

Western Jewish Studies Association

30th Annual Conference

San Diego, California

March 16-17, 2025



Lawrence Baron, Founder and President

Program Committee:

Joshua Furman

Joel Gereboff

Alan Levenson

Baron Award Jury:

Joel Gereboff

Shira Klein

Seth Ward

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The WJSA Appreciates the Financial Support It Has Received from:

Association for Jewish Studies

Jewish Studies Program, San Diego State University

Jewish Studies Program, University of California, San Diego

The Murray Galinson San Diego/Israeli Initiative

Schedule

Sunday, March 16

8-8:45 am

Registration, Foyer in front of Pacific Room

9:00-10:30 am

Panel 1 **Jewish Homelands**, Sunset Room

Chair: Matt Goldish, Ohio State University

Olivia Goldring, University of California-Berkeley

Judeo-French: An Account of the Multilingual Jewish Community of Medieval Tsarfat

David Malkiel, Bar-Ilan University

Home or Homeland? Family Dynamics and Migration Decisions in a Renaissance Hebrew Epistle

Beatrice Waterhouse, University of California, San Diego

The Imagined Homeland, Ideal Citizenship, and Spain's Sephardic Law of Return

Panel 2 **Pogroms, the Holocaust, and Its Intergenerational Legacy**, Marina Room

Chair: Timothy Pytell, California State University, San Bernardino

Jan Kutilek, University of Pardubice

Anti-Jewish Violence in the Wake of the Great War in Galicia and Czechoslovakia

Zohar Segev, University of Haifa

Rethinking the Bombing of Auschwitz: Support, Opposition, and Political Struggle

Nancy L. Segal, California State University, Fullerton

The Children of the Auschwitz Twins: New Voices About Exceptional Survivors

Panel 3 **Modern Jewish Literature**, Pacific Room

Chair: Holli Levitsky, Loyola Marymount University

Denisa Glacová, University of Michigan

Through a Queer Lens: Exploring the Complex Identities of Jiří Mordechai Langer (1894–1943)

Naomi Sokoloff, University of Washington

Poetry from October 7 and the Vilna Ghetto: Mishol's "Safe Room" and Sutzkever's "I Lie in this Coffin"

Audrey Thacker, California State University, Northridge

"That would be so God": Replacing a Questionable Divinity with an Equally Questionable Humanity in Shalom Auslander's *Hope: A Tragedy*

Sunday, March 16

10:45 am-12:15 pm

Panel 4 Israeli Higher Education [In Honor of The Hebrew University's Centennial], Marina Room

Chair: Justin Pressman, Executive Director, Western Region, American Friends of The Hebrew University

Yuval Sinai, Netanya Academic College

The Higher Education System in Israel

Liora Lukitz, Independent Scholar [Paper read by Miri Talmon, Tel Aviv University]

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Preserving Israel's National Identity

Shai David Ben-Ami, University of Washington

The Lions of Mount Scopus

Panel 5 American Jews and Race, Pacific Room

Chair: Ellen Eisenberg, Willamette University

Joanna Martin, Indiana University

The Ever Expanding Bosom of "Whiteness": Exploring Racial Identity among European Jewish Immigrants and Its Implications for African/African-Jewish Communities

Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwall, California State University, San Marcos

Before DEI: Jewish Leftist Writers Battle Anti-Black Racism... and HUAC, 1930s – 1950s

Avery Weinman, UCLA

Jewish-Indigenous Solidarity During the Indians of All Tribes Alcatraz Occupation, 1969-1971

Panel 6 Soviet and American Jewish Activism, Sunset Room

Chair: Paul Batrop, University of Melbourne

Victoria Khiterer, Millersville University

Americans at Babyn Yar, Babyn Yar Commemoration in America

Karine Rashkovsky, Independent Scholar

Lessons from the Soviet Jewish Dissident Movement

Sunday, March 16

12:30-1:45 **Lunch**, Sunset Room

Welcoming Remarks: Laurie Baron, President, Western Jewish Studies Association

Deborah Hertz, Jewish Studies Program, University of California, San Diego

Rebecca Bartell, Jewish Studies Program, San Diego State University

Susan Lapidus, Murray Galinson San Diego-Israel Initiative

Amy Shevitz, Loyola University Chicago, In Memoriam for David Biale (1949-2024)

Laurie Baron, San Diego State University, In Memoriam for Seth Wolitz (1938-2024)

Presentation of the Baron Award for Best Graduate Paper

2-3:30 pm

Panel 7 **Modern European Jewish History**, Marina Room

Chair: David Weinberg, Wayne State University

Paul R. Bartrop, University of Melbourne

The Slow Road to Jewish Emancipation in Norway, 1814-1851

Haim Sperber, Western Galilee College,

Immigration and Crime – Jewish International Trafficking networks, 1880 -1924

Eva Taterova, Czech Academy of Sciences

From Cooperation to Confrontation: Czechoslovakia and Israel during the Cold War

Panel 8 **Contemporary Relevance of the Bible**, Pacific Room

Chair: Hadar Aviram, University of California Hastings College of Law

Martin Zwick, Portland State University

Tikkun Viewed from the Perspective of Systems Philosophy

Joel Gereboff, Arizona State University

Healing Psalms and the Rise of Healing in the American Jewish Community

Alan Levenson, University of Oklahoma

The King James Bible Mystique and the Teaching of Bible in Public Schools

Panel 9

Argentine Jewry, Sunset Room

Chair: Rebecca Bartell, San Diego State University

Eduardo Faingold, University of Tulsa

Spanbrew: the Hebrew-influenced Spanish of Habonim in Argentina

Guillermo Glujovsky, University of Sherbrooke

The Jewish Movement for Human Rights during the Argentine Dictatorship (1976-1983)

Nora Glickman, Graduate Center of the City University of New York

The Jewish Graphic Art of Sergio Langer, an Argentinean Humorist

Sunday, March 16

3:45-5:15 pm

Panel 10 **“Inappropriate” Portrayals of Jews in Popular Culture**, Marina Room

Laurie Baron, San Diego State University

David Gottlieb, Spertus Institute

Prurience and Prophecy: Raunchy Jewish Comedy and Prophetic Performance

Seth Ward, University of Wyoming

Nudity in Israeli Films and American Students’ Responses

Mara Cohen Ioannides, Midwest Jewish Studies Association

Jewish Cowgirls in Popular Culture: Cowboy Replacement or Lesbian Porn?

Panel 11 **Jewish History in the American West**, Pacific Room

Chair: Ava Kahn, Independent Scholar

Serra Bardin, University of Oklahoma

Yiddishist in the Mayrev: California, Yiddish Literature, and Jewish Women, 1930s-1950s

Amie Thurber, Portland State University

Legacies of Jewish dissent: Rabbi Reichert and the Struggle against Zionism

Eleanor Kaufman, University of California, Los Angeles

On not Finding Antisemitism in the Western Jewish Archive

Panel 12 **Modern Jewish Music and Thought**, Sunset Room

Chair: Deborah Hertz, University of California, San Diego

Brian Wilson, California State University-Sonoma

Darius Milhaud's 1948 Service Sacré for Baritone soloist, Récitant, Chorus and Orchestra

Peter Atterton, San Diego State University

Levinas's God Who Hides His Face

Amy Hill Shevitz, Loyola University Chicago

Philosophy and Auto/biography: Writing an American Jewish Thinker

5:15-5:45 pm

Cash Bar, Terrace Outside of Sunset and Mariana Rooms

Sunday, March 16

5:45-8 pm Dinner, Sunset Room

Roundtable

Laurie Baron: A Man for the WJSA Season



Laurie Baron convened the first Western Jewish Studies Association Conference in 1995. He has been its president ever since but is stepping down from the position this year. As he explains. “No one over 77 should be president of anything.”

Colleagues and WJSA Executive Board Members Will Review His Career.

Chair: Ellen Eisenberg, Willamette University

Ava F. Kahn, Independent Scholar

Seth Ward, University of Wyoming

Yvonne Kozlovsky-Golan, University of Haifa

Holli G. Levitsky, Loyola Marymount University

Mara Cohen Ioannides, Midwest Jewish Studies Association

Amy Shevitz, Loyola University, Chicago

Monday, March 17

8:30 am, Registration, Foyer Outside of Pacific Room

9:00-10:30 am

Panel 13 **Early Modern Jewish Law and Texts**, Marina Room

Chair: Shmuel Shepkaru, University of Oklahoma

Matt Goldish, Ohio State University

Concepts of Magic in some Early Modern Rabbinic Responsa

Chaim Saiman, Villanova University School of Law

The Authority of the *Shulhan Arukh*: the Halakhic Development of the Laws of Triage

Gilli Cohen, Brandeis University

Treating Spinoza as Tanna: Analyzing the Hidden Talmudic Logic in Harry Wolfson's Method

Panel 14 **Jewish Science Fiction/Fantasy After October 7: A Roundtable Discussion**, Sunset Room

Chair: Amelia Glaser, University of California, San Diego

Elana Gomel, Tel-Aviv University

Valerie Estelle Frankel, Mission College and San Jose City College

Panel 15 **Mizrahi Jewry**, Pacific Room

Chair: Yvonne Kozlovsky-Golan, University of Haifa

Benjamin Berman-Gladstone, Columbia University

Gender, State, and Halakhic Pluralism: Avraham Tabib and Raḥel Tzabari on Marriage Law and Yemeni Jewish Custom

Drora Arussy, Jewish Unity through Diversity

On Eagles' Wings: The Arussy Family's Odyssey

Narciss M.Sohrabi, Paris Nanterre Université,

Jewish Cemetery as Cultural Heritage Object in the Iran

10:45 am-12:15 pm

Panel 16 **American Jewish Experiences**, Sunset Room

Chair: Joshua Furman, University of Denver

Gregory Brown, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

"We'll Probably Never Go to the Ghetto Again": Leo Gershoy, a Jewish-American in Paris

Jeffrey Demsky, San Bernardino Valley College

Drawn Together: Locating Bibi and Donald in Israeli and American Political Cartoons

Monday, March 17

10:45 am-12:15 pm

Panel 17 **Biblical Figures**, Marina Room

Chair: Alan Levenson, University of Oklahoma

Hadar Aviram, University of California Hastings College of the Law

The Exilic Triad Behind Bars: The Incarceration Experiences of Joseph, Esther, and Daniel

Roberta Sabbath: University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Finding Sarah and Hagar: Law, Anthropology, History

Panel 18 **Cinema as a Reflection of Israeli Life**, Pacific Room

Chair: Seth Ward, University of Wyoming

Shmuel Shepkaru, University of Oklahoma

Sacrifice and Sarcasm in Israeli Cinema

Elke Heckner, University of Iowa

How to Exit Invisibility: Space and Ethnicity in *Turn Left at the End of the World* (2004)

Miri Talmon, Tel Aviv University

Is this the Way We Were? Retrospective *Kibbutz* Films as Cinematic Israeli Historiography

Yvonne Kozlovsky Golan, University of Haifa

Educating the IDF's Tactical Command in Ethics and Values with Cinema and Media

12:30-2:00 pm Lunch and Roundtable Discussion, Sunset Room

Reactions to 10/7 and the Gaza War. Moderator, Laurie Baron, San Diego State University

Asa Maron, MGSDD Visiting Scholar at the University of California, San Diego

The Disillusionment Discourse in Israel following October 7th: A Few Observations

Stephen Stern, Gettysburg College

What Does Never Again Mean in Berlin After 10/7?

Shira Klein, Chapman University

Before and After October 7: The Great Split among Holocaust scholars