



ה מ ר כ ז ל א מ נ ו ת י ה ו ד י ת
THE CENTER FOR JEWISH ART
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM • האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים



Activities Report of the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem



*Torah crown, Ukraine, c. 1820.
Photo Ardon Bar Hama. Gross Family Collection.*

June 2019 – December 2021



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The report was prepared by Dr. Anna Berezin and Dr. Vladimir Levin
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Overview

This progress report covers the period of two and a half years from June 2019 to December 2021. During the last two years the world has lived in the shadow of COVID-19, learning to struggle against the virus and to exist side by side with it. The cutting edge of scientific pursuit is currently focused in this field and the humanities seem of little help. However, the only way to overcome difficult times is perseverance; the Center sticks to this idea, and is working towards its goals under the new circumstances. The Center has expanded its key project, the Index of Jewish Art, with tens of thousands of new entries, conducted scholarly research, documented Jewish material culture during field trips, shared its findings at conferences and workshops and reached out to new audiences.

In the year 2019 the Center for Jewish Art celebrated the 40th year of its existence. Mishna Avot 5:21 says “Forty [years] – for understanding” (בן ארבעים לבינה). We hope that we indeed have arrived to a better understanding of our three major goals: the first is to increase the knowledge on Jewish visual culture in its different manifestations, by conducting academic research, publications and lectures. The second is the *in situ* gathering of material by documentation of Jewish heritage, and its preliminary research. The third goal is the developing of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, which constitutes an accessible solid academic base for further research by the world-wide scholarly community, as well as a repository of records on Jewish material culture.

During the two and a half years to which this report relates, the Center for Jewish Art achieved significant success in realizing its goals:

FINISHED RESEARCH PROJECTS:

- Iconographical Indexing of the Ursula and Kurt Schubert Archives
- Slovenian Jewish Heritage
- Catalogue of Illuminated Esther Scrolls

PUBLICATION OF A NEW BOOK

NEW RESEARCH PROJECTS:

- Lower Saxony – A Jewish Topography
- Holocaust Memorial Monuments

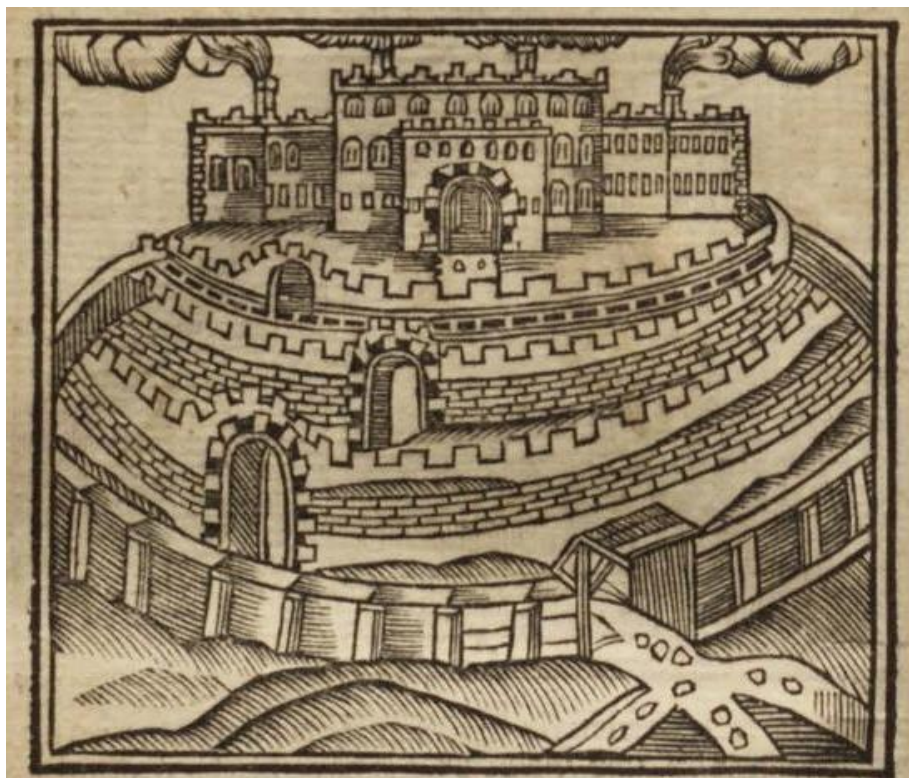
FIVE RESEARCH EXPEDITIONS

ORGANIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES



ONGOING RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION PROJECTS:

- Preparation of a book on Jewish material culture in Siberia, supported by Dr. Betsy Gidwitz
- Preparation of a book on synagogues in Latvia, supported by The Israeli Science Foundation
- “Revealed Architecture: Sacral and Secular Jewish Architecture in East Prussia” with Beit Tfila – Research Unit, supported by DFG
- Continued research on Canadian Jewish heritage, supported by the Marvin A. Drimer Foundation
- A cooperative project with the Russian State Library in Moscow on the documentation of pictorial elements in Hebrew books
- Integrating the documentation of the Gross Family Collection (Tel Aviv) in the Index of Jewish Art



*“The Temple that King Herod ordered to build” from Sefer Josippon in Yiddish (Amsterdam: Hertz Levi Rofe and Kosman, 1743), fol. 122.
Schneersohn Library, a branch of the Russian State Library at the Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center in Moscow.*

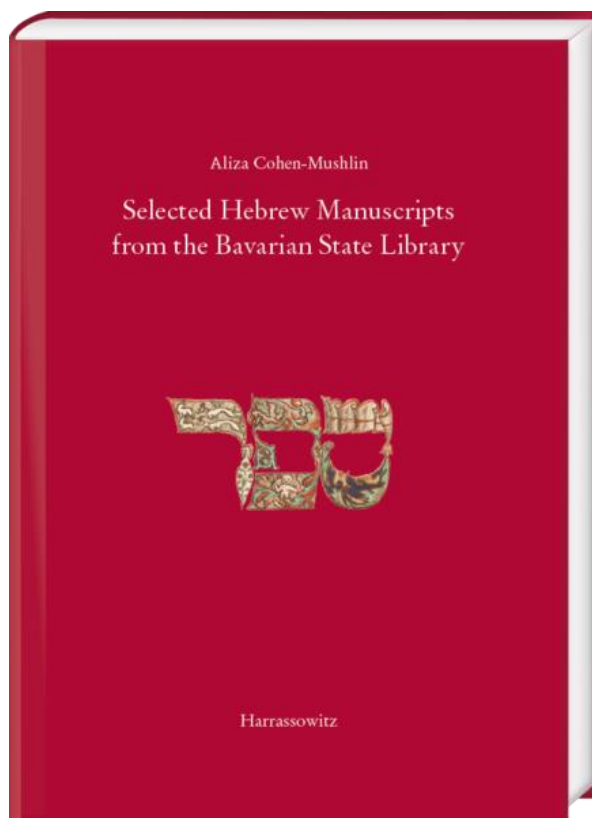


New Book: *Selected Hebrew Manuscripts from the Bavarian State Library*

Selected Hebrew Manuscripts from the Bavarian State Library
by Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, in collaboration with Yaffa Levy, Michal Sternthal, Ilona Steimann, Anna Nizza-Caplan and Estherlee Kanon-Ebner.

Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2020. XLVIII, 570 pages.

This magnificent book is the result of a large research project undertaken by Prof. Aliza Cohen-Mushlin and the Section for Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts at the Center for Jewish Art in 2008–2019. The project was supported by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation.



The Hebrew manuscripts collection in the Bavarian State Library in Munich is of utmost importance, because it unravels the intricately close associations between Jews and Christians: Jewish scribes and converts writing for Christian humanists; Christian artists painting for Jewish clients; and Jewish artists working in Christian workshops. The book deals with 84 selected Hebrew manuscripts: 30 illuminated manuscripts and 54 manuscripts of the collection which belonged to Johann Jacob Fugger, some of which are illuminated. It is not merely a catalogue, but a deep research of every manuscript, which includes extensive examination of its codicology, paleography, texts and illustrations, as well as the research on the manuscripts' history and their Jewish and Christian owners. The iconography and style of each illumination which appears in the manuscripts is scrutinized and compared to its parallels in other manuscripts, to determine place and date. In order not to make this book too voluminous, all illuminations in the manuscripts and their comparative material are available online, in the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art.



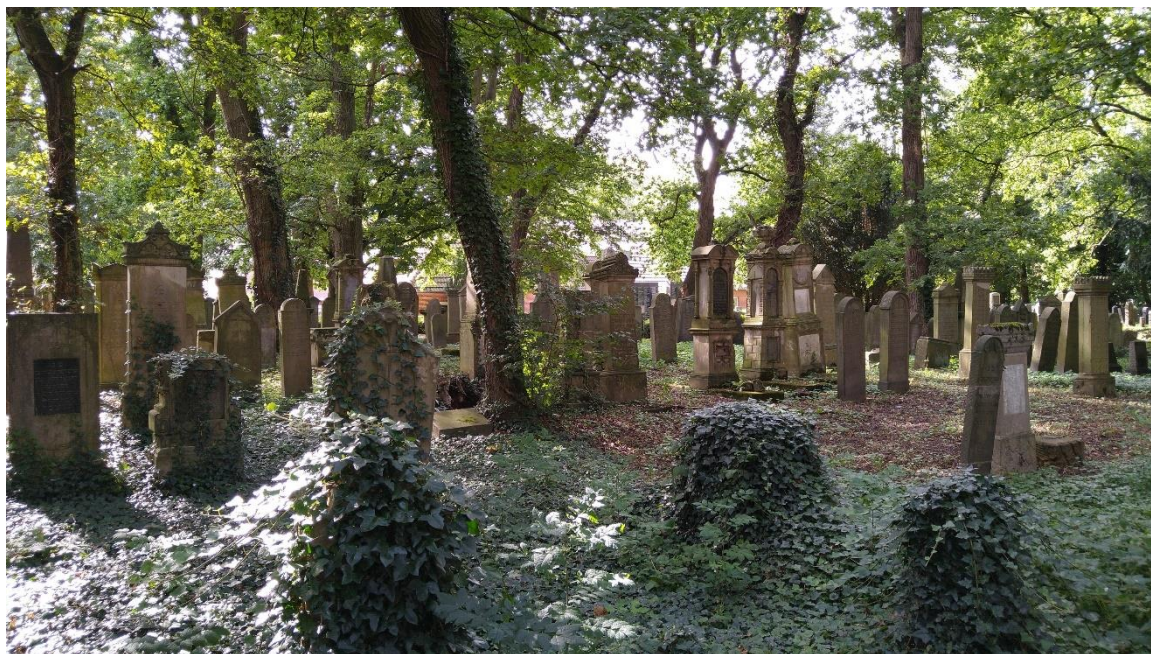
New Research Projects

Lower Saxony – A Jewish Topography

Supported by the Ministry of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony

In January 2020, the Center for Jewish Art cooperating with its long-time German partner, the Bet Tfila – Research Unit for Jewish Architecture in Europe, Technische Universität Braunschweig, and with the Lower Saxony State Office for Monument Preservation (Niedersächsisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege) started a project titled “Lower Saxony – A Jewish Topography.” The project is generously supported by the Ministry of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony.

The aim of the project is to make the sites of Jewish culture and history in Lower Saxony accessible to the public online in the atlas of monuments of the Lower Saxony State Office for Monument Preservation. The project includes mapping, research, and documentation of preserved and lost Jewish buildings and sites – synagogues, cemeteries, cemetery chapels, *mikvaot*, schools, and other communal buildings, from the beginning of the Jewish settlement in Lower Saxony in the Middle Ages to the present.



Jewish Cemetery in Emden, Lower Saxony, Germany (18th – early 20th centuries).

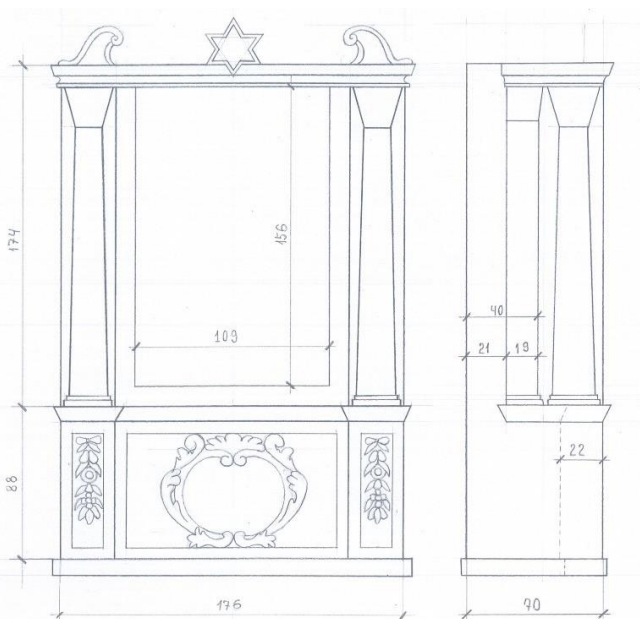
Photo by Katrin Kessler, 2021.



Holocaust Memorial Monuments

Holocaust monuments are one of the important genres of post-WWII Jewish art. The events, people, places and process of the Holocaust, or literature, films, music, art, etc., about the Holocaust have been documented, studied, archived, and taught about in many institutions. Until now, however, there has been no comprehensive and systematic effort to document and study Holocaust commemoration through memorial monuments, to collect and preserve their history, art and message, as well as use them to educate about the Holocaust.

The Holocaust Memorial Monuments Project is a joint effort of the Center for Jewish Art, the Miller Center/Feldenkreis Program at University of Miami (Dr. Haim Shaked), and the International Survey of Jewish Monuments (Dr. Samuel D. Gruber). It aims to collect and preserve documentation about Holocaust memorial monuments, including standardized mapping, photography, description, and historical research. When complete, the database will include all monuments memorializing the Holocaust in all the countries affected by the Holocaust and wherever the Holocaust is commemorated. The database – a division of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art – will create searchable and comparative records for education, public policy, and academic use.



Holocaust memorial in the Jewish cemetery of Opatija, Croatia.

The memorial was made in 1955 by Bernard Natan, the pre-WWII President of the Jewish Community, using the Torah Ark from the Prayer Hall in Opatija, which was donated by the community of Ancona in the 1920s.

Photo by Vladimir Levin, 2021.

Drawing by Ekaterina Sosensky, 2021.



Research Expeditions

Romania

Supported by The Morris and Beverly Baker Foundation

The research expedition by the Center for Jewish Art to Romania, generously supported by The Morris and Beverly Baker Foundation, was undertaken in September 2019. The expedition surveyed synagogues, Jewish cemeteries, cemetery chapels, communal buildings, and ritual objects in southern Transylvania (Sibiu, Mediaș, Arpașu de Sus, Dumbrăveni, Micăsasa, Porumbacu de Jos) and in central Wallachia (Târgoviște, Pitești, Râmnicu Vâlcea). Along with the survey of 16 Jewish cemeteries and 7 synagogues, the Center's team documented a previously unknown Hasidic synagogue in Sibiu not mentioned in any publication on Romanian synagogues.

To access the full expedition report, click [here](#).



Previously unknown Hasidic Synagogue in Sibiu, Romania (1923).

Interior view towards the east.

Photo by Vladimir Levin, 2019.



Slovenia

Supported by the Israel Ministry of Science and Technology

Three research expeditions by the Center for Jewish Art to Slovenia were undertaken in the framework of the bilateral Slovenian-Israeli research project “Digitization of the Jewish Heritage in Slovenia.” During those expeditions, the CJA researchers together with their Slovenian colleagues, especially Dr. Janez Premk, documented Jewish heritage sites in Slovenia, starting from the medieval synagogue in Maribor and ending with tombstones of the Jewish soldiers of the First World War.

The most unexpected finding of our research in Slovenia was two fragments of 14th-century Hebrew Pentateuch manuscripts and of a 17th-century Yiddish book, used as bindings for two 16th-century German books kept in the National and University Library of Slovenia in Ljubljana. Dr. Claudia Rosenzweig of Bar Ilan University succeeded to identify the Yiddish book as *Sefer brant shpigl* published by a Basel printer Conrad Waldkirch in 1602. We were glad to inform about this discovery to the researchers of the project “Books Within Books – Hebrew Fragments in European Libraries.”

All documentation materials collected and produced during the expeditions to Slovenia are available in the web portal [Slovenian Jewish Heritage](#) (on the portal, see below).



Binding of the book “Beschreibung mit was stattlichen Ceremonien...” (Dillingen: Johannes Mayer, 1587) made of a 14th-century Hebrew Ashkenazi Pentateuch manuscript and of the Yiddish book “Sefer brant shpigl” (Basel: Conrad Waldkirch, 1602).

The National and University Library of Slovenia, Ljubljana.

Photos by Vladimir Levin, 2019.



Hungary

Supported by The Keller Foundation

The research expeditions by the Center for Jewish Art to Hungary in June and October 2019 were the continuation of the expedition of 2018. All of them were generously supported by the Keller Foundation. The expeditions aimed to document synagogues built from the late eighteenth century until the Revolution of 1848, which was the formative period for the evolving synagogue architecture in Hungary. Since some pre-1848 synagogues were documented by other institutions or recently restored, the expeditions concentrated on those buildings that were not earlier researched. In addition, the expeditions surveyed synagogues erected after 1848. As a result, the Center's researchers compiled a comprehensive and up-to-date list of all preserved synagogues in modern Hungary, whether still serving Jewish communities or converted for other purposes. The 162 synagogues extant in the country constitute about a quarter of the total number of synagogues which existed before World War II.

To access the full list of preserved synagogues in Hungary, click [here](#).



*Synagogue in Nyíregyháza, Hungary (1924–32, arch. Lippòt Baumhorn).
Photo by Sergey Kravtsov, 2019.*



The Volga

Supported by Dr. Betsy Gidwitz (Chicago)

The research expedition by the Center for Jewish Art to the Volga region of Russia was undertaken in May-June 2021 and was generously supported by Dr. Betsy Gidwitz.

The main goal of the expedition was to document the preserved buildings of active and former synagogues, Jewish ritual objects in local museums and to survey Jewish cemeteries. Sixteen synagogues, four collections of ritual objects and thirteen Jewish cemeteries were documented or surveyed in the following cities: Tver, Rybinsk, Yaroslavl, Kostroma, Nizhnii Novgorod, Kazan, Ulyanovsk, Samara, Buzuluk, Syzran, Saratov, Volgograd, and Astrakhan.

To access the full expedition report, click [here](#).



*Torah Ark in the Old
Synagogue in Samara, Russia
(early 20th century).*

Photo by Anna Berezin, 2021.



Croatia

Supported by The Keller Foundation

The research expedition by the Center for Jewish Art to Croatia in July-August 2021 was done as part of the research project on Jewish heritage of historic Hungary, generously supported by the Keller Foundation. The main goal of the expedition was to survey the preserved buildings of active and former synagogues and cemetery chapels. The team also surveyed Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust monuments.

The expedition documented or surveyed the Jewish monuments and sites in the following cities: Bjelovar, Čakovec, Cernik, Đakovo, Daruvar, Dubrovnik, Karlovac, Koprivnica, Križevci, Opatija, Osijek, Rijeka, Sisak, Slatina, Slavonski Brod, Split, Varaždin, Virovitica, Vukovar, and Zagreb.

To access the full expedition report, click [here](#).



*Modernist building of the Orthodox Synagogue in Rijeka, Croatia
(1930–32, arch. V. Angyal and P. Fabbrio).*

Prayer hall with a Torah ark made in Trieste in 1797 and brought to Rijeka in 1935.

Photo by Vladimir Levin, 2021.



The Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art

The maintenance and expansion of the Index is supported by Dr. Betsy Gidwitz (Chicago)

The Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art is the core project of the Center for Jewish Art founded in 1974 by Prof. Bezalel Narkiss, and Prof. Gabrielle Sed-Rajna. The Israeli government recognized the archives of the Center for Jewish Art that comprise the core of the Index as an intangible national heritage in 2012. The Index was inaugurated in its digitized form in August 2017 with some 280,000 images. Currently, it has more than 380,000 images and this number is growing every day.

The Index of Jewish Art is not only the **world's largest repository** of documentation of Jewish visual culture. It is also an **iconographical index** that allows for the retrieval of material according to iconographical subjects and follows the development of those subjects through time and space. When the digital Index was inaugurated in 2017, the thesaurus of iconographical subjects included about 2,000 terms. Now it comprises more than 4,000 subjects and their variations. Such a significant increase is mostly the result of the creation of the Section for Printed Books in 2017. Jewish printed books depict many subjects that do not appear in medieval Hebrew manuscripts, ritual objects and synagogue wall paintings. In addition, printing houses had printer's marks, which labelled books published by each house. Now almost all known Jewish printer's marks appear in the Index and are searchable along with other Jewish iconographical subjects.

The Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art and its "old" divisions *Historic Synagogues of Europe*, *A Catalogue of Wall Paintings in Central and East European Synagogues* by Boris Khaimovich, and *Ursula and Kurt Schubert Archives* became an important tool for scholarly and lay research on Jewish visual heritage. In 2019–21, three new divisions were added: *A Catalogue of Illuminated Esther Scrolls* by Dagmara Budzioch, *Slovenian Jewish Heritage*, and *The Gross Family Collection*. Those divisions are described below. The popularity of the Index is measured not only by the number of users, but also by the number of people and institutions that virtually **"donated" their collections to the Center for Jewish Art to be included in the Index and be accessible to all online.**

In addition to the collections and documentations described in the reports for the previous years, many individuals and organizations contributed their collections to the Index in the last two and half years.



Documentation Project of Eva Maria Kraiss

Eva Maria Kraiss from Michelbach an der Bilz, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, approached the Center for Jewish Art in 2019 and offered us her photographs of Jewish monuments taken during her recent documentation trips in Germany, Poland, and Ukraine. Her photographs are an important addition to the Index since they not only capture the recent conditions of monuments that the CJA documented many years ago, but also bring to light synagogues and cemeteries that were not documented by us.



Synagogue in Pavoloch, Ukraine (c. 1900). Photo by Eva Maria Kraiss, 2019.

Eva Maria is a passionate individual who explains her drive to document Jewish material heritage:

I am not able to change the history of Germany and my people during WWII and the terrible and incredible time of National Socialism. I feel a deep shame reading history books and memories of people who survived the terror or seeing the rudiments of the wonders of Jewish culture and religion. I feel responsible for keeping the memories alive and all I can do personally is keep alive through documentation the few surviving traces in my region, as well as in Poland and Ukraine.

No synagogue, cemetery, or Jewish house remains as it was in the moment of my snapshot... Some are going to fall to ruins in only a few years, some are restored or at least kept in their original state. It makes me sad not to have the chance to see all these buildings in their former splendor! A certain consolation, if I may say so, is the reception of my exhibitions – the next will be in Frankfurt/Main in September 2022, where I can reach people... who confess that they didn't know the reality of the Shoah in Eastern Europe. Knowing my pictures are being preserved in the Center of Jewish Art is also a consolation.



Archive of Michael Greenberg

Dr. Michael Greenberg of Efrata is the founder and director of the publishing house “Gesharim” which publishes mostly academic Russian books on Jewish themes.

Dr. Greenberg shared with the Center for Jewish Art his personal archive of photographs he took in the late 1980s, while he helped to restore the graves of Hasidic leaders in Ukraine. These unique pictures give us a rare opportunity to see those graves just before their reconstructions by various Hasidic organizations in the 1990s and 2000s. The examples of the graves of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav in Uman and his main pupil, Rabbi Nathan Sternhartz of Nemirov in Bratslav, will illustrate the comparison.



*The place of the grave of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav in Uman, Ukraine.
Photo by Michael Greenberg, 1987.*



*The ohel of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav in Uman, Ukraine.
Photo by Olena Andronatiy, 2019.*



*The tombstone of Rabbi Nathan Sternhartz of Nemirov in Bratslav, Ukraine.
Photo by Michael Greenberg, 1987.*



*The ohel of Rabbi Nathan Sternhartz of Nemirov in Bratslav, Ukraine.
Photo by Eva Maria Kraiss, 2018.*



Diarna: The Geo-Museum of North African and Middle Eastern Jewish Life

Since 2010, Diarna (a Judeo-Arabic word meaning “our homes”) is documenting Jewish sites across the Middle East and North Africa. In 2020, the CJA and DIARNA exchanged their documentations of synagogues in Cairo, Egypt. Two sets of documentation done by CJA in 1984 and DIARNA in 2017 allow for a detailed comparison.



Nisim Ashkenazi Synagogue in Cairo (1894), Torah ark.
Photo by Zev Radovan, 1984.



Photo by Joshua Shamsi, 2017.



Hanan (Etz-Haim) Synagogue in Cairo (1900), Torah ark.
Photo by Zev Radovan, 1984.



Photo by Joshua Shamsi, 2017.



ESJF – European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative

The European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative was established in 2015, with the core objective of protecting and preserving Jewish cemetery sites across Europe through the accurate delineation of cemetery boundaries and the construction of cemetery walls and locking gates.

Some researchers, employed by ESJF, photographed the majority of tombstones in each cemetery they surveyed. In 2021, ESJF transferred their documentation of more than 300 cemeteries in Szabolcs–Szatmár–Bereg and Hajdú-Bihar Counties of Hungary made by Gabriella Dohi, to the Center for Jewish Art. Now this documentation is being uploaded to the Index of Jewish Art and will be available to all.

The majority of Jewish cemeteries in Hungary were established in the middle or second half of the 19th century. The tombstones in Hungary are usually very somber and almost devoid of imagery, besides a depiction of a willow, which appears on thousands of headstones of Jews and non-Jews in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Nonetheless, a careful examination allows to discover early tombstones that resemble patterns and imagery characteristic of their neighboring Galicia, from whence a large part of Hungarian Jews migrated during the 19th century.



*Tombstone of Yosef son of Mordechai
(1767?) in the Jewish cemetery of Gyüre.
Photo by Gabriella Dohi, 2021.*



*Tombstone of Moshe son of Rabbi Yitzhak
(1860s) in the Jewish cemetery of Balkány.
Photo by Gabriella Dohi, 2021.*



Archive of Dr. Samuel D. Gruber

The American art and architecture historian, Dr. Samuel D. Gruber was one of the first western scholars who arrived in Communist East Central Europe in the late 1980s and began to give attention to the issues of documentation and preservation of Jewish monuments in the area.

On behalf of the World Monuments Fund and the United States Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad, Dr. Gruber initiated and supervised numerous countrywide surveys and restoration projects. During his work, and continuing in more recent years with the International Survey of Jewish Monuments, he has collected a substantial archive of photographs and other documentation. In 2021, Dr. Gruber began to share his photo archive with the Center for Jewish Art. His photographs of Jewish monuments and sites in Bulgaria and Slovakia are already available in the Index of Jewish Art. The transferring of Dr. Gruber's photos from the Czech Republic is currently in progress. We are looking forward to more images to come.



*Zion Synagogue in Plovdiv, Bulgaria (1878).
Interior dome in the prayer hall before the restoration of 2002.
Photo by Samuel D. Gruber, 2001.*



Collection of Stuart Saffer

In 1991, Stuart Saffer became the first official representative of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to return to the USSR since 1938. He served as Country Director for Moldova and Ukraine.

In 2004, he initiated a project to document Jewish life in Moldova which covered 73 Jewish sites in the country including synagogues, Jewish houses, cemeteries, Holocaust memorials and unmarked Holocaust sites. 2,700 images taken in the framework of this project by the photographer Igor (Yigal) Tepper, as well as a detailed information about those sites, have been uploaded to the Index of Jewish Art.

Mr. Saffer lives now in Herzliya where he continues to document the revival of Jewish life in the USSR/FSU in the 1990s by collecting oral history testimonies of Jewish leaders.



*Holocaust memorial in Bălți, Moldova (c. 1996).
Photo by Yigal Tepper, 2004, from the collection of Stuart Saffer.*



Other Contributions to the Index of Jewish Art

It is impossible to mention here all the individuals and institutions that contributed information and images to the Index of Jewish Art. We are grateful to all of them! Below are listed the most significant contributions.

Prof. Ilia Rodov of Bar-Ilan University provided us with his documentation of Jewish sites in India. Almost 800 photographs were taken during Prof. Rodov's trip to India in 2018. These images demonstrate today the situation of the buildings documented by the CJA in 1995.



Kadavumbagh Mattancherry Synagogue in Kochi (Cochin), India (19th century), as it was documented by the CJA in 1995, by Ilia Rodov in 2018, and following the damage by heavy monsoon rains in 2019.

Ph. Boris Lekar, 1995.

Ph. Ilia Rodov, 2018.

Ph. Claudia Nahson, 2019.

Claudia J. Nahson, the Morris & Eva Feld Senior Curator at the Jewish Museum of New York, provided the Index of Jewish Art with her photographs of Kadavumbagh Mattancherry Synagogue in Kochi, damaged by the heavy monsoon rains of 2019.

Simon Rozas cycled from Luxemburg to Strasbourg. On his way, he took photos of synagogues that were mapped in our project *Historic Synagogues of Europe*. We are grateful to him for the photographs of fourteen synagogues in France, Germany and Luxemburg that are now included in the Index of Jewish Art.

Olena Andronatiy of Lviv, Ukraine, sent to the Center her photographs of synagogues in Uman. Her photos were taken in the framework of the preparation of a guidebook of Jewish sites in Uman, which became very popular among orthodox Jews in recent years.



Dr. Susan Nashman Fraiman from Jerusalem sent to the Center her photographs of the mediaeval synagogue in Tomar, Portugal.

Dr. Leonid Smilovitsky from Tel Aviv University shared with us his photographs of Jewish cemeteries, Holocaust monuments, synagogues, and Jewish buildings in Belarus in 2018 and continued this “tradition” by providing the Center documentations from his 2019 trip to Belarus.

Michele Migliori from Budapest (currently a doctoral student at the Bar-Ilan University) provided the Index with his recent documentation photographs of several Jewish sites in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria. These photos update the visual information gathered by the Center’s researchers. For example, the renovation of the synagogue in Berettyóújfalu, Hungary, started just a few months after it was surveyed by the CJA expedition in 2019.



Synagogue in Berettyóújfalu, Hungary (1903). View from the southwest.

Photo by Vladimir Levin, 2019.



Photo by Michele Migliori, 2020.

Raisa Burshtein of St. Petersburg shared with the Index her documentation of the Jewish cemetery in Sestroretsk – a small spa town near St. Petersburg – where a tiny Jewish community existed from the late 19th century.

Alexei Brovarnik of St. Petersburg provided the Index with photographs of the New Synagogue in Kaliningrad, opened in 2018, in place of the destroyed Great Synagogue of Königsberg.

Nebojša Kartalija, a historian from Sombor, Serbia, sent the Index of Jewish Art his recent photo documentation of the synagogue and Jewish cemetery in Sombor. Like in the cases described above, those photos provide an important update for the original Center’s documentation, performed in 2001.



Linda Altshul of Kiryat Bialik sent us her photographs of the Soviet-time synagogue in Saratov, Russia, made during her 1997 visit there as a teacher of English in the local university. Those photographs came just in time to be presented in our public lecture on Jewish heritage along the Volga River. While most of the photographs mentioned above bring up-to-date information about sites that the Center documented a long time ago, in this case, Ms. Altshul's photos provide a historic layer to our documentation done during the summer of 2021.



*Soviet-Time Synagogue in Saratov, Russia, that functioned in 1947–2010
and now serves as the museum of the Jewish community.*

Photo by Linda Altshul, 1997.

Photo by Vladimir Levin, 2021.

The YIVO Institute of Jewish Studies, New York, shared with the Index a number of photos of historic synagogues and cemeteries in Eastern Europe that are no longer preserved.

The Jewish Museum of Sweden provided the Index with photographs of the Old Synagogue in Stockholm.

Russell Harris shared with the Index his photographs of synagogues in Egypt, Poland, and England.

Monica Unikel-Fasja, the author of *Synagogues of Mexico*, sent to the Center photographs of the Nidjei Israel Synagogue in Mexico City after its recent renovation. The Nidjei Israel Synagogue was modelled in 1941 after the Great Beit Midrash in Šiauliai, Lithuania – this became known because of our publication, *Synagogues in Lithuania: A Catalogue*.

Josh Hamerman sent to the Index images of paintings and artefacts from his personal collection.



Rabbi Mordechai Reichinstein, the chief rabbi of Belarus, collects postcards depicting synagogues, cemeteries, and shtetls in Belarus as well as postcards depicting Belarusian Jews during World War I. Scans of postcards from his collection add an important aspect to the Index of Jewish Art, demonstrating scenes of Jewish life in this country.



*"Market place in Belorussia," Russian postcard, early 20th century.
Collection of Mordechai Reichinstein.*

Natalia Chizhova from St. Petersburg sent us up-to-date photographs of synagogues in Azerbaijan, which supplement the documentation done by the Center in 1994.

Ekaterina Gandrabura from Derbent, Dagestan, sent us up-to-date photographs of the synagogue in Buinaksk, part of the project "Opening the synagogue of Temir-Khan-Shura." Compared with the documentation done by the Center in 1994, they show how little the building changed in nearly 30 years.



*Synagogue of Mountain Jews in Buinaksk, Dagestan, Russia (1862).
Photo by Michael Kheifetz, 1994.*



Photo by Ekaterina Gandrabura, 2021.

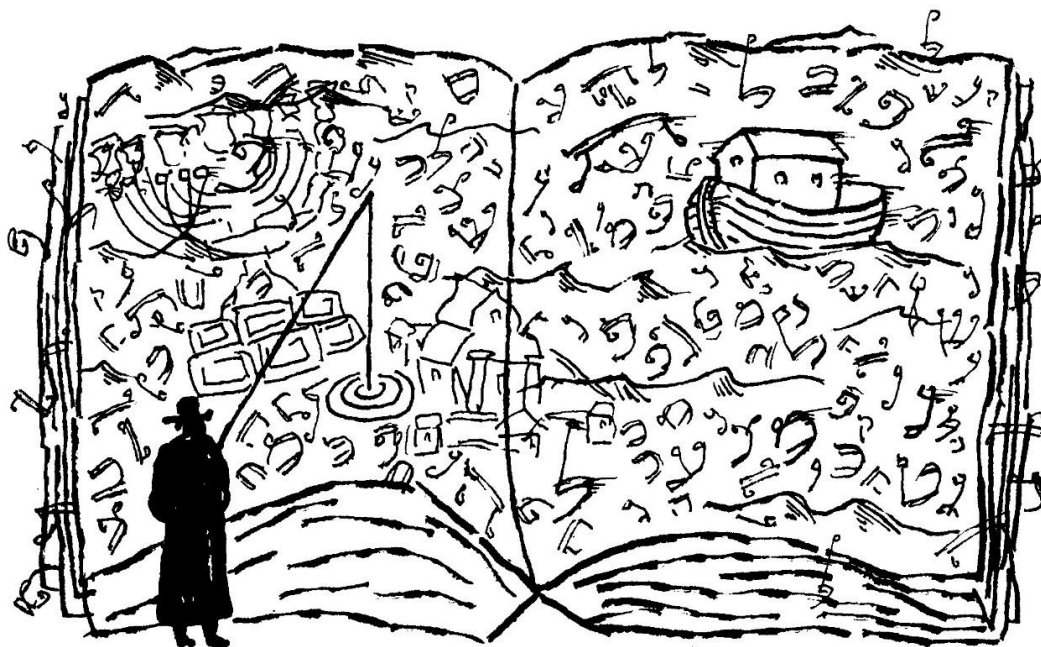


New Artists in the Section for Modern Jewish Art

Ruth Schreiber from Jerusalem is an artist working in a wide variety of media. Her works explore aspects of traditional Jewish texts, especially the Bible, in new ways, using video-art, installations, and objects. She also explores aspects of being a female in contemporary society. Twenty works by Ruth Schreiber, including photographs, are now accessible in the Index.

Andrea Strongwater of New York is an artist who recently began to address Jewish themes in her work. Her major project is re-creating in words and paintings the synagogues that no longer exist. Twelve of her works are now accessible in the Index.

Mark Podwal, a New York based artist and physician, shared with the Index fifty of his works, mostly on Jewish topics. Podwal deals with traditional Jewish subjects with a delicate sense of humor and a taste for irony. His works bring smiles to the faces of users of the Index's Thesaurus of Iconographical Subjects.



Mark Podwal, Sea of Talmud (1992).

Alec Mishory from Tel Aviv is a researcher of modern Jewish art, especially Israeli art. In contrast to other friends of the Center who provided the Index with their photographs or their artistic oeuvre, Alec Mishory provided about twenty texts on the works of several modern Jewish artists. Most of the texts concern illustrations by Joseph Budko for Ch.N. Bialik's poems.



New Divisions in the Index of Jewish Art

Gross Family Collection

The Gross Family Collection in Tel Aviv is one of the largest and most important private collections of Judaica in our time. It includes books, illuminated manuscripts, ceremonial objects, amulets, jewelry, costume, postcards, and many other materials.

William L. Gross is one of the longest standing friends and supporters of the Center for Jewish Art. He stands out in his willingness to share his objects with the public, to lend them for numerous exhibitions all over the world, and to permit the publication of their photographs.

We are extremely grateful for the opportunity to include photographs and descriptions of the objects from the Gross Collection in the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art. The division of the Index, *Gross Family Collection*, aims to present Gross' magnificent endeavor in its entirety. At the moment, we have uploaded more than 4,700 objects from his collection. Many more are coming. To access the *Gross Family Collection* division, click [here](#).



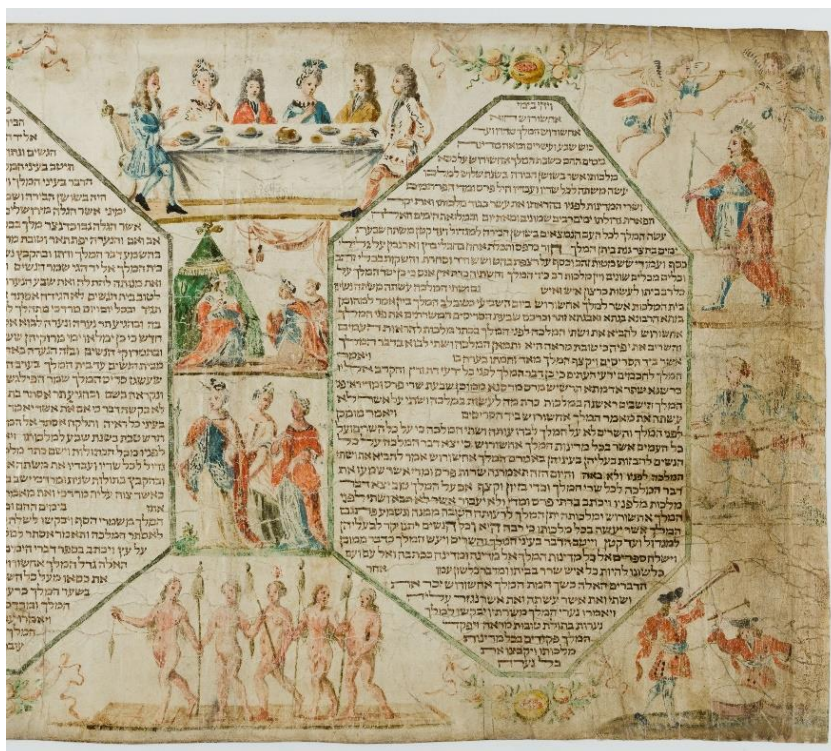
*Ken Goldman and FAO Schwarz,
Dolls of the anti-Lilithian angels Sanvi, Sansanvi and Semangelaf (2008).
Photo by Ardon Bar Hama.
Gross Family Collection.*



Catalogue of Illuminated Esther Scrolls by Dagmara Budzioch

Our digital *Catalogue of Illuminated Esther Scrolls* is the result of a two-years research project conducted by Dr. Dagmara Budzioch and other researchers of the Center. The Catalogue is a division of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art and it contains 230 Esther scrolls from 49 collections in 13 countries in a comprehensive manner, with their illuminations, descriptions and specifications. To access the *Catalogue of Illuminated Esther Scrolls*, click [here](#).

Decorated Esther scrolls seem to have started to be produced in the second half of the sixteenth century (the earliest known dated decorated scroll dates from 1564). The majority of preserved historical scrolls were made between the second half of the seventeenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. At this period, the production of illuminated Esther scrolls, which differed significantly in terms of motifs and decorative elements, layout and techniques, was at its greatest popularity among the Jews of Italy, the Netherlands, and Central Europe. This artistic tradition became popular in Jewish culture, common in both Ashkenazi and Sephardi communities throughout Europe, and continues to this day. The custom of decorating the scrolls with images was also common in North Africa, Iran, and the Middle East.



*Esther Scroll with
Octagonal Text
Panels, Alsace, first
quarter of the 18th
century.*

*Photo by Ardon Bar
Hama.*

*Gross Family
Collection.*

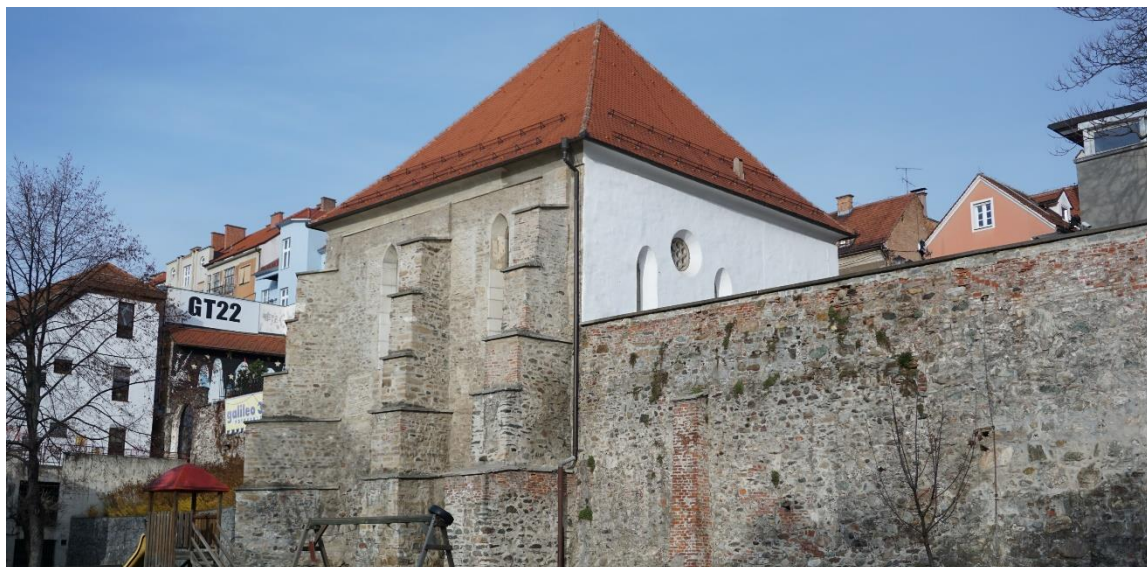


Slovenian Jewish Heritage

Web portal *Slovenian Jewish Heritage* was created in the framework of a bilateral Slovenian-Israeli research project "Digitization of the Jewish Heritage in Slovenia," conducted by the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the University of Maribor. The funding for the project was provided by the Israel Ministry of Science and Technology and the Slovenian Research Agency. To access the *Slovenian Jewish Heritage* portal, click [here](#).

The portal presents the entire multifaceted Jewish heritage of Slovenia. It includes synagogues, cemeteries, tombstones and their fragments, cemetery chapels, Holocaust memorials, medieval Jewish quarters, ritual objects, and manuscripts preserved in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia. The portal *Slovenian Jewish Heritage* is a division of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art. Integration of documentation of Slovenian Jewish heritage in the Index enables its contextualization and placement within the broader context of European and global Jewish heritage.

In addition to the creation of the web portal, the project included three expeditions to Slovenia in 2018–2019, a workshop of Israeli and Slovenian teams in Jerusalem and an international conference "Jewish Heritage of Slovenia" at the Hebrew University in September 2019. A special volume no. 27 of *Jews and Slavs* – a journal devoted to Jewish history and culture in Slavic lands – under the editorship of Dr. Sergey Kravtsov and Dr. Polonca Vodopivec is now being printed.



Synagogue in Maribor, Slovenia (13th–15th century, reconstructed in the 1990s).
Photo by Vladimir Levin, 2018.



Conferences and Workshops

Lockdowns and restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the Center's staff to go on research trips during 2020. However, it opened new opportunities for the dissemination of our knowledge and understanding to a world-wide audience. Hundreds of people took part in online events and hundreds watched them later on YouTube.

Workshop for Israeli and Slovenian teams of the project "Digitization of the Jewish Heritage in Slovenia" 16–17 September 2019

The workshop for Israeli and Slovenian teams was held in Jerusalem, before the international conference "Slovenian Jewish Heritage." The teams discussed the progress of the project, learned how questions of Jewish heritage are being dealt with in Israel, and visited the Museum of Hungarian-Speaking Jewry in Safed and the U. Nahon Museum of Italian Jewish Art in Jerusalem.

International Conference "Slovenian Jewish Heritage" 18–19 September 2019

This was our last live event before COVID-19. The conference was organized by the Center for Jewish Art, the Department of Art History in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Maribor, and the France Stele Institute of Art History at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Organizing Committee: Prof. Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, Dr. Vladimir Levin, Prof. Barbara Murovec, Dr. Janez Premk) in the framework of the bilateral Slovenian-Israeli research project "Digitization of the Jewish Heritage in Slovenia." The Ambassador of Slovenia in Israel, H.E. Andreja Purkart Martinez, the Ambassador of Israel in Slovenia, H.E. Eyal Sela, and the Dean of Humanities in HU, Prof. Michael Segal, greeted the participants – 21 scholars from Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Slovenia, and the United States of America. The conference addressed the multifaceted history and culture of Jews on the issues of today's Slovenia from an interdisciplinary and comparative perspective.

The program of the conference can be viewed [here](#). The recordings of the presented papers are available on the [YouTube channel of the Center for Jewish Art](#).



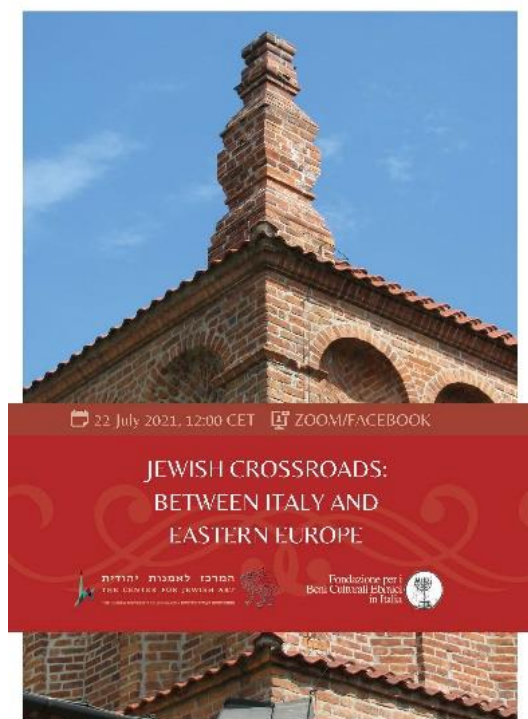
Online International Workshop “Jewish Dress in Central and Eastern Europe: Methodological Aspects” 12 October 2020

The online workshop “Jewish Dress in Central and Eastern Europe: Methodological Aspects” was organized by the Center for Jewish Art in cooperation with the Universität Greifswald (Dr. Vladimir Levin and Dr. Anna Novikov). The workshop consisted of 14 papers by scholars from Germany, Israel, Poland, and USA, dedicated to various aspects of research on Jewish dress in Early Modern and Modern periods.

For the workshop program see [here](#).



Online International Conference “Jewish Crossroads: Between Italy and Eastern Europe” 22 July 2021



The international online conference “Jewish Crossroads: Between Italy and Eastern Europe” was organized by the Center for Jewish Art in cooperation with the Foundation for Jewish Cultural Heritage in Italy (Dr. Vladimir Levin and Dr. Andrea Morpurgo). The conference included 18 papers by leading scholars from the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, the UK and the USA, devoted to migrations, economics, Halakha, architecture, sculpture, manuscripts, printed books, and other topics a propos the interconnections between Eastern European Jews and modern Italy.

For the conference program, click [here](#). For the full length recording of the conference, click [here](#).



Recipients of the Narkiss Prize

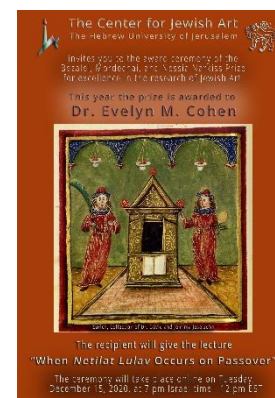
William L. Gross

The Mordechai, Bezalel and Nessia Narkiss Prize for excellence in the research of Jewish Art for 2019 was awarded to William L. Gross from Tel Aviv – one of the most important contemporary collectors of Judaica. The Gross Family Collection is more than a private collection – it is an important source for academic research for dozens, if not hundreds of scholars. In other words, the very existence of the Gross Collection is a very significant contribution to the research of Jewish art and visual culture. At the award ceremony on 25 December 2019, William Gross lectured on “Holy Secrets: Visual Image in Kabbalah.”



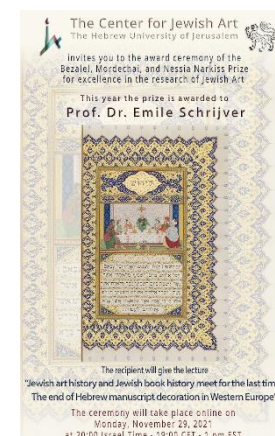
Dr. Evelyn M. Cohen

The Mordechai, Bezalel and Nessia Narkiss Prize for excellence in the research of Jewish Art for 2020 was awarded to Dr. Evelyn M. Cohen of New York. Dr. Cohen is a researcher of the art of medieval Hebrew manuscripts and author of many important scholarly works in the field. On 15 December 2020, for the first time, the Narkiss Prize ceremony was conducted online. The use of the online platform attracted a significantly wide audience from many countries, who listened to Dr. Cohen's lecture “When Netilat Lulav Occurs on Passover.”



Prof. Dr. Emile G.L. Schrijver

The Narkiss Prize for 2021 was awarded to Prof. Dr. Emile G.L. Schrijver of Amsterdam. Prof. Schrijver combines two features that are essential in modern world: he is a researcher of Jewish manuscripts and printed books and at the same time the General Director of the Jewish Cultural Quarter in Amsterdam – an institution that unites Jewish museums and sites in the city and widely promotes Jewish culture. In the online ceremony on 29 November 2021, Prof. Schrijver delivered a lecture “Jewish Art History and Jewish Book History Meet for the Last Time: The End of Hebrew Manuscript Decoration in Western Europe.”





Staff Updates

Prof. Rina Talgam

We are delighted to have Prof. Rina Talgam of the History of Art Department in the Hebrew University as the Academic Head of the Center for Jewish Art.

The research interest of Prof. Talgam, the Alice and Edward Winant Family Professor of Art History, include the art of the Middle East from the Hellenistic period to the Umayyad period, specialization in mosaic pavements, and the mutual influences between polytheism, Judaism, Samaritanism, Christianity and Islam, the emergence and sources of Umayyad art, and ancient synagogues. She authored *The Mosaics of the House of Dionysos at Sepphoris* (with Zeev Weiss, 2004), *The Stylistic Origins of Umayyad Sculpture and Architectural Decoration* (2004) and *Mosaics of Faith: Floors of Pagan, Christians, and Muslims in the Holy Land* (2014).



The connection of Rina Talgam with the Center for Jewish Art began in the 1980s, when she – as an art history and archeology student – worked at the Center and participated in several key research and documentation projects. After the retirement of Prof. Aliza Cohen-Mushlin in 2005, Prof. Talgam became the director of the Center and served in this position in 2006–2012.

Dr. Dagmara Budzioch

The Center for Jewish Art was happy to have in its staff Dr. Dagmara Budzioch, the specialist in Jewish book culture, especially Megillot Esther.

Dr. Budzioch's book, *The Decorated Esther Scrolls from the Museum of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and the Tradition of Megillot Esther Decoration in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries – An Outline*, was published in Polish in 2019 and won the Professors' Joseph Gierowski and Chone Shmeruk Award for the Best Book on the History and Culture of Polish Jewry in 2020. Dr. Budzioch was the leader and main researcher in the Center for Jewish Art project on illuminated Esther scrolls in 2019–2021 (see above).





Dr. Sergey Kravtsov

We are happy to congratulate Dr. Sergey Kravtsov on his promotion to the rank of Research Fellow.

Sergey joined the Center in 1994, immediately after his Aliyah from Lviv, Ukraine. Since then, he became one of the most prolific scholars of synagogue architecture. He authored and edited *Di Gildene Royze: The Turei Zahav Synagogue in L'viv* (2011), *Synagogues in Lithuania. A Catalogue* (with Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, Vladimir Levin, Giedrė Mickūnaitė and Jurgita Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė, 2010 – 2012), *Synagogues in Ukraine: Volhynia* (with Vladimir Levin, 2017), *In the Shadow of Empires: Synagogue Architecture in East Central Europe* (2018), *Ukrainian and Jewish Artists of Lemberg/Lwów/Lviv: From Ausgleich to the Holocaust* (with Ilia Rodov and Małgorzata Stolarska-Fronia, 2019), and *Jewish-Slavic Cultural Horizons: Essays on Jewish History and Art in Slavic Lands* (with Polonca Vodopivec, 2022, in press).



Dr. Vladimir Levin

During the winter of 2019–2020, Dr. Vladimir Levin, director of the Center for Jewish Art, was The Professor Bernard Choseed and Natalie and Mendel Racolin Memorial Fellow at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York. During his stay in the United States, Dr. Levin not only surveyed a number of synagogues in New York and its vicinities, but also established contacts with many institutions and individuals working in the field of Jewish visual culture.



Our Guests and Interns

Just before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Center for Jewish Art had the honor of organizing a guest lecture by Professor **Anna Wierzbicka** from the Department of Contemporary Art at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences. On 3 December 2021, Prof. Wierzbicka gave a talk “Jewish Artists and Art Critics from Poland Active in France in the Years 1900–1939.”

Interns

In the autumn of 2020, the Center for Jewish Art was lucky to have two interns, **Anastasia Brenina** from Kyiv, Ukraine, and **Grigorii Shevchuck** from St. Petersburg, Russia. Anastasia is an artist, while Grigorii is a young researcher interested in Samaritan studies. They came to Israel on the MASA program, which allows potential new immigrants to



*Anastasia Brenina and Grigorii Shevchuck
during a short excursion to Mount Gerizim, the sacred place of the Samaritans,
11 November 2020.*



spend a few months in Israel to experience Israeli life before making their final decision on Aliyah. Anastasia and Grigorii came to us in the harsh time of lockdowns and other restrictions. Nonetheless, we are very grateful for their help with the development of the Index of Jewish Art. Both Anastasia and Grigorii spent most of their internship working on the materials from the Gross Family Collection. We hope that they also learned a lot about Jewish visual culture.

In Autumn 2021, another MASA intern arrived to the CJA – **Claire Sigal** from Montreal. Claire recently graduated with a BA in Art History at Concordia University. She has been awarded a grant from the Museum of Jewish Montreal to give a presentation on “Jewish needlework in Montreal at the turn of the century.” Claire focuses on the overlapping of textiles and literature in different contexts. Her essays, published in *Yiara*, *CUJAH*, and other publications, are mainly on identity and needlework. She draws upon Jewish folk culture, Yiddish music, queerness, womanhood and fashion history, academically and personally. After her internship, Claire will return to Montreal for a Master’s in Library Sciences to pursue a career in Jewish Art and Literature.



In December 2021 began the internship of **Anna Zbar** from Ekaterinburg, Russia. Anna studied at the Ekaterinburg State Theater Institute and at the Faculty of Art History in the Ural Federal University in the same city. Her scientific interests in Jewish naive art led her to collaborate with the Museum of Naive Art in Ekaterinburg and to work with the artist of this style, Nalina Heifetz. In addition, Anna worked on the implementation of the children's curatorial school for the Gallery of Modern Art, Ekaterinburg, helping its participants to mount exhibitions and updating curatorial ideas. Now Anna plans to continue her scientific activity in naive Jewish art, participate in specialized conferences and museum work.





Public Lectures and Educational Seminars

“Jews in Siberia: History and Cultural Heritage”

In July 2019, Dr. Anna Berezin and Dr. Vladimir Levin took part in the summer field school “Jews in Siberia: History and Cultural Heritage,” organized by the SEFER Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization, Moscow, and the F.M. Dostoyevsky Omsk State University, Russia.

“Synagogue and the City”

In July 2019, Dr. Vladimir Levin gave a course “Synagogue and the City” at the Summer School of the SEFER Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization in Moscow.

“Eastern European Synagogues”

In July 2020, Dr. Vladimir Levin gave a course on Eastern European synagogues at the 2020 Holocaust Studies Summer Program, organized by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies, and the Shevchenko National University of Kyiv.

“Preservation and Perseverance: The Center for Jewish Art Races to Digitize Historical Jewish Life”

On 1st September 2020, Dr. Anna Berezin and Dr. Vladimir Levin gave a talk on the activities of the Center for Jewish Art in the Hebrew University’s Webinar Series. The recording of the event is available [here](#).

“Beyond Religion: Synagogues in Eastern Europe”

The three-part series of lectures by Dr. Vladimir Levin given in October 2020 at Beit Avichai – Jewish cultural hub in Jerusalem dedicated to the creation, development and expression of Jewish thought and ideas – was devoted to the history and architecture of synagogues in Eastern Europe, from the 16th and 17th centuries until the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The lectures are available here:

“A Town within a Town? Synagogue Compounds in Eastern Europe” ([video](#));

“The Architecture of Gender: Women in the Eastern European Synagogue” ([video](#));

“Reform or Consensus? Choral Synagogues in the Russian Empire” ([video](#)).

“Jews of Siberia”

Another series of three lectures at Beit Avichai in February 2021 was given by Dr. Anna Berezin and Dr. Vladimir Levin. They spoke about the history and culture of Jews in



Siberia beginning with their first settlement in the early 19th century up until Putin's Russia, with a special emphasis on synagogues, cemeteries, ritual objects, and expressions of Jewish cultural identity. The lectures are available here:

"The Land of Exile: Jews in Siberia under the Tsars" ([video](#));

"Imitating the Capitals - Synagogues in Siberia" ([video](#));

"Jewish Siberians under the Soviets and "Soviet Zion" in Birobidzhan" ([video](#)).

"Architecture of Synagogues"

In the spring semester of 2021, Dr. Sergey Kravtsov gave a course "Architecture of Synagogues" in the Art History Department of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

"Synagogues and Jewish Cemeteries in the Russian Empire"

The series at Beit Avichai in August 2021 by Dr. Anna Berezin and Dr. Vladimir Levin was dedicated to the history and architecture of synagogues and Jewish cemeteries in the Russian Empire. It demonstrates how certain patterns of Jewish material culture were transferred from an area with a long Jewish history to new regions where Jews settled in the 19th century, and how they adapted to their new environment. The lectures are available here:

"The Land of Wooden Synagogues (Lithuania)" ([video](#));

"The Choral Synagogue and Other Jewish Structures in St. Petersburg" ([video](#));

"Jewish Material Culture in the Volga Region" ([video](#)).

A Russian-language course "Jews in Siberia"

In October 2021, Dr. Anna Berezin and Dr. Vladimir Levin gave a course on the Jews of Siberia at the SEFER Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization. It dealt with the following questions: How the history of small Jewish communities living beyond the Pale of Settlement, far from traditional Jewish centers, might be interpreted in the context of general Russian Jewish history? How a Jewish community builds itself in a new place? How new Jewish communities identify themselves against the "large" Jewish world? How these communities interact with the non-Jewish majority around them? The lectures are available [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

"Lower East Side's Synagogues"

In December 2021, Dr. Vladimir Levin was a guest speaker at The New York Public Library's Doc Chat "Photographing the Rise and Fall of the Lower East Side's Synagogues," dedicated to the photo archive of Morris Huberland kept in the NYPL.



Papers by the CJA Researchers in Scholarly Conferences

Rina Talgam, *The Magdala Stone: Temple and Community in First-Century Galilee*, International conference “The First Synagogues in Galilee (1st -3rd centuries CE),” University of Lausanne, 9–10 April 2019.

Vladimir Levin, *Imperial Synagogue? Jewish Worship as Object and Subject of Policy Making in the Western Borderlands*, International conference “Making the Empire Great Again: Challenges in Modernizing the Russian Empire,” Lithuanian Institute of History in Vilnius, Lithuania, 20–21 June 2019.

Vladimir Levin, Keynote Lecture *Jews in Siberia, Siberian Jews or Jewish Siberians: Concepts and Contexts of Studying History and Culture of an Ethno-Confessional Minority*, Seminar “Jews in Siberia: History and Cultural Heritage,” Omsk State University, Russia, 1–5 July 2019.

Vladimir Levin, *Why Do Politicians Need a House of Prayer? Synagogues and Politics in Eastern Europe*, 26th International Annual Conference on Jewish Studies of SEFER, the Moscow Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization, Moscow, Russia, 14–16 July 2019.

Vladimir Levin, “Zi lign zikh ale vi perl zeshpreyt, avu s’zaynen yidn in shtot nor farzeyt”: Vilna kloyzn, *Jewish urban geography, and Zalmen Szyk’s 1000 yor Vilne*, International Research Conference “Reading Vilna in Jewish Writing and Urban History,” Vilnius University, Lithuania, 5–7 August, 2019.

Zoya Arshavsky, *The Architectural and Artistic Heritage of Bukhara Jews as Part of the Cultural and Historical Heritage of Uzbekistan*, The Third International Congress of World Scientific Society for Study, Preservation and Popularization of Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan “Uzbekistan – Crossroads of Great Roads and Civilizations: Empires, Religions, Cultures,” Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 22–27 August 2019.

Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, *The Jewish Customs and Ritual Objects of the Jews in Bukhara and Samarkand*, The Third International Congress of World Scientific Society for Study, Preservation and Popularization of Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan “Uzbekistan – Crossroads of Great Roads and Civilizations: Empires, Religions, Cultures,” Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 22–27 August 2019.



Vladimir Levin, *The Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art and the Project "Digitization of Jewish Heritage in Slovenia,"* International conference "Jewish Heritage in Slovenia," The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 18–19 September 2019.

Vladimir Levin, *Synagogues in Eastern Europe,* Second International Symposium on Religious Art and Culture, Art College of Sichuan University, Chengdu, China, 25–28 October 2019.



Vladimir Levin among the participants of the Second International Symposium on Religious Art and Culture, Art College of Sichuan University, Chengdu, China.

Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, *The Yiddish Bellifortis* (Munich, BSB Cod.hebr. 235), The Thirteenth Annual Imago Conference "Chivalry and Nobility in Medieval and Early Modern Art, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, 2 January 2020.

Vladimir Levin, *A Town Within a Town? Synagogue Compounds in Eastern Europe,* The Harry G. Friedman Society, New York, USA, 5 January 2020.

Dagmara Budzioch, *Jewish Books Written by and for Women,* The Seminar of the Research Team on the Jewish Spirituality, The Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland, 10 January 2020.



Vladimir Levin, *Russian Zionism and the Synagogue*, Zionism Then and Now: A Symposium, Department of Jewish Studies, Tulane University, New Orleans, USA, 2–3 February 2020.

Vladimir Levin, *The Search for Jewish Architecture – The Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University*, The Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies, University of Miami, USA, 5 February 2020.

Vladimir Levin, *Jewish Brick and Mortar in the Russian Capital: The Architectural Dialogue between the St. Petersburg Jewish Community and the Tsarist Metropolis*, Max Weinreich Fellowship Lecture in Eastern European Jewish Studies, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York, USA, 18 February 2020.

Rina Talgam, *From Dura Europos to Huqoq; Transitions in Jewish Art from the 3rd Century CE to the Beginning of the 5th Century*, International conference “Transformations in Stone: Archaeological Testimonies to Transitions Within and Between Religious Traditions in Antiquity,” Lund University, Sweden, 5 March 2020.

Dagmara Budzioch, *From Breslau to Wrocław: The Extraordinary History of the Leon Vita Saraval Collection*, The Seminar of the Research Team on the Jewish Spirituality, The Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland, 8 October 2020.

Vladimir Levin, *How Many Tails has the Tale of Shtrayml?* Online Workshop “Jewish Dress in Central and Eastern Europe: Methodological Aspects,” the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and University of Greifswald, Germany, 12 October 2020.

Vladimir Levin, *How Jewish Scholars Invented the Fortress Synagogue* – a lecture at the Seminar on Jewish Spirituality in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, Poland, 13 November 2020.

Vladimir Levin, *The Synagogues of Lithuania: How They Differ from Those in Other Areas of Eastern Europe*, International Online Conference “In the Radiance of the Vilna Gaon: History of Lithuanian Jewry,” POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw, Poland, 18 November 2020.

Anna Berezin, *‘Siberians of the Mosaic Faith’ and other images of Siberian Jews*, International Conference “Peoples of the Empire: Personal and Institutional History of Asiatic Borderlands of Russia,” Omsk State University, Russia, 3–6 December 2020.



Rina Talgam, *Contacts and Disputes between Jews and Christians in Galilean Synagogue Mosaics*, International online conference “Late Antique Mosaics: Current Research and Conservation Strategies in East and West of the Mediterranean,” University of Vienna, 11–12 December 2020.

Dagmara Budzioch, *Paula dei Mansi as a Medieval Jewish Scribe*, International Workshop “Jewish Craftspeople in the Middle Ages: Objects, Sources and Materials,” Tel Aviv, 1 March 2021.

Rina Talgam, *The Significance of the Placement of a Temple Model in a First Century CE Galilean Synagogue*, online workshop “Re-Imagining the Temple,” Centre for the Study of the Bible, Oxford University, 4 March 2021.

Rina Talgam, *The Stone ‘Table’ from Magdala Synagogue and Other Stone ‘Tables’ around the Sea of Galilee*, “Where Did We Arrive? One Hundred Years of Research on Ancient Synagogues in the Galilee and Golan,” online conference, Yad Ben-Zvi and Kinneret College, 10–11 March 2021.

Dagmara Budzioch, *Depictions of Queen Esther in Esther Scrolls (Megillot Esther) and Jewish Manuscripts* – lecture at the University of Warsaw, Poland, 13 April 2021.

Sergey Kravtsov, *Domed Four-Pier Synagogues in Ruthenia, Podolia, and Volhynia*, Online Symposium on Swedish Synagogue Architecture (1795–1870) and the Cultural Milieu of the Early Jewish Immigrants to Sweden, Centre for Theology and Religious Studies at Lund University, Sweden, 19 April 2021.

Vladimir Levin, *How to Build a Synagogue in a European City: The Case of St. Petersburg*, Online Symposium on Swedish Synagogue Architecture (1795–1870) and the Cultural Milieu of the Early Jewish Immigrants to Sweden, Centre for Theology and Religious Studies at Lund University, Sweden, 19 April 2021.

Dagmara Budzioch, *Selected Issues of Decorated Esther Scrolls Production in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Amsterdam*, The Thirteenth Contact Day Jewish Studies on the Low Countries, University of Antwerp, The Netherlands, 20 May 2021.

Anna Berezin, *Siberian Myth in the Russian-Jewish History*, Online Conference “Jewish Immigration in Myth and Reality,” Missouri State University, Springfield, USA, and Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland, 21–25 June 2021.



Vladimir Levin, *Synagogues in Belarus: Representation, Coexistence, Preservation*, First International Conference “The History, Culture, and Heritage of Jews in Belarus Across the Age,” University of Southampton, UK, and Belarusian-Jewish Cultural Heritage Center, Minsk, Belarus, 28–30 June 2021.

Dagmara Budzioch, together with Sharon Liberman Mintz, *From Polin Katan to Italy: Aryeh Leib ben Daniel of Goray – A Wandering Jewish Scribe of the 18th Century*, Online conference “Jewish Crossroads: Between Italy and Eastern Europe,” the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 22 July 2021.

Zoya Arshavsky, *The Turkestan Period in the Architecture of Bukhara Jews*, The Fifth International Congress “Cultural Legacy of Uzbekistan – the Foundation of a New Renaissance,” Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 13–17 September 2021.

Sergey Kravtsov, *The Temple Iconography in the Modern Time Synagogue Architecture*, “What’s New, What’s Next?” International Online Conference, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw, Poland, 3–7 October 2021.

Vladimir Levin, *Synagogues in 19th-Century Eastern Europe and What May Be Learned from Them*, What’s New, What’s Next? International Online Conference, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw, Poland, 3–7 October 2021.

Vladimir Levin, *Attitudes to Jewish Heritage as a Sign of European Liberalism in Post-Soviet Space*, Offline Seminar “Freedom and Unfreedom in Critical Times: Liberalism and Illiberalism in Central, Eastern and Baltic Europe,” University of Tartu, Estonia, 14–15 October 2021.

Dagmara Budzioch, *The Art of Oriental Esther Scrolls - Hebrew Manuscripts Between Jewish and Muslim Worlds*, Columbia University Seminar on Religion and Writing, New York, USA, 8 November 2021.



Recent Publications by the CJA Researchers

After many years, the Center for Jewish Art returned to publishing in Hebrew. Issue 272 of the magazine *Et-Mol*, published by Yad Ben Zvi in May 2021, was entirely dedicated to the research conducted at the Center for Jewish Art. All the articles in this issue were contributed by the current and former researchers of the CJA. They include the introduction by Prof. Ilya Rodov of Bar-Ilan University, "The Index in the Center: Knowledge and Information about Jewish Art," the article "The Shaar Hashamayim Synagogue in Cairo: Its Visual Sources and Its Influence in the World" by Dr. Sergey Kravtsov; "Bukharan Jews Between Islam and Russia: The Development of Synagogues in Uzbekistan" by Arch. Zoya Arshavsky, Dr. Ruth Jacoby and Dr. Vladimir Levin; "Unicorn, Elephant and Dragon in Jewish Cemeteries: Visual Representation of Names in European Jewish Tombstones" by Dr. Boris Khaimovich; "Decoration of Books in the Muslim Surrounding: Jewish Printing Houses and the Practices of Decoration in the Ottoman Empire" by Ekaterina Oleshkevich; "Between Two Worlds: Illuminated Esther Scrolls" by Dr. Dagmara Budzioch; "On Women and Gender in Contemporary Jewish Art of the Bezalel School" by Dr. Ido Noy.



Dagmara Budzioch, *The Decorated Esther Scrolls from the Museum of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and the Tradition of Megillot Esther Decoration in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries – An Outline* (Warsaw: Jewish Historical Institute, 2019) (in Polish).

Ruth Jacoby and Zoya Arshavsky, "Synagogues in the City of Bukhara," *AB" A – Journal for Research and Study of the Jews of Iran, Bukhara and Afghanistan* 11 (2019): 67–83 (in Hebrew).

Katrin Kessler and Vladimir Levin, "The Kiryati House and its Architect Shmuel Mestechkin" in: Regina Stephan (ed.), *More than Bauhaus: The Architecture of the White City Tel Aviv* (Baunach: Spurbuchverlag, 2019), 79–85.



Sergey Kravtsov, "Synagogue Architecture of Latvia between Archeology and Eschatology," *Arts* 2019, 8(3), 99.

Sergey Kravtsov, "Rescue the Great Synagogue in Brody," *Sztuka i krytyka / Art and Criticism* 10 (2019): 24–31 (in Polish).

Vladimir Levin, "Material Culture" in: Marcin Wodziński (ed.), *Studying Hasidism: Sources, Methods, Perspectives* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2019), 231–267.

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