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Editor's Welcome

Hello members, and L'Shana Tova for the upcoming New Year. In this September 2017 issue of the Australian Association for Jewish Studies newsletter, I invite you to experience the thrills of time travel! Sadly, exploring the glories of ancient Judea or the excitement of the year 3000 is off the cards, but this issue will take you back to 1987 and forward to the possibilities of the next decades.

This year marks the Association's 30th anniversary, born in 1987 as the brainchild of a handful of Australian Jewish scholars mindful of the need for a specialist national forum for the study of Jewish religion, history, literature and culture. We begin this issue with the recollections of the early days of the Association and its activities from some of its founders and initial members, and explore how the Association has grown and developed over the years.

Jumping forward to the present, we are counting the weeks until the excitement of the 2018 Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Jewish Studies, to be held for the first time in Perth. We sit down with conference convenor, Professor Seth Kunin, to find out what's on the cards for conference participants to enjoy in February. We also have a brand-new journal editor for the Australian Journal of Jewish Studies, Dr Vicky Schinkel, to introduce to members in this issue.

After reflecting on the past and surveying the present, this Newsletter issue turns to the future, both of the Association and of the field of Jewish Studies in Australia. Our student members are our "next crop" with regards to Australian Jewish Studies

scholarship, and with a wide range of research interests from Anthropology to Geography, from History to Fashion Studies, they are indeed a fertile field! We profile some of our student members, looking at the work they're doing and their future plans and directions.

Finally, we survey the international field of Jewish Studies, with reports back from several international scholarly events and details of new books in the discipline. You will also find information about the upcoming conferences of interest to Jewish scholars, both at home and abroad.

I hope you enjoy this edition's journey through the past, present and future of the Association and the Jewish Studies discipline.

*Jennifer Creese, Editor
School of Social Science, University of Queensland*

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Dr Michael Abrahams-Sprod, Emeritus Professor Suzanne Rutland OAM, Dr Myer Samra, Dr Miriam Munz, Dr Anna Rosenbaum, and Professor Seth Kunin also serve on the committee.

Recollections on 30 Years of the Australian Association for Jewish Studies

This year marks 30 years since the founding of the Australian Association for Jewish Studies by a handful of Australian Jewish scholars keen to define the discipline outside the bounds of the generic “studies of religion” field and explore the varied fields of history, art, literature, philosophy and social science within the Jewish context. **Suzanne Rutland** and **Rodney Goutmann**, long-time contributors to the Association, have contributed their thoughts to this profile of the Association and its history.

The seed of an idea for an Australian Jewish scholars group was first born at an Australian Association of Religions conference, held at the South Australian College of Advanced Education in 1987. Four noted Jewish scholars were in attendance – Dr. Evan Zuesse and Dr. Rodney Goutman (S.A. College of Advanced Education, Professor Leon Mann (Flinders University) and Associate Professor W.D. Rubinstein (Deakin University, Victoria). Chatting during the event, all four noted that the program, although it embraced all religions, was highly Christian-centric. Coming from different disciplinary areas – Goutman from history, Zuess from Religious Studies, Rubinstein from Social Science and Mann from Psychology – they also noted that it was exceedingly narrowing to only be able to look at Jewish topics through the lens of religion. Clearly, a broader scope was necessary, and so the four pledged to establish an independent association for scholars working on Jewish-themed topics, to showcase their research.

Prior to 1987, the field of Jewish Studies in Australia was thinly-spread across disciplines, and there was little teaching in universities on Jewish topics except for

small departments in Semitic Studies at the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne. For the most part, material of Jewish interest (for example, Holocaust Studies, Israel in international politics, or Biblical Studies) were treated as subtopics or themes of more general studies. Some of those lecturing in these areas were conducting individual research into more specialized Jewish topics, but were largely working in isolation from one another.

The fledgling Association aimed to combat this through two major forums: an annual conference dedicated to connecting Jewish Studies across the disciplines, and a journal through which Jewish scholars could showcase their work nationally and internationally. However, the committee faced a significant challenge in providing these services, namely finding the funding for their production. The Association founders were, from the start, adamant that the Association’s conference and journal would need to be independent and free from external control to maintain academic authenticity and rigor. This commendable stance, however, did not appeal to many potential funding bodies or donors. The founding committee used their interstate academic connections, spreading information about the group and its aims by mere word of mouth, to build support. Initially, some funding for the journal came from the Australian Institute for Jewish Affairs, but the departure of director Isi Leibler in 1997 ended the funding agreement and the Association had to become self-sufficient.

The Association’s journal was born through the efforts of its founding editor, Dr. Evan Zuesse, who selected the name *Menorah: Australian Journal of Jewish Studies* and personally canvassed his academic connections for contributions.



Above: Professor W.D Rubinstein, Dr. David Birman, Mrs. (now Professor Emerita) Suzanne Rutland, and Dr. Paul Bartrop pictured at the inaugural AAJS Conference, Melbourne, 1987. Source: S. Rutland

Early editions were produced by Zuesse and Dr. Rodney Gouttman, the Association's treasurer and secretary, on the presses of the South Australian College

of Advanced Education's external studies department. The name *Menorah* was changed in 1991 under its second editor, Dr. Rachael Kohn, due to a clash with an American journal with a similar name. A twice-yearly newsletter was produced from 1989 onwards, with Dr. Hillary Rubinstein as its editor.

The Association's inaugural conference was held in Melbourne in 1987, and early conferences alternated between Sydney and Melbourne, where most participants were based. Various state-based "mini-conferences" were also held under the direction of the Association's state-level Vice-Presidents in Victoria and New South Wales. The first major conference to be held outside the two major centers was in Adelaide in 1993, coordinated by Dr. Paul Bartrop (now Professor). Visiting international Jewish scholars were always well-supported by the Association, who organized and promoted public lectures and arranged conference keynote speaker places for these honored overseas guests.

Support for the Association spread throughout the states, not just from researchers and scholars but from those working in related fields, particularly the library sector. Two librarians, Dr. Marianne Dacy and the late Joy Ruth

Young, both of University of Sydney, soon became active members of the Association from the very beginning. Marianne served for many years as the Association's honorary secretary and treasurer for almost two decades and without her sterling efforts the Association would not have survived.



Above: Joy Young (center) with Israeli Consul General Zvi Gubbay (L) and Professor Alan Crown, Chair of Mandelbaum Publishing, 1987. Source: T. Young

The legacy of the early days of the Association is clearly evident in the scope of Jewish Studies in Australia today. With thriving Jewish Studies teaching and research across many Australian universities, the Association proved a giant step for formalizing and raising the profile of Jewish Studies at university level. From these humble beginnings, the *Journal* has continued to provide high-quality contributions to the international Jewish studies literature, and is noted globally as one of the premier academic Jewish Studies sources. The Association attracts members from all over Australia, and even internationally, and has a strong committee of members from around the country with a variety of backgrounds, disciplinary knowledge and skill sets available to serve the Association. To close with a quote from Prof. Suzanne Rutland, long-serving member of the Association: "As an historian, I don't believe in predicting the future, and certainly not what will happen in 30 years' time, but I do feel that for now we have a very rosy future".

**Countdown to AAJS Conference 2018
with Professor Seth Kunin, Conference
Convener**

It is now only five months until Curtin University in Perth, Western Australia, will open its doors to the AAJS and welcome participants to the 30th Annual AAJS Conference. Planning for the conference is well under way, but we managed to steal a few moments in the schedule of Conference Convener **Professor Seth Kunin**, to ask him some questions about how the arrangements are going and what's in store for us.



Above: Professor Seth Kunin, Deputy Vice Chancellor (International), Curtin University, and AAJS 2018 Conference Convener. Source: Curtin University.

For those who don't know you, what has been your academic journey? How did you come to be researching Jewish Studies in Australia, and directing Curtin University's international endeavors as Deputy Vice Chancellor?

I undertook my undergraduate degree in anthropology at Columbia University New York, an MA at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, and PhD in anthropology looking at Cambridge, focusing on biblical anthropology and producing the books "The Logic of Incest" and "We Think What We Eat". I began my career lecturing in theology at the University of Nottingham and then the University of Aberdeen in 1999, where I did many years of fieldwork with the Crypto-Jewish communities of New Mexico and published "Juggling Identities: Identity and Authenticity Among the Crypto-Jews". I became Head of School of Divinity & Religious Studies at Aberdeen, and then Director of Research at the university's College of Arts & Social Sciences, and then moved to become Dean of Arts and Humanities at Durham University in 2005. I returned to Aberdeen in as Dean of Internationalization in 2014, and I came to Australia in 2016 as Deputy Vice Chancellor (International) at Curtin University, Western Australia. In my new role, I am not in the classroom anymore, but I am still researching and writing extensively on Jewish identity, life and mythology.

What inspired you to become conference convener for the upcoming 2018 AAJS Conference?

For the most part, it was a case of being in the right place right time! I had only just arrived in Australia when I registered to attend the Australian Association for Jewish Studies conference scheduled for

February 2017. Whilst networking at the conference, I discovered that due to unforeseen circumstances, the existing convener had just announced they would be unable to continue in their role. I thought it would be a fantastic opportunity, not only for myself to make connections within the Association's community of researchers, but also to bring the conference and Association members to Perth for the first time and showcase my new institution, Curtin University.

What are the key things, in your opinion, that make for a good conference?

It's important to offer good networking opportunities to conference participants, particularly in such a wide-spread academic community as we see here in Australia. You need to have a broad range of excellent quality papers, from across many different disciplines within the framework of the conference theme. Most importantly you need to put together a program which provokes questions and highlights topics which really challenge participants to step outside their academic comfort zones; this challenging is what brings a conference up from merely "good" to "memorable".

What are the biggest challenges facing you and your organising team?

One of the biggest challenges for us, here at Curtin, is going to be getting people to come such a long way – it's quite a flight over here from the Eastern states! One of the ways we aim to do that is by ensuring a good range of high-quality papers. That in itself presents its own challenges; we are all leveraging our academic contacts within and outside the Association to attract paper proposals and draw in the

best possible speakers. We're also keen to encourage new presenters, researchers who have not delivered papers at Association conferences before, to bring their fresh ideas and work along to showcase to conference participants.

What are you really excited about bringing to conference participants as part of the 2018 AAJS Conference? What should we really look forward to?

We're very confident that we'll deliver an excellent program of challenging and exciting presentations to conference participants. The chance to network with fellow scholars from across Australia and from overseas is always appealing, and we will have some outstanding keynote speakers along this year who will deliver brilliant presentations. Most exciting of all, participants will be able to enjoy all of this in the beautiful surrounds of Curtin University's Bentley Campus and its beautiful landscaping and architecture, and hopefully take the opportunity to explore and experience more of this beautiful part of the world.

As a Perth local, what are the things you really recommend that conference participants experience while they're visiting?

Apart from the conference itself, there's lots to see and do in the city of Perth itself, from historical sites to parks and zoos. If you have an extra day I recommend you visit the Swan River Region and immerse yourself in the history of West Australian settlement, which as a newcomer, I found fascinating. If you can arrange a few more days' stay, trip down to the Margaret River area, home of some of the state's best wineries and cheesemakers. Another great

nearby destination is the port city of Fremantle, especially its Maritime Museum, which provides a fascinating look into the development of the Australian nation through shipping. It all definitely makes for a worthwhile trip across to AAJS 2018!



Above: Curtin University's Bentley Campus, home of the AAJS 2018 Conference. Source: Curtin University

**Extension of Call for Papers: 30th
Annual AAJS Conference, 11-12
February 2018, Perth, WA**



**Call for Papers – Australian Association
for Jewish Studies**

**DEADLINE EXTENDED –
ABSTRACTS DUE 15 SEPTEMBER
2017**

**The 30th AAJS Conference, 11-12
February 2018,
Curtin University, Perth (Western
Australia)**

**By the Rivers of Babylon: Memory,
Emotion and Jews**

Psalm 137 is perhaps the paradigmatic text for the interplay of memory and emotion in the construction of both Jewish history and the Jewish self. The psalmist lays the groundwork for the depiction and understanding of exile, and provides the paradigm for over 2000 years of fears, anxieties, hopes and aspirations, which for some culminates in the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. This paradigm corresponds with the messianic hopes, which emphasize the optimistic future rather than the tragic present or past.

While memory and emotion have shaped the discourse about the Holocaust, and equally become significant reference points for reading Jewish history, they, particularly emotion, have been relatively de-emphasized in both rabbinic discussions of Halacha and academic analyses of Jewish rituals and practices. Even Jewish mystical speculation is largely presented in a rationalist mode.

Hasidism, is perhaps the primary exception to this pattern; this is specifically found in the Baal Shem Tov's rejection of the basis of the rabbinic system of his time, with a concomitant focus on emotion rather than reason as the fundamental basis of religious experience. Arguably, Chabad has provided a mechanism for moving Hasidic discourse back towards emphasis on reason.

Geography, particularly Zion, has been a consistent focus for memory and emotion expressed in longing. This trope is first expressed in the quotation from Psalms, it is also the heart and power of the poetry of Yehuda HaLevi. The importance of place is the heart of modern Zionism, and is one of the most significant motivators in modern Jewish life and thought.

The 30th Australian Association for Jewish Studies (AAJS) conference, to take place in Perth, Western Australia on 11-12 February 2018, seeks to redress the absence of these tropes in the understanding of Jewish practice and law, as well as exemplifying its importance in aspects of Jewish thought and historical experience; it also seeks to provide a forum for wider discussions of memory and emotions as they touch on all aspects of Judaism.

AAJS 2018 Perth, entitled "**By the Rivers of Babylon: Memory, Emotion and Jews**", will provide a trans-disciplinary forum for addressing perspicaciously both memory and emotion - both providing a basis for challenging and understanding their implications. It also seeks from the opposite direction to reassess our understanding of Judaism by resorting to general theories of memory and emotion.

We hope that AAJS 2018 Perth would act as an epistemological bridge, as an antidote for parallel discourses surrounding Memory, Emotion and Jews. Proposed papers can look at the theme from any angle, for example psychological, linguistic, philosophical, anthropological, theological, musical, political, biological, historical, cross-cultural. Papers on other topics would be considered too.

Please submit your paper proposal by Friday, **15 September** to the convenor, Professor Seth Kunin: seth.kunin@curtin.edu.au (Subject: AAJS 2018 Perth Abstract).

Notice of acceptance will be sent out by **15 October 2017**.

Submissions must include the following:

- Postal and email address
- Abstract of the paper to be presented (no more than 250 words)
- Short biographical note (no more than 50 words)

AAJS encourages students engaged in academic research to submit proposals based on their work to the conference committee. Authors should clearly indicate their student status on their submission. Presenters are also invited to submit written articles for consideration for publication in the *Australian Journal of Jewish Studies*. Communication about the conference should be sent electronically to Professor Kunin: seth.kunin@curtin.edu.au.

Introducing the new Australian Journal of Jewish Studies Editor, Dr. Vicky Schinkel



Above: Dr Vicky Schinkel, Australian Journal of Jewish Studies Editor: Source: V. Schinkel

Throughout a career encompassing statistical analysis, marketing communications, advertising, research creative writing and academia, Dr. Vicky Schinkel has dedicated herself to the transfer of knowledge and information.

The daughter of Dutch immigrants, whose families fled the Netherlands following World War II, Vicky spent her formative years on thousands of acres in Central Queensland. As a songwriter and musician, she found yet another way to communicate profound ideas. During her 12 years of experience in radio, she was a film critic, and producer, writer and host of 'Mysteries of the Unexplained.' Dr. Schinkel completed her PhD in 2012 at the University of Melbourne, on application of the PaRDeS analytical method to the interpretation of film.

Dr. Schinkel is looking forward to continuing the Journal's tradition of publishing advanced scholarship in Jewish studies. She can be contacted at vickyschinkel@gmail.com

Jewish Scholars of the Future: Our AAJS Students

Jewish studies in Australia is thriving, as evidenced by the quality of the academic output of our Association members. As we began this edition looking back to the past, we turn our attention now to the future, and look at a selection of our up-and-coming researchers, the PhD and Masters' Students who make up the Student membership of the Association. From a diverse variety of fields, these seven developing scholars tell us a little about their research and their goals for the future.

Deborah Berry



PhD Candidate at Avondale College of Higher Education, Cooranbong, NSW.

Thesis title: "Har Karkom and the Wilderness Itineraries"

Outline of Research: My research aims to uncover whether it is possible to resolve the geographical data of the wilderness narratives into one coherent plausible itinerary with Har Karkom as the biblical Mount Sinai-Horeb.

Why Jewish Studies?: The historical authenticity of the exodus, wanderings, and conquest narrative is widely discounted in biblical scholarship. Yet the events described in the Torah are foundational to Jewish identity. I hope to be able to use my research to resolve some of these long-standing conundrums.

Career Goals: In five years' time, I would like to be travelling, lecturing, and teaching on the historical geography of the wilderness era.

Jennifer Creese



PhD Candidate at the University of Queensland, St Lucia.

Thesis title: " Identity in an Australian Jewish community: an ethnography of public and private Jewish life in South-East Queensland"

Outline of Research: My research looks at the private expression of Jewish life and the public performance of Jewish communal identity in the Jewish community of South-East Queensland. I explore the relationship between private habitus and public performance of Jewish identity, and examine how any dissonance between the two provides an ideal mechanism for negotiating the Jewish community's position within the cultural framework of the surrounding mainstream society.

Why Jewish Studies?: I have a background as a social historian, and began looking into the past of my local Jewish community as part of its 150th anniversary celebrations in 2015. My interest deepened into a desire to look more closely at the workings of the contemporary community, so I turned my attention to Anthropology to be able to understand the diverse

experiences of the Jewish community around me, which is very different to most of the other Australian Jewish communities.

Career Goals: In five years' time, I would love to be researching and lecturing further in Anthropology, Sociology, Studies of Religion or Jewish Studies, either within Australia or overseas.

Jonathan Kaplan



PhD Candidate at University of Technology, Sydney.

Thesis title: "Sartorial Politics, Jewish Men, and Cosmopolitanism in Vienna, 1890–1938"

Outline of Research: My research refocuses the attention of the sartorial and aesthetic choices of middle-class Viennese Jewish men, both within their communities and the wider society, and implications for Jewish identity and acculturation. The thesis examines the role 'Jewishness' played within the wider cultural milieu of late 19th and early 20th century Vienna, and its visual and sartorial manifestations within a range of media.

Why Jewish Studies?: Prior to commencing my post-graduate research I studied design (both digital media and fashion). One area of interest during this period was the role of Jewish people within the fashion and dress industries,

particularly within a pre-WWII European context. As a descendent of Jewish immigrants who were involved in the 'schmatte' trade in both Europe and Australia the interplay between Jewish identity, the fashion and dress industries, and visual culture was something I wished to further explore.

Career Goals: In 5 years' time, I am hoping to be finished with my thesis and would like to be engaged in a post-doctoral fellowship or other research position in either Australia or abroad.

Gregory Keith



PhD Candidate at University of Sydney.

Thesis title: "The Holocaust in Western Sydney's Multicultural Classrooms"

Outline of Research: The Holocaust is a mandatory component of the Australian History syllabus for students in Years 9 and 10 but the complex and challenging nature of learning about the Holocaust, combined with the politics of the Middle East and the traumatic pasts of many students, can make this a problematic topic in some classrooms. This research seeks to quantify how much time the Holocaust receives in Western Sydney classrooms, how it is taught and the challenges identified by teachers. It will conclude by highlighting successful classroom strategies.

Why Jewish Studies?: I recognized early in my teaching career, through visits to the Sydney Jewish Museum, that the Holocaust is the defining event of the twentieth century and that I needed to be able to teach it much better than I had been doing. The MA in Holocaust Studies at Sydney with Konrad Kwiet led to two visits to Yad Vashem and now the PhD with Suzanne Rutland.

Career Goals: In five years, I will still be in the classroom, doing what I enjoy most, but I would like to have developed the relationship with the University of Sydney into a part-time teaching role.

Helen Star



Master of Arts (Research) Candidate at University of Sydney.

Thesis title: "Understanding and sharing testimony of Holocaust survivors."

Outline of Research: My research focus is on Holocaust testimony as a record of lived history. I'm particularly interested in the difficulty of expressing traumatic experiences through recollections in Holocaust testimonies. The study offers a contribution to the memory of those who experienced the Holocaust.

Why Jewish Studies?: Perhaps the most significant reason for engaging in Jewish studies is to gain insight into Jewish history and heritage.

Career Goals: In five years, I would like to be pursuing further studies to explore how descendants of Holocaust affected cultures are reconstructing the lost histories of their families.

Jana Vytrhlik



PhD Candidate at University of Sydney.

Thesis title: “The Great Synagogue in Sydney and its 18th C Dutch Silver Rimmonim: an art-historical perspective”

Outline of Research: My research focus examines the visual identity and heritage of the Jewish community in colonial Australia (1830-1887).

Why Jewish Studies?: I’ve previously worked as a curator at the Jewish Museum in Prague and Sydney and I’m currently a guest curator at the AM Rosenblum Jewish Museum at The Great Synagogue in Sydney. With my PhD research, I aim to combine my curatorial experience with an academic framework to bring a new perspective to the exploration of Australian Judaica.

Career Goals: In five years, I hope I’ll be continuing to research the rich Judaica collections in Australia and – as they are largely unknown – and promoting them to the world.

Zhang Wen



PhD Candidate at Shanghai International Studies University.

Thesis title: "City Writing in American Jewish Holocaust Fiction"

Outline of Research: My research, based on theories of cultural memory, city politics and space, intends to explore the relationship between Holocaust memory, urban space and post-Holocaust Jewish identity in American Jewish fiction.

Why Jewish Studies?: What drew me to Jewish studies is the long-lasting history of Jewish people and their special national and cultural spirit, never giving up in the face of suffering. I feel that the Jewish approach to the cultural preservation of the Holocaust can enlighten us Chinese in preserving our memory of WWII and how to treat the past and the present.

Career Goals: In five years, I would like to raise my people's concern about the Holocaust by making my PhD dissertation published in my country and open new courses of Jewish Holocaust fiction in the university I'll work in.

Registrations open for 49th Annual Association for Jewish Studies Conference, USA

Registrations are now open for the AJS 49th Annual Conference, to be held December 17-19, 2017, at the Marriott Marquis hotel in Washington, DC, USA.

The Annual Conference of the Association for Jewish Studies is the largest annual international gathering of Jewish Studies scholars in the world. With more than 1100 attendees, over 190 sessions, a major book exhibit of leading publishers, cultural programming, and gala banquet, the AJS annual conference provides a unique opportunity to share ideas and explore the world of Jewish Studies scholarship. Many AJS members and speakers have attended and presented at AAJS Conferences in the past, and our two organizations are proud to support each other's events.

Pre-conference registration, and bookings for reduced conference rates for hotel rooms, closes on November 15th.

More information about the conference, including the program, is available at <http://www.associationforjewishstudies.org/annual-conference>.

Registrations open for the Inaugural Australasian Alliance of Holocaust Organisations (AAHO) Conference, Melbourne

The newly-established Australasian Alliance of Holocaust Organisations (AAHO) aims to establish a network of like-minded organisations and scholars to share ideas and resources, gather support and promote their work. The AAHO will be holding its first annual conference from November 12-13, at the Jewish Holocaust Centre, Melbourne, with guest speakers on topics of interest, with opportunities to discuss cooperation, support, problems and concerns.

For more information, contact the Jewish Holocaust Centre, 13-15 Selwyn St. Elsternwick, Victoria. Melbourne 3185 (03) 9528-1985. Fax: (03) 9528-3758. E-mail: admin@jhc.org.au

Conference Report: IHRA Plenary Meeting, Geneva

On 29 June 2017, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) successfully concluded its first bi-annual Plenary Meeting under the Swiss Chairmanship in Geneva. Among the 200 experts who gathered to discuss the various issues relevant to IHRA's work in terms of education, remembrance, academic research and communication, was the Australian delegation, consisting of six Holocaust experts, together with Angus Acton-Cavanough, the second secretary from the Australian Embassy in Berlin.

After the plenary, the Swiss IHRA Chair, Ambassador Benno Baettig, welcomed the decision made by the Geneva Plenary to adopt a strategy framework for the organization. Speaking after the conclusion of the Plenary Session, he said:

“The last four days were a period of intense discussion and demonstrated the high level of commitment among all IHRA delegates. I'm proud that with the Spirit of Geneva we could adopt the first strategy framework for the IHRA. This will make the work of the IHRA more efficient and effective and will enhance the relevance of the organization's work.”

At this plenary, the honorary chair, Emeritus Professor Yehuda Bauer, again highlighted what he sees as the most urgent issues facing the organization in its efforts to combat antisemitism. He spoke about the world-wide trend of anti-liberalism that was sweeping the globe, endangering democratic values, supporting exclusivist nationalism and opposing freedom of expression. This trend is the opposite of the ideals of the French Revolution. IHRA stands on the other side of this, even though the organization did not intend to be. Bauer felt that this should make IHRA a little more decisive in its work.

He then stressed that one of the greatest problem is hate speech on the internet. It has been there before but with the new technologies hate speech can be spread and is being spread. He said:

“What we are facing is a vast flood of hatred including antisemitism and Holocaust denial, which is where we come in. The major part is jihadist hate speech attacking the Muslim world, first and foremost. It is a tremendous threat but not the only one, there is misogyny and homophobia. IHRA has a task in there – we cannot keep quiet, we cannot educate, remember, research when there is hatred all over the place.”

Bauer noted that the hate speech is led by grey figures concentrated in Dublin probably because of tax reasons. This is an international problem which must be dealt with the UN, but it is also a focus for IHRA's work.

As in the past, the Australian delegation actively participated in all the different working groups and other forums. They also discussed with Sir Eric Pickles, head of the UK delegation, ways of moving Australia's membership status forward – at present Australia joined IHRA two-years ago as an observer nation, one of nine, with 31 nations having full membership.

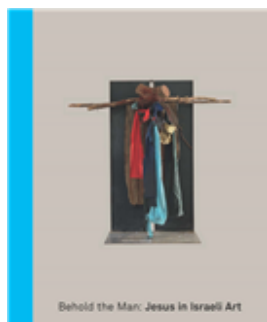
The next stage for Australia is to apply to become a Liaison Country. Given that Holocaust education has been made mandatory in the new national curriculum and the Gandel Holocaust Educator's program, with sending teachers to Yad Vashem, as well as local follow-up, this is very doable for Australia. The Australian delegation is determined to push this agenda.

Professor Emerita Suzanne Rutland



Above: L-R Sue Hampel, Sir Eric Pickles (UK), Benno Baettig (Swiss chair), Donna Frieze, Suzanne Rutland, Avril Alba, Steven Cooke, and Andre Oboler. Source: S. Rutland

Recent Books of Interest



Behold the Man: Jesus in Israeli Art / by Amitai Mendelsohn. Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2017. 0-465-278-965-978

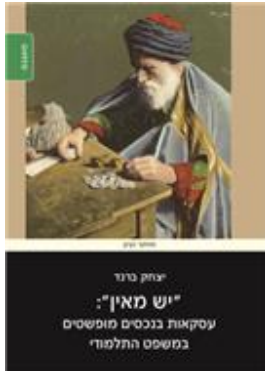
Dr. Amitai Mendelsohn investigates the various appearances of the figure of Jesus in Israeli art as a significant, multifaceted and ever-present phenomenon. Through works by prominent artists from different generations, it discusses in depth the evolving attitudes of Jewish, Zionist pre-state, and Israeli art towards Jesus, from the second half of the nineteenth century until today: from artists labouring "In the shadow of the Cross" to artists who saw Jesus as a symbol of the rebirth of the Jewish people in the land of Israel, and artists whose engagement with Jesus is detached from the complex and fraught relations between Christianity and Judaism, and who see him as symbolizing the suffering artist. The book examines the different directions taken by Israeli artists in portraying the figure of Jesus, and proves the extent of this phenomena and its ever-present importance.



Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira - Sermons from the Years of Rage: The Sermons of the Piaseczno Rebbe from the Warsaw Ghetto, 1939-1942 / by Daniel Reiser. World Union of Jewish Studies, 2017. 978-965-92115-1-7 /

Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira, a Holocaust victim and the Grand Rebbe of Piaseczno, used to deliver priceless sermons in the Warsaw Ghetto during the war. For years, the printed editions of the sermons' manuscripts have provided only partial versions of the text, which had been perpetually changed, rephrased and revised by its original author. This exquisite two-volume facsimile analyses and reproduces the sermons of the Piaseczno Rebbe in collected form for the first time. The first volume of this book provides a critical and annotated edition of these manuscripts, published following a long editing and deciphering process based on the original manuscript, located in Warsaw's Jewish Historical Institute Archives. The book paints a new picture of this important, universal and historical document and unveils the personal story of its fascinating author. The second volume is a facsimile edition, with the original manuscript on one side and the detailed line-by-line presentation of the text as the Rebbe corrected it. The second volume includes

the words and passages that were deleted and is printed in 4 different colors which follow the proofs and changes that the Rebbe made in the text.



“Out of Nothing”: Transactions in Incorporeal Estate in Talmudic Law / by Itzhak Brand. Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2017. 978-965-493-904-1

According to common opinion, in Jewish law research and in the Halakhic literature, transactions in incorporeal estates are non-valid. However, economic life and the business world are based on these transactions. As a result, a gap was created between Halacha and reality. The book *"Out of Nothing"* proposes resolving this problem through Talmudic research methods, various issues which are discussed in the Talmudic law, including *Davar She'lo Ba La'olam, Tovat Hanaha*, and bills of sale. In the course of the discussion it turns out that the Tannaitic ruling recognizes these transactions, but Talmudic halakha refused to recognize them. However, the Amoraim suggest various ways of mediation in order to enable transferring of future estate, debt bonds and so on.

The book proposes to take the bridges that the Amoraim leaned toward the Tannaitic law and to use them as tools for halakhic validation of current market life.



The Gdoilim: Leaders Who Shaped the Israeli Haredi Jewry / edited by Benjamin Brown & Nissim Leon. Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2017. 978-965-493-915-7.

One of the most visible aspects of Orthodox Judaism in present-day Israel is the ubiquity of the "Gdoilim" – "the great ones" - the luminary spiritual leaders whose presence dominates orthodox politics, media and the public space. However, these individuals, whose lives are constantly canonized in hagiographies, have largely remained unknown outside the Orthodox Jewish communities, and have generally been overlooked by the academic research. This book is a pioneering attempt to fill this gap by offering a comprehensive collection of articles by Israeli and American leading scholars of Orthodox Judaism striving to elucidate the lives and theologies of these extraordinary individuals and explain the secret of their lasting power.

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