The annual Bulletin is an important aspect of the work of BAJS in raising the profile of Jewish Studies in Britain and Ireland, and highlighting our members’ significant and varied achievements. This past year has brought disruptions and challenges for our members, and for BAJS as an association, but I would like to take the opportunity to share with you an overview of all the ways that BAJS is working on behalf of all our members and our plans for the future.

A key part of our ambition to promote research and teaching in Jewish Studies across Britain and Ireland is our annual conference. Unfortunately, this year’s meeting – on “World in Crisis: Reflections and Responses from Antiquity to the Present” – had to be postponed to 5-7 July 2021 due to Covid-19. However, it was important to us to offer something for our members in place of the conference, and we are delighted to have been able to hold our first online event, on 15 July 2020, “BAJS: Perspectives from a New Generation of Scholars”. The event was designed to give a platform to early-career research that continues to be developed even amidst our present uncertainties, and the programme displayed the breadth of research in Jewish Studies being undertaken in Britain and Ireland. It was heartening to see our community come together for this event, and also join our AGM at the end of the day when we announced the winners of our annual book prize and our undergraduate and postgraduate essay prizes.
It is a priority for BAJS is to support the next generation of scholars. This mission is vital for securing the future of Jewish Studies, especially with a difficult job market. We already have a number of initiatives in place to support our postgraduate and early-career community, most notably through the annual PGR studentship offered by BAJS (currently held by Susannah Rees, King’s College London), a dedicated PG/ECR Representative on the BAJS Committee (a position currently held by Dr Katharina Keim, Manchester and Lund), bursaries for PGRs and ECRs to attend the BAJS conference, and especially our mentoring scheme. We strongly encourage all members to support these initiatives and get involved. We will of course continue to hold dedicated panels to support the career development of postgraduates and early-career researchers when we resume our annual conference in 2021. BAJS will continue to prioritise this essential work for the future of our field, and we hope that the abovementioned online event “Perspectives from a New Generation of Scholars” may be the first of many.

A major way that BAJS can have an impact in promoting Jewish Studies is through advocating for proper representation in the Research Excellence Framework (REF). We frequently undertake to explain the nature of Jewish Studies to those outside the field and involved in REF matters. In communications with REF panel and sub-panel chairs, we have emphasised that Jewish Studies is an interdisciplinary field that stretches from antiquity to the present day and is studied in different global contexts. We have stressed that research is conducted regularly into questions of Jewish culture and identity in addition to or instead of questions around Judaism as a religion, which also has chronological and global breadth and is a major subject area in its own right. We have pointed out that Jewish Studies may take historical, literary, sociological, philosophical or anthropological approaches to Jewishness, as well as assess representation of Jews in art, film, television and other visual media. We have noted that colleagues in Jewish Studies are represented in a very wide range of HE institutions and departments across Britain and Ireland and that it is important to acknowledge that those working in Jewish Studies may have different methodological issues and theoretical approaches from those commonly taken within the departments of which they are a part. Crucially, we have also emphasised that research in Jewish Studies often requires work in specialist languages such as Classical Hebrew and Aramaic or Modern Hebrew and Yiddish. Such arguments are important for promoting better understanding of our discipline, and our REF conversations have had one encouraging result, although it might best be called a rather limited win, as we received an invitation to nominate colleagues for an assessor in rabbinic literature/Jewish textual studies for sub-panel 31 (Theology and Religious Studies). It is significant that we will have some representation on one REF sub-panel, but it does not of course amount to recognising the broad nature of the field, and it still points to notions that Jewish Studies is focused on questions of religion, and, very problematically, mainly in the ancient world. So it is a limited win, and there is still a long way to go. What our experiences do show is that BAJS can have an impact when it comes to representation in the REF, and we have already begun to talk about strategies to promote the full spectrum of Jewish Studies ahead of the next REF cycle. We welcome input in these matters, and encourage all members to participate when we send out calls for action.

Another way that BAJS works to support its members is by providing resources for teaching. You will hopefully have had an opportunity to explore our newly upgraded website – https://britishjewishstudies.org/ – which is intended to provide a more attractive and engaging introduction to BAJS and the work that we do. As part of the new website design, we are in the process of developing a new page for our PG and ECR members, as well as a new resources page aimed at providing links to online specialist resources in Jewish Studies. It includes a number of teaching resources, given that online teaching will very likely be a feature of our members’ teaching provision from now on – https://britishjewishstudies.org/links-and-resources/. We want to develop these pages, and welcome member contributions in this regard.

Our newly renovated website is also the basis of a new BAJS project focused on schools and colleges. We are already working on support for our established members, PGRs and ECRs, and undergraduate interests in Jewish Studies, but for strategic reasons we also want to build interest in the field before undergraduate level. The first stage of the project is a report on the status of Jewish Studies in schools and colleges. We are surveying a range of institutions, including professional teaching associations, institutions in the culture and heritage sectors, and representatives of religious communities and research institutions. The goal is to identify pathways that lead to interest in
Jewish Studies courses at university, as well as obstacles to students’ engaging with the discipline. The aim is to use the information gathered in the report to design targeted activities that will promote engagement with Jewish Studies subjects in schools and colleges. You may have seen a recent call to members for input, and we welcome feedback or ideas for this project.

We are all aware that this is a difficult time for Higher Education. We invite all our members to get in touch with us if you are experiencing issues or opportunities related to Jewish Studies, whether on an individual level or in your department or institution. BAJS is here to support its members.

I would like to add a note of thanks to all on the BAJS Committee, who volunteer their time and skills on behalf of us all with such outstanding commitment and dedication, and to all our members for their valued and unstinting engagement and support.

We welcome your feedback. I hope you enjoy reading this Bulletin and finding out more about our successes.

Prizes and Prize-winners

Student Essay Prize

For this year’s essay prize, BAJS attracted a good number of excellent entries from a wide range of institutions, and the judges really enjoyed reading the submissions. The jury’s decision is to award a first place and a second place undergraduate prize and no postgraduate prize.

Second Place goes to Sophie Rejali from the University of Birmingham for a clearly argued and thoughtful dissertation entitled “Redeeming Dr Miklósh Nyisli in light of Primo Levi’s ‘Grey Zone’”.

First Place goes to a really engaging and authoritative dissertation by Aviv Reich from Oxford University, on “Israel Zangwill: Negotiating Jewish Identities in English”.

Thank you to all those who submitted entries; the high quality of the work is really encouraging for Jewish Studies in Britain and Ireland. And many congratulations to our winners.

The 2020 BAJS Book Prize

The book prize initiative was launched by BAJS in 2018 to recognise and promote outstanding scholarship in the field of Jewish Studies. Each year BAJS will award £1,000 for the best monograph submitted, for works that are original, are methodologically rigorous, and make a significant contribution to Jewish Studies. The chronological focus alternates from year to year: in the even years, books on the ancient to medieval period; in the odd years, books on the early-modern to modern period.

Accordingly, the 2020 BAJS Book Prize was reserved for books focusing on ancient and medieval Jewish studies. As it happened, the jury decided to split the award, and, happily, the recipients include both ancient and medieval projects, and the authors represent established scholars as well as early-career researchers (ECRs).

One of the winners is The Calendar Controversy of 921/2 (see the Selected Publications section below, p. 34) by Sacha Stern and his team (Marina Rustow, postdoctoral research fellow Nadia Vidro, and Ronny Vollandt). The book reinterprets a Palestinian-Babylonian controversy that shook Levantine and Middle Eastern Jewries in the 10th and 11th centuries. With manuscript witnesses widely dispersed, neglected, even lost, the team’s editorial work has produced an exemplary corpus of texts with translation, which promises to provide a lasting research resource on early medieval Mediterranean/Middle Eastern Jewries. In its close attention to the materiality of the manuscripts, the book combines the best of several disciplines: rabbinic text studies, history of science, manuscript studies, material culture studies. It also provides a completely new explanation of this much misunderstood episode in the history of rabbinic Judaism.

The other winner is Scribal Culture in Ben Sira (Leiden: Brill, 2018) by Lindsey Askin. It is a rich and wide-ranging study of ancient textualities, and illuminates the self-understanding of a Hellenistic Jewish sage-scribe-author. It re-evaluates Ben Sira’s book by setting it clearly in its context – the world of ancient Mediterranean book production. Through careful consideration of the archaeological and textual data about book production, storage and
collecting in antiquity, it discredits various anachronistic ideas about how Ben Sira might have handled, both materially and intellectually, his possible sources. One chapter that the jury singled out as particularly revealing was the chapter on medicine, which overturns a number of assumptions about Jewish engagement with Hellenistic culture. The book as a whole is a valuable study of Hellenistic Judaism in its Mediterranean context.

Jewish Studies Journals – portraits

With the notable exception of the Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England, which belongs to the British moment in “Wissenschaft des Judentums”, academic journals devoted to Jewish Studies made their appearance fairly late in Britain and Ireland, perhaps because of the traditional strength of Biblical Studies and Old Testament studies. The post-WWII resurgence of Jewish Studies was led by people with a strong commitment to a Jewish cultural renaissance. A more detailed history of this moment will hopefully emerge from the special volume dedicated to Jewish journals, which JMJS has planned for next year. For now, we publish some thumbnail sketches of the more prominent journals, in order of their historical emergence.

Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England

introduced by Michael Berkowitz (UCL)

The Jewish Historical Society of England (JHSE), founded in 1893, is generally believed to be the oldest, continuously running historical-interest organisation in the western world. Its journal, Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England, commonly referred to as Transactions, began in 1893-94, and is now published annually by the UCL (University College London) Press. While serving the membership of its parent organisation, which includes academics, independent scholars, and those who are simply keen on history, Transactions is peer-reviewed
(through a double-blind process) and is offered open-access as well as in traditional print form. It appears, ideally, around the beginning of the calendar year. The journal can be accessed through the Ingenta and ScienceOpen platforms. It is edited by Michael Berkowitz, with Jeremy Schonfield, contributing editor. Lars Fischer is the Book Review editor. The editorial board of Transactions includes scholars from around the world, and it is professionally copyedited by Katharine Ridler and is designed by Tony Kitzinger.

While the publication of Transactions has been somewhat irregular (a couple of world wars and various crises happened to intervene), it is notable for featuring outstanding scholarship in Jewish history, texts, and literary studies long before “Judaic (Jewish) Studies” came to comprise an academic field outside of “theology”. Although still focusing on the history of Jews in Britain (and Ireland), its remit has been expanding to the English-speaking world writ large. The last issue (2019) had a large section devoted to new research on the history of the Kindertransport, including comparative studies. The next issue will have a substantial share dedicated to the late past president of the JHSE, Professor Ada Rapoport-Albert (z’l).

**Journal of Jewish Studies**

introduced by Margaret Vermes (Oxford University)

The *Journal of Jewish Studies* was founded in 1948. It continued its regular and timely publication during the academic year 2019-20, under the joint editorship of Professor Sacha Stern (UCL) and Professor Alison Salvesen (University of Oxford), with Margaret Vermes (Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies) as Executive Editor, Dr Benjamin Williams (University of Oxford) as Book Reviews Editor and Dr Alinda Damsma (UCL) as Assistant Editor.

Volume 70, no. 2 (Autumn 2019) has articles on Roman Judaea (Goodman), the Jerusalem Talmud (Mastey), medieval exegesis (Viezel) and Kabbalah (Dauber, Yisraeli), the reception of Maimonides (Mazor), manuscripts in Crimea (Akhiezer), early modern German society (Kogman), and Elizabeth Taylor (Lifshitz).

Volume 71, no. 1 (Spring 2020) has articles on the Jerusalem Talmud (Simon-Shoshan), medieval manuscripts (Ofer), Jews in China (Li and Meng), early modern *musar* (Koch) and messianism (dal Bo), Yiddish literature (Rosenzweig), Anglo-Jewish history (Goodman), and the Danish Jewish museum (Nissimi).

Both issues include book reviews of titles ranging from the ancient to the modern world.

The print and online versions of the Journal both remain in high demand among our institutional subscribers across all five continents. The Middle East and the Far East display a strong preference for the digital format only. North America and Europe continue to cherish print or maintain interest in subscriptions to both formats.

The Journal has developed its copyright guidelines and licences for Gold and Green Open Access as well as Individual Authors’ Copyright Agreements, in order to comply with recent Open Access regulations, whilst maintaining academic excellence, publication quality and the present financial model. The information is displayed on our website:

[https://www.jjs-online.net/about-us/copyrights](https://www.jjs-online.net/about-us/copyrights)

We are delighted to report that a third volume of the Supplement Series, entitled the *People and the Peoples: Syriac Dialogue Poems from Late Antiquity*, by Sebastian P. Brock, was released in October 2019. These anonymous dialogue poems reflect the conflict between the early Christian Church and Judaism between the fifth and eighth centuries CE. The volume contains critical editions of the Syriac texts and fully annotated English translations, published together for the first time. More details and a review can be found at: [https://www.jjs-online.net/supplements/series_3](https://www.jjs-online.net/supplements/series_3)
Leo Baeck Institute Year Book

The Leo Baeck Institute Year Book is the pre-eminent journal on Central European Jewish history and culture. This well-established publication covers cultural, economic, political, social and religious history, the impact of antisemitism and the Jewish responses to it. The Year Book is the publication of the Leo Baeck Institute, founded in 1955 for the study of the history and culture of German-speaking Central European Jewry. The journal of record in its field, the Year Book features the world’s most prominent experts in the social, cultural, intellectual and political history of Jews in Central Europe after 1789, including the Holocaust.

Jewish Culture and History

introduced by Joachim Schlör (University of Southampton)

Jewish Culture and History was established at the University of Southampton in 1998. It is an inter-disciplinary journal which brings together the best of current research in Jewish social history with innovative work in Jewish cultural studies. The journal explores previously neglected areas of the Jewish experience from a range of different perspectives, including Jewish popular culture, social and political history, the literary and cultural representation of Jews, and the global contexts of Jewish culture and history. Current and former issues, Aims and Scope, and Editorial Board can be found here:

https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjch20

The autumn 2019 issue was especially wide-ranging and inter-disciplinary, with contributions on Abraham Z. López-Penha (1865-1927), the Jewish-Colombian novelist and poet whose oeuvre negotiated Sephardic and Pan-Hispanic identities. The Latin American theme was continued with an essay about Yiddish in Chile; Jewish migrant travelogues to Australia; early Zionist interpretations of Crusader castles in Palestine, and the Photo-League’s archive of black lives in New York.

The first issue of Winter 2019/20 was edited by Susanne Korbel, Parkes Fellow in October 2019. The papers are based on a workshop “Rethinking Jewish/non-Jewish Relations” at Graz University, and included articles about gender and masculinity in concentration camps, nature as sanctuary, public funerals, and Jewish-Argentinian exilic culture.

The Spring 2020 issue included work about 16th-century Yiddish translations of Pirkei Avot, the appropriation of Neo-Hasidism in Conservative Judaism, Moroccan Jews in early modern travelogues, Jewish writers in Budapest c. 1900, and a portrait of the eminent German-Jewish legal historian Guido Kisch (1889-1985).

Three Special Issues are in preparation:
Tamas Turan (ed.), Special Issue: 150th anniversary of the Hungarian Jewish Congress;
Maite Ojeda Mata, Joachim Schlör (eds.), Jewish cultural heritage in Spain, Portugal and North Africa;
Toni Griffiths (ed.), New Approaches to Medieval Anglo-Jewish History.

Journal of Modern Jewish Studies

introduced by Glenda Abramson (Oxford University)

The Journal of Modern Jewish Studies, devoted to a wide range of disciplines and geographic areas, is now in its 20th year, with the 20th-anniversary issue to be published in 2021. We have published a number of themed volumes, notably Gender, Sexuality and Queer in Modern Jewish Studies, guest-edited by Henriette Dahan (May 2019), and Beyond the Pale: The Country Houses of the Jewish Élite, guest-edited by David Rechter, Abigail Green and Juliet Carey (November 2019). A special issue in 2018 was published by Routledge as a book in 2019: Comic Books, Graphic Novels and the Holocaust: Beyond MAUS, edited by Ewa Stancyk.

Next year (March 2021) there will be a special issue entitled Gendering Jewish Inter/Nationalism, guest-edited by Jaclyn Granick and Abigail Green. For our 20th anniversary we’re planning an issue on Jewish journals.

More information at: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cmjs20/current
JewThink – a new, open, diverse non-profit British Jewish platform

introduced by Nathan Abrams (Prifysgol Bangor / Bangor University)

JewThink (www.jewthink.org) is a project to set up a popular not-for-profit service to allow diverse Jewish voices to be heard in Britain.

Why do we need JewThink? Existing Jewish publications in the UK are struggling. The circulation of print-based media continues to dwindle and close, and websites fight to produce revenue. At the same time, newspapers are subject to editorial decisions. JewThink aims to be an open, democratic platform for discussion and debate – free from the commercial pressures that drive other newspapers and websites.

What JewThink isn’t. JewThink does not support any particular political party. There are people who want what’s best for the Jews in the Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats, the Conservatives and the Green Party, and they are all welcome to contribute, though we won’t tolerate abusiveness and factional attempts to delegitimise other Jews. We note that angry and divisive debates over the emotive issues of Israel and antisemitism are common in both Jewish and non-Jewish publications. JewThink encourages a different kind of conversation. We will challenge contributors to “tell us something we didn’t know”; to find fresh angles and fresh ways of telling them.

JewThink will not be a 24/7 news network. We won’t be competing against the Jewish Chronicle, the Jewish News or Jewish Telegraph. Because we are released from the understandable pressure to fill pages, we would happily publish a handful of good pieces every week. People today dip into individual stories through social media, and are not dependent on one source as they used to be. There’s no reason for us to waste precious resources creating content that is already being supplied by other sites.

JewThink is not a commercial platform. We do not have any click targets for our articles. We do not have any shareholders or funders to please.

We will ask for donations and show occasional adverts. But any money made will be invested back into the service.

JewThink is nothing without YOU. A rule of thumb for contributing is: what can I not get published in any other existing British Jewish publication?

If you think it is not up to scratch, and that you could do better, please contribute. We don’t just need contributors; we also need those with expertise in data, coding, and business. Let us know what is important to you.

If you don’t have the time to contribute content, please consider a donation so that we can keep the site going.

Thank you very much.

The JewThink team. Contact: editorial@jewthink.org

Jewish Studies Highlights: from A to Z

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge: City of Scholars, City of Refuge, 1933-1945

5-6 March 2020

 Shortly before the coronavirus shut down the university and much of the world, we organised a conference, Cambridge: City of Scholars, City of Refuge, 1933-1945. Co-sponsored by CRASSH, Trinity College, and the Jewish Historical Society of England, and organised in association with the Insiders/Outsiders Festival, the conference brought together a stellar group of scholars and scientists to begin to tell the story about the way that Cambridge – university, colleges and city – became a haven for refugees from Fascist Europe in the years 1933-45. (We were inspired in part by a recent book that tells a similar story for Oxford.)

Some participants spoke about individual refugees – both academic superstars (the molecular biologist Max Perutz, the sociologist Karl Mannheim, the medievalist Walter Ullmann) and the marginal or nearly forgotten (the philosopher Rose Rand, whom Ludwig Wittgenstein supported anonymously). We heard papers about Jewish scholars fleeing Nazi-occupied Europe (the historian Samuel Krauss) and artists fleeing Franco’s Spain (the
composer Roberto Gerhard). We learned about the refugee experiences of women scientists, art historians, and a German avant-garde choreographer (Kurt Jooss). Participants also spoke about individuals and organisations that played vital roles in supporting academic refugees (Robert and Sybil Hutton, Herbert Loewe, the Cambridge Refugee Committee, the Strangeways Institute), as well as particular Colleges that did so: Trinity, King’s, Caius, Girton and Peterhouse (which welcomed the LSE for the duration of the war).

We heard about successes but also about failures: both the evacuation from Frankfurt of the invaluable music library of Paul Hirsch, and Herbert Loewe’s heroic, ultimately unsuccessful attempt to evacuate the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums from Berlin to Cambridge.

And we launched a book about the extraordinary household at 9 Adams Road, where Alice Roughton began to welcome refugees in the 1930s, and which has remained a welcoming haven to academics and others ever since. (Alice’s son Geoffrey presented the first copy of the book to Nicolas Bell, librarian of Trinity College.)

On the Thursday evening, we were welcomed into the Master’s Lodge at Trinity to hear from Stephen Wordsworth, director of the Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA), about the extraordinary work that that organisation, founded at Trinity in 1933 as the Academic Assistance Council, continues to do today. And we heard a magnificent keynote lecture from Lord Krebs about his father, Hans Krebs, who played such a central role in the story of scientific refuge from Nazi Europe to Cambridge and Britain in the 1930s, and about the fellowship in his memory that continues to support persecuted scientists to this day.

A final roundtable reflected on the differences and commonalities in the experiences of exiled scholars, scientists and artists, and the meaning of telling this story now, as it passes from living memory to history. (The large audience included both children and former students of refugee scholars.) And we reflected on what lessons the university can draw from this riveting history for our time, which has seen its own refugee crises and in which academics continue to be at risk from authoritarian regimes as nearby as Turkey and Hungary.

Looking back on it now, with the hindsight and experience of Covid-19 and more than two months of lockdown, we realise all the better – without comparing the incomparable – how our conference was about something else as well: the way an academic community can come together in a moment of global menace; how, in turn, such a threat can foreground and inspire the ideals of a community of learning, indeed of universitas, the common purpose of the free human search for knowledge and wisdom. We knew this story had global consequences that far transcended local history: after the war, many refugee academics from Europe who had found safety in Cambridge would go on to transform and even create entire disciplines. What will the world look like after our current global crisis, and what role will the university play in shaping it? We don’t know yet, but the story that our conference has begun to tell – as another CRASSH project about exile and scholarship, knowledge and migration has done – shows that we have a hand in making that world ourselves. Global crises and catastrophes can remind us of our common humanity and of our capacity for generosity and solidarity, and renew our aspirations and dedication.

Source: http://www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/events/28656

CARDIFF

Cardiff University’s School of History, Archaeology and Religion has welcomed its first lecturer in Modern Jewish History (August 2019): https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/1547643-new-focus-on-modern-jewish-history
Social media are impacting in significant ways on anti-Jewish racism – but what is novel about this relationship? Focused on this question, Edge Hill University hosted the first conference to analyse the connection between innovations in media and changes in antisemitism over the *longue durée*. Funded by the European Association for Jewish Studies, the event was a collaboration between the magazine *MONITOR Global Intelligence on Racism* (http://monitoracism.eu) (Monica Gonzalez-Correa) at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, Florence, Edge Hill’s new *International Centre on Racism* (ICR) (James Renton and Jenny Barrett), and the *Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung* (ZfA) (Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, Uffa Jensen, and Marcus Funck) at the Technische Universität Berlin.

A principal aim of the conference was to bring experts in the digital humanities, literature, law, social sciences, and history into dialogue. With historian Professor Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (ZfA) and web epistemologist Professor Richard Rogers (Amsterdam) as keynotes, the organisers attracted participants in these fields from Germany, Israel, Norway, the UK, and the United States.

Scholars, analysts and policymakers have pointed to social media for some time as a driving force behind the increasing virulence of antisemitism. This new form of communication has evidently played an important role in the recent spike in violent attacks and murder of Jews by lone-wolf killers in the United States and Europe. The killers have interacted with like-minded people online, and used the web as a means of articulating their ideology and as a platform for broadcasting their acts of violence. Beyond the realm of physical violence, antisemites are engaging with each other globally in new ways and are developing new forms of expression, and antisemitic notions and languages have moved into mainstream online debate and politics.

In order to combat this online racism effectively, we must decipher what, if anything, is really new – in form as well as content. Yet the fundamental question remains: how can the novelty of contemporary antisemitic ideas, practices, and networks be assessed? The answer must begin, the conference organisers argue, by analysing new developments within a bigger historical framework: the relationship between media and antisemitism over the centuries. In collaboration, the meeting of academic disciplines can, we contend, sketch out new paradigms of analysis. In turn, this larger canvas provides new possibilities for thinking about effective anti-antisemitism.
The conference achieved our goal of providing a new temporal and multi-disciplinary framework for thinking about our subject; we began our analyses in medieval history, extended our discussions into modernity, and then delved into the recent past and the present. The speaker panel included scholars of literature, law, history, the social sciences, and digital humanities. Following recent scholarship on antisemitism, much of our discussion was embedded in the bigger subjects of the far-right, digital culture, and the relational dynamics between racisms.

Taken together, the conference established clear connecting elements that are pronounced in particular moments (for example, between early modern Spain and contemporary global digital culture). This is not to say that we found unchanging features of antisemitism – on the contrary. The research unearthed points of similarity between points in time, including characteristics, defining emotions, and practices, that are brought into sharp relief by our deep historical approach. At the same time, the conference findings also underscore distinctive features of seminal junctures that are tied to innovations in media, and accompanying changes in political, economic, and social cultures.

Significantly for those combating antisemitism today, these findings include the unveiling of new evidence of effective contemporary antiracism strategies, along with suggestive parallels from the past.

These findings are to be communicated via an open-access peer-reviewed publication edited by Monica Gonzalez-Correa, MONITOR, EUI, Michael Berkowitz, UCL, and James Renton, Edge Hill University.

The partnership between MONITOR and the ICR has been formalised, and their ongoing events and publications continue to examine antisemitism in the context of other racisms over the longue durée. Their next conference will be on “Centring Race in History”, which will be followed by a webinar series on antiracism in the 2020s after George Floyd. MONITOR and the ICR will also discuss future collaborations with the ZfA.

For the conference programme, see: https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/events/2019/11/05/social-media-and-antisemitism-deciphering-the-relationship-between-prejudice-and-communication/

MONITORacism magazine is the world’s only online (and free!) magazine committed to bringing the insights of academic research on all racisms to global public debate, addressing antisemitism alongside Black Lives Matter and much more: www.monitoracism.eu

EDINBURGH

Jewish Studies at the University of Edinburgh

Since the BAJS Conference of 2017 at the University of Edinburgh, Jewish Studies here has continued to thrive. The conference on the theme of migration took place in the middle of a three-year AHRC-funded project directed by myself and Dr Mia Spiro (University of Glasgow): Jewish Lives, Scottish Spaces – Jewish Migration to Scotland, 1880-1950. We had the good fortune to be joined by Dr Phil Alexander, who contributed expertise in ethnomusicology and cultural studies to the project, and all the skills and knowledge gathered in his career as a musician. As this project concluded in 2019, we wound up with a respectable set of outputs (of which more elsewhere in this Bulletin), a recognised place in the scholarly landscape of British Jewish Studies, and lasting partnerships with local Jewish cultural and religious organisations.

The Jewish Studies Network at the University of Edinburgh has seen a relaunch in 2019 with a new focus. The Network is led by Professor Peter Davies in German Studies and myself. It brings together scholars in thematically and methodologically connected areas of scholarship, to explore broader questions concerning translation and agency, archives, and the practices of collecting and interpreting various genres of primary sources – literary texts, letters, trial transcripts, oral and written testimony, film and photography. Scholars involved with the Network are drawn from a much broader range of Humanities’ disciplines, offering a place for inter-
disciplinary discussion and a supportive environment for postgrad students. We are ambitious for the Network, and our generous seed funding enables us to run a couple of outward-facing events every year, to offer research events for staff and postgrad students.

In January 2019 Sophie Bayer took up the Astaire Levin Doctoral Scholarship to work on the private papers of the Ernst Levin Collection held at Lothian NHS Archives (http://libraryblogs.is.ed.ac.uk/levin/). Trained in cultural studies and literary criticism, Sophie brings a wealth of knowledge in German literature and culture to the analysis of a corpus of letters from the artist Max Unold and the writer and journalist Reinhard Koestler to Ernst and Anicuta Levin. The letters span the time from before WWI and, following the Levin’s emigration to Scotland, pick up again in 1945, ending with the death of the correspondents in the second half of the 20th century. There are other angles to explore within the Levin Collection, and there are other relevant archives in Scotland which would provide fertile ground of doctoral and post-doctoral research projects: for example, the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre’s collections (for a preview of some resources see https://sjac-collection.is.ed.ac.uk/), but also collections held in the National Library of Scotland (for example, the archives of Muriel Spark, and the papers of the Daiches family), and the University of Edinburgh’s Centre for Research Collections:

https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/-library-museum-gallery/crc.

We’d love to hear from potential research students who may be interested in pursuing doctoral projects on archival collections held in Scotland. For further information see:

https://www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/studying/graduate-school/research-programmes/study-areas/religious-studies-study-of-religions/jewish-studies

and

https://www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/graduate-school/research-programmes/types-of-programmes.

Hannah Holtschneider is supervising the PhD project:

Sophie Bayer (year 2), “Personal correspondence between Ernst and Anicuta Levin and Reinhard Koestler and Max Unold as collected in the Ernst Levin Collection (NHS Lothian Archives)”.

EXETER

PhD projects at Exeter:

Isabelle Mutton (supervisor: David Tollerton), “Holocaust Memorials in London and Ottawa: Sacred Secular Space”.

Lydia Souter (supervisor: David Tollerton), “21st Century Holocaust Memorials and Theories of Trans-national Memory”.

GLASGOW

(see also above, in the Edinburgh section)

Dr Philip Alexander (University of Glasgow) was awarded a three-year post-doctoral Fellowship to run from 2019-22: “Foreign Sounds: Musical Life in Jewish Scotland, 1880-1950”.

LEEDS

An ongoing research collaboration between the Centre for Jewish Studies (Eva Frojmovic, Jay Prosser) and the University Library is seeking to open the Cecil Roth Collection up to further research, including that on Roth’s collecting as heritage activism. For further details, see “(Re-)cataloguing Cecil Roth’s Collections at Leeds University Library”, at the section News from Archives, Libraries and Museums below.
In November, Leeds welcomed Professor Yulia Egorova (Durham), who spoke about Defining Anti-Semitism in the global context of prejudice: perspectives from Social Anthropology.

In the UK, recent years have witnessed visible public and political debates over the development of definitions of antisemitism and Islamophobia. These have generated a dynamic academic discussion about the potential that such definitions may (or may not) have for fighting inequality and securing community empowerment. Building upon ethnographic interviews conducted in the UK and historical research on images of Jewishness in British and postcolonial India, Professor Yulia Egorova situated current debates regarding definitions of antisemitism in the wider historical context of global images of anti-Jewish prejudice.

LONDON

King’s College London

Network for the Study of Dispersed Qumran Cave Artefacts and Archival Sources (DQCAAS)

For “Rylands Dead Sea Scroll fragments, thought to be blank, reveal text”, see the section News from Archives, Libraries and Museums below.

University College London (UCL) and King’s College London

Ancient Near Eastern Languages in Contact eLectures

Co-Organisers: Dr Alinda Damsma, Dr Lily Kahn, Dr Jonathan Stökl

UCL is pleased to announce that UCL and King’s College London are co-hosting an eLecture series, entitled Ancient Near Eastern Languages in Contact (ANELC). This initiative aims to bring together scholars from round the world with an interest in Ancient Near Eastern languages, in the hope of stimulating an exchange of ideas and collaboration in a time of academic isolation. The eLectures take place each Wednesday from 1 July until 26 August 2020 from 16:00 until 17:00 BST (London). This is a free online event and you are most welcome to join. Details at:


Translating Covid-19 information into Hasidic Yiddish

(UCL: Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies)

by Lily Kahn, Kriszta Eszter Szendrői, and Sonya Yampolskaya (UCL)

For the past year we have been working on an AHRC-funded research project on contemporary Hasidic Yiddish based in UCL Linguistics and Hebrew & Jewish Studies. Until March 2020 the project focused on collecting linguistic and sociolinguistic data from Yiddish speakers in the main Hasidic centres worldwide, with extended fieldwork conducted in London’s Stamford Hill, the New York area, and Israel. The Covid-19 pandemic put an abrupt stop to our work as we suddenly found ourselves unable to conduct interviews. Like everything with
this pandemic, things moved very quickly, and we soon found ourselves with an unexpected role to play during the crisis.

The Hasidic community in London’s Stamford Hill comprises approximately 40,000 people, the majority of whom are Yiddish-speaking. The community is extremely tight-knit, and members frequently avoid secular sources of information, especially online media. Moreover, many in the community are relatively unfamiliar with English. As Covid-19 health and police guidance started to appear in several waves on online forums which many in the Hasidic community do not have access to, we began to work with the NHS, Metropolitan Police, and Hackney Council in order to provide them with a Yiddish translation of their guidance for the Stamford Hill Hasidic community. In addition, we published information pages in a local magazine in Stamford Hill which reaches over 5,000 households.

We chose to translate the official guidance into colloquial Hasidic Yiddish, a generally spoken variant of the language employing vocabulary, grammar, and expressions that are perhaps surprising to the eyes of an academic Yiddishist. One particularly memorable discussion involved arguably the most important word of the entire translation, ‘cough’. There are two variants of this verb in Yiddish, הוסטן hustn and Hisen hisn, both of which are in use in the Hasidic world. Different members of the research team, as well as other Hasidic Yiddish speakers with whom we consulted, had particularly strong opinions about which was the correct one to use, and it was important to come to a satisfactory solution for such a crucial word in the context of the information we were trying to convey.

In addition to the linguistic issues concerning the translation, there were cultural factors to be taken into account. The NHS and police information did not contain any mention of specifically Jewish issues, such as prohibitions on going to the mikveh, forming minyanim, and attending synagogue services. We felt that it was vital to include details of these culturally salient topics, and were pleased that the NHS and police allowed us to make these additions.

It has been a very moving experience producing these translations, and even more so to hear reports of them being disseminated in North London. It is our sincerest hope that these translations will go some way towards helping to support London’s Yiddish-speaking residents in these grim times.
**Conference: Joseph Weiss, Amos Weisz and Gershom Scholem: 50 Years of Reflection on Hasidism**

23-24 September 2019  
Speakers:  
Noam Zadoff (University of Innsbruck)  
Zvi Leshem (National Library of Israel, Jerusalem)  
Ada Rapoport-Albert (UCL) (z”l).  
Chani Smith (Leo Baeck College)  
Lily Kahn (UCL)  
Tali Loewenthal (UCL)  
Ian Fairley (University of Leeds)

**Qaraite and Rabbanite calendars: origins, interaction, and polemic (2018-2021)**

funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation  

This project, run in collaboration by Professor Sacha Stern (UCL, London) and Professor Ronny Vollandt (LMU, Munich), with Dr Nadia Vidro as research fellow, investigates the origins and history of Qaraite and Rabbanite calendars in the 9th-12th-century Near East and Byzantine Empire. The Qaraite movement was a powerful Jewish movement in the 9th-12th centuries in the Near East, Byzantine Empire, and other Jewish-populated regions. Their main tenet was to reject the authority of the Talmud and rabbinic tradition, and to rely instead on a fresh reading of biblical scriptures, which led to substantially different interpretations and practices in many areas. Among the most conspicuous differences between Qaraites and Rabbanites was how they reckoned the calendar. Whereas mainstream Rabbanite Jews followed a fixed calendar based on calculation, medieval Qaraite Jews in Muslim lands determined the calendar by empirical factors, such as new moon sightings and the state of ripeness of the crops. These fundamental differences often led to festivals being celebrated on different dates, and hence to considerable polemic and controversies. This project investigates the origins of the Qaraite and the fixed Rabbanite calendars, which arose in the 8th-9th centuries and which, in our hypothesis, were closely intertwined. It studies the calendar disagreement between Qaraites and Rabbanites, its significance on each side of the debate, and its polemical uses. Our research also reflects on how people run their lives with different timeframes and calendars, and on the impact this exerts upon the sense of social belonging and identity.

PhD projects at UCL:  
Ron Hasson (supervisor: Markham J. Geller), “The term ‘Zion’ in biblical and ancient sources”.  
Ofer Livnat (supervisor: Sacha Stern), “Sifrei Evronot: medieval Jewish calendar manuals”.

See also: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/hebrew-jewish/people/research-students](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/hebrew-jewish/people/research-students)

**MANCHESTER**

**Jewish material culture and artists’ responses to it**

*by Alex Samely (University of Manchester)*

How would modern artists respond to artefacts from Jewish history that are now held at libraries and museums? This is the question that colleagues at Manchester’s Centre for Jewish Studies and Northern UK and Dublin partner institutions asked themselves in 2018 – and now we have some answers. Over the last 15 months, established creative artists and academics have collaborated in using 50 selected Jewish Objects as pointers to historical and contemporary Jewish life.
The resulting artistic engagement has borne thoughtful, beautiful and moving fruit.\(^1\) One artwork, created by Jacqueline Nicholls, offers the viewer pristine white pages and folds sewn together as a book. That book conceals as much as it displays. In a stunning inversion of fragments from the Genizah, one glimpses handwriting through irregular openings in the blank paper – the lacunae are where the writing is. The placing of the sewing and the gaps evoke Manchester’s famous, butterfly-shaped Genizah fragment of the Mishneh Torah, on which Maimonides himself can be seen formulating halakhic rules, then changing his mind.\(^2\)

Another work of halakhah, Isaac ben Joseph of Corbeil’s \textit{Sefer Mitsvot Qatan}, inspired illustrator Kremena Dimitrova to create seven large, complex and vibrant comic-strip panels that tell the (hi)story of Isaac and his work (pictured above). The number of panels corresponds to the \textit{SeMaQ}’s structure of seven “pillars”, and its motifs echo some of the hundreds of unusual marginal illustrations which adorn this Ashkenazi manuscript dated to c. 1346.\(^3\) Kremena’s panels fuse modern styles and techniques with medieval images of hounds and hares, dragons, fishes and human figures.

The 50 Jewish Objects researcher, Dr Stefania Silvestri, reports that her encounter with circumcision wimples advanced her thinking on Jewish material culture generally. In a report completed just before going on maternity leave – and subsequently giving birth to a beautiful baby girl – Stefania argues that the emotional dimensions of such objects have a place in Jewish historiography. For Stefania, these pieces of cloth, which were embroidered by female relatives of a newborn boy in certain regions of Ashkenaz from the 16th century and into which the boy at circumcision was wrapped,\(^4\) link ritual, cultural, emotional and gendered dimensions in the study of the Jewish historical experience.

Exploring another “textile” dimension of Jewish life, artist Helena Tomlin has created an installation of three pieces of white cloth with the hand-stitched names “Tycia”, “Helena” and “Rusha”. The cloths are draped on three low stands, making up a “Lodz Banquet”. Originally arising from Helena’s engagement with an illustrated Italian Esther scroll,\(^5\) the installation reflects inter-generational connections between women in “everybody’s history”. The three women named are two great-aunts and a great-grandmother of the artist, who lived in Lodz in the 1920s, after which all trace of them is lost.

Artists also brought the sound of Hebrew singing to the solemn reading room of Manchester’s John Rylands Library, where such sounds had never been heard before. In November of last year, this grand neo-Gothic building, whose stained-glass windows depict the intellectual giants of Western history and Christian theology, witnessed a performance of synagogue music from 19th-century Odessa. Using a book of liturgical compositions that had been hand-copied in Pontypridd in 1917, members of the Menorah Synagogue Choir performed songs by the Odessa cantor Jacob Bachmann,\(^6\) songs that had perhaps not been sung anywhere in the world for a long time.

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\(^1\) All pieces mentioned here can be seen at \url{http://www.manchesterjewishstudies.org/50-jewish-objects-artwork/?SSLLoginOk=true}; other pages on the site link to artists’ blogs and interviews, Dr Silvestri’s blogs and the annotated list of 50 Jewish objects and other materials relating to the project.


\(^3\) Digital images and a detailed description may be found at: \url{https://www.digitalcollections.manchester.ac.uk/view/MS-HEBREW-00031/1}

\(^4\) \url{https://luna.manchester.ac.uk/luna/servlet/s/5818c5}

\(^5\) \url{https://luna.manchester.ac.uk/luna/servlet/s/q628t4}

\(^6\) Images and description: \url{https://www.digitalcollections.manchester.ac.uk/view/MS-HEBREW-00059/1}
It was again the illustrated Esther scroll that inspired artist Nicola Dale. Alongside that scroll, a liturgical manuscript from Honan, whose Hebrew characters invoked for her the aesthetics of Chinese calligraphy, set Nicola on the path of creating the 49 printed cards and other items that together make up her artwork “Arranged in Time and Space”. A key theme of that piece is the “translation” of words into three-dimensional objects. She thus addresses, among other things, the very materiality of written culture. Or, as she says in a video that draws upon a quasi-Midrashic sensitivity to multiple meanings: “the justification of text and the direction of reading”.

Researchers came together on several occasions to discuss the conceptual implications of studying Jewish material culture, presenting to each other items held at Trinity College Dublin and at the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Chester and Bangor. Memorable too was a 12 February 2020 event, at which, following short papers by Aaron Hughes (Rochester), Sami Everett (Cambridge) and Alex Samely, a meeting explored links between curating and researching Jewish objects, on the one hand, and “Jewish” belonging, identity and alienation on the other, which might be experienced by the persons involved in such academic pursuits.

Image: Kremena Dimitrova, Deconstruct : Reconstruct – Turning a 14C Jewish Manuscript into 21C Comic Strips
http://www.manchesterjewishstudies.org/50-jewish-objects-artwork/?SSLoginOk=true

For “Rylands Dead Sea Scroll fragments thought, to be blank, reveal text”, see the section News from Archives, Libraries and Museums below.

The Jewish-Muslim Research Network
by Adi Bharat (University of Manchester, University of Michigan)

The Jewish-Muslim Research Network (JMRN) was started in April 2019 by Adi Saleem Bharat and Katharine Hall at the University of Manchester. An interdisciplinary and international initiative, the JMRN brings together academics whose research focuses on Jews, Muslims, and the relations and interactions between them. The JMRN aims to provide a forum for productive discussions and debates among researchers from different fields whose work is at the forefront of a line of academic inquiry that has produced creative and critical scholarship in recent years.

The JMRN’s current coordinators are Adi Saleem Bharat, Katharine Hall, and Flora Hastings. Adi, who will soon be joining the University of Michigan as a faculty member, researches race and religion in contemporary French society and politics. Katharine is an Arabic-English translator and student of Egyptian Jewish history. Flora is a PhD candidate in the anthropology department of SOAS, whose research comparatively explores “progressive” forms of Jewish and Muslim identity in contemporary Barcelona.

The network is constantly growing, and counts over one hundred members across Europe, North America, and the Middle East, representing a variety of disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, political science, history, religion and theology, literature, linguistics, area studies, and cultural studies. Members range from students to tenured professors – we are committed to fostering meaningful academic relationships between scholars at different stages of their career.

7 Images and description: https://www.digitalcollections.manchester.ac.uk/view/MS-HEBREW-00024/1

Our inaugural conference, entitled “Beyond ‘Jewish-Muslim Relations’”, with keynote lectures by Seth Anziska (UCL), Yulia Egorova (Durham University), and Brian Klug (Oxford University), has been deferred.

As part of our 2019-20 seminar series in Manchester, Brahim El Guabli (Williams College, USA) delivered a lecture on images of Jews in French and Arabic “mnemonic literature” in Morocco, Esra Özyürek (LSE) lectured on holocaust memories and immigrant integration in Germany, Ludovic-Mohamed Zahed (Calem Institute) presented his research on the diversity of genders and sexualities in Islam, Aaron W. Hughes (University of Rochester, USA) spoke on the topic of alterity in medieval Islam, and Samuel Sami Everett (Cambridge) spoke on the vast, diverse field of “Jewish-Muslim dialogue” in France.

In addition, in December 2019, the network hosted a symposium on gender and sexuality in/around Judaism and Islam. Following the symposium, Adi Saleem Bharat has begun putting together an edited book tentatively titled *Queer Jews, Queer Muslims: Race, Religion, and Representation*. Together with the Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Manchester, we also held a panel on the theme of identity, belonging, and alienation in Jewish Studies with Aaron W. Hughes, Samuel Sami Everett, Alexander Samely (Manchester), and Katja Stuerzenhofecker (Manchester).

Prior to the pandemic, we also held regular reading groups in Manchester and London. One upside of the lockdown has been that we have now moved our activities online, and have welcomed scholars from across the world to our online reading group over the last few months. We also recently held our first online seminar – on Jews, Muslims, and secularism, with Brian Klug (Oxford University) and Sultan Doughan (Boston University) – on 18 June. Later this month, on 30 July, we will be hosting an online launch for the recently published book by JMRN member Robert Phillips, *Virtual Activism: Sexuality, the Internet, and a Social Movement in Singapore* (Toronto University Press, 2020).

Do have a look at our new website – [https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/jmrn/](https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/jmrn/). And note our new email address: [jewish.muslim@umich.edu](mailto:jewish.muslim@umich.edu)

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**PhD Projects in Manchester:**

**Ongoing:**


**Completed:**


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**OXFORD**

**Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies**

**Highlights 2019-20**

As with most universities, the activities of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies had to be postponed or to migrate online owing to the Covid-19 crisis. The Michaelmas and Hilary terms were however rich in exciting scholarly events.

New publications of three of the Centre’s fellows received important book awards:


Martin Goodman’s *Josephus’s The Jewish War* (Princeton University Press, 2020). A review may be found here:

In addition to the regular teaching and research seminars and the weekly David Patterson lectures, the highlights of this academic year included the Fourth Edward Ullendorff Memorial Lecture, the ninth edition of the Oxford Seminar in Advanced Jewish Studies, and a film festival.

The Fourth Edward Ullendorff Memorial Lecture on 19 November 2019 was given by Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner (Woolf Institute and University of Cambridge). The lecture on *Multilingualism in Mediaeval Egypt: An Exploration of Inclusion and Segregation* offered fascinating insights into the linguistic reality of medieval Jewish communities in Egypt through the prism of the private letters from the Cairo Geniza.

From October 2019 to March 2020, the OCHJS hosted its Oxford Seminar in Advanced Jewish Studies. The Seminar entitled *Between Sacred and Profane – Jewish Musical Cultures in Early Modern Europe* was led by Dr Diana Matut of the Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg and Dr Deborah Rooke of Regent’s College, University of Oxford, and gathered the leading specialists in Jewish music. The research group focused on Ashkenazi, Italian-Jewish and Western Sephardic musical expressions in Europe during the early modern period. Special emphasis was given to the connectivity of liturgical, semi-liturgical and secular spheres. See: https://www.ochjs.ac.uk/academic-activities/oxford-seminar-in-advanced-jewish-studies-current/


On 11, 12 and 13 February 2020, OCHJS, under the leadership of Professor Adriana X Jacobs, organised a three-day film event in the framework of the Brichto Israel Studies fund. We screened three films from director and producer Yair Qedar’s celebrated documentary project *The Hebrews*, a series of films portraying key figures of the Hebrew and Jewish literary canon. We showed films on the *Levantine* writer Jacqueline Kahanoff (1917-79), the Yemenite Jewish poet Shalom Shabazi (1619-c.1720), and the Yiddish poet Avraham Sutzkever (1913-2010). Each film was introduced by Yair Qedar himself and one of the Centre’s scholars. The screening was followed by roundtable discussion.

Owing to Covid-19, our summer activities – the Hebrew Manuscripts Workshop: Codicology, Palaeography and Art History, and the Oxford Summer Institute on Modern and Contemporary Judaism (OSI), both planned for July 2020 – have been postponed to summer 2021.
The Parkes Institute for the Study of Jewish/non-Jewish Relations has had an exciting year. We were very pleased to welcome new members to the Institute: Dr Anna Collar and Dr Thomas Irvine. Dr Alexander Hay has also joined the team as our new Digital Coordinator, and he has worked hard to strengthen the Parkes Institute digital presence. He has created a Youtube channel with recent recorded named lectures – https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzxpqV_WX3F1O2-nMGA46Pw – as well as a monthly interactive Newsletter available on our website: https://www.southampton.ac.uk/parkes/news/index.page. His support has been crucial during the Covid-19 pandemic to support our shift to more online activities.

Our research programme has been rich and diverse this year, with fortnightly research seminars on different aspects of Jewish/non-Jewish relations, ranging from antisemitism in the Russian Revolution to transnational aspects of the Kindertransport. This year we innovated with more panel events and debates, including one dedicated to the research of our PhD students. Our named lectures were delivered by Alison Salvesen (Montefiore Lecture), Mark Geller (Rein Lecture) and Shirli Gilbert (Karten Lecture). The Parkes Lecture due to be given by Michael Miller (CEU) was postponed to next year. We were also pleased to host the Visiting Fellowships for the third time, with this year’s focus on Cultural Encounters between Jews and non-Jews.

In October-November 2019, our two fellows in residence were Dr Susanne Corbel (University of Graz, Austria) and Dr Reuven Kiperwasser (University of Ariel and Hebrew University, Israel). Susanne Corbel co-organised with Joachim Schlör and colleagues from Graz a stimulating workshop on “Shared Spaces – Methodological Approaches to Jewish/non-Jewish Relations”.

Our doctoral seminar has continued to offer a dedicated space for our PhD students to share their work-in-progress, convened this year by Dr Kati Straner with the support of the PhD student Abaigh McKee. This forum has become even more vital and well-attended during the Covid-19 pandemic, offering students intellectual stimulation, motivation and support at a difficult time for them. The second Parkes graduate conference that was due to take place in July 2020 has been postponed to 2021.

We have also undertaken some major outreach events this year. The Interfaith lecture was delivered by Carolyn Sanzenbacher on “James Parkes in the Hitler Years – International Interfaith Interracial Humanitarianism”. Our annual city-wide commemoration on Holocaust Memorial Day in partnership with Solent University included a talk by Marc Levene on “Genocidal Resonances in an Age of Mass Environmental Refugeedom”, a musical performance by the Wessex Interfaith Choir, a drama performance around the post-war naval photographs of Albert Goff, and reflections and readings from local sixth-form colleges. An exhibition showcased responses from local students to Holocaust testimony based on workshops led by the Parkes Institute team and developed by Katie Power and Uri Agnon.

Instead of cancelling all our public events and outreach activities during the Covid-19 pandemic, we were able to move several of them online. In June 2020, members of the Parkes Institute, the History department at Southampton and beyond shared their views on the debated topic of “Antisemitism on the Left”. In July, educators across the country were invited to participate in a free online workshop over three weeks on the “Ethics of teaching the Holocaust and difficult histories”, coordinated by Heather Mann. The Parkes Institute website will also publish more online resources, including source commentaries on different aspects of Jewish history and culture.

We hope to build on this digital experience in the coming year, and we welcome partnerships!
News from Archives, Libraries and Museums

The Hidden Treasures Covid-19 Community Archive Project
by Daniel Cesarani, Project Administrator, Hidden Treasures.

In January 2020 the Board of Deputies of British Jews was planning the launch of a new project showcasing the archives throughout Britain that hold material of Jewish interest. The project, Hidden Treasures; celebrating Jewish archives in Britain, aims to build awareness of, and encourage active exploration of, Britain’s Jewish past through archival visits. Events, hosted at those archives, were intended to be a major part of this programme. Then March rolled round, the crisis began, and plans had to change.

One of the most striking elements of the Jewish response to Covid-19 has been the rapid digital evolution of British Jewish communal life. Some synagogue activities moved online, working within religious rules to create a continuity of communal life, and new types of social engagement have entered the popular understanding. Disruptions to religious festivals – a Pesach, Shavuot, and Lag B’Omer – have required modifications to adapt traditional celebrations into digitally appropriate forms. All these changes have generated a vast number of documents and a huge quantity of data that will be of great interest to social historians going forward. As with the wider experience of Jewish life, the Hidden Treasures project also had to adapt.

The Hidden Treasures website, to be launched later this year, now constitutes the main public-facing aspect of the project, and out of it came the Board of Deputies’ Covid-19 Jewish Community Response Archive. It aims to gather a representative sample of the digital ephemera as it relates to the ongoing pandemic – announcements, newsletters, and advertisements – being produced by various Jewish communities across Britain.

The Board’s communications networks, especially its links with synagogues and community organisations, have been the main method by which the archive has been gathering material. Calls for material have been put out through the Board’s regular announcements, resulting in a steady inflow of material from a large number of sources. The majority of the material is from synagogues and community organisations, with synagogue newsletters being a particular way of observing the weekly change in community reactions to the crisis. However, more material generated by non-Jewish organisations, like city councils, aimed at their local Jewish populations, is being submitted to the archive as time goes on.

Emerging out of crisis, the Jewish Community Response archive is a small and ad-hoc initiative, but we’re eager to grow and develop the project. We’re part of the international archiving effort, spearheaded by the National Library of Israel, and we welcome advice, support, and additional material for the archive.

The archive’s point of contact is Dawn Waterman, the Board of Deputies Heritage and Archives Advisor, and material can be emailed to her directly, or to boardofdeputiescovid19@gmail.com

(Re-)cataloguing Cecil Roth’s Collections at Leeds University Library
by Konstanze H. Kunst, Manuscript Cataloguer, Cecil Roth Collection, Special Collections and Galleries, Leeds University Library

Since August 2019, a project has been under way at Leeds University Library to (re-)catalogue part of the collections assembled by the historian Cecil Bezalel Roth (1899–1970), which are now housed in the Library’s Special Collections. Roth was as passionate a collector as he was a historian. Throughout his adult life, he avidly collected manuscripts, printed items, art and artefacts connected to Jewish cultures and history. Much of the extraordinary material Roth collected – his extensive manuscript and print collection, his research library and more than 4,200 pamphlets, together with many of his personal papers – had already found a home in the Leeds University Library in the years prior to his passing.

The cataloguing project has three main objectives. First, to considerably enhance the extant records of more than 350 manuscript items collected by Roth from the age of 23 onwards. (A single “manuscript item” in the sense used here sometimes includes multiple letters, documents, or pamphlets). Second, to add information about annotations and owner’s notes to the
records of the c. 800 printed items from before 1850. Third, to create records for the c. 2,500 uncatalogued pamphlets in Roth’s collection, many of which are believed to be very rare.

The project has been made possible thanks to the Rothschild Foundation Hanadiv Europe. It is one of the results of the considerable ongoing efforts on the part of Special Collections at Leeds University Library, together with collaborating scholars, to promote the exceptional character of the Cecil Roth Collection at Leeds, and to make it more accessible to the scholarly world and the wider community. This championship could not have come at a more opportune moment in the world of Jewish studies.

Roth’s collection at Leeds is of special value to the new history of Jewish cultures and material texts as it has emerged over the past 20 years. It also offers deep insight into the crucial role that Roth played in the formation of the field of Anglo-Jewish history and the ways that Jewish heritage was preserved and interpreted for further generations. As historian and collector alike, Roth was able to see the “extraordinary in the ordinary”. While other collectors of his time were still looking for “clean copies” and pristine, well-preserved, highbrow manuscripts, Roth collected texts that were rooted in the daily life of “ordinary” Jews and their communities.

Examples among the manuscripts include communal prayer books and prayer pamphlets, memorial books, circumcision and accounting ledgers, wedding poems, notebooks of preachers, letters, and pieces of paper inscribed with spells. Many of the handwritten and printed items in Roth’s collection have copious notes and marks, bookplates and insertions, along with plenty of stains. All of these tell us about the creators, users, readers, owners, and sellers of the objects. Roth’s manuscript collection is of immense interest, especially for the now well-established field of early modern Jewish history, considering that more than two thirds of the items date from the years 1500 to 1800 (see the chart).

Image: Roth Ms 13: praying in and recording a time of plague.
**Digitising the British Library’s Hebrew manuscripts**

by Ilana Tahan, Lead Curator Hebrew & Christian Orient Studies, The British Library. email: ilana.tahan@bl.uk

The Hebrew manuscript collection of the British Library is an unparalleled scholarly resource of international standing, whose marked excellence stems chiefly from the breadth and depth of the material. Its contents are rich and diverse, touching upon all branches of Hebrew literature and Jewish learning. The collection comprises items displaying Jewish cultural, religious and social life spanning more than 1,000 years, and covering a vast geographical expanse, from Europe and North Africa in the west, through the Middle East to China in the east.

Between 2013 and early 2020, the British Library undertook a far-reaching, externally funded digitisation project – the Hebrew Manuscripts Digitisation Project (HMDP). Its principal goal has been to provide free online access to the library’s Hebrew manuscript holdings, through manuscript conservation and imaging, metadata creation and online presentation. Generously funded by The Polonsky Foundation, Phase 1 of the project, included material described in George Margoliouth’s Catalogue of Hebrew Manuscripts (3 v. reprinted 1965). Phase 2 (begun in mid-2016) was sponsored by the National Library of Israel, and comprised the Gaster and the Samaritan manuscripts. The benefits and outputs of this challenging, large-scale project have been wide-ranging. Here are the most salient:

- Opening up the Hebrew manuscript collection to wider audiences, including remote users and the public at large
- Improving access to a significant scholarly resource; 2,700 Hebrew manuscripts (codices, scrolls, single sheets) digitised and catalogued in HMDP Phases 1 & 2
- Fully digitised manuscripts and detailed, searchable catalogue records; available on the Digitised Manuscripts site https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/
- The creation of 250 catalogue records linked to 7,000 Genizah manuscript digital images (captured 2010-12 as part of the Friedberg Genizah Project); available on the Digitised Manuscripts site
- Enabling close examination of unique and distinctive details (e.g. manuscript micrography), impossible with the naked eye
- Increasing opportunities for discovery and research
- The creation in Phase 1 of a digital bespoke hub – The Polonsky Foundation Catalogue of Digitised Hebrew Manuscripts – aimed at encouraging and facilitating research and new work, using the new digital collection: https://www.bl.uk/hebrew-manuscripts
- The creation of additional British Library platforms with Hebrew manuscript content, e.g. Discovering Sacred Texts: https://www.bl.uk/sacred-texts/themes/judaism
- Facilitating conservation assessment of individual manuscripts; enabling conservation treatment of fragile items; ensuring long-term preservation of the physical objects
- Growing interest from scholars and the public in the digitised collection, as well as in the physical objects
- Increasing staff’s promotional and research activities via social media (e.g. blogs) conferences, publications.

The completion of the HMDP has culminated in the beautifully designed Hebrew Manuscripts: Journeys of the Written Word exhibition. Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, the exhibition could not be launched in March as planned, but is expected to open at a future date. Curated by Ilana Tahan and...
Zsofia Buda, the exhibition transports the visitor on a journey of discovery through magnificent objects, the majority of which are owned by the British Library. Viewers will come face to face with the centuries-long culture, history and traditions of Jewish people from various parts of the world. Many of the exhibits have never been on public display, so viewers will be in for a treat.

The speedy realisation of this exhibition – within barely ten months – shows unmistakably how digitisation has aided the curators through the laborious stages of selecting, planning and researching. Without digital access to the Hebrew manuscripts, these tasks could not have been achieved in such a short period.


**Surrounded by Manuscripts: Reflections of a Cataloguer**

by Dr Zsofia Buda

I have spent the last four years (2016-20) cataloguing manuscripts at the British Library for the second phase of the Hebrew Manuscripts Digitisation Project. Virtually the entire Hebrew manuscript collection of the British Library has now been digitised and made available online.

My training was as an art historian and as a medievalist with medieval Hebrew manuscript illumination as my main field of interest; but most of the beautifully illuminated medieval manuscripts had already been catalogued (in the first phase) when I joined the project, and the vast majority of the manuscripts that Icatalogued were post-medieval. However, I soon realised that I could turn this into an advantage.

Cataloguing such a diverse collection – with its wide range of subjects, formats, languages and provenances from a variety of Jewish subcultures – improved my codicological and palaeographical skills. Reflecting on these years, I can see that it gave me much more than merely a sharpening of these practical skills. It has definitely widened my horizons, providing me with a more comprehensive view of Hebrew manuscript culture. Having seen and studied nearly 1,500 manuscripts “in the flesh”, I have gained a deeper understanding of the role of the materiality of manuscripts in the transmission of knowledge. I have discovered the significance of miscellanies – composite volumes that contain a selection of various works. Why were certain works copied together and what can this tell us about the compilers? Having traced the “footprints” of a large number of manuscripts, I realised how much provenance research can reveal about the spread of knowledge and culture. The fact that all these items belonged to a particular collection has raised my awareness about the possibilities of researching the history of a collection, and has taught me to look beyond the individual object.

Although as a cataloguer I did not have much time for in-depth research, this position provided me with invaluable first-hand experience with manuscripts, and enabled me to get an unparalleled comprehensive view of Jewish manuscript culture. Last year, co-curating the exhibition Hebrew Manuscripts: Journeys of the Written Words with lead curator Ilana Tahan gave me a special opportunity to conduct a more in-depth study of some 22 manuscripts and to support an important event that will promote Hebrew manuscripts and Jewish heritage in general to a new and even wider public.

**Rylands Dead Sea Scroll fragments, thought to be blank, reveal text**


New research has revealed that four Dead Sea Scroll manuscript fragments housed at The University of Manchester’s John Rylands Library, which were previously thought to be blank, do in fact contain text. The discovery means that The University of Manchester is the only institution in the UK to possess authenticated textual fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The study was undertaken as part of a Leverhulme-funded study held at King’s College London, a collaboration between Professor Joan Taylor (King’s College London), Professor Marcello Fidanzio (Faculty of Theology of Lugano) and Dr Dennis Mizzi (University of Malta).
Unlike the recent cases of forgeries assumed to be Dead Sea Scrolls fragments, all of these small pieces were unearthed in the official excavations of the Qumran caves, and were never passed through the antiquities market. In the 1950s, the fragments were gifted by the Jordanian government to Ronald Reed, leather expert at the University of Leeds, so he could study their physical and chemical composition. It was assumed that the pieces were ideal for scientific tests, as they were blank and relatively worthless. These were studied and published by Reed and his student John Poole, and then stored safely away.

In 1997 the Reed Collection was donated to The University of Manchester through the initiative of Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis, George Brooke. These fragments have been stored in Reed’s own labelled boxes in The John Rylands Library, and have been relatively untouched since then.

When examining the fragments for the new study, Professor Taylor thought it possible that one of them did actually contain a letter, and therefore decided to photograph all of the existing fragments over 1 cm that appear blank to the naked eye, using multispectral imaging. Fifty-one fragments were imaged front and back. Six were identified for further detailed investigation; of these, it was established that four have readable Hebrew/Aramaic text written in carbon-based ink. The study has also revealed ruled lines and small vestiges of letters on other fragments. The most substantial fragment has the remains of four lines of text with 15-16 letters, most of which are only partially preserved, but the word Shabbat (Sabbath) can be clearly read. This text may be related to the biblical book of Ezekiel (46:1-3). One piece with text is the edge of a parchment scroll section, with sewn thread, and the first letters of two lines of text may be seen to the left of this binding.

“Looking at one of the fragments with a magnifying glass, I thought I saw a small, faded letter – a lamed, the Hebrew letter L,” said Professor Taylor. “Frankly, since all these fragments were supposed to be blank and had even been cut into for leather studies, I also thought I might be imagining things. But then it seemed maybe other fragments could have very faded letters too. With new techniques for revealing ancient texts now available, I felt we had to know if these letters could be exposed. There are only a few on each fragment, but they are like missing pieces of a jigsaw puzzle you find under a sofa.”

The research team is currently undertaking further investigations of these fragments in consultation with The John Rylands Library and Professor Brooke, as part of a larger project studying the various Qumran artefacts at the John Rylands Library. The results will be published in a forthcoming report.

**The Eye as Witness: Keeping Eyes on the Exhibition**

by Louise Stafford (National Holocaust Centre and Museum) and Maiken Umbach (History, University of Nottingham).

This short report replaces the conference paper which Professor Maiken Umbach had submitted to the BAJS conference 2019.

“The Eye As Witness”, an innovative mixed-media exhibition, born out of a cross-disciplinary research project funded by the AHRC, draws attention to the problem of perpetrator-dominated photography in relation to the Holocaust, and aims to liberate the memory of victims and survivors from perpetrator narratives. Having toured in full, or part, in Manchester, London, and Leeds, the exhibition was due to run at the National Memorial Arboretum and the Jewish Museum in spring and summer 2020. Since Covid-19 closed museum doors, the need to share the questions posed to audiences remains. The immersive and participatory curation of the exhibition poses particularly interesting challenges in creating an online version of this experience.

In the physical show, visitors first undertake a Virtual Reality exploration of a photograph from the Stroop Report about the Warsaw Ghetto, which visually and viscerally problematises familiar official Nazi photography. In a second part, visitors then encounter the much less familiar clandestine photos taken by Holocaust victims.
Alongside the images, voices of survivors are shared through excerpts of testimony from the “Forever Project”: together, they draw attention to the dignity and agency exercised by those persecuted by the regime.

We are now creating an online version of the exhibition, and that poses a number of challenges:

Does the museum setting, and the presence of a “live” educator, change the way that we view evidence in an exhibition, compared to an online experience controlled entirely by the user?

In curating an online version, to what extent should methodology be driven by the opportunities of digital engagement, and how is this balanced with conceptual and content-driven approaches?

What additional opportunities does a digital exhibition offer to users to both “open out” and “drill down” further into the content of the exhibition?

How can dialogue with the audience begin before they engage with the exhibition, and what additional opportunities do online media offer here? Similarly, what opportunities are there for sustained and thoughtful reflection after the visit in a digital space?

The multi-disciplinary team of the AHRC research project proved a great asset in this process, combining historical expertise, especially on the use of ego-documents, with expertise in Computer Science on Mixed Reality and Human-Computer Interaction. But so has the partnership with the National Holocaust Centre and Museum, which works closely with a much-loved team of survivor speakers, who contributed insights and perspectives to developing the exhibition. Covid-19 poses huge societal challenges, and this is drawn into sharp relief by the circumstances of many survivor speakers. Their creativity and positivity in maintaining a dialogue about Holocaust learning during this time have been inspirational. The “Eye as Witness” exhibition exists, in part, to ensure that the voices and narratives of victims and survivors remain central to the public’s engagement with the Holocaust and its legacies. At a time when many elderly survivors are unable to leave their homes and engage physically with learners, their contribution to tackling our questions in creating an online learning tool are particularly significant. The question of how to approach alternative, digital engagement is crucial for the Centre and its academic partners as they pursue their commitment to share the perspectives of victims and survivors.

https://witness.holocaust.org.uk/exhibition
The Association for Canadian Jewish Studies/ l’Association d’études juives canadiennes (ACJS/Aéjc) was founded in 1976 as the Canadian Jewish Historical Society / Société d’histoire juive canadienne. The original aim of the society was to promote and disseminate historical research concerning the engagement of Jews with Canadian society. It did so via the Canadian Jewish Historical Society Journal (1977-88), and via an annual conference held in conjunction with the Canadian Historical Association at the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (CFHSS) Congress.

In 1993 the Canadian Jewish Historical Society began publication of a new annual scholarly journal, Canadian Jewish Studies / Études juives canadiennes to promote a new multidisciplinary approach to the subject. In 1996 the society changed its name to the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies / l’Association d’études juives canadiennes (ACJS/Aéjc) to highlight our broader research scope. In addition to history, the new association encouraged new research on the Canadian Jewish experience through the disciplines of political science, sociology, economics, gender studies, geography, education, demography, religion, linguistics, literature, architecture, translation, and performing and fine arts, among others.

Today, the ACJS/Aéjc is a national member-run organisation that brings together academics, students, professionals and others interested in the study of the Jewish experience in Canada across multiple disciplines.

Our regular activities include: An annual springtime conference that brings together scholars, archivists, and associated societies and organisations of Canadian Jewish studies to share their ideas and help shape the future of the discipline; Community-based activities that promote Canadian Jewish Studies in the form of lectures, walking tours, literary readings and other events; Publication of Canadian Jewish Studies, the only journal devoted to the study of Canadian Jewry. Canadian Jewish Studies is an open-access scholarly journal that includes full-length peer-reviewed articles from a variety of scholarly disciplines, book reviews, special sections devoted to translations of important primary sources, and short essays by representatives of archival collections from coast-to-coast-to-coast called “Archives Matter”; Publication of a bi-annual Bulletin highlighting news and events pertaining to Canadian Jewish studies.

Via partnerships with numerous local Jewish historical societies and organisations throughout Canada, the ACJS maintains a vibrant relationship with Canada’s Jewish communities and encourages the identification and preservation of properties, sites, and districts related to Canadian Jewish heritage.

Each year, the ACJS/Aéjc dispenses awards that recognise the achievements of those who have made the most meaningful contributions to our discipline. The Louis Rosenberg Canadian Jewish Studies Distinguished Service Award recognises a significant contribution made by an individual, institution or group to Canadian Jewish Studies. In 2009 the ACJS/Aéjc created the Marcia Koven Award for Best Student Paper and has awarded a promising young scholar with this distinction every year since. In 2019 the ACJS/Aéjc established the Robert L. Kemeny Award, a new grant to help full-time students attend our annual conference and share their research.

The ACJS/Aéjc invites anyone with an interest in the Canadian Jewish experience to join our association and participate in our programming.

The ACJS/Aéjc gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies at Concordia University, the Israel & Golda Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies at York, the Vered Jewish Canadian Studies Program at the University of Ottawa, and the Jewish Studies Program of the University of Toronto.
Letter from Italy

This is the first instalment of a series of miniature portraits of our counterparts on the European mainland, each of which has its own history and special character.

Associazione Italiana per lo Studio del Giudaismo (AISG)

by Professor Mauro Perani
(Università di Bologna, President of the Associazione www.aisg.it)

The Italian Association for the Study of Judaism (Associazione Italiana per lo Studio del Giudaismo, AISG) was founded in 1979 in Bologna, at the then Centro di Documentazione per le Scienze Religiose. The founding members of the AISG were 13 scholars of Judaism and early Christianity, listed below:

Paolo Sacchi (University of Turin), Giuliano Tamani (University Ca’ Foscari, Venice), Mauro Pesce (University of Bologna), Daniela Piattelli (University of Rome Tor Vergata), Reinhard Neudecker (Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome), Sergio J. Sierra (University of Genoa), Fausto Maria Parente (University of Rome Tor Vergata), Pier Cesare Ioly Zorattini (University of Udine), Lorenzo Perrone (Documentation Center for Religious Sciences, Bologna), Liliana Rosso Ubigli (University of Turin), Emanuela Trevisan Semi (University Ca’ Foscari ‘of Venice), Paolo Bettio (Documentation Center for Religious Sciences, Bologna), and Angelo Vivian (University of Pisa). The Presidents were: Paolo Sacchi from 1979 to 1988; Fausto Parente 1988-92; Giuliano Tamani 1992-94; Michele Luzzati 1994-97; Lucio Troiani 2000-03; P.C. Ioly Zorattini 2003-09; currently Mauro Perani 2009-21.

Materia Giudaica, the journal of AISG

As secretary of the AISG since 1991, Giulio Busi founded in 1996 Materia Giudaica as the bulletin of the AISG, initially a small magazine of 40-50 pages and printed without a publisher. From 2001, under the editorship of Mauro Perani, it has been published by the specialist Jewish studies publishing house Giuntina of Florence:

https://www.giuntina.it/AISG_6/Materia_giudaica_2/

Between 1980 and 2019, the AISG held almost 34 congresses on Jewish studies, all resulting in volumes of conference proceedings that appeared either in the journal Materia Giudaica or separately.

Italia Judaica

Unlike perhaps some other Jewish Studies associations, AISG serves also as a worldwide association of scholars interested in the special histories and traditions of the Jews in Italy. The “Italia Judaica” Project was founded by Shlomo Simonsohn in 1969 within the Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Institute (Tel Aviv University). The purpose of this project was to promote research on primary sources through the organisation of conferences and the promotion of publication of the results in the field of Italian Jewish history. In over 50 years of research in the framework of the Italia Judaica Project, ten conferences were held in Italy between 1981 and 2008. Published volumes of six of these conferences are available online on the website:


A branch of Italia Judaica is the Documentary History of the Jews in Italy, directed by the late Professor Shlomo Simonsohn (33 volumes). One result of these researches by Italia Judaica was the site created by Shlomo Simonsohn, of the “historical-geographical lexicon of Italian Judaism”, available here: https://www7.tau.ac.il/omeka/italjuda/presentation
None of us were ready to lose David Cesarani in 2015; he touched the hearts and minds of too many to count, and, as his former doctoral students, we have a responsibility to perpetuate his legacy. We were privileged to have been brought into the extended Cesarani family and were encouraged to flex our academic muscles, to apply ourselves to rigorous scholarly research, and to consider the practical and personal applications of our knowledge. David's contributions to society, particularly with reference to Holocaust research, education and commemoration, should serve as an inspiration to us all. In honouring David's legacy we felt that it was particularly important to give David's former students and close colleagues a voice to celebrate his life and perpetuate his memory.

Our contributors were a pleasure to work with, offering great insights throughout the book both in terms of intellectual innovation and in illustrating what David was like as a person. The charisma we all miss bursts though the text in anecdotes by, among others, Rob Rozett, Suzanne Bardgett, Tony Kushner and Aimee Bunting as well as in a very special "Afterword" by his widow Dawn Waterman, his son Daniel Cesarani, and his friend and intellectual contemporary, Bryan Cheyette.

A key challenge in editing this book was to capture the breadth of David’s research interests. David enjoyed a fantastically varied career, cut tragically short, yet he still provided three further pioneering publications posthumously in 2016 and 2017: his seminal text, Final Solution, offering a masterly overview of the Holocaust; an illuminating biography of Benjamin Disraeli, and an edited collection with Peter Mandler on modern philanthropy. These final works by David once again demonstrate the breadth of his work and depth of thought.

In The Jews, the Holocaust and the Public we wanted to incorporate as many of David’s diverse research interests as would be possible in a coherent volume. As a result, we have focused on Anglo-Jewish history, minorities and nationalisms, the Holocaust and its histories, war crimes and their legacies, and public history and Holocaust commemoration. Additionally, as a group who knew David well, it was also important to ensure we included
snapshots of his personality as well as David’s many and varied public interactions. Rather than seeing these as separate intellectual strands, we felt it was important that the overlaps and interconnections between these themes be explored, much as they are in David’s first solo authored book, *Justice Delayed* (1992). Here his interest in all of these areas coalesced, creating a distinctive “Cesaranian” historical approach concerned with the role of Jewish identity in modern societies; the experiences of migrants and minorities; the role of nationalism; and the terror of the Nazi state.

It would be impossible to do justice fully to David’s career in one volume, though we offer a cohesive cross-section of his life and work and engage in new debates that he would no doubt have relished exploring. The volume is not a hagiography: chapters such as that of Richard J. Evans directly challenge some of David’s writings. As David encouraged us to do, we hope that readers will take inspiration from this volume to continue to investigate these vital themes and challenge pre-existing historiography. Even if you are primarily a Holocaust scholar, we would ask you to read the sections on “Minorities and Nationalisms”; and if you are a curator or a commemoration activist, to pause and reflect on the “War Crimes” section. What made David great, and arguably one of the most important public historians of the last 50 years, was his breadth of vision, and his ability not just of being an expert in a particular subject area but of seeing the “big picture”. As we face complex, social and political challenges going into the future in relation to Britain’s national identity, contemporary antisemitism and modern forms of hostility towards minorities, it is David’s breadth of vision, and his ability to work across disciplines and in dialogue with public organisations and communities, that we need to cultivate in the historians of tomorrow.

**Fergus Millar (1935-2019) and Jewish History**

by Martin Goodman (Oxford University)

The first anniversary of the death of Fergus Millar (he died on 15 July 2019) provides an opportunity to reflect in the pages of the Bulletin on the impact of his many contributions to Jewish history in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds.

Fergus, who was a very active and towering figure in the world of Roman studies over a long career, never explained in public how he came to spend so much of his working life on the history of the Jews. In the notes he left (with characteristic forethought) for the benefit of obituarists, Fergus stated that it was by chance that, a year after he took up his post in 1964 teaching Ancient History at Queen’s College, Oxford, he happened to encounter Geza Vermes, shortly after Geza’s arrival in Oxford as Reader in Jewish Studies. Geza himself wrote that he considered their meeting a providential accident, but, if so, Fergus helped providence by turning up to listen to one of Geza’s first lectures in Oxford. According to the preface of his classic study on *The Emperor in the Roman World* (1977), Fergus had already been immersed in Josephus’s *Jewish War* and *Antiquities* in the late summer of 1961.

The task of revising Schürer’s *History of the Jewish People*, to which Geza recruited Fergus in 1965, lasted from 1969 to 1986. Schürer’s history was a
classic of 19th-century scholarship, which was still much cited despite being hopelessly out-of-date. It was quite remarkable that a Roman historian at the height of his career should choose to devote himself to the selfless task of updating it. It was a massive undertaking, completed with outstanding thoroughness and precision.

But Fergus’s interest in Jewish history went far beyond the revision of Schürer. As Professor of Ancient History at UCL from 1976-84, he cultivated close ties with the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies, studying Hebrew with Ada Rapaport-Albert, and it was not accidental that his inaugural lecture in Oxford as Camden Professor of Ancient History in 1984, in effect a prospectus for The Roman Near East (1993), was published by Geza Vermes (in 1987) in the *Journal of Jewish Studies*. The third volume of his collected essays, which was published in 2006 and entitled *The Greek World, the Jews and the East*, contains, among many other contributions, his influential studies on the background to the Maccabaean revolution (1978) and on the Jews of the Graeco-Roman diaspora in late antiquity (1992).

After he stepped down from the Camden Chair in 2002, Fergus had an extraordinarily productive retirement in the 17 years he was attached to the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, in his shared office in the Oriental Institute (and later in the Clarendon Institute). It was typical of Fergus that he dealt with his irritation at the lack of a guide to the rabbinic texts on which he felt that he could rely as an historian of the ancient world by co-writing, with Eyal Ben-Eliyahu and Yehudah Cohn, a *Handbook of Jewish Literature from Late Antiquity*, published by the British Academy in 2012.

In the substantial final volume of Fergus’s collected articles – *Empire, Church and Society in the Late Roman Near East: Greeks, Jews, Syrians and Saracens* (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), which brought together papers originally published between 2004 and 2014 – the essays on Jewish history demonstrated anew the importance of understanding the Jewish evidence against the background of wider ancient society. It is not least through this demonstration that his work will long remain so influential on all who study the history of the Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds.

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**Ada Rapoport-Albert, 26 October 1945–18 June 2020**

by Joanna Weinberg and Piet van Boxel (Oxford University)

With the death of Ada Rapoport-Albert the world of Jewish Studies has been deprived of one of its most respected and beloved members. Ada was a captivating personality, a meticulous scholar and a creative and imaginative thinker. She inspired generations of students and scholars who flocked to hear her words of wisdom or, simply, to seek out her somewhat anarchic company. Generous to a fault, Ada’s home was a meeting-place for all: young and old, academic and non-academic alike.

Born in Tel Aviv, Ada came to England in 1965, and made her way to University College London where she began her studies in Jewish history. It was there that she came under the spell of Joseph G. Weiss, who initiated her into Bratslav Hasidism and put her on the path that would lead to her pioneering studies on the religious and socio-historical expressions of Hasidism.

In 1988, with the assistance of Immanuel Etkes and Rachel Elior, Ada organised a conference entitled “The Social Function of Mystical Ideas in Judaism: Hasidism Reappraised”. This unprecedented event generated excitement from all students of Jewish history and religion. For the first time in England (and indeed elsewhere in the scholarly world), the study of Hasidism in all its features was “reappraised” by the greatest scholars of the
day. Ada’s initiative was dedicated to her teacher and mentor Joseph Weiss. In 1996 Ada produced more or less singlehandedly the volume now entitled *Hasidism Reappraised* that was to dictate the direction of the study of Hasidism for decades to come. Ada’s own contribution to the volume was pathbreaking, probing and overturning conventional wisdom on essential questions of periodisation with regard to the Hasidic movement.

It was during her stay in Harvard in 1984-85 as visiting lecturer and research fellow that Ada started to reflect on the role of women in Hasidism. One of the first scholars to address matters of gender in Judaism, she set out to counter certain apologetic positions and to argue that there was no historical evidence for women’s participation in the spiritual life fostered in Hasidic circles. She continued to ask questions, and these spilled over into her studies of Sabbatianism and Frankism, where she pinpointed the exceptional “high visibility” of women in these sectarian movements. By means of scrutiny of a wide range of texts, Ada reframed the scholarly discussion of Sabbatianism as a mass movement, and confronted head-on the vexed historical question of structure and agency as it related to religious piety. Whatever the topic, she left no stone unturned. In fact, she was rather proud of her infinitely long footnotes that testified to her zealous quest for all the evidence.

The historical and religious setting of Frankism was the topic of her presidential address to BAJS in 2001, delivered with the mesmerising force that characterised all her public presentations. Nineteen years later, already suffering from terminal illness, she gave two papers at the 2019 BAJS conference. In the first lecture she returned to Bratslav with a fascinating study of how a tradition evolved into commentary. Ever ready to chart unfamiliar waters, she devoted her second paper to Immanuel Hai Ricchi’s *Mishnat Hasidim* (Amsterdam, 1727), a kabbalistic work modelled on the six orders of the Mishnah. In this paper she wrestled with new and intractable questions about the presentation of Kabbalah in the guise of Mishnah. These papers were stamped with the same intellectual probity that were the hallmark of all Ada Rapoport-Albert’s contributions to the study of Judaism, religion and Jewish history.

She will be greatly missed.

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**BAJS Report into Jewish Studies in Schools and Colleges**

We are writing a report on the status of Jewish studies in schools and colleges. We would like to survey a range of institutions including professional associations of RE teachers; institutions in the culture and heritage sector; representative bodies of religious communities; and research institutions. We hope to identify the obstacles which might prevent students from engaging with Jewish studies courses at university. On the basis of this report, we hope to design activities through which BAJS can support topics related to Jewish studies in schools and colleges.

As part of this report we intend to focus on three key areas:

- Exposure to Jewish studies at schools, the current availability of Jewish studies options as part of the RE or history curriculum, and how BAJS could support the work of teachers in Britain and Northern Ireland
- Jewish studies as a subject which enhances an individual’s employability, and how BAJS might support the development of relevant professional skills which helps students of Jewish studies stand apart from other candidates
- Cultural literacy and the exposure of pupils to Jewish studies at a community level (e.g. through trips to synagogues, visiting museums or archives) and how BAJS could support this work.

We would welcome feedback or any thoughts you might have on these topics.

We are interested in gathering responses on whether you have any specific recommendations for closing the gap between academic Jewish studies at universities and the teaching of related subjects in schools and colleges.

Have you run outreach and public engagement activities aimed at closing this gap, and if so, what were your experiences?

If you would like to contribute to this project or if you know someone who would, please contact the current BAJS studentship holder, Susannah Rees (susannah.rees@kcl.ac.uk) by 14 August.
PGR/ECR Network: News and Updates

by Katharina Keim (Lund University and University of Manchester)
Katharina.keim@manchester.ac.uk

It has been a privilege to serve as the Postgraduate Researcher and Early Career Researcher representative on the BAJS committee over the last ten months, even as the last three months have seen unprecedented disruption to all of our working lives. When I began in the role, my goals were twofold:

1. to advocate for PGRs and ECRs in an ever-changing and challenging academic environment, and
2. to develop a space for PGRs and ECRs to network within BAJS, promoting initiatives for experience sharing, skills training, and mutual support.

While my goals remain the same, the way of reaching them has had to shift in order to meet the needs of our early-career cohort in the age of Covid-19. The past few months have been extra challenging for many of our PGR and ECR members, and I understand that the disruption caused will vary among the group. Accordingly, the BAJS committee have agreed to open up the annual application cycle of the BAJS Mentorship programme, so that the scheme is now open to applications on a rolling basis. This means that PGRs and ECRs are welcome to apply at any time to be matched with a mentor. We look forward to connecting early-career members with more established colleagues, who can engage with their mentees’ ongoing research projects and offer professional development support from an outside perspective. We strongly encourage new applications, and look forward to hearing from you!

More information about the BAJS Mentorship programme can be found on the BAJS website at https://britishjewishstudies.org/pg-ecr-network/.

We are also exploring other opportunities to connect with PGR/ECR members via online events, in order to be able to deliver the sessions we would have had in person during the annual BAJS meeting this July. More information about this will be posted to the PG/ECR space on the BAJS website, and will also be circulated on the BAJS blog in due course. In the meantime, I wish you all the best of mental and physical health, and look forward to being in touch again soon.

Selected Publications of BAJS Members (2019-20)

This list includes information received. The editors are unable to undertake the necessary research for a comprehensive listing. Please send us your publications!


Hempel, Charlotte. Chair, Public Panel Discussion with Professors Larry Schiffman (NYU), Hugh Williamson (Oxford) and Hindy Najman (Oxford), The Silence about Ezra in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Where Do We Go from Here? Birmingham, 9 December 2019.


Miller, Michael T. “The Name of God and the Name of the Messiah: Jewish and Christian parallels in Late Antiquity” (with Mariano Troiano). Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism 16 (2020).

Miller, Michael T. “Black Judaism(s) and the Hebrew Israelites”. Religion Compass 13, no. 11 (2019): e12346.


BAJS: Perspectives from a New Generation of Scholars (15 July 2020)

This online event, which showcases the work of a selection of emerging talents in the field, is not a replacement for the full BAJS conference (now postponed until July 2021) but rather is a standalone event, providing a snapshot of early-career research that continues to be developed even amidst the current uncertainties and disruptions.

Timetable:

10.00-11.10 – Session 1
Dr Rebekah Welton (University of Exeter), Gluttony and Drunkenness in Ancient Israel
Dr Yael Fisch (University of Oxford) The Vitality of Tannaitic Temple Architecture: The Case of “Beit Ha’Moqed”

11.40-12.50 – Session 2
Dr Tali Artman Partock (University of Cambridge), Picking up the Pieces: Men’s Recovery from Captivity and Rape in Rabbinic Literature
Dr David Torollo (King’s College London), On Wisdom, Wine and Wandering: Texts and Intertexts on the Good Life from Medieval Sepharad

13.50-15.00 – Session 3
Dr Sarah Irving (Edge Hill University), Donations and their Destinations: Charity and Conflict after the 1927 Palestine Earthquake
Dr Phil Alexander (University of Glasgow), Berlin Klezmer and Urban Community

The BAJS Committee

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