PROGRAM BOOKLET / LIVRET DE PROGRAMME

Canadian Society for Jewish Studies, Annual Conference 2026

Conférence annuelle 2026 de la Société canadienne d'études juives

Generously sponsored by / Avec le généreux soutien du

Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies, Carleton University

Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, May 26-28, 2026

Université Carleton, Ottawa Ontario, Canada, du 26 au 28 mai, 2026

in unceded Algonquin Anishinaabe territory
au territoire non cédé du peuple anishinabé algonquin



Paterson Hall

Breakfasts/Déjeuners : in front of / devant Paterson 303

Panels : Paterson 303

Lunches/Dîners: Paterson 301

Supper on Tuesday / Souper mardi : Paterson 201

Daily schedule / Horaire de chaque jour p. 1-4

Panel schedule with biographies and abstracts /
Panels, avec biographies et résumés des communications p. 5-29

Daily schedule / Horaire de chaque jour

TUESDAY MAY 26 / MARDI 26 MAI

9 am / 9h Welcome, breakfast / Bienvenue; déjeuner

10 am / 10h **History / Histoire (I)** (Présidente/Chair: Deidre Butler)

Tzipporah Machlah Klapper (Harvard)
The Political Success of the Adiabenian Royalty in Jerusalem

Emmanuel Friedheim (Bar-Ilan)
Le choix rabbinique de compiler la Mishna trouve-t-il son origine historique dans les difficultés éducatives rencontrées au sein de la famille judéenne ?

Mary Jane Ainslie (Nottingham—Ningbo)
Tracing the Jewish Networks of Pre-Modern China: Reclaiming Power and Refuting Isolation in the Jiangnan Region

Dan Shapira (Bar-Ilan)
A Follow-Up to "The First Jews of Ukraine": A pre-Ashkenazi Turkic-Speaking Rabbanite Community of Ukraine-Rus' Found

12 noon / 12h Lunch / Dîner

1 pm / 13h **Women's Voices** (Chair: Deidre Butler)

Lily An Kim (Independent Scholar)
When East Meets West: The Migration and Incarceration of Jewish Women in America

Tirzah Meacham (University of Toronto)
The Afterlife of Original Sin in Women's Petitionary Prayers

Ira Robinson (Concordia)
"In the Mirror of Life": Jewish Women and Women's Issues in Montreal as Reflected in the Advice Column of the *Keneder Adler*, 1930-1933

2:30 pm / 14h30 Break / Pause

2:45 pm / 14h45 **Ethics / אתיקה** (**יו"ר** / Chair: Ira Robinson)

עירית עופר שטרק (בר-אילן)
קביעת סדרי קדימויות בהצלה בעת מלחמה : מבט ביואתי-יהודי לאור מלחמת חרבות ברזל
(Irit Offer Stark, Bar-Ilan: Prioritizing Rescue Efforts in Wartime: a Jewish Bioethical Perspective in Light of the "Iron Swords" War)

Noa Vigny Billick (Toronto Metropolitan University)
How Not To Make An Idol: Jewish Art and Ethical Representation

Ariela Rosenzweig (University of Toronto)
A Benjaminian Shabbat: Translation, Messianism,and Ritual Praxis

Anya Broytman (McGill)
Soviet State's Emissaries and Victims: The Aftermath of Solomon Mikhoels and Itzik Fefer's 1943 North American Tour

5 pm / 17h Dinner / Souper

WEDNESDAY MAY 27 / MERCREDI 27 MAI

8:30 am / 8h30 Breakfast / Déjeuner

9 am / 9h **History (II)**
Chair: Tirzah Meacham

Jose Luis Dizon (University of Toronto)
How Two Jewish Scholars Helped Create Modern Muslim Studies

Diane Kemker (Loyola University Chicago)
How Antisemitism and Ableism at Ellis Island Shaped Stereotypes of the 20th Century North American Jewish Man

Ronnie Miller (Independent Scholar)
Zionist Ideology and the Politics of Language: Nathan Eliashvili and the Georgian Jewish Diaspora (1910s-1920s)

Vivian Astroff (Independent Scholar)
A Narrative of Anglo-Jewish Aspirations and Accomplishments: The Leons of Bletchley Park Estate

11 am / 11h Break / Pause

11:15 am / 11h15 **Religious Literature / ספרות דתית**
יו"ר / Chair: Ira Robinson

Natalie Polzer (Louisville)
The Story Cycles of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Akiva in *Avot de Rabbi Natan* Versions A and B: Proto-Biography or Redactional Coincidence?

אבישר הר-שפי (בר-אילן)
על מקומו של האדם ויחסיו עם הטבע - ר' פנחס בן יאיר ור' שמעון בר יוחאי בזוהר בלק
(Avishar Har-Shefi, Bar-Ilan: On the Human Being's Place and Relationship to Nature – Rabbi Pinḥas ben Yair and Rabbi Shim'on bar Yoḥai in the Zohar on Balak)

Martin Lockshin (York)
"'The Torah has Seventy Faces' - But Not Seventy-One"

12:45 pm / 12h45 Lunch / Dîner

1:45 pm / 13h45 **Before and after the Shoah**
Chair: Justin Jaron Lewis

Ula Madej-Krupitski (McGill)
Between Inclusion and Exclusion: The Polish "Holiday of the Sea" and Jewish Belonging in the 1930s

Virginia Shewfelt (University of Toronto)
Country and Land in Early Issues of *Undzer Shtime*

Celia Rothenberg (McMaster)
The Legend of the Nazi "Museum of an Extinct Race"

3:15 pm / 15h15 Break / Pause

WEDNESDAY MAY 27, continued / MERCREDI 26 MAI, suite

3:30 pm / 15h30 **Contemporary Concerns**
Chair: Celia Rothenberg
Alex Tepperman (Winnipeg)
Campus and Cul-de-Sac: Mapping Jewish Crime in the 21st Century
Cary Kogan (University of Ottawa)
A Hostile Campus Climate: Faculty Experiences of Antisemitism on Campus post-October 7
Deidre Butler & Betina Appel Kuzmarov (Carleton)
"We Held Candles and Burnt Our Fingers": Activists Speak about the Trouble with Jewish Divorce in Canada

5 pm Shuttle bus to Soloway JCC for dinner and evening program /
17h Navette au Centre communautaire juif Soloway pour le souper et programme de soirée

Evening program / programme de soirée : The Nightingale of Iran (Le Rossignol d'Iran)



Their grandfather was a famous singer known as The Nightingale of Iran. Their father, a Tehran teen idol. It's always been a mystery to Danielle Dardashti (storyteller/ documentarian) and her sister Galeet Dardashti (musician/ (anthropologist): What drove their Persian Jewish family to leave Iran during a golden age for Jews, so long before the Islamic revolution? This live show, based on their chart topping audio documentary about identity, belonging, and music, reveals painful secrets unspoken for generations.

THURSDAY MAY 28 / JEUDI 28 MAI

8:30 am / 8h30 Breakfast / Déjeuner

9 am / 9h **The Arts / האמנויות**
יו"ר / Chair: Ira Robinson
Rhoda Seidenberg (Independent Scholar)
Patriotism and Belonging: *Heimat* for Lilli Baitz in Salzburg and Berlin
Elizabeth Bolton (Independent Scholar)
The Influence of Judith Kaplan Eisenstein on the Jewish Liturgical Soundscape
סיון הר-שפי (הרצוג / בר-אילן)
אלם וכתיבה במציאות של מלחמה ומשבר (שיחת-אמן)
(Sivan Har-Shefi, Herzog / Bar-Ilan: Silence and Writing in a Time of War and Crisis – Artist Talk)
Luke Langille (Concordia)
Woven Out of History: Anni Albers, Otti Berger, Sonia Delaunay, Trude Guermonprez, Gego and Eva Hesse in a Contemporary Exhibition

THURSDAY MAY 28, continued / JEUDI 28 MAI, suite

11 am / 11h Break / Pause

11:15 am / 11h15 **Diasporas Beyond Ashkenaz**
Chair: Justin Jaron Lewis

Mika Benesh (Concordia)
Iraqi Jewish Amuletic Cultures

Miranda Crowdus (Concordia)
Sonic Heritage Diversity: Songs of Middle Eastern and North African Jews in Montreal

Eyal Davidson (Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies)
The Ketubah Enactment Dispute as a Test Case of the Clash of Traditions between the Musta'arabi and Immigrant Jews in the 16th-Century Land of Israel

12:45 pm / 12h45 Lunch and Annual General Meeting / Dîner et assemblée générale annuelle

2:30 pm / 14h30 Goodbyes / Au revoir !

Thank you / Merci :

all our presenters and everyone attending this year's conference / tou.te.s ceux et celles qui ont partagé leurs recherches avec nous, et tou.te.s nous auditrices/auditeurs
our President Deidre Butler, Vice-President Yael Halevi-Wise, and the CSJS executive / notre présidente, Deidre Butler, notre vice-présidente, Yael Halevi-Wise, et le comité exécutif
all CSJS members / tou.te.s les membres de la SCÉJ

CSJS Institutional Members / Membres institutionnels de la SCÉJ:
The Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies, Carleton University
Department of Jewish Studies, McGill University
The Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Toronto
Israel & Golda Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies, York University
Conference sponsor / Sponsor de la conférence :
Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies, Carleton University

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES * RÉSUMÉS ET BIOGRAPHIES

Panel 1	History / Histoire (I)	p. 5
Panel 2	Women's Voices	p. 8
Panel 3	Ethics / אתיקה	p. 9
Panel 4	History (II)	p. 13
Panel 5	Religious Literature / ספרות דתית	p. 16
Panel 6	Before and After the Shoah	p. 18
Panel 7	Contemporary Concerns	p. 20
Panel 8	The Arts / האמנויות	p. 23
Panel 9	Diasporas Beyond Ashkenaz	p. 26

Panel 1 ~ HISTORY (I) ~ paper 1
Tuesday May 26 10-10:30 / mardi 26 mai 10h – 10h30

Tzipporah Machlah Klapper (Harvard University):
The Political Success of the Adiabenian Royalty in Jerusalem

Abstract: The first-century Adiabenian Queen Helena and her son King Monobaz appear several times in rabbinic literature, as well as in an extended narrative in Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*. Whereas Josephus' narrative focuses on the conversion to Judaism of Helena and her son Izates, rabbinic literature only occasionally hints at the family's origins outside of the land of Israel, instead focusing on their exemplary piety and generosity. (One later narrative depicts Monobaz's conversion, but this narrative shows signs of having been integrated from a non-rabbinic external source.)

This paper argues that this striking lack of mention of Helena and Monobaz's non-Jewish origins in rabbinic literature is the result of the successful political project of the Adiabenian royalty in Judea. In the first century, the Adiabenians worked to portray themselves as benefactors to the Jews and potentially even as (candidates for) their monarchs. This project was successful, and Jews in the Land of Israel largely remembered them as Jewish monarchs. A careful reading of the other sources which mention the Adiabenians' activities in the Land of Israel, including the works of Josephus, bears this out. Even Josephus only mentions the conversions of the monarchs when discussing their activities *outside* Judea; when it comes to their activities *within* Judea, the Adiabenians function as Jewish royals of exemplary piety and generosity, much as in rabbinic literature.

Biography: Tzipporah Machlah Klapper is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University. She holds an MA in Jewish Studies from the Rothberg International School at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a BA in English Literature from The City College of New York (CCNY).

Panel 1 ~ HISTOIRE (I) ~ communication 2
mardi 26 mai 10h30 – 11h / Tuesday May 26 10:30 - 11

Emmanuel Friedheim (Université Bar-Ilan) :
Le choix rabbinique de compiler la Mishna trouve-t-il son origine historique dans les difficultés éducatives rencontrées au sein de la famille judéenne ?

Résumé: Mon propos sera ici de tenter de comprendre les liens de causalité entre les difficultés familiales - notamment sur le plan éducatif - et la nécessité, ressentie par l'entourage de Rabbi Judah le Prince, de compiler la Mishna au début du III^{e} siècle de notre ère. Cette entreprise, réalisée il y a un peu plus de dix-huit siècles, en l'an 218 selon les calculs des rabbins du X^{e} siècle, Sherira Gaon (906-1006), chef de l'académie babylonienne de Poumbedita, puis Nissim Gaon (990-1062), figure majeure de la communauté juive de Kairouan (dans l'actuelle Tunisie), constitue un tournant majeur dans l'histoire du judaïsme rabbinique.

Comment expliquer historiquement qu'à un moment donné, au sein du judaïsme rabbinique, la décision fut prise de rédiger, ou plutôt de compiler - ce premier volet de la loi

orale, la Mishna, avec ses soixante-trois traités répartis en six ordres, comprenant au total 4 184 enseignements, les Mishnayoth ? Cette décision fut d'autant plus significative qu'elle représente, de fait, la première oeuvre d'envergure principalement halakhique depuis la destruction du Second Temple de Jérusalem en 70.

Je propose donc ici d'examiner plusieurs facteurs historiques susceptibles d'expliquer le besoin soudain de rassembler cette vaste littérature, en plaçant au centre de l'analyse certaines questions d'ordre familial. Sans écarter les explications déjà avancées pour comprendre le choix de Judah le Prince de compiler la Mishna, je souhaiterais suggérer une hypothèse complémentaire : la décision de Judah le Prince aurait trouvé son origine, au moins en partie, dans les difficultés éducatives rencontrées par la deuxième et la troisième génération après la capitulation de Bar Kokhba en 136.

Biographie: Né à Paris, Emmanuel Friedheim a fait son aliyah en 1988. Il est professeur des universités au département d'histoire juive et du Judaïsme contemporain au nom d'Israel et de Golda Koschitzky de l'université Bar-Ilan, et l'auteur de *Rabbinisme et Paganisme en Palestine romaine – Étude historique des Realia talmudiques (Ier-IVème siècles)* Brill; *Those Who Trust in Idols: Polytheism in Iudaea-Palaestina and its Surroundings in the Roman and Early Byzantine Era,* (Tel Aviv University Press – Hebrew) et (sous presse) en collaboration avec Idan Breier, *An Ethical View of Human-Animal Relations in Early Rabbinic Literature – Midrash and Aggada,* (sous presse) entre autres livres et articles.

Panel 1 ~ HISTORY (I) ~ paper 3
Tuesday May 26 11-11:30 / mardi 26 mai 11h – 11h30

Mary Jane Ainslie (University of Nottingham – Ningbo China Campus)
Tracing the Jewish Networks of Pre-Modern China: Reclaiming Power and Refuting Isolation in the Jiangnan Region

Abstract: This paper presents some conclusions from an ongoing project, contributing to contemporary efforts to recover the neglected history of Jewish communities in China. Most significantly, we challenge conventional constructions of historical Jewish communities in pre-modern China, many of which tend to privilege notions of isolation and victimhood.

Our research suggests that while such dominant characterizations may have been true by the eighteenth century, when the Jesuits wrote the first detailed descriptions of the ancient Jewish community in the northern city of Kaifeng, such a construction was not necessarily true for the earlier periods and communities of Chinese Jews.

We will specifically illustrate how, in the Yuan (1271–1368) dynasty and the Ming (1368–1644) dynasty, evidence and context suggests that Jews had stable communication and trading networks across China, both with other non-Han groups and with the broader Jewish diaspora across China. More precisely, we examine the presence of Jews in key locations of economic power across the Jiangnan region, indicating how they were not only well integrated and connected but also played key roles in the significant trading locations. We finish by reassessing the networks, status, and relationships of Jews in the Jiangnan region during the Ming (1368–1644) and early Qing (1636–1912) dynasties, highlighting how evidence suggests the continuation of Jewish networks, that adapted to wider economic and political changes in different ways and directions.

Biography: Dr. Mary J. Ainslie is Associate Professor in Media and Communications and Associate Dean at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at University of Nottingham Ningbo China Campus. Her research specializes in inter-cultural links across the Asia region. She is the author of *Anti-Semitism in Contemporary Malaysia: Malay Nationalism, Philosemitism and Pro-Israel Expressions* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), and her work exploring Judaism in China has appeared in China Quarterly, Patterns of Prejudice, The Yearbook of Transnational History, The Times of Israel and The Conversation.

Panel 1 ~ HISTORY (I) ~ paper 4
Tuesday May 26 11:30-12 / mardi 26 mai 11h30-12h

Dan Shapira (Bar-Ilan University)
A Follow-Up to "The First Jews of Ukraine": A pre-Ashkenazi Turkic-Speaking Rabbanite Community of Ukraine-Rus' Found

Abstract: Back in 2001, I postulated the existence of a Jewish Qıpčaq-Turkic-speaking community in the late 15th century, somewhere in the Qıpčaq Steppe (dešt-i Qıpčaq), but coming originally from Northern Iran. I did so for reasons completely theoretical.

In 2003, I began working on Turkic and Persian translations of the Bible from the First Firkowicz Collection; one Turkic text (I F 143) struck me as strange, but it was only in 2016 that I returned to this text when a scholar from Russia posed before me his questions about this text. This scholar, Dr. Grishchenko, got permission from the library to study the paper on which the MS was written, and it turned out that the paper was Venetian from the 1470s.

So, this partially surviving Judeo-Turkic translation of the Pentateuch is among the oldest Middle Qıpčaq documents. Much to my surprise, this community turned out to be Rabbanite, not Karaite. These Qıpčaq-Turkic-speaking Rabbanite Jews co-existed in time and space with Qıpčaq-Turkic-speaking Karaites and Armenians of Kyiv and Galicia-Wohlyn and lived on the Slavic-Turkic borderland; they were multilingual and possessed astonishingly rich Jewish education. They also co-existed in space and time with the early Ashkenazi Jews in the region.

Some of the members of this community, whom we know by their names and books they had copied, were engaged in Kabbalistically motivated attempts to Judaize (whatever that might mean) the Grand Princedom of Muscovy. The end of this community came in 1482, when Kyiv and adjacent areas were destroyed by the Crimean Tatars in their first ever slaver raid on Ukraine. Surviving members of this community were brough to the Crimea and so were their books. One of these books, a incomplete Middle-Qıpčaq translation of the Torah, is the focus of my topic. This new Jewish language was shaped by the Islamicate and Persianite cultural world; the delicate fabric of Islamic, Persian, even Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Pagan Turkic concepts reflected in this newly found language is artistically amazing. My presentation will be dedicated to analyzing this music of words and what they reflected in context.

Biography: Dan Shapira is Professor, Department of Middle Eastern Studies, and Feldman Professor of the History and Culture of Eastern European Jewry, Faculty of Jewish Studies, at Bar-Ilan University. He has published research on Turkish, Iranian, and Crimean Jewish literature, history, and languages.

Panel 2 ~ WOMEN'S VOICES ~ paper 1
Tuesday May 26, 1 – 1:30 pm / mardi 26 mai, 13h – 13h30

Lily An Kim (Independent Scholar)
When East Meets West: The Migration and Incarceration of Jewish Women in America

Abstract: When Eastern North Carolina State Sanatorium, Wilson, became the first state-sponsored hospital to treat tuberculosis in the USA in 1908, the social construction of illness took root in the American imagination. A cultural history of gender and disease in the Americas reveals a paranoia of race and migration at unchecked borders, which affected the development of institutions, quarantine systems, education and immigration policies. This paper delineates a path of "new" immigrant xenophobia and search for "pathogen" erasure from the South to the Midwest and West that reveals a self-preserving ideology of the modern metropolis. Yet responses to containment paradoxically encouraged the development of intercultural solidarities. This interrogation of "disability" or diseased notions of vitality and health explores legal/civil rights, ethnocultural and migration factors for interracial cooperation against white nationalism. Unearthing the roles that women inhabited in the fight for bodily sovereignty and equal justice proves pertinent to the hope of social healing and a reckoning in the twenty-first century.

Biography: Lily An Kim, DPT, MA, MTS, is a museum educator and board member. She has chaired Holocaust Education (UJA Federation of Toronto) and writes about women, antisemitism/racism and moral injury.

Panel 2 ~ WOMEN'S VOICES ~ paper 2
Tuesday May 26, 1:30 – 2 pm / mardi 26 mai, 13h30 – 14h

Tirzah Meacham (University of Toronto):
The Afterlife of Original Sin in Women's Petitionary Prayers

Abstract: Many Jews believe that there is no element of Original Sin in Judaism. Others, notably S. Levy and Samuel Cohon, maintain that all the elements of doctrine of original sin exist in biblical and rabbinic texts. Normative Judaism, however, determined free will was a precondition to sinning, leaving Original Sin to Christians. This paper will examine sources in rabbinic literature which suggest a concept of Original Sin and analyze the relative guilt of Adam and Eve. We will examine physical and spiritual repercussions of the sin in the Garden of Eden, including the curses directed towards Eve. We will see how the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai removed the stain of Adam and Eve's transgression but how the language of pollution, *zuhama*, opened the possibility of understanding Eve's actions as far weightier and more extensive than eating a fruit. It seems that the giving of the Torah was insufficient to remove guilt and need for atonement. We will then turn to the afterlife of the sin in the Garden and how it is expressed in petitionary prayers, *teḥinot*, for women in Italy in the 17th-19th centuries. Many of these texts exhibit an ongoing engagement with repentance connected to the sin in the Garden.

Bi**ography:** Tirzah Meacham earned her Ph.D. from the Hebrew University, and teaches in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto. She teaches text study in original languages, Hebrew and Aramaic, and courses with texts in translation,

cross-listed with Women and Gender Studies, Equity Studies, and Ethics, Society, and Law. Her publications include contributions to the *Feminist Commentary on the Babylonian Talmud.*

Panel 2 ~ WOMEN'S VOICES ~ paper 3
Tuesday May 26, 2 – 2:30 pm / mardi 26 mai, 14h – 14h30

Ira Robinson (Concordia University)
"In the Mirror of Life": Jewish Women and Women's Issues in Montreal as Reflected in the Advice Column of the *Keneder Adler*, 1930-1933

Abstract: This presentation will analyze Jewish women's issues in Montreal, Canada in the early 1930s as reflected in the advice column, "In the Mirror of Life" [*in shpigl fun lebn*] that appeared in Montreal's Yiddish daily newspaper, *Der Keneder Adler,* from its inception in August 1930 to the death of its first editor, Chaim Kruger (1877-1933), in December 1933. The column presented its readers annually with hundreds of often lengthy letters from readers along with the editor's detailed responses relating to a wide variety of issues. Most of the letters from Montreal Jewish women are concerned with women's issues, and many of the men's letters concerned women as well. Taken as a whole, "In the Mirror of Life" exposed a wide variety of issues faced by Jewish women in Montreal. Issues prominently discussed in the column include marriage and sexuality, and women's economic independence. The letters and responses will expand our understanding of the life of the Montreal Jewish community in this era, revealing many interesting insights on women's experience in depression-era Montreal. Their analysis will thus constitute a contribution to both Jewish women's history and Canadian Jewish studies.

Biography: Ira Robinson is Emeritus Professor of Judaic Studies in the Department of Religion of Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec. He is the founding president of the Canadian Society for Jewish Studies, a past president of the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies, and a past president of the Jewish Public Library of Montreal. Professor Robinson taught at Concordia beginning in 1979 and served as the Chair of the Department of Religion and Director of the Concordia University Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies. The author of many publications and mentor of many students, Professor Robinson was awarded the Louis Rosenberg Canadian Studies Distinguished Service Award by the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies in recognition of his lifelong contributions to the study of Canadian Jewry.

****

Panel 3 ~ ETHICS ~ paper 1 / פאנל ג ~ אתיקה ~ מסמך א
Tuesday May 26, 2:45 – 3:15 pm / 15:15 – 14:45, 26 במאי, יום שלישי

עירית עופר שטרק (בר-אילן)
קביעת סדרי קדימויות בהצלה בעת מלחמה : מבט ביואתי-יהודי לאור מלחמת חרבות ברזל
(Irit Offer Stark, Bar-Ilan: Prioritizing Rescue Efforts in Wartime: a Jewish Bioethical Perspective in Light of the "Iron Swords" War)

תקציר: מצבי אירוע רב נפגעים ומחסור במשאבים רפואיים מעמידים את הצוותים הרפואיים בפני דילמה מוסרית חריפה: במי יש לטפל תחילה, וכיצד יש להקצות משאבים כאשר אין די לכולם.

בשיח האתי ביחס למצבים מקובלות שתי גישות מרכזיות: האחת נשענת על ערך השוויון ומחייבת הענקת טיפול שווה לכלל הנפגעים, ללא העדפה – גם אם משמעות הדבר היא פגיעה בסיכויי ההישרדות של כולם (למשל הטלת גורל או עקרון התור). הגישה השנייה היא גישת ה־TRIAGE (מיון), המבוססת על קביעת קריטריונים רפואיים לתעדוף, כמו דחיפות הטיפול וסיכויי ההישרדות, מתוך מטרה להציל מספר מרבי של נפגעים – גם במחיר הענקת טיפול רק לחלקם. ההנחה הרווחת היא כי גם במצבי חירום ומחסור אין להפלות בין חולים שונים על סמך מאפיינים שאינם רפואיים.

ההרצאה תבחן האם עקרונות האתיקה להקצאת משאבים רפואיים הנהוגים בשגרה ניתנים ליישום מלא בזמן מלחמה, או שמא מצבי קיצון מלחמתיים מחייבים מסגרת אתית ייחודית. הדיון יתמקד בדילמות מוסריות הכרוכות ברפואה צבאית, בה המטפל שייך ומחוייב בו זמנית למספר קהילות – מוסרית, רפואית, אזרחית, לאומית וצבאית. נבחן מספר סוגיות המתעוררות מכך, כגון: האם קיימת הצדקה לשיקולים זהותיים או לאומיים שאינם קריטריונים רפואיים בקביעת סדרי קדימויות בטיפול? האם חובת המטפל להענקת טיפול בכל אדם הזקוק לו ללא תלות במעשיו- חלה גם על טיפול באויבים כנועים או נסוגה מפני חובות אחרות? האם חובת הטיפול הרפואי בבלתי מעורבים זהה לחובת הטיפול הרפואי בחיילנו? האם ניתן להצדיק הימנעות ממתן טיפול רפואי לבלתי מעורבים או אויב כנוע על מנת לשמור משאבים לטיפול עתידי בכוחותינו? האם החובה המוסרית לצמצם ככל האפשר הרג חפים מפשע במלחמה, שקולה לחובה המוסרית להצלת חפים מפשע? האם הימנעות מהצלתם עשויה להיחשב למחדל כ'לא תעמוד על דם רעך'? האם ההבחנה בין מעשה למחדל ניתנת להצדקה בהקשר זה?

הדיון יוצג במסגרת תיאורטית המקובלת בשדה הביואתיקה היהודית, המשלבת שיח פילוסופי עם ניתוח מקורות הלכתיים, ויידון לאור מקרי מבחן ממלחמת חרבות ברזל.

ביוגרפיה: ד"ר עירית עופר שטרק מרצה בכירה בעולמות- בית ספר ללימודי יהדות באוניברסיטת בר אילן ועמיתת מחקר במרכז קוגוד לחקר המחשבה היהודית במכון הרטמן. מנהלת תכנית חזון להצמחת מנהיגות צעירה יהודית ליברלית דמוקרטית במכון הרטמן. בעלת תואר ראשון במקרא ולימודי יהדות, תואר ראשון במשפטים, תואר שני בפילוסופיה יהודית, ודוקטורט בפילוסופיה יהודית וביואתיקה יהודית (במסלול משולב לתלמידים מצטיינים) מאוניברסיטת בר אילן.

Panel 3 ~ ETHICS ~ paper 2
Tuesday May 26, 3:15 – 3:45 / mardi 26 mai, 15h15 – 15:45

Noa Vigny Billick (Toronto Metropolitan University):
How Not To Make An Idol: Jewish Art and Ethical Representation

Abstract: Jewish visual culture is often framed through a paradox: a tradition shaped by the Second Commandment's warning against graven images nonetheless sustains centuries of artistic and material expression. This paper argues that Jewish art develops not in opposition to this commandment, but through an ongoing interpretive engagement with it. Understanding Jewish creativity as a form of midrash—dialogic, layered, and materially attentive—reveals how constraint becomes a generative force rather than a limiting one.

This paper reframes the Second Commandment as an ethical directive concerned with idolatry rather than representation itself. The Hebrew Bible's literary visuality already models this approach through narrative gaps, symbolic action, and ambiguity that invite interpretation. Rabbinic midrash expands this posture by treating interpretation as a creative act, sustaining continuity across changing historical and cultural contexts. Together, these traditions establish a Jewish aesthetic grounded in revealment and concealment, where meaning is produced through indirection rather than imitation. The paper then traces how this interpretive ethic takes material form in medieval Jewish book arts. Manuscripts become sites of visual negotiation, embedding interpretation into layout, ornament, and script while responding to diasporic conditions. These

strategies persist into modern and contemporary Jewish art, where artists continue to balance visibility and restraint, presence and distance.

Situated within broader diasporic and transhistorical contexts, this framework offers a productive lens for understanding Jewish material culture across time and place. Jewish artistic and scholarly practices repeatedly return to interpretation as an ethical stance toward making, one that resists substitution, certainty, and idolization. The Second Commandment, rather than constraining Jewish art, compels it—transforming ethical caution into an enduring mode of creative interpretation.

Biography: Noa Vigny Billick is a Jewish book artist and PhD candidate in the Communication and Culture program at Toronto Metropolitan University. Her research explores Jewish communication, ritual, and storytelling through material and craft. Through her art and academic research, she investigates how physical forms carry meaning, memory, and connection across time and place, highlighting the interconnectedness of storytelling and identity, and emphasizing traditional objects as a medium through which people share and preserve experiences.



Cups of Elijah and Miriam from "The Telling Table", Noa Vigny Billick, 2026

Panel 3 ~ ETHICS ~ paper 3
Tuesday May 26, 3:45 – 4:15 pm / mardi 26 mai, 15h45 – 16h15

Ariela Rosenzweig (University of Toronto)
A Benjaminian Shabbat: Translation, Messianism, and Ritual Praxis

Abstract: This paper performs a Benjaminian translation between Sabbath ritual and revolutionary theory, arguing that Shabbat operates as weekly general strike and rehearsal for messianic redemption. My methodology follows Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator," where translation does not reproduce but transforms the original by drawing out unrealized potentials, creating "echoes" and "reverberations" between texts brought into constellation. I translate between Talmudic texts on Shabbat and Benjamin's messianic historical materialism to illuminate revolutionary possibilities latent in both.

This translation reveals three resonances: First, Sabbatical anti-instrumentalism—where action detaches from productive purpose through oneg (delight)—mirrors pure language's refusal to merely "mean" or "say," revealing cessation itself as creative power. Second, Sabbatical cessation parallels messianic arrest of historical progress; Rashi's teaching that God finished creation through rest demonstrates stoppage as fulfillment, collapsing time into a monad containing past, present, and messianic future. Third, Shabbat functions as universal strike: the

39 melakhot mandate complete withdrawal from production and accumulation, prefiguring Benjamin's general strike that doesn't reform but abolishes the existing order.

The critical move is understanding ritual as Gramscian translation between theory and praxis. Gramsci defines translation as the "unity of theory and praxis"—if theory translates to praxis and praxis to theory, the two are unified. Shabbat ritual performs this unity: scriptural theory (Shabbat as 1/60 of the World-to-Come and catalyst for Messiah's arrival) translates into material praxis (weekly cessation of labor), while ritual praxis retroactively transforms scriptural theory by actualizing its messianic potential. Each Sabbath is both strike and sanctification, both material resistance to capitalism's empty time and theological enactment of redemption.

This paper contributes to scholarship on Shabbat's political theology, explored by Abraham Joshua Heschel through temporal sanctification, Giorgio Agamben through inoperativity, and Bonnie Honig through democratic agonism. Where existing scholarship examines Shabbat as rest or resistance, I show it as revolutionary translation: weekly rehearsal that brings theory and praxis, materialism and theology, into messianic unity.

Biography: Ariela Rosenzweig is a first year PhD student in the Department of Religion and Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto. Her work concentrates on Political Theology, Philosophy of Religion, and Modern Jewish Thought.

Panel 3 ~ ETHICS ~ paper 4
Tuesday May 26, 4:15 – 4:45 pm / mardi 26 mai, 16h15 – 16h45

Anya Broytman (McGill University)
Soviet State's Emissaries and Victims: the Aftermath of Solomon Mikhoels and Itzik Fefer's 1943 North American Tour

Abstract: This paper examines the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (JAC) and its tragic dual role as an agent of wartime Soviet propaganda abroad and as a target of internal repression during Stalin’s postwar antisemitic campaign. The Committee, comprised of prominent Soviet Jewish writers, doctors, scientists, and intellectuals, was formed in 1941 to rally support for the Soviet war effort against Germany among the global Jewish diaspora. In 1943, actor Solomon Mikhoels and poet Itzik Fefer embarked on a highly publicized overseas tour to the US, Canada, Mexico, and Great Britain to raise funds for the Red Army. After the war, however, the JAC fell out of favour with Soviet authorities. Key JAC members were arrested, and after over two years of interrogations and torture followed by a two-month long secret “trial”, 13 members of the JAC were executed at the Lubyanka prison on August 12, 1952, which came to be known as The Night of the Murdered Poets.

Much of the existing scholarship focuses on the cultural importance of the JAC for Soviet Jewry as its members were at the forefront of a thriving Soviet Yiddish culture that brought literature, theater, and journalism to Soviet Jews in their native language. The JAC is also commonly studied in the wider context of Stalin’s postwar antisemitic purges. However, this paper focuses on the international dimension of this story, examining how the Soviet state used the JAC for international outreach and was then compelled to destroy it. Ties between the JAC and left-leaning cultural elites in the West were cultivated by the Soviet leadership during the war as they were expedient during the USSR’s dire military struggle with Germany but then

rapidly became a liability after the Allied victory as the early contours of the Cold War began to take shape. The presentation draws on documentary evidence that came to light in the 1990s, on memoirs left by family members of the victims, and on Western press publications covering Fefer and Mikhoels' 1943 tour. It also features a new translation of Peretz Markish's poem 'Sh. Mikhoels—*A ner tomid baym orn*' ('S. Mikhoels—An Eternal Flame by His Coffin').

Biography: Anya Broytman: PhD student in Russian and Slavic Studies at McGill University. MA in European and Russian Affairs from the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto (2024); BA in European Studies, German, and Spanish from Trinity College at the University of Toronto (2018).

****

Panel 4 ~ HISTORY (II) ~ paper 1
Wednesday May 27, 9 – 9:30 am / mercredi 27 mai, 9h – 9h30

Jose Luis Dizon (University of Toronto):
How Two Jewish Scholars Helped Create Modern Muslim Studies

Abstract: In contemporary Islamic Studies, two giants of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries stand out: Abraham Geiger (1810-1874) and Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921). These two European Jewish scholars helped pioneer the modern study of the Qur'an and early Islamic history, the former by his 1833 classic *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?* ("What did Muhammad Adopt from Judaism?"), and the latter by his two-volume *Muhammedanische Studien* ("Muslim Studies"), published in 1889-1890, and his *Vorlesungen über den Islam* ("Lectures on Islam"), published in 1910.

In advancing Islamic studies, these two scholars draw from the richer tradition of Jewish studies, as evidenced by how both writers worked on Jewish scholarship in addition to their contributions to Islamic studies. Geiger's work on Islam cannot be separated from his work on Judaism, since the very question he seeks to answer depends on the relationship between the two faiths. Likewise, Goldziher's work draws its inspiration from his prior study of Judaism, as found in his earlier work *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern und seine geschichtliche Entwicklung* ("The Myths of the Hebrews and Their Historical Development"), published in 1877. The methods he used in this latter work became the basis for his historical dissection of early Islamic history, especially the hadith tradition that developed in Sunni Islam. Thanks to these two scholars, modern Islamic studies indelibly bears a Judaic mark, both in terms of its methods and the questions it seeks to answer.

Biography: J. Luis Dizon has recently completed his Ph.D. dissertation in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto. His research specialty is comparative Abrahamic Religions, and his dissertation focused on the use of Jewish and Christian scriptures by medieval Muslim writers.

Panel 4 ~ HISTORY (II) ~ paper 2
Wednesday May 27, 9:30 – 10 am / mercredi 27 mai, 9h30 – 10h

Diane Kemker (Loyola University Chicago School of Law)
How Antisemitism and Ableism at Ellis Island Shaped Stereotypes of the 20th Century North American Jewish Man

Abstract: This paper is an intersectional analysis of the process applied to Jewish male immigrants to North America from 1880-1930, including at Ellis Island, Galveston (Texas), Pier 21 and its predecessor (Nova Scotia), and its effects on stereotypes of North American Jewish men that became prevalent by the middle of the 20th century. It analyzes these phenomena with attention to race/racialization, religion, ethnicity/ nationality, disability, and sex/gender.

How did practices of purportedly disability/illness-based exclusion of immigrants to the U.S. and Canada (especially at Ellis Island, approximately 1880=1930) contribute to the racial formation of 20th century North American Jewish identity, and Jewish masculinity specifically?

This research draws on the work of disability historians Douglas Baynton and Jay Dolmage to explore, through data about differential rates and bases of exclusion and late 19th/early 20th century writings about Jews, how Jewish racialization intersected with ableism in immigration, bringing together emerging ideas of "scientific racism," developing ideas of public health, and preexisting stereotypes about Jews. A subtopic focuses on Jewish masculinity and ways in which Jewish men were regarded as deviating from norms of the ideal immigrant-worker, physically and otherwise. The goal is to illuminate how disability/illness, often seen as a neutral or even appropriate basis for exclusion, not only reflects ableism, but intersects with other biases to amplify and reify stereotypes that continue to affect how even those members of minority groups who are admitted are seen within the wider polity for generations to come.

Biography: I am a law professor and academic lawyer, specializing in critical race theory as it intersects with doctrinal areas of law, including antidiscrimination law and antisemitism. I was for 5 years the founder/co-organizer of the annual "Law vs. Antisemitism" Conference, and convened the panel *Antisemitism and Critical Race Theory* with David Schraub and Jonathan Feingold, at the UCLA School of Law Critical Race Studies 25th Anniversary Symposium (October 2025). A recent article is *Using a "Moves to Innocence" Approach to Dissect and Debunk the Claim that Critical Race Theory is Antisemitic*, 27 LEWIS & CLARK L.R. 1145 (2024). Last fall, I appeared on the podcast "Antisemitism on Trial: Seeing Antisemitism Through Law" (with host Dr. Reut Paz), discussing *"PruneYard Shopping Center v. Robins, 447 U.S. 74 (1980), and the Erasure of Zionist Activism."*

Panel 4 ~ HISTORY (II) ~ paper 3
Wednesday May 27, 10 – 10:30 am / mercredi 27 mai, 10h – 10h30

Ronnie Miller (independent scholar)
Zionist Ideology and the Politics of Language: Nathan Eliashvili and the Georgian Jewish Diaspora (1910s-1920s)

Abstract: This paper examines the political and ideological significance of language choice in the work of Nathan Eliashvili, a Georgian Jewish educator, translator, and Zionist activist

operating in Georgia and Mandatory Palestine during the 1910s–1920s. It argues that his commitment to Hebrew was not merely a cultural preference, but a deliberate ideological strategy linking linguistic revival to national consciousness and political belonging.
In the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, Georgian Jewish communities confronted competing models of modernity: integration through local languages (Georgian or Russian), Yiddishist cultural autonomy, or Zionist Hebrew revival. Through close textual analysis of Eliashvili's pedagogical writings, school initiatives, and dramatic translations, this study demonstrates how language functioned as a site of ideological contestation. His founding of a Hebrew-immersion school in Tbilisi, together with his translation of European and Russian political dramas into Hebrew, positioned translation as a form of political mediation rather than mere literary transfer. Methodologically, the paper combines intellectual history, translation studies, and theories of diaspora nationalism. Drawing on archival sources in Georgian and Hebrew, it situates Eliashvili within broader debates about Jewish political identity, language standardization, and cultural sovereignty in peripheral communities. By foregrounding the Caucasus, a region often marginal in Zionist historiography, the paper contributes to scholarship on Jewish linguistic politics by demonstrating how ideological commitments were negotiated outside the major European centers. It further argues that language revival was not only a cultural project, but also a conscious political act that shaped modern Jewish self-representation.

Biography: Ronnie Miller, PhD, received his MA in History from Tel Aviv University and his MEd and PhD from University of Toronto. His doctoral research focused on Jewish identity in the diaspora. Miller taught Jewish history at both secondary and post-secondary institutions and is the author of several books, including *The Jewish Lobby and Canadian Middle East Polic*y (1990), *Following the Americans to the Persian Gulf* (1994), *חלומות נכזבים על ארץ ישראל: מכתבים לנתן אליהשוילי* (2022), and *Elusive Dreams: Letters to Zion* (2024). Dr. Miller resides in Ontario. His research on this project is conducted jointly with Ketevan Kakitelashvili, Associate Professor at the Institute of Cultural Studies, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University.

Panel 4 ~ HISTORY (II) ~ paper 4
Wednesday May 27, 10:30 – 11 am / mercredi 27 mai, 11h30 – 11h

Vivian Astroff (Carleton University)
A Narrative of Anglo-Jewish Aspirations and Accomplishment: The Leons of Bletchley Park Estate

Abstract: Bletchley Park Estate is well known as a clandestine centre of British codebreaking during the Second World War. This paper illuminates the pre-war narrative of the estate under the ownership of Sir Herbert and Lady Fanny Leon (1883–1937), arguing that the Leons, members of the Anglo-Jewish *nouveau riche*, developed the estate and manor as a stage to "perform Englishness" and secure social standing alongside the traditional Christian landed gentry. The estate functioned as a family home, and a political and social hub for North Buckinghamshire. Moreover, while the Leons adopted the trappings of the aristocracy, they subverted traditional English class boundaries by promoting meritocracy, Liberal radicalism and civic equality.

I was inspired to develop this case study by the work of Professor Abigail Green, University of Oxford, who has written on the history of Jewish country houses managed by Britain's National Trust. Bletchley does not fall under the National Trust umbrella and was not included in her studies. My research began in summer 2023, as the basis for writing an undergraduate thesis. This included visiting Bletchley Park Estate to investigate the archives and photograph the architecture of the manor and the landscape. In adjacent Milton Keynes, I consulted local archives, including oral histories recorded from former employees of Bletchley Park Estate. Other primary sources included contemporary U.K. periodicals, newspapers, and archaeological records of *Historic England*.

This study builds on scholarship showing the Victorian Anglo-Jewish elite to be, simultaneously, social insiders and classic outsiders because of their Jewish ancestry. By examining its pre-war history, we understand Bletchley Park as not only a wartime facility, but also as a site of significant social evolution influenced by British Jewry in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras.

Biography: I returned as a part-time, adult student to Carleton University in 2018, enrolling in the History and Theory of Architecture honours B.A. program of the Art History Department, and graduated in Winter 2026. In June 2023, I was awarded the Landen Dominic Burnett Memorial Award, and the Jack Barwick and Douglas Duncan Memorial Scholarship in Art History. I have also graduated from McGill University with a B.A. in modern languages (English and Spanish literature), and from Carleton's Bachelor of Journalism program.

****

Panel 5 ~ RELIGIOUS LITERATURE ~ paper 1
Wednesday May 27, 11:15 – 11:45 am / mercredi 27 mai, 11h15 – 11h45

Natalie Polzer (University of Louisville)
The Story Cycles of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Akiva in *Avot de Rabbi Natan* Versions A and B: Proto-Biography or Redactional Coincidence?

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

Third, if a sort of proto-biographical drive can be identified in *ARN*, how does this illuminate its obscure transmission history and development? These questions highlight contributions made to the discipline of classical rabbinics: the nature and redaction history of *Avot de Rabbi Natan*; the literary development of biographical genres from classical to medieval rabbinic literature; and changing attitudes towards rabbinic figures over time, which results in emergent hagiography.

Biography: Dr. Natalie C. Polzer: Associate Professor of Jewish Studies and Religious Studies, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky. BA Jewish Studies, MEd. Jewish Education, MA Jewish Scriptural Interpretation — McGill University. PhD — Cambridge University, Rabbinics. Main research focus: rabbinic narrative through literary and cultural theoretical lens.

Panel 5 ~ RELIGIOUS LITERATURE ~ paper 2 / פאנל ו ~ ספרות דתית ~ מסמך ב
Wednesday May 27, 11:45 – 12:15 / 12:15 – 11:45 ,יום רביעי, 26 במאי

אבישר הר-שפי (בר-אילן)

על מקומו של האדם ויחסיו עם הטבע - ר' פנחס בן יאיר ור' שמעון בר יוחאי בזוהר בלק

(Avishar Har-Shefi, Bar-Ilan: On the Human Being's Place and Relationship to Nature – Rabbi Pinḥas ben Yair and Rabbi Shim'on bar Yoḥai in the Zohar on Balak)

תקציר: הרצאה זו תדון בחטיבה הסיפורית בזוהר לפרשת בלק המתארת את המפגש בין רבי פנחס בן יאיר, רבי שמעון בר יוחאי ובנו רבי אלעזר (זוהר ג, ר ע"ב–רד ע"א). מדובר בחטיבה ייחודית, ראשית, משום שהיא מעניקה לרבי פנחס בן יאיר תיאור עשיר ומורכב: דמות שבדרך כלל נוכחת בספרות הזוהרית כחשובה אך שולית, כאן מוצגת כנושאת בשורה וכמי שמציעה דרך רוחנית השונה מדרכו של רבי שמעון בר יוחאי, ומוצגת אף כעליונה עליה.

בנוסף, ייחודה של החטיבה בא לידי ביטוי ביחס יוצא הדופן כלפי הטבע ובעלי החיים המוצג בה, ובו תתמקד ההרצאה. הדיון העכשווי בנושא הודגש במחקרו של דוד סיינדברג, הטוען כי ספרות הקבלה מרחיבה את "צלם אלוהים" מן האדם אל כלל הבריאה, וכך מערערת על היררכיה ארוכת-שנים בין אדם לשאר היצורים. עם זאת, ביחס לספרות הזוהרית נדמה כי הקו הרווח הוא דווקא אנתרופוצנטרי: האדם מוצב במרכז וכתכלית הבריאה, ובעלי החיים משמשים לעיתים כ"אביזרי במה" בלבד (Jonnie Schnytzer, "A (Marginal) Kabbalistic Reading of Animals" (2023)) בדרמה הקוסמית שהיא אנושית בעיקרה. על פי וולפסון, הספרות הקבלית מכירה בחשיבות הטבע אך עדיין רואה בו בעיקר "מראה" להתבוננות האדם באלוהות (Elliot R. Wolfson, "The Mirror of Nature Reflected in the Symbolism of Medieval Kabbalah" (2002)).

על רקע זה אטען כי התפיסה המוצגת בסיפור ומושמת בפיו של רבי פנחס בן יאיר, מציעה תנועה מן האנתרופוצנטריות אל יחסי אחווה.

זהו מקרה בוחן מרתק בו גיבור חליפי "מנצח" את גיבור הזוהר, רשב"י, המייצג בסיפור את הקו הרווח בזוהר. בכך מוצבת אמירה מכוונת המאתגרת את היחס המקובל לבריאה בספרות הזוהרית, תוך שימוש בדמותו של רשב"י עצמו כמייצגת העמדה הנדחית.

לסיום, אערך השוואה בין דמותו של ר' פנחס בסיפור לדמותו של פרנציסקוס מאסיזי. בחינת החידוש של פרנציסקוס ביחס להיגיוגרפיה הנוצרית תאיר את עומק המחלוקת בין ר' פנחס לרשב"י ואת ייחודיותה של החטיבה בעיצוב העמדה דתית שונה כלפי עולם החי.

Biography: I am Lecturer in the Department of the History of the Jewish People, Bar-Ilan Univeristy. My research focuses on the Hasidic movement, with emphasis on the Hasidic tale, and on Kabbalistic literature, concentrating on the poetic dimensions of the Zoharic corpus.

In my doctoral dissertation and in my book *The Myth of the Edomite Kings in Zoharic Literature*, I investigated the Idrot—the Zohar's most intricate and profound literary stratum—

applying extensive literary methodologies. My second book, *The Active Tale*, is the first full-scale study of the Hasidic tale since Joseph Dan's *The Hasidic Story* (1975), providing a renewed perspective on its evolution from the founding of the Hasidic movement in the mid-18th century to the present. I also served as chief editor of *Ohr Chozer – Hasidism and Its Values*, together with Moshe Idel, Yoav Elstein, Louis Glinert, Hannah Handler, and Rela Kushelevsky.

Further studies in the field of Kabbalistic literature focus on the *Idrot* corpus as a whole, the Zoharic narrative—including its central motifs and characters and the various textual layers of the Zoharic corpus, with emphasis on the middle stratum and the stratum of the Tikkunim.

Panel 5 ~ RELIGIOUS LITERATURE ~ paper 3
Wednesday May 2, 12:15 – 12:45 am / mercredi 27 mai, 12h15 – 12h45

Martin Lockshin (York University, Toronto)
"'The Torah has Seventy Faces' – But Not Seventy-One"

Abstract: From the beginning of the recorded history of Bible commentaries, some Jews have claimed that biblical texts can, and even should be interpreted in more than one way. Some argued that texts have, at the same time, both a peshat (plain or contextual) meaning and also a midrashic (expansive or applied) meaning. Others argued that alongside the surface meaning, there are also mystical secrets in the text that can be unearthed by using the proper methods. These approaches imply a "liberal" approach to interpretation, that "your" interpretation can live in peace alongside of "mine," even when they lead to different conclusions.

On the other hand, we find many examples of what might be called "narrow" reading of the Bible, i.e. people who wrote peshat Bible commentaries that disparaged the midrashic approach, and advocates of midrash who looked down on peshat and sometimes saw it as heterodox. This paper will examine the tension between the liberal and the narrow approach to explanations of biblical verses, beginning in Talmudic literature and continuing through the classical period of Jewish Bible commentaries (the 11th to 13th centuries).

Biography: Martin Lockshin is University Professor Emeritus at York University and lives in Jerusalem. He received his Ph.D. in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Brandeis and his rabbinic ordination in Israel while studying in Yeshivat Merkaz HaRav Kook. His publications include his four-volume translation and annotation of Rashbam's commentary on the Torah.

****

Panel 6 ~ BEFORE AND AFTER THE SHOAH ~ paper 1
Wednesday May 27, 1:45 – 2:15 pm / mercredi 27 mai, 13h45 – 14h15

Ula Madej-Krupitski (McGill University)
Between Inclusion and Exclusion: The Polish "Holiday of the Sea" and Jewish Belonging in the 1930s

Abstract: Both historiography and popular perceptions tend to depict the Jewish experience in 1930s Poland in decisively exclusionary terms. Polish Jews of this period are often portrayed as

alienated from mainstream society, subject to discrimination, and mired in poverty. This paper challenges this ubiquitous view by centering on *the Holiday of the Se*a, an ambitious state-run initiative introduced in 1933 that sought to foster attachment to the Baltic Sea as well as to promote national unity and strength.

Through an analysis of state messaging and programming in the port city of Gdynia and in major towns across the country, initiatives explicitly designed to encourage Jewish participation, I demonstrate a conscious effort by the nationalizing state to promote and display Jewish belonging. Moreover, I trace a range of Jewish responses in both Yiddish and Polish publications, as well as celebratory activities organized by Jews themselves to mark *der yontef fun poylishn yam*. The enthusiastic embrace of this new holiday by Polish Jews in the mid-1930s underscores the performative nature of their Polish and Jewish identities, which to them were neither fixed nor contradictory, and a missed opportunity for fuller more meaningful inclusion.

Biography: Dr. Ula Madej-Krupitski is Assistant Professor in the Department of Jewish Studies at McGill University in Montréal. A historian by training, she received her PhD from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2020. At McGill, she teaches a range of courses on Modern Jewish History. Her research focuses on Jewish life in Eastern Europe before the Holocaust. Her book manuscript, *Jews on Holiday: Leisure, Travel, and Identity in Interwar Poland* is under review with Indiana University Press.

Panel 6 ~ BEFORE AND AFTER THE SHOAH ~ paper 2
Wednesday May 27, 2:15 – 2:45 pm / mercredi 27 mai, 14h15 – 14h45

Virginia Shewfelt (University of Toronto)
Country and Land in Early Issues of *Undzer Shtime*

Abstract: In April 1945, the German concentration camp Bergen-Belsen was liberated and repurposed into a displaced persons camp by the British Army. That summer, the Jewish former prisoners, now displaced persons, began circulating a Yiddish-language newspaper amongst themselves titled *Undzer Shtime*, "Our Voice." In this periodical they shared local news, as well as poetry, art, and opinion pieces about their wartime experiences and current circumstances. In this paper, I analyze the ways in which the writings in the first six months of the newspaper's run portray the concepts country and place. As a Zionist publication, the contributors to *Undzer Shtime* unsurprisingly associate the land of Israel as a site of youth, growth and renewal, and frequently express wishes to emigrate there. At the same time, as Holocaust survivors who are temporarily living within the bounds of a former concentration camp, they express complex emotions about Europe, and especially Germany, as both the location of their suffering and also a site of mourning which links them to their loved ones who were murdered and buried there. This analysis will consider the contents of *Undzer Shtime* as literary responses to the Holocaust, written by and for a community of Jewish survivors, while still displaced within Germany immediately following the fall of the Nazi regime. In doing so, I examine discourses of place in Jewish Holocaust memory as they emerged in its immediate aftermath.

Biography: Virginia Shewfelt received her Bachelor of Arts in German and anthropology from Memorial University of Newfoundland in 2016. She is currently enrolled in the doctoral program

in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at University of Toronto, where she also received her Master of Arts in German in 2018. Her research interests include the translation and adaptation of German-Jewish Holocaust narratives in literature and cinema.

Panel 6 ~ BEFORE AND AFTER THE SHOAH ~ paper 3
Wednesday May 27, 2:45 – 3:15 pm / mercredi 27 mai, 14h45 – 15h15

Celia Rothenberg (McMaster University)
The Legend of the Nazi "Museum of an Extinct Race"

Abstract: This paper examines the narrative—often found in Jewish community and memorial contexts—that the Nazis intended to establish a "museum of an extinct race" following what they presumed would be their victory. In my ongoing research with Canadian custodians of Torah scrolls from the Memorial Scrolls Trust in London, I have encountered this narrative frequently, and I approach it with deep respect and gratitude for the communities that continue to safeguard these sacred objects. Let me make clear that this paper is in no way intended to support any form of Holocaust denial; rather, it seeks to understand how particular stories, most notably those stories centred on the symbolism of Torah scrolls, take shape and endure within Jewish memory.

To understand the context of this narrative, it is important to consider the history of the Memorial Scrolls Trust itself. The Trust cares for 1,564 Torah scrolls originating from Jewish communities in Bohemia and Moravia, now part of the Czech Republic. These scrolls, along with many Judaica items, were sent by Jewish communities to the Jewish Museum in Prague during the Holocaust in the hope that they might survive Nazi persecution. After the war, the Czech government assumed control of the stored materials. In 1964, a Jewish philanthropist acquired the Torah scrolls and arranged their transfer to London, where Westminster Synagogue established the Trust to oversee their restoration and distribution. Usable scrolls—often called Holocaust Torahs—were then placed on permanent loan to Jewish communities worldwide.

The paper presents ethnographic and textual examples of the "museum" narrative, reviews Magda Veselka's 2016 analysis questioning its historical basis, and reflects on why this story continues to resonate so strongly in Jewish communal life.

Biography: Celia Rothenberg is associate professor of Religious Studies at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Her current research examines Canada's Holocaust Torahs.

****

Panel 7 ~ CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS ~ paper 1
Wednesday May 27, 3:30 – 4 pm / mercredi 27 mai, 15h30 – 16h

Alex Tepperman (University of Winnipeg)
Campus and Cul-de-Sac: Mapping Jewish Crime in the Twenty-First Century

Abstract: Since the advent of modern criminology, the study of Jewish crime in Canada, Great Britain, and the United States has presented an ongoing conceptual challenge. The atomization

and diversity of Jewish life in diaspora has meant that, aside from a small number of oft-studied examples (eg. Manhattan's Lower East Side; Whitechapel in London), scholars have had few opportunities to systematically study Jewish crime and deviance at a level higher than the individual or small group. This paper contends that, given the long-established correlation between environment and criminal behaviour, geographical criminology provides a promising avenue for the study of crime among Jews in the twenty-first century. In this paper, I employ both census data and original research on Distinctive Jewish Surnames (DJS) as means of mapping Jewish life throughout Canada, the US, and the UK. Through geographical analyses of both residential patterns and of crime generators, attractors, and nodes within regions with both heavy (Hertsmere, UK; Baltimore County, USA; and York Region, Canada) and light (the United States' Appalachian Region; the Canadian Prairies; and Wales) Jewish presences, this paper contends that Jews disproportionately and predictably live and work in areas defined by high levels of surveillance; low levels of residential mobility; and significant physical distance from traditional crime generators. Accordingly, this paper contends that the geographical realities of twenty-first century Jewish life are such that crime among Jews is culturally unique, defined by fewer opportunities to commit public acts of casual theft or violence; less direct scrutiny from police and courts; and greater opportunities to reframe criminal acts as opportunities for restitution, rehabilitation, or formal reintegration without the stigma of a criminal record. I conclude that these findings are indicative of a distinct Jewish relationship to modern criminal justice worthy of further study.

Biography: Alex Tepperman is Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at the University of Winnipeg, as well as a former Visiting Scholar in Judaic Studies at Brooklyn College. In addition to publishing in journals such as *Crime, History, and Society* and *Social Justice*, Alex is Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Historical Criminology* and co-editor of the recent collection *Memory as Power: Historical Criminology and the Role of the Past in Critical Scholarship.* His primary research focus is on Jewish crime in North America, with a particular interest in microhistorical methodology.

Panel 7 ~ CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS ~ paper 2
Wednesday May 27, 4 – 4:30 pm / mercredi 27 mai, 16h – 16h30

Cary Kogan (University of Ottawa)
A Hostile Campus Climate:
Faculty Experiences of Antisemitism on Campus post-October 7

Abstract: The October 7, 2023 (10/7) Hamas attack on Israel was the deadliest assault on Jews since the Holocaust, terrorizing Israelis and Jews worldwide. Rather than receiving support, Jewish, Israeli, and allied faculty on Canadian campuses faced increasingly hostile environments that often invalidated their grief. These responses reflect the normalization of antisemitism, often in the form of antizionism, in academia after but beginning well before 10/7. Using a cross-sectional survey, this study sought to examine the experiences of antisemitism among Canadian and US faculty. Associated features of interest included mental health and well-being, changes in professional behaviours, and changes in Jewish practices and community affiliation. Findings suggest two broad experiences, those who experience moderate to extreme levels of antisemitism

and those who experience little to none. Faculty reporting higher levels also reported significantly poorer mental health and greater disruption to their work. Importantly, results suggest that the association between antisemitism and these detrimental outcomes works through the degree to which they: 1) perceive a social cost to expressing their Jewish identities on campus, 2) feel betrayed by their colleagues and institutions, and 3) feel vulnerable on campus. Analyses examining associated benefits of Jewish practice and community affiliation are forthcoming. This study documents the current hostile climate for Jewish, Israeli, and allied faculty at a time when efforts are being made address discrimination against other minoritized groups. It also extends previous scholarship on the mediating influence of the psychological factors of identity suppression, betrayal, and vulnerability on exposure to identity-based hate.

Biography: Cary Kogan is full professor of clinical psychology at the University of Ottawa. His interdisciplinary research spans several topics including mental health classification, the impact of racism on mental health in Black Canadian communities, and the effect of antisemitism on faculty in higher education. Prof. Kogan is co-president of the Network of Engaged Canadian Academics (NECA, neca-rdace.org), a non-partisan network of over 400 Canadian faculty members on 54 University and College campuses. NECA's mission is to protect academic freedom, promote robust scholarship on Judaism, and combat all forms of antisemitism.

Panel 7 ~ CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS ~ paper 3
Wednesday May 27, 4:30 – 5 pm / mercredi 27 mai, 16h30 – 17h

Deidre Butler and Betina Appel Kuzmarov (Carleton University)
"We Held Candles and Burnt our Fingers": Activists Speak about the Trouble with Jewish Divorce in Canada

Abstract: What can be done to help Agunot, women who cannot secure Jewish divorces, when their husbands withhold or delay a *get* to extract concessions or exert control over them? This question has animated activists around the world who have grappled with this issue for the last 50 years. This paper reconstructs incomplete historical narratives by listening to those activists who identified, named, and worked to address inequities in the religious divorce process in Canada. Beginning in the 1970s and 1980s, Jewish women across Canada mobilized, framed *get* refusal as abuse, and argued it was both a gender justice issue and a matter of women's equality under Canadian law. Within our larger ethnographic project which seeks to understand Jewish divorce as currently practiced, we conducted oral history interviews with activists Norma Baumel Joseph, Evelyn Brook, John Syrtash, Sharon Shore, and others. Their stories set the stage for understanding the key shifts in attitudes and practices that took place in Jewish communities across Canada and which led to the passing of Section 21.1, Canada's "*Get* law."

We explore how individual activists worked through grassroots advocacy, coalition-building, and legal reform efforts that responded to the unique communal, social and legal forces that shaped Jewish divorce in Canada. Informed by feminist oral historical methods, legal pluralism, as well as community-based research theory, these interviews demonstrate not only the power of individuals to effect change within their communities, but also the ways the particular conditions and personalities shape the possibilities of that response. They further reveal not only a unique snapshot of communal solidarity and activism but also something

fundamental about Canadian Jewish divorce practice; how Jewish divorce overflows the boundaries of Orthodox institutions and Orthodox practice, operating in the distinctly Canadian expression of denominational identities and practices.

Biographies:

Deidre Butler's research operates at the intersections of religion, ethics and feminist thought. Her current research program targets modern Jewish life and thought as its object of study and develops a sustained critique of the ways in which philosophical and cultural narratives efface and dislocate lived, particular, gendered, and embodied experiences. Her research program complicates and contests these distortions by marshalling a range of types of evidence (original ethnographic data, as well as theological, philosophical, and artistic responses). She is Associate Professor, Religion (Jewish Studies) in the College of Humanities, Carleton University; director, Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies; and President of the Canadian Society for Jewish Studies.

Dr. Betina Appel Kuzmarov is Associate Professor in the Department of Law and Legal Studies, Carleton University, where she has been a faculty member since 2006. As a trained lawyer, Betina's research interests lie in the area of international law, as well as law and religion. Her research and training all focus on aspects of international law or transnational legal issues. In addition to her legal background, she has a practical understanding of the value of international mobility, having been both an international student and visiting scholar.

****

Panel 8 ~ THE ARTS ~ paper 1
Thursday May 28, 9 – 9:30 am / jeudi 28 mai, 9h – 9h30

Rhoda Seidenberg (Independent Scholar)
Patriotism and Belonging: *Heimat* for Lilli Baitz in Salzburg and Berlin

Abstract: In the movie *Wicked for Good*, Stephen Schwartz has Elphaba, the Wicked Witch, croon "There's no place like home." While home is a universal sentiment, the concepts of homeland, patriotism, and nationalism have become increasingly complex, especially in North America and after the events of the October 7 war. To understand the roots of these 21st-century "hot topics," one must look back to the "long 19th century," particularly the emancipation of Austrian and German Jews. This turning point in Jewish history led many to believe that legal freedom would translate into societal acceptance and full participation in the concept of *Heimat*. However, this perceived arrival proved illusory, ultimately shattered by the advent of National Socialism in 1933.

Unlike its English counterpart "homeland," the German word *Heimat* carries deep connotations of native culture, racial purity, and political alignment. For "outsiders" like the Jews, this definition often precluded true belonging regardless of their level of assimilation.

This paper examines Lilli Baitz's life and work as a focal point for these tensions. Using her creation of department store mannequins and dolls adorned in authentic *Tracht* as primary

evidence, the following chapters will investigate her attempt to visually and materially claim her place in her "homeland". The study begins by detailing the Jewish experience in Central Europe and the urgency of post-emancipation assimilation, before tracing the tragic trajectory of these efforts during the rise and fall of the Nazi Regime.

Biography: Prof. Rhoda Seidenberg is an Adjunct Professor of Art History at Bronx Community College of the City University of New York and Touro University. She received her graduate degree from Columbia University. Prof. Seidenberg has delivered numerous papers and published articles on dolls within a historical context, relating to society and history. Dolls and toys are not merely playthings to dismiss as trivial, but worthy of thorough research. She is a sought-after speaker and has given seminars at Touro University's Research Day, and the United Federation of Doll Club's annual conventions and YouTube channel. Most recently, she presented a paper on the coconut-head dolls in Deborah Neff's collection of Black Dolls at the Symposium held at the National Museum of Toys and Miniatures in Kansas City.

Panel 8 ~ THE ARTS ~ paper 2
Thursday May 28, 9:30 – 10 am / jeudi 28 mai, 9h30 – 10h

Elizabeth Bolton (Independent Scholar)
Judith Kaplan Eisenstein's Influence on the Jewish Liturgical Soundscape

Abstract: Music performed and sung in Jewish homes and communal ritual spaces has been significantly shaped by Judith Kaplan Eisenstein's academic as well as practice-oriented work.

Whether composing choral settings of piyyutim, creating singable English translations of holiday hymns, or narrating a multi-episode broadcast on the Music of the Jewish People, Dr. Judith Kaplan Eisenstein (1909-1996) had a significant practical impact, as a musicologist and educator, on the soundscape of contemporary Jewish song. Integrating the conceptual framework of Judaism as an evolving religious civilization as articulated by her father, Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan, Eisenstein significantly expanded the understanding, enjoyment and transmission of Jewish culture and tradition through music. Her insights championed and extended Kaplan's vision from the theological and philosophical into the practical and aesthetic.

Dr. Eisenstein's work as a musicologist manifested in an astonishing range of formal and informal educational settings, exemplifying the scholar-practitioner's craft. Her work leapt from manuscript paper into synagogue spaces as well as home rituals, broadening access to a wealth of repertoire through, among other techniques, singable English translations of beloved Hebrew songs, and the integration of centuries-old repertoire into participatory worship. Dr. Eisenstein explicitly identified the link between her research and her own religious search.

Through primary source research, interviews with students and family members, and with the acknowledgment of my participant/observer status, I explore the rich intersections of Dr. Eisenstein's personal and professional journey and Reconstructionist thought.

Biography: Rabbi Elizabeth (Liz) Bolton, born in Montreal, began her career as an opera singer, extended her work into cantorial music, and then attended the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, graduating in 1996 with rabbinic ordination and an MA in Hebrew Letters. After a career of teaching and service in Philadelphia and Baltimore, she returned to Canada in 2013 to

serve Or Haneshamah: Ottawa's Reconstructionist Community, as Ottawa's first woman and first queer congregational rabbi. She is also a practitioner of Spiritual Care at Queensway-Carleton Hospital. Liz co-leads Rainbow Haven, a community group that sponsors and settles queer refugees to Canada. She is an adjunct instructor at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and an advisor to cantorial students in the Aleph Ordination Program. She is a regular guest with CBC radio and television in Ottawa, and posts at *Words of the Spirit* at www.orh.ca.

Panel 8 ~ THE ARTS ~ paper 3 / פאנל ט ~ האמנויות ~ מסמך ג
Thursday May 28, 10 – 10:30 am / 10:30 – 10 יום חמישי, 28 במאי

סיון הר-שפי (המכללה האקדמית הרצוג ואוניברסיטת בר אילן)
אלם וכתיבה במציאות של מלחמה ומשבר (שיחת-אמן)
(Sivan Har-Shefi, Herzog College / Bar-Ilan University: Silence and Writing in a Time of War and Crisis – Artist Talk)

תקציר: מבט על תהליכי כתיבה לאחר 7.10, מתוך מסע אישי של יוצרת עכשווית ובהתכתבות עם יוצרים עבריים בעבר ובהווה .

לאחר 7.10 נכנסתי ככותבת לתקופה ממושכת של אלם. לצד זאת, בשנתיים שמאז ראו אור שלושה ספרי שירה שלי, שכל אחד מהם מהווה ערוץ התמודדות אחר עם מציאות משברית. כמשוררת שהינה גם חוקרת ספרות, אבקש לקרוא את מחסום הכתיבה מחד, ואת פרץ היצירה מאידך, תוך דיאלוג עם רשימתה של לאה גולדברג "על אותו הנושא עצמו" ולאור ה'פולמוס' שלה עם עמיתיה המשוררים בערב מלחמת העולם השניה; וכן למול רשימתו של בני ברבש "דברים בפתיחת התערוכה של אסף רומאנו, פעימה וקו.(17.1.25) "

בני ברבש ברשימתו מעלה סדרת שאלות נוקבות שעיקרן - האם נכון לכתוב למול מאורעות התקופה הקשים, או שמא הכתיבה מעצם טבעה מהווה ביחס למציאות אשליה ממכסת או מייפה, ולכן לא ראויה?

שאלה עקרונית זו מצטרפת אל שאלתה המוקדמת של לאה גולדברג, על מה ראוי לכתוב בזמן מלחמה? ברשימתה שפורסמה ב"השומר הצעיר" ב-1939, יצאה גולדברג בהצהרה כי היא לא תכתוב על המלחמה, אלא תדבק בכתיבה על החיים ועל אותם ערכים הנותנים טעם לקיום. ואמנם, בשנות המלחמה כתבה גולדברג כמה משירי האהבה והטבע המוארים ביותר שלה. חבריה הניאו סימבוליסטים ובראשם נתן אלתרמן התווכחו עימה וטענו כי ראוי ליוצר לעת כזאת להיענות לקריאת המציאות ולהתייחס למלחמה . הסופר אשר ביילין טען כנגדה שהיא לא תעמוד בהצהרותיה שלה, "שהמלחמה תיכנס לתוך דמה ודם שירתה לאט-לאט". האם ניתן לזהות תהליכים כאלה בשירתה?

ההרצאה תתייחס לשאלות אלו ונוספות, ותלווה במצגת של אמנות וויזואלית (קולאז'ים ואיורים) מתוך ספרי "שיתין - יומן מלחמה חזותי-פואטי", זוכה פרס זלדה לשירה.

ביוגרפיה: ד"ר סיון הר-שפי בוגרת תואר שלישי (2013) בחוג לספרות עם ישראל באוניברסיטת בר-אילן (נושא: מושג המלכות בשירת אורי צבי גרינברג — מקורות, מבנה ומשמעות). משוררת עטורת פרסים, עד כאן כתבה שמונה ספרי שיריה. מרצה לספרות ומנחה סדנאות כתיבה במסלול לתואר שני בכתיבה יוצרת באוניברסיטת בר אילן, במכללת הרצוג, ובמכללות נוספות בירושלים.



(image: nillydagan.com)

Panel 8 ~ THE ARTS ~ paper 4
Thursday May 28, 10:30 – 11 am / jeudi 28 mai, 10h30 – 11h

Luke Langille (Concordia)
Woven Out of History: Anni Albers, Otti Berger, Sonia Delaunay, Gego, Trude Guermonprez, and Eva Hesse in a Contemporary Exhibition

Abstract: More than forty creators are featured in "Woven Histories: Textiles and Modern Abstractions" (2023-2025) which toured at the National Gallery of Canada, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. The exhibition—which reframes textiles in the early 20th century as a form of high modernism—perports to entwine "previously disparate narratives" and to put "into dialogue the work of artists from across generations and continents." The exhibition catalogue features discussions of African diaspora and culture/aesthetics, Cherokee identity, feminism, gender, identity politics, Indigenous Peoples, Japanese identity, LGBTQ+ identity, neoliberalism, and enslavement. However, Jewish identity, the Holocaust and antisemitism all go unmentioned. This omission is notable considering that the exhibition features several Jewish artists, many of whom lost family members in the Holocaust. One artist featured, Otti Berger, *was herself murdered at Auschwitz, and yet even this fact goes unmentioned*.

I will argue that by downplaying the brutality of antisemitism in the 20th century—while foregrounding other forms of racism—this exhibition provides a permission structure for audiences to downplay antisemitism in all contexts. Does David Schraub's notion of "engrained assumptions of Jewish hyperpower" play a central role here? Could Jonathan Branfman's "Teaching for Coalition: Dismantling 'Jewish-Progressive Conflict' through Feminist & Queer Pedagogy," help elucidate lacunae? What can be surmised from the publication date of the exhibition catalogue, October 10th 2023? Can the exhibition be brought into conversation with David Baddiel's critiques of progressive identity politics' exclusion of Jewishness?

Biography: Luke F. Langille is a translator and emerging scholar pursuing an MA in Art History at Concordia University in Montreal. He is a longtime cultural worker and community volunteer who currently serves on the board of the Owen Sound Emancipation Festival. Luke's words have appeared in Elle Canada, Chatelaine and Literary Hub. His most recent translation *When the Lake Burns* was published with Conundrum Press in 2024. He currently works at the National Gallery of Canada.

****

Panel 9 ~ DIASPORAS BEYOND ASHKENAZ ~ paper 1
Thursday May 28, 11:15 – 11:45 am / jeudi 28 mai, 11h15 – 11h45

Mika Benesh (Concordia University)
Iraqi Jewish Amuletic Cultures

Abstract: Though often seen as relics of a lost homeland, protective amulets are still used today by exiled Iraqi Jews and their descendants. In this auto/ethnographic study, my dialogue with four other people of Iraqi Jewish heritage about these practices leads me to posit that protective

amulets enable Iraqi Jews to instantiate their relations with one another, with non-humans, and with land itself—and wear these relations on their bodies.

Tracing intertwined histories of Jews in Iraq and amuletic practices in the region, I then explore the presence of Iraqi Jewish protective amulets in archives and Iraqi Jewish cultural outputs, such as the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art and Carol Isaacs' 2020 graphic novel *The Wolf of Baghdad.* My findings contrast with the ways Iraqi Jewish amulets are often described (particularly in the Bezalel Narkiss Index), raising questions about what makes something an amulet for Iraqi Jews. Is an artefact still an amulet when cut off from relational networks which once generated its protective power? What stories of rupture might be told by objects which sit in private collections, disconnected from their people and place? What happens when such artefacts are robbed of their histories? And how do we continue in their absence?

Ella Shohat writes that the resurgence of interest in the cultural contributions of Iraqi Jews cannot be reduced to a fixation about the past, since it also suggests hope for a different future (Shohat 2017). Understanding protective amulets as agents which instantiate Iraqi Jewish modes of kinship may open up possible alternative future relations between people, non-humans and land itself throughout the Iraqi-Jewish diaspora.

Biography: Mika Benesh is a designer-researcher and PhD student in Religion at Concordia University in Montréal. With a background in jewellery making, his scholarly work explores Jewish material culture on the margins. Across his creative and academic practices, he is interested in grasping a small hold of many Jewish futures.

Panel 9 ~ DIASPORAS BEYOND ASHKENAZ ~ paper 2
Thursday May 28, 11:45 am – 12:15 pm / jeudi 28 mai, 11h45 – 12h15

Miranda Crowdus (Concordia University)
Sonic Heritage Diversity: Songs of Middle Eastern and North African Jews in Montreal

Abstract: This talk chronicles the development of a federally-funded project at Concordia University "Sonic Heritage Diversity," a project that explores the disappearing music and musical and listening practices, as well as related intangible cultural heritage, of Montreal Jews of Middle Eastern (Mizrahi) and North African (Sephardic) origin, and more broadly the practices of communities and individuals fitting outside of "Ashkenormative" parameters such as Yemenite, Ethiopian, or Romaniote (Judeo-Greek). This talk will highlight key moments revealed during fieldwork and archival research.

Montreal is currently home to an unusually diverse population of Jews from different origins. While some came to Canada directly from their places of origin, others came from countries like the United States, Israel and France, to which they had originally immigrated often in order to leave situations that had become unsustainable owing to conflict and/or antisemitism. This talk explores the multi-faceted areas to which the project "Sonic Heritage Diversity" contributes. On the research side, the project seeks to create a rich and nuanced database for exploration and preservation. More broadly, it stimulates the exploration of innovative research methods to preserve disappearing repertoires of intangible heritage in a context in which Canadian Jewish identity is rapidly changing, and previous intra-Jewish ethnic boundaries are shifting and, in some cases, coalescing. The public-facing aspect, including the creative

activation aspect of the project serves as an important resource through which Jewish subjectivities can remember their musical past and engage with it in the present. The project also aims to act as an important medium for destigmatization, offering rich, community-led depictions of Jewish people, their music, and their diverse journeys.

Biography: Miranda Crowdus is Associate Professor at the Department of Religions and Cultures at Concordia University where she also holds the Research Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies. Her research interests lie at the intersection of Ethnomusicology and Jewish Studies. She earned her doctorate at City University London in 2016, and was a research associate at the European Centre for Jewish Music in Hanover. Her book *Hip Hop in Urban Borderlands* was published in 2019. She recently concluded a DFG-funded project "Queering Jewish Cultural Heritage in Europe: Jewish Transformations Through Reparative Response and Creative Encounter" and an edited volume with Routledge based on the project will appear later this year.

Panel 9 ~ DIASPORAS BEYOND ASHKENAZ ~ paper 3
Thursday May 28, 12:15 – 12:45 pm / jeudi 28 mai, 12h15 – 12h45

Eyal Davidson (Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies)
The Ketubah Enactment Dispute as a Test Case of the Clash of Traditions between the Musta'arabi and Immigrant Jews in the 16th Century Land of Israel

Abstract: In the centuries prior to the sixteenth century, many Jews emigrated to Eretz Yisrael from various countries, bringing different traditions and settling alongside veteran residents, Musta'arabi Jews or longtime immigrants. Over time, public and social consensuses evolved to enable joint customs. The arrival of the Sephardi exile after the expulsion breached this balance, and – under its strong influence – the westerners, the Musta'arabi Jews and most of the other communities adopted its customs, at the natural expense of their previous traditions.

In this lecture, I shall present and analyze various sources pointing to a dispute regarding the *Ketubah* (marriage contract) decree. The Sephardi custom, which the Jewish exiles from Spain brought with them to Israel, adhered to the '*Tolitula* (Toledo) Enactment', according to which a woman's husband and children are to divide up all her property, including the *nichsei milog* (usufructuary property). In contrast, the Musta'arabi Jews, who represented the custom of the established residents of the Land of Israel, adhered to the 'Damascus Enactment', according to which the dowry is split up but the *nichsei milog* are inherited by the husband alone.

As Jews from the various diasporas began to marry and develop mixed family relationships, a need arose to draft an agreed decree regarding the *Ketubah*. The Sephardi sages were unwilling to forgo the '*Tolitula* Enactment' but espoused different views on the 'Damascus Enactment'. This event is a clear manifestation of the clash of Jewish customs in Safed.

Biography: Eyal Davidson earned his PhD in the Department of Jewish History at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He works as a researcher of the history of Jerusalem and the Land of Israel, in addition to being a lecturer in the departments of Eretz Israel studies at the Schechter Institute and at Herzog and Orot Israel academic colleges. He serves as an educational advisor to the Ministry of Education, and has written books including *Jerusalem from Everywhere*, *For Jerusalem*, *The Jewish Quarter and All Its Paths*, alongside academic and popular articles.

The last panel will be followed by the closing lunch and Annual General Meeting of CSJS.
Le dernier panel sera suivi du dîner de clôture et de l'assemblée générale annuelle de la SCÉJ.

See you next year in Toronto! / À l'année prochaine à Toronto!



image: justcolor.net

University of Toronto, May 25-27, 2027 (tentative dates)
Université de Toronto, 25-27 mai, 2027 (dates provisoires)