This year’s Bajs conference will be held in Manchester, a university with a long-established interest in Biblical and Jewish Studies. This article describes its history and the current activities at Manchester.

History

The University of Manchester has a distinguished record in the research and teaching of Jewish and Biblical Studies, beginning with the Talmudic scholar Tobias Theodores who taught Biblical Hebrew from 1866. Other prominent individuals include the biblical scholar James Barr and the historian and scholar of Semitic languages, Edward Ullendorff. Modern Hebrew has featured prominently, with language and literature specialists such as Meir Wallenstein, who chaired the city’s Tarbut Society, and, more recently, Leon Yudkin. In fact, Manchester was amongst the earliest to teach modern Hebrew from the 1930s and was the first UK university to offer a BA degree in modern Hebrew (one of the two first graduates was David Patterson in 1949); it published the modern Hebrew language journal of Jewish Studies, Melilah from 1944 to 1955.

The University has long-established links with the local Jewish community, which dates back to the 1780s and remains the largest in the UK outside London. Over the years many Jewish scholars have taught at the University, a number of whom were closely involved with the Zionist movement. Chaim Weizmann lectured on chemistry and Weizmann’s contemporary, the eminent philosopher Samuel Alexander, introduced him to Balfour. The modern historian, Sir Lewis Namier, was also active in assisting Weizmann. Philip Hartog, a fervent anti-Zionist, was lecturer in Chemistry (leaving to become academic registrar of London University, just before Weizmann arrived). There were very strong connections to the Manchester Reform congregation; in addition to Theodores and Hartog,
Gustav Gottheil, who was rabbi of the synagogue 1860-1873, taught German, and Laurence Mark Simmons, who was rabbi 1878-1900, taught oriental languages.\textsuperscript{iv} Two other important scholars resident in the city were the Sephardi 	extit{hacham} and Zionist leader Moses Gaster, much of whose collection of manuscripts is now held the University library, and the Orthodox rabbi and historian, Alexander Altmann, who established in 1941 the non-affiliated Institution for Higher Jewish Education.\textsuperscript{v}

**Tobias Theodores: The Founding Figure of Jewish Studies at Manchester**

Tobias Theodores (1808-1886) was born in Margulin in the Prussian province of Posen, he had grown up in Berlin at the time of the radical reform movement led by Israel Jacobson, and had come to England as a youth. After an early career as an itinerant language teacher, was appointed in 1851 to a teaching post in German at Owens College, which had been established the same year. From 1866 he was Professor of German (until 1871), of French (until 1880), and of Hebrew (until 1884). Among his publications were an \textit{Introductory Lecture on the Study of Arabic and Hebrew} (1860) and a lecture on ‘The Talmud’ in \textit{Essays and Addresses by Professors and Lecturers of the Owens College} (1873). He was a frequent contributor of essays and translations relating to various aspects of halakhah to the journal \textit{Hebrew Review and Magazine of Rabbinical Literature} which was published 1834-1836; among other things he addressed such subjects as ‘Morality of the Talmud’ (1834), which was in large part of a translation of Maimonides’ \textit{Mishneh Torah}, and ‘On the Administration of Justice in the Hebrew Commonwealth’ (1836). Theodores was a polemicist who was keen to use scholarship to good social effect, publishing critiques of the blood libel in the Jewish press in the aftermath of the Damascus Affair, and attacking suggestions in the mainstream press that Jews were not fit to sit in Parliament. As a key figure of the Manchester Reform Synagogue, established in 1856, Theodores was instrumental in having the Hungarian rabbi Solomon Schiller-Szinessy appointed as its first minister, and was a close associate of the German-American Reform rabbi Gustav Gotttheil (1827-1903).

Simmons, who was rabbi 1878-1900, taught oriental languages.\textsuperscript{iv} Two other important scholars resident in the city were the Sephardi 	extit{hacham} and Zionist leader Moses Gaster, much of whose collection of manuscripts is now held the University library, and the Orthodox rabbi and historian, Alexander Altmann, who established in 1941 the non-affiliated Institution for Higher Jewish Education.\textsuperscript{v}

**The Centre for Jewish Studies**

The present Centre for Jewish Studies was established in 1996 when the existing provision was strengthened by the creation of the Alliance Chair in Modern Jewish Studies. It connects staff located in the subject areas of Middle Eastern Studies,\textsuperscript{vi} Religions and Theology,\textsuperscript{vii} German, History, Linguistics, and East European Studies.\textsuperscript{viii} Currently, there are five postgraduate fellows,\textsuperscript{x} and recent visiting fellows from abroad have included the Talmudic scholar Natalie Polzer (Louiseville, USA) and the historian of Anglo-Jewry Wang Benli (Suzhou, China). The most recent addition to the list of honorary fellows is Rabbi David Rue, chief justice of the \textit{Beit Din} of Los Angeles, who is working with the Centre on the topic of the \textit{Agunah} problem. There are currently 14 doctoral students in the area of Jewish Studies.\textsuperscript{x}

The Centre is largely reliant on external funding for many of its research projects; in the year 2013-14 it managed £930,000 in grants, excluding RCUK postdoctoral fellowships. The areas in which the Centre has research strength include Classical Judaism, Medieval Judaism and Jewish/Non-Jewish relations, Modern Jewish history, culture and literature, Modern Jewish/Non-Jewish relations, Holocaust, Modern Israeli society, history and political thought, and Modern Jewish thought (Britain, France, Germany, Israel). A selection of current externally-funded research projects include Corpses of Mass Violence (in collaboration with Ecole des Hautes Etudes des Sciences Sociales, Paris; European Research Council, 2012-16); Darwin’s Jews (Leverhulme, 2013-15); Catalogue of Codices, Scrolls, and Other Texts in Hebrew Script in the University of Manchester Library (anonymous Jewish foundation, 2015-18); Translation of Abulafia’s Secrets of the Torah in the Kabbalistic Library of Pico della Mirandola (British Academy, 2014-15); Anti-Semitism and Articulations of National Identity in Hungarian Film, 1931-44 (Leverhulme, 2012-15); Moses Gaster: Eclectic Scholar (British Academy, 2013-16); Reading the Bible in the Ottoman Empire (Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship, 2014-17); Conversion to Judaism in Contemporary Poland conducted (anonymous Jewish Foundation, 2014-15). Centre members edit or co-edit \textit{Journal of Semitic Studies}, \textit{Leo Baeck Institute Year Book}, \textit{Studia Judaica} monograph series, and \textit{Melilah: Journal of Jewish Studies}.
In terms of teaching, the Centre has tended to focus on integrating Jewish Studies course options into a wide variety of degree programmes in the humanities, such as religious studies, history and Middle Eastern studies. For last year (2013-14), the total number of enrolments in around 20 undergraduate Jewish Studies classes was more than 400, while the total number of enrolments in 5 masters-level classes was 26.

With regard to outreach and wider engagement, the Centre offers two annual public lecture series, namely, the Sherman Lectures in Jewish Studies and the Bogdanow Lectures in Holocaust Studies, and a research seminar series open to the public that for the last three years has focused on Israel Studies. It maintains close relations with the Manchester Jewish Museum as a venue for academic talks and as a partner for collaborative doctoral studentships using its extensive oral history collection, and, in cooperation with the Imperial War Museum North, it organises an annual Holocaust workshop day, catering for teacher training and a general audience. The Centre remains closely associated with the local Jewish Community and is a constitutive member of the Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester.

**Judaica and Hebraica**

The John Rylands Library is one of the largest academic libraries in the UK and some highlights for Jewish Studies include: the Hebrew Manuscripts Collection comprising 10,600 fragments from the Genizah of the Synagogue of Elijah in Old Cairo together with 400 codices; the Haskalah Collection, a unique collection of around 900 volumes in Hebrew and other languages from the East European Jewish Enlightenment movement; the Teltzcher Collection which contains some 650 items in English, Hebrew, Latin, German and Czech, ranging in date from the 1550s to the late twentieth century; the Marmorstein Collection which is especially rich in classical rabbinic texts and in East European responsa printed in Hebrew, English, Hungarian and other languages; and the Gaster Collection of a wide variety of manuscripts, including Samaritan materials. In addition to such holdings in the JRL, there is the Bill Williams Library of Modern Jewish history comprising around 4500 volumes.

**News on Modern Hebrew Studies**

In 2014-15, the University found itself at the centre of an international protest when a number of degree programmes in the subject area of Middle Eastern Studies, including a BA(Hons) in Hebrew and Israel Studies, and a number of course units, including undergraduate Modern Hebrew, were withdrawn and/or phased out. Support for the Manchester academics who argued in favour of continuing the provision of undergraduate Hebrew language teaching was received from a wide variety of individuals, learned societies, and subject associations, with the BAJS online petition receiving over 1000 signatures from 45 countries within 10 days. It is therefore with great pleasure that the Centre can now report that management has agreed recently that the credit-bearing undergraduate teaching of Modern Hebrew at all levels will continue (albeit in a reduced capacity), on condition that it be partly paid for by external funding. As a result, among other things, the Centre is currently developing an innovative hybrid approach to language learning that will facilitate the virtual participation of individuals from around the country in regular classes in Modern Hebrew at Manchester. While disappointed that the withdrawn degrees will not be restored, the Centre is extremely grateful for the assistance that BAJS (and in particular its Secretary, Helen Spurling) and others provided, especially considering the inauspicious economic circumstances and the practical and ideological challenges that face university language teaching in the UK more generally.

Daniel Langton and Alex Samely
Co-directors of the Centre for Jewish Studies
www.manchesterjewishstudies.org

**Notes:**

i The Victoria University of Manchester was established in 1880, its forerunner being Owens College, established in 1851.


iii For Manchester’s contribution to the history of Zionism, see the online exhibition Manchester and Zionism: www.manchesterjewishstudies.org/manchester-and-zionism/.

iv Inexplicably, the University did not employ Solomon Schiller-Szinessy, who was the Manchester Reform synagogue’s first rabbi from 1856-1860 and who went on to become Reader of Talmud and Rabbinical Literature at Cambridge, or Abraham Wolf, the congregation’s rabbi from 1901-1907, an expert in Spinoza who went on to become professor of Logic and Scientific Method at UCL.

v This became the Institute for Jewish Studies in 1953, which was relocated to UCL when Altmann moved to Brandeis University in 1959.

vi Moshe Behar (Israeli and Middle Eastern Studies), Sophie Garside (Hebrew and Israel Studies), John Healy
The Parkes Institute Golden Jubilee Celebrations

In 1965, the Parkes Library opened to the public, having been transferred to the University of Southampton the year before from James Parkes' own house. Alongside the Library, the Parkes Centre also started a new life in the University, maintaining its unique focus of the study of Jewish/non-Jewish relations across the ages. The hope of James Parkes was that within a university setting, his Centre would become an international hub, helping to stimulate intellectual and practical work to focus on the key issues of religious and racial prejudice, working to combat intolerance and to promote respect between people of different faiths and backgrounds.

Fifty years on we believe that what is now the Parkes Institute has realised the ambitions of its founder. In 2014 and 2015 we have been both celebrating the achievements made so far, but also promoting fresh agendas in scholarship and wider outreach work. The Celebration has consisted of fifty individual events, varying from a musical vigil for peace to a study of Dr Who and the changing face of Jewish identity. There have been ten workshops and conferences held not only at the University of Southampton but also in with our partners in Cape Town, Jerusalem, London, Paris and elsewhere. These have covered many different themes, including the relationship between Jewish


In 2014-15, the Shermans were given by Amy-Jill Levine (Vanderbilt University) and the Bogdanows by Christopher Browning (North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

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and will feature photographs, documents and books from the Parkes Library and Jewish archives. The Jubilee Celebrations will come to a climax in the late summer and early autumn with two major events. The first, running alongside the Special Collections exhibition in September 2015, is a three day International symposium devoted to Jewish/non-Jewish relations across the ages, the field which James Parkes pioneered and championed. It will examine the history of research over the past 50 years, presenting the latest approaches and determining future directions. Key note speakers include Professor Martin Goodman of the University of Oxford, Professor Miri Rubin of Queen Mary College, University of London, Professor Greg Walker, University of Edinburgh, Professor Todd Endelman, University of Michigan, Professor Sander Gilman, Queen Mary College, University of London, and Professor Tony Kushner of the Parkes Institute itself.

The second is a public debate to be held in West London Synagogue in October 2015. Following the inspirational work of James Parkes, it will examine the challenges facing interfaith dialogue in the twenty-first century. It brings together leading representatives of Judaism (Baroness Neuberger), Christianity (Lord Richard Harries) and Islam (Imam Monawar Hussain). In tribute to James Parkes, they will explore the progress made but also the remaining challenges in these troubling times.

To conclude: the Vice Chancellor, Professor Don Nutbeam, has described the Parkes Institute as ‘one of the University of Southampton’s most treasured achievements’. He adds that its world class Jubilee programme of scholarly and community events ‘celebrates and embraces the vision of James Parkes to create a society free of ignorance and prejudice. We look forward to the Parkes Institute’s next fifty years with great anticipation and pride in what has already been achieved.’

Prof Tony Kushner
University of Southampton

Jewish Lives, Scottish Spaces: Jewish Migration to Scotland, 1880-1950

Dr Hannah Holtschneider (University of Edinburgh, Principal Investigator) and Dr Mia Spiro (University of Glasgow, Co-Investigator) have won an AHRC award of £495,418 for a three-year research project on Jewish migration to Scotland, beginning September 2015. Project Partner is the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre (SJAC, http://www.sjac.org.uk/), whose holdings will be extensively researched and part-digitised. The project team will be completed by a post-doctoral researcher. An extensive programme of public activities is planned to disseminate key findings of the project and make them accessible to a wider audience, including educational resources for teachers and undergraduate students.

Harvey Kaplan, Director of the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, said:

‘We look forward to working with this exciting new project over the next three years. The wide-ranging collections of the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, brought together over the last 30 years, constitute a unique national resource, unparalleled in any other immigrant group in Scotland. We are looking forward to seeing our collections underpinning this AHRC-funded project and being utilised to interpret Jewish history in Scotland.’

The SJAC’s collections on the history of the Jewish religious communities in Scotland since the late nineteenth century, particularly the written records and material objects surviving the closures of synagogues across all Scottish regions will form the primary source material. Material evidence from surviving synagogue libraries and prayer book collections will provide further materials. By mapping and examining the SJAC’s extensive collection of memoirs, biographies, and recorded oral histories of survivors and refugees, the project will uncover the impact of World War II and the Holocaust on Scottish-Jewish collective identity, and how Jewish refugees yet again transformed the Scottish landscape in the post-war period.

How do Jews construct social, political and cultural ‘spaces’ in Scotland?

Jewish Lives, Scottish Spaces traces and evaluates for the first time Jewish ‘spaces’ in Scotland 1880-1950 to uncover how the religious and cultural contributions Jews made complicate ideas of ‘Scottishness’ and of ‘Jewishness’. ‘Jewish spaces’ are understood as the construction of ethnic, religious, and cultural environments, as opposed to real, mappable places. The conventional impression is that Jewish migrant communities in Scotland
exist in a pattern of transition and acculturation that lies outside of major Scottish or Jewish historical narratives of belonging. Studies on larger populations, such as London’s East End or New York’s East Side have, in many ways, obfuscated the manner in which Scottish Jewish religious and cultural history is distinct, and how important contributions of the Jewish community intersected with ideas of Scottish belonging. Jewish Lives, Scottish Spaces will draw out the important distinctions of Scottish Jewish history to uncover its critical role in understanding migration in both Jewish and Scottish contexts.

**Dr Hannah Holt-schneider** is Senior Lecturer in Jewish Studies at the University of Edinburgh, UK. She is the author of The Holocaust and Representations of Jews: History and Identity in the Museum (Routledge, 2011) and German Protestants Remember the Holocaust: Theology and the Construction of Collective Memory (2000), as well as numerous articles on Jewish/non-Jewish relations. [For more information see: http://edin.ac/16eQ8CF](http://edin.ac/16eQ8CF)

**Dr Mia Spiro** is Lecturer in Jewish Studies (Theology and Religious Studies) at the School of Critical Studies, University of Glasgow. She is the author of Anti-Nazi Modernism: The Challenges of Resistance in 1930s Fiction (Northwestern University Press, 2013) and has published work on Virginia Woolf, Jewish representation in the interwar period, and on the Jewish Golem myth in modern and contemporary film and literature. Her forthcoming monograph, *Modern Monsters: Golems, Vampires, and the Ghosts of War*, examines how elements of the supernatural have been used by modern Jewish writers and artists to grapple with oppression, migration, and antisemitism in the first half of the twentieth-century. [For Dr Spiro’s profile see: http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/critical/staff/miaspi ro/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/critical/staff/miaspi ro/)

**Jewish Studies in Scotland**

Jewish Studies in Scotland is a developing field of research. While a good number of scholars at Scottish universities work in areas which relate to the study of Jewish lives, histories and cultures, there are only two posts which are primarily in Jewish Studies, one at the University of Edinburgh, the other at the University of Glasgow. Little research has focused explicitly on Jewish history Scotland, the monographs in this field at present do not reach double figures. This is set to change with Jewish Lives, Scottish Spaces. Determined to improve the visibility and standing of Jewish Studies in Scotland, Drs Holtschneider and Spiro are looking forward to enhancing both, the field of Jewish history in Scotland and the wider field of Jewish Studies. A day conference planned for summer 2016 is set to focus on Jewish history in the ‘Celtic Fringe’ and bring together researchers of adjacent fields such as migration studies, urban studies and Scottish, Irish and Welsh Studies. In the summer of 2017 Edinburgh will host the annual BAJS Conference and for the first time bring this gathering of scholars in all fields of Jewish Studies to Scotland. As usual the theme of the conference will be one to which all disciplines and historical periods of Jewish Studies can contribute to: ‘Jews and Migration’. As 2017 marks the half-way point in the AHRC project Jewish Lives, Scottish Spaces, BAJS 2017 will host a panel dedicated to Jewish history in Scotland at which project findings are presented. BAJS 2017 will also showcase other important contributions to the study of Jewish history, religion and culture from Biblical times to today which are being researched at Scottish universities.

If you are interested in following the project Jewish Lives, Scottish Spaces, please sign up on the project website to receive updates via email or RSS: https://jewishmigrationtoscotland.wordpress.com. Project news and information about public events will be posted regularly on the website from September 2015.
Calendars in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Standardization and Fixation

A major research project funded by an Advanced Grant of the European Research Council (ERC)

Principal Investigator: Prof. Sacha Stern

This research project studies the evolution of calendars in late antique and medieval societies, with a special focus on Roman, Christian, Jewish, and Islamic calendars. The complex evolution of these calendars was closely related to politics, science, and religion, and contributed more widely to the standardization of culture in the ancient and medieval worlds.

The project is based in the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies, with Professor Sacha Stern as Principal Investigator and five Research Associates working in several areas including the seven-day week, late antique hemerologia, medieval Jewish calendar disputes, and medieval Arabic and Hebrew monographs on astronomy and calendars. It is funded by an ERC Advanced Grant to the value of €2,499,000, the largest ever achieved in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at UCL.

The study of calendars has been neglected by historians as a merely technical curiosity; but in fact, the calendar was at the heart of ancient and
medieval culture, as a structured perception of time, and as an organizing principle of social life. Our study of calendars covers a wide range of historical periods and cultural traditions, and employs a wide range of disciplines: social history, ancient and medieval astronomy and mathematics, the study of religions, literature, epigraphy, and codicology. We are interested to discover how Roman, Christian, Jewish, and Islamic calendars evolved, in late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, towards ever increasing standardization and fixation.

To this end, we are focusing on five specific manifestations of this process:

1. the diffusion and standardization of the seven-day week in the Roman Empire;
2. 'hemerologia' (comparative calendar tables) and their production in late Antiquity;
3. the Jewish calendar dispute, between Palestinians and Babylonians, of 921-2 CE;
4. Jewish calendar fixed cycles in medieval manuscripts;
5. monographs on the calendar by medieval Muslim, Christian, and Jewish scholars, especially al-Biruni's 'Chronology of the Ancient Nations' and Isaac Israeli's 'Yesod Olam'.

Study of these five research areas will enable us to formulate a general interpretation and explanation of how and why calendars became increasingly standardized and fixed. Our Research Associates and their main research areas are:

- Dr Ilaria Bultrighini (the week in the Roman Empire; the 'hemerologia')
- Dr Nadia Vidro (Jewish calendar cycles)
- Dr François de Blois (Biruni’s 'Chronology')
- Dr Ilana Wartenberg
- Dr Israel Sandman (Isreali’s ‘Yesod Olam’)
- Professor Sacha Stern is working in all areas, and especially on the dispute of 921-2 CE.
- Our project administrator is Georgia Panteli.

Workshops on project-related themes are organized on a regular basis, with the participation of international experts and open access to the public. Please see https://www.ucl.ac.uk/hebrew-jewish/research/research-pro/calendars-antiquity-middle-ages for more information.

Relocation of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies to Oxford city centre

2014 was an historic year for the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. In September the Centre relocated in central Oxford all the activities which for many years had been based in Yarnton Manor, 4 miles to the north of the city centre. The move was warmly welcomed by the University, which recognized the opportunities for synergy between the Centre and the University in the wider promotion of Hebrew and Jewish studies. The goodwill across the University ensured that OCHJS was able to secure an appropriate new home for the Centre within the Clarendon Institute building in Walton Street, close to the Oriental Institute in Pusey Lane and even closer to the Oxford Jewish Congregation in Richmond Road. Thus the Centre's activities in teaching and research that were previously divided between Yarnton and the Oriental Institute have been brought together under one roof. Students and staff of the University now find it much easier to attend classes and events, and to use the library. For those coming from further afield, we are just ten minutes on foot from the railway station, and five minutes from Gloucester Green bus station.

The move to central Oxford has also enhanced the continuing programme of the residential Oxford Seminars in Advanced Jewish Studies hosted by the Centre and supported by the Polonsky and Dorset Foundations. Visiting scholars can live within the city, and are now able to access easily not only the holdings of the Leopold Muller Memorial Library which have been fully incorporated into the Bodleian system and located in the Clarendon Institute itself, but also the various other collections of the Bodleian Library. The Muller Library’s special collections material is now housed in the newly refurbished Weston Library alongside the Bodleian’s own Hebraica and Judaica.

In addition to our existing teaching in Hebrew and Jewish Studies, our new location has meant that we have been able to add to the existing weekly Ulpan classes in Beginners and Advanced Yiddish for the general public (taught by Dr Khayke Beruriah Wiegand) an Ulpan in Biblical Hebrew (Dr Steve Herring) and one for Modern Hebrew (Daniel Hershkowitz). Also under the auspices of the Hebrew Centre, Dr Herring is organising a two week intensive course in Biblical Hebrew, which will take place in early September 2015 at the Clarendon Institute. The weekly David Patterson Lectures are currently held on a Monday evening, for a mixed academic and lay audience.

Teaching staff in Jewish studies

Much to our regret, Prof. Hugh Williamson retired from his post as Regius Professor of Classical Hebrew at the end of last year, though we have warmly welcomed his successor, Prof. Jan Joosten, who comes to Oxford from Strasbourg. The University also bestowed the title of Professor on
Joanna Weinberg (Rabbinics and Medieval Hebrew) and David Rechter (Modern Jewish History), reflecting the international impact of their scholarship.

**Oxford Seminars in Advanced Jewish Studies**

‘On the Word of a Jew’

The first OSAJS seminar of the academic year took place October 2013 – March 2014. The overall theme of the Seminar, led by Nina Caputo and Mitchell Hart (both of the University of Florida), together with David Rechter, was ‘On the Word of a Jew: Testimonies and the Nature of Trust’. The research examined when and how Jews came to be seen as reliable or trustworthy in the realm of the law—as witnesses, but also as lawyers and judges— and in a host of other realms, including medicine, politics, academia, culture (particularly the art world), and business and finance. Participants focused on traditionally Christian countries or empires, but also on the status of Jews under Muslim rule. The seminar provided an opportunity to explore how ‘the Jew’ serves as a spur or impulse to large-scale changes in mentalities and practices, and to explain how this occurred within specific institutional settings. The Visiting Fellows assigned to this project, which was made possible through the generous support of the Dorset Foundation and the Polonsky Foundation, met twice weekly in term time to conduct public seminars and to discuss their research. The concluding conference, to which additional speakers were invited, included a keynote public lecture by Professor George Rousseau.

‘Josephus in the Early Modern Period’

The third OSAJS seminar, entitled ‘The Reception of Josephus in the Early Modern Period’, was convened jointly by Dr Joanna Weinberg and Professor Martin Goodman. It ran from January – June 2014 and set out to investigate the varied uses of the writings of Flavius Josephus in Jewish and Christian literature in the early modern period. The survival of Josephus’ writings from the first century CE to the early modern period was entirely due to the use of these texts by Christians. It is possible that Josephus’ writings were known to the rabbis of late antiquity, but the surviving late-antique rabbinic texts in Hebrew and Aramaic make no explicit reference to him or to his work. The re-entry of Josephus into the Jewish cultural milieu came about through a Hebrew reworking of a Latin translation of the first sixteen books of the Antiquities and a Hebrew paraphrase of the Latin version of The Jewish War attributed to Hegesippus. Produced in the tenth century CE, this Hebrew rendering, known as Josippon, circulated in various versions in medieval rabbinic circles, and remained for many centuries the prime source for Jews on the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. By the time of Rashi, in the later eleventh century, Josippon was commonly ascribed to Josephus himself, thus acquiring a spurious authority which encouraged its translation into other languages, including Arabic. The real Josephus became known to Jews from the fifteenth century, but it was the sixteenth-century Azariah de’ Rossi who rediscovered the significance of Hellenistic Jewish writers for Judaism, and who used Josephus as a fundamental source for analysing the authenticity of rabbinic tradition. From the early modern period the works of Josephus, in different forms, became a vital resource for Jews as much as Christians of all denominations in reconstructing their own histories.

**AHRC Workshops on the Jewish Reception of Josephus in the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries**

The third of four workshops on the reception of Josephus in Jewish culture from the eighteenth century to the present, led by Professor Martin Goodman together with co-investigators Professor Tessa Rajak and Dr Andrea Schatz, took place over two days in January 2014. The workshop was devoted to the Jewish reception of Josephus in Central and Eastern Europe between about 1800–1914. Participants were invited to examine the uses of Josephus in a wide range of rabbinic, maskilic and early Zionist contexts, raising questions such as how Josephus figured in debates on the renewal of Jewish religious, cultural and political life in Central and Eastern Europe, how he was cited in controversies over assimilation, and the implications of educational and popular uses of Josephus. The fourth and final two-day workshop covered the Jewish reception of Josephus in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Participants examined the role of Josephus in a wide spectrum of Jewish politics, culture, religious life, scholarship and education from the early twentieth century, through the foundation of the State of Israel to the present. Matters under consideration included how Josephus figures in Zionist thought, how Liberals, Orthodox Jews and Bundists used his works and image in debates about Jewish nationalism, and how Josephus’ work has been re-evaluated in the late twentieth century and today in debates about post-Zionist reassessments of the foundation and ideologies of the State of Israel.

**The Catherine Lewis Lectures**

Dr Joshua Teplitzky gave a series of lectures entitled
Performing Traditions conference

In January 2015 Dr Zehavit Stern organised a highly successful two-day conference, ‘The Art of Cultural Translation: Performing Jewish Traditions in Modern Times’. This was followed by a wonderful performance at the Oxford Jewish Congregation of the Internationale, ‘a post-dialectic Klezmer cabaret’ by Psyo Korolenko and Daniel Kahn.

Oxford Summer Institute in Modern and Contemporary Judaism

In summer 2014 Dr Miri Freud-Kandel collaborated with Dr Adam Feziger to run the inaugural Oxford Summer Institute in Modern and Contemporary Judaism, on the subject of “Modern Orthodoxy and the Road Not Taken: A Critical Exploration of Questions Arising from the Thought of Rabbi Dr Irving 'Fitz' Greenberg”. The topic for this coming summer’s Oxford Summer Institute is “State and Spirit: The Impact of Sovereignty on Contemporary Judaism”.

Seminars within the University of Oxford

Members of the Hebrew and Jewish Studies Unit of the University of Oxford convene several regular seminars series within the University each year. These are the Seminar on Jewish History and Literature in the Graeco-Roman Period (Professor Martin Goodman); the Seminar in Modern European Jewish History (Dr David Rechter, Dr Abigail Green, and Dr Zoë Waxman); the Seminar in Modern Israel Studies (Professor Derek Penslar); the Seminar on Abrahamic Religions (Professor Martin Goodman, Dr Mark Edwards and Dr Nicolai Sinai). This year Prof. Joanna Weinberg is also convening a fortnightly lunchtime seminar for doctoral students in Hebrew and Jewish Studies to present their work, and with Prof. Joosten and Dr Adriana Jacobs she runs a weekly graduate seminar on Hebrew exegesis.

Dr Alison Salvesen
Oxford University

Journal of Semitic Studies is 60

This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of the Journal of Semitic Studies, and there will be a wine reception at the Bajs 2015 conference in Manchester in celebration.

JSS, which was founded in Manchester in 1955/6 thanks to the support of Isaac Wolfson (later Sir Isaac), is owned by the University of Manchester and published by Oxford University Press (print and electronic versions, and all earlier volumes available online). It is edited mainly by Manchester academic staff in Middle Eastern Studies and Religions and Theology and is now acknowledged as the leading journal in its field, publishing articles on the Semitic languages and editing and commenting upon texts written in these languages, ancient and modern. Though the focus has always been on texts and language rather than religious ideas or theology, the Journal has been closely associated with the Jewish Studies interests of the University of Manchester, with several Fellows of the Centre for Jewish Studies among its editors.

Because of the high standing of JSS, scholars set great store by getting their articles accepted by it. As a result the Journal receives many high-quality submissions and can afford to be very selective in what it accepts for publication.

JSS appears twice each year and the editors try to ensure that there is a balance of articles which will interest specialists in the two most important languages, Hebrew and Arabic. It also frequently publishes articles concerned with texts in such languages as Akkadian, Ethiopic and Syriac. A similar policy applies to its supplement series, which provides a publication outlet for longer technical works in this field and for collections of conference papers.

On 24 November the editors held a reception in the University to mark the publication of two new JSS Supplements. The event was sponsored by Mr Joe Dwek and the Centre for Jewish Studies. The two new supplements were typical in many ways of the Journal's commitment to a wide range of Semitic Studies. The first was The Egyptian Historian ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti by Shmuel Moreh, Emeritus Professor in the Hebrew
University of Jerusalem. Professor Moreh (who came to Manchester for the launch of the book) has a worldwide reputation as an Arabist and has published in addition to this supplement a translation of al-Jabarti’s description and history of Egypt. Al-Jabarti died in 1825, having witnessed the Napoleonic invasion of the country. The second was The Palmyrene Tax Tariff by the Soviet-era scholar Ilia Sholeimovich Shifman (translated from Russian and originally published in 1980). His book is the only monograph on a long Aramaic and Greek inscription (dated 137 CE) dealing with taxation in Roman Syria. Other recent supplements have been devoted to Semitic linguistics, medieval Hebrew medical terminology and the history of printing in the Middle East.

Fortunately, JSS is unaffected by recent reorganization of Middle Eastern Studies within the University of Manchester and its next major birthday will be its seventy-fifth!

For further information on the Journal see its Oxford University Press website: http://jss.oxfordjournals.org

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University of Manchester

European Association for Jewish Studies (EAJS)

The Association now boasts of almost eight hundred full, associate and student members. This significant surge in membership has not in the least to do with the lure of Paris, locum of the Tenth Congress of the European Association for Jewish Studies. Splendidly organized by Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger and her indefatigable team - the organizing team received a stunning eleven hundred paper proposals, of which around three quarter were accepted - took place in July 2014. The Congress had nine hundred active participants, by far the largest held by EAJS.

Since the Congress, EAJS has successfully applied for support for a programme supporting networking and early career researchers. The Berlin based ‘Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung, Zukunft’ awarded EAJS € 50,000 for a three-year ‘EAJS Programme in European Jewish Studies’, allowing to fund two academic events per year for the next three academic years. Congratulations to Prof. Michael Berkowitz (UCL) for his successful bid to hold the EAJS Roundtable in London in December 2015. It will focus on the founding of the YIVO Institute in 1925 and is entitled YIVO’S Histories, Contexts, Tensions. Congratulations are also due to Dr Élodie Attia-Kay for her and her co-applicants’ successful bid for the EAJS Laboratory. They will devote the meeting, to be held in Aix-en-Provence in June 2016, to Research Approaches in Hebrew Bible Manuscript Studies. EAJS Laboratories are intended to support early career researchers by inviting them to present their expertise at these events focused on discussion and exchange between senior and junior colleagues.

Most recently, an even more important grant has been made to EAJS allowing to fund two more formats of academic events, namely conferences and summer schools. Awards in the framework of this EAJS Conference Grant Programme will be announced in the second half of July 2015. More information will be available on the Association’s website: http://eurojewishstudies.org/

But if this weren’t enough already, more is happening. EAJS and AJS (the Association for Jewish Studies with membership overall in Canada and the US) have now formally announced a partnership, offering reduced membership fees, the sharing of electronic resources, and the joint organization of academic events.

Dr François Guesnet
Secretary, European Association for Jewish Studies
Looking at Jerusalem through a Scottish Lens: On Being the Edgar Astaire Fellow in Jewish Studies at the University of Edinburgh

We all know that situation when someone asks you about your research, you give them the elevator speech, and even though every academic will respond with a version of ‘oh, that’s so interesting,’ you see their eyes glazing over and feel their attention waning. But come to Edinburgh, tell someone that you are working on Muriel Spark, and all of a sudden, the unexpected happens: Everyone, no matter whether it is your colleagues at the university, the archivist, people on the street, and, more than anyone else, members of the local Jewish community, perk up and not only listen, they actually have to say something about what you are doing. Now, add to that a larger book project on Jerusalem, which, as a central site of memory of Jews, Christians, and Muslims and the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has a similar effect and as it turns out, scholarly work is suddenly not a lonely venture anymore.

Having spent the past year with the Program in Cultural Studies at the Hebrew University (and previously, several at Tel Aviv University), surrounded by people knowledgeable about all aspects of Judaism, I had expected much less of that at my time on the Edgar Astaire Fellowship for Jewish Studies with the School of Divinity and the Institute of Advanced Studies at the University of Edinburgh but, as it turned out, every conversation I had about either Spark or Jerusalem – and, unsurprisingly, there were many – added a little something to my thinking. While Edinburgh might not be the most central location on the British Jewish Studies map, I found it to be a goldmine of scholars with wide-ranging interests, even if some were only tangentially related. For me, however, with a PhD in Holocaust Studies and now working on a cultural history of Jerusalem through literature and films exploring the many imaginations of the ‘Holy City,’ colleagues working on translations of Holocaust testimonies, Jerusalem architecture, or Jewish migration to Scotland, demonstrated the diversity and breath of the field across departments and schools. Obviously, one sometimes has to stretch a little, but an interdisciplinary framework such as a School of Divinity will get you talking about ritual in the Second Temple and today’s political machinations of ultranationalist Israelis hoping for the Third Temple to be rebuilt, to name but one example. Additionally, presumably because Scotland is not central geographically, there seems to be a lively conversation within the country and with Jewish Studies people in Northern England – a community from which I benefitted by hearing about the development of Kahanism from Sarah Marsden (St. Andrews), about the Bnei Ephraim communities from Yulia Egorova (Durham), and more. As a researcher and project manager of the former ‘History + Memory’ research group at the University of Konstanz, interdisciplinary environments – where I am the only one primarily working on Jewish subjects – are not unusual, but what came as a real surprise to me was teaching a class in the MSc programme in Religious Studies. In Germany’s rather well-off south, my classes – whether they covered the Holocaust, Jewish literature, or the Middle East – are primarily attended by white Germans of Christian background, but reading Jerusalem poetry with students from across the globe and from different religious and cultural origins also made me hear Yehuda Amichai and Mahmoud Darwish’s voices in a different way.

But I was not only talking while on my fellowship: As I was working my way through many meters of boxes – the current campaign at the National Library of Scotland to acquire more of Muriel Spark’s papers does not call her a hoarder for nothing – and rereading her novel The Mandelbaum Gate (1965), which is set in the divided Jerusalem of 1961, a certain consistent theme both in her life story and her novel became evident: There is never ‘just one’ story or truth for the Scottish writer who throughout her life insisted on calling herself ‘half-Jewish’, even if it ultimately cost her her relationship with her only son Robin in a public struggle over him asking her to acknowledge the Jewishness of her maternal grandmother. In my reading, I therefore propose that Spark makes a case for refusing any singular truth when it comes to the Jerusalem setting of her novel as well: Only those protagonists who see that they themselves and the city they are written into has not one but many narratives of past and present, get to see all of Jerusalem, even at a time when an urban border between Jordan and Israel was running through it.

Thinkers of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict highlight that we are in a situation in which both sides intentionally foreground their narrative. Social psychologist Dan Bar-Tal and others have shown that peacemaking needs the acknowledgment of the other side’s differing story
Karen Adler's dissertation won the BAJS Student Essay Prize 2014 for her work on the University of Nottingham and was supervised by Dr Nina Fischer.

Many congratulations to Louise Pederson for winning the BAJS Student Essay Prize 2014 for her dissertation on a Jewish charity, which was submitted to the University of Nottingham and supervised by Dr Karen Adler.

Edgar Astaire Fellow in 2015/16

Dr Kenneth Collins (Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow and Visiting Professor in the History of Medicine at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem) will be the Edgar Astaire Fellow in 2015/16. During the tenure of the Fellowship he will focus on material relating to Jewish participation in the Polish School of Medicine at Edinburgh University which operated during the 1940s, while also examining the contribution by Jewish refugee psychiatrists and psychoanalysts to the development of their speciality in Edinburgh. Dr Collins has pioneered research on Jewish history in Scotland. His publications include Go and Learn: The International Story of Jews and Medicine in Scotland (1988), Second City Jewry: The Jews of Glasgow in the Age of Expansion, 1790-1919 (1990), and Be Well! Jewish Immigrant Health and Welfare in Glasgow, 1860-1914 (2001).

News about Jewish Studies in Edinburgh can be found here: http://jewishstudies.div.ed.ac.uk/

In my dissertation I explore the treatment and care of children at the leading Jewish charity, Norwood, in the period 1841-1914. Norwood, formerly known as the Jews’ Hospital and Orphan Asylum (JHOA), was one of the earliest residential children’s charities established in Britain in the nineteenth century. Founded in 1807 to ‘uplift the morals and occupations of the young [Jewish] poor’, it preceeded Barnardo’s and other comparable institutions of different denominations by over half a century. Yet despite this remarkably early initiative, the JHOA has been given little recognition for its contribution to Victorian childcare in current literature, and even less has been done to evaluate the institution’s achievements in a wider historical context. I endeavoured to address this oversight by critically assessing the JHOA, with the principal objective of establishing a fresh narrative of the institution through an evaluation of the orphans’ experiences.

I began by examining the institution’s rigorous admissions process, in order to build a profile of the JHOA’s ‘ideal’ candidate. Although successful applicants did not always match these requirements, the process reveals a great deal about contemporary attitudes to the poorer classes. One overarching condition stipulated by the charity

Dr Nina Fischer
was that the children had to be ‘deserving’ of relief. It was believed that by accepting illegitimate, abandoned or destitute children, the JHOA would only encourage desertion and immorality, and ‘lower the tone of the institution’. This was a concept the Anglo-Jewish elite had adopted from their Gentile peers, and it typifies middle-class Victorian attitudes towards the pauper classes for most of the period. The children were required to pass examinations with tests in English, arithmetic and Hebrew. Furthermore, they also had to pass a medical examination, and one boy was rejected on account of his stutter. Evidently, this process did not always support those most in need, as the JHOA was more concerned with the intellectual capacity and social backgrounds of their future wards, than with the actual needs of the children. I argued that despite the institution’s stringent criteria, the final composition of successful candidates was in fact more diverse than the policy suggests. The charity also received orphans under the Pauper Removal Act and children who had lost both their parents bypassed many of the requirements.

While investigating the day-to-day lives of the orphans, I discovered that by the end of the period the children’s lives had improved markedly as the institution began to introduce a number of progressive reforms. In the early years, the children’s experiences had been characterised by the dull repetitiveness of the institutions ‘barrack’ structure. However, as new social reforms were introduced across Britain, the JHOA managed to adopt a policy that, although not innovative, managed to encourage the children’s individuality while still fulfilling its purpose. This balancing of interests reflected the need for the JHOA to deal with specifically Jewish concerns, and explains why the institution diverged from the new forms of childcare that were enthusiastically adopted by other private and state-run establishments from the 1870s onwards. The institution followed a strict Anglicisation programme in an attempt to engender middle-class British values into the children and ensure their smooth transition into society. However, this did not mean that the children were allowed to neglect their religious duties. The JHOA did its best to infuse a traditional religious observance, and took its cue from the guidelines set by the Chief Rabbi and the United Synagogue. I found that the gendered treatment of the boys and girls influenced the children’s perceptions of their future roles in society. Girls were taught skills such as laundry and needlework, which promoted middle-class ideas of female domesticity. Boys took lessons in woodwork and bookkeeping in preparation for entering skilled trades after leaving the institution. Many of the children wrote letters of gratitude to the headmaster after leaving the JHOA, and these are a testament to the excellent care that was taken of the children, and they demonstrate that the institution was fulfilling its objectives laudably.

Finally, I tracked the children as they left the institution to enter domestic service or apprenticeships, I evaluated their quality of life and assessed how successfully the institution met its objectives. The majority of girls left the institution for paid domestic work as the JHOA deemed it the most suitable occupation for girls. Only a minority of the girls found jobs in occupations such as dress making, nursing and cap making. Occupational records for the boys indicate that very few directly entered middle-class occupations – the vast majority were placed in working-class trades, earning wages that enabled them to afford little more than sustenance and board. Evidently the JHOA's contribution to upward social mobility was limited, however, its expressed purpose of 'maintaining, educating, clothing and apprenticing to industrial employments poor children of the Jewish religion' was admirably fulfilled.

I established that although the policy adopted for the care of the children was not innovative, the JHOA nevertheless fulfilled its purpose during the period 1841-1914. By the time the boys and girls left at the ages of fourteen and fifteen, they had been Anglicised, but at the same time, the institution ensured that the children retained part of their Jewish identities through a traditional religious observance, and it also prepared them for employment after they left the institution. Admittedly, the JHOA was as much self-serving as it was philanthropic. It sought to imbue middle-class ideas and attitudes in the children that would perpetuate the class and gender roles in Victorian society, which protected the position of the Anglo-Jewish elite in the community. Nevertheless, this does not detract from the institution’s achievements. The orphans were well cared for, as the visitor’s book and countless letters of gratitude sent to the headmaster testify. Until government legislation raised the school leaving age, the children at the JHOA were receiving substantially more schooling than their contemporaries at Poor Law institutions or the children of poor families. Furthermore, once the orphans left the establishment, they were placed in respectable occupations, often with significantly better prospects than children whose parents could not afford to pay apprenticeship premiums.

It is an honour receiving this prize, and I am extremely grateful to the BAJS. I would like to thank the history department at the University of Nottingham, and in particular my personal tutor
Karen Adler, as without her support and guidance this achievement would not have been possible.

Louise Pederson

Louise has just completed the Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) in London and will commence with the Legal Practice Course (LPC) in August.

New Books:

The following edited volumes originated in two BAJS conferences, Southampton 2010 (The Image and the Prohibition of the Image in Judaism) and Canterbury 2013 (Memory, Identity and Boundaries of Jewishness).


Published March 2015.

Visualizing Jews through the Ages is a major multidisciplinary study exploring literary and material representations of Jews, Jewishness and Judaism from antiquity to the twenty-first century. In bringing together leading scholars from within the field of Jewish Studies, it investigates how the debates surrounding literary and material images within Judaism and in Jewish life are part of an on-going strategy of image management. It is a strategy, this volume suggests, both consciously and unconsciously undertaken within multifarious arenas of Jewish life from early modern German lands to late twentieth century North London, Late Antique Byzantium to the curation of contemporary Holocaust exhibitions. Jews throughout the world and across the ages have repeatedly used images whether literary or material to mediate and disseminate individual and collective Jewish identity to the non-Jewish world. This volume suggests that Jewish encounters with images and imagery in their various forms across the ages reflect the on-going project to shape and define what it means to be Jewish.

Contents:

Introduction: Visualising Jews: An Introduction to Literary and Material Representations of Jewishness and Judaism Through the Ages Hannah Ewence and Helen Spurling

Part I: Divinity, Divine Actions and Their Interpretation: The Management of Theological Images
1. The Idea of Creation out of Nothing: From Qumran to Genesis Rabbah. Markus Bockmuehl
2. The Image of God in Late Antique Apocalyptic Literature: The Holy One as Teacher in Pirqé Meshiha. Helen Spurling
3. Approaching the Divine by Imitatio Dei: Tzelemand Demut in R. Moshe Cordovero’s Tomer Devorah. Patrick Benjamin Koch
4. The Image of Torah Min Ha-Shamayim in the Thought of Louis Jacobs Miri Freud-Kandel
5. Nothing and the Jews Devorah Baum

Part II: Contested Images of Judaism and Jewishness: Jewish Perspectives on Identity and Image Management
7. The Wissenschaft des Judentums and the Visual Irene Zwep
8. Aestheticism and the Flight from Jewishness Todd M. Endelman
9. The Jew in the Eruv, the Jew in the Suburb: Contesting the Public Face and the Private Space of British Jewry Hannah Ewence

Part III: Interaction and Conflict with the "Other": The Management of Images in Jewish/Non-Jewish Relations
10. Beyond the Generic: Contextual Interpretations of Medieval Jewish Female Iconography Israel Sandman
11. Navigating Christian Space: Jewish Responses to Christian Imagery in Early Modern German Lands Maria Diemling
12. Translating Modernity: On Aniconism and Negative Aesthetics in German-Jewish Thought Leena Petersen
13. Confronting the Military Image: The Jewish Soldier and the British Army in the First World War Anne Lloyd

Part IV: Communication and Representation: The Management of Jewish Images in Cultural Media
15. Another Man’s Faith?: The Image of Judaism in the BBC Television Series Men Seeking God. James Jordan
16. The Absent, the Partial and the Iconic in Archival Photographs of the Holocaust Isabel Wollaston
17. Adorno and the Prohibition of the Image: The Case of Music Lars Fischer
18. Ari Folman’s Other War: Animating and Erasing the Holocaust in Waltz with Bashir. Giulia Miller


Due for publication in September 2015.

The drawing of boundaries has always been a key part of the Jewish tradition and has served to maintain a distinctive Jewish identity. At the same
time, these boundaries have consistently been subject to negotiation, transgression and contestation. The increasing fragmentation of Judaism into competing claims to membership, from Orthodox adherence to secular identities, has brought striking new dimensions to this complex interplay of boundaries and modes of identity and belonging in contemporary Judaism. Boundaries, Identity and Belonging in Modern Judaism addresses these new dimensions, bringing together experts in the field to explore the various and fluid modes of expressing and defining Jewish identity in the modern world. Its interdisciplinary scholarship opens new perspectives on the prominent questions challenging scholars in Jewish Studies. Beyond simply being born Jewish, observance of Judaism has become a lifestyle choice and active assertion. Addressing the demographic changes brought by population mobility and 'marrying out,' as well as the complex relationships between Israel and the Diaspora, this book reveals how these shifting boundaries play out in a global context, where Orthodoxy meets innovative ways of defining and acquiring Jewish identity.

Contents:

Introduction. Larry Ray and Maria Diemling
1. Homeland, Exile and the Boundaries of Jewish Identity. David Biale
3. Identity and Negotiation of Boundaries among young Polish Jews. Joanna Cukras-Stelągowska
4. Shades of Closeness, Belonging and Becoming in a contemporary Polish Jewish Community. Jan Lorenz
5. Mimicry, Translation and Boundaries of Jewishness in the Soviet Union. Klavdia Smola
6. ‘Which Self?’ Jewish Identity in the child-centred Holocaust Novel. Lia Deromedi
7. Reality Gaps: Negotiating the Boundaries of British Jewish Identities in Contemporary Fiction. Ruth Gilbert
9. ‘Don’t be a stranger’: Giyur as a Theologisation of the Boundaries of (Jewish) Identities. Nechama Hadari
10. ‘Hands across the Tea’: Re-negotiating Jewish Identity and Belonging in Post-War Suburban Britain. Hannah Ewence

11. ‘I always felt on the edge of things and not really part of it’: Fuzzy Boundaries in an extended Scottish Jewish Family. Fiona Frank
12. Probing the Boundaries of Jewishness and Israeli Identity – the situation of non-Jewish partners and spouses of Israeli Jews. Dani Kranz
13. Pushing the Boundaries: Contemporary Jewish Critics of Israel and Zionism. Dashiel Lawrence

BAJS CONFERENCE 2016

11 – 12 July 2016 at the University of Birmingham

Call for Papers

The Texture of Jewish Tradition: Investigations in Textuality

The written word as manifest in a spectrum ranging from classical Jewish texts to contemporary literature alongside texts unearthed in locations including desert caves, an island in the Nile, a Cairo synagogue to the Warsaw ghetto is the lifeblood of a great deal of research in Jewish Studies. This conference invites reflection on exploring textuality from a variety of perspectives ranging from the material aspects of texts including the growing role of digital humanities in the field, scribal culture and consciousness, textual plurality, composition, reworking, form and genre, reception, classification and inter-relationships between textual worlds and corpora. In addition, speakers may wish to investigate the oral and social aspects of texts and textuality such as performance, memory, and power.

For initial enquiries please contact the BAJS President Elect for 2016 Dr Charlotte Hempel at chempel@bham.ac.uk
### Programme:

**SUNDAY 5 JULY**

4.00-6.30pm Registration at The Pendulum Hotel (note: daily registration also at conference venue from 8.30am)

5.00-6.30pm Rylands Library Judaica collection presentation and *Journal of Semitic Studies* reception (optional)

6.30pm Dinner at Eastzeast restaurant (optional)

**MONDAY 6 JULY**

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<tr>
<th>Room 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.00am, session 1</strong></td>
<td><em>A. Bible, Ancient, Classical</em></td>
<td><em>C. Modern and Contemporary</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Satire, Monotheism, and Skepticism, Joshua L. Moss, American Hebrew Academy, USA</td>
<td>Challenges to monotheism in a post-secular age: an analysis of religious-identity narratives of Orthodox and previously Orthodox Israelis. Ari Engelberg, Hebrew University, Israel</td>
<td><em>D. Philosophy and Theology</em></td>
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<td>What Shall We Do with Devout Idolaters? Jeremiah 44 Reconsidered, Ruth Fidler, The University of Haifa, Israel</td>
<td>When Rabbis Lose Faith: Twelve rabbis tell their stories about their loss of belief in God. Paul Shrell-Fox, The Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies, Israel</td>
<td>Idoloclastm: The First Task of Second Wave Jewish Feminist Theology. Melissa Raphael, University of Gloucestershire</td>
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<td>Textualism and Skepticism Post-modern Philosophy and the Theory of Text. Federico Dal Bo, Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry, Germany</td>
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10.30am, coffee break in The Hub

**11.00am**

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<td><em>F. Jewish Studies: Communicating</em></td>
<td><em>D. Philosophy and Theology</em></td>
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BAJS Conference 2015

Atheism, Scepticism, and Challenges to Monotheism

5-7 July 2015, Manchester Meeting Place, The University of Manchester

Organised by Professor Daniel Langton (BAJS President 2015)
**session 2**

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Atheism in Jewish antiquity</td>
<td>Sarah Pearce</td>
<td>University of Southampton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun and Angels Worship in eastern Jewish Communities of the Roman Empire: from Monotheism to Henotheism</td>
<td>Maureen Attali</td>
<td>Paris IV, La Sorbonne University, France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irish newspapers, journals and other popular press' opinions on the 1948 Palestine War</td>
<td>Stephen Oliver Murray</td>
<td>Trinity College Dublin, Ireland</td>
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<td>The Common English Bible (2011) and the Limits of Modern Bible Translation</td>
<td>Jonathan G. Campbell</td>
<td>University of Bristol</td>
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<td>The Judaica Project: For a Laboratory Ethics (Dance)</td>
<td>Ben Spatz</td>
<td>University of Huddersfield</td>
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From Monotheism To Scepticism. Kenneth Seeskin, Northwestern University, USA

THE ATTENUATION OF GOD IN MODERN JEWISH THOUGHT. Norman Solomon, Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies

Jewish Scepticism: The Status Quaestionis. Giuseppe Veltri, Hamburg University, Germany

**12.30, lunch in The Mumford Restaurant**

**1.30pm, session 3**

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<tr>
<td>B. Medieval and Early Modern</td>
<td>Zvi Stampfer</td>
<td>University of Cambridge</td>
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<td>&quot;I command you, Do not engage yourself with Logic&quot;: Reevaluation of Rabbi Hayya Gaon's attitude toward Greek philosophy</td>
<td>Zvi Stampfer</td>
<td>University of Cambridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Too Grand a Scene to be Denied&quot; - Jacob Anatoli (c. 1194-1256) on Truth, Doubt and Certainty in his Sermon on the Ten Commandments</td>
<td>Renate Smithuis</td>
<td>University of Manchester</td>
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<td>Doubting Abraham doubting God - The Call of Abraham in the Or ha-Sekhel</td>
<td>Benjamin Williams</td>
<td>JRRI, University of Manchester</td>
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C. Modern and Contemporary

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<tr>
<td>Secular and Humanistic Sedarim: Jewish Ritual between Atheism and Universalism</td>
<td>Corinna R. Kaiser</td>
<td>University Duiseldorf, Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ritual, spirituality and secularization. Kate Miriam Loewenthal, Royal Holloway, University of London</td>
<td>Beit Shirah: Atheists and song in the contemporary progressive Jewish synagogue services. Barbara Borts, Rabbi of Darlington Hebrew Congregation</td>
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D. Philosophy and Theology

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<td>Spinoza, Jewish Studies, and the Theology of Reading. Alex Samely</td>
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<td>Kaplan and Wittgenstein: atheism, phenomenology and the use of language. Michael T. Miller</td>
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E. Literature and Film

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<tr>
<td>&quot;Why the Geese Shrieked&quot; - Isaac Bashevis Singer's Work between Mysticism and Scepticism. Khayke Beruriah Wiegand</td>
<td>Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atheism and Skepticism in the Poetry of Paul Celan. Dorit Lemberger</td>
<td>Bar-Ilan University, Israel</td>
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**3.00pm, coffee break in The Hub**

**3.30pm, Plenary session: Keynote Lecture by David Ruderman: Plenary room 4/5**

**5.15pm, AGM: Plenary room 4/5**

**6.30pm, Conference dinner in The Mumford Restaurant (optional)**

**TUESDAY 7 JULY**

**Room 1**

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<td>The Jews and their Doubts. Anti-Jewish Polemics and Christian Apologetics in the Fascicolo delle vanità giudaiche (1583) by Antonino Stabili Martina Mampieri, University of &quot;Roma Tre&quot;, Italy</td>
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<td>Metatron Revisited: Binitarian Overtones in the Kabbalah of Nathan Neta Shapira of Krakow. Agata Paluch, The British Library Scepticism and Politics in Simone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Émile Durkheim's Sociology and French Antisemitism. Chad Alan Goldberg, University of Wisconsin, USA</td>
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<td>Why the positivist attempt to save modernity from itself can mean</td>
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**B. Medieval and Early Modern**
Shim‘i the Skeptical: Skeptical attitudes in early modern Jewish Anti-Christian polemical writings.
Karoly Daniel Dobos, Pazmany Peter Catholic University, Hungary

*The “If” of doubt, the “Maybe”: On some expressions of epistemic uncertainty in Hebrew poetry of the Baroque era.* Yehoshua Granat, Hebrew University, Israel

*Polytheism, syncretism and Judaism of the Jews at Elephantine: Ashim and Kherem Betel as secondary deities.* Eulàlia Vernet, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

**Postgraduate masterclass with David Ruderman**

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**C. Modern and Contemporary**
Unveiling the Christianity of European Secularism; or, is a Jewish Secularism Possible? Lucien Wolf, Sylvain Lévi and Leon Renton, Edge Hill University

*“This is the time, not for psalms, but for arms.” Atheism, messianism, and revolution in the Pale.* Pieter Laskowski, University of Warsaw, Poland

**D. Philosophy and Theology**

*Is Apophatic Theology the same as Atheism? An Answer from Judaism.* Philip Alexander, University of Manchester

*Gershom Scholem: Scholar between Atheism and Secularism.* Rosa Reicher, University of Heidelberg, Germany

*Secular theology as a challenge for Jewish Atheists.* Avner Dinur, Sapir College, Israel

**F. Jewish Studies: Interfaith**

*Representations of Jews and Judaism in the Works of the Methodist theologian Adam Clarke (1762-1832).* Simon Mayer, University of Manchester

*A comparison of recent Jewish critiques of the state of Israel and Christian anti-Jewish polemic and its implications for Jewish identity.* William Evans, University of Birmingham

*Global conflict, local peace? Jewish-Muslim relations in the UK.* Yulia Egorova, Durham University

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**C. Modern and Contemporary**

*Philosophy, Science, Secularism and Hasidism: the Tzemah Tzeder’s Sefer HaHakirah and its later echoes in Habad.* Naftali Loewenthal, UCL

*Reflections of an Atheist Jew.* Leonard Marx, Swansea University

*Creation as coincidence? Religion versus science in Yiddish anarchist reasoning.* Lilian Türk, University of Hamburg

**E. Literature and Film**

*Yeḥyel Yom Kippur in modern Israeli Hebrew literature.* Tamar S. Drukker, SOAS

*Judaism and Atheism in the work of the Czech 20th century novelist Ivan Olbracht.* Martin Borůšek, University of Cambridge

**D. Philosophy, Theology, and Law**

*‘Religious Agnosticism’: Judah L. Magnes between Bertrand Russell and William James.* David Barak-Gorodetsky, University of Haifa, Israel

*The Desirable Lenient Policy Concerning Conversion to Judaism: The Relationship between Acceptance of the Jewish Commandments and Religious and Philosophical Scepticism.* Yehiel Kaplan, Haifa University

**F. Jewish Studies: Jewish Law**

*Breaking the Commandments of God for the Sake of Our Tradition: The Rabbinic ‘Supremacy Clause’ in Historical Perspective.* Holger Zellentin, University of Nottingham

*The Golden Rule(s) of Love: the Two or the One?* Alex Tal, University of Haifa, Israel

*Challenges to Jewish Law in Times of Transition: Rethinking Parenthood Concepts.* Avishalom Westreich, College of Law and Business, Ramat Gan, Israel

**Postgraduate masterclass with David Ruderman**
Woolf Institute Cambridge Scholarship

The Woolf Institute, in partnership with the Cambridge Commonwealth, European and International Trust, offers the Woolf Institute Cambridge Scholarships. These scholarships are intended to support outstanding research students at the University of Cambridge who have the potential to become exceptional leaders of the future. Scholars will be selected from amongst applicants in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Their research must be relevant to the focus of the Woolf Institute - the multi-disciplinary study of relations between Jews, Christians and Muslims. The Woolf Institute and the Cambridge Commonwealth, European and International Trust will co-fund the successful candidates. Each scholarship will cover the full cost of studying for a PhD at the University of Cambridge, and will be tenable at any of the thirty-one Cambridge Colleges.

Further details: [http://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/phd.asp](http://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/phd.asp).
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Jewish Studies in the British Isles

The British Association for Jewish Studies was founded in 1975. In the fourty years of its existence, the Jewish Studies scene in the British Isles has changed dramatically and, as the following surveys demonstrate, is more productive, creative and innovative than ever. In the past year, BAJS members have been promoted to prestigious positions, secured highly competitive grants and won prizes, pursued original research projects, supervised postgraduate students from all areas of Jewish students and published widely.

Please keep sharing your Jewish Studies news with BAJS. We are keen to highlight and celebrate the manifold activities and successes in Jewish Studies by our members.

New appointments and promotions

BAJS warmly congratulates the following members for their achievements:

Anna Sapir Abulafia, formerly of Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge, was appointed to the Chair of the Study of the Abrahamic religions in the Faculty of Theology and Religion at Oxford. She was an Affiliated College Lecturer and Director of Studies in History in Newnham College, Cambridge since 1990, where she served as Vice-President from 2002 – 2010.

David Rechter was promoted to a Chair in Modern History at the University of Oxford.

Joanna Weinberg was appointed to a Chair in Rabbinics and Medieval Hebrew at the University of Oxford.

Vered Weiss has completed her PhD at the University of Kent and has secured a postdoctoral research associate position at the University of Illinois from September 2015.

Honours and Distinctions:

Professor Nicholas de Lange (Cambridge) delivered the Grinfield Lectures on the Septuagint, University of Oxford, 2013--2015 (six lectures on Jewish use of Greek Bible translations in the Middle Ages) with the title ‘Japheth in the tents of Shem:Greek Bible translations in medieval Judaism’. He also currently holds a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship. During his tenure he is writing a book about Jewish use of Greek Bible translations in the Middle Ages.

Dr Daniel Wildmann (Queen Mary University of London / Leo Baeck Institute London) has secured a Lady Davis Visiting Professorship at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem where he will spend spring 2016.

Dr Holger Zellentin (University of Nottingham) was awarded a 2014 Philip Leverhulme Prize for “Qur'anic Studies and Jewish Studies” and a 2016 British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship entitled “The Qur’an between Judaism and Christianity” (see entry on p. 7).

Current Research Projects:

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Hannah Holtschneider, Edinburgh: AHRC Award: *Jewish Lives, Scottish Spaces* (please see separate entry on page 5). Dr Holtschneider also runs the Jewish Studies Network (http://jewishstudies.div.ed.ac.uk/) and is co-editor of the online teaching resource *Jewish/non-Jewish relations* (http://jnjr.div.ed.ac.uk/).


Pl: Daniel Langton.


Guido Mensching, FU Berlin: An XML-based Information System for Old Occitan Medical Terminology (including Judaeo-Occitan), together with Gerrit Bos (Cologne), Maria Sofia Corradini (Pisa), Andrea Bozzi (Pisa). This project is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

Work on a critical edition of the Kitāb at-Talḥiṣ by Marwān ibn ḡanāḥ, together with Gerrit Bos (Cologne). This project is also funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

Aaron Rosen, KLC: Aaron Rosen organized a series of three crowd-sourced exhibitions at the Jewish Museum in London. The exhibition on show from 26 May to 4 September 2015 is *Journeys - how do we trace, interpret and represent them*.

The exhibition will feature personal mementoes, historic artefacts and fine art, all on the theme of journeys. Members of the public have submitted objects alongside moving testimonies of the journeys undertaken – physical, spiritual and emotional. A selection of over 25 objects will be displayed in the Jewish Museum’s Welcome Gallery alongside treasures from its Judaica collection, in this project in partnership with the Cultural Institute at King’s College London.

The objects tell stories from around the globe, including South Africa, Yemen, Ethiopia and the Ukraine, and across many cultures and religions. For more information please see: http://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk/journeys.

Andrea Schatz, KLC: *The Reception of Josephus in Jewish Culture from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (AHRC-funded, Co-Investigator).

Renate Smithius, Manchester: The John Rylands Research Institute has received an award of £120,000 from an anonymous private Foundation for the production of a catalogue of the Hebrew manuscripts collection at the Rylands Library. When completed, the catalogue, which builds upon the unpublished catalogue of Hebrew manuscripts produced by Alexander Samely in the early 1990s, will be made available online.

Sacha Stern, UCL: *Calendars in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Standardization and Fixation*: ERC project, 2013-2014, £1,874,254.50.

For more information, please see https://www.ucl.ac.uk/hebrew-jewish/research/research-pro/calendars-antiquity-middle-ages and separate entry on page 7).

Daniel Wildmann (Queen Mary University of London / Leo Baeck Institute London): *A History of Visual Expressions of Antisemitism, Emotions and Morality*.

In Late Imperial Germany postcards were apopular means of communication. In 1900, the Berlin bookseller «Antisemitic Bookshop Emil Keil» produced a postcard entitled «Jewish Prowess», showing a Jewish man in his prime, of stocky build, hiding behind his corpulent wife after an encounter with a bear in the mountains. He bends down and uses his wife as a shield from the animal, displaying what is typically considered 'female' behaviour – taking shelter behind a (male) body – and indicating an inversion of gender roles.

The ugliness and shapelessness of the Jewish body on this postcard is striking. Not only does it show unattractive bodies, the postcard also speaks of correlated moral inadequacies, such as cowardice, dishonesty, lecherousness. Such
postcards were eagerly collected and posted – they met with approval, inspired positive emotions and feelings. But what was it that aroused those feelings? What kind of feeling is generated? How do these feelings interact with these antisemitic visual signals?

Looking back at the history of antisemitism, it is obvious that visual sources are vital to the formulation of antisemitic narratives, shared emotions and shared common values. The postcard is a case in point. What is still missing in present-day research is an approach that combines emotion, morality, visual language and antisemitism. This project, using Germany as an example, is intended to clarify how these connections work. The project will cover the late Imperial Germany, the Weimar Republic, the Nazi era and post-1945 Germany (East and West), and investigate films and TV productions. By positioning films – from the silent movie era to today’s TV productions – in their historical, political and cultural context, I will point out the continuities and discontinuities of emotions and moral values linked to the visual presentation of Jews and Judaism.
Ongoing doctoral research at British and Irish Universities

The following survey was compiled and updated from members’ communications and last year’s overview. Please update us on changes and completions.

University of Aberdeen

Supervisor: Jutta Leonhardt-Balzer
1. Yang Kyu Park, *The Zealots and Early Christianity*
2. Stefan Bosman, *The Jewish background of motifs, arguments and hermeneutical methods in Paul*
3. Erlend MacGillivray, *Evidence for missionary activity in ancient philosophical schools and Philo*

Supervisor: Steve Mason

Bangor University

Supervisor: Nathan Abrams

University of Birmingham

Supervisor: Charlotte Hempel

University of Cambridge

Supervisor: Anna Sapir Abulafia

Supervisor: Graham Davies
2. J.G. Davidson, *Theological Significance of Nouns referring to God in Deutero-Isaiah.*

Supervisor: Nicholas de Lange

Supervisor: William Horbury
1. Elizabeth Robar, *Short and long prefix conjugation forms in Biblical Hebrew.*

Supervisor: Daniel Weiss

Canterbury Christ Church

Supervisor: Maria Diemling

Supervisor: Lucille Cairns

Supervisor: Robert Hayward
2. Tyson Puthoff (co-supervised with John Barclay), Human Mutability and Mystical Change: Explorations in Ancient Jewish Onto-Anthropology.

**Supervisor: Yulia Egerova**

**University of Edinburgh**

**Supervisor: Hannah Holtschneider**
1. Katarina Ockova, Marriage practices among Jews in contemporary Slovakia (joint supervision with Professor Janet Carsten, Social Anthropology).
2. Lizzie Robinson-Self, Concentration camp poetry (joint supervision with German Studies).
4. Ryan Tafilowski, Paul Althaus and the Jewish Question.

**Supervisor: Timothy Lim**
John M. Starr, A Quantitative Analysis of the Aramaic Qumran Texts.

**Heythrop College, University of London**

**Supervisor: A. Achtar**
1. Hakime Reyyan Yasar: Contemporary Islamic and Jewish approaches to inequities in religious divorce law.

**Supervisor: Martin Poulsom**
1. John Gravett: The work of David Tracy as a model for understanding Jewish and Christian Holocaust Theology.

**Supervisor: Ann Jeffers**

**University of Kent**

**Supervisor: Larry Ray**
1. Rachel Kay Burns, Sequestration of concentration camps in Nazi Germany: Knowing about, and attitudes towards the camps in three case studies.

**Supervisor: Axel Stähler**
2. Joanne Pettitt, Characterising Evil: The Ontology of Culpability and the Figure of thePerpetrator in Representations of the Shoah
3. Vered Weiss, Oh Other Where Art Thou?: The Location of the Other in Hebrew and English Literature of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (completed 2015).

**University of Leeds**

**Supervisor: Johanna Stiebert**

**Liverpool Hope University**

**Supervisor: Bernard Jackson**
2. Rachel Levy, How Jewish Orthodoxy positioned itself in the wake of modernity and the emancipation of the Jews, with particular reference to food and dietary laws in the Netherlands.

**King’s College London**

**Supervisor: Paul Joyce**

**Supervisor: Andrea Schatz**
2. Débora Marques de Matos, Mobility and Adaptability of Sephardic Scribes in the Late Fifteenth Century (co-supervised in the Department of Digital Humanities).

**Supervisor: Jonathan Stökl**

**Kingston University**

**Supervisor: Philip Spencer**
1. Ian Rich, Perpetrator motivation and the question of Imperialism (Shoah/comp. genocide research).
University of Manchester

Supervisor: George Brooke
4. Marvin Miller, Second Temple Epistolography and the Genre of MMT.
5. Johnson Chang, Covenant and Priesthood in 2 Maccabees, the Sectarian Scrolls, and Hebrews.

Supervisor: Adrian Curtis
1. Jennifer Williams, Approaches to Childlessness in the Hebrew Bible.

Supervisor: Cathy Gelbin

Supervisor: Daniel Langton

Supervisor: Alex Samely
1. Hedva Rosen, Aspects of the literary structure of the Mekhilta

Supervisor: Renate Smithuis
2. Marci Freedman: The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela

Newcastle University

Supervisor: Beate Müller

University of Oxford

Supervisor: Martin Goodman
1. David Friedman, Josephus on the servile origins of the Jews in Egypt.
3. Andrea De Marinis, A study of Philo, Quod omnis prous liber.

Supervisor: Abigail Green
1. Milena Zeidler: Transnational Jewish Relief Networks and the Emergence of Jewish Internationalism in Congress Poland.

Supervisor: Jan Joosten
1. Matt Albanese: Septuagint Isaiah.

Supervisor: Derek Penslar
2. Peter Bergamin, An Intellectual Biography of Abba Achimeir.

Supervisor: Alison Salvesen

Supervisor: Joanna Weinberg
1. Sabine Arndt (co-supervisor Emilie Savage-Smith): Judah Hacohen and the Emperor's philosopher: Dynamics of transmission at cultural crossroads.
2. Symon Foren: Ovadiah Sforno as exegete and philosopher.

Supervisor: Hugh Williamson
1. Sonja Noll, An analysis of the semantic field of words for 'silence' in the Hebrew Bible.
4. Jongkyung Lee, 'They will attach themselves to the house of Jacob': A Redactional Study of Isaiah 13–23.
5. Anna Khanina, The Use of earlier Scripture in Speeches in Chronicles.

Queen Mary, University of London

Supervisor: Miri Rubin (History)
1. Milan Zonca, Authority and Deviance in Medieval Jewishry.
Supervisor: Daniel Wildmann
3. Dana Smith: The “Jüdischer Kulturbund”: Jewish Cultural Life and Identity under Nazism
4. Tabea Maja Judith Richardson: Deliberate voices: 3 female protagonists and their take on the Christian-Jewish dialogue after the Holocaust; Gertrud Luckner, the activist, Eleonore Sterling, the historian Jeanette Wolff, the politician
5. Florence Langilliére: Nationalist Jews in France, Germany, and Italy Faced with Anti-Semitism: 1914-1940.

University of Reading

Supervisor: David Brauner

University of Roehampton

Supervisor: Eric Jacobson
2. Chris Horner, Hannah Arendt and the Fate of Judgment.
3. Ariel Kahn, Kabbalah as Narrative Technique in I. B. Singer, Kafka and Aynon.

SOAS

Supervisor: Catherine Hezser

University of Southampton

Supervisor: Tony Kushner
5. Tom Plant, Anglo-Jewish Identity and Youth Clubs in the Twentieth Century.
6. Malgorzata Wloszycka, Debates about the Holocaust in Postwar Poland at the local level.

Supervisor: Shirli Gilbert
1. Laura Musker, Italian Jewish Communities and the Catholic Church during the Fascist Era.

Supervisor: Devorah Baum
1. Michael Witcombe, Sex and Sexuality in Philip Roth.
2. Eva Van Loenen, Representations of Hasidim and Hasidism in Post-War American Literature.

Supervisor: Andrea Reiter
1. Bettina Koehler, Contemporary German-Jewish Literature (esp. Maxim Biller) as a Counter Discourse.
2. Diana Popescu, The contribution of post-Holocaust visual art to the shaping of Jewish and Israeli identities.
3. Meike Reintjes, German Jewish Women Poets in British Exile.
4. Mike Witcombe, Philip Roth.
5. Silke Schwaiger, Edition Exil, Vienna and Migrant Authors.

Supervisor: Joachim Schlör

Trinity College Dublin

Supervisor: Zuleika Rodgers
2. Emily Parker, The figure of Joseph in the writings Philo of Alexandria (completed 2014).
3. Natalie Wynn, Jewish Activism and intercommunal relations, 1840–1913 (completed 2014)

Supervisor: Anne Fitzpatrick
3. Heidi O’Rourke, Amun and Yahweh: An Examination of the Jewish Temple of Elephantine during the Persian Period.

University College Dublin

Supervisor: Lindsey Earner-Byrne

University College London

Supervisor: Helen Beer

**Supervisor: Michael Berkowitz**
4. Felicity Griffiths, *Ethnicity and Minority Groups in the Colleges of London University*.

**Supervisor: François Guesnet**
2. Zuzanna Krzemien: Salomon Dubno (1738-1813) - Eastern European Jewish Learning and German Jewish Haskalah.

**Supervisor: Lily Kahn**
1. Paul Moore: *A Syntactic Analysis of Targum Canticles* (second supervisor, with Willem Smelik)

**Supervisor: Neill Lochery**
1. Azriel Bermant, *Britain’s Policy towards the Arab-Israeli Conflict under the Thatcher Government*.
2. Toby Greene, *The impact of Islamist terrorism on UK policy towards the State of Israel*.
3. Mohammed Hussein, *Hamas and the Islamification of the Palestinian Authority Areas*.

**Supervisor: Ada Rapoport-Albert**
2. Nathaniel Berman, *‘Improper Twins’: The Ambivalent ‘Other Side’ in the Zohar and Kabbalistic Tradition*.
5. Agata Paluch, *R. Nathan Neta Shapiro of Krakow (1585–1633) and the Ashkenazi Kabbalah*.

8. Lindsey Taylor-Guthartz, *The religious lives of Orthodox Jewish women in London, with a focus on folk practices*.

**Supervisor: Sacha Stern**
Members’ recent publications

The following entries are based on communications received from BAJS members.


Eadem (with Natalie Tchemetska), ‘Glosses in Greek script and language in medieval Hebrew manuscripts’, Scriptorium 68 (2014), 253-64.


Eadem, ‘A Late Iron Age Cult Stand from Gezer’, In John R. Spencer, Robert A. Mullins and Aaron J. Brody, eds., Material Culture Matters: Essays


Eadem, Review of Katrin Pietzner, Bildung, Elite und Konkurrenz. Heiden und Christen vor der Zeit Constantins, STAC 77, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck,


Eadem, ‘Greco-Roman Sündials and Their Links to a Qumran Calendar (4Q208-4Q209)’, Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry 14:3 (2014), 67-81.


James Renton, The West’s war against Palestinian ‘Extremism’ is Doomed to Fail’, The Conversation, 3 August 2014 (available online).


Idem, ’The Babylonian Calendar and the Bible’, 2014 (available online).


Jonathan Stökl (ed. with Alan Lenzi), Divination, Politics and


Book Reviews

Midrash as a fundamental form of Jewish culture

Midrash Unbound is a significant and substantial contribution to the study of midrashic literature, method and process as manifested in diverse Jewish sources, and select non-Jewish writings, from Late Antiquity to the Modern age. Fishbane and Weinberg have brought together an impressive array of scholars to explore the nature of Midrash in varied historical and geographical contexts, pointing out, as the aptly chosen title suggests, transformations and innovations in the development of the genre.

The editors outline their aims in an incisive introduction, which not only describes the individual contributions but draws important connections between them. The opening statement of the volume highlights the purpose in producing this collection: ‘to enlarge the perspective on Midrash and midrashic creativity – marking its arcs and turns across the vast breadth of Jewish literature, through close studies of its varieties and transformations’ (p1). Thus, the overall approach in this volume is to illustrate the evolution and reception of the midrashic genre, which is explored primarily in literature of the Medieval and Early Modern periods. Given the vast range of potential choices of source material, the editors have selected for investigation what they consider to be ‘typical cases’ (p1).

The volume is presented in four parts, with twenty contributions from eighteen scholars of international reputation, along with the introduction to the volume by the editors. The four parts are intended to represent key phases in the development of Midrash.

Part One is on ‘Origins and Subsurface Traditions’, and focuses on the period of Late Antiquity in Jewish and Christian literature (noted by the editors as first to fifth centuries). It begins with a chapter on ‘Midrash and the Meaning of Scripture’ (Fishbane, ch.1), which draws attention to the form, construction and features of midrashic traditions. This provides an excellent introduction and foundation for questions on the nature of Midrash in the rest of the volume. The second chapter provides a comparison of classical midrashic and targumic sources on Exodus 17:14-16 (Hayward, ch.2), and the remainder of Part One consists of three chapters on the reception and/or process of Midrash in Christian literature: the New Testament (van Boxel, ch.3); Jerome (Salvesen, ch.4); and Syriac traditions (Brock, ch.5). The consideration of the role of Midrash in non-Jewish and, specifically, Christian literature is elaborated in most detail in this section of the volume, and highlights the relationship between Jewish and Christian exegetical writings in this formative period.

Part Two is on ‘Later Midrashic Forms’ and assesses material from the end of Late Antiquity through to the early Medieval period (fifth to eleventh centuries). The first of the chapters in this section covers the use and application of Midrash in piyyutim (Fishbane, ch.6), Pesikta Rabbati on the concept of the suffering messiah (Alexander, ch.7) and the polemical Toledot Yeshu as representative of a narrative midrashic approach (Fishbane, ch.8). The analysis of narrative Midrash is continued in the chapter on ‘Storytelling as Midrashic Discourse in the Middle Ages’ (Yassif, ch.9), which provides a compelling discussion on the shift towards literary independence in this period and the development of midrashic creativity as a means of addressing cultural questions. The final chapter discusses ‘performative Midrash’ and examines how midrashic traditions influence or stimulate action as recorded especially in narratives of martyrdom (Marcus, ch.10). This section contains a particularly well-chosen range of material, and persuasively highlights a transition in the nature of Midrash of this period through increasingly rich innovation and adaptation in literary production.

Part Three is entitled ‘Medieval Transformations’ and analyses material from the later Medieval period (twelfth and thirteenth centuries). This includes assessment of the work of Nathan ben Yehiel (Weinberg, ch.11), Rashi (Marcus, ch.12), Tosafist commentators (Kanarfogel, ch.14) and the Zohar (Wolfson, ch. 15). This section also includes a chapter on The Pendulum of Exegetical Methodology: From Peshat to Derash and Back’ (Japhet, ch.13), which provides an insightful investigation of the relationship

between peshat and derash methodologies in Jewish literature up to the Medieval period. This part of the volume effectively illustrates the importance of Midrash as a scholastic enterprise. The final part of the volume is on ‘Early Modern and Modern Traditions’ (sixteenth to twentieth centuries), with Early Modern material as the focus of discussion in four out of the five chapters. The section begins with a chapter on ‘The Ingathering of Midrash Rabbah: A Moment of Creativity and Innovation’ (Williams, ch.16), which provides a clear overview of the compilation of this anthology in the sixteenth century, and responses to and use of Midrash Rabbah by contemporary commentators such as Meir Benveniste and Judah Gedaliah. This is followed by chapters on Midrash in Medieval and Early Modern Jewish sermons (Saperstein, ch.17), a case study on the work of R. Judah Loew of Prague (Elbaum, ch. 18) and analysis of a collection of traditions on the destruction of the Temple in a Yiddish booklet (Elbaum and Turniansky, ch.19). The section closes with a chapter on Midrash in Habad Hasidism (Loewenthal, ch.20), which brings the volume into the Modern period. This section presents another shift with a ‘gradual return of Midrash to its popular base in the community’ (p2), affected in large part by the emergence of printing.

Key questions are raised and explored by this collection such as: how are we to understand and define ‘Midrash’? What is its influence and legacy? What transformations and innovations has the genre experienced, both as a literary product and a process of interpretation? The definition of ‘Midrash’ is left open by Fishbane and Weinberg to allow each contributor to explain their own understanding of the term, and what it means for the literature they are investigating. In this way, the editors have allowed for a diverse range of perspectives on what is significant about Midrash in any given period, whether this is the production of a midrashic text or compilation, analysis of the application of midrashic methods or examination of the reception of midrashic traditions. Each chapter carefully draws out how Midrash has been used, transformed and creatively developed in the particular historical context under consideration, thus allowing for a broader assessment of trends and diversity in different periods. As a result, the editors have produced a collection that successfully emphasises the importance of Midrash across diverse contexts and types of writings from classical midrashic and targumic compilations to later commentaries, dictionaries, narrative tales, poetry, sermons and kabbalistic literature.

The questions raised and explored provide a stimulating basis for new thinking about the field. The volume certainly fulfils Fishbane and Weinberg’s intention to highlight the role that Midrash has played in the creation and formation of Jewish identity and culture through the ages. The collection supports their assertion that ‘Midrash is a fundamental form of Jewish culture’ (p1), and represents ‘cultural pedagogy’ (p2) through the transmission of values, beliefs and ideas. The editors also maintain that there is an identifiable coherence and integrity in all its expressions over the course of two millennia’ (p1). This is clearly illustrated by the centrality and authority of Scripture at the heart of the genre, as also emphasised in the introduction (p2) and by Fishbane in ch.1., but the transformations of Midrash in the various contexts discussed is what stands out in this volume.

I would highly recommend this collection to those interested in the concept of Midrash, both as a literary genre and an exegetical process, and the reception, indeed transformation, of the medium through history. It is a volume that enriches and meaningfully extends discussion on how we can understand Midrash and its development in diverse literary forms and historical contexts.

Dr Helen Spurling
University of Southampton

Placing Judaism at the Heart of Western Thought

ANTI-JUDAISM

THE WESTERN TRADITION

DAVID NIRENBERG


Historians and social scientists fell out of love many years ago with the view that ideas can persist across epochs, centuries, or even generations. The 1970s witnessed the beginning of a ferocious pre-occupation among scholars with uncovering the novelty of ideas that had previously been thought to be integral parts of Western culture. The convention now is that modernity was/is the age of ideational as well as technological invention— not just innovation. Indeed, many see
invention and unceasing change as the hallmarks of post-medieval thought—if not the human story in general. Traditions of thought, as much as traditions of social practice, are—the argument runs—a human self-deceit, which results from the need for fixity in the midst of constant flux. The study of antisemitism is no exception: the dominant view for many years has been that prejudice against Jews cannot be understood as operating consistently across time and space.

More recently, however, several scholars have begun to complicate this picture. Susannah Heschel, for example, has emphasised the Christian theological substance of Nazi antisemitism, which most have seen as the culmination of a modern, secular, scientific racism.1 Gil Anidjar has gone further, and rubbed out the lines between medieval and modern in his history of Christian thought, which, he contends, shapes what many describe as the secular West. Anidjar has argued that Western understandings of Jews, along with other aspects of social, political and even economic thought, are determined by a Christian self-understanding focused on blood.2 David Nirenberg’s hugely important book, Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition, should be seen as part of this profound challenge to the historical and intellectual framework of secular modernity. His book is very different, however, to the recent scholarship of those who are interested in the travel and influence of ideas across time. His interest is, rather, in the persistence and power of frames of thinking, or the shells of categories of conceptualisation, rather than their content. He argues that through centuries the figure of the Jew has been, and continues to be, an object used within societies to work through—to articulate and figure out—challenges brought by significant social, political and economic change. For this reason, representations and discussions of Judaism and Jews changes in fundamental ways over time, dependent upon the problems that they are being used to understand or challenge.

Nirenberg is keen to show that ‘anti-Judaism’ was not a product of Christianity alone and cannot be limited to Europe. He provocatively starts his story, therefore, with a chapter on ancient Egypt, concerned principally with Hellenistic Egypt, and focuses his attention in chapter 4 on attitudes towards Judaism in early Islam. Why did Judaism play this role in these and other societies? In ancient Egypt, where we have little evidence to go on, the principal causes might have been the significant Jewish minority presence, Judaism’s direct challenge to Egyptian belief, and the anomalous position of a Greek elite that was stuck between Roman overlords and indigenous society. When we move to the main focus of Nirenberg’s analysis—Christendom—the cause is much clearer: Christian theology. As Christianity claimed to supersede Judaism, it had a special relationship with that religion that was more intimate and necessarily more hostile than any other in the history of ‘anti-Judaism’ (for all of the early Islamic concern with Jews as figures of hypocrisy and falsification, Judaism was simply not as important in Islamic thought as it was in Christianity and Christendom).

Nirenberg’s explanation of how Jews were conceived from the beginnings of Christianity renders a familiar story: Judaism as the law, the letter, and the flesh versus Christianity as the spirit; and Jews as the wretched outcasts needed to testify to the wrongs of rejecting Christ. What is different about his analysis is why these Christian understandings of Jews and Judaism remained persistently significant across time, including the era of secularism. Nirenberg argues that Jews and Judaism became a principal means for how Western thought functioned—a major vehicle through which Christian societies negotiated change, from the vicissitudes of early Christian theology and medieval conflict over sovereignty to the French revolution and modern economic and political thought. Hence, as Nirenberg makes clear, anti-Judaism was as significant in societies from which Jews had been expelled, as those where Jews actually lived.

There are significant problems with aspects of Nirenberg’s analysis. His separation of ‘anti-Judaism’ as a field of thought from racism in general and antisemitism in particular is based on narrow definitions of these two phenomena (pp. 214, 406). The abstract figures of the Jew and Judaism, and theology and culture in general, have a complex inter-relationship with conceptions of the real world. Moreover, European understandings of Jews and Judaism belonged to, and affected, wider frames of prejudice and racialization, as Hannah Arendt made clear in her classic The Origins of Totalitarianism—a text that interests Nirenberg, though for other reasons.3 Nirenberg’s ‘anti-Judaism’ misses, among other thought zones of racial/religious difference, the important relationship between how

3 Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism (San Diego: Harcourt, 1985 edn), Part II.
Christian societies conceived Jews and Muslims from the Crusades until the early twentieth century. Finally, his model of ‘anti-Judaism’ does not sufficiently account for the praise for, and indeed obsession with, ancient Israel (see especially chapter 9) that was particularly prevalent in the seventeenth century, but was also important long after this moment.

These questions do not detract, however, from the general thrust of Nirenberg’s argument, which is as original as it is convincing: he takes Judaism from the margins of Western thought and places it firmly at the very centre. This book, therefore, lays down a great challenge to students of the West and its genealogies. If Nirenberg is right, why have the figures of the Jew and Judaism been so neglected in the new intellectual history of recent years—in studies of European Empire, transnational modernity, political economy? And now that he has made his case, will scholars outside of Jewish Studies take note? I very much hope so.

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**New publications in early modern Jewish history**

The early modern period is a period of transition that has shaped European history profoundly. In Jewish historiography the awareness of this era as a distinctive period – and not just the continuation of the Middle Ages - is a relatively recent development, shaped by historians such as Elisheva Carlebach, Elliott Horowitz, Bob Liberles, Benjamin Rudin and David Ruderman, among others, whose works have highlighted the complex ways in which early modern Jews negotiated the challenges of an ever-changing ‘host society’ in the centuries before legal emancipation. Some of the most exciting scholarship that has appeared in the past decades has also firmly put the focus of attention on early modern Jews as agents of their destiny who actively and resourcefully shaped their own lives, despite the legal, occupational, social and religious limitations in place. These insights have also nuanced our understanding of the relationship between Jews and non-Jews. The focus of scholarly attention has shifted from no longer regarding Jews exclusively as victims of Gentile aggression, discrimination and persecution but as players in their own right who responded in manifold ways to their non-Jewish neighbours.

The following works are important new contributions to the growing body of scholarship on early modern Jewish history and Jewish-non-Jewish relations in Europe.


Stephen Burnett, a professor of Religious Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is a well-known expert on Christian Hebraism. His book on the Hebraist Johannes Buxtorf is the definite work on the Swiss scholar’s contributions to Christian Hebraism. The current volume, meticulously researched and lucidly written, is the culmination of years of scholarship in the field of Hebrew printing. The book traces the development of Hebrew as a language nearly exclusively associated with the Jews at the beginning of the sixteenth century to a powerful tool of the Protestant reformers who used it to attack the authority of the Catholic doctrine. This led not only to the expansion of teaching Hebrew at universities but also to flourishing of the Hebrew book market. Burnett points out that ‘the Reformation turned Christian Hebraism from the pastime of a few hobbyists and theologians into a broad based intellectual movement that involved students and professors, printers, patrons of many kinds living throughout Europe,’ [3] with Christian Hebraists playing a leading role in establishing the academic engagement with Hebrew and Jewish texts within Christian scholarship.

How did this remarkable development happen? Burnett successfully contextualises the work of leading Christian Hebraists by analysing Christian Hebrew books and their authors. Burnett argues that Christian Hebrew books – books that contain a substantial amount of Hebrew type – are an ‘intellectual bridge between the Jewish and Christian world of scholarship’ that ‘mediate Jewish learning’ [5]. While Christian Hebrew books may be of relatively minor importance in the Hebrew

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4 Ben Gidley and James Renton (eds), Antisemitism and Islamophobia: A Shared Story (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming).

printing industry as a whole, they flourished in the Reformation era. About 2,000 such books were printed between 1501 and 1660. The bibliographical information they provide allows mapping out the intellectual world of Christian Hebraism, its centres, main players and which aspects of Jewish learning they found relevant for Christian purposes.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first examines what motivated Christians to learn Hebrew and how this was made possible by the introduction of Hebrew teaching at European universities. The following chapter studies the authors, the confessionalisation of Hebrew studies and the patronage system that made these works possible. Chapter three explores which Jewish texts were of particular interest to Christian scholars. Burnett shows that these were mostly related to Hebrew language and biblical studies. In chapter four the access to Jewish learning and the ‘birth of Jewish bibliography’ is studied. This is an interesting chapter reconstructing the personal and public Judaica collections and noble libraries that contained Jewish works. The last two chapters examine the production and distribution of Christian Hebrew books. How and where were they printed, who were the printers and booksellers, how did they reach their buyers? Chapter five answers these questions but, as demonstrated in chapter six, press control in Catholic Spain and Italy limited the discourse in these countries, despite the flourishing trade in Hebrew books.

A particular interesting aspect of the book is the exploration of the role that Jews and converts from Judaism played in the growth of Christian Hebraism. Christians were not only interested in Jewish texts but often engaged closely and personally with Jewish tutors, purchasing agents, copyists and translators. While Burnett notes that these personal contacts were ‘marked all too often by misunderstandings that arose from cultural differences and from dissimilar approaches to Hebrew learning as well as from religious friction’, he also argues that the common interest in the Hebrew book ‘made possible a new kind of encounter with Judaism, embodied in Christian Hebrew books’. [9] Burnett’s book is undoubtedly a major contribution to the study of Christian Hebraism that combines a highly readable discussion of the intellectual endeavours with very practical information on the realities of producing, advertising and selling books in Hebrew. The book provides a wealth of detailed information on individual scholars, Christian printing presses, publishers and specific works published and the technical challenges of type-setting Hebrew type. The work enhances our understanding of the role of printing in the Reformation era and contextualises a fascinating aspect of the intellectual and commercial encounters between Jewish and Christians in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.


Stimulated by the influential works of Maurice Halbwachs6 and Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi,7 memory has become a frequently studied topic in Jewish historiography but Greenfield takes these debates further. She focuses on a richly documented case study and utilizes an impressive range of sources to examine how the Jews of Prague understood, recorded and preserved their history. This history was always an alternative version to Christian readings of historical events. As Greenblatt argues, Jewish affirmation that God continued providence over the Jews and vindicated them was a refutation of Christian claims that God had rejected the Jews, as

7 Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982).
demonstrated by their prolonged exile. Grief and mourning over calamities that had befallen them and the need to preserve the memory of these for future generation also inspired memory strategies.

David Gans’ chronicle Zemah David is well known as the major historical chronicle of Ashkenazic Judaism at that time but it is also exceptional. Greenblatt demonstrates the variety of forms the creation of memory took in early modern Prague. These were influenced by cultural and material conditions, gender roles and their transformations, the socioeconomic status, print technology, increasing literacy of men and women and linguistic considerations. The city’s evocative Jewish cemetery has become a major site for mass tourism today but Greenblatt reads it as a crucial site of communal and individual memory. She draws out beautifully how memory can serve as ‘a bridge between the living and the dead’ by using gravestones, ritual objects and a weekly liturgy for the dead to ‘keep the dead actively involved in the daily activities of the living’ [6]. The timeframe chosen for the book allows tracing the changes in the aesthetics of memory and in the role of the individual. As the latter becomes more important in commemoration, live stories of family members were more commonly included in introductions to books or handwritten familial rescue tales (such as a scroll, written by R. Yomtov Lipmann Heller, describing his 1629 imprisonment for alleged anti-imperial and anti-Christian writings and his subsequent release) that established a special commemoration day with fasting and a ‘Purim’ celebration, that as a tale of deliverance evoked the biblical Purim story. In the larger context within the community, liturgies for annual commemorations were created to remember the rescue from past threats. Greenfeld notes the political aspects of these events, arguing that outside pressure and internal conflicts shaped the form of local commemorations. She also explores another genre, historical songs in Yiddish whose main purpose was to disseminate news among Jewish communities. The Chief Rabbi Oppenheim’s keen interest in collecting rare manuscripts and ephemera resulted in a unique collection of printed booklets, now preserved at the Bodleian and skilfully analysed in the book.

The six chapters of the book explore the urban geography of Prague and the role of calendars, the memorial space of cemetery and synagogue, autobiographical writing and commemorations within a family setting, the link between authorship, communal authority and local traditions, the forms of memory in writing, telling and singing and finally studying print versus manuscript, vernacular versus sacred and women versus men in chapter six. A particular interesting and moving example that highlights not only the increasing importance of Yiddish as a written language but also the contribution of women to the expansion of printing is a text commemorating the seven dead children of Baer and Beila Perlhefter. Beila wrote the introduction to an ethical treatise in Yiddish that the couple published in memory of their children.

This is meticulously researched and original book that enhances our understanding of the world of early modern Jews and makes an important contribution to the study of communal memory as a form of identity.

Iris Idelson-Shein, Difference of a Different Kind: Jewish


Iris Idelson-Shein, a former student of Shulamit Volkov and currently a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Martin-Buber-Professur für Jüdische Religionsphilosophie in Frankfurt, has written an original and engaging study that makes an important contribution to the study of Jewish identity, self-definition and attitudes towards non-Jews. Set in the contextual framework of the study of the history of race in general and in the eighteenth century in particular, the author analyses how the ‘other’ in European society, the Jews, in turn internalised and engaged with the emerging discourse on racial difference.

The author argues that ‘otherness’ in the early modern was not defined by skin colour or other biological markers but by cultural and religious differences. Only in the late eighteenth century, more essentialist notions of difference, came to the fore. Idelson-Shein is interested in the radical change ‘in which Ashkenazi Jews understood difference’ during the early modern period and poses the following questions: How did this change come about, how did it

[6] For more information on this important collection, see the section ‘The Catherine Lewis Lectures’ on p. 9 of this Bulletin.
affect the Jewish discourse on race and how does it relate to the bigger non-Jewish context? The book is divided into four chronologically and thematically organised chapters that follow the same method: a carefully selected key text provides the initial focus of the discussion that is then expanded to include a discussion of other relevant texts from the same period. While rabbinical texts are not entirely ignored, the focus of the book is on secular conceptions in the Ashkenazic cultural and social context. The selected texts are from four different literary genres, representing the most dominant modes of writing about race in that period.

Chapter 1 analyses an intriguing passage from the only extant memoirs of an early modern woman, the German-Jewish business woman Glikl bas Leib, where she describes an erotic encounter between a pious Jew and an East Indian woman, based on a folktale. The focus of the chapter is on representations of the savage woman and particularly on the savage mother.

The following chapter discusses a philosophical text by the Lithuanian physician and prototypical early maskil Yehudah ben Mordecai ha-Levi Horowitz that was published in Amsterdam in 1766. Here Idelson-Shein is particularly interested in the seeming contradiction that non-Europeans can be portrayed as both noble and ignoble.

Chapters 3 and 4 explore on the image of the savage in the very first Hebrew books written for children from the beginning of the 19th century. The focus of both chapters is Hebrew and Yiddish translations of German books aimed at children, highlighting the important role of translators ‘as agent of internal cultural-colonization’.

The book traces the changes that occurred in Jewish perceptions of race in the long 18th century. Focusing on well-chosen authors and texts, Idelson-Shein notes a development from a sense of superiority through a quest for equality to feelings of inferiority that highlights both the Jewish sense of self and of the other. This is a stimulating and creative book that makes for enjoyable reading.

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