holocaust survivors.

Postwar, Lehman fought for civil rights, confronted Senator Joe McCarthy, opposed domestic internment camps, and continued his progressive, social justice agenda for underserved, marginalized populations. Given Ukraine’s refugee crisis and the effects of war and repression on civil society there, Lehman’s WWII relief work is a highly salient benchmark for humanitarian assistance. This study of his broad “tikkun olom” suggests how social justice and humanitarian relief might be effectively operationalized.

**Rachel S. Kovacs**, Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Media Culture, CSI, CUNY, is a PR practitioner and freelance writer/reviewer. Dr. Kovacs has researched UK/EU broadcasting activism, CSR/ethics issues, PR for humanitarian/healthcare crises, and media literacy. Her research won awards from PRSA’s Educators Academy and the Institute for Public Relations. Formerly Assistant Editor, *Journal of Communication*, Assistant Director, University of Maryland Writing Center, and a Yale Visiting Faculty Fellow, she holds a Ph.D., and M.A. Mass Communication, University of Maryland College



of Journalism and Towson University, respectively, and a B.A., Theatre Arts, Brandeis University), and has lived and traveled extensively abroad.

([Rachel.Kovacs@csi.cuny.edu](mailto:Rachel.Kovacs@csi.cuny.edu))

### **Amy Fedeski**, *Iranian Jewish Migration to the United States and the (Re-)Making of American Refugee Policy, 1978-1984*

In the late 1970s, Jewish American communal activists campaigned to transform US refugee policy. Just as this campaign reached fruition in the form of new legislation introduced to the US Congress, a new wave of Jewish migration from Iran to the United States began after the Iranian revolution. While historians have examined both the emigration of the Jews of Iran and the transformation of US refugee law in this period, this paper is the first to bring them together to show how Iranian Jewish migration to the US shaped, and was shaped by, the concurrent change in American refugee policy. In doing so, this paper will move beyond a traditional focus on the work of government and local NGO actors to consider how Iranian Jewish refugees themselves worked to shape US policy in this crucial period. Using a variety of archival material from both government sources and the papers of organizations like the American Jewish Committee and the Council of Jewish Federations, this paper will show how the US government and Jewish American NGOs thought about Iranian Jewish refugees, and how Iranian Jews themselves understood their own migration within national and transnational contexts. It will argue that the migration of Iranian Jews presented Jewish American activists, and the US government, with a new type of refugee: communally organized, politically active, with the ability and desire to advocate for their own interests. Iranian Jews themselves were thus crucial to the remaking of US refugee policy which occurred from 1978 to 1984.

**Amy Fedeski** is a PhD candidate at the Corcoran Department of History, University of Virginia. She completed a BA (Hons) in History and Politics at the University of Sheffield in 2017, followed by an MPhil in American History at Selwyn College, University of Cambridge. Currently, Amy is working on a dissertation entitled "'What We Want To Do As Americans': Jewish Political Activism and United States Refugee Policy, 1965-1989'. Her wider research interests lie in the intersection of the Cold War, Jewish politics, America in the world, and US immigration policy.



**Jennifer Putnam**, Timelessness: Prisoner Experiences of Time in Nazi  
Concentration Camps

S  
5

This presentation will explore the effects of timelessness on prisoners in Nazi concentration camps by combining prisoner testimony with material sources, including inmate graffiti. Time in the camps has rarely been a focus for historians, leaving Sofsky's interpretations of camp time as the main influence in the field. His arguments suggest that depriving prisoners of time was an exertion of absolute power in the camps and thus deprived prisoners of both agency and social power. Other works on time have focused solely on individual prisoner groups, ignoring contact between Jewish and gentile prisoners. This research takes an integrated historical approach which considers all prisoner groups' interactions and has thus led to an understanding of how some Jewish prisoners were aware of the date, which was previously unclear in studies that focused solely on Jewish prisoners' experiences of time. Religious timekeeping is also compared across groups with an eye towards understanding prisoner hierarchy and privileges, which often correlated with survival rates. Rejecting claims of powerlessness and a lack of agency on the part of the prisoners, this article demonstrates the ways in which prisoners and groups of prisoners worked clandestinely to mark time and thus maintain a limited sense of agency. Finally, this research explores the impact of timekeeping and timelessness on prisoner memory and testimony after the war, particularly how the inaccuracies of recalling dates has affected criminal trials in the post-war period.

**Jennifer Putnam** is a PhD candidate in History at Birkbeck College, University of London. Her research focuses on contemporary graffiti in sites of the Nazi concentration camps and ghettos. She is interested in individual acts of resistance against the Nazi regime, how prisoners and guards interacted with the built environment around them, and unconventional forms of communication. Jennifer received an MA in Modern History and Politics from Birkbeck College and an MPhil in Linguistics from Trinity College Dublin. Jennifer speaks four languages – Polish, French, Spanish, and English – and is learning two more –Yiddish and German. ([jputna01@mail.bbk.ac.uk](mailto:jputna01@mail.bbk.ac.uk))



## Steven Samols, *Picturing the Holocaust: A Photobook by Survivors in the Immediate Postwar Period*

In December 1945, a group of Jewish survivors in Poland produced a photobook showing what they had just lived through. Edited by historians Philip Friedman and Gershon Taffet, the volume was titled in Polish and English: *Zagłada Żydostwa Polskiego. Album zdjęć/ Extermination of Polish Jew: Album of Pictures*. *Extermination* was the first artefact of its kind. Piecing together two hundred and fifty found photographs by both perpetrators and victims, and with text in Polish, Russian, Hebrew, French, and English, the book aspired to show the entire cycle of persecution and extermination faced by Jews in occupied Poland. Beginning with pictures of antisemitic humiliations, *Extermination* moves through the regimes of forced labor, ghettoization, massacres, and extermination camps from multiple perspectives. This paper discusses how the pictures of *Extermination*, and the visual narrative they formed together, have come to define Jewish history, canonizing a repertoire of familiar images of persecution and death. It highlights how those pictures intersected with the larger history of photography, signifying the medium's changing documentary purpose in response to the Holocaust. Beyond the flood of images that showed liberated concentration camps in international exhibitions and magazines, *Extermination* aimed to historicize the atrocity as the result of a cycle of systematic persecution against the Jewish people. The book provided a more comprehensive picture of the atrocity, one that was published in a more permanent medium than sparse photographs and temporary exhibitions. In turning to the photobook, survivors innovatively built upon, and combined several cultures of Jewish memorialization and historicization.

**Steven Weiss Samols** is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of History at the University of Southern California. Currently sponsored by the Israeli Council for Higher Education's 'Sandwich Scholarship' at Tel Aviv University, Steven's dissertation explores the role of twentieth century photobooks as documents of Jewish History. His work lies at the intersection of Cultural History and Visual Studies. Steven holds a MSc. in European Studies from the London School of Economics and a B.A. in History from New York University. ([ssamols@usc.edu](mailto:ssamols@usc.edu))



## Robert Thompson, 'To work with Jews, not only for Jews': Christian Encounters with Holocaust Survivors in Post-War Relief

In recently-liberated concentration camps and, later, in Displaced Persons camps in Occupied Germany, British Christians encountered and worked with Jewish survivors of Nazi persecution. They listened to Jewish testimony of the Holocaust and were confronted with the challenges which faced survivors of the Holocaust in the post-war world: rehabilitation, repatriation, and resurgent antisemitism. They wrote to coreligionists at home in the UK about what they witnessed. These experiences impacted relief workers' Christian faith, and their understanding of Jews and Judaism was changed. This paper explores two case studies of Christian women relief workers—an Anglican member of the Friends Relief Service and a Quaker member of the Jewish Relief Unit—to demonstrate how a study of the “lived” realities of Christian-Jewish relations in this period can complicate our understanding of how Christians responded to the aftermath of the Holocaust. Contemporary papers, life writings, and later oral history interviews reveal nuanced Christian motivations, challenging the notion of widespread secularization of relief work. Women's kinship in relief organisations enabled Christian-Jewish encounters, deepening awareness of Jews and Judaism. A Christian framework shaped how relief workers reflected on what they learned of Jewish life and of antisemitism. It is argued that these encounters with Jewish survivors in post-war relief were amongst the first practical workings out in local context of a “lived” Christian response to the Holocaust and disclose the meaning behind relief worker Alison Wood's conviction of the need 'to work *with* Jews, not only *for* Jews'.

Robert Thompson is a PhD candidate in the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at University College London. His research *Liberators, Occupiers, Pastors: Christian Encounters with Holocaust Survivors in Germany 1945-1950* is funded by a Wolfson Foundation Postgraduate Scholarship in the Humanities. Rob's earlier studies were conducted at the Universities of Oxford and Southampton, and his MA thesis was awarded Proxime Accessit for the Royal Historical Society's Rees Davies Prize in 2020. Rob facilitates the Holocaust and Religion Reading Group for PhD students and Early Career Researchers, and is a trustee of the National Holocaust Centre and Museum.

[robert.thompson.20@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:robert.thompson.20@ucl.ac.uk)



## Tom Eshed, Sovereignty Out of Time and Space – The Initiative to Confer an Israeli Citizenship upon Holocaust victims in the 1950s

One of the clauses of the “Martyrs’ and Heroes Remembrance (Yad Vashem) Law – 1953” states that it is in its power to “confer upon the members of the Jewish people who perished in the days of the Disaster and the Resistance the commemorative citizenship of the State of Israel, as a token of their having been gathered to their people”. This long-forgotten, unique and unprecedented clause is still part of Yad Vashem’s law today. This idea was a matter for heated debates in the early 1950s in the Knesset and the Israeli government, as it constituted a startling innovation in the supposed correlation between sovereignty and temporality. It also called the attention of some of the leading Jewish scholars of international law of the time. They argued on how can a state bestow citizenship upon people who were murdered before it was established. One original solution brought forth was to declare that Israeli sovereignty dates all the way back to the Second Temple period. In my paper, drawing from documents from the Israeli State Archives, I will follow the legal, moral and political arguments regarding the conferment of an Israeli citizenship upon Holocaust victims from the initiative’s inception up until the failure to convince the Jewish diaspora to accept it. More broadly, I will discuss the meaning of this initiative, and Holocaust memory in general, on how Israeli officials and leading diaspora Jewish leaders and scholars understood the relationship between international law, the Jewish state and the diaspora.

Tom Eshed is a PhD candidate in the department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His dissertation, supervised by Prof. Amos Goldberg, is titled “Holocaust Diplomacy: Commemorating the Shoah in Israeli Cultural Diplomacy, 1953-2005”. It examines Israeli cultural diplomacy based on Holocaust memory since the creation of Yad Vashem and until the United Nations accepted Resolution 60/7, establishing 27th of January as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. ([tom.eshed1@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:tom.eshed1@mail.huji.ac.il))



## 5.5 Muslim-Jewish Encounter, Diversity and Distance in Urban Europe – A Round-Table

Council Room

**Dr Alyaa Ebbiary** is Postdoctoral Research Associate at Durham University. She completed a PhD in Social Anthropology at SOAS. Her academic background is in Anthropology and Middle Eastern Studies (Manchester University) and Religious Studies (Lancaster University), and she also trained as a RE teacher (Cambridge). Apart from academia and education, Alyaa has also worked as a community organiser and interfaith facilitator for over 15 years, with a particular interest in the Muslim-Jewish encounter. She currently serves as an Officer of the British Association of Islamic Studies (BRAIS) and is Book Reviews Editor for the Journal of Education in Muslim Societies (JEMS).

**Dr Daniella Shaw** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Birkbeck, University of London. Her PhD in Sociology, from the University of Surrey, explored how religion-oriented diasporic communities adapt to an impermanent modernity, entailing field research with faith communities in the UK and USA. In her research, Daniella seeks to rethink a set of underlying assumptions about characteristics, historicity and dialectical relationships between the 'traditional' and the 'modern' within late modernity. Daniella worked for many years in the field of intercultural and interreligious understanding, running programmes and liaising with policymakers on issues of community relations.

[d.shaw@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:d.shaw@bbk.ac.uk)

**Dr Arndt Emmerich** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Max Weber Institute for Sociology at the University of Heidelberg, studying intercultural and interreligious encounters between Jews and Muslims in Germany. Prior to that, he was a Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity and a Research Officer with the Changing Structures of Islamic Authority project at the University of Oxford. Using a variety of qualitative research methods, he has focused on generational and institutional transformations within mosque communities in Germany and Britain.

[arndt.emmerich@mwi.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:arndt.emmerich@mwi.uni-heidelberg.de)

**Dr Élodie Druetz** defended her PhD thesis in political science at Sciences Po Paris and INED in 2020. It focused on the experiences of racialization and the politicization of university graduates of sub-Saharan origin in Paris and



London. She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Strasbourg (SAGE). ([elodie.druez@sciencespo.fr](mailto:elodie.druez@sciencespo.fr))

Dr Ben Gidley is a Senior Lecturer in Psychosocial Studies at Birkbeck, University of London, and an associate of the Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism. He researches racism, antisemitism, diversity and urban politics in Europe. He is the co-author of *Turbulent Times: The British Jewish Community Today* (2010, with Keith Kahn-Harris) and co-editor of *Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe: A Shared Story?* (2017, with James Renton). ([b.gidley@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:b.gidley@bbk.ac.uk))



## 6.1 The State of Jewish Tangible Heritage in Ukraine: Buildings, Monuments, Museums and Libraries

Safra Lecture Theatre

S  
6

### A Joint BIAJS-JHSE Panel

Researchers, teachers and library/museum professionals working in Ukraine will join this hybrid event remotely to offer an introduction to the rich field of Jewish material heritage in Ukraine: buildings, monuments, museums, artefacts, and library treasures. Much of this vast treasure trove is acutely endangered by the present war. Come and hear about the amazing work by our Jewish Studies colleagues working under conditions of war to safeguard and document Jewish heritage.

The round-table is organised jointly by the British and Irish Association of Jewish Studies (BIAJS) and the Jewish Historical Society of England (JHSE).

### **Eugeny Kotlyar**, Jewish Heritage in Independent Ukraine: Discovery, Study, Preservation and Presentation – Thirty Years of Experience and Challenges

Dr **Eugeny Kotlyar** is Professor in the Department of Art History and the Department of Monumental Painting of Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts. ([eugeny.kotlyar@gmail.com](mailto:eugeny.kotlyar@gmail.com))

### **Sofia Dyak**, Jewish Heritage and Diversity in Lviv

Dr Sofia Dyak is Director of the Center for Urban History of East Central Europe in Lviv ([s.dyak@lvivcenter.org](mailto:s.dyak@lvivcenter.org); [www.lvivcenter.org](http://www.lvivcenter.org))

### **Maksym Martyn**, Judaica in Lviv: Underestimated Heritage

Dr **Maksym Martyn** is Chair of the Judaica Department at the Lviv Museum of the History of Religion. ([maks.gevara@gmail.com](mailto:maks.gevara@gmail.com))



## Vitaly Chernovianenko, Ukraine's Hebraica Collections in International Perspective

Dr Vitaly Chernovianenko is a Senior research fellow in the Judaica Department, Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, and President of the Ukrainian Association for Jewish Studies: He is chief editor of *Judaica Ukrainica*. ([chernovianenko@gmail.com](mailto:chernovianenko@gmail.com); [president@uajs.org.ua](mailto:president@uajs.org.ua); [uajs.org.ua](http://uajs.org.ua))

## Nadia Ufimtseva, Judaica Objects in Ukrainian Museums

Nadia Ufimtseva (Department of History at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. ([nadia.ufimtseva@gmail.com](mailto:nadia.ufimtseva@gmail.com)))

Interlocutors: **Mia Spiro** and **Eva Frojmovic**

### 6.2 Failure, Crisis, Redemption: Kabbalistic and Polemic Temporalities

Council Room

#### Hillel Feuerstein, Regressive Words – Failing Cosmogony

Friedrich Nietzsche made the following determination: 'Mankind likes to put questions of origins and beginnings out of his mind'. The very essence of the *Zohar* seems to contend this declaration however, as it makes every effort to do just that. In the unique writing style characteristic of Kabbalistic and Mithopoetic works, the authors determinedly search for a path through the tough exterior concealing the secrets and truths behind the lofty moment of creation. One of the primary theories presented and often repeated throughout the *Zohar*, describes the original moment of creation as a product of a series of prior failures at the attempt to create a proper and sustainable world. Depicted through a series of imagery, the initially exalted harmonious process of creation is reduced to a frustrating progression of trial and error.

The innovative concept of Theogony and Cosmogony introduces God's labor pains, describing the difficulties involved in the extrication from loneliness and related struggles; a linguistical pattern is used by the *Zohar* to deep-dive under the shallow surface of the waters of existence into the stormy depths of the primordial era. The syntactical structure of *Hysteron proteron* allows the



*Zohar* to turn its focus to exploring the initial moment of creation. An inverted order of the rhetorical structure is also used as a tool to reflect the content's reversal toward the realm of primeval existence. The linguistic shape first outlines the final successful act of creation, and from there we are given a glimpse into the ancient failures that preceded it. The *Zohar* reserves the use of more linear linguistic styles for occasions when the final moments of creation were not a result of any prior difficulties or failures. Thus, the space to gaze backward and study the less successful moments that led up to the final determinations of God appear only in times of divine crisis.

**Hillel Feuerstein** received his MA (Cum Laude) in Jewish Thought, from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, with a scholarship for excellence from the Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies. He continued his studies in the field of Jewish thought at Bar-Ilan University, as a PhD Student, under the supervision of Prof. Daniel Abrams, with the support of The President's Scholarship Program for Outstanding Doctoral Fellows. His thesis aims to deal with 'The Secret of Creation in the *Zohar*: A Critical Inquiry with Editions of Selected Texts'. His MA thesis: *The book of Vanished Letters: An Annotated Critical Edition with Introduction*, is due to be published in the near future with Cherub press. ([hillel.feuerstein@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:hillel.feuerstein@mail.huji.ac.il))

### **Hartley Lachter**, *Temporal Spirals: Cosmic Cycles and Jewish History in Medieval Kabbalah*

Medieval kabbalistic texts from the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries advance a conception of historical time that defies the simple binary between "circular" and "linear." The biblical doctrine of sabbatical years and the Jubilee is recast as a grand temporal cosmic pattern in which the universe is renewed in as a new "world" every seven thousand years, and annihilated after fifty thousand years. According to this doctrine, each *shemittah* or cycle of seven thousand years, is governed by one of the seven lower *sefirot*, which gives each world a unique character. Most kabbalists who ascribe to this doctrine claim that the current world cycle is governed by the attribute of *Din*, or strict divine judgement. All of the tragic events of Jewish history are attributed to this aspect of the present eon. Yet, the kabbalists claim, history is moving in a better direction, with messianic redemption near at hand. Future worlds will be vastly superior versions of reality, devoid of collective Jewish tragedy. And Jewish souls, they claim, will be reincarnated to enjoy these new worlds. This



paper will explore how the kabbalistic discourse of cosmic cycles reflects an attempt by some medieval Jews to make sense of their own historical moment. By claiming such an esoteric tradition, medieval kabbalists suggested that Kabbalah provides a glimpse behind the veil of history that accounts for the misfortunes of their present moment, and holds out the promise of a glorious future.

[Hartley Lachter](#) holds a Ph.D from New York University in medieval Kabbalah. He is an associate professor of Religion Studies at Lehigh University, where he holds the Philip and Muriel Berman Chair in Jewish Studies, and serves as the director of the Berman Center for Jewish Studies. He is the author of *Kabbalistic Revolution: Reimagining Judaism in Medieval Spain*, and he is currently working on a monograph on medieval kabbalistic constructions of Jewish history. ([hal611@lehigh.edu](mailto:hal611@lehigh.edu))

### **Miriam Sklarz**, *The scepter shall not depart from Judah... until the coming of Shilo*": Nahmanides's Polemic Regarding the Time of the Messiah's Advent

Jacob's blessing for Judah, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah... until the coming of Shilo" (Gen. 49:10) is one of the most cited verses in the Christian polemic against Judaism. From the earliest days of Christianity, this verse was enlisted to prove that the Messiah has already come, in the person of Jesus.

This paper demonstrates Nahmanides' handling of the Christian claim via his polemical writings (*The Book of Redemption*, *The Book of Dispute*) as well as by the character design of Judah in his Biblical commentary.

[Prof. Miriam Sklarz](#) is Head of the Bible and Rabbinic Literature Program at Orot Israel College, and Chair of the Bible Department at Hemdat College. Her research focuses on Jewish Medieval Biblical Exegesis and Biblical Poetry. ([miryamsk@orot.ac.il](mailto:miryamsk@orot.ac.il))



**Ofer Livnat**, Teaching and Disseminating Computations Creatively: Medieval Jewish Calendar Manuals

S  
6

I am currently conducting research on 12-14<sup>th</sup> century manuscripts which are essentially Jewish calendar manuals known as “Sifrei Ibbur” or “Evronot.” These manuals, composed in northern France, Ashkenaz, and later in Italy as well, teach the rules and computations of the calendar, enable better understanding of the calendar, and provide a guide for producing a correct Jewish calendar. This is an interesting genre of calendar literature in that it is not the most advanced scholarly and scientific work on the calendar, but on the other hand it is more that just a practical calendar or even a rudimentary explanation of the calendar. Over time these treatises gained great popularity, with numerous editions and manuscripts appearing in the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, these original early manuscripts have yet to be properly studied.

I propose to provide at the seminar an overview of the manuscripts I am researching, including where and when they were composed, and other features of the manuscripts. I will then highlight some of the key components of these treatises, and what unique techniques they used to teach about the calendar and engage their readers.

**Ofer Livnat** is currently studying (part time) for a PhD in Jewish studies at University College London under the supervision of Prof. Sacha Stern. Ofer is a graduate of the Eretz Hemdah Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies in Jerusalem and teaches in programs for training rabbis and Dayanim (rabbinical judges). Ofer also serves as a Dayan on the Sephardi Beth of London and lectures on Tanach at the Jerusalem College. ([ofer.livnat.18@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ofer.livnat.18@ucl.ac.uk))

**Shalom Morris**, Miriam Mendes Belisario's *Sabbath Evenings at Home* and Sephardic Print Culture in mid-nineteenth century England

Miriam Menes Belisario published *Sabbath Evenings at Home* in two parts in London in 1856. She did so at a time of increasing female scholarship in the Anglo Jewish community. Unlike with others, the work reflects the views of Sephardic traditionalists in their debates with religious reformers. This paper



explores Belisario's influences, why she synthesised their views into a work meant for children, and how the work itself reflects Belisario's own life.

**Shalom Morris** is pursuing a PhD at King's College London, studying the formation of Anglo-American Sephardic religious ideology during communal debates over religious reform in the mid-nineteenth century. Shalom is also the rabbi of London's historic Bevis Marks Synagogue.

### **Sari R. Alfi-Nissan**, *The Light Within Me: Celebrating the Self Through Jewish Holidays in the iGen Era*

In recent years, aspiration and positive psychology discourses have been integrated into everyday life, and school curriculums. This study follows the celebration of Jewish holidays in Israeli public elementary schools to demonstrate how global psychology discursive practices are translated and embedded into everyday religious rituals. The literature addresses the popularization of psy-discourses as reflecting social processes of individualization and neoliberal values. While global neoliberal ideologies and practices have been massively criticized in sociological inquiries, it is important to examine how local configurations of culture and religious particularities (re)shape global discourses. In contrast to the claim that neoliberalism diminishes collective practices, the study shows how celebrating Jewish holidays through popular psychology discourse in Israeli public-school education strengthens both the individualistic and the collective-communal while altering the cultural meaning of religious symbols. We followed Jewish holidays celebrations in a qualitative study using ethnographic research in "Narkisim" elementary school and content analysis of schools' websites, teachers' blogs, and Ministry of Education programs. We argue that celebrating Jewish holidays through psy-discourses promotes the worship of an individualistic self, while glorifying religious ethno-national symbols and narratives. Findings show how by using religious symbols as metaphors for the "self", teachers promote future-orientation, self-reflection and "positive thinking". At the same time, findings show how the rebranding of religious symbols and narratives make them more accessible to iGeneration young individuals. The study elucidates both the path of neoliberal discourses and of religious practices in late modernity through the reframing of Jewish symbols in Israeli education.



**Sari R. Alfi-Nissan** is a PhD candidate at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Bar-Ilan University, Israel. Sari's research focuses on Jewish-Israeli identity in the iGeneration era. She graduated the master's degree program at BIU with highest honors, was valedictorian of her class, and was granted excellence scholarships for her M.A and PhD studies. In 2021, she was a visiting postgraduate researcher at the University of Kent, UK. Sari is an experienced lecturer for postgraduates and undergraduates, teaching various methodological courses, using qualitative and quantitative methods. Sari is also a writer. Her first fiction novel became a bestseller.

([sari.alfi-nissan@biu.ac.il](mailto:sari.alfi-nissan@biu.ac.il); [www.sarialfi.com](http://www.sarialfi.com))

### **Nadia Beider**, *Jewish School Choice in Europe*

Jewish education has traditionally been a central concern of Jewish communities. In recent decades communal resources have been directed towards establishing new Jewish schools, both in Eastern and Western Europe, and enrolment in Jewish schools has risen significantly, yet little is known about the dynamics Jewish school choice across Europe. This paper draws on data from the 2018 European Union Fundamental Rights Agency survey of Jews in Europe to gain a fuller understanding of the factors affecting Jewish educational choices. What motivates parents to send their children to Jewish schools? Are they primarily interested in fostering a strong Jewish identity? Do they want to provide their children with the opportunity to mix with Jews or beyond the community? What is the impact of more general concerns such as academic standards, cost and convenience? How does antisemitism affect school choice? This paper will analyse variations across Europe and the relationship between parental Jewish identity and socio-demographic characteristics and school choice. In doing so, it will contribute to our understanding of Jewish identity formation and the topic of school choice more broadly.

**Nadia Beider** is a doctoral student in the Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a Visiting Research Scholar at the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University. ([nadia.beider@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:nadia.beider@mail.huji.ac.il))



## Liat Steir-Livny, Israeli-Jews in the Current Health Crisis: Covid-19 and Holocaust Representations in Israeli Media and Social Media

The Holocaust was and remains a central trauma in Israel's national consciousness. The memory of the trauma has not faded over the years; on the contrary, Holocaust representations and the public discourse on the Holocaust have only grown stronger in recent decades. Research indicates that the Holocaust memory has a very powerful presence in Israel and is a cross-generational defining trait of the Jewish population. Scholars claim that the Israeli media, educational and cultural arenas as well as public discourse in Israel frame the Holocaust as a current, ongoing local trauma rather than an event that ended decades ago in another place.

Based on this scholarly work and surveys which indicate that in the Jewish Israeli population, the Holocaust is considered a central event affecting daily life, this talk will discuss how the Covid-19 pandemic is associated with the Holocaust on Israeli media and social media in a way that confirms its deep grasp on the Israeli Jews. It will discuss the ways Israeli politicians have dealt with the pandemic through Holocaust associations, the ways Jewish Israelis have transformed their daily lives during Covid-19 through Holocaust icons in serious and in black humor representations, and the way anti-vaxxers are using Holocaust-related concepts to express their denial of the benefits of Covid-19 immunization, which began in Israel in December 2020. Through texts and narratives in the media and social media the talk will show how Jewish-Israelis imagine the comparisons between the past in the Holocaust and the present under the pandemic and shape Jewish-Israeli interpretations of time through individual and communal performances.

Liat Steir-Livny is an Associate Professor in the Department of Culture at Sapir Academic College. She also teaches in the Cultural Studies MA program and in the Department of Literature, Language, and the Arts at the Open University of Israel. Her research focuses on Holocaust commemoration in Israel from the 1940s until the present. It combines Holocaust studies, Memory Studies, cultural Studies, Trauma studies and Film studies. She is the author of many articles and five books. ([liatsteirlivny@gmail.com](mailto:liatsteirlivny@gmail.com); [www.liatsteirlivny.com](http://www.liatsteirlivny.com))



## Anat Feldman, Religion, Health, and Politics: Charedi Society in Israel During the COVID-19 Period

The coronavirus lockdowns and social distancing resulted in a particularly harsh blow to the Charedi (ultra-Orthodox) society in Israel. The educational institutions sent the children home to small, crowded apartments. The synagogues which closed and the ban on participation in large-scale events encroached on religious and communal life. The connection with teachers, rabbis, and communal leaders was weakened.

In addition, little exposure to the general media and the lack of trust in the secular government establishment led the Charedim to oppose the Ministry of Health directives regarding the prevention of coronavirus. The Charedi community continued to behave according to a different agenda from general society. Most educational institutions did not close immediately, unlike those in general society. Weddings, funerals, and other communal events continued to take place, without social distancing or mask wearing. In this situation, many people became sick with coronavirus. The percentage of those who became sick or died from corona was far higher in the ultra-Orthodox community than in the general population.

My lecture will examine the link between health and ultra-Orthodox politics. I will focus on the questions: how were government decisions influenced, if at all, by political pressure from the ultra-Orthodox parties to prevent lockdowns and social distancing? How did the rabbis mediate the government directives to their communities? And how did the ultra-Orthodox population behave in regard to the restrictions of social distancing and closure of educational and religious institutions?

Dr. Anat Feldman is a senior lecturer at Achva Academic College, Israel. She is an expert in the Charedi society of Israel. ([Anatf@live.achva.ac.il](mailto:Anatf@live.achva.ac.il))



## WEDNESDAY 13 July

SESSION 7

9:00–10:30

7.1 Rethinking Time and Space Participating in  
the Second Temple Period

River Room

**Charlotte Hempel**, Qumran in Time and Place – Beyond the  
Watershed Paradigm

This paper addresses the conference theme of time in relation to place with reference to the evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls. The question of the times and places of the origins of the sectarian movement behind the Dead Sea Scrolls is often addressed with reference to accounts of community emergence and communal life in the Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls. Recent decades have presented us with a much larger literary evidence base as well as important shifts in the assessment of the archaeological picture represented at Khirbet Qumran. In this paper I will attempt to strip our thinking right back to the basics of what constitutes communal life by asking a series of questions:

1. Where and how did things start and evolve?
2. What kinds of shared activities can be extrapolated from the available evidence?
3. How distinctive are the locations and activities represented in the finds from Qumran?

Rather than starting with a sense of the distinctiveness of the site and occupants of Khirbet Qumran and the rich literary heritage associated with them I will argue, in conclusion, that streams of continuity embed the evidence from Qumran in a series of broader chronological, geographic, social, literary and scribal developments.

**Charlotte Hempel** is Professor of Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Judaism and currently also Head of the School of Philosophy, Theology and Religion at the University of Birmingham, UK. Charlotte is a specialist on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Recent publications include with



George Brooke (eds), the *T&T Clark Companion to the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2019), *The Community Rules from Qumran: A Commentary* (2020), and "Ezra and the Dead Sea Scrolls," forthcoming in *BAR* in 2022. The latter paper benefitted from an award by the UK's Arts and Humanities Council (AHRC) to work on a project entitled *Ezra's Legacy and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Law and Narratives of Exclusion*. As part of this project Charlotte founded The Second Temple Early Career Academy, a Virtual Common Room of global reach. Charlotte has also served as Executive Editor of the international journal *Dead Sea Discoveries* from 2012-2018, was President of the British Association of Jewish Studies in 2016 and currently serves as President of the Society for Old Testament Study for 2022. ([C.HEMPEL@bham.ac.uk](mailto:C.HEMPEL@bham.ac.uk))

### **Naomi Hadad and Eshbal Ratzon, A New Edition of 4Q319**

4Q319, one of the Dead Sea Scrolls, is a compendium of several calendrical lists, which seeks to synchronize four cycles of time - signs, priestly watches, sabbatical years and jubilees – into one distinctive 294-year "super calendar." It is copied on the same scroll as 4Q259, a copy of Serekh HaYahad. However, there is an academic debate whether the calendar is a continuation of the Serekh, suggesting a close connection between regulatory and calendrical matters at Qumran, or an independent composition coincidentally copied together. With the use of new multispectral images provided by the Scrolls Unit of the Israel Antiquities Authority, as well as modern computerized tools, we are working towards a new material and digital reconstruction of the fragmentary scroll. The reconstruction we propose can shed light on our knowledge of the calendar at Qumran as well as the specific research question of when the day begins according to the Qumran sect and other questions related to time.

**Naomi Hadad** holds a BA in Archeology of the Land of Israel from Ariel University. Working as a research assistant to Dr. Eshbal Ratzon for the past year and a half, she is in the process of co-authoring a new reconstruction of a Qumran calendar using digital tools and advanced methodologies.

**Dr. Eshbal Ratzon** is a senior lecturer at the Cohn Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and the Department of Jewish Philosophy and Talmud, Tel Aviv University. She studies the Dead Sea Scrolls and ancient Jewish science.



## Joan Taylor, Gender, Time and Space in the Second Temple and Early Synagogue Complexes: Reflections on Josephus

There remains a question about whether ancient synagogue halls of the Second Temple period were divided in terms of gendered space, as we find in later synagogues where the *mehitza* wall was increasingly common. The question is also related to practice in the 'Court of the Women' in the Second Temple. In this discussion the evidence of Josephus will be analysed, to argue that when describing the Court of the Women as a *gunaikōnitis* Josephus resourced a widely-understood category of Hellenistic domestic space, but this was not a female-exclusive zone. In a patriarchal world, a man's exclusion from any area of his house was exceptional, and only connected with protecting marriageable virgins. The term *gunaikōnitis* is generally a space *inclusive* of women (and children) along with men, in contrast to the *andrōn*, which was a space *exclusive* to men, used for meals and for older boys' education. The terms are not equal. This in turns helps us understand Josephus' concept of the synagogue hall space, in which men, women and children congregate together on Sabbath days, as conceptually also a *gunaikōnitis*. By contrast, there is a male-exclusive zone, corresponding to both the Court of the Israelites in the Temple and the Beth Midrash within the synagogue complex, which conceptually parallels the *andrōn*. As such, we need to imagine ancient synagogue activity on the Sabbath as more open and family-friendly than is often the case.

Joan E. Taylor is Professor of Christian Origins and Second Temple Judaism in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at King's College London. She works in history, literature and archaeology and is particularly interested in the study of women and gender. Her books include: *The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism* (1997); *Jewish Women Philosophers of First-Century Alexandria - Philo's 'Therapeutae' Reconsidered* (2006); *The Essenes, the Scrolls and the Dead Sea* (2014) and, with David Hay, *Philo of Alexandria: On the Contemplative Life* (Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series, 2021). ([joan.taylor@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:joan.taylor@kcl.ac.uk))



### **Joseph Citron**, In Search of Lost Time: Paradigms of Time in Isaiah Horowitz's Shelah and the Kabbalistic Literature of the Early Modern Period

In this paper I explore how early modern European Kabbalists related to time through the themes of suffering, redemption and time 'wasting'. Writing about time in a manner which paralleled Christian pietists' emphasis on never losing a second of productive moments in daily life, the idea of never wasting a minute of time played a central role in how Isaiah Horowitz regarded the purpose of a Jew's life and provides an insight into how 'religious' time should be regarded through the lens of Kabbalah. Through meditation and cleaving to God, the kabbalists believed that the constraints of linear time could be transcended and that time was a concept which could be hurried, slowed and bypassed altogether through human activity. Theodicy, for example, became less problematic if time and lifespan lost its value in favour of what was achieved within it. As Israel's endurance of suffering hastened the coming of the messiah, it had a pivotal role in human redemption by shortening the required distance to their final destination. Similarly, through an examination of Horowitz's shifting attitudes regarding the time wasting of the early pietists mentioned in the Talmud spending their day in prayer (evidenced from his notebooks), we see the development of a conception that transformed traditional notions of time and space and proved fundamental to the pietism being formulated in the crucible of 17th century Europe.

**Joseph Citron** gained a BA (1<sup>st</sup> Class Hons.) in History from the University of Manchester (2014) and went on to do an MA at the Dept. of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at UCL (2015) followed by a PhD in the same department (2019). He is now an associate fellow of UCL. His PhD was recently published: *Isaiah Horowitz's Shnei Luhot Haberit and the Pietistic Transformation of Jewish Theology* (Brill 2021). His research interests include the relationship between law and mysticism, piety across cultures and the formation of Jewish Orthodoxy. He recently presented papers at BAJIS (2021) and the AJS (2021). ([joseph.citron.14@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:joseph.citron.14@ucl.ac.uk))



## **Kate Miriam Loewenthal**, Haredi Women, the Pandemic, and Time

A significant feature of haredi life is the goal to have a large family. Large haredi families offer a unique experience of time to their members. This study focuses on mothers, and analyses interviews with haredi women in North London. The group of interviewees are selected for large family size (five or more children under the age of 18, with at least 2 of primary school age and under). The government ruling in the earliest stages of the pandemic was for all to be housebound, with no school attendance.

Empirical studies so far show that this increased demand on women more than on men, apparently for most social groups, as a result of heavier childcare responsibilities for mothers.

In this study interviewees are asked to recall the pandemic period and to describe whether and how their experience of time was affected, in practical, psychological and spiritual terms. They are asked to compare pre-pandemic, early pandemic, and current conditions. Some attention is also given to the issue of using both Jewish and secular calendars.

Brief comparison will be offered with studies of the experience of mothers in other religious/social groups, paying particular attention to culturally and religiously specific demands involving religious activity, family size and the experience of time.

**Kate Miriam Loewenthal** is emeritus Professor of Psychology at Royal Holloway London University. She also holds honorary professorial posts at University of Glyndwr, University of Chester, and New York University in London. She is the author of several books on the psychology of religion and related fields, and many articles. Her academic teaching and research have been focused on the psychology of religion, with her research focused particularly on religion and mental health in the Jewish community and other minority groups.  
([c.loewenthal@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:c.loewenthal@rhul.ac.uk))

## **Naftali Loewenthal**, Times of Prayer in Habad Hasidism in Spiritual and Social Context

Times of prayer can mean both the duration of prayer, and when it begins. From its earliest generations, the Hasidic movement embraced distinctive approaches to prayer which often excited the ire of the



Mitnagedim. The Habad school emphasizes systems of contemplation before or during the prayer which might both lengthen the duration of prayer and also delay its commencement beyond the usual halakhic category of 'sof zeman tefilah', a concept which applies only to men.

Through this kind of practice, what spiritual 'effects' are being sought by the Hasidim? How is it understood in halakhic terms? What social effects are there, as regards the local synagogue community, and the wife and children of the contemplative?

It is planned to conduct interviews with the wives/children of men who engage in contemplative prayer, to ascertain their responses to this spiritual practice.

For the Orthodox, female prayer is recognized but considered to be beyond most of the time constraints which apply to males. The question of spiritual Hasidic prayer on the part of women rather than men will also be addressed, which again raises the question of time in the context of family life.

Further, as described by Lindsey Taylor-Gurhartz, in *Challenge and Conformity: The Religious Lives of Orthodox Jewish Women* (2021), a significant haredi female prayer practice is the extensive saying of *Tehilim* (Psalms), individually and in groups. In the life of a busy haredi woman, how does *Tehilim* recital relate to time?

**Naftali Loewenthal** (husband of Kate Miriam) gained his B.A. and PhD at the Dept. of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at UCL many years ago. He is a Lecturer (Teaching) in the same department, teaching courses on Maimonides, Hasidism and Jewish Philosophy. He has published two books – *Communicating the Infinite, the emergence of the Habad School* (University of Chicago Press, 1991), and *Hasidism Beyond Modernity, Essays in Habad Thought and History* (Littman Library and University of Liverpool Press, 2020) - and many articles. His current research fields include Habad approaches to Zionism and to contemplative prayer. ([n.loewenthal@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:n.loewenthal@ucl.ac.uk))



**J.J. Kimche**, *A Revolution in Time: The Historicist Moment in Jewish Philosophy*

S  
7

Jewish philosophy during the Medieval and early Modern era was undertaken in a largely ahistorical manner. This changed in the middle third of the nineteenth century, during which European Jewish thinkers came under the influence of the ideas currently fashionable within German academia. Exposed to Hegel and his successors, a small cadre of Jewish thinkers began to reconfigure their religious patrimony along historicist contours. Practically speaking, these thinkers began to ascribe theological and religious significance to the grand sweep of Jewish history, and viewing Jewish history as the central arena for the instantiation of important Jewish concepts. This turn towards history, as has been noted, constituted a revolutionary development in Jewish thought.

This lecture will explore the development and interdependence of three prominent Jewish thinkers during the 1830s and 1840s, each of whom broke new ground in Jewish intellectual history through grounding their overarching theories of Judaism on a distinctly historicist – and partially Hegelian – view of Jewish history. Samson Raphael Hirsch interpreted the vicissitudes of Jewish history as a natural consequence of the Jews' universalist mission as spiritual ambassadors at the heart of global culture, and in the process creatively reimagined the entire ethos of Jewish exilic existence. Heinrich Graetz took the significant step of declaring that *"the totality of Judaism is discernible only through its history"*, thereby centralising the diachronic plane as the arena for the unfolding of the 'Jewish Idea'. Finally, Nachman Krochmal, the great *Maskil* of the Galician region, employed quasi-Hegelian dialectical frameworks regarding historical development in order to explicate the unique standing of the Jewish nation within world history.

Through an exploration of these three thinkers, this lecture will propose this notion of a 'historicist moment' in Jewish thought and consider this category's historical, methodological, and heuristic significance.

**J.J. Kimche** is currently a PhD candidate at Harvard University, where he specialises in Modern Jewish intellectual history. He was born and raised in



London, and received his undergraduate degree from Shalem College, Jerusalem, where he double-majored in Western Philosophy and Jewish Thought. His essays and translations have been published in both popular and academic forums, and his first academic book – a translation and commentary of an important nineteenth century work of Jewish thought – is due to be published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2023. ([jkimche@g.harvard.edu](mailto:jkimche@g.harvard.edu))

### **Karolina Sierzputowska**, *The Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition and the Politics of Memory*

The two last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a radical transformation of Anglo-Jewish history due to the mass migration of Eastern European Jewry. The negative responses to migration within English society caused anxiety over a carefully constructed Jewish image and the necessity for the legitimization of the native community's presence in Great Britain. The Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition held in 1887 was part of the Jewish politics of memory that shows the new direction of the Jewish historical narrative. My aim is to present how narrative strategies of various texts produced during the exhibition shaped the communal idea of the Jewish present and past. The analysis of the exhibition catalogue and associated texts makes it possible to trace the Jewish periodization of modern history as well as highlighted moments that constituted Jewish history in England. Jews transferred a contemporary conceptual framework to the description of pre-modern England by stressing modern terms (e.g., 'capital' and 'capitalist') in historical narratives. The use of such terminology aimed to expand the recipient's perception with the help of well-known conceptual categories. The texts created the illusion of a parallel between the Jewish contribution to the economy of a feudal country and Jewish participation in modern economic developments based predominantly on capital which, according to the catalogue narrative, had always been part of Jewish wealth. Thus my aim is to show the fluidity of past and present in the Jewish politics of memory during the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition.

**Karolina Sierzputowska** graduated in Jewish Studies at Jagiellonian University. Since 2020, she is a PhD student at the Doctoral School in the Humanities at Jagiellonian University in the Department of History. Her doctoral project concerns the Jewish entanglement with British colonialism and imperialism as well as anti-Jewish stereotypes based on the racial discourse of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. ([karolina.sierzputowska@doctoral.uj.edu.pl](mailto:karolina.sierzputowska@doctoral.uj.edu.pl))



## Karen Skinazi, Narrative Time: The Rise of Mizrahi and Sephardi Historical Fiction

“The Jews,” wrote historian Yosef Haim Yerushalmi in *Zakhor*, “have the reputation of being at once the most historically oriented of peoples and as possessing the longest and most tenacious of memories.” Yerushalmi then cautioned, “We should at least want to know what kind of history the Jews have valued, what, out of their past, they chose to remember, and how they preserved, transmitted, and revitalized that which was recalled.” Considering the bulk of Anglo-American historical fiction—fiction that has set out to preserve, transmit, and revitalize a collective Jewish past—that has centred on a European experience, we should not be surprised by the “Ashkenormative” nature of Jewish culture in the United States and Britain. Until recently, the past chosen to be remembered has favoured the shtetls of the Pale and the trauma of the Holocaust.

In the last thirty years, however, there has been a significant emerging body of fiction imaginatively retelling the histories of Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews. This literature often reaches back hundreds of years: for instance, *The Weight of Ink* begins in the present day before shifting to the Sephardic community that moved from Amsterdam to London in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and *The Cry of the Peacock*, opening in 1982, transports us to 18<sup>th</sup>-century Isfahan. Other times, it recounts a modern history, as in Carol Isaacs’s graphic memoir, *The Wolf of Baghdad*. In my talk, I will examine the role this new literature plays in filling a critical gap in Jewish collective memory and thus reorienting Jewish history.

Dr. Karen E. H. Skinazi is a Senior Lecturer and the Director of Liberal Arts at the University of Bristol in the UK. She is the author of *Women of Valor: Orthodox Jewish Troll Fighters, Crime Writers, and Rock Stars in Contemporary Literature and Culture* (Rutgers University Press, 2018), which was awarded Honorable Mention for the Canadian Association for American Studies’ book prize. Karen writes widely on women’s literature and has published a critical edition of *Marion: The Story of an Artist’s Model* by Winnifred Eaton/Onoto Watanna, the first Asian North American novelist (McGill-Queen’s UP, 2012). Karen is also the co-chair of the West Midlands Nisa Nashim Jewish-Muslim Women’s Network Book Group, and she is currently working on a project examining the productive interface between Muslim and Jewish women’s lives, literature, and activism. ([karen.skinazi@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:karen.skinazi@bristol.ac.uk))



## 7.4 Postgraduate and Early Career Research: Developing an Academic Career

Council Room

A Round-Table

**Steven Samols** (Thesis Completion and Grant Applications)

([ssamols@usc.edu](mailto:ssamols@usc.edu))

**Rebekah van Sant-Clark** (Thesis Completion and Grant Applications)

([rebekah.vansant-clark@oriel.ox.ac.uk](mailto:rebekah.vansant-clark@oriel.ox.ac.uk))

**Lindsey Taylor-Guthartz** (Publishing the First Monograph)

([lindsey.taylor-guthartz@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:lindsey.taylor-guthartz@manchester.ac.uk))

**Hannah Ewence** and **Mia Spiro** (Tenure-Track Positions and Teaching Fellowships)

([h.ewence@chester.ac.uk](mailto:h.ewence@chester.ac.uk); [Mia.Spiro@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Mia.Spiro@glasgow.ac.uk))

## 7.5 Jews and Progressive Activism from Liberal to Illiberal Times, 1893–1939

Safra Lecture Theatre

**Ellery Gillian Weil**, *The 'Old Woman' and the New: The Progressive Era and the Rise of the Jewish Women's Movement*

This paper traces the beginnings of the transnational Jewish women's movement to redefine Jewish womanhood, led by educated, elite Jewish women at the turn of the twentieth century. The paper explores the transnational alliance building that formed the Jewish women's movement, which set its manifesto at the 1893 Jewish Women's Congress and expanded and diversified its activities throughout the Progressive Era. Although started in the United States, the movement quickly expanded into Western Europe, eventually broadening its sphere of influence to Eastern Europe and South



America. The paper analyses the hurdles the movement's alliance-building faced, including concerns from Orthodox women that women's empowerment was incompatible with devout religious practice, and hesitation from the emergent gentile women's movement, which had a history of anti-Judaism rooted in antisemitic stereotypes of Judaism as repressive to women.

The paper discusses how the movement drew on Progressive Era values to engage with marginalized communities, including the inherent double-marginality of being founded by Jewish women, albeit elite ones. The movement directly engaged with a variety of Progressive initiatives, including the Settlement House movement, anti-sex-trafficking rescue work, and the growing umbrella of immigrant aid organizations. The formation of this transnational movement was a crucial development in the history of Jewish womanhood prior to the World Wars, but has been previously studied only as disconnected national activist initiatives. Further, though spiritually and intellectually multifaceted, this movement had an overarching aim of defining and promoting the "Jewish New Woman."

**Ellery Gillian Weil** recently submitted her doctoral thesis, "Creating the New Jewish Woman: Alliance-Building and the Jewish Women's Movement at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," supervised by Francois Guesnet, at University College London (UCL). A graduate of the University of Michigan who also holds a Masters' in History from UCL, her research interests sit at the intersection between early twentieth century History, Jewish Studies, and Women's Studies. She has written articles on Constance Rothschild Battersea's Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women (JAPGW), and the Union of Jewish Women. She is currently serving as a historical advisor and contributor on a forthcoming documentary about the history of the New West End Synagogue and the women of London's Jewish aristocracy. ([ellery.weil.15@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ellery.weil.15@ucl.ac.uk))

**Paul J. Weinbaum**, *Jewish Internationalism and Public Health: Ludwig Rajchman, The League of Nations Health Section and the Creation of a Transnational Health Organization 1919-1939*

Traditional scholarship on the League of Nations concludes that the organization was a failure because it did not prevent the outbreak of World War II. This judgement is based solely on an evaluation of the political



activities of the League and overlooks its other important endeavors. Perhaps the most successful of these efforts in the period 1919-1939 was the work of the Health Section led by Dr. Ludwig Rajchman. Rajchman was born to a wealthy and assimilated Jewish family in Warsaw in 1881. He was inculcated with traditional Jewish values including the importance of education and community, and throughout his life harbored strong socialist and internationalist views.

Rajchman's Health Section initiated an international system of public health programs including the control of epidemic diseases, the development of effective disease treatments, and the standardization of laboratory testing. Rajchman also forged partnerships with private charitable foundations such as the Rockefeller Foundation which provided financial support for international medical education and scientific meetings between medical experts from different nations. Rajchman also played a pivotal role in the founding of UNICEF and the WHO in the post-World War II period.

Drawing on primary source material such as the League archives in Geneva, the Rockefeller Collection in New York, and Rajchman's personal journals and letters, this paper demonstrates how Rajchman channeled his core values and beliefs rooted in his Jewish heritage into the creation and leadership of the Health Section of the League of Nations, the world's first transnational health organization. Rajchman's cultural and political identity also led to his dismissal from the League in 1939 within the context of the rise of antisemitism, and the rightward shift in European political sentiment during the 1930s.

[Paul J Weinbaum](#), MD, MS, MA has been an academic women's health physician for over 30 years. In 2016, he began his training as a professional historian at Duquesne University earning an MA degree in 2019. Paul is currently completing the second year of the PhD program in History at Carnegie Mellon University. Current research centers the Health Section of the League of Nations, the world's first transnational health organization. The focus is on Ludwig Rajchman, the Polish-Jewish physician who led the Health Section from 1919-1939. Paul is expanding his thesis research to include the inter-war and post war international public health activities of Jewish women physicians/scientists from the Soviet Union.



## Peter Bergamin, The Contradictions of Liberal British Zionists: Paul and Romana Goodman as case study

Paul Goodman was a leading figure in British Zionism. He was the Honorary Secretary of the Political Department of the English Zionist Federation, Secretary of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Community, and member of the first B'nai B'rith Lodge in London. He and his wife Romana were embedded in the progressive milieu of liberal British politics in the early twentieth century. Romana was an active feminist, a founding member of both WIZO and the first Women's Lodge of B'nai B'rith in the UK. Like many Anglo-Jews, they initially wanted to combine their liberalism with the promising situation in British Mandatory Palestine, but it was clear by the late 1930s that such a combination would be impossible. Focusing on the first twenty years of the Mandate (1920-1939), and using articles, speeches and reports by and about the Goodmans this paper traces an all-too-familiar-trajectory experienced by much of Anglo-Jewry during the period, one that had begun in 1920 with outright and fervent support of Britain being granted the Palestine Mandate by the League of Nations, but that through *Realpolitik* –, the rise of Fascism and especially Naziism, and continued Arab resistance to a Jewish presence in Palestine and Britain's apparent renegation of its Mandatory obligations as a result – eventually caused the Goodmans to temper their liberal outlook and enthusiasm, as loyalty to their adopted nation turned to disillusionment with its Palestine policy.

Peter Bergamin is Lecturer in Oriental Studies at Mansfield College, University of Oxford and Research Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. He is the author of *The Making of the Israeli Far-Right: Abba Ahimeir and Zionist Ideology* (2020). His current research looks at Britain's withdrawal from the Palestine Mandate. ([peter.bergamin@mansfield.ox.ac.uk](mailto:peter.bergamin@mansfield.ox.ac.uk))



## 8.1 Marriage and Divorce: Halakhah and the Secular State

River Room

S  
8

**Wendy Filer**, Searching for stable legal solutions to personal status across time and legal space: the case of *Lindo v Belisario* (1795-1796)

A secret *kiddushin* ceremony in July 1795 led to an English ecclesiastical court considering and applying for the first time the complex halakhic framework governing the validity of a Jewish marriage. While historians of Anglo-Jewish history have debated the legal and historical implications of this encounter between English ecclesiastical law and halakhah, little attention has been paid to the oscillating legal position of the young Esther Lindo during protracted legal proceedings before the Portuguese Bet Din and the English ecclesiastical court. This paper focuses on the case from Esther's viewpoint to reveal her liminal personal status as she found herself caught between two very different legal systems. It situates her predicament within the legal and cultural context of the late-eighteenth century Spanish and Portuguese Jews Congregation's attitude towards controlling marriage. Applying legal pluralism theory, it analyses the ambiguities in the Christian court's toleration of a minority legal system's rules concerning marriage and uncovers the problems women like Esther encountered in overcoming the gendered legal principles in both legal systems.

**Wendy Filer** has a PhD from King's College London. Her thesis "A Space for Jewish Justice: The Mahamad's Court of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation of London, 1721-1868" focuses on civil debt disputes recorded in the community's books of lawsuits, as well as family disputes heard by lay and religious judges within the community, and in non-Jewish courts. She is a qualified (non-practising) solicitor, with a law degree from the University of Oxford. ([wendy.filer@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:wendy.filer@kcl.ac.uk))



## Avishalom Westreich, The Civil Revolution of Jewish Family Law in Israel

This paper is part of a comprehensive examination of what I call "the civil revolution" of Jewish law in Israel and its application to the study of law and religion in modern society.

In recent years I pointed to signs of change within the Israeli rabbinical courts in family matters. These researches included monetary matters (where I demonstrated how rabbinical courts generally adopt modern concepts of equal division of property), child maintenance (where I showed the internal debate within rabbinical courts as regards the mother's obligation to participate equally in child support), and alike. What is striking in these discussions (and debated within academic and public circles) is that most of them show progress toward reducing the gaps between Jewish family law and modern legal system. The paper would propose to define this shift as a *process of diffusion*: that of civil law and values into religious law.

The picture, however, is not yet complete. Further aspects of the process would be discussed in this paper, such as the place of modern values within rabbinic reasoning, for example: the weight of integrity in rabbinic reasoning and the discursive influence of civil law on rabbinical courts in this matter. In addition, the paper would discuss meta-legal questions regarding this process, for example: How can this process be explained hermeneutically? And what role does the unique sociological and political structure of Israeli society and its legal system play in this dramatic process?

Avishalom Westreich is an Associate Professor of Jewish Law, Family Law, and Jurisprudence, at the College of Law and Business in Ramat Gan, Israel, a Research Fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute, Jerusalem, and an Honorary Research Fellow at Manchester University. He was a Visiting Scholar at Harvard Law School and several other institutions. His research focuses on Talmudic law and on modern family law, mainly marriage, divorce (in particular: the *agunah* problem), and reproduction. He published two books and more than 40 articles. Westreich's teaching areas include Jewish Law, Family Law, and Philosophy of Law. ([avishalomw@clb.ac.il](mailto:avishalomw@clb.ac.il))



## Melech Westreich, Coerced Divorce of the Wife: Jewish Law in Tunisia in the Modern Era

I examine the different attitudes of Tunisian legal scholars in the modern era towards the issue of divorcing the wife without a legal ground, which shapes the status of the wife during her marriage. I introduce the three main legal streams in Jewish law that were formed in the middle ages: the Ashkenazy, which rejected arbitrary divorce and strongly restricted the causes for divorce, flourishing in a Christian environment; the Eastern, which permitted arbitrary divorce, flourishing in an Islamic environment; and the Sephardic, which took a midway course, developing in a mixed cultural environment.

After the French gained control over Tunisia, in 1881, they reorganized the structure of the rabbinical courts, restricting its scope of jurisdiction. At the same time, French culture and the establishment of Alliance Israélite Universelle schools in Tunisia, began to influence the Jewish communities, especially in the capital Tunis. In Jerba, however, the dominant halachic community in southern Tunisia, rabbinic leaders blocked successfully the influence of French culture. I show that contrary to our expectation, in the capital Tunis the court continued to follow the eastern tradition and permitted arbitrary divorce, whereas the rabbinical court of Jerba opposed it strongly and struggled to implement this attitude in other communities in the south. Finally, I explain this phenomenon based on a halakhic analysis and a socio-historic insight.

([westreic@gmail.com](mailto:westreic@gmail.com))

### 8.2 Power, Authority and Their Limits in Italian Kabbalah

KO.18

## Noam Lev-El, Antiqui et Moderni in Sixteenth-Century Kabbalah: Constructing Authority in a Time of Absent Knowledge

The sixteenth-century is of immense importance in the history of Christian and Islamic lands, as well as in Jewish intellectual and cultural history. At the time that protestant critique shook the power structures of Christian Europe, the Jewish (mostly Sephardic) scholarly elite was facing its own crisis of knowledge. A defining characteristic of sixteenth-century kabbalistic literature—originating in the Mediterranean basin—is the writers' awareness that they are at the



precipice of a new era. In the wake of the Jewish expulsion from the Iberian Peninsula, the Jewish, and in my case kabbalistic, leadership was striving to reorganize. Focusing primarily on the learned discourse of kabbalistic knowledge against the background of historical changes, the paper investigates the varying scholarly power structures, both past and present.

In my paper, I explore the construction of and search for authority in sixteenth-century Kabbalah. This search manifested itself mainly in two forms: first, in face of past tradition and changing circumstances, was the debate of “Antiqui et Moderni” (*Rishonim* and *Ahronim*), which destabilized halakhic and kabbalistic discourses alike; second, as recently presented by Peter Burke, the crisis of knowledge provided ample ground for the rise of authoritative figures. The paper will examine the misgivings concerning the extent of authority attributed to diverse texts and sources, as well as the different models of the construction of personal kabbalistic authority.

**Noam Lev-El** is a Ph.D. candidate (ABD) in the Dept. of Jewish Thought and a Ph.D. Honors Program Fellow in the Mandel School for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is writing his dissertation, titled “Organization Strategies and Genres of Sephardic Kabbalistic Knowledge in the Sixteenth Century Mediterranean,” under the tutelage of Prof. Jonathan Garb. He teaches in The Interdisciplinary Program at the Hebrew University, and his latest article, ‘Kabbalah for Beginners?: Moses Cordovero’s Early Oeuvre and its Initial Reception’, is forthcoming in the *Journal of Jewish Studies*.

### **Eugene D. Matanky**, *Popularizing, Regulating, and Institutionalizing Kabbalah in Early Modern Italy: The Career of Menaḥem Azariah da Fano*

The latter half of sixteenth-century Italy was a tumultuous period concerning kabbalistic knowledge. The 1550s and 60s saw the printing of the masterpieces of Classic Spanish Kabbalah—the crown jewel being the Book of the *Zohar*. Increased availability of this lore allowed unbridled access and, thereby, unrestrained interpretation. Simultaneously, in the town of Safed of the Ottoman Empire, a parallel renaissance occurred in the group of kabbalists centered around the luminaries Solomon Alqabeş and his brother-in-law and disciple Moses Cordovero, and later the famed Isaac Luria. Their kabbalistic



works, in manuscript form, were sought after by Jewish kabbalists located on the European continent. The following paper will discuss how Menaḥem Azariah da Fano utilized this opportunity to concurrently popularize and regulate Safedian kabbalah through public teaching and printing, while institutionalizing it in his image through his various disciples and the rare manuscripts in his possession. This snapshot of kabbalah in Italy demonstrates the fluid interplay between manuscript and print cultures at this time and their implications on contemporary power structures.

**Eugene D. Matanky** is currently a doctoral candidate at Tel Aviv University (ABD). His dissertation, entitled "Esoteric Labor: A Material Reception of Cordoverean Kabbalah," explores the material conditions and invisible hands responsible for the transmission and reception of Cordoverean kabbalah in its multiple intellectual-cultural milieus. This research project touches upon issues of the sociology and transmission of knowledge, hermeneutical reception, processes of canonization, and discourse analysis. His article: "Illustration, Dissemination, and Production: Diagrams in Moses Cordovero's *Pardes Rimonic*," will appear in the forthcoming volume of *Kabbalah*.

([eugenem@mail.tau.ac.il](mailto:eugenem@mail.tau.ac.il))

### **Avi Kallenbach**, *How Not to Respond to a Book: Digressive Hebrew Marginalia in Early Modern Italy*

The study of annotations in books is a growing field, with scholars in various disciplines pointing to marginal inscriptions as invaluable evidence for the way texts were read, understood, and received in various periods. Not all marginal notes, however, fit perfectly into models of reading or reception. As several scholars have taken pains to note, marginalia often have little to do with the text they are ostensibly glossing; for this reason, more than one scholar has preferred the term "book use" over "reading" or "reception" in their studies of annotations. In my lecture I will address the occurrence of this phenomenon – annotations with little to no connection to the text at the center of the page – within the marginalia appended to Hebrew books in late sixteenth century Italy. I will address three models of "disconnection": 1) annotators who simply ignore the main text on the page, liberally using blank margins as a convenient medium for entirely new inscriptions; 2) annotators who utilize the internal organization of the main text as a convenient way of organizing stray thoughts and commonplaces; and 3) annotators who latch onto small details in the main



text, using these as inspiration to compose essentially independent “microtexts.” With these examples, I hope to present marginalia both as forms of book use as well as a genre of writing in their own right.

**Avi Kallenbach** is a doctoral candidate in the department of Jewish philosophy at Bar Ilan University. His doctoral dissertation entitled “Mysticism from the Margin” explores the annotations and reading practices of Early Modern kabbalists in Italy.

### 8.3 Christian Constructions of Jewishness and Jewish Time

**K0.20**

#### **Julia Pohlmann**, *Secularization vs. Religious Pluralism – Re-evaluating Jewish and Non-Jewish Responses to the Jewish Naturalization Act of 1753*

The Jewish Naturalization Act tends to be treated as part of a narrative of Britain’s secularization rather than as a facilitator of social recognition of religious faith and Jewish politization. This paper offers a corrective to that perspective by examining the implications of the Act for the Jewish experience in England. In doing so, it examines the political, public, and religious spheres of the Sephardic and German-Ashkenazic community of 18<sup>th</sup> century London. Dissecting the political debates of Jews and non-Jews surrounding the Naturalization Act of 1753, it seeks to reconsider the religious and proto-political Jewish structures in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Specifically, the paper will address four questions: Who responded to the Act in the Jewish community and outside of the Jewish community? Through which medium did respondents voice their opinions and convictions? How did the internal segregation between Sephardim and Ashkenazim impact the political debates on Jewish Naturalization? How does studying responses to the Act lead to an improved understanding of Jewish agency in Eighteenth Century England?

In answering these questions, I will focus on ecclesiastical reasoning in dissecting public discourse on the Act, therefore teasing out the religious vocabulary of the Act as well as the political debates surrounding it. This paper thus takes a new approach to the inner dynamics of Anglo-Jewish history as well as their cultural, social and political contributions to England.



**Julia Pohlmann** holds an MA in Jewish Studies from the University of Potsdam. During her studies, she has been conducting terms abroad at the University of Haifa (2014), the Leo Baeck Institute in London (2016), and the Center for Jewish History in Manhattan (2019). She started her PhD in History at the University of Aberdeen in November 2020 with the topic " Jewish Urban Space in Eighteenth-Century England and Scotland", which explores Jewish and non-Jewish relations as legal and social concepts of toleration. Her research is funded by the Rothschild Hanadiv foundation and the Minerva scholarship (Germany). ([j.pohlmann.20@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:j.pohlmann.20@abdn.ac.uk))

### **Jana Hunter**, 'A thick layer of time': travelling to Prague's Jewish Quarter c. 1840-1920

In 1894, British travel writer James Baker revealed what it was like stepping into Prague's Jewish Quarter, '[f]rom this bright building and free open space, a short dive down Josephtown Street, and, by another of the sudden changes we are in the narrow, high-housed, dirty, sordid streets of an old Jewish town'. Descriptions such as these were fraught with well-established tropes and travel writers often portrayed such brash perspectives on the district.

However, it is exactly between the lines of these travelogues, that we can start to extrapolate experiences of time. As such, this paper explores the temporal experiences of British travel writers in Prague's Jewish Quarter in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Building methodologically on the recent studies in temporality by Natasha Wheatley, Stefanos Geroulanos, and Dan Edelstein, this paper confronts disciplinary strictures and assesses temporal regimes as tense ecosystems: competing, cooperative, collateral, and conflicting.

To start, this paper reads the travel writing 'chronocentrically' and sets religious time and profane time in sharp contrast against the dynamics of individual experiences of time. Such an approach exposes perceptions of time that challenge the established discourse of a medieval and squalid Jewish Quarter, instead spotlighting the travellers' admiration for its public health, as well as its technological and scientific progress. Finally, by drawing on newspapers, journals, personal documents, and photographs, the temporal experiences of British travel writers are compared to those of the Jewish



community, offering a vibrant and novel account of temporal experiences in Prague's Jewish Quarter.

**Jana Hunter** is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of History at the University of Oxford funded by the Rawnsley Scholarship. Her research focuses on the embodied and temporal experiences of travel to Bohemia in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Prior to Oxford, Jana was at the University of Cambridge where she studied for an MPhil in Modern European History and at Durham University where she completed her undergraduate degree in History. ([jana.hunter@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:jana.hunter@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk))

### **James Renton**, Navigating the Jewish Time of the Renaissance and Enlightenment

This paper will examine the critical importance of Jewish time—the Jewish past, present, and future—in western European Christian cosmologies of the Renaissance and Enlightenment. I will focus on the ways in which western European thought in this moment travelled across the span of Jewish time—in a non-linear, multi-directional form, why this 'Jewish' time was significant, and *how* it intersected with invocations of Greek and Roman antiquity, as well as Muslim time. The paper will argue for the importance of Christian political theology around the new notion of sovereignty, in particular, along with the new racialised histories of civilization. I will conclude by considering how and why the Jewish present and future begins to come into view in post-Enlightenment thought, but continued within a temporal framework that was determined by a non-linear, multi-directional Christian conception of ancient Jewish time.

**Professor James Renton**, Edge Hill University. He is Professor of History, and Co-Director of the International Centre on Racism at Edge Hill. His research focuses on the history of race in Western European and global history. Most recently, he co-edited with Anya Topolski the special issue, 'Jean Bodin and the Sovereignty of Exclusion', in *Political Theology* (2020). ([Rentonj@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:Rentonj@edgehill.ac.uk))



### **Mie Jensen**, 'Thank you for being a badass queer Jew. Mazel tov and l'chaim': Queer Jewish Women's Practices in Contemporary England

During the 1980s, the bread, which developed into an orange, on the Seder plate became a symbol of lesbianism in Judaism – present but seemingly out of place. Decades have passed, and scholars have paid attention to changing texts (queer theology, LGBTQ+ affirming prayers, and midrash) and politics (ordaining LGBTQ+ rabbis, blessing ceremonies, and same-sex marriage). With changing times, it is important to understand how non-heterosexual Jewish women live and experience their intimate and Jewish lives.

This paper reveals emerging findings from my PhD fieldwork in England. Drawing on twenty biographical narrative interpretive method interviews with non-heterosexual Jewish<sup>1</sup> women, this paper will address how these women perform individual, familial, and communal practices.

This paper will discuss known practices such as lighting candles for shabbat, baking challah, and attending synagogue. It will discuss holiday celebrations and practices such as lighting the chanukiah and cleaning for Passover. It will also provide insights into the process of queering practices. For example, how a polyamorous bisexual woman held a b-mitzvah for her non-binary child; how a demisexual trans woman who grew up in a Haredi family changed the morning prayer to affirm her identity; and an ex-Modern Orthodox lesbian who, together with her nominally Christian wife and an ex-Haredi gay friend, made a queer Seder where they discuss social injustice and add their own Seder symbols (such as a used teabag to symbolise menopause).

Drawing on people's life stories, this paper identifies individual, familial, and communal Jewish performances from the 20<sup>th</sup> century to contemporary time.

**Mie Astrup Jensen** is an ESRC-funded PhD candidate at UCL in Hebrew and Jewish Studies and Gender and Sexuality Studies. Mie is interested in intersections between gender, sexuality, and religion. Her PhD 'Being Queer and Jewish: a Cross-Communal and Cross-National Study of Ethno-Religious Experiences and Divides' focuses on lesbian, bi, and queer Jewish women's lived experiences and practices in England and Israel. Her work seeks to add a queer and gendered lens to lived religion by focusing on their intimate lives,



Jewish practices, and Jewish identities. It is the first empirical study that focuses on non-heterosexual Jewish women in England.

([mie.jensen.20@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:mie.jensen.20@ucl.ac.uk))

### **Max Munday**, *Constellations of Jewish pasts, presents and futures in practice-based research*

This paper will explore how constellations of pasts, presents and futures emerged within a series of improvisatory, art practice-based research workshops that took place this Spring.

The workshops, involving a small group of young Jews and the researcher, are part of PhD research around 'social haunting' (Gordon, 2008), historic antisemitism and the complexities of Jewish experiences, identity and memory. The group has sought to develop a multi-modal, 'whole body' dialogue that aims to move across time and subjectivities.

Avery Gordon described a 'social haunting' as the disruption of the present by past social violence and seemingly lost possible futures, which by their presence, invite action or 'something-to-be-done' (Gordon, 2008).

The workshops aimed to create a space in which affect-driven relationality and the creative expressions of participants' bodies generate multiple moments of constellations of past, present and possible futures. The paper will ask whether this helped to meet Avery Gordon's challenge to find a 'vocabulary' (Gordon, 2008) or 'mode of knowledge production' (Gordon et al, 2020) to understand the meeting point between the seething presence of historic antisemitism and seemingly closed possibilities, the conditions in the present that catalyse a 'social haunting', and our living experiences within structures of power.

Creative work generated in collaboration with participants in the workshops will be shared as part of the paper. These early reflections on the study will consider how an embodied approach challenged temporal linearity and attended to the arrival of 'constellations' of the past and present (Benjamin, 2005).

**Max Munday** is a second year doctoral student at Sheffield Hallam University. His art practice-based research project is titled *Embodying the Social Ghosts: Exploring 'Social Haunting' through movement and sound*. His research starts from his own complex Jewish identity. Max uses the affective and relational



aspects of sound and movement to connect with other Jewish subjectivities and seeks to create a caring and experimental research space to question fixities and open up possible better futures. (Max.A.Munday@student.shu.ac.uk)

### Lindsey Taylor-Guthartz, 'A taste of the world to come': time and timelessness at Limmud conference

Limmud is an annual cross-communal Jewish conference founded in 1980, which in recent years has attracted over 2,000 participants and has inspired similar events in over 40 countries. Originally designed for educators, it has evolved into a multi-generational 5-day encounter for families, academics, community leaders and workers - and anyone else who wants to go. Interviews with Limmud participants and organizers, conducted as part of ethnographic research on Limmud's history and development, have revealed an interesting dimension to participants' perception of time at Limmud: they often use terms such as 'a different time zone', 'bubble', 'magical world', or even 'a taste of the world to come' to describe their experience there. The paper explores the links between these ideas and classical Jewish temporal concepts of Shabat, *yemei hamashiah* ('days of the Messiah') and *olam haba* ('the world to come') as 'sacred time' and 'different time', and their implications for participants' understanding of the role of Limmud in their own lives and in the wider Jewish community.

Dr Lindsey Taylor-Guthartz received her doctorate from UCL in 2016, and Orthodox rabbinical ordination from Yeshivat Maharat, New York, in June 2021. She is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Manchester, where she is investigating the history and development of Limmud. Lindsey has taught at Cambridge, Oxford, SOAS, King's College London, and Vassar College, NY. She is also a Research Fellow at the London School of Jewish Studies. Her first book, *Challenge and Conformity: The Religious Lives of Orthodox Jewish Women*, was published in 2021 by the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization. ([lindsey.taylor-guthartz@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:lindsey.taylor-guthartz@manchester.ac.uk))



## 8.5 Private Passions and Public Commitments: Belonging, Activism and Citizenship in the Lives of the Anglo-Jewish Elite, c. 1830–1980

Safra Lecture  
Theatre

### Tom Stammers and Abigail Green, *Jews and Hunting in Modern Britain: Gender, Politics and Place*

Drawing on Biblical stories and rabbinical texts, many scholars have assumed that Jews had an aversion to hunting. It played no role, according to this view, in the shaping of Jewish masculinity, nor in the story of Jewish assimilation. This paper explores the counter-evidence for the enthusiastic embrace of hunting with hounds by members of the Jewish elite in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It argues that that hunting was not simply one more symptom of integration into aristocratic society, but also an engine for it, giving some Jewish families an important role within the English countryside. Hunting with stags or hounds was inseparably bound to important social and political issues such as land ownership, philanthropy, local office-holding and masculine self-fashioning; above all, it can be read as a performance of national character. Its significance can be inferred not simply from the snobbish and antisemitic backlash it provoked in the pages of Victorian novels, but can also in the enduring loyalty and affection it inspired among some Jewish families, even as its legitimacy was coming under deepening attack in wider British society.

This paper explores this understudied subject by weaving together the evidence of literature- such as the novels of Robert Smith Surtees, or the *Memoirs of a Foxhunting-Man* by Siegfried Sassoon- with archival material and examples taken from the material and visual culture of the Jewish Country House. Offering insights into pride, resentment and fragile masculinity, hunting proves to be a topic of surprising pertinence to modern Jewish history.

[Tom Stammers](#) is Associate Professor of Modern European Cultural History at the University of Durham. He is the author of *The Purchase of the Past: Collecting Culture in Post-Revolutionary Paris* (Cambridge, 2020) and the co-editor of a forthcoming special issue on German-Jewish collectors beyond German borders (see *Journal of the History of Collections* in 2022). He is working in the field of Jewish collecting and cultural history as one of the co-



investigators within the AHRC project 'Jewish Country Houses: Objects, Networks, People'. ([t.e.stammers@durham.ac.uk](mailto:t.e.stammers@durham.ac.uk))

**Abigail Green** is Professor of Modern European History at the University of Oxford. She is currently writing an international history of Jewish liberal activism for Princeton University Press, tentatively entitled *Children of 1848: Liberalism and the Jews from the revolutions to human rights* and leading a collaborative research project on Jewish Country Houses. She is the author of *Moses Montefiore: Jewish Liberator, Imperial Hero* (2010), and of numerous articles and edited collections. ([abigail.green@bnc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:abigail.green@bnc.ox.ac.uk))

### **Isobel Muir**, *The lasting esteem of the people? An investigation of the legacy of Sir Joseph Duveen, Lord Millbank (1869-1939) as British cultural philanthropist*

By his own admission, Joseph "Joe" Duveen was 'an outsider' within the largely aristocratic British artistic establishment among whom he lived and worked as an art dealer. In 1928, after he made an offer of £100,000 to pay for a new gallery that would house the Parthenon marbles in the British Museum, he was recognised by the then Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, as deserving 'a most honourable place' among those British philanthropists who had used 'their means to the enhancement of the glory of our national collections'. Despite Baldwin's admiration, in subsequent accounts of his professional life, Duveen has often been characterised as a showman or conjuror, duping his "philistine" clients on both sides of the Atlantic, and bringing the dealer unrivalled [and perhaps undeserved] commercial and political success in his own lifetime. This paper will examine the legacy of public opinion on Duveen's artistic philanthropy in Britain, with particular emphasis on his subscriptions to public building projects at the National Gallery, the British Museum, the Ferens Art Gallery in Hull and Tate Gallery, Millbank – the latter he chose to be forever associated with when he was made a baronet. I will consider whether these acts of philanthropy toward national organisations were an attempt by the first-generation Dutch Jewish immigrant to self-fashion as protector of British national interests.

**Isobel Muir** is a second year AHRC-funded Collaborative Doctoral candidate at the National Gallery, London, and the University of Durham. Her thesis examines the diverse roles of Jews as constituents of the National Gallery: as



collectors and donors of fine art, as cultural philanthropists, and as trustees and advisors to its staff. Prior to joining the National Gallery's CDA programme, she worked in Public Programming at Dulwich Picture Gallery in South London, and as Assistant Curator and Assistant to the Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures at the Royal Collection Trust. ([isobel.r.muir@durham.ac.uk](mailto:isobel.r.muir@durham.ac.uk))

### Jaclyn Granick, Local and Transnational Activism of Elite Jewish Women in the 20th century

This paper focuses on the international Jewish elite who played active parts in cultural and Jewish philanthropy and who have been deeply embedded in the political culture of their European states from the late nineteenth century through present times. There has been little recognition of the many continuities maintained by this elite past the First World War and throughout the twentieth century, in part through its women. While the history of the transnational Jewish women's movement is slowly being mapped out, its connections to this rarified world have not featured centrally in it, and the era of the World Wars is entirely absent from it.

In some cases, widowhood revealed women as activists in their own right, such as Dorothy de Rothschild, who contributed to many central democratic institutions of the fledgling Israeli state, including negotiations leading to the Balfour Declaration and the Knesset building. Maud Russell and other women from this milieu sought to rescue relatives and other Jewish children from continental Europe to the UK during the Holocaust, and in some cases succeeded. Rothschild women hosted youth Holocaust survivors in their country houses and presided over their rehabilitation in France. Rosie Parker, also a Rothschild, joined the radical collective Spare Rib and kickstarted the postwar Jewish feminist movement in Britain. Departing from these examples, I seek to uncover new stories and find connective threads demonstrating that these women formed the backbone of many crucial Jewish initiatives in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Dr Jaclyn Granick is Lecturer in Modern Jewish History at Cardiff University in Wales, UK. She is the author of the National Jewish Book Award winning *International Jewish Humanitarianism in the Age of the Great War* (Cambridge, 2021) and co-editor of a special issue *Gendering Jewish Inter/Nationalism* forthcoming in the *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* (2022).



She is currently serving as co-investigator of the Arts and Humanities Research Council funded Jewish Country Houses research project.

([GranickJ@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:GranickJ@cardiff.ac.uk))

### Discussant: Laura Leibman

**Laura Leibman** is Professor of English and Humanities at Reed College, VP of Program (AJS), and the author of *The Art of the Jewish Family: A History of Women in Early New York in Five Objects* (Bard Graduate Center, 2020) which won three National Jewish Book Awards. Her latest book *Once We Were Slaves* (Oxford UP, 2021) is about an early multiracial Jewish family who began their lives enslaved in the Caribbean and became some of the wealthiest Jews in New York. ([leibman@reed.edu](mailto:leibman@reed.edu))

A Concluding Roundtable, 13.30–14.30

Safra Lecture Theatre

### After Progress? Temporalities and Counter-Temporalities in Jewish Studies

When medieval, early modern and modern Jews engaged with history and historical temporalities, they often frustrated expectations that have become the hallmark of historiography as an academic discipline: they did not distance themselves from earlier generations in the name of progress. But if we recognize now, after Amos Funkenstein and Carlo Ginzburg, secular and colonial versions of Christian claims in such professional expectations, what does this mean for our own interpretations of historical temporalities in Jewish Studies? Such questions have been raised in the last two decades in several areas of Jewish Studies and have led to new critical inquiries and an incipient dialogue with related fields, such as Islamic Studies. This panel explores medieval, early modern and modern Jewish historical practices to ask how current inquiries in the complexities of Jewish approaches to historical time, periodization and power in Christian, Islamic and secular contexts might inform new perspectives on 'Wissenschaft' and Jewish Studies today.

**Fred Astren** is Professor in the Department of Jewish Studies at San Francisco State University. His current book project, *Before the Geniza: Jews and the Early Middle Ages*, casts a Mediterranean gaze on Jewish history in the years



500-950. In print and forthcoming are book chapters on the failure of Visigothic anti-Jewish legislation in Spain, on the impact of ninth-century Arabic literary production on Jewish sectarianism, and a chapter in the *Cambridge History of Judaism* on non-rabbinic Judaisms in medieval Islam. Astren is the author of *Karaite Judaism and Historical Understanding* (University of South Carolina Press, 2004). ([fastren@sfsu.edu](mailto:fastren@sfsu.edu))

**Andrea Schatz** is a Reader in Jewish Studies at King's College London and BIAJS President 2021–22. Recently, she has edited the volume *Josephus in Modern Jewish Culture* (Brill, 2019) and she is the co-author, with Pavel Sládek, of 'The Editor's Place: Samuel Boehm and the Transfer of Italian Print Culture to Cracow' (*JQR* 112.3, 2022, 468–519).

**Irene Zwiep** (PhD 1995) holds the chair of Hebrew and Jewish Studies in Amsterdam. Her research concentrates on Jewish intellectual history, with particular emphasis on Jewish linguistic thought, enlightenments and Wissenschaft des Judentums. Two recent publications relevant to the conference are: 'Between Past and Future. European Jewish Scholarship and National Temporalities, 1845-1889,' in Anne O. Albert e.a., eds, *Frontiers of Jewish Scholarship: Expanding Origins, Transcending Borders* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022), 21–41; 'Hyphenated history. Teaching the Past and the Making of the Modern Dutch Israelite', in Dorothea M. Salzer, ed., *Jüdische religiöse Erziehung im Zeitalter der Emanzipation. Konzepte und Praxis* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2022), 171–191.

#### Cover illustration:

Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Lisbon, 1471-1472, vol. 1, f. 11v,  
British Library, Harley MS 5698.