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BULLETIN 2026

Edited by Samuel Sami Everett and Anoushka Alexander-Rose

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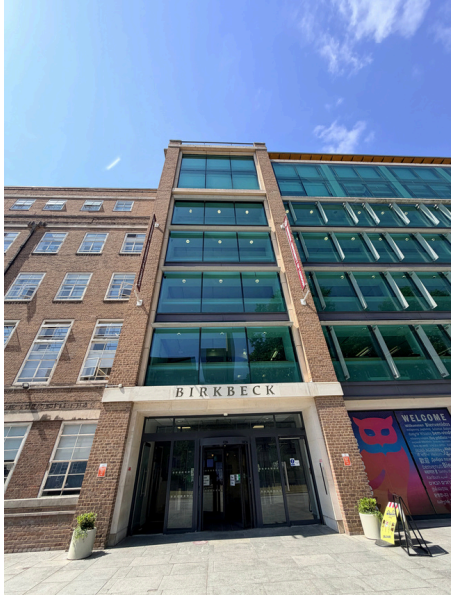
BIAJS CONFERENCE 2026: SPACE AND PLACE IN JEWISH STUDIES



A MESSAGE FROM BEN GIDLEY, OUTGOING BIAJS PRESIDENT 2025-26

Dear BIAJS members,

It was a great pleasure and an honour to welcome members of BIAJS to Birkbeck, University of London, in July 2026 for our annual conference, Space and Place in Jewish Studies. We chose a deliberately broad theme, capable of bringing together scholars working across different periods, disciplines and methodologies while still generating a coherent conversation about the ways in which Jewish life, culture and thought have been shaped by—and have themselves shaped—physical, textual, social, political and imagined spaces.

The scale and range of the conference exceeded our expectations. We welcomed 211 participants and some 190 contributions, including papers, panels, workshops, roundtables, screenings, responses and walking tours. Participants joined us from across the UK as well as the United States, Israel, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, Romania and Argentina. Rather than organising the programme around large keynote sessions, we deliberately created space for a greater number of contributions and more dialogical formats. This resulted in a busy programme with numerous parallel sessions, but these were consistently well attended and generated lively and sustained discussion.

One of the most encouraging aspects of the conference was the strength of early-career participation. Graduate students and postdoctoral researchers were present in unusually high numbers, alongside established scholars, and their contributions were consistently impressive. EAJS funding enabled eleven early-career scholars from European universities to attend, including Master's, doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. More broadly, we tried to maintain an inclusive ethos throughout: we made no distinction between senior and early-career scholars in allocating speaking slots, welcomed independent and retired researchers and colleagues working in museums, galleries, education and community organisations, and sought to make the conference accessible in practical as well as intellectual terms.

A number of particularly productive conversations developed across the three days. Space and place proved an effective way of connecting work that might otherwise have remained in separate disciplinary or chronological silos. Jewish urbanism emerged as a major strand, with research ranging from architectural and archival approaches to digital humanities and quantitative analyses of settlement and spatial integration. Gender and sexuality were similarly prominent, extending from women's internationalism and Holocaust testimony to masculinity, religious spaces and the methodological challenges of researching sexuality in archives. The conference also helped to de-centre familiar narratives of Anglo-Jewish history, foregrounding work on Ireland, colonial and peripheral British Jewish experiences, Sephardi and Mizrahi histories, Ladino culture and the Jewish worlds of the Indian Ocean. Alongside this, a series of panels and roundtables demonstrated the continuing vitality of Yiddish and diasporist studies.

The breadth of Jewish Studies represented at the conference was quite striking. Ancient, Biblical, Rabbinic and medieval studies sat alongside modern history, literature, film, music, art history, sociology and anthropology, while colleagues also brought perspectives from law, linguistics, philosophy, criminology and other fields. The UK Jewish Ethnography Network, which grew out of the 2023 BIAJS conference, held three roundtables on the ethical and methodological challenges of conducting ethnographic research in difficult and polarised times. We also saw significant clusters of work on Biblical, Rabbinic and medieval Jewish thought and on the histories of the Yishuv and Israel, alongside discussions of Jewish heritage, racism, antisemitism and contemporary Jewish identities. What impressed me most was not simply the range of subjects represented, but the extent to which conversations travelled between panels, disciplines and historical periods.

Holding the conference in Bloomsbury also allowed us to connect academic Jewish Studies with the institutions, archives and communities around us. Participants took part in an Association of Jewish Refugees walking tour of Jewish refugee Bloomsbury, viewed oral-history films produced by the AJR, and visited the Wiener Holocaust Library. We benefited greatly from the engagement of the Leo Baeck Institute London and the Wiener Library, as well as contributions from museums and communal organisations in Britain and internationally. A meeting of directors of UK Jewish Studies centres also took place during the conference, creating a useful new forum for cooperation, while the BIAJS AGM allowed members to reflect collectively on the Association's work.

The conference took place at a difficult moment, amid heightened concerns about the security of Jewish institutions in London. We therefore had to think carefully about how to ensure participants' safety without allowing security arrangements to overwhelm the open and welcoming character we wanted the conference to have. I was grateful for the understanding and good humour with which participants approached these circumstances.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who made the conference possible: all our speakers, session chairs and participants; my colleagues Lindsey Davidson, Mia Spiro, Jaclyn Granick, Sonia Gollance and the wider BIAJS committee for their support throughout; the organisations and institutions that worked with us across London; and Anoushka Alexander-Rose and Martin Saps for their invaluable help during the conference. Particular thanks are due to Chris Fray and the Birkbeck events team, whose work behind the scenes made an unusually large and complex conference run so smoothly. I left the presidency enormously encouraged by the intellectual breadth of Jewish Studies in Britain and Ireland, by the strength of its emerging scholars, and by the willingness of colleagues across very different fields to remain in conversation with one another.

Ben Gidley
Outgoing President of BIAJS
Reader in Sociology and Psychosocial Studies
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MESSAGE FROM JOHANNA STIEBERT

INCOMING BIAJS PRESIDENT 2026-2027

Dear BIAJS members,

Greetings from Leeds and thank you for appointing me BIAJS President. I am neither British, nor Irish, and I identify more as a scholar of Biblical Studies, than Jewish Studies – still, I am very grateful for this honour and opportunity, and I look forward to welcoming many of you to Yorkshire next year. I have benefited much from attending BIAJS conferences in years past and I look forward to working together closely both with the BIAJS Committee and with the community of our vibrant Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Leeds to make BIAJS 2027 a success.

Over this past year I have been part of a project called "Rethinking Jewish Cultural Heritage Today," which was funded by the Leeds Arts and Humanities Research Institute (see here). The aim of this project was to reflect deeply on Jewish cultural heritage in present, difficult and unsettling times. Prior BIAJS presidents, too, have mentioned in previous bulletins, the ongoing violence both preceding and following 7 October 2023. Jewish cultural heritage and Jewish studies are also affected, confronted as they are by ethical, political, and conceptual challenges. Our Leeds project convened researchers and heritage professionals, creating a variety of spaces and forums for discussing urgent themes that bear on Jewish Studies. While such spaces can feel fragile and can evoke discomfort, distress and dissent, shared reflection and critical engagement remain essential.

BIAJS 2027 can, I hope, continue to create and nurture such spaces. Given the conference theme, there will be scope for a "pluriverse" of topics, including niche topics and joyful topics. Still, we cannot and should not deny the pressures of the dark times we are living through or avoid the important discussions these pressures generate. Such discussions and any deeper understanding of others' positions and perspectives depend and rely on all attendees' and participants' efforts.

In our Leeds project, we used a set of guidelines for our conversations. Credit for articulating these guidelines goes primarily to Leeds University postgraduate Rabbi Robyn Ashworth-Steen who, in turn, credits AAUW. These guidelines have been tried and tested and will, I hope, continue to make possible conversations across differences and difficult terrains – including, though not only, at BIAJS 2027. I will circulate these guidelines as BIAJS 2027 approaches.

We look forward to welcoming BIAJS members to Leeds, home to England's third largest Jewish community, set in beautiful Yorkshire. Our conference theme for BIAJS 2027 is "Rethinking Pluralism and Peripheries in Jewish Studies" and we aim to host an array of events: panels, lightning rounds, round tables, and workshops, as well as an exhibition by artist Sarah Lightman, with an accompanying presentation by scholar of religion Dawn Llewellyn, and visits to campus places of interest, such as Leeds University Special Collections, home to magnificent archives, notably the personal collection of pioneering British Jewish historian Cecil Roth (1899–1970).

The dates for next year's conference are 28-30 June 2027, timed to make it possible for scholars of Medieval Jewish Studies to stay on in Leeds and attend also the International Medieval Congress held each year on the Leeds University campus. Next year, the International Medieval Congress is on 5-8 July 2027. We have also ensured that BIAJS 2027 isn't clashing with the EAJS Congress 12-15 July 2027 in Spain. Information on registration and submissions to the BIAJS 2027 Conference can be found here.

I would like to thank everyone on the BIAJS Committee for their hard work and for the support and guidance they have already given me.

The 2026 annual conference under the theme 'Space and Place in Jewish Studies', hosted by Ben Gidley at Birkbeck in London in the sunshine was a resounding success (even if England lost to Argentina on the conference's final day). It's a hard act to follow but we will give it a go. Looking forward to seeing you at BIAJS 2027!

For now, wishing you all, health, peace and wellbeing in the coming Jewish and academic new year.

Johanna Stiebert
Incoming BIAJS President
Professor of Hebrew Bible
j.stiebert@leeds.ac.uk

BIAJS ANNUAL CONFERENCE 28-30 JUNE 2027

'RETHINKING PLURALISM AND PERIPHERIES IN JEWISH STUDIES'

CALL FOR PROPOSALS UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS, WEST YORKSHIRE, UK

The annual conference of the British and Irish Association for Jewish Studies (BIAJS 2027) seeks to showcase the pluralism and dynamism of Jewish Studies, exploring the subject's diversities and encouraging intra-disciplinary collaboration, exchange, dissent, and cross-fertilisation of ideas and research. The conference seeks to place particular emphasis first, on who or what is at the apparent centres and margins of Jewish Studies, and second, on the ideological and practical reasons for and impacts of this.

We invite contributions (including panels and co-presentations) from across the fields of Jewish Studies – history, literature, religious studies, archaeology, the arts, linguistics, law, political studies, the social sciences, and more – that reflect critically on self- and on subject-specific positionality. We welcome contributors who feel on the margins of, or minoritised by, the subject/s of Jewish Studies: maybe because they work with or on academic approaches, or communities, or texts, or languages, or cultural expressions and practices on the fringes of Jewish Studies, or maybe because of their personal identity, or geographical, or institutional location.
The conference theme encourages marginal, minority and counter-voices and interrogation of who or what lays claim to normativity.

We welcome papers that explore Jewish traditions in different media, sub-cultures, parts of the world and in different historical periods. Topics can include, but will not be limited to the following:

- theological, religious, philosophical or ideological areas of Jewish Studies – particularly non-normative areas
- Jews and Jewish Studies and political engagement, dissent or activism
- Jews, Jewish Studies and Minoritization
- Jewish literary and artistic explorations and sub-cultures
- The changing status of Jewish cultural heritage
- The status and landscape of Jewish Studies in higher education
- Topics of antisemitism, Judeophobia, and Jewish racism
- Nationalism, populism and Jewish Studies
- Challenges to concepts of crisis and thriving in Jewish history and culture

As usual with BIAJS conferences, some papers on topics unrelated to or only tangentially related to the conference theme are also welcome, including proposals on cutting-edge research in Jewish Studies and research by postgraduate students wishing to present on their doctoral research.

Confirmed presenters
Francesca Stavrakopoulou – Professor of Hebrew Bible and Ancient Religion, author of God: An Anatomy

Yehudis Fletcher – Co-founder and CEO of Nahamu, a think tank countering extremism within the Jewish community, author of Chutzpah

Sarah Lightman – artist, writer and Fellow of The Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, author of the graphic novel *The Book of Sarah*

We encourage proposals for panels, lightning talks, workshops and co-presentations.
Paper proposals should include an abstract of no more than 250 words and a speaker biography of maximum 100 words.
Panel proposals should include a brief rationale for the panel of no more than 100 words, abstracts of a maximum of 250 words for each paper proposed as part of the panel, and speaker biographies of no more than 100 words each. We advise that panels be mixed in terms of genders, and, where possible, reflect a range of perspectives and of career stages.
NB: Speakers will be allocated 30 minutes for their presentation and questions. Papers should be a maximum of 20 minutes in length followed by 10 minutes for questions and discussion.

Postgraduates! We have ten bursaries of £200 available for postgraduate students (in addition to a fee waiver) thanks to generous funding from EAJS. If you would like to be considered for a bursary, please state this as part of your proposal and send your CV (maximum 2 pages).

Please send paper proposals, panel proposals, and all conference-related correspondence to BIAJSpresident2027@gmail.com. The deadline for proposals is Tuesday 1 December 2026 at 11:59PM. Registration will open early in the new year after proposals have been assessed and participating speakers notified.

Many thanks to the European Association for Jewish Studies (EAJS), the Spalding Trust, as well as the Centre for Jewish Studies and Centre for Religion and Public Life of the University of Leeds.

BIAJS BOOK PRIZE 2026

The **2026 BIAJS Book Prize** was awarded to Joseph Scales, *Galilean Spaces of Identity: Judaism and Spatiality in Hasmonean and Herodian Galilee* (Leiden: Brill, 2024).

This innovative and impressively interdisciplinary study offers a fresh account of the formation and negotiation of Jewish identity in Hasmonean and Herodian Galilee through the lens of space and spatiality. Bringing literary and archaeological evidence into productive dialogue, Scales demonstrates how built environments and the use and transformation of space both reflected and helped to shape social, political, and religious identities. The committee was particularly impressed by the book's breadth and careful handling of its evidence, and its important contribution to our understanding of Jewish life and identity in Hasmonean and Herodian Galilee.

An **honourable mention** was awarded to Suzanna Millar, *Animals, Power, and Intersectionality in the Books of Samuel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2026).

Millar's original and thought-provoking study brings animal studies and intersectional approaches into conversation with close readings of the books of Samuel, revealing the often-overlooked role of animals in the texts' constructions of power, gender, status, and identity. The committee was impressed by the book's innovative use of animal studies as a fresh approach to the biblical text, offering an interesting and genuinely new angle on familiar texts.

BIAJS STUDENT ESSAY PRIZES

Undergraduate – Dov Forman, UCL: "Understanding Israel Zangwill's Turn to Zionism": The panel were very impressed by the quality and engagement with primary sources matched by sophisticated analysis Dov's dissertation. We had a good range of time periods and approaches in the group of UG submissions. (Nom: Michael Berkowitz)

Postgraduate – Abigail Glickman, Cambridge: "Reinterpreting reuse: a holistic approach to T-S 20.47.": The panel were very impressed by the quality and engagement with primary sources matched by sophisticated codicological and palaeographical discussion in Abigail's essay on a misunderstood Genizah manuscript leaf. (Nom: Benjamin Outhwaite)

BRISTOL JEWISH STUDIES

Jewish studies as a subject of research continues to flourish at Bristol through multiple disciplines, currently represented by Lindsey A. Davidson (CLRT), Tim Cole (History), Rowena Kennedy-Epstein (English), and Michael Kalisch (English).

The University of Bristol School of Humanities underwent an administrative structural change in 2025-26, with the Department of Classics and Ancient History combining administratively with the Department of Religion and Theology (CLRT) but the retention of current, separate undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

Karen Skinazi (Director of Liberal Arts) will be very much sorely missed by her Bristol colleagues as she has departed for a new position as Director of the Louchheim School for Judaic Studies at Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles. We wish you well in your new position, Karen!

Current PhD students in Jewish studies:

- Caroline Gurney, "Mapping Bristol's Jewish Community, 1720-1881," supervised by Richard Sheldon and James Thompson
- Joey Hyatt, "Scribal Culture in Chronicles," supervised by Lindsey Davidson
- Stewart Taylor, "When the sinner waxed proud': The body as contested space in Early Roman Galilee," supervised by Lindsey Davidson
- Naomi Bibi, working on women in the Tanakh, formerly supervised by Karen Skinazi and Jose McClellan, will be co-supervised by Michael Kalisch and Lindsey Davidson

Events and public engagement

In pursuit of the cultural heritage of Jewish studies and ancient Israel, the 2025-26 undergraduate class taking the module Religion and History of Ancient Israel enjoyed a valuable field trip to the British Museum in April 2026, with a curator-led study session seeing undisplayed objects in the Museum's collection related to ancient Israel and late antique Judaism, including incantation bowls and Judean Pillar Figurines, and enjoyed a walk around the Assyrian, Levantine and Persian galleries. Photos by Lindsey Davidson:

BIRKBECK INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF ANTISEMITISM, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Events at BISA this year included:

Online seminars
'Forged in plain sight: a biography of 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion', Faith Hillis, University of Chicago, June 2026.

'Antisemitism as oppression of Jews as Jews', Mareike Riedel, Macquarie Law School, May 2026.

''When is violence 'ethnic'? On Jews as victims and perpetrators', Tova Benjamin, Davidson College, February 2026.

'Psychoanalysis and Jewish studies', Devorah Baum, University of Southampton, and Stephen Frosh, Birkbeck, University of London, October 2025.

Public lectures
'People without history are dust: queer desire and the Holocaust', Anna Hájková, University of Warwick, June 2026.

'Hollywood and American Jews in World War II', Michael Berkowitz, University College London, March 2026.

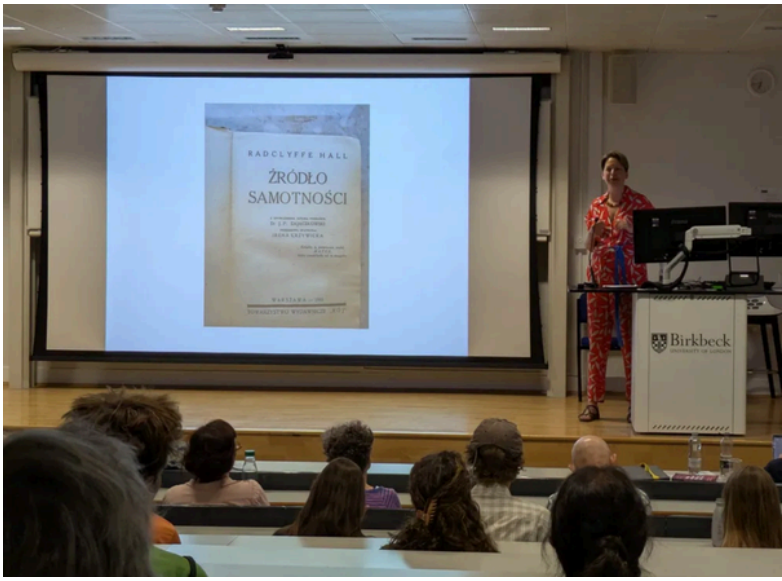
'Mourning, memory and politics: memorialisation of the Holocaust in Britain from the 1940s to the present day', David Feldman, Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism, January 2026 (Holocaust Memorial Day lecture in collaboration with the Institute of Historical Research).

Doctoral students:

Eliaou Balouka: Postcolonial Emotions: From Jewish and Muslim Coexistence in Southern Algeria to Their Diasporic and Disconnected Trajectories in the West (Ben Gidley, first supervisor, with Sami Everett, University of Southampton). Bonnart Trust studentship.

Howard Cohen: Attitudes towards Ritual Circumcision amongst British Progressive Jews (Ben Gidley, first supervisor, with Ben Kasstan-Dabush, Edinburgh University).

For details of all BISA events, videos and podcasts visit: https://bisa.bbk.ac.uk/whats-on/events/



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Jewish Studies across the University

Jewish Studies at the University of Cambridge remains unusually broad and distributed across the University, with significant activity in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Divinity, Classics, History, Modern and Medieval Languages and Linguistics, Education, and the University Library and its Genizah collections. The 2025–26 return illustrates the extent to which Jewish Studies brings together textual scholarship, history, linguistics, literature, anthropology, religious studies and the study of contemporary Jewish cultures. This breadth builds on recent appointments in Hebrew, medieval Middle Eastern Jewish studies and Second Temple Judaism, alongside established strengths in the Hebrew Bible, Cairo Genizah, Judaeo-Arabic, Jewish-Greek literature, Israel Studies, modern Hebrew literature, Jewish philosophy and ethnographies of Jewish communities.

Doctoral research and training

Fifteen recent doctoral projects demonstrate this disciplinary range. In Modern and Medieval Languages and Linguistics, research includes ethical vision in Primo Levi, Hannah Arendt and James Baldwin, and language, trauma and belonging in women's translingual Holocaust narratives. Asian and Middle Eastern Studies includes work on contact between Hebrew and Arabic literature and on Biblical Hebrew word order. Classics projects address language in Roman Caesarea Maritima and the Sibylline Oracles and Jewish Greek.
Divinity supports a substantial concentration of doctoral work in Hebrew Bible and ancient Judaism, with projects on the Benjamin region and the Judahite state in the seventh century BCE, the early transmission of the Bible, ritualised narratives of warfare, foreigners in the Priestly Corpus, divine-human dialogue and simile in Job, pneuma in the Septuagint, and linguistic approaches to Qohelet. Work crossing Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and the University Library includes research on Sefer Tagin under the supervision of Geoffrey Khan and Ben Outhwaite.

Research projects and grants

Current funded work likewise spans ancient, medieval and contemporary Jewish Studies. Anastasia Badder's interdisciplinary Maimonides from Scratch project, undertaken with the Genizah Research Unit, the University of Southampton, Winchester School of Art and Panoply, uses arts-based approaches with Jewish and Muslim students, museum volunteers and community participants. Badder has also received support from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture and the Sylvia and Moshe Ettenberg Research Grant in Jewish Education for Jewish Languages and Literacies, a project on the relationship between Hebrew learning in Jewish classrooms and pupils' wider language-learning experiences.

Other projects include a Cambridge–LMU Munich collaboration incorporating medieval Jewish history; a Philip Leverhulme Prize project in Classics on scriptural interpretation and political thought in Late Antiquity; and the British Academy-funded Beyond the Codex. Scott Mandelbrote continues projects supported by the Ian Karten Charitable Trust and the Rothschild Foundation on early printed Hebraica in Cambridge libraries and the early-modern Hebrew book trade. Leverhulme fellowships have supported Estara Arrant and Vince Beiler's work on the Genizah through Cambridge University Library, while Ben Outhwaite participates in the Horizon-funded Arabic Poetry in the Cairo Genizah.
Major collaborative projects include Entangled Otherings: Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and Racism, led in Cambridge by Esra Özyürek with international partners, and the John Templeton Foundation-funded God, Language, and Diversity, whose Cambridge work on Midrash and experimental linguistics is led by Daniel Weiss and Napoleon Katsos. Geoffrey Khan's long-running research programme includes the ERC-funded Cambridge Grammar of Biblical Hebrew, extending through 2026, alongside major work on Neo-Aramaic and the linguistic traditions of Western Asia.

DURHAM UNIVERSITY, CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF JEWISH CULTURE, SOCIETY AND POLITICS

Doctoral Students

Leibovich, Claire MLAC -- Literature Thinks: The "Jewish Question" in Postcolonial Francophone Jewish Literature from North Africa.

Dickson, Adam -- Antisemitism in English football, with particular emphasis on supporter experiences and the governance of inclusion.

Keller, Philip Music -- Jewish identity and music culture in Germany and Austria, 1870 to 1930.

Kaag, Sierra English -- The role of creative texts as supplementary interpretation in museum collections.

Bellamy, Sophie -- The rise and fall of Jewish communities in North East England.

History Friederike (Rike) Schwelle -- Modern Jews and Ancient Egypt: Patrons, Collectors and Scholars in Europe c.1880–1950.

Research Grants:

Clara Joseph Shievietz Memorial Scholarship, Gladstone Library, 2025/2026 (Rebecca Clifford)

EHRI Fellowship, Wiener Library, 2025/2026 (Rebecca Clifford)

Institute for Advanced Studies Fellowship, Durham University: associate fellowship and grant to run workshop 'New Pathways for Sunderland's Jewish Heritage', 2025 (Rebecca Clifford)

Leverhulme Research Fellowship for 'Child Survivors, Psychoanalysis, and Holocaust Memory' 2024 (Rebecca Clifford)

Northern Bridge (Arts and Humanities Research Council) PhD Studentship (collaborative doctoral award with Tyne & Wear Archives) for 'The rise and fall of Jewish communities in North East England' 2023, (PhD student: Sophie Bellamy) (Rebecca Clifford)

Huntington Fellowship, Huntington Library, Pasadena CA, USA (2024/25). (P.I. Ilan Zvi Baron)

Leverhulme fellowship (2025-2026): "The Anaesthetics of Politics: Fascism, Form, and Aesthetic Experience" (P.I. Zoe Roth)

BA/Leverhulme Small Research Grants Scheme (2023 – 2024) Political Responsibility in the Worst of All Possible Worlds (P.I. Ilan Zvi Baron)

ESRC IAA award to conduct a project, "Representing British Jewish Heritage" in collaboration with the Manchester Jewish Museum. (awarded 21/11/2024) (P.I. Yulia Egorova)

Events:

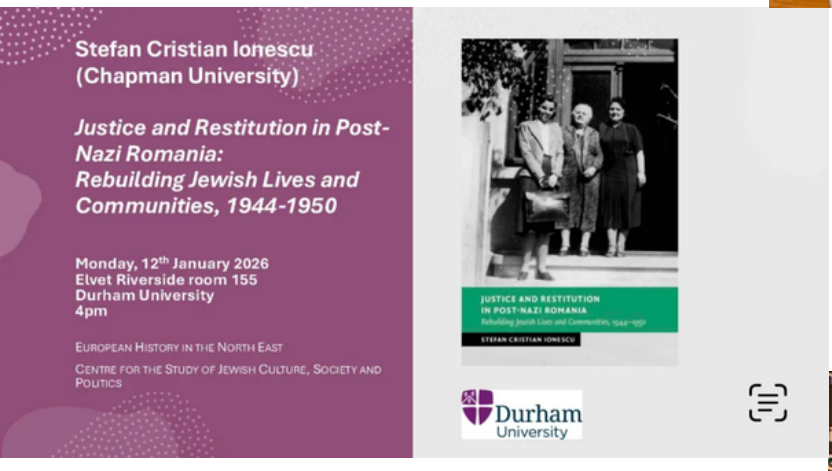
Sunderland Jewish Walking Tour (Nov 5th, 2025)

Jewish Diaspora and Migration: Two years after 7 October and the devastating assault on Gaza, this interdisciplinary colloquium brings together scholars from diverse backgrounds to examine e the reshaping of Jewish identity in the diaspora amid the profound political, cultural, and moral ruptures facing Jews worldwide. Some contributions will focus on historical and ethnographic cases of internal conflict - moments when individuals or communities find their Jewish 'self' divided between competing loyalties and core values -- highlighting how such tensions have long shaped Jewish culture. (Dec 8 2025)

Ștefan Ionescu, research talk about his new book Justice and Restitution in Post-Nazi Romania Rebuilding Jewish Lives and Communities, 1944–1950 (CUP 2025). (Jan 12, 2026)

Echoes of the Past: Holocaust Remembrance in Germany -- Holocaust Memorial Lecture given by Yael Almog (Jan 27, 2026)

Michael Miller: Prague and Beyond: Jews in the Bohemian Lands or Quotas: The "Jewish Question" and Higher Education in Central Europe, 1880-1945. (March 25 2026)



EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY, JEWISH STUDIES

Edinburgh Jewish Studies is a thriving community of academic staff and postgraduate students. Our areas of teaching and research specialisation span all periods of history, and cluster around the ancient world and the twentieth century. Throughout the teaching semesters we maintain a successful series of lunchtime research talks that draw a local, national and international audience facilitated by our mailing list. A full list of events can be viewed here: https://jewishstudies.div.ed.ac.uk/.

Those interested in joining our mailing list, please get in touch with Dr Kimberley Czajkowski (k.czajkowski@ed.ac.uk).

Current PhD Students:

Trevor Stern, Judaica in Scotland (SGSAH-CDA studentship) (joint supervisor 50%, Mia Spiro, University of Glasgow 50%, Calum Robertson, National Museums Scotland)

James Carrigy, The cinematic decontextualization of Jewish spaces in the aftermath of WWII in Central Europe (joint supervisor 50%, Jenny Watson 50%)

Samuel Jacobs, The post-war political theology of the Satmar Rebbe, Rabbi Joel Teitelbaum (joint supervisor 50%, Joshua Ralston 50%)

Cian Pappenheim (University of Glasgow), Mapping Memorial Books: Tracing the Commemorative Legacy of Yiddish Yizkor Books (SGSAH-funded) (assistant supervisor 25%, Mia Spiro 50%, Ernest Schonfeld 25%)

Nick Kolobov (University of Glasgow), A restorative account of the art of Jewish female migration (1660–1858) (SGSAH-funded) (co-supervisor 50%, Mia Spiro 50%)

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF ENGLAND

Report on activities in 2025-2026 by Sasha Bolot (Honorary Secretary of JHSE) and Rosalie Bernheim (NGG Network Coordinator).

The JHSE has seen another successful year despite the challenges facing Britain's Jewish community. With a new Chair, Dr. Anthony Rabin, we remain focussed on developing further the increasing membership, holding lectures and events open to the membership and the wider public, as well as funding new research in Jewish history.

Events

Through developing our programme of events, which already demonstrate a great range and depth, our aim is to remind people of the importance of Jewish history within the history of Britain.

At an event at the Wiener Holocaust Library, held in September, the JHSE launched its oral history archive, a project led by Alan Dein and Professor Tony Kushner. The archive holds interviews with leaders and members of JHSE and is stored at the British Library. At the same event, Professor Gavin Schaffer, JHSE President, inaugurated the 'President's Conversations' that will address key contemporary issues through a historical lens. The first conversation brought together leading scholars, Professors Tony Kushner (Southhampton) and Miri Rubin (Queen Mary) in a discussion on the historical evolution of anti-Judaism and antisemitism. A lecture is planned for later in 2026 by Dr. Nathan Abrams on 'Jews in the Welsh Imagination'.

Branches

Local meetings are held by branches in North London, Essex, Sussex, Cambridge, Manchester and Liverpool as well as in Jerusalem, held both in person but online. Meetings are often hosted in private homes which adds to the special nature of these in person events and to the communal appeal of the JHSE offer. These events vary from events at which authors speak about their work and then take questions from the audience to walking tours with certified guides such as that held in London in November 2025.A relationship has been established with curators at Salomons Estate and Strawberry Hill so it is very much hoped that branches will be able to visit these sites too.

Journal

The Society's journal, Jewish Historical Studies: A Journal of English-Speaking Jewry is edited by Professor Shirli Gilbert alongside co-editors, Professor Adam Mendelsohn (University of Cape Town) and Professor Avril Alba (University of Sydney). The journal is published by UCL Press and Open Access. The most recent volume (Issue #57), published in April 2026, was a special issue on Jews and the British Empire guest-edited by Dr. Elizabeth Imber (Clark University). Research articles included work on Jews and the British Empire, Mandate Palestine, the Baghdadi diaspora, Jews and Italians in Egypt, Fritz Haendel's drawings in Mauritius and a roundtable session of Hasia R. Diner's 'Capitalism and Migration: the Jews and Beyond'. The journal's next issue, #58, is scheduled for Spring 2027.

New Generation Group

Network for emergent academic researchers

Monthly events, reading groups, and workshops

Awards

The recommendations of the JHSE Awards sub-committee were decided on 29th May 2026 (Professor Tony Kushner as convenor and chair; Andrea Schatz; Michael Berkowitz, Joanna Newman, Adam Sutcliffe) and then ratified by the Trustees. There were 19 applications this year, an increase from last year, continuing the upward trend of the past few years. The majority were community-based projects, postgraduate students and established academics also applied.

Awards included:

1.Kevin Bolton (community historian/archivist) for costs of a Jewish Heritage Trail.
2.Alexander Brown (PhD student) for archival visits concerning German Jewish exiles.
3. Vivi Lacks (community historian) for a podcast on London's Female Yiddish writers.
4. Dina Specner/ Miriam Marson (Willesden Cemetery heritage project for exhibition and related on individuals buried in the cemetery.
5. Lawrence Suss (community historian for work on Florence Place Jewish cemetery, Brighton. This falls within the remit of the David Hyman Prize). It is also important to highlight the achievements of recent recipients, including the continue touring of the 'Kehilla' photographic exhibition on Bradford Jewry, the successful launch of the Ipswich mapping project and the Lincoln medieval Jewish heritage walking tour. It is now ten years since the committee, which has worked together with a great deal of cooperation and efficiency, was established. We will be looking to refresh the team in the next few years.

New Generation Group

Rosalie Bernheim, the NGG Network Co-ordinator reports that the 2025-26 academic year has been highly successful and positive for the NGG. They delivered eight events, grew the newsletter subscriber base, broadened its reach within and beyond the UK and laid the groundwork for structural initiatives to improve member engagement. Members are primarily UK based but also has an international spread with members in Israel, Austria, France, Germany and Poland, especially after connections made at the May 2026 conference.

Events

The varied programme of events catered for the breadth of interests and scholarship represented within the group of NGG members. The year culminated in their Third Annual Conference on 11 May at UCL, which was attended by around 50 participants, the biggest turnout yet. However, the online events are attended by far fewer people despite promotion via our newsletter, website and social media channels. Their events range from 'meet and greets', socials, work in progress sessions, online writing retreats to online book talks. These events are intended to provide a framework for opportunities in networking, feedback sessions for early career academics and community accountability for academic writing.

Research coverage and Work Groups Initiatives

Events this year reflected impressive diversity of members' research interests spanning a wide chronological and geographical range; from Jewish life in medieval Spain to Jewish communities in late twentieth century Baltic states.

They have established NGG workgroups, pairing ECRs and doctoral researchers with shared interests in particular periods, genres and research areas to foster peer support and collaboration beyond formal events. So far, they have eight NGG members in pairs based on their research interests, with the aim of creating meaningful and sustained scholarly relationships.

Newsletter and Website

The NGG newsletter list grew by over 40 subscribers during the academic year 2025-26, representing a useful expansion of our network. Despite this growth, translating newsletter readership into active participation remains a challenge. They continue to address this through regular communication and reminders, individual follow-up where appropriate, prompts to supervisors and other academic contacts to circulate details of NGG activities. The Website has been significantly improved and now offers a more appealing interface with clearer communication and overview of the group's activities and events.

KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

Overview

The Jewish Studies at King's network benefits from a growing number of PhD students who work at the intersection between Biblical Studies and Jewish Studies. With the roll-out of a new curriculum, Jewish Studies is also present at all levels of Undergraduate and MA programmes, with a particular focus on the Hebrew Bible, Dead Sea Scrolls, Jewish literature from the Greco-Roman period and early modern & modern Jewish religion, culture and politics. The increasing number of BA students in the Department of Theology & Religious Studies has a very positive effect on Jewish Studies modules, which attract large numbers. The flexibility of the new curriculum also allows us to include teaching rabbinic literature more consistently again.

Current PhD students:

Alex-David Baldi (A Critical and Comparative Study of Death Penalty Laws in the Pentateuch)

Matt Lodge: Jewish Apocalypticism and the Historical Jesus

Isabelle Murray ('Plants out of Place': Wandering Jewish Women in Romantic Literature; with English)

Rebecca White (The Holy Spirit in the LXX and Luke's Gospel)

Yue Chi Yau (Collective Memories and Ethnic Identity in Ezekiel 20: A Social-Scientific Approach)

Research projects and grants

A Templeton Religion Trust grant to explore "God and Hope" has been awarded to Nathanael Vette. The research project will bring together theologians, historians, philosophers and ethicists to consider discourses of hope in Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions.

Seminars and events

The Biblical Studies Seminar, convened by Annie Calderbank and Nathanael Vette, continues to attract a strong and lively audience from across London and beyond. Last year, it regularly featured topics relating to the Hebrew Bible, Dead Sea Scrolls, Second Temple Judaism and Rabbinic Literature, with speakers including Charlotte Hempel, Nathan MacDonald, Hindy Najman, Saul Olyan, James Carleton Paget, Casey Strine and Rebekah Welton.

Publications

Calderbank, Annie, 'The Elusive Presence of God in Ezekiel's Exagoge: A Proposal for Reading a Fragmented Text', Journal for the Study of Judaism 57 (2026): 1-33.

Vette, Nathanael, 'The Son of Man and the Sea: Hydromachy and Conquest in Mark's Sea Voyages', Journal for the Study of the New Testament 47 (2025): 576-599.

Vette, Nathanael, 'The Gospels' in the Oxford Classical Dictionary, ed. Tim Whitmarsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press), online.

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS CENTRE FOR JEWISH STUDIES

Overview

The 2025–26 academic year at the University of Leeds Centre for Jewish Studies (CJS) was marked by an ambitious programme of collaborative research, postgraduate development and public engagement, with particular emphasis on Jewish cultural heritage, Holocaust memory and contemporary debates around diversity and decolonisation.

Postgraduate and early-career research

A newly established PGR/ECR group provided a forum for work in progress across a wide chronological and geographical range. Presentations included Dr Lyman Gamberton on embodied practices in early modern Venetian Jewish women's prayer books; Sophia Lambert on the funeral monuments of Bradford's Reform Jewish community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; Dr Chloe Pinto on Ezra Pound's complex relationship with the German-Jewish sculptor Heinz Henghes; and Lizzie Angus on the legacies of Jewish communists in Maghrebi independence movements.

Lectures, exhibitions and public events

The Centre's Holocaust Memorial Day Lecture 2026, supported by the Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR), was delivered by Dr Amy Williams, AJR Kindertransport Scholar-in-Residence. In Kindertransport: New Discoveries, or Rethinking the Kindertransport 87 Years On..., Williams discussed new findings emerging from her research since 2024 and their planned presentation in a co-authored book with Professor Bill Niven, due from Yale University Press in 2027, as well as in a new AJR Kindertransport database planned for 2028. The 2026 Selig Brodetsky Memorial Lecture was delivered by Dr Ben Gidley of Birkbeck College. Addressing the question Is antisemitism rising in the UK?, Gidley examined the methodologies through which antisemitism is measured, the collection and interpretation of data, and the different approaches these reveal to understanding contemporary antisemitism.

Jewish Culture Month was marked with an exhibition on Elias Canetti, curated by a team at Swansea University, alongside an interdisciplinary roundtable, Elias Canetti, a Jewish Émigré in Britain: Leeds Responses. Contributors included Jack Arscott of Swansea University and Helen Finch, Jack Palmer and Griselda Pollock from the University of Leeds.

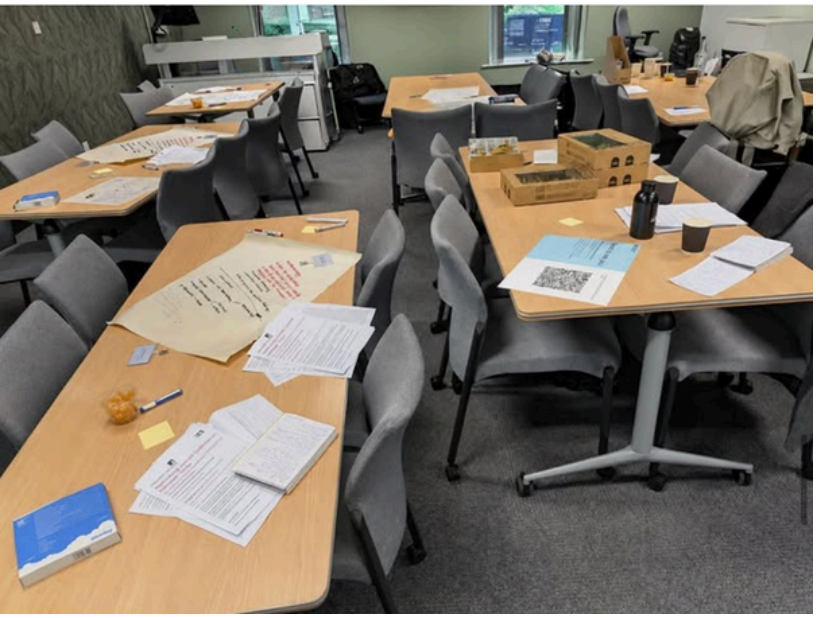
The year concluded with a study afternoon on Lithuanian Jewish history and memory, supported by the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in the UK. Professor Saulius Sužiedelis of Millersville University discussed his 2025 book Crisis, War, and the Holocaust in Lithuania in conversation with Dr Zinovijus Ciupijus of Leeds. Dr Darius Staliūnas of the Lithuanian Institute of History reflected on the development and richness of academic Jewish Studies in Lithuania since the end of the Soviet period, while Dr Jolanta Mickute, Head of Education at the Lost Shtetl Museum, introduced a screening of one of the museum's educational films in conversation with Professor Jay Prosser.

Looking ahead, the Centre is preparing to welcome the British and Irish Association for Jewish Studies Annual Conference to Leeds from 28–30 June 2027.

Rethinking Jewish Cultural Heritage Today.

The Centre's principal project for the year was Rethinking Jewish Cultural Heritage Today (R-JCH): Contested Histories, Museums, Crossing Boundaries. Supported by a network grant from the Leeds Arts and Humanities Research Institute (LAHRI), the project brought together academics and heritage professionals for three international workshops: 'Critical' Jewish Heritage Studies: Contested Pasts, Living Futures; The Future of Holocaust Memory: Museums and Education; and Crossing Boundaries: Decolonization, Diversity, Dissent.

Rather than conventional panel-based conferences, the workshops were conceived as collaborative laboratories in which participants could address current challenges in Jewish heritage work directly and develop new approaches collectively. The programme culminated in a pop-up exhibition exploring decolonisation, diversity and dissent in contemporary Jewish heritage production. The project strengthened existing partnerships, created new connections between scholars and heritage practitioners, and generated plans for further collaborative research.



Processing Threads 2023-2025, 2025
Laura Nathan

In 2023 in a dysregulated state, I unpicked the threads of this flag. Over a two-year period, I attempted to painstakingly reweave the fragile threads into a tightly woven fabric. Whilst doing so, I listened to the news- absorbing reports from opposite ends of the spectrum. This process strained my eyes, mind and heart. The process highlighted feelings of confusion, isolation, despair, and betrayal. It also emphasised how vulnerable it felt to be a Jewish artist. I have yet to submit this piece to an exhibition as I'm aware there isn't space to support this kind of nuance or the dialogues which may enfold.

*

Laura's piece was not only central to our exhibition but also helped inspire our wider project, Rethinking Jewish Cultural Heritage Today (R-JCH). Her investment in the flag, and her courageous, persistent unpicking of its many meanings, reflected the questions at the heart of our work: how to attend with care to the tensions, challenges, and possibilities of Jewish cultural heritage today. The exhibition, Decolonisation, Diversity, and Dissent, became a highlight of the project, embodying much of what we hoped to achieve. We are deeply grateful to Laura and to all who entered into conversation with us.

Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Leeds
https://lahri.leeds.ac.uk/lng/rethinking-jewish-cultural-heritage-today/

CENTRE FOR JEWISH STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

Current (and recently completed) doctoral students

Joshua Crosby, The Jerusalem Temple through the Eyes of Greeks and Romans (Oakes and Pormann)

Caroline David, The Looting of Alfred Spitzer's Art Collection (Dreyfus and Gigliotti)

Anna Dolman, Defying Disability in Victorian Jewish Manchester: The Diaries of David Isaacs and Social Marginality in a Minority Community (Langton and Jones).

Linda Graul, Financial Aryanisation in Luxembourg (Dreyfus and Majerus)

Bethan Hayes, Analysing Antisemitism and Jewish Representation in Gender, Queer, Post-colonial and Critical Race Discourses (Langton and Samely)

Robert Kanter, A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations in the UK, c. 1900-1999 (Langton and Dreyfus)

Mateusz Krzesiński, "Circumcision of Heart" in Romans 2.29 in Light of the Jewish Concept of Purity (Oakes and Boakye)

Nicolas Laugel, Alsatian Jews in the Holocaust (Dreyfus and Sumpf)

Richard Liantonio, The Basis of Divine Pleasure in the Psalms (Swanson)

Rabbi Aaron Lipsey, The Responses of the Lubavitcher Rebbe to the Holocaust: A Study of His Letters, Talks and Teachings (Samely and Langton)

Natasha Mann, The Impact of the Prophetic Harlotry Metaphor on Second Temple Sources and Rabbinic Law (Morse and Samely)

Kerry McCall, Experiences of Antisemitism among Jewish Women in Interwar Britain (Langton and Wildman)

Lynne Potts, Hope and Suffering in the Book of Job (Samely and Oakes)

Laura Schlagheck, Discourses of Dangerous Femininity and their Relation to Antisemitism, (Colonial-)Racism and Antiziganism in Fin-de-Siècle Culture (Gelbin)

Research projects and other successes in the field of Jewish Studies

The Centre for Jewish Studies continued to flourish as a centre for research, public engagement and interdisciplinary collaboration in Jewish Studies.

The Centre hosted the Bogdanow Lectures in Holocaust Studies 2026, welcoming Professor Susannah Heschel (Dartmouth College). It also organised and supported a wide range of public lectures, community events and partnerships, including collaborations with Manchester Jewish Museum, Holocaust Centre North, and the BBC's "Going Beyond Belief" educational resource.

Professor Langton's Darwin in the Jewish Imagination was longlisted for the ISSR Book Prize 2026.

The Centre hosted Hannah Wilson as a Rothschild Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow, undertaking research on the material memory of the Holocaust in domestic and public spaces, and University Library acquired institutional access to The Jewish Chronicle digital archive, significantly enhancing research opportunities for staff and students working on Anglo-Jewish history and culture.

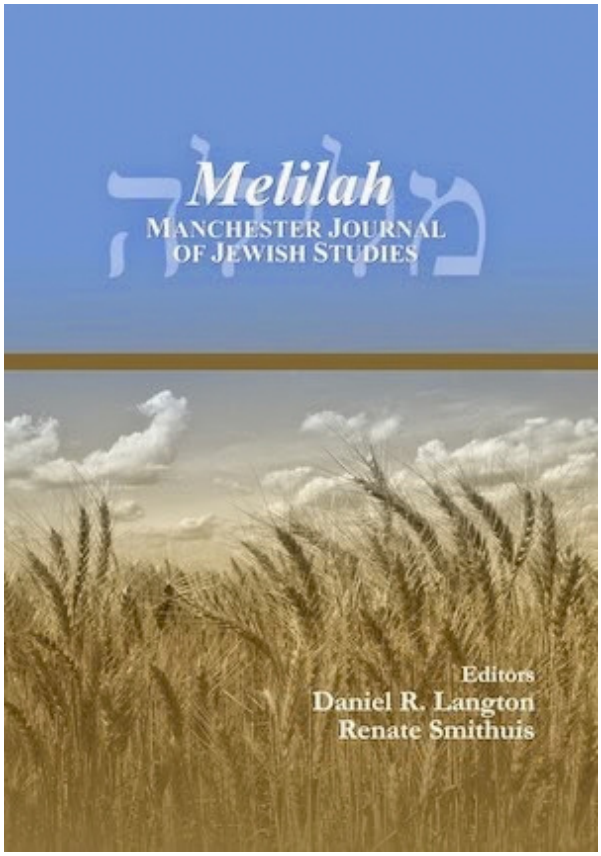
The AHRC awarded a Collaborative Doctoral Award to the Centre in partnership with Manchester Jewish Museum for the project Defying Disability in Victorian Jewish Manchester: The Diaries of David Isaacs and Social Marginality in a Minority Community (Dolman, supervised by Langton).

Professor Jean-Marc Dreyfus co-curated a major exhibition at the Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris based on newly discovered photographs documenting the first roundup of Jews in Paris in 1941. His research attracted substantial international media attention and exemplified the Centre's commitment to bringing cutting-edge scholarship into the public sphere.

The Centre continued its support for the Scriptural Encounters programme, activities connected with Jewish music and intercultural dialogue, and educational initiatives drawing on the unique Jewish collections of the John Rylands Research Institute and Library.

Members of the Centre contributed to public debate, policy advice and community engagement, with Centre members providing expertise on antisemitism, interfaith relations, Holocaust history, Jewish-Muslim relations, and contemporary issues relating to Israel and Palestine.

The Centre's journal Melilah continued to expand its international readership, while the Centre's recently refreshed website enhanced its a strong public and scholarly presence.



PARKES INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF JEWISH/NON-JEWISH RELATIONS, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

Leadership and institutional developments

The 2025–26 academic year saw continued development in the Parkes Institute's research, teaching, postgraduate community and public-facing work. Professor James Jordan became Director in Autumn 2025. The Institute also marked the death of Dr Edgar Feuchtwanger, the German-Jewish refugee historian and former Southampton colleague whose scholarship and public testimony made an enduring contribution to the Parkes and to Anglo-German understanding.

Teaching, postgraduate research and early-career development

The MA Holocaust: History, Experience, Heritage continues to connect historical study with memory, museums, archives and public history. The 2024–25 cohort undertook a Parkes-supported field trip through Warsaw, Kielce, Słomniki and Kraków, visiting Jewish neighbourhoods, ghettos, memorials, POLIN Museum and the sites of Treblinka, Auschwitz and Kraków-Płaszów.

The postgraduate community expanded with four new doctoral projects. Beth Purser is examining contemporary antisemitism among younger adults in Britain in relation to Holocaust education and memory; Ben Jennings is researching Jewish life in Libya between 1940 and 1948; Toby Kunin is studying post-war encounters between Romani activists, Jews and Jewishness; and Elizabeth Marvell is researching grassroots memorials of genocide in Britain. Immy Tozer's work on representations of Jews in English Civil War polemic received a highly commended award in the University's doctoral Poster Showcase. Charlie Knight completed his PhD on German-Jewish correspondence during the Holocaust and took up a Bithell Visiting Fellowship at the School of Advanced Study. Former Parkes doctoral student Tom Lawson was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hull.

Research, fellows and international collaboration

The Parkes continued to play a prominent role in European Holocaust research through the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI). EHRI-UK Director Rachel Pistol was elected inaugural Chair of EHRI's National Coordinators Committee. In November 2025 Southampton hosted representatives from Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Germany, Israel, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia and the UK for meetings as EHRI moved into its permanent form as a European Research Infrastructure Consortium. Claire Le Foll led the academic component of the pilot Virtual Belarusian Jewish Museum. The project brings together material from museums and archives internationally with digitised personal objects shared by individuals and families, and places Belarusian civil-society participants at the centre of the work.

The Institute welcomed Keren Darmon as an Honorary Research Fellow. Her project on the Oxford and St George's Club in London's East End combines oral history and archival research and is intended to lead to a social history and exhibition.

Sami Everett's interdisciplinary Maimonides from Scratch project continued its arts-based work on Jewish and Muslim histories through workshops at Manchester Jewish Museum and Mucem in Marseille, with further work planned in Morocco. Everett and Anoushka Alexander-Rose also co-organised the European Association for Jewish Studies virtual symposium 'Translating Maimonides', hosted by Cambridge in December 2025, combining contemporary scholarship with animation and work on Genizah materials.

Public engagement, heritage and events

Public-facing Jewish Studies remained central to the Institute. The annual visit to Barton Peveril Sixth Form combined Noëmie Duhaut's lecture on the Dreyfus Affair, antisemitism and conspiracy theories with workshops on Holocaust film, memorialisation, Sonderkommando testimony and the history of Libyan Jewry.

Anoushka Alexander-Rose's travelling Wandering Jew exhibition continued to move between academic, heritage and community settings and was also made available digitally. At Limmud Festival she organised a PhD engagement programme bringing emerging researchers into dialogue with senior academics and public audiences.

Doctoral researcher Maddie Walch curated Memories of Fear: The Artwork of Gerda Cohen, centred on the work of a Jewish child refugee who later settled in Southampton and drawing on material now held in the University's Special Collections.

The Institute's seminar and lecture programme ranged across Holocaust history, Jewish politics, textual traditions and Jewish life beyond Europe. Speakers included Simone Gigliotti, Geoffrey Levin and Antoinette Moses. The spring programme included Hindy Najman for the Montefiore Lecture, Jonathan C. Kaplan-Wajselbaum for the Archive Lecture, David Baddiel in conversation with Devorah Baum for the Parkes Lecture, and Yair Wallach for the Howard Rein Memorial Lecture.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON DEPARTMENT OF HEBREW AND JEWISH STUDIES

Seth Anziska, Mohammed S. Farsi-Lindenbaum Professor of Jewish-Muslim Relations, is the founding director of UCL's Middle East Research Centre. His current projects include an international history of Israel's 1982 Lebanon War and its afterlives for Metropolitan/Henry Holt (US) and Bloomsbury (UK). He has been awarded research and writing support from the British Academy, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Leverhulme Trust.

Michael Berkowitz, Professor of Modern Jewish History, presented his work on American Jewish moviemakers and the war effort at the Center for Jewish History (New York), the Yiddish Book Center (Amherst, MA), the Motion Picture Academy Museum (Los Angeles), Birkbeck's Institute for the Study of Antisemitism (London), and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Archive (Hyde Park, New York). His research on Kodachrome, Agfacolor, and Polaroid is the basis for an original musical, Kodachrome, which premieres in February at The Cockpit in Marylebone, London. Berkowitz was awarded a British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grant for work in Vienna on the scientist Helen Husek.

Alinda Damsma, Lecturer in Semitic Languages, has edited a volume on tattooing, identity, and belonging and contributed research on Neo-Aramaic and ancient religious terminology. Details of her publications appear in the members' bibliography.

Sonia Gollance, Associate Professor of Yiddish Studies, signed a book contract with Syracuse University Press for her translation of Tea Arciszewska's modernist drama Miryeml and received an AHRC-UKRI Knowledge Exchange Grant to stage this translation in London in 2027. She is part of the organising group for the new Yiddish theatre troupe, the London Yiddish Shpilers, which had its first performance in June 2026. She also oversees London's new KlezJamDance, a recurring klezmer jam with Yiddish folk dancing, which she typically leads, on Sunday afternoons in Bloomsbury.

Mark Geller, the Jewish Chronicle Professor of Jewish Studies, was recently awarded an Advanced Grant from the European Research Council (ERC) of €2.4 million to lead an international research project, BabPharmacy.

Shirli Gilbert, Professor of Modern Jewish History, is the lead editor of Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England. She serves as Director of the Sir Martin Gilbert Learning Centre. François Guesnet, Professor of Modern Jewish History, continues to co-edit POLIN with Anthony Polonsky. He is chairman of the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies (IPJS) and serves on the Executive Committee of the European Association for Jewish Studies (EAJS). His collection on Jewish self-government in the Polish lands, co-edited with Jerzy Tomaszewski (z''l), was the subject of a book forum in Shofar in November 2025.

Lily Kahn is Head of the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies and Professor of Hebrew and Jewish Languages. She is currently completing a Leverhulme Trust-funded reference grammar of Maskilic Hebrew, co-authored with UCL colleague Sonya Yampolskaya, and was co-investigator of the AHRC-funded research project Contemporary Hasidic Yiddish (2019–23), in conjunction with Kriszta Eszter Szendroi (University of Vienna). The volume arising from that project is in press with De Gruyter/Brill.

Sacha Stern is a Fellow of the British Academy and Professor of Rabbinic Judaism. From February 2025, he is Principal Investigator of a five-year UKRI Frontier Research Grant project (ERC Advanced Grant award) on "Astronomy, calendar, and related sciences in Near Eastern cultures, third–eighth centuries CE".

Among former students, Eli Rubin's history of Chabad Hasidism received an Honorable Mention for the Baron Book Prize.

David Solomon has completed a seven-volume annotated translation of Tiqqunei ha-Zohar, based on the 1740 Constantinople (Qusta) edition. Their publications are listed in the members' bibliography.

Current PhD students:

Noa Ben David: Jewish identifications and minority integration in contemporary Norway (Supervisors: François Guesnet; Elettra Carbone (Scandinavian Studies)).

Nir Ben-Porat: Minority Language and Mobility in Ethno-Nationalist Societies: The Case of Palestinians in Tel Aviv (Supervisors: Seth Anziska; Lily Kahn).

Tamara Gleason Freidberg: The Yiddish Press and the Holocaust in Mexico (Supervisors: Shirli Gilbert; Helen Beer).

Sarah Grabiner: Constructing and Connoting Multiple Liturgical Meanings via Translation in Hebrew-English Prayerbooks (1940–2022) (Supervisors: Lily Kahn).

Ron Hassan: Zion, Yeshurun & Biblical Onomastics: a new outlook on the history of Hebrew & Israelite gods (Supervisors: Mark Geller; Lily Kahn).

Zeyu Jiang: Inter-Cultural Dynamics in the Globalisation of Scientific Practices: A Comparative Study of Babylonian and Chinese Medicine in the 1st Millennium BCE (Supervisors: Mark Geller; Vivienne Lo (History)).

Rabbi Ofer Livnat: Sifrei Evronot: 16th–18th Century Jewish Calendar Manuals (Supervisors: Sacha Stern).

Theodosis Pipis: An Escape from Eurocentrism and Hellenism: Cypriot History in an Arab Key, 1923–1974 (Supervisors: Seth Anziska; Ali Coşkun Tunçer (History)).

Keren Rubner: Generational phonetic variation in the Hasidic English of Stamford Hill (Supervisors: Lily Kahn; Bronwen Evans (Speech, Hearing & Phonetic Sciences)).

Scott Saunders: Holocaust Journeys (Supervisors: Shirli Gilbert; François Guesnet).

Anna Switaj: The City, Despite Everything: Lviv Architecture as Witness, 1918–1947 (Supervisors: François Guesnet; Eva Branscome (Bartlett School of Architecture)).

THE EAJS AND EUROPEAN JEWISH STUDIES 2025-26

The European Association for Jewish Studies (EAJS) is gearing up to its 13th Congress, to take place in Alcalá de Henares near Madrid 15-17 July 2027 under the motto 'Renewing the Strength of Jewish Studies'. The call for paper will be issued imminently. Among others, the Congress will include a programme dedicated to research students and early career scholars in the framework of EAJS Emerge, following similar programmes at the Congresses in Kraków (2018) and Frankfurt am Main (2023).

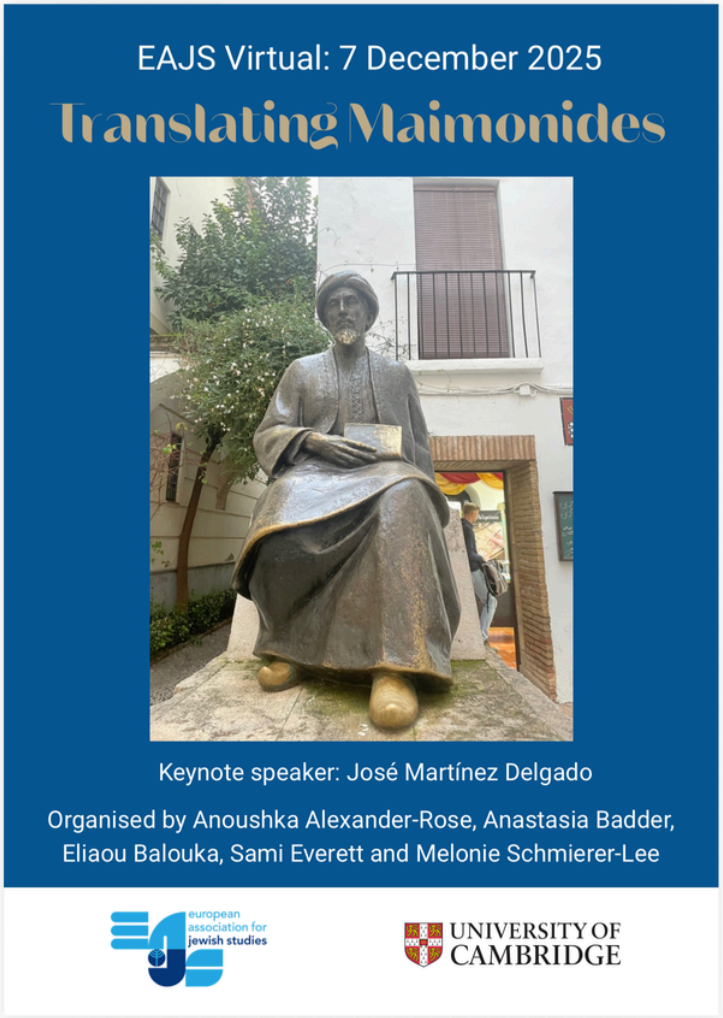
The Association hosted its second annual virtual conference in December 2025 on the reception and translation of Maimonides. Curated by a team of colleagues from Cambridge University, it reflected on Maimonides' past impact and ongoing inspiration.

The EAJS Virtual Conference 2026 will be dedicated to the impact of artificial intelligence on teaching in Jewish Studies and take place in the autumn. Among the other activities, a workshop to take place in partnership with the Nevzlin Research Centre (Hebrew University), the Ukrainian Catholic University/Lviv, the Centre for Urban History/Lviv, and the Institute for Jewish Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków will reflect on consolidating Jewish Studies in Ukraine.

The EAJS hopes to continue to support conferences and workshops through its Conference Grant Programme, funding academic events in all areas of Jewish Studies. The Small Research Grant Programme should also be extended – do check the Association's webpage for updates, or, much easier, do become a member to receive regular updates about grant programme announcements. Both programmes are offered with support from the core funder Rothschild Foundation Hanadiv Europe (RFHE) of the EAJS. Reports from the first rounds of awards reflect the breadth and wealth of Jewish Studies in Europe.

The Association now counts more than 1,400 members. The recently revamped website now features a heatmap of the regional distribution of its membership – do check out this new feature.

François Guesnet
EAJS Secretary
f.guesnet@ucl.ac.uk



LEAH LAWFORD – INCOMING BIAJS STUDENTSHIP HOLDER

As the BIAJS Studentship holder, I hope to use the opportunity to showcase the breadth, diversity, and contemporary relevance of Jewish Studies, while highlighting the people whose research, teaching, and public engagement sustain the field. One potential initiative would involve collaborating with Stephen D. Smith's Our Jewish Story project to record a series of short interviews with BIAJS members. These conversations would explore how scholars came to Jewish Studies, the questions and communities that shape their work, why their research matters, and what Jewish Studies means to them personally and professionally.

A central aim would be to represent the diversity of pathways into the discipline. I would be particularly interested in including perspectives from both Jewish and non-Jewish scholars, as well as researchers working across different academic fields, career stages, methodological approaches, and areas of specialism. By foregrounding individual experiences alongside scholarly expertise, the interviews could offer an accessible and engaging introduction to the richness of Jewish Studies and challenge assumptions about who works within the field and what the discipline encompasses.

The project could also provide a valuable platform for promoting the work of BIAJS and its members to wider academic and public audiences. Short, accessible interviews could be shared through digital platforms and used to demonstrate the range of research being undertaken across Britain and Ireland. At the same time, the recordings would contribute to a growing oral history resource, preserving reflections on the development, significance, and future of Jewish Studies from those actively shaping the discipline. Through this collaboration, I hope to create a project that celebrates both the intellectual diversity of Jewish Studies and the community of scholars who make it possible.
I would also like to use these interviews to write up a blog post about the wide variety of work and perspectives taking place within BIAJS.

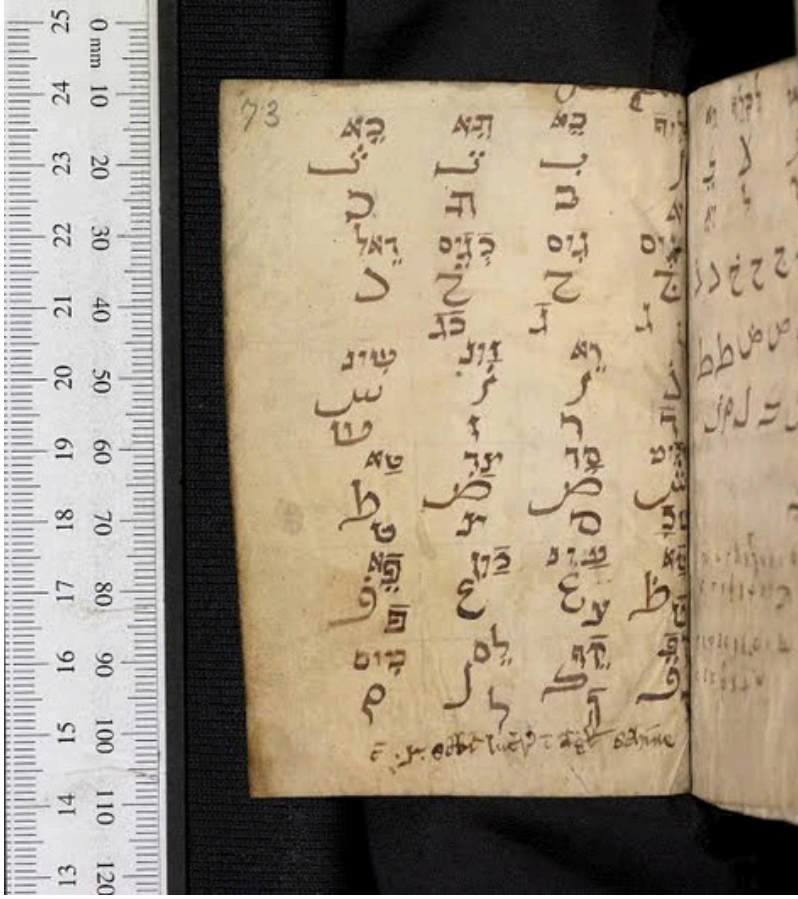
HANNAH BASH – BIAJS POSTGRADUATE REP

As Postgraduate Representative on the committee for the British and Irish Association for Jewish Studies (BIAJS), it's been an exciting year. I've focused my efforts on connecting up Postgraduate students and Early Careers researchers within Jewish Studies, especially at different events – which I've also promoted over the course of the year. This has involved workshops and wider events related to Jewish culture and history, such as those organised by BIAJS, the Leo Beack Institute, and more recently, the upcoming Limmud festival in December (2026), for example. I've also been liaising with departments across different universities to ensure that BIAJS is well represented to incoming students and early career researchers, including its prizes and bursaries, and online events – such as the BIAJS series that PhD Studentship holder Kerry McCall convened earlier this year. I'm especially grateful to all the different members of departments at different universities who have been so positive about passing this information on, and it's been great to see things come together.

One of my highlights this year really has been spending time with so many amazing people, in person, at the annual BIAJS conference. Over the summer many Postgraduate students and Early Careers researchers in Jewish Studies within the BIAJS sphere are either just finishing or submitting work, or will be very soon, which highlights an incredible range and scope of research – whether this concerns ancient music, contemporary Jewish poetry, or different experiences within marginalised groups, both historical and lived. I've also had a jampacked year in terms of my own doctoral research, especially as I approach a more advanced stage of my thesis: "Orality and Materiality in Northwest Semitic poetry" (2027). It's been a delight to speak at multiple events, including the "Renewed Philology,"series organised by Associate Professor Jacqueline Vayntrub, and the interdisciplinary project co-organised by UCL, the University of Oxford, and Palladion Budapest ("Writing Transcutural Histories"). I'm also excited about the two-year international "Psalms" project that I've more recently become involved with.

Looking ahead, to the next year, more Postgraduate students and Early Careers Researchers than ever look set to become involved with BIAJS, and BIAJS events. I've been exploring different ways in which BIAJS might raise its profile even more over the upcoming academic year, as one of my main priorities. I also have several ideas about how we might connect up with other organisations and groups that would also facilitate the promotion and nurture of Jewish Studies, especially for Postgraduate students and researchers in an early stage of their career. And, lastly, I'm already looking forward to the next BIAJS annual conference, in 2027.

SUPPORT THE OXFORD SCHOOL OF RARE JEWISH LANGUAGES



The Oxford School of Rare Jewish Languages (OSRJL) at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies has launched an appeal to help secure the School's future. Founded in 2021 with the aim of teaching ten endangered Jewish languages, the OSRJL has since expanded substantially and now offers courses in 18 rare Jewish languages, bringing together students and scholars from around the world.

Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, President of the Oxford Centre and the driving force behind the initiative, has issued an open letter asking for support to sustain and develop the programme. The appeal seeks to ensure that the OSRJL can maintain its existing teaching, expand future provision and continue its important work in preserving and transmitting endangered Jewish linguistic and cultural traditions. The initiative speaks directly to BIAJS's commitment to supporting the breadth and diversity of Jewish Studies and to sustaining the infrastructures through which specialist knowledge can be passed to future generations.

Further information and Professor Olszowy-Schlanger's appeal are available from the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies.
Read the OSRJL fundraising appeal

BIAJS MEMBER PUBLICATIONS

- Alexander-Rose, Anoushka. "Reflections on Translating, Curating, and Collaging the Wandering Jew." Ethnoscripts, special issue "Jewish Cultural Heritage, Minority Agency, and the State" (2025).
- Almog, Yael, ed. "Ages of Jewish Diaspora." Political Theology 26, no. 2 (June 2025).
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