

AAJS

Australian Association for Jewish Studies

BIANNUAL  
NEWSLETTER

CONTENTS

Editor's  
welcome

Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2025 issue of the AAJS biannual newsletter!

In this issue we congratulate longtime AAJS member Dr Jana Vytrhlik on her wonderful achievement of being awarded winner of the 2025 Leslie and Sophie Caplan Award for Jewish Non-Fiction for her book Treasures of Old Jewish Sydney (2024). Link to purchase Dr Vytrhlik's

book is included within. We also list other announcements from AAJS members and provide an update on the 2026 annual conference to be held in Sydney. As usual, this issue lists several exciting opportunities in Jewish studies and related fields, calls for submissions to seminars and publications, as well as fellowship and other grant opportunities. We highlight several fascinating books in diverse areas of Jewish studies published in 2024 and the first half of 2025. As always, we invite our readers to get in touch and send us your ideas for future issues of the newsletters, including announcements of your publications and events related to the field.

Dr Jonathan C. Kaplan  
Sydney Jewish Museum/UTS  
Newsletter Editor

## Meet your AAJS board

AAJS board members are listed below with contact details: we encourage you to get in touch with any of them for answers to all your Association questions.

All general inquiries/correspondence to: the Co-Presidents: [president@aajs.org.au](mailto:president@aajs.org.au)

All membership inquiries/correspondence to: the Membership Secretary: [memberships@aajs.org.au](mailto:memberships@aajs.org.au)

Journal enquiries to: the Editor: [ajewishstudies@aajs.org.au](mailto:ajewishstudies@aajs.org.au)

Website enquiries to: the Website Administrator: [website@aajs.org.au](mailto:website@aajs.org.au)

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**President, VIC: Dr Anna Hirsh**

**Vice President, NSW: Dr Lynne Swarts (Sydney University)**

**Vice President, VIC: Dr Simon Holloway (Melbourne Holocaust Museum)**

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**Newsletter Editor: Dr Jonathan Kaplan (Sydney Jewish Museum and University of Technology Sydney)**

**Website Coordinator: Dr Suzanne Faigan**

### **AAJS Executive Board Members:**

**Ex-Officio, Immediate Past President: Professor Ghil'ad Zuckermann**

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**Professor Avril Alba (University of Sydney)**

**Dr Myer Samra**

**Ms Jasmine Beinart (University of Adelaide)**

**Ms Angelica Jacob (University of New South Wales)**

### **International Liaisons:**

**Israel: Professor Emerita Suzanne Rutland**

**New Zealand: Dr Suzanne Faigan**

**USA: Dr Jason Schulman**

**Canada: Associate Professor David Koffman**

## Dr Vytrhlik wins The Leslie and Sophie Caplan Award for Jewish Non-Fiction

The AAJS wishes *mazal tov* to longtime member Dr Jana Vytrhlik on her accomplishment as winner of the 2025 Leslie and Sophie Caplan Award for Jewish Non-Fiction for her book *Treasures of Old Jewish Sydney* (2024). The award is supported by the Caplan Family to honour the memory of their parents, the late Leslie and Sophie Caplan, pillars of the Australian Jewish community who had a lifelong interest in modern Jewish history and literature, and who both had published works on aspects of Australian Jewish History.

Shortlisted authors include Anna Jacobson (*How to Knit a Human*), Jayne Persian (*Fascists in Exile*), John Safran (*Squat*), and Michael Visontay (*Noble Fragments*). In *Treasures of Old Jewish Sydney* Dr Vytrhlik's curatorial and historical skills are on display as she brings together

artefacts, images, documents, and architecture to recreate and retell the very beginnings of Sydney's Jewish community. An extraordinary work of historical recovery, it is also a visually stunning book that brings the personalities and places of Sydney's early community to life. Accompanied by original essays, this volume has filled a much-needed gap in the historiography, and in so doing has enriched our knowledge of Jewish life, practice and history in Australia. *Treasures of Old Jewish Sydney* was also highly commended for the 2025 National Trust Heritage Awards and the 2025 State Library NSW Community History Prize.

**Purchase your copy via the following [hyperlink](#).**



## IHRA Plenary Meeting, June 2025

This year Israel is the chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and its mid-year plenary was scheduled to be held at Yad Vashem in late June. However, the war with Iran forced it to be held online. One key focus currently is issues relating to antisemitism. Professor Suzanne Rutland and Dr Andrew Oboler are Australia's representatives on the IHRA Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial and Rutland was invited to give a presentation to the Committee on the issue of antisemitism in Australia post-October 7 during its 'Spotlights' session. Both Oboler and Rutland have volunteered to be members of a special IHRA project looking at campus antisemitism, to assist the IHRA to develop policies and recommendations to deal with this global threat.

## The 19th World Congress of Jewish Studies

Every four years the World Union of Jewish Studies holds a major international conference in Jerusalem at the Hebrew University, with papers covering the full range of Jewish studies from the biblical period to the current day, encompassing all disciplines including history, literature, theology, and the arts. This year the 19th Congress was held in person from 4–8 August at the Hebrew University. Despite the current challenging situation scholars came from across the Diaspora and Israel to participate in the conference, covering topics which included a wide-range of themes from the writings of the late Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Medieval Studies, Jewish Studies, and Jewish music and literature.

As a member of the Association for the Scientific Study of Jewry, Professor Emerita Suzanne Rutland participated in the stream run by the Association which operated as a conference within the larger conference. Many of the papers focused on the negative impact of the Gaza war from different angles both within Israeli society and in the Diaspora. Professor Rutland was invited to be on a panel discussing 'Antisemitism Before and After 7 October', with her paper dealing with 'Antisemitism in Australia Before and After October 7'. The other two papers discussed issues relating to American Jewry. Professor Rutland found the conference stimulating and valuable in creating connections with colleagues in relation to her areas of research.

The Ann Plotke Kirby Visiting Fellow in Jewish-Non-Jewish Relations and Keynote is Professor Michal Bar-Asher Siegal (Ben Gurion University). The AAJS and HBJS Conference committee consists of Professor Avril Alba, Dr Simon Holloway, Professor Emerita Suzanne Rutland, and Ms Vanina Vaisman-Levy.

Information on registration will be publicised in due course. In the meantime, for any questions please email Professor Avril Alba ([avril.alba@sydney.edu.au](mailto:avril.alba@sydney.edu.au))

## Dr Lynne Swarts's Review of Ruptured

In August, AAJS Vice President (NSW) Dr Lynne Swarts's review of *Ruptured: Jewish Women in Australia Reflect on Life Post-October 7* was published in *The Conversation*.

*Ruptured*, brings together 36 raw, honest essays by Australian Jewish women from all walks of life — some well-known voices, others first-time authors. Created in the spirit of lived experiences, each piece sheds light on a unique Jewish experience: from confronting antisemitism on the sports field to finding healing through comedy, and so much more. As Dr Swarts asserts in her review, 'This book is not just a chronicle of pain and upheaval, but a testament to the strength and resilience each woman demonstrates in the struggle to maintain their sense of identity and belonging in contemporary Australia.'

Read Dr Swarts's review via:

<https://theconversation.com/deeply-personal-urgently-communal-jewish-australian-women-reflect-on-life-after-october-7-261667>

Purchase *Ruptured* via: <https://ruptured.com.au/>

## Update from AJJS Editor

The editor of the *Australian Journal of Jewish Studies*, Dr Suzanne Faigan is pleased to inform readers that volume 38 of the journal is currently underway and soon to be published. In the meantime, the *AJJS* has recently joined LinkedIn and invites all academic authors, potential future authors, and readers to connect via:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/australian-journal-of-jewish-studies-ajjs-9197a9394/>

## AAJS 2026 Conference

A joint initiative of AAJS and Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies (University of Sydney) with the support of the Ann Plotke Kirby Endowment in Jewish-Non-Jewish relations, the 2026 AAJS Conference, 'Bridges and Boundaries: Jewish-Christian Relations across Time', will explore the complex topic of Jewish-Christian relations across time and place, and take place in Sydney on 8-9 February 2026. While often a relationship of persecution and conflict, there have also been times of considerable cross pollination and creativity between Christian and Jewish communities.



## Honouring Yona Gilead's Enduring Contribution to Hebrew Education

Professor Emerita Suzanne Rutland

A version of this update was first published in University of Sydney [SLC Newsletter 2025 - Issue 7](#)

Longtime AAJS member, Senior Lecturer Dr Yona Gilead has recently retired from University of Sydney where she had a profound impact on the development and professionalisation of Hebrew learning instruction.

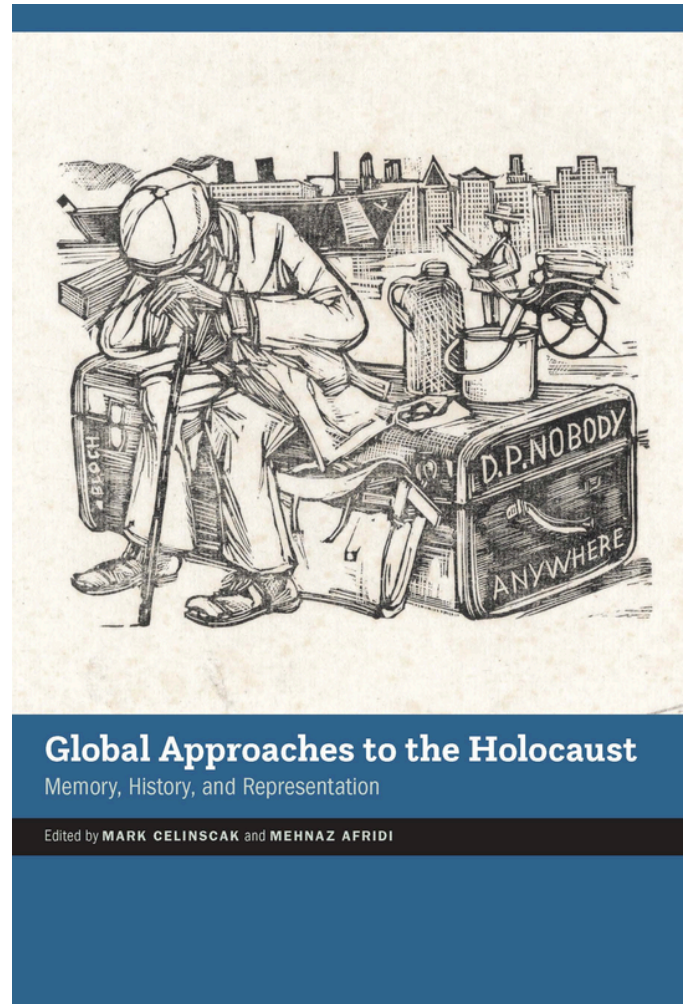
Dr Gilead's academic journey began with a master's degree in Talmudic studies, followed by positions teaching at both primary and secondary levels. Through dedication, skill, and pedagogical excellence, she quickly established a reputation as an exceptional Hebrew educator. This led to an invitation from Professor Rutland in 1996, then Chair of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies to join the University's academic staff.

One of Dr Gilead's most significant contributions has been her collaboration with Professor Rutland in creating a coherent and systematic Hebrew program introducing pedagogical innovation and a learner-centred approach, transforming it into a structured, six-level progression framework designed to cultivate future educators.

Her doctoral research, published as *Dynamics of Teaching and Learning Modern Hebrew: A Learner's Perspective*, broke new ground internationally by foregrounding the student's voice in second-language acquisition. This work remains a foundational text in the field.

Beyond curriculum development, Dr Gilead has mentored educators, led teacher training, and strengthened Hebrew language education nationwide. Her legacy is one of scholarship, innovation, and generational impact—qualities that will continue to shape the field for years to come.

## New Book: Global Approaches to the Holocaust



The field of contemporary Holocaust studies is increasingly international in perspective. These approaches do not detach themselves from European history; rather, they incorporate perspectives and voices not always considered in more traditional Holocaust studies.

The contributors to this volume take such an approach as they examine the Holocaust, adding to the historical and memorial reach of the subject through an international range of voices. *Global Approaches to the Holocaust* asks: What happens when scholars shift their focus from an exclusively European perspective of the Holocaust? What new insights are gained from exploring the impact of the Holocaust from outside the European milieu? How do countries

that were not directly affected by Nazi policies of occupation and extermination remember the Holocaust? What consequences does an expansive approach to the Holocaust entail?

With essays about North and South Africa, Mauritius, Japan, Argentina, Mexico, Chile, the Philippines, the United States, Australia, Canada, India, Pakistan, Palestine, Colombia, New Zealand, and more, *Global Approaches to the Holocaust* seeks to create a critical voice in Holocaust studies that encompasses not only Europe but also Asia, Africa, South and North America, Australia, and the Middle East.

Included are two chapters on Australia: 'Limiting the Undesirables: Jewish Refugee to Australia, 1938–1939', by Paul R Bartrop and 'Holocaust Education in Australia: History, Importance and Challenges', by Suzanne D Rutland.

*Global Approaches to the Holocaust* is edited by Mark Celinscak and Mehnaz Afridi and is published by Nebraska University Press. Purchase via:

<https://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/nebraska/9781496230683/global-approaches-to-the-holocaust/>

Use code **6AF25** at checkout for 40% discount!

## Jewish Tour of India, 8-19 February 2026

AJS members whose scholarly work addresses or interests lie in the rich and diverse Jewish history of India will be interested in an upcoming tour of India with Professor Shalva Weil and hosted by Jewish Unity Through Diversity.

Embark on a remarkable journey through India's unique Jewish heritage and vibrant history with the 'Jews of India: Hidden Communities' group tour, led by renowned experts. This carefully curated itinerary guides travelers through Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, and Goa, unveiling centuries-old synagogues, historic fortresses, and breathtaking monuments like the Taj Mahal and Agra Fort. Participants will have the chance to connect with local Jewish communities, explore meaningful heritage sites such as the Magen Abraham Synagogue and Judah Hyam Synagogue, and enjoy in-depth cultural tours of iconic cities.

Highlights include guided visits to UNESCO World Heritage sites, immersive community experiences, a Shabbat celebration in Goa, and a two-day academic conference focused on Indian Jewish history. The tour is designed for comfort and authentic engagement, with all meals strictly vegan or kosher to meet dietary needs. This is a rare opportunity to discover the hidden Jewish stories woven into India's rich tapestry, engage with local leaders, and appreciate the cultural diversity and historical legacy of Indian Jewry.

For further information on itinerary and costs visit:

<https://www.unitytdiversity.com/event-details/jews-of-india-in-unlikely-places-rajasthan-gujarat-go-and-delhi-1>

## Vacancies in Jewish studies and related fields

### Full Professor of Jewish Studies with a Focus on Persecution History and Antisemitism Studies, University of Vienna

The advertised position covers key aspects of Jewish culture, literature, religion, and history across its entire geographical scope (Global Jewish Studies). A special focus lies on the history of Jewish persecution from the ancient period to the present day. The professorship represents the subject area comprehensively in research and teaching. Teaching is mandatory in compulsory modules in the Bachelor's, Master's and Extension curricula in Jewish Studies, supplemented by supervision of BA, MA and Doctoral Theses. Participation in one of the faculty's key research areas and in the Doctoral School of Historical and Cultural Studies is also expected.

Your academic profile:

- Doctoral degree/PhD
- Outstanding research achievements, excellent publication and funding record, international reputation
- Proven leadership qualities
- Gender and diversity competence
- Experience in designing and managing large research projects
- Enthusiasm for excellent teaching and supervision at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral level
- Willingness to take on organisational and administrative responsibilities within the Faculty and/or the University

The University of Vienna expects the successful candidate to acquire, within three years, proficiency in German sufficient for teaching in bachelor's programmes and for participation in university committees.

Deadline: **17 December 2025**

For additional information and to apply visit the following [hyperlink](#).

### Sava Ranisavljevic Visiting Assistant Professorship in Judeo-Spanish Studies, Northwestern University

The Crown Family Center for Jewish and Israel Studies and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Northwestern University invite applications for the Sava Ranisavljevic Visiting Assistant Professorship in Judeo-Spanish Studies, a full-time position housed in the Crown Family Center. The successful candidate will be appointed for an initial term of three years, to begin September 1, 2026, with the possibility of renewal. The VAP will teach five courses annually, over the course of three academic quarters—at least one of these courses will be in the field of Hispanophone Jewish culture, which might include Latin American Jewish Studies, Iberian Jewish Literature, Judeo-Castilian (aka Ladino) Language or Linguistics, etc. The remaining courses may be in other areas of Jewish Studies as appropriate.

Applications may be submitted [here](#) and should include a cover letter, CV, writing sample, two sample syllabi (at least one of which should be for a course in Hispanophone Jewish culture), and three letters of recommendation. Candidates must have completed a PhD in a relevant field by the start of the appointment.

The deadline for applications is **Dec 15, 2025**.

Questions may be directed to Katie Jenio at [jewish-studies@northwestern.edu](mailto:jewish-studies@northwestern.edu).

For additional information visit the following [hyperlink](#).

## Upcoming conferences & calls for papers

### CfP – WORKSHOP: Women and Yiddish – New Approaches to Gender, Sexuality, Language, and Culture, University of Delaware, 28 April 2026

Yiddish language and culture have long served as a vibrant tapestry for exploring themes of gender and sexuality, particularly within the Jewish diaspora. Historically, women in Yiddish-speaking communities were often portrayed through complex, sometimes contradictory lenses, but their stories have been underrepresented in both mainstream scholarship and popular narratives. Greater attention to Yiddish sources as well as new approaches in gender studies have begun to uncover previously neglected voices, providing a richer and more nuanced understanding of gender and sexuality in Yiddish literature, theater, folk traditions, and Hasidic life. The opening of former Soviet archives and digitization of Yiddish publications, too, has allowed unprecedented access to Yiddish sources. This has led to the re-discovery of material and texts that shed light on the experiences of Jewish women and LGBTQ+ individuals across the Diaspora and in different periods of history. New translations and critical studies continue to explore the 500-year history of Yiddish, reevaluating works from earlier centuries and exploring how Yiddish-speaking communities dealt with issues of gender and sexuality. These findings are reshaping the way we understand Yiddish as a dynamic, evolving language and culture. They tell stories not only of survival but also of radical reinvention and transformation, and of the diverse and often subversive roles women and marginalized groups played within historic and contemporary Jewish cultures.

This workshop aims to gather scholars working at the intersection of gender studies and Yiddish language and culture. We aim to continue exploring questions raised in publications such as Naomi Seidman's work in the 1990s, and developed since then by numerous scholars, most

recently in journals such as *Pakn Treger* and *In Geveb*.

Paper proposals could address, among other topics:

- Women as role models (as matriarchs, mothers, activists, scholars, educators, leaders etc.)
- Representations of women in high and popular culture (such as the Jewish American Princess or the yidishe mame)
- Women as creators and audience of art (such as literature, music, theater)
- Women writing in Yiddish or in English and other languages while using a Yiddish framework (for example, Cynthia Ozick)
- Gendered nature of publications, translations, and circulation of Yiddish works
- Women in traditionally male spaces like Torah studies
- Women in religious spaces and as religious subjects (for example, in *tkhines* or as readers of the *Tsene Rene*)
- Gendered identity and identity politics
- Language and gender in education or socialisation processes
- Gendered experiences and perspectives of queer (including trans and non-binary) people

We welcome methodological and disciplinary diversity, including (but not limited to) history, literature, cultural studies, material culture and museum studies, Yiddish/Jewish studies, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, linguistics, and Holocaust and genocide studies. We encourage submissions from early-career scholars. Limited travel funds are available; please indicate in your proposal if you will need travel funds.

The one-day workshop will be held at the University of Delaware in Newark, DE, on April 23, 2026, and will be open to the public. Participants are requested to give a 10–15-minute short presentation with a focus on which questions their specific research raises. Each panel will have a respondent connecting the different presentations, and the workshop will conclude with a public event.



The deadline for proposals is **December 15, 2025**.

Proposals should be written in English and include an abstract of the proposed presentations (up to 300 words). Applicants will be notified by January 2026.

Please send your proposals to and contact Dr. Christin Zühlke in case of questions via [zuehlke@udel.edu](mailto:zuehlke@udel.edu).

**CfA: The Social Worlds of Internment: Entangled Histories of Inmates in Concentration Camps (1933–1945), USHMM, 3-14 August 2026**

The Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum invites applications for the 2026 Jacob and Yetta Gelman International Research Workshop, The Social Worlds of Internment: Entangled Histories of Inmates in Concentration Camps (1933–1945). The Mandel Center will co-convene this workshop with Željka Oparnica and Milovan Pisarri, University of Belgrade, in cooperation with [ShoahLab – Holocaust Studies Laboratory](#) at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory of the University of Belgrade. The workshop is scheduled for August 3–14, 2026, and will take place at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

This workshop explores the complex lifeworlds of inmates in the concentration camps of Nazi Germany and its allies, examining interpersonal and social relations among individuals and groups of different backgrounds as they navigated the often volatile and violent conditions of their incarceration. The fundamental question of how prisoners related to one another—through contact, collaboration, or conflict—remains largely unexplored, leaving a striking gap in our understanding of camp life as a shared, entangled experience. By foregrounding their interactions, the workshop seeks to reconceptualise the study of internment, contributing to a more inclusive, nuanced, and historicised understanding of life in the camps.

Together, we will ask how prisoners from different backgrounds interacted under extreme conditions, and what forces shaped the nature of their interactions. In what ways were racial, national, political, or other officially imposed categories either reinforced or subverted in the daily life of the camp? What new solidarities or fractures emerged within these enforced proximities? And more fundamentally, how might we move beyond comparative frameworks to embrace a relational or entangled history of camp life—one that highlights contact zones and the fluid boundaries of identity under persecution?

We invite applications that address these questions in studies of individual camps across the European continent and in colonial and semi-colonial territories, or through comparative studies of multiple camps, between 1933 and 1945. The workshop will lay the groundwork for future collaborative research ventures on the relational dimensions of the experience of internment during the Nazi period.

Deadline: **12 January 2026**.

For additional information and to apply visit the following [hyperlink](#).

**Call for Papers: British & Irish Association for Jewish Studies Conference 2026, Birkbeck, University of London, 13-15 July**

For 2026, the theme of the BIAJS annual conference is *space and place*. Since ancient times, these concepts have been central to Jewish life and thought. Spaces and places can be real or imaginary, micro or macro, shared or separated, boundaried or porous, safe or hostile: the ark, the sukkah, the mikveh, the genizah, the kibbutz, the eruv, the Temple, the concentration camp, the Uganda plan, Babylonian exile, the occupied territories, Eretz Yisrael, di goldene medine, Sepharad, Yiddishland, the heavens and the underworld... From biblical narratives rooted in specific geographies, to sacred architecture and urban neighbourhoods, to diasporic movements

and reimagined homelands, Jews have continually negotiated their relationship to space – physical, textual, social, political, and symbolic. Spaces and places are not neutral containers for Jewish life; they shape, reshape and are shaped by Jewish life and practices. How can attention to place and the spatial animate Jewish studies?

We welcome proposals that engage with this theme from any disciplinary, methodological, or chronological perspective. Although BIAJS conferences are always open to panels and papers outside of the main theme, this particular theme allows for many strands of inquiry, including but not limited to:

- Maps and cartographies in Jewish history
- Biblical, Talmudic and Rabbinic constructions of sacred and profane space
- Jewish cosmologies
- Pilgrimage, exile, and homeland
- Ritual spaces
- Space and place in Judaic law and philosophy
- A people without land? Diaspora, exile, transnationalism, rootless cosmopolitans
- A land without people? Zion, settlement, colony, homeland
- Jewish urbanism and spatial segregation (shtetls, ghettos, quarters...)
- The gendering of Jewish space
- Sites of memory and commemoration
- Field sites in Jewish ethnography or Biblical archaeology
- Imagined geographies in literature, film, music and art
- Spaces of leisure and culture (ballrooms, taverns, clubs, cafes...)
- Digital and virtual spaces of Jewish identity
- Mainstream and marginal spaces
- Spaces of antisemitism

Deadline for submissions: **30 January 2026**

For additional information including submission guidelines visit the following [hyperlink](#).

## Grants and other opportunities

### University Assistant Postdoctoral, Historical and Cultural Studies, University of Vienna

At the Department of Jewish Studies, part of the Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies, you will engage in research and teaching within the framework of the Professorship for Judaic Studies, with a focus on source and cultural history.

Your future tasks:

- You contribute to research, teaching, public engagement, and administrative tasks within the Professorship for Judaic Studies with a focus on source and cultural history.
- You are in the process of developing an independent research profile.
- Your current research includes the preparation of a second monograph (habilitation thesis) aligned with the thematic focus of the professorship.
- You publish in international academic venues and deliver scholarly lectures.
- You actively participate in the development of research proposals and the acquisition of third-party funding.
- You teach courses amounting to four semester hours per week.

This is part of your personality:

- You have successfully completed a doctoral program in Judaic Studies or a related field by the application deadline.
- You have experience with interdisciplinary theories and methods in Judaic Studies.
- You have a strong interest in working with texts, particularly rabbinic literature.
- You are planning a habilitation, book, or research project that aligns with the profile of the professorship.
- You have experience in acquiring third-party funding or are prepared to actively engage in this process.

- You possess excellent knowledge of Hebrew and Aramaic.
- You have a strong command of both German and English, spoken and written; if you do not yet speak German, language acquisition will be supported during the period of employment.

Please submit your application with the following documents (in German or English):

- A letter of motivation including your research interests (max. 1 page)
- An academic CV (max. 2 pages) and a list of publications
- A project description of your proposed research (max. 3 pages)
- Digital versions of two academic articles
- Contact details of referees
- Digital copies of your degree certificates

If you have any content questions, please contact: Constanza Cordoni de Gmeinbauer:

[constanza.cordoni@univie.ac.at](mailto:constanza.cordoni@univie.ac.at)

Application deadline: **12 December 2025**.

For additional information and to apply visit the following [hyperlink](#).

### **Dubnow Institute Visiting Research Fellowship Program (2026/27), Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow, Leipzig**

The Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow (DI) offers fellowships to external researchers for a visit in Leipzig during the academic year 2026/27. The fellowship's duration is two months. The DI is an interdisciplinary institute dedicated to scholarly research on Jewish history and culture in Central and Eastern Europe from the early modern period to the present. Its research activities adopt a pan-European perspective, including spaces of Jewish emigration, especially Israel and the Americas. The institute has a specialist library that supports its research activities and reflects the institute's research interests in its collections.

The call is aimed at doctoral and postdoctoral researchers (up to six years after their PhD) working on a methodologically and thematically innovative project in Jewish history and culture. The proposed research projects should resonate with the foci of DI's [research units »Politics«, »Law« and »Knowledge«](#).

### **Offer and Requirements**

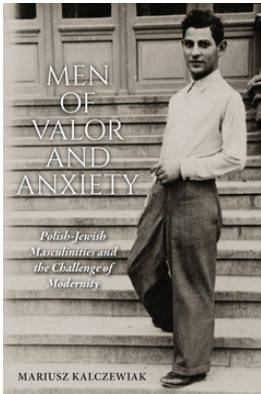
A visiting research fellowship at the DI allows for work on individual research projects and provides for intensive exchange with colleagues on site. Visiting fellows get a work place at the institute and are invited to present their project in a guest lecture which will take place during the first weeks of their stay. In addition, the DI offers a broad variety of events for participation and encourages the use of its library as well as of the many libraries, archives and research centers of the University and the city of Leipzig.

Fellows are kindly asked to spend the term of their fellowship at the institute. The fellowship entails a monthly allowance of 2,000 € for doctoral candidates and 2,300 € for postdocs. Applicants from abroad must provide proof of health insurance coverage for Germany upon commencement of their stay. The DI supports visiting fellows in finding accommodation in Leipzig. Depending on the available budgetary means, fellows visiting the institute with family members requiring care may apply for a monthly maintenance grant of up to 200 €.

Application deadline: **16 December 2025**.

For application guidelines visit the following [hyperlink](#).

## Recent books of interest (click any ISBN to purchase)

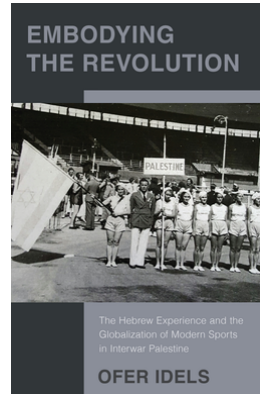


**Men of Valor and Anxiety: Polish-Jewish Masculinities and the Challenge of Modernity/ by Mariusz Kalczewiak. Indiana University Press, 2025.**  
[9780253073839](#)

At the turn of the twentieth century, Jewish men in Eastern Europe lived in a social reality in which both Jewish and non-Jewish men and women tested, debated, and redesigned masculinities.

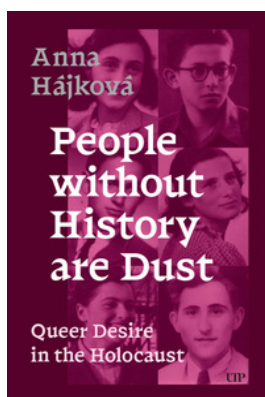
*Men of Valor and Anxiety* explores how religion, class divisions, antisemitism, new domesticity, and militarization changed masculine ideas and practices in Eastern Europe between the 1890s and 1930s. Author Mariusz Kalczewiak applies recent paradigms of gender theory and social history to offer a sensitive historical analysis of personal memoirs, advice books, archives of Jewish institutions, and journalistic commentaries. This study ventures into the military barracks, yeshivot study halls, fraternity parties, and Jewish homes to demonstrate how complex Jewish masculinities were between orthodoxy, acculturation, Polish and Jewish nationalisms, and changing notions of domesticity and profession.

Focusing on an ethnic minority in a country that first struggled for independence and later embarked on an accelerated modernization project, *Men of Valor and Anxiety* is the first book to demonstrate how the links between ethnicity and gender were constructed within both global and local contexts.



**Embodying the Revolution: The Hebrew Experience and the Globalization of Modern Sports in Interwar Palestine/ by Ofer Idels. Rutgers University Press, 2025.**  
[9781978844452](#)

This original and thought-provoking study offers a fresh perspective on Zionism by exploring Hebrew culture's ambivalent attitude toward modern sports. Drawing on extensive archival sources and contemporary literary theories, it focuses on Zionism's surprising anxiety toward sports during the interwar heyday of "muscular Judaism," revealing an unusual society in which athletes failed to attain national pride and distinction. Addressing themes such as the body, language, space, immigration, internationalism, amateurism, gender, and militarisation, *Embodying the Revolution* presents an innovative reading of Jewish life in Mandate Palestine, linking the marginalisation of sports to the meaning and experience of the Zionist Revolution. Idels' compelling interpretation of the appeal of sports, selfhood, and the compromises inherent in radical aspirations—narrated from the periphery of the interwar global rise of sports—challenges contemporary assumptions that dismiss ideology as an elitist myth.



**People without History are Dust: Queer Desire in the Holocaust/ by Anna Hájková. University of Toronto Press, 2025.**  
[9781487557119](https://www.utoronto.ca/9781487557119)

*People Without History are Dust* explores same-sex desire in the Holocaust, telling the gripping stories of queer Jews that have been long silenced by the homophobia of survivors.

Queerness remains one of the most stigmatised and overlooked aspects of Holocaust history, often erased due to the lingering homophobia of survivors. *People Without History Are Dust* challenges this silence, weaving together compelling stories of German, Dutch, Czech, and Polish Jewish Holocaust victims and survivors – including Anne Frank, Molly Applebaum, Margot Heuman, and Gad Beck—whose experiences help illuminate the hidden history of queerness in a time of genocide.

Drawing on extensive archival research, this groundbreaking book uncovers the lives of those who were doubly marginalised, not only persecuted as Jews but also as queer individuals. In doing so, it confronts the ways in which history has excluded or minimised their experiences, urging us to question normative accounts of the Holocaust.

By shedding light on these long-overlooked stories, *People Without History Are Dust* deepens our understanding of identity, survival, and memory, reminding us why an inclusive and complex approach to history is essential—not just for the sake of the past, but in service to the present and the future as well.



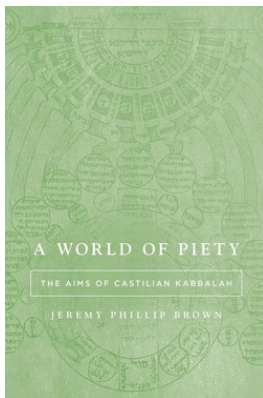
**The Great Christmas Boycott of 1906: Antisemitism and the Battle over Christianity in the Public Schools/ by Scott D Seligman. Potomac Books, 2025.**  
[9781640126541](https://www.potomacbooks.com/9781640126541)

Today's battles over Christianity in U.S. public schools have deep roots. In the nineteenth century it was an intramural struggle between Protestants and later-arriving Catholics. But at Christmastime in 1905, when Frank Harding, the Presbyterian principal of a Brooklyn elementary school, urged his Jewish students to be more like Jesus, the Jewish community entered the fray in a big way. It was just the trigger Orthodox Jewish activist Albert Lucas had been waiting for. Fresh from battling Christian settlement houses intent on converting Jewish children, Lucas accused the public schools of illegal proselytizing and called for Harding's ouster.

After the Board of Education let Harding off in 1906 with a slap on the wrist and declined to clarify the rules governing religion in schools, New York's Jews staged a boycott of school Christmas pageants in protest. The board's concession to exclude sectarian hymns and religious compositions generated enormous antisemitic public backlash. Jews were accused of waging war on Christmas and of being less than true Americans.

*The Great Christmas Boycott of 1906* traces the Christmas celebration dispute to the present day and describes how Jewish organisations of the twenty-first century, persuaded that politics are unlikely ever to permit a victory, seem to have reconciled themselves to the status quo and moved on to other, more winnable issues.





**A World of Piety: The Aims of Castilian Kabbalah/ by Jeremy Phillip Brown. Stanford University Press, 2025.**  
[9781503643666](#)

*A World of Piety* examines the historical aspirations of kabbalah to prompt a revival of ancient rabbinic piety in medieval Castile. What were the aims of the celebrated works of rabbinic wisdom fashioned during the reigns of Alfonso X and Sancho IV of Castile, including the formative Book of the Zohar? In pursuit of this question, Judaica scholar Jeremy Phillip Brown turns to the Hebrew and Aramaic writings composed by Todros ben Joseph ha-Levi Abulafia of Toledo, Joseph Gikatilla of Medinaceli, and especially Moses de León of Guadalajara. These writings set out to disseminate the secret patrimony of ancients: a knowledge of divinity comprised of essentially Jewish attributes as a basis for human emulation. According to these texts, God models a pious form of life—not merely a life of Torah and the commandments, but a program exceeding the norms of religious obligation. Midnight vigils for prayer and study, guarding the eyes and tongue, sexual austerity, spiritual poverty and concern for the materially poor—the texts affirm that God exemplifies these and other modes of piety, prompting their imitation as a penitential means of individual and even social transformation. By means of their writings, the Castilian authors sought to form penitents as ‘other people’ created anew in the Judeomorphic image of God. *A World of Piety* sheds light on the core motivations of a discourse that would emerge as a major domain of religion and thought by reconstructing the socio-historical ambitions of a little-known cadre of medieval rabbis active in a Christian milieu.



**Israelite Religion: From Tribal Beginnings to Scribal Legacy/ by Karel van der Toorn. Yale University Press, 2025.**  
[9780300248111](#)

A panoramic, thousand-year history of Israelite religion, from the Iron Age to the birth of Judaism, by a renowned biblical scholar. From its Iron Age beginnings to its aftermath in the Roman period, Israelite religion went through significant changes and transformations. As the Israelites responded to major historical events and political realities, their collective beliefs and practices evolved over time and developed new forms, even as earlier elements of religious culture remained an active substratum.

Weaving together biblical literature, archaeology, and comparative sources, award-winning author Karel van der Toorn tells the sweeping story of how Israelite religion evolved from a tribal cult honoring the ancestors and the ‘god of the fathers’ to a scriptural religion practiced by an ethnic minority within the Roman Empire. He demonstrates how religion was integral to nation-building as Israel transitioned from a nomadic chieftdom to a monarchical state; how religious practices changed in response to the loss of political independence; and how in the final centuries before the Common Era, as Hellenistic culture permeated the Eastern Mediterranean, Israelite religion gave rise to a variety of reading communities committed to a body of sacred scripture, with the law of Moses at its core.

Combining literary studies, anthropology, linguistics, history, and more, this book tells the fascinating story of Israelite religion as it has never been told before.

## Photo submissions: Australian or Australian-Jewish theme



Above: Jewish Sports Association January 1939. Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, Original item no. NCY42/259

In anticipation of warmer weather this summer, this newsletter's Australian-Jewish themed image comes to us from the State Library of New South Wales and depicts members of the Jewish Sports Association in 1939. Do you recognise any of the people depicted? If so, get in touch with us!

### Call for Submissions, AAJS Newsletter No 94

Do you have a story, report, review or image you'd like to see in the next edition of the Australian Association for Jewish Studies newsletter? Send your submissions, or even just your ideas, to [newsletter.aajs@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.aajs@gmail.com).