





# MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

09.00/09.30

*Registration*

09.30/10.00

*Opening Notes*

Vice Rector Peter Riedler

Dean of Studies of the Faculty of Humanities Margit Reitbauer

Heads of the Institutes of Slavic Studies and Jewish Studies, Organizers

10.00/11.30

## I IMPERIAL EXPERIENCES, ENTANGLEMENTS AND ENCOUNTERS

### KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURE THROUGH HISTORY

**Chair: Mirjam Rajner**

KARKASON, TAMIR The “Entangled Histories” of the Jewish Enlightenment in Ottoman Southeastern Europe

ŠMID, KATJA Amarachi’s and Sasson’s Musar Ladino Work *Sefer Darkhe ha-Adam*. Between Reality and Intertextuality

KEREM, YITZCHAK Albertos Nar, from Historian to Author and Ethnographer. Crossing from Salonikan Sephardic Historian to Greek Prose, Fiction, Social Commentary and Tracing Greek Influences on Salonikan and Izmir Sephardic Culture

11.30/12.00

*Break*

12.00/13.00

### PERCEIVING THE SELF AND THE OTHER

**Chair: Željka Oparnica**

GRAZI, ALESSANDRO On the Road to Emancipation. Isacco Samuele Reggio’s Jewish and Italian Identity in 19th-century Gorizia

MILOVANOVIĆ, STEVAN The Images of Sephardim in the Travel Book *Oriente* by Vicente Blasco Ibáñez

13.00/15.00

*Lunch*

15.00/16.30

### POSTIMPERIAL EXPERIENCES

**Chair: Sonja Koroliov**

OSTAJMER, BRANKO Mavro Špicer (1862—1936) and His Views on the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy

JURLINA, PETRA Small Town Elegy: Shaping and Guarding Memory in Rural Croatia. The Case of Vinica, Lepavina and Slatinski Drenovac

SELVELLI, GIUSTINA The Multicultural Cities of Plovdiv and Ruse Through the Eyes of Elias Canetti and Angel Wagenstein. Two “Post-Ottoman” Jewish Writers

16.30/17.00

*Break*

17.00/18.00

## II CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN MODERNITY

### THE SCOPE OF LANGUAGE USE

**Chair: Jasmina Huber**

DOBREVA, ISKRA Multilingual Skills of Sephardic Jews based on the Sephardic Fiction from 1900 to the 1920s

PAPÓ, ELIEZER Bosnian Sephardim and Their Attitudes Toward the Internal and External Other

19.00/20.30

**PUBLIC READING: ADRIANA ALTARAS @ LITERATURHAUS GRAZ (ELISABETHSTRASSE 30)**

# TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

09.00/10.30

## CIRCLES, CENTERS AND JOURNALS

**Chair: Ljiljana Dobrovšak**  
ŠABOTIĆ, DAMIR

The Role and Impact of the Journals *Židovska svijest* and *Jevrejski život* for the Jewish Cultural and National Identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina Between the Two World Wars

GARGOVA, FANI

Marcus Ehrenpreis and the Literary Circle "Misal". Or, a Rabbi and Two Bulgarian Poets Translate *Also sprach Zarathustra*

KEREN-KRATZ, MENACHEM  
*Break*

The Literary Circle in Maramures, Romania. Between Tradition and Modernity

10.30/11.00

11.00/12.30

## ISAK SAMOKOVLIIJA

**Chair: Miranda Levanat**

KUJUNDŽIĆ, FAHRUDIN

Isak Samokovlija Between Prose and Drama. *Hanka* and *The Blond Jewess*. Problems of Dramatization

FINKELSTEIN, MIRIAM

Messianism in Isak Samokovlija's Prose

OPARNICA, ŽELJKA

Boundaries of Community. The Sephardic World(s) of Jacques Konfino and Isak Samokovlija

12.30/14.00

*Lunch*

14.00/15.30

## THE VARIETY OF LITERARY PRODUCTION I

**Chair: Olaf Terpitz**

KACPRZAK, MARTA

*Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*. Sephardic Adaptations of Western Novels

BUZDUGAN, ALICE

Aspects of the Fairy-Tale Research of the Pioneering Cultural Historians from 19th-century Romania,

Moses Gaster and Lazăr Șăineanu

VIDAKOVIĆ-PETROV, KRINKA

Jewish Children's Literature in Yugoslavia Prior to the Holocaust

15.30/15.45

*Break*

15.45/16.45

## THE VARIETY OF LITERARY PRODUCTION II

**Chair: Eva Kowollik**

HANSEN-KOKORUŠ, RENATE

Jewish Life Perspectives from a Non-Jewish Writer's View (Ivo Andrić)

PETZER, TATJANA

Rhythms of Creation. Approaching Stanislav Vinaver's Modernism

16.45/17.15

*Break*

17.15/18.45

## CULTURAL AND LITERARY PRODUCTION OF WOMEN

**Chair: Giustina Selvelli**

TACZYŃSKA, KATARZYNA /

The Gender of Knowledge Transfer. Balkan Jewish Women Living in Exile Cases

TWARDOWSKA, ALEKSANDRA

KOVAČEVIĆ, NELA

The Emancipation of the Sephardic Woman in the Literary Work of Laura Papo Bohoreta

SIMIĆ, DIJANA

On Questions of Jewishness and Womanhood in the Yugoslav Context. An Intersectional Approach to

Judita Šalgo's Early Prose Texts

19.00

20.00

## SCREENING OF AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID KAMHI ON SEPHARDIC MUSIC AND CULTURE

*Conference Dinner*

# WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

08.30/10.00

## ARTS AND THEIR SOCIETAL POTENTIAL

**Chair: Eliezer Papo**

- HUBER, JASMINA *Omanut—Monthly for the Promotion of Jewish Culture as an Instrument of Educational Work in the Musical, Artistic, Literary and Theatrical Field*
- RAJNER, MIRJAM Sarajevo's Forgotten Avant-Garde. The "Collegium Artisticum" and Jewish Creativity on the Eve of World War II
- WILHELM, MIRJAM On Vjera Biller, or: The (Im-)Possibilities of Being a Jewish Paintress. Female Artisanhip within the 21st-century Interwar Avant-Gardes

10.00/10.15

*Break*

## III SHOAH

10.15/11.45

### MEMOIRS "REVISITED"

**Chair: Olaf Terpitz**

- ALEKSOV, BOJAN *Memoirs of the Jewish Refugees in the Balkans*
- DOBROVŠAK, LJILJANA *Branko Polić's Memoir Records*
- RAHMANI, KUJTIM *Historical-Fictional Faces of a Paradox. The Memoirs of a Jew*

11.45/12.45

## REMEMBERING AND PUBLIC SPACE

**Chair: Mirjam Wilhelm**

- UNGAR, OLGA *Remembering the Victims of the Holocaust. Monuments in Jewish Cemeteries and Public Spaces*
- KLEIN, RUDOLF *Metropolitan Jewish Cemeteries of the Balkans. Art, Morphology and Trajectories of Influence*

12.45/14.00

*Lunch*

14.00/15.30

## CONTEMPORARY HOLOCAUST NOVELS

**Chair: Krinka Vidaković Petrov**

- CZERWIŃSKI, MACIEJ *The Question of Guilt in the Novel of Miljenko Jergović *Ruta Tannenbaum**
- KRUG, REBECCA *Just a Small Cog in the Wheel? Imagined Identities and the "Banality of Evil" in David Albahari's *Gec i Majer**
- LEVANAT-PERIČIĆ, MIRANDA *(Re)Writing the Holocaust in Aharon Appelfeld's and Daša Drndić's Novels. Lost and Found Languages*

15.30/15.45

*Break*

15.45/16.45

## ENCOUNTERS THROUGH INTERMEDIALITY

**Chair: Renate Hansen-Kokoruš**

- GIERGIEL, SABINA *Additional Testimony. Photographs in the Prose of Daša Drndić and Aleksandar Hemon*
- KOWOLLIK, EVA *Hidden Jewish Identity from an Intermedial Perspective. Strategies of Postmemory in Filip David's Novel *Kuća sećanja i zaborava* and Goran Paskaljević's Film *Kad svane dan**

16.45/17.00

*Break*

17.00/19.00

## IV CONTEMPORARY POSITIONS

**Chair: Tatjana Petzer**

DANON, DONA      Adaptation of Two Generations of Zagreb Jews to Post-Socialism and the New Croatian Nation-State

HOFMANN, BETTINA      George H. W. Bush Sr. in Babi Yar. Aleksandar Hemon on History and Immigration

LAZIČIĆ, GORAN      Kabbalah Revisited in Milošević's Serbia. The Case of the Novel *Leeches* by David Albahari

KOROLIOV, SONJA      Multidirectional Irony. Time, Space and Humour in Angel Wagenstein's Novels *Isaac's Torah* and *Farewell, Shanghai*

19.00

*Concluding Remarks*

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**CONFERENCE**  
**“JEWISH LITERATURES AND CULTURES**  
**IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE.**  
**EXPERIENCES, POSITIONS, MEMORY“**  
**UNIVERSITY OF GRAZ,**  
**16—18 SEPTEMBER 2019**

The regions of Southeastern Europe are characterized in historical as well as in contemporary perspective by a high degree of ethnical, religious, lingual and cultural diversity and heterogeneity. Belonging to the Ottoman Empire or Austria-Hungary, forming supranational nation states such as Yugoslavia, or arising as nation states such as Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, but also Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and (European) Turkey they were framed in different legal, referential and ideological settings, providing spaces for various encounters, entanglements and conflicts. Jews, be they Sephardim, Ashkenazim or Romaniots, settling there in different periods, experienced divergent life worlds (Lebenswelten) engendering over the centuries a rich cultural production. The language they chose depended on their respective cultural and political position—be it Hebrew, Ladino, a Slavic language such as Croatian, Bosnian or Serbian, Turkish, Greek or Italian.

Scholarly interest in those regions has grown impressively in the last years, however, predominantly in the realms of historiography. Literature and cultural production in general are still an under-researched area today demanding attention.

Concentrating on the 19th century until today, i.e. on the shifts from imperial to national setting/s, the conference aims at addressing, highlighting and analyzing the following topics:

- » How did Jewish writers position themselves in the multicultural and multilingual setting of the literary field? In which ways did/do they reflect on identification processes (Jewish—Jewish, Jewish—Muslim, Jewish—Christian)?
- » In what ways did/do they reflect on those experiences in religiously informed literary genres (e.g. Musar literature)?
- » Which topics did/do they raise and how (e.g. segregation/integration; empire/nation; relation between Jewish and Christian and Muslim groups; Shoah; World Wars I and II; migration; Yugoslav wars of the 1990s)?
- » Which processes of entanglement and encounter took/take place (e.g. choice of genre; topics; translation) since enlightenment?
- » How did/do writers define their relationship to and their understanding of Europe and the European?
- » Which processes accompanied the transition from pre-modern times to modernity and postmodernity (self-perception;

- language choice—e.g. from Ladino to Serbian, from Serbo-Croatian to German; translation practices)?
- » Which experiences were/are elaborated in literature, e.g. shared experiences vs. differing experiences (e.g. alienation; belonging; situativity of belonging and multiple attachments; similarity vs. difference; perceptions and attributions; gender constructions; ambivalences; ambiguities; contiguities; the role of cultural heritage in transnational and trans-lingual perspective)?
  - » Which preferences in genre choice were/are displayed (e.g. novel; biography; autobiography) and why?
  - » How did/do literary processes (avant-garde; modernism; postmodernism) reflect in Jewish literatures?
  - » What impact had/have conceptions of memory and post-memory (Marianne Hirsch) on Jewish literatures in Southeastern Europe?
  - » To what extent and in which ways did/do translation activities enhance the visibility of these literatures and create/d an awareness among the readership of world literature?
- » What were/are the positions and dispositions of non-Jewish writers such as Miljenko Jergović or Aleksandar Hemon writing about Jewish conditions (compared e.g. to the 19th-century Polish writer Eliza Orzeszkowa)?
  - » To what extent and in which ways can Jewish experiences in Southeastern Europe be compared to other multiethnic regions such as the Russian Empire and the Habsburg Empire?
  - » What were/are the relationships between Southeastern and Eastern European Jewish writers?

# The Organizers

**Renate Hansen-Kokoruš** is a professor of Slavic literatures and cultures at the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Graz in Austria. She studied at the University of Mannheim, the University of Sarajevo and the State University of Moscow and completed her PhD and post-doctoral degrees in Slavic Studies at the University of Mannheim. She worked for the German department at the University of Sarajevo and the Slavic department in Mannheim. As a visiting professor, she has taught at universities such as the Humboldt University in Berlin, the University of Waterloo in Canada, the University of Zadar in Croatia, the State University of Tomsk in Russia, the University of Frankfurt/M. in Germany as well as the University of Innsbruck in Austria. She was head of the Department of Slavic Studies in Graz and is co-editor of the journal *Anzeiger für Slavische Philologie*.

**Olaf Terpitz** is deputy head of the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Graz. He studied at the University of Leipzig, the RSUH Moscow and the University of Haifa. He completed his PhD at the University of Leipzig and his habilitation at the University of Vienna. His research interests encompass European Jewish literatures, processes of encounter and translation. He is co-editor of the book series of the Graz Center for Jewish Studies (*Schriften des Centrums für Jüdische Studien*) and the series *Wiener Galizien-Studien*.

**Tamir Karkason** studies the history of Mediterranean Jewry, focusing on issues of enlightenment, 'haskalah' and nationalism. After completing his doctoral thesis (The Hebrew University, 2018), he is now working on the manuscript of his first book, *Home and Away: The Ottoman-Jewish Enlightenment in the Nineteenth Century*. He was an Olamot Center Visiting Fellow at the „Borns Jewish Studies Program“, Indiana University (2018–2019). Currently he is a postdoctoral fellow in the ERC Project “Jewish Translation and Cultural Transfer in Early Modern Europe” at the Department of Jewish History, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Within the framework of this project, he studies non-Jewish books that were translated into Ladino between the 17th and early 19th centuries.

**Tamir Karkason**

## **The “Entangled Histories” of the Jewish Enlightenment in Ottoman Southeastern Europe**

The concept and methodology of “entangled histories” emerged about a generation ago in historiography, bringing with it a change in the techniques used to explore the subjects of historical research that interface with diverse historical contexts. This methodology emphasizes the need to be alert to the specific historical contexts in which terms evolve, rather than assuming that these are “natural”. It also highlights the awareness that the subjects of a comparative study undergo mutual changes through contact, even if their relations are asymmetric.

A circle of 90 maskilim (Jewish enlighteners) were active in Western Anatolia and Southeastern Europe; they wrote primarily in Hebrew and Judeo-Spanish. In this paper, I will seek to apply the methodology of “entangled histories” to the subject of Jewish Enlightenment in Southeastern Europe.

The maskil Judah Nehama of Salonica (1825–1899) maintained extensive contacts with European peers. We are in possession of 140 letters exchanged by Nehama between 1850 and 1890 with correspondents from Austria-Hungary, as compared to just eight letters with contacts from the Russian Empire. The situation regarding other maskilim is essentially similar. Why did Austria-Hungary assume this dominant role in the networks of Ottoman-Jewish maskilim? This pattern may be attributed to the geographical

proximity of the empire to the Ottoman Balkans. However, in order to give a broader picture, I will sketch the historical background that fostered the development of the contacts between the Ottoman Nehama and his Austro-Hungarian peers. I will devote a brief discussion to other historical points of contact between these two empires and their Jewish populations. For example, certain social and ideological similarities can be observed between maskilim in both empires; in both cases, the maskilim tended to be moderate, religiously observant with a strong Jewish education and autodidacts.

This approach of integrating various new historiographic finds with the “entangled histories” method has never previously been applied to the study of Sephardic Jewry. Accordingly, the paper seeks to contribute to the historiography both of the *haskalah* and of Ottoman Southeastern Europe.

**Katja Šmid** is a distinguished researcher at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) in Madrid, Spain. She received her PhD in Linguistics from the University of Ljubljana in 2010. She has been a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Salamanca, a Marie Curie fellow at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a Research and teaching fellow at the University Complutense of Madrid where she has taught Ladino literature. Her field of expertise is Judeo-Spanish language and literature, with a focus on rabbinical literature and Sephardic women in the Balkans. In addition to her numerous articles on these subjects, Katja Šmid has published in 2012 a scientific edition of Eliezer Papo's Judeo-Spanish 19th-century rabbinical treatise, *Sefer Meshek beti*, focusing on the habits and customs relating to the Sabbath practiced among the Sephardic Jews of Bosnia.

**Katja Šmid**

## **Amarachi's and Sasson's Musar Ladino Work *Sefer Darkhe ha-Adam. Between Reality and Intertextuality***

Yitzhak Bekhor Amarachi's rich literary legacy consists of Ladino translations of some classical Hebrew narratives, two works on geography and three biographies, of Moses Montefiore, the family Rothschild and Napoleon III, written in Hebrew by Abraham Menahem Mendel Mohr. Yosef ben Meir Sasson is the author of *Sefer Zoveah Todah* (Belgrade, 1860), a guide of Jewish laws for animal ritual slaughtering in Judeo-Spanish. Together, Amarachi and Sasson composed the two Ladino moralistic works *Sefer Darkhe ha-Adam* and *Sefer Musar Haskel* (Salonika, 1843, 1849 and 1892).

The aim of this paper is to examine *Darkhe ha-Adam*, an original Ladino book of moralistic, scientific and historical content and entertaining purposes, inspired by three Hebrew works, *Sefer ha-Berit* by Pinhas Hurwitz (Brno, 1797), *Seder ha-Dorot* by Yehiel Heilprin (Karlsruhe, 1768) and *Ševet Yehudah* by Šelomo Ibn Verga (Adrianople, 1550).

As pointed out by Lehmann (2005: 189–192), Amarachi and Sasson introduced, probably for the first time, secular scientific knowledge and historiographic topics taken from general, non-Jewish history, to Jewish literature and incorporated them into the musar

Ladino literature, an important novelty in the Judeo-Spanish rabbinic literature in the mid-19th century. The aim of this paper is to study how the authors relate to the relevant historical events from the Sephardic past through the references of Jewish and non-Jewish sources in *Darkhe ha-Adam* and how their works, in general, respond to the historical and socio-political setting of their time.

**Yitzchak Kerem** is a historian of Sephardic Jewry. Researcher at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, past lecturer of Sephardic Studies for the Makor M.A. program, The Hebrew University and The Sephardic Educational Center of Jerusalem, founder and former director of the Institute for Hellenic-Judeo Studies, University of Denver. Editor of the monthly academic e-mail publication *Sefarad vahaMizrah* since 1992, founder and CEO of the “Foundation for Jewish Diversity”, Los Angeles and “The Heritage House for the Sephardic and Eastern Jewish Communities”, Jerusalem, Former academic affiliations at Aristotelian University, Thessaloniki, The American Jewish University of Los Angeles, as well as past undergraduate and graduate studies at Macalester College, St. Paul, MN, The Hebrew University, University of Oslo and the Aristotelian University. He is an expert on Sephardic Jewry in the Holocaust and Sephardic and Eastern Jewish genealogy. Co-author of *Pinkas Kehilot Yavan* (Yad Vashem), *The Guidebook for the Research of Sephardic and Eastern Jewry in Israel* (Avotaynu, 2006) and past section editor of the *New Encyclopedia Judaica*, *The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* and *Chronology of World Slavery* (ABC-CLIO).



**Yitzchak Kerem**

## **Albertos Nar, From Historian to Author and Ethnographer. Crossing from Salonikan Sephardic Historian to Greek Prose, Fiction, Social Commentary and Tracing Greek Influences on Salonikan and Izmir Sephardic Culture**

Albertos Nar was a Salonikan Jewish historian of his community in the first half of the 20th century and during the Holocaust. Toward the end of his life, he became an author of Greek prose, fiction and social commentary. He also became an ethnographer, highlighting Greek cultural influences on Jewish culture in Ottoman Salonika and Izmir. He left his Jewish Sephardic environment and located and detected Greek influences not only locally in Thessaloniki, but also across the Aegean and in foreign and rivalling Turkey in Izmir, thought previously not only to be alien, but similarly an insular Sephardic Jewish enclave. Through his exposure to contemporary Greek culture, Nar broke down borders and cultural barriers through his literary writing.

In 1997, Nar published a book of short stories in Greek entitled *Σε αναζήτηση ύφους. Διηγήματα* (In search of style. Short stories). He relived the lives of Salonikan Jews in the interwar period through the poor in the bedlam of the old train station and the Modiano market, or in the petit-bourgeoise neighborhood of Via Egnatia, or in his post World War II era through his sporting activities in basketball and soccer, or the cafés of the Upper Town which he called “our Manhattan”. He depicted the White Tower

and the gates of the old wall as secret hiding places and recalled Asia Minor Greek-Orthodox refugees and local Jewish Sephardic women like Stella Hezkel and Rose Ashkenazi singing Rembetika music in Vardar tavernas in the 1930s. He also included stories that draw on his growing up and playing billiards and cards, roaming through the fruit market Lemonadika, his father’s store, or going to school.

In his book on synagogues and songs of Salonikan Jewry, he presented Judeo-Spanish ballads and translated them to Greek; unravelling not only the medieval Jewish Spanish culture, but showing their Ottoman Turkish, Greek, French and Italian elements.

In *Keimeni epi aktis Thalassis* (1997), Nar showed how the Greek author Georgos Ioannou lamented the absence of its large Jewish community of Thessaloniki, annihilated in the Holocaust and recalled previous Jewish-Greek (Orthodox) interaction in daily life.

**Alessandro Grazi** is a research associate in the Department of History of Religion of the Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz, where he is carrying out a digital humanities research project on 19th-century Jewish Italian prayer books, titled *Minhag Italia*. Previously, he has been a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Jewish Studies of the University of Amsterdam. He has taught Italian Language and Culture at the Center for Foreign Languages of the University of Giessen. Grazi holds a PhD in the Humanities from the University of Groningen with a dissertation titled *Patria ed Affetti. Jewish Identity and Risorgimento Nationalism in the Oeuvres of Samuel Luzzatto, Isaac Reggìo and David Levi*. He has earned a Research Master in Literary Studies (highest honors) at the University of Amsterdam and a Laurea (highest honors) at the University of Bologna, specializing in Hebrew codicology and paleography. He is co-editor of the book *Believers in the Nation—European religious minorities in the age of nationalism (1815–1914)* (2017).

**Alessandro Grazi**

## **On the Road to Emancipation. Isacco Samuele Reggio's Jewish and Italian Identity in 19th-century Gorizia**

Traditionally, the Italian Jews living and working in the Italian portion of the Habsburg Empire have been considered less enthusiastic about emancipation and in their relation to Italian nationalism and identity. This is also because the famous “Toleranzpatent” issued by Joseph II in 1781 improved the conditions of the Jewish communities residing there, especially if compared with other regions of the Italian peninsula. This created a socio-cultural environment, at least for the economic and cultural elites that favored a shift in their priorities away from emancipation and towards a deeper re-assessment of Judaism and Jewish identity in the light of modernity.

However, this paper argues that the attachment of Habsburg Italy's Jews to Italian identity and nationalism was actually relevant and has been underestimated by past scholarship, which did not sufficiently take into consideration the socio-political environment, in which they were active. Furthermore, considering Habsburg Italy as one monolithic entity does not take into account the clear differences between the coast and the Lombardy-Venetia region (Catalan, 2012) and between these and the special dynamics of Gorizia, situated at the crossroads of three distinct language communities (Italian, Slavic and German).

By addressing the important figure of Isacco Samuele Reggio of Gorizia (1784–1855), one of the most prominent Italian Jewish intellectuals of the time, this paper aims to contribute to a re-assessment of the importance of emancipation and Italian identity for the Jews living in the Italian portion of the Habsburg Empire, more specifically in the city of Gorizia. Through an analysis of Reggio's life and oeuvre, in particular the Jewish journal *Strenna Israelitica* and his contributions to the Italian community periodical “Aurora”, this paper wishes to show a so far neglected aspect of Reggio's “Weltanschauung” that is, his strong attachment to Italian identity and nationalism. This, in turn, will show how Gorizia's Jewish minority, in spite of being predominantly Ashkenazic, sided without hesitation with the town's Italian speaking community.

**Stevan Milovanović**, born in 1983 in Užice, Republic of Serbia. Graduated from the Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Kragujevac. During the school year 2014/2015 he started attending various courses at the Faculty of Philology and Arts, University of Kragujevac, associated with Spanish and Judeo-Spanish language at primary and master studies at the Department of Spanish and Hispanic literature. He participated in several student national and international congresses of biomedical sciences. He wrote scientific papers in the field of Pathology, Nuclear Medicine, Immunology and Surgery. In 2015 he participated in the international Conference “Jews and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1565–2015“, Sarajevo and in 2016 in “The Western Balkan Encounter of Sepharad and Ashkenaz between tradition and change“, Belgrade. He also attended the 4th and 5th Sefardic Summerschool, organized by the Research Institute for the History of the Jews in Germany in August 2015 and August 2016 in Halberstadt. On those occasions, he was leading one of the groups of students during the workshop on transcription from Rashi and Hebrew letters to Latin script. In 2017/2018 he attended the course the “La literatura sefardí entre tradición y modernidad” at University Complutense of Madrid, Spain. He is currently researching customs, traditions, traditional holistic medicine, rabbinical and

secular literature of Spanish Jews—Sephardim, Judeo-spanish language, Rabbinical literature in Judeo-Spanish, Spanish Middle Ages and Renaissance literature, dialectology, lexicology and phonetics and phonology of Judezmo. He speaks Judeo-Spanish since childhood.

**Stevan Milovanović**

## **The Images of Sephardim in the Travel Book *Oriente* by Vicente Blasco Ibáñez**

The travel book, as a literary genre, is the exhibition of experiences and observations made by a traveler and may be accompanied by maps, drawings, prints, photographs, etc., made by the author or by his travel companions. It prospered especially in the 19th century and in the first decade of the 20th century, during the “Belle époque” within costumbrist literature.

Vicente Blasco Ibáñez was a Spanish writer, screenwriter and film director who is considered one of the main representatives of Spanish realism and naturalism. He is famous for his novels and travel books. *Oriente* is his third travel book. It was written during 1907, when the author made a journey from Central Europe via the Balkans to Istanbul (he travelled through the European part of the Turkish empire).

The book consists of two parts. First, the *Camino al Oriente* (Voyage to the Orient) and second, *En Oriente* (In Orient). Sephardic Jews take part from Belgrade until the end of the book. In various episodes, Ibáñez shows differences between Sephardic Jews from Belgrade and merchants from other ethnic groups and compares them in Istanbul with Turks, modern or traditional. Ibáñez displays an ambivalent attitude toward the Sephardim: whereas their language and their costumes from the Iberian Peninsula fascinate him, he harbors prejudices against them because they

are Jews. In *Oriente* Ibáñez depicts the intricate identity constructions of the Sephardim: their Spanish identity through language and descent and their attachment to the country where they lived in the Balkans, be it Serbia or the Ottoman Empire.

The paper aims at highlighting the relationship between the non-Jewish writer and the Sephardim along aspects of cultural identity, religious prejudice and differences. Moreover, it aims at characterizing the double attachment of the Sephardim to their Spanish identity and to their local national belonging through Ibáñez’s own understanding of his Spanish political and cultural nationalism.

**Branko Ostajmer** studied at the University of Zagreb where he obtained his PhD. Since 2006 he has been employed at the Croatian Institute of History and his research interest focuses on the political, social and cultural history of the 19th century with the emphasis on the area of the Kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia. His scientific interests also include Croatian-Hungarian relations in the period of dualism, as well as the political and cultural role of Jews in Croatia in the same period. Currently he is a member of the scientific project "European Origins of Modern Croatia: transfer of Ideas in Political and Cultural Fields in the 18th and 19th Centuries".

**Branko Ostajmer**

## **Mavro Špicer (1862–1936) and His Views on the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy**

The name of the writer, translator, anthologist and pioneer of the Croatian Esperanto movement Mavro Špicer (Našice, 1862–Zagreb, 1936) is not unknown in Croatian historiography and literature, as well as in the relevant lexicons. However, only his activity related to the Esperanto movement (in the year 1909 he founded the Society of Croatian Esperanto in Zagreb, in the same year he published the first Esperanto textbook and launched the first Croatian Esperanto journal *Kroata Esperantisto*) is relatively well researched. The rest of his very rich and diverse publicist activity has remained largely neglected and unknown until today.

Mavro Špicer (Spitzer) attended primary school in Našice, secondary school in Osijek and the University of Vienna (Slavic languages and classical philology). After his studies, he entered the military service and spent most of his military career in Budapest. His first literary study was published in the Viennese journal *Neue Freie Presse* in 1881, later on he published hundreds of articles in Croatian, Hungarian, Austrian and German newspapers and magazines (in Croatian, Hungarian, German and Esperanto). He wrote until his death and his book *Ženska duša u svijetlu povijesti* (Female Soul in the Light of History) was published just a few months before his death (Zagreb, 1936).

The lecture deals with the relatively unknown segment of the publicist activity of Mavro Špicer and especially with his views on the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and on the Croatian-Hungarian alliance within the Habsburg framework.

**Petra Jurlina** holds a BA in Political Sciences of the University of Zagreb (2007) and an MA in Nationalism Studies and Jewish Studies of the Central European University, Budapest (2008). She also finished Peace Studies at the Centre for Peace Studies, Zagreb (2006) and Women's Studies at the Centre for Women's Studies, Zagreb (2007). She worked as project coordinator and project assistant in many projects concerning human rights and civil society, minority protection, holocaust and genocide studies; she edited seven books on these topics and organized arts and culture events.



**Petra Jurlina**

## **Small Town Elegy: Shaping and Guarding Memory in Rural Croatia. The Case of Vinica, Lepavina and Slatinski Drenovac**

The presentation will examine the memory of three distinguished individuals from Croatia's early and mid-20th-century past, focusing on the experience of a small town, where, with nobody around to testify or care and often with a population that changed throughout the course of 80 or a 100 years, not only in terms of a lifespan but population exchange and war, even the most distinguished locals, if Jewish (the 'other' in this case) disappear from local memory forever. I will briefly present biographical details of selected case-studies and the information gathered during fieldwork research whose aim was to investigate whether they are significant for the local context. The communities, situated in today's continental part of Croatia, span three different counties and count between 200 and 3400 in population. I will also compare these towns' remembrance of pivotal moments in their history and try to reach a conclusion on the differences in the status of events and people remembered and what this translates to in small town Croatia of today.

Hinko Hinković (1854–1929), a Jewish-Croatian lawyer, publisher and politician, deserved his mention in Croatian history textbooks primarily as a member of the Croatian Party of Rights and the Yugoslav Committee, a political interest group during World War I, aiming to joining the south Slavs in an independent state. Often involved in disputes with the Catholic Church and intellectual contemporaries, he provoked debate in the local Jewish circles

as well, on whether a converted Jew should speak his mind when it comes to criticizing the clergy. Born and schooled in a small town in a vine growing area close to the Slovenian and Hungarian borders, Hinković, born Heinrich Moser, pursued a career in law and politics. Aleksandar Licht (1884–1948) was the founder of the Zionist movement in Croatia, born in the village of Sokolovac, near Koprivnica. Upon completing military service in World War I, he returned to Zagreb where he practiced law at his firm. In Vienna he was the chairman of "Bar Giora", a group of Zionist students from Yugoslavia. He was also the only Zionist from Yugoslavia who was a member of the action committee of the World Zionist Congress. Licht was the founder of the so-called "Zagreb school" of Zionism that represented an uncompromised and radical Zionism. Although the family moved to the Croatian capital when he and his siblings were small, I will look into what traces they left in the Koprivnica area. Maja Bošković-Stulli (1922–2012) was a Yugoslav-Croatian slavacist and folklorist, literary historian, writer, publisher and an academic, noted for her extensive research of Croatian oral literature. She is the only member of her family who survived the Holocaust. Although born and raised in the Croatian capital, she was deeply formed by the time spent in the countryside with her grandparents, in the small village of Slatinski Drenovac, where her grandfather was a GP and where the family tried to hide during World War II.

**Giustina Selvelli** is a senior scientist at the Department of Cultural Analysis, Division Multilingualism, at the Alpen-Adria University of Klagenfurt-Celovec, where she teaches courses on the sociolinguistics of globalization and linguistic diversity in Southeast Europe. She studied German and Balkan Studies at University of Trieste (Bachelor's Degree), Anthropology and Ethnolinguistics at University Ca' Foscari of Venice/University Paisii Hilendarski of Plovdiv (Master's Degree) and Southeast European Studies at University Ca' Foscari of Venice and University of Novi Sad (PhD). She has been a visiting researcher and lecturer at Yildiz Technical University of Istanbul and University of the Aegean in Mytilene, holding seminars on topics related to ethnolinguistic minorities in the wide Southeast European space, as well as an Erasmus Mundus postdoctoral fellow at University of Novi Sad, researching local Roma communities and their media.

**Giustina Selvelli**

## **The Multicultural Cities of Plovdiv and Ruse Through the Eyes of Elias Canetti and Angel Wagenstein. Two “Post-Ottoman” Jewish Writers**

The aim of my presentation is to illustrate the cosmopolitan setting of the Bulgarian cities of Ruse and Plovdiv during the first half of the 20th Century, as depicted in the memoirs of two Sephardic Jewish writers: Elias Canetti (born in Ruse) and Angel Wagenstein (born in Plovdiv). Particular attention will be devoted to the role played by the Jewish communities during the Ottoman and post-Ottoman period, in terms of their contribution to the economic and cultural life of the cities.

Canetti was born in 1905, in post-Ottoman Ruse, while Wagenstein was born in Plovdiv in 1922, in the after-war period. Notwithstanding these years of difference, the situation in the two cities appeared rather similar: the Sephardic Jews were still living as a distinct unity in terms of religion and language, being able to keep their own cultural identities alive. The memoirs of Canetti and Wagenstein are quite significant as they come from a later period, expressing a principle of “nostalgia” as the process of “de-Ottomanization” had almost completely been carried out.

For what concerns Canetti, the memories of Ruse occupy a special place in his novel *Die Gerettete Zunge* (The tongue set free,

1977): the writer recalls a fascinating setting, characterized by a Babylonian confusion of languages, where the most diverse nationalities crossed and met, such as Russians, Jews, Romanians, Roma and Armenians. In relation to Plovdiv, in his novel *Dalech ot Toledo* (Far from Toledo, 2002), apart from the Bulgarian majority, Wagenstein describes the lively presence of the Turkish, Jewish, Armenian, Greek and Roma communities, defining their patterns of daily interactions as a specific model of interethnic coexistence. By relating to the composite legacy of their home towns, Canetti and Wagenstein stand out as highly multicultural Jewish personalities, acknowledging the importance of the different cultural worlds they were exposed to, not only the Jewish and Bulgarian, but also the Turkish and in general the “Oriental” ones.

**Iskra Dobрева** is a postdoctoral fellow at the Department of General, Indo-European and Balkan Linguistics, Faculty of Slavic Philology, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski“, Bulgaria (until July 2019). She studied at the Department of Ibero-Romance Studies at Sofia University (2011–2016) and the Institute of Spanish Language and Literature of the University of Neuchatel, Switzerland (2013–2014). Her main object of interest is Judeo-Spanish and its extra-Iberian development, mainly as part of the Balkan Linguistic Area between the 16th and early 20th centuries. In her studies, Dobрева uses Judeo-Spanish texts in Hebrew, Latin and Cyrillic scripts.

**Iskra Dobрева**

## **Multilingual Skills of Sephardic Jews Based on the Sephardic Fiction from 1900 to the 1920s**

The paper aims to shed light on the multilingual skills and competences of Sephardic Jews in Bulgaria and all over the Balkans. It will show the linguistic competence both in Judeo-Spanish and other local languages via the prism of auto-perception of Sephardic authors from the mid-1920s or earlier.

The main source is the *Biography of Family Arie* written by Tchelebi-Moshe Abraham Arie II (around 1910) in Sofia. The un-edited version of this five-volume work is preserved in the Bulgarian Central State Archives (fund 1568k). Other Sephardic texts from the same period will also be taken into consideration, in particular, the ones referring to and commenting on the linguistic skills of Sephardic Jews. Arie makes several valuable remarks on language skills and the acquisition of new languages upon the arrival in Bulgaria of his grandfather and family members. Especially relevant are the references to the multilingual skills of Sephardic women. For instance, they learned Turkish with their husbands, helped by local Jewish teachers or native Turkish teachers. Furthermore Sephardic women used to visit their neighbors from the harem of the local Turkish aga. With reference to young women of the time, Arie mentions that they used to sing, play and learn several songs in French and Italian (as Western European songs were

fashionable in the beginning of the 20th century). The author criticizes them for knowing more Christian songs than Sephardic ones. Female multilingualism is relevant for Judeo-Spanish studies as it contradicts the popular stereotype of Sephardic women as monolinguals (in Judeo-Spanish) and as the main preservers of Judeo-Spanish for centuries in an extra-Iberian environment.

Based on specific cases taken from Sephardic fiction texts from early 20th century, the paper will attempt to outline the relevant facts concerning the formation of Judeo-Spanish as the language of the biggest part of Ottoman Jews and how it gradually replaced Judeo-Greek as everyday language within the Jewish communities in the Ottoman period.

The paper will present excerpts from Sephardic texts revealing facts and information about the language competence and skills of Sephardic Jews, especially female multilingualism. By bringing together the relevant facts and stories from Sephardic fiction texts from early 20th century, the paper will attempt to analyze Judeo-Spanish bilingualism and multilingualism in the Balkans.

**Eliezer Papo**, PhD, is senior lecturer at the Hebrew Literature Department of the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and Chairman of the Moshe David Gaon Center for Ladino Culture at the same university. He also serves as President of “Sefarad—Society for Sephardic Studies”, an international scholarly association dedicated to Sephardic studies, as well as the chief-editor of *El Prezente—Journal for Sephardic Studies*. He is moreover a representative of the Israeli Academia in the Council of the National Authority for Ladino Culture as well as a member of its executive board. His research centers on oral literature in general and Sephardic literatures (oral and written, rabbinic and secular) in particular. Currently he is conducting a research project sponsored by the Israel Science Foundation entitled *Annotated Edition of the Ladino Text of Magriso’s Mecam Locez on Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers*, accompanied by Transcription, English Translation and Introductory Research. In January 2014 his book *And Thou Shall Jest with Your Son: Judeo-Spanish Parodies on the Passover Haggadah*, received the prestigious Ben-Tzvi award. He has published around 40 articles in eight different languages about different aspects of Sephardic culture and literature as well as four works of fiction—one in Ladino and three in Serbo-Croatian.

**Eliezer Papo**

## **Bosnian Sephardim and Their Attitudes Toward the Internal and External Other**

The lecture is anything but politically correct. It deals with (more or less) pejorative ethno-nicknames used by Bosnian Sephardim to describe their non-Sephardic neighbors, switching to the way the Other is treated in rabbinic and secular Ladino (written) literature, produced in Bosnia and Hercegovina.

Just like everyone else in Bosnia and Hercegovina, the Ladino speaking Sephardim referred many a time to members of other local ethno-confessions by internal pejorative ethnonyms. Thus, for example, besides being “Verdes” (the green ones, obviously referring to the color of Islam) in spoken Bosnian Judeo-Spanish Bosnian Muslims were also known as “Karpasis” (Hebrew name for the parsley, used during the Passover ritual seder-dinner to represent the bitter herbs eaten by the Israelites during their slavery in Egypt) or “Almeshas” (plums). Both pejorative ethnonyms are referring to the widespread custom of many Bosnian Muslims to drink alcohol, in spite of the notorious qur’anic prohibition. Notably, during the seder ritual, karpas is dipped in wine or vinegar, while plums are the fruit of which the alcoholic beverage šljivovica, so emblematic of Bosnia and Hercegovina, is made.

Nicknames used in Bosnian spoken Judeo-Spanish to describe Bosnian Serbs can be classified into three categories: pejoratives, neutral nicknames and emphatic (benevolent) nicknames. The best example of the pejoratives are certainly “Ratones”

(mice) and “Hachus” (crosses, from Ottoman Turkish haç—cross). While the association of Christian Orthodox Serbs with the cross is obvious, the reasons behind the mouse association are still to be found. Since in larger Ottoman cities Ladino speaking Sephardim referred to Armenians as Ratones, it might be that it was introduced to Bosnia and Hercegovina via religious associations (Armenians are Eastern Christians, too). A neutral Ladino nickname for Serbs follows the Bosnian Muslim practice of referring to Serbs as to “Vlahs” (originally this neutral Bosnian Muslim name for Serbs developed an indisputable pejorative connotation, non-existent in Bosnian spoken Judeo-Spanish)—or, in Ladino: “Blahu”. There is a famous Sephardic proverb from Bosnia that says “In kazalityu, mediyu Blahityu” (A Jew from a village is half a Serb). However, when spoken about positively, Serbs are many a time also referred to as “Yavanikyus” (dear/small Jovans, an obvious reference to one of the most common Serbian male names).

The lecture shall not dwell exclusively on oral materials but will also check the way the Other is treated in Ladino literature produced by Bosnian authors.

**Adriana Altaras** is an actress, writer, dramaturge living in Berlin. She was born in 1960 in Zagreb/Croatia (then Yugoslavia) as the child of Jewish partisans who left the country in 1964. She first lived in Italy, then in Germany where she graduated from High School in Marburg in 1979. After studying at Berlin's Academy of Dramatic Arts (with a degree in acting in 1983), she was a post-diploma student from 1983–84 at the New York University theater wing. In 1984 she founded the off-theater "Zum Westlichen Stadthirschen", Berlin and worked there as writer, actress and director. Since 1992 she teaches drama for the study "Musical/show" at the University of Art, collaborates with the Shoah Foundation Steven Spielberg and was in 2002 the creative director of the "Jüdische Kulturtage", Berlin.

She earned prestigious awards: in 1988 the Bundesfilmpreis; in 1989 the Golden Horse Award for Best Foreign Actress, Taiwan, in 1993 the Theaterpreis des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, in 1999 the 2. Publikumspreis Friedrich Luft, Berlin for the production "La Sorella Amante" from Joh. A. Hasse at the Neuköllner Oper Berlin and in 2000 the Silver Bear, Berlinale.



# Adriana Altaras

## Filmography (selection)

- 1964 *Nikoletina Bursać* (Dir. Branko Bauer)
- 1988 *Das Mikroskop* (Dir. Rudolf Thome)
- 1996 *Kondom des Grauens* (Dir. Martin Walz)
- 2004 *Alles auf Zucker!* (Dir. Dani Levy)
- 2007 *Vollidiot* (Dir. Tobi Baumann)
- 2009 *Die Gräfin* (Dir. Julie Delpy)
- 2014 *Titos Brille* (Dir. Regina Schilling)
- 2016-19 *Der Kroatien-Krimi*
- 2017 *Die Unsichtbaren* (Dir. Claus Räfle)

## Books

*Titos Brille. Die Geschichte meiner strapaziösen Familie*, Köln 2011. [Titove naočale. Povijest moje naporne obitelji. S njemačkoga prevela Branka Grubić, Zagreb 2013.]

*Doitscha. Eine jüdische Mutter packt aus*, Köln 2014. [Dojča. Ispovijest jedne židovske majke. S njemačkoga prevela Branka Grubić, Zagreb 2016.]

*Das Meer und ich waren im besten Alter. Geschichten aus meinem Alltag*, Köln 2017.

*Die jüdische Souffleuse*, Köln 2018.

## Productions (selection)

- 1996 *Frau Parker kann nicht schlafen*. Ein Notturmo (Neuköllner Oper Berlin)
- 1999 *Vagina Monologe* by Eve Ensler (Arena Berlin)
- 2000 *La Sorella Amante* (Neuköllner Oper Berlin)
- 2000 *Gefilde des Himmels* (Isaac B. Singer, Jewish Museum Berlin)
- 2004 *HypOp I.* (Musiktheater im Magazin, Staatsoper Unter den Linden Berlin)
- 2005 *Trauer To Go. Das Stück zum Mahnmal* (Maxim Gorki Theater)
- 2007 *Kasimir und Karoline* by Ödon von Horvath (Theater Augsburg)
- 2009 *Die Lustige Witwe* by Franz Lehár (Theater Aachen)
- 2010 *Weihnachten im Zelt* (Theater Meiningen)
- 2013 *Melnitz* (Novel by Charles Lewinsky, Zurich)
- 2014 *Il barbiere di Siviglia* by Gioachino Rossini (Staatstheater Kassel)

**Damir Šabotić** graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo and obtained as well an MA degree in postmodern literature from the Faculty of Philosophy in Tuzla. Currently, he is a PhD student at the Karl-Franzens-University of Graz.

He participated in several academic conferences in Sarajevo, Travnik and Graz. His work appeared in journals such as *Razlika/Differance*, *Bosna franciscana* and *Sic!* where he publishes short stories and essays.

He published a poetry collection *Privatna svetišta* (Naklada Zoro, Sarajevo, 2006), a collection of short stories *Zazivač meleka* (Naklada Zoro, Sarajevo, 2008) and the novel *Nađi me* (Dobra knjiga, Sarajevo, 2013). His short stories appeared in two anthologies: *Pod pritiskom: Panorama savremene bosanskohercegovačke priče* (Prosveta/Altera, Belgrade, 2008) and *Rat i priče iz cijelog svijeta: Antologija savremene bosanskohercegovačke pripovijetke* (Zagreb, Novi Liber, 2009), as well as in the collection of best short stories *Izvan koridora* (Podgorica, Zagreb, 2011).

In 2014, the novel *Nađi me* was shortlisted for the "Meša Selimović" prize awarded from Tuzla, and it was also nominated for the European Union Prize for Literature in 2016.

**Damir Šabotić**

## **The Role and Impact of the Journals *Židovska svijest* and *Jevrejski život* for the Jewish Cultural and National Identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina Between the Two World Wars**

Shortly after the First World War, Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina started to reconstruct the cultural upswing of the late 19th and early 20th century. Thanks to the new social circumstances caused by the Austrian-Hungarian administration then, paths to the European university centers were open. With the creation of the Kingdom of SHS began another, and in cultural and social terms even richer epoch. The Renaissance of Jewish public life was to last about two decades, and it was marked by distinctive, turbulent, often contradictory ideological turmoils related primarily to national identity and Zionism as the most important cultural and ideological programs of Jewry at that time. In Sarajevo, as the capital of Sephardic national awakening in the former Yugoslavia, numerous cultural and educational societies, organizations and important weekly journals started or continued with their intensive work.

The aim of this talk is to show how the different ideological postulates of the Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jewish communities in Sarajevo between the two World Wars produced different cultural practices. Sephardim and Ashkenazim represented different points of view regarding the construction of the national identity of Jews. While the Ashkenazim promoted a unitary approach, i.e.

Zionism as the only political option and Hebrew as the foundation of national identity, the Sephardim were trying to preserve their own tradition and revive the threatened Judeo-Spanish language as a distinctive part of their cultural and historical identity. In this regard, the cultural policy of the Jewish community in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Sarajevo had different guidelines: Ashkenazim were trying to spread their ideological matrix through the weekly journal *Židovska svijest* (Jewish Consciousness, 1918-1927), and Sephardim were trying to reaffirm the Judeo-Spanish language in the journal *Jevrejski život* (Jewish Life, 1924-1927). At the same time, both journals were published in Serbo-Croatian, which testifies to the strong acculturation processes these Jewish communities were exposed to.

**Fani Gargova** studied Art History at the University of Vienna and the Université Libre de Bruxelles. In 2019, she completed her doctoral dissertation on the Central Synagogue of Sofia at the University of Vienna. Previously, she was a project coordinator of the „Digitales Forschungsarchiv Byzanz“ (DiFaB) at the University of Vienna and Byzantine research associate at the Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives of the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Harvard University. Her research has been supported by, among others, the Rothschild Foundation (Hanadiv) and the IFK in Vienna.

**Fani Gargova**

**Marcus Ehrenpreis and the Literary Circle “Misal”.  
Or, a Rabbi and Two Bulgarian Poets Translate  
*Also sprach Zarathustra***

Marcus Ehrenpreis came to Sofia in 1900 to become the Chief Rabbi of Bulgaria. Born in Lviv and educated at Berlin's Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums, Ehrenpreis was a firm proponent of an enlightened Reform Judaism and an ardent Zionist. For his progressive reforms of the Jewish community in Sofia, he encountered severe resistance. In addition, the collaboration with the Bulgarian administration was tense and the Bulgarian bureaucracy frustrating. In this situation, Ehrenpreis felt most at home among the Bulgarian intellectual elite. These included the founders of the Bulgarian Academy of Fine Arts and the members of the first Bulgarian literary circle “Misal”. Beyond their religious differences, Ehrenpreis saw a reflection of his own visions for Hebrew culture in the budding endeavors for an enlightened Bulgarian literature and arts.

This talk will trace the friendship of Marcus Ehrenpreis with Pencho Slaveykov and Mara Belcheva and his involvement in the literary circle “Misal”. It will show how Bulgarian Jewish literary and artistic production and innovation at the beginning of the 20th century did not evolve in an exclusively Jewish environment but rather in constant contact and exchange with the surround-

ing gentile intelligentsia. It will further argue for an animated exchange and translation activity, which ultimately enriched each side's literary production.

In 2009, **Menachem Keren-Kratz** completed his PhD in Yiddish literature at Bar-Ilan University and in 2013 he received a further PhD in Jewish history from Tel-Aviv University. He recently published the book *Maramaros-Sziget: Extreme Orthodoxy and Secular Jewish Culture at the Foothills of the Carpathian Mountains* (Jerusalem 2013, in Hebrew). His forthcoming book *Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum—The Satmar Rebbe: The Pious, the Zealot and the Politician* is to be published in 2019 by the Zalman Shazar Center of Jerusalem. Keren-Kratz has published over 35 articles, both in Hebrew and in English, in academic and semi-academic publications. These included several peer-reviewed article collections as well as a series of academic journals such as: *Dapim: Studies on the Holocaust, Identities, Cathedra, Keshet, Modern Judaism, Contemporary Jewry, Israel Studies Review, Journal of Modern Jewish Studies, Jewish Political Studies Review* and *Tradition*. He gave numerous talks at local and international conferences.

**Menachem Keren-Kratz**

## **The Literary Circle in Maramures, Romania. Between Tradition and Modernity**

The Jewish settlement in Maramures—then a northeastern border county of Hungary—began in the mid-17th century and, in time, it became an exclusively ultra-Orthodox region. Yet, from the mid-19th century, when Jewish emigration to Hungary accelerated and brought with it the spirit of modernity, Jews became increasingly involved in non-religious culture and especially in writing poetry. By the turn of the 20th century and despite its highly religious atmosphere, several intellectuals, all raised in ultra-Orthodox and even Hasidic homes, published some forty non-religious books on topics such as Jewish history, religious thought, science and Zionism, as well as some fifteen different newspapers.

Following its defeat in the First World War, Hungary was dismantled and most of its former territories were annexed to other countries. The southern part of Maramures was annexed to Romania. The literary circle in Sighet, Maramures' capital, emerged and flourished in the early 1920s. The group, which included both men and women, was inspired by their physical and spiritual surroundings and this became manifest in their writings. The more established authors and poets managed to publish their books, while the aspiring writers published their works only in local newspapers and in literary magazines.

During the 1930s, Sighet's literati realized that they needed their own publication platform and several activists established

a monthly cultural magazine in Yiddish entitled *Maramarosher Bleter* (Maramures' Pages), which was published between 1931–1932. Shortly after this magazine ceased to appear, they published a new and radical bi-weekly magazine named *Der Stern* (The Star). It didn't last long too, but in 1934 a new literary magazine titled *Oyfgang* (Rising) was established. Even though Sighet was a remote town far from Europe's literary centers and its editors were relatively unknown, *Oyfgang* enjoyed worldwide acclaim and survived longer than many other literary magazines, which were published in major cities. The last literary magazine, *Yung Maramures* (Young Maramures), was published in 1941 but managed to print only one issue before World War II and the Holocaust broke out.

These cultural achievements demonstrate that in some cases literary centers that did not enjoy the benefits of a large metropolis and that consequently were late to develop, could still gain and yield great influence as well as international recognition.

**Fahrudin Kujundžić** was born in 1986 in Zvornik, Bosnia and Herzegovina. He earned his Master's degree in 2011 at the Department of Comparative Literature and Librarianship at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo. Since 2014, he has been working at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, currently serving as a senior assistant. In 2018, he enrolled in doctoral studies in literature. He published short stories, poems, critics and essays in Bosnian-Herzegovinian literary journals.



**Fahrudin Kujundžić**

**Isak Samokovlija Between Prose and Drama.  
*Hanka* and *The Blond Jewess*. Problems of Dramatization**

Isak Samokovlija created the dramas *Hanka* and *The Blond Jewess* on the basis of short stories of the same name, which shall serve as an intriguing starting point for the attempt to gain a better understanding of the poetics of Samokovlija. A comparative analysis of his short stories and dramas emphasizes the problems of the dramatization process. This encompasses the fundamental differences between the literary genres and becomes manifest when the short story serves as material and gets adapted in accordance with the laws of the drama form. Being aware of the specificity of the literary forms of prose and drama, the process of dramatization can be interpreted as an analysis of the short story itself. In Samokovlija's case this seems even more remarkable, since he dramatized his own stories. My paper will aim, therefore, first of all, to address the question how prose and drama articulate the image of man and specifically, how this functions in the selected examples. Moreover, I will discuss these phenomena against the background of Samokovlija's entire literary opus, reflecting on the social and historical conditions in which he lived and worked.

**Miriam Finkelstein** is an assistant professor at the Leopold-Franzens University of Innsbruck in Austria. She studied Russian literature at Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich, Germany and received there her PhD. She worked at the Slavic Departments of Humboldt University and the Free University in Berlin as well as at the Chair for Slavic Literatures and Cultures of the University of Passau. She is co-editor of the volumes *Proceedings of the Second International Perspectives on Slavistics Conference* (with I. Mendoza und S. Birzer, Munich 2009), *Slavische Literaturen als Weltliteratur* (Slavic Literatures as World Literature with D. Hitzke, Innsbruck 2018) and *Victim Narratives in Transcultural Contexts* (with E. Binder et al. forthcoming). Her main areas of research are contemporary Russian poetry and prose, Russian-Jewish literature as well as contemporary Russian-American and Russian-German literature. Currently she is writing her second book (habilitation) entitled *The Migrant Remembers Back. Personal Life Narratives in Contemporary Russian-American and Russian-German fiction*.

## Miriam Finkelstein

### Messianism in Isak Samokovlija's Prose

One of the most striking features in the short stories of the Bosnian-Jewish writer Isak Samokovlija (1889–1955) about the Sephardic Jews of Sarajevo is the resilience of his protagonists, the poor carriers and shoemakers, washerwomen, widows etc. At some point in their lives full of deprivation and humiliation, they eventually stand up to those whom they conceive of as oppressors. In what appears to be unprecedented acts of defiance, they even refuse to observe Jewish laws and to follow sacred traditions—to pray on Saturdays (*Jevrejini koji se subotom ne moli Bogu*/The Jew who didn't pray on Saturday) or follow the Rabbi's instructions (*Davokova priča o Jahijelovoj pobuni*/ Davoka's story of Jahijel's protest).

I suggest a reading of Samokovlija's short stories in the context of the Sephardic traditions of messianism and Sabbatism that emerged after the expulsion from Spain and were later amplified by horrific events such as the massacres by Bogdan Chmielnicki. Although for Samokovlija the defiance is always an individual act committed on one's own behalf only and none of the characters are depicted as Messiahs who lead the Jewish people as a whole, I will argue that the patterns of disobedient and even rebellious behavior in his short stories can be traced back to the messianic and Sabbatean movements of the 16th–18th centuries. Thus, Sabbetai Zevi, the probably best-known 'Messiah' of the 18th century, publicly transgressed Jewish laws, abolished many rit-

ualistic observances and created new rites. Samokovlija seems to suggest, however, that in the late 19th and early 20th century there is no need to wait for the Messiah, because salvation is now a personal issue (and personal responsibility) and can be achieved now by virtually every man.

Finally, I will discuss the question of responsibility for the suffering of the Sarajevo Jews, an issue that, I believe, sets Samokovlija apart from many other Jewish writers of his age, both Sephardic and Ashkenazic. The writer emphasizes that those responsible for the never changing misfortune are not the Gentiles (Turks, Serbs, or others), not some hostile outside forces but fellow Jews of the very same community, the rich and powerful merchants and rabbis, who fail to show solidarity with their poorer brethren, who manipulate the weak and the hapless.

**Željka Oparnica** is PhD student at Birkbeck College, University of London, studying under Fred Anscombe and David Feldman. She holds an MA in Comparative history with a specialization in Jewish studies from the Central European University, Budapest and a BA in history from the University of Belgrade. Prior to commencing her PhD, she was an intern at the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast Europe in Regensburg and the Leibniz Global Studies Institute in Leipzig. Her PhD thesis deals with Ashkenazic-Sephardic intellectual contacts in the Balkans and German-speaking countries. In the coming 2019/2020 academic year she will be a Leo-Baeck-Fellow.

Željka Oparnica

## Boundaries of Community. The Sephardic World(s) of Jacques Konfino and Isak Samokovlija

What was the Sephardic community in the 20th-century Balkans? Was it the kehila? Was it the quarter of a town or a city where the Jewish life was confined to? Or was there one Sephardic community stretching from Vienna to Salonica, as Vita Kajon suggested in his essay *On the Balkan Jewry* (1925)? I suggest that the works and lives of two almost forgotten Sephardic writers, Jacques Konfino (1892–1975) and Isak Samokovlija (1889–1955), offer answers to these questions from the perspective of the marginalized experiences of the Sephardim existence.

Up until today, when discussing the Sephardic community of the Balkans, researchers mainly focus on the obvious choices of Salonica and Sarajevo, important centers of religious, cultural and political development throughout the centuries. However, this approach to the Sephardic history of the region reached the point where these two cities, with some exceptions, came to represent the entire palette of Sephardi experience. Therefore, this paper aims to portray the community beyond the traditional centres.

This paper aims to address the wider spectre of historical realities of the Sephardim. Both of the named writers were born and grew up in fairly marginal cities—Konfino, a native of Leskovac (Serbia) and Samokovlija, a native of Goražde (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Both of them left their primary surrounding in order to study in

one of the most important centers of both Jewish and non-Jewish culture at that time—Vienna. At the university of Vienna, they were members of “Esperanza”, a student association of the Spanish speaking Jewry, one of the pillars of the Sephardism movement, which came to be one of the crucial pillars of Sephardic identity and politics in the first half of the 20th century. After graduation, they settled in Belgrade (Konfino) and Sarajevo (Samokovlija), both as physicians. However, even though their paths did not keep them physically bound to their native locales, Konfino and Samokovlija dedicated their lives to portraying the worlds they descended from.

Konfino's and Samokovlija's picturesque depictions of the communal life reflect their experience of both periphery and the center and, I argue, give the ground to reposition the traditional Sephardic setting and set the boundaries of the community on a different ground. As they were both active writers from 1920s up until their death, their portrayals have both artistic value as well as credibility as historical source.

**Marta Kacprzak** is a PhD student at the Institute of Iberian and Ibero-American Studies at the University of Warsaw. She holds an MA in Hebrew Philology from the University of Warsaw and a BA in Spanish Philology from the University of Social Sciences and Humanities. She studied at the University of Granada (Spain) within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme. She also participated as research bursary fellow in the project “Jewish Studies across Mediterranean Europe” at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) and the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM). She is writing a doctoral dissertation about Sephardic versions of Robinson Crusoe.

**Marta Kacprzak**

## ***Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*. Sephardic Adaptations of Western Novels**

In the second half of the 19th century the *haskalah*, an intellectual movement whose objective was to educate and westernize Eastern European Jews, reached also the Sephardic communities in the Ottoman Empire. As a result, a Sephardic secular literature emerged, producing mainly narrative fiction, theatre plays and press. Furthermore, newspapers figured increasingly in the distribution of modern Judeo-Spanish literature since many novels and theatre plays appeared in serialized form in journals or as chapbooks.

Modern Sephardic literature is primarily based on translations or adaptations of Western novels. Many of them were published without indicating the title of the source version and its author, which requires a special research. Moreover, literary texts in Judeo-Spanish were printed in “*aljamía*”, which means that they were written in Rashi script, a semi-cursive typeface of the Hebrew alphabet. Among these texts we can find Sephardic editions of the famous novel *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe or *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift.

I encountered three different versions of *Robinson Crusoe* that were written in Judeo-Spanish and edited in “*aljamía*”. Two of them were published in chapters in the Sephardic press, the first one in Salonica in 1881 and the second one in Constantinople in 1900. The third one was brought out as a complete version in

Constantinople in 1923. Concerning *Gulliver's Travels*, I will discuss in the talk two travel episodes of Gulliver where he finds himself among Lilliputians and Giants that were published by Ben Ghiat in the original version in “*aljamía*” in the newspaper *El Meseret* in Izmir in 1897.

In the first part of my presentation I will discuss the beginnings of Sephardic secular literature with particular emphasis on adopted genres and especially the novel. In the second part I will comment on the Sephardic editions of *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels* and discuss the similarities and differences concerning both the linguistic and literary level. I will emphasize the convergences and discrepancies in the storyline according to the original versions. Moreover, I will highlight the linguistic contrasts that illustrate the changes Judeo-Spanish experienced along with the process of modernisation. Worth mentioning are numerous Gallisms and words that derive from Turkish or Hebrew, however, the number of Hebraisms depends on the author. In the case of the Sephardic version of *Gulliver's Travels* the words of Hebrew origin are sparse and relate mainly to Judaism and religious matters, while in *Robinson Crusoe* they are pretty frequent and serve as glosses (annotations given in brackets) for Turkish words that not necessarily must be related with Judaism or Jewish culture.

**Alice Buzdugan** is a literary and cultural scientist and alumna of the Graduate School for East and Southeast European Studies (University of Regensburg/Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich). She studied at the University of Bucharest, the Friedrich-Alexander University of Erlangen-Nurnberg and the University of Regensburg. She completed her PhD at the University of Regensburg, for which she received a three-year Immanuel-Kant scholarship from the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media. Her main research interest encompasses the intercultural encounters in minority literatures in Southeast Europe, especially the ones written in Romanian, German and Hungarian; she is a member of the Southeast Europe Association.



**Alice Buzdugan**

## **Aspects of the Fairy-Tale Research of the Pioneering Cultural Historians from 19th-century Romania, Moses Gaster and Lazăr Șăineanu**

Some of the earliest extensive studies on fairy-tales in Romania were written by the polymath Moses Gaster (1856–1939) and the Romanist Lazăr Șăineanu (Eliezer Schein, 1859–1934). These two cultural historians were among the most influential Jewish intellectuals of Romania and they significantly influenced both the fairy-tale research and the Romanian literary scene and received important awards. Nonetheless, researchers only gradually are rediscovering their work.

Both were befriended for almost twenty years in the late 19th century. My presentation focuses on two of their most important works: one of the first systematic typologies of Romanian fairy-tales, *Basmele române în comparațiune cu legendele antice clasice și în legătură cu basmele popórelorú învecinate și ale tuturorú popórelorú romanice. Studiú comparativú* (Romanian Fairy-Tales in Comparison with Classical Ancient Legends and in Connection to Fairy-Tales of neighboring Peoples and of all Romance Peoples. A Comparative Study, 1895) by Șăineanu and one of the first comprehensive synthesis of Romanian folk literature, *Literatura pop-*

*ulară română* (A History of the Romanian Folk-Literature 1883) by Gaster.

The importance of these works for Romanian philology was already stressed. A comparison of them will reframe the views of their authors and show how they understood other European approaches to fairy-tales: Gaster distanced himself for one from Grimm's approach and tried to prove that folk literature developed from written sources. He claimed, moreover, to have influenced Șăineanu in his writing. However, Șăineanu the Romanist still affirmed Grimm's approach instead.

The talk will compare key aspects of the theories and methods from these two fairy-tale collections. I will showcase in my talk their snapshots of the Romanian collective imaginary.

**Krinka Vidaković Petrov**, scholar, professor, translator and diplomat. PhD in Comparative Literature (University of Zagreb). Full professor and Senior fellow at the Institute of Literature and Art in Belgrade (retired). Served as ambassador of Yugoslavia to Israel (2001–2006). Was a member of the Editorial Council of several academic journals, including the *Foreign Affairs Israel* (published in Jerusalem by the Israel Council on Foreign Affairs and the World Jewish Congress).

She has published a number of books, scholarly studies, monographs and numerous scholarly contributions in academic publications in Yugoslavia, the USA, Spain, Israel, Italy, France, United Kingdom, Rumania, New Zealand, Macedonia, China, Poland and Hungary.

Fields of interest: comparative literature and folklore, Hispanic and Jewish studies, Holocaust studies, culture of Diaspora communities, Serb immigrants in the USA, theory and history of literary translation.

**Krinka Vidaković Petrov**

## **Jewish Children's Literature in Yugoslavia Prior to the Holocaust**

Children's literature is a distinct type of literature based on an essential discrepancy: It is created mainly by adults, but designed to address the needs of the pre-adult age group and also to fulfill the essential tasks of growing up, learning and integrating into the social and cultural system shared by adults (parents) as a collective body. One of the main functions of this type of literature is education that evolves mostly in non-institutional environments such as the family, but also in collective social gatherings and celebrations of communal holidays, including the strengthening of the association of some of the latter with children (Purim, Hamisha Asar).

The fairly small corpus of children's literature from Yugoslavia is important because it reflects the process of linguistic and cultural assimilation (including the distinctions between the Sephardim and Ashkenazim), the heritage of the pre-modern period blending with new models of the modern period, gender markers and issues regarding identity perceptions/projections. In Yugoslavia, two periods can be distinguished: the older traditional/folkloric period (preserved in the Sephardic heritage in the Judeo-Spanish language) and the modern period (in the Serbo-Croatian language and under the strong influence of Zionist ideologies and policies). Other specifics of children's literature, regardless of whether it is transmitted orally (as part of the folkloric tradition) or in the writ-

ten media (children's books and magazines of the new period) are specific models of discourse, its multi-medial dimension (association with music, dance, games) and the world of make-believe and play.

We have chosen to study the Yugoslav period because this country had a mixed Jewish population (two thirds Ashkenazim and one third Sephardim) with different assimilation experiences. We have chosen this period because the Holocaust completely changed the size and status of Jews in postwar Yugoslavia. Our aim is to study the corpus of Yugoslav Jewish children's literature with special focus on the issues identified above.

**Renate Hansen-Kokoruš** is a professor of Slavic Literatures and Cultures at the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Graz in Austria. She studied at the University of Mannheim, the University of Sarajevo and the State University of Moscow and completed her PhD and post-doctoral degrees in Slavic Studies at the University of Mannheim. She worked for the German department at the University of Sarajevo and the Slavic department in Mannheim. As a visiting professor, she has taught at universities such as the Humboldt University in Berlin, the University of Waterloo in Canada, the University of Zadar in Croatia, the State University of Tomsk in Russia, the University of Frankfurt/M. in Germany as well as the University of Innsbruck in Austria. She was head of the Department of Slavic Studies in Graz and is co-editor of the journal *Anzeiger für Slavische Philologie*.

**Renate Hansen-Kokoruš**

## **Jewish Life Perspectives from a Non-Jewish Writer's View (Ivo Andrić)**

The Nobel laureate Ivo Andrić dedicated three essays to Jewish writers resp. culture (*Jevrejsko groblje/The Jewish cemetery, Isak Samokovlija* and *Kalmi Baruh*) and created a few, but very impressive literary Jewish figures in his work, i.e. in stories or imbedded stories in the novels *Travnička hronika* (Travnik Chronical) and *Na Drini ćuprija* (The Bridge over the Drina). The figures are of Sephardic and of Ashkenazic origin, but all of them live in Bosnia; the first already for centuries, remembering their former home country Spain, the second coming as specialists with the Austrian occupation (kuferaši). Andrić's figures are acting in settings at the beginning (Mordo Atijas, Salomon Atijas) or in the late 19th century (the young girl Rifka who commits suicide), the early 20th century (Lottika), the interwar period (Max Löwenfeld, *Deca/ Children*) and the Holocaust (Mento Papo), in the Bosnian capital Sarajevo, but also in Travnik and Višegrad. Most of these stories (or separate stories in the novels) the author wrote from the perspective of memory after World War II. While "multicultural" life in Bosnia during the Ottoman and Austrian period is shown as suppression of the non-recognized non-Muslim people, Jewish isolation and self-isolation, but also the attempt to escape from the hatred (the famous *Letter from 1920*) are the main topics in these texts. Special attention is given to *Buffet Titanic* with the opposition of the poor Mento and the Ustaša Stjepan Ković

that can be interpreted as "anatomy of the holocaust" (Radivoje Konstantinović) and to *Deca* (Children), a very impressive study of hatred, aggression and guilt.

**Tatjana Petzer** is a visiting professor of Slavic Cultural Studies at the University of Halle-Wittenberg and a Dilthey fellow of the Volkswagen Foundation at the Leibniz Center for Literary and Cultural Research (ZfL) Berlin. She studied at the University of Berlin and the University of Belgrade. She completed her PhD at the University of Halle-Wittenberg. Her research interests include Slavic literatures, cultural history and history of knowledge.

**Tatjana Petzer**

## **Rhythms of Creation. Approaching Stanislav Vinaver's Modernism**

The erudite writer, poet, translator, and journalist Stanislav Vinaver was an important figure in South Slavic literary culture. Having studied mathematics and physics, music and philosophy at the University of Paris, where he became a follower of Henri Bergson's philosophical ideas, Vinaver's writings were influenced by his concept of creation, a complex understanding of time, and the notion of future which might also be linked to Judaism. The paper traces the Bergsonianism in Serbian and Yugoslav thought in the interwar period, and Vinaver's influence in developing a transformative aesthetics in the context of European modernism. Against the background of the modernist movement of the twenties, three aspects of Vinaver's dialogue with Bergson's concepts of intuition and dynamism in creation, and his understanding of the *durée* as continuous creation and of time as a hybrid of duration and space will be discussed:

1. Vinaver's reconstruction of Bergson's aesthetics and, as provided in his early programmatic and essayistic writing, Vinaver's views on the creative power of the *élan vital* and on rhythm as continuous movement and continuity;
2. the cinematographic essays as a contribution to the theory of the avant-garde cinema, which was significantly influenced by Bergson's reflections on the cinematographic mechanism and the perception of motion;

3. Vinaver's non-mimetic, ornamental prose in which the relationship between intuition and intellect problematized by Bergson is shifted to an opposition within language—of rhythm and grammar; as postulated in *Gromobran Svemira* (1921, *The Lightning Rod of the Universe*), the space- and time-bound creations of the eternal poet genius are like the creations of nature.

**Katarzyna Taczyńska** has a Ph.D. in Literature (2014), holds a double Nicolaus Copernicus University Masters degree in Polish (2008) and in Balkan philology (2010). She also completed Postgraduate studies of Teaching Polish as a Foreign Language (2008) and Gender Studies (2013) at NCU and Art and Culture at the University of Wrocław (2017). She is the author of the monograph *Dowcip trwający dwa i pół roku. Obraz Nagiej Wyspy w serbskim dyskursie literackim i historycznym końca XX i początku XXI wieku* (The Portrait of Goli otok Prison Camp in Serbian Literary and Historical Discourse at the End of the 20th and the Beginning of the 21st Century) and co-editor of the series *Get to Know the Balkans*. From 2015 to 2018 she worked as postdoctoral fellow at the Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznań with the project “Remembering (about) the violence. The cultural history of women in Serbian and Croatian historical and literary discourse in the twentieth century” and since 2012 she has been cooperating with the Laboratory for the Study of Collective Memory in Post-communist Europe at NCU. Currently she works at the Institute of Western and Southern Slavic Studies at the University of Warsaw.

**Aleksandra Twardowska** is an assistant professor at the Department of Balkan Studies at the Nicolaus Copernicus University of Toruń (Poland). She studied South Slavic philology at the University of Gdańsk (Poland) where she completed her PhD. Her academic interests involve the languages, culture and history of Balkan Jews, Jewish and Slavic anthroponomy and Balkan languages. She has written several papers on the Balkan Sephardic Jewry and co-edited the volumes *Ashkenazim and Sephardim: A European Perspective* (2013) and *Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Language Miscellanea* (2019). She co-edits the series *Getting to Know the Balkans for young scholars*. She is a member of the Polish Association for Jewish Studies and the Polish Commission of Balkan Culture and History.



**Katarzyna Taczyńska**  
**Aleksandra Twardowska**

## **The Gender of Knowledge Transfer. Jewish Balkan Women Living in Exile Cases**

If we take into account its structure and multilingual nature, the history of Jewish culture in the Balkans is multidimensional. Further facets are revealed when we focus our attention on women, very rarely portrayed in history as protagonists. It seems that a female narrative related to transfer of knowledge can be an interesting key if applied to interpreting the legacy of Judaism, but at the same time interacting with and constituting the context for Balkan cultures. In the 20th-century history this issue can be considered at least on two levels, both of which present a fascinating intersection of emancipation ideas and traditional patterns of behaviour.

The first group of female mediators of knowledge can be found within the Sephardic minority before World War II. The research of Balkan Jewish pre-war magazines (e.g. series of texts by Laura Papo Bohoreta or Sara Demajo) shows that women, due to their traditional position and social role in the family, had been entrusted with the preservation and transmission of Bosnian Sephardic customs and values, yet being on the turning point of emancipation.

The second group is represented by Jewish women who managed to survive the Holocaust and, despite the difficult socio-political

situation, decided to research the history of Balkan Jews or document their culture, although most of them lacked (formal) professional preparation. This trend of cultural practices played an important role in preserving and commemorating the activities of Jews in the Balkans. A significant part of those researchers and popularizers of culture emigrated after the war and worked abroad (e.g. Ženi Lebl, Paulina Lebl Albala, Gina Camhi) although there are also those who stayed in the country of their birth (Jamilia Kolonomos) or were active both in their Balkan homelands and countries of migrations (e.g. Rikica Ovadija).

In our paper we will focus on presenting short biographies of several of those women who emigrated and started working abroad. We are interested not only in common patterns and codes but also in variations in the transfer of knowledge (and tradition) by Jewish Balkan women of Sephardic or Ashkenazic origins, using various languages and working for various groups of recipients, in many centers and at different times.

**Nela Kovačević** holds a BA in Spanish Philology from the University of Belgrade, Serbia (1997) and finished Postgraduate studies in 2001 at the Department of Spanish Philology at the University of Granada, where she earned her PhD in 2014 with the thesis *El mundo sefardí en la obra de Laura Papo y el lugar de la mujer en él* (The Sephardic world in the literary work of Laura Papo and the woman's place in it). She was awarded a doctoral fellowship by the Rothschild Foundation (2008–2009). Her areas of expertise are Sephardic studies, Sephardic culture, Sephardic woman, Judeo-Spanish language, Jewish studies, Hispanic studies; currently she is doing research on Jewish periodicals in Sarajevo between the two World Wars.

**Nela Kovačević**

## **The Emancipation of the Sephardic Woman in the Literary Work of Laura Papo “Bohoreta”**

During the Ottoman Empire, Bosnian Sephardic Jews lived quite isolated from the rest of the Bosnian population. For almost three centuries of isolation they managed to preserve the cultural heritage brought from their homeland Spain, from which they were expelled in 1492, i.e. oral tradition, customs and the language, known as Judeo-Spanish. This community was isolated until the Austro-Hungarian occupation, after which it started to change radically due to the inevitable process of modernization. The Sephardic population finally started to adapt to the outside world in all aspects of life—education, culture, way of living, etc.

All these changes are reflected in the literary work of Laura Papo (1891–1942), the only female Bosnian Sephardic writer, who wrote plays, poems, stories and essays in Judeo-Spanish. In her essay *La mužer sefardi en Bosna* (Sephardic woman in Bosnia) and in some of her stories and dramas, the author describes a patriarchal environment that changes and disappears with the time and the historical, economical and cultural circumstances. Within this frame, she offers an image of the Sephardic woman, her characteristics and her role in family life, focusing especially on her transformation from a patriarchal woman to an emancipated one. On her way to progress, the Sephardic woman accepts various changes, breaking up with her submissive role within the

family and the closed, strictly patriarchal way of life. Slowly, she leaves behind the conservative habits and ideas, ingrained in her people for centuries and accepts the new rules that western culture brought to Bosnia. She receives education, acquires various skills, starts to work, chooses a husband by herself, becomes conscious of herself, her possibilities and the importance of being independent.

The topic of this paper will be the change of the Sephardic woman from Bosnia, within the historical and cultural context, based on examples from Laura Papo’s work.

**Dijana Simić** is a university assistant of Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian (B/C/S) Literary and Cultural Studies in the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Graz. Her teaching and research focus on identity in Post-Yugoslav literatures, Gender Studies as well as migration and Memory Studies in the South Slavic context. After graduating in B/C/S philology in 2013, she attended the interdisciplinary doctoral program “Southeastern Europe” at the Center for Southeast European Studies at the University of Graz and continued her education in the field of Slovenian Philology at the Universities of Graz and Ljubljana. Since 2014, she has been coordinating the international CEEPUS teaching project, “Current Research Trends in Slavic Studies”. As a Marietta-Blau-fellow, she worked on her PhD project on “Narratives of Intimacy in Recent Bosnian-Herzegovinian Prose” at the Central European University in Budapest and the University of Sarajevo in 2017.

**Dijana Simić**

## **On Questions of Jewishness and Womanhood in the Yugoslav Context. An Intersectional Approach to Judita Šalgo's Early Prose Texts**

In December last year, the Serbian daily newspaper *Danas* (Today) published an article about Judita Šalgo (1941–1996), an author from Vojvodina. With its headline *Zaboravljena pesnikinja* (A forgotten poet), it points out that the work of the Hungarian-Jewish author, who wrote in Serbian and understood herself as a Yugoslav, has so far been neglected by the Serbian public and consequently also by South Slavic Studies.

Thus, research on Šalgo's poetry and prose is only gradually being conducted, mostly dedicated to her posthumously published, unfinished novel *Put u Birobidžan* (1997, *The Road to Birobidžan*). Referring to the works of the German slavist Eva Kowollik it can be stated that the author deals with the following biographically motivated aspects in her literary and essayistic texts: 1. the experience of the Shoah and the related trauma, 2. women's writing in general and feminist (anti-)utopia in particular, which are closely related to Šalgo's neo-avantgarde poetics, 3. processing the loss of home and identity that accompanied the collapse of Yugoslavia.

Within the frame of an intersectional analysis which emphasizes both gender identity and ethnicity in their correlation, the talk seeks to examine selected earlier prose texts by Šalgo in order to close the research gap mentioned earlier, focusing on the question of how female and Jewish experiences in the Yugoslav context are negotiated in the selected literary examples.

**Jasmina Huber** studied music (oboe) at the University of Ljubljana (Akademija za glasbo, Ljubljana) and graduated in 1985. She studied Musicology at the Academy of Music in Düsseldorf (Robert-Schumann-Hochschule Düsseldorf) and Jewish Studies and Yiddish language, culture and literature at the Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf. In 2013 she received her PhD at the Mannheim University of Music and Performing Arts (Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Mannheim). The title of her dissertation was *How much change can a tradition tolerate today? Singing and prayer in the Jewish Community Belgrade facing the challenges of today*. Since 2009 she has taught Yiddish and works as a research associate in the department of Jewish Studies at the Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf.

**Jasmina Huber**

## ***Omanut—Monthly for the Promotion of Jewish Culture as an Instrument of Educational Work in the Musical, Artistic, Literary and Theatrical Field***

The Jewish press and publishing activities on the territory of former Yugoslavia in the period between the two World Wars were mainly addressed to Jewish readers and therefore had little effect on the non-Jewish environment. In Zionist Zagreb the “Omanut—Society for the Promotion of Jewish Art” was founded in 1932. Its aim was to arouse the interest of Jews in Jewish music and literature and to promote young artists. It was the society’s objective to examine the possibility of establishing a link between historical and contemporary art. Furthermore, it aimed at creating a foundation for the promotion of Jewish art in the future, despite the wretched financial situation of the organization. This cultural association was at the center of Jewish cultural life, organizing numerous cultural events in Zagreb and throughout Croatia until the founding of the Independent State of Croatia in 1941.

The society published a 24-volume series with exclusively musical works in the *Edition Omanut* and in 1940 was the only one in Europe to print Jewish music. Since literary contributions were to be published as well, the “Omanut Society” founded the journal *Omanut—Monthly for the Promotion of Jewish Culture* in 1936.

On the one hand, through the *Edition Omanut* the entire “Omanut Society” gained notoriety, reputation and popularity in the Jewish cultural life worldwide; on the other hand, the Zionist-influenced journal in the Serbo-Croatian language played an important role among the Jews in Croatia as an instrument of educational work in the musical, artistic, literary and theatrical field.

This paper is mainly focused on this monthly, whose intention was the emergence of a Jewish cultural renaissance in Croatia. The monthly showed the intellectual achievements of Western and Eastern European Jewry. New connections were established and existing ones were expanded and deepened. Due to the wide and varied correspondence with cultural institutions, music editors and journalists from all over the world, the members of the society were able to familiarize themselves with all new styles and new musical and literary works, to receive unpublished manuscripts and to be up-to-date. The stated goal was to stop the assimilation process of the Jews in Croatia by constructing an ethnic-national Jewish identity.

**Mirjam Rajner** is a senior lecturer in the Jewish Art Department of Bar-Ilan University. She studied at the Belgrade University, Serbia, Hochschule für Jüdische Studien in Heidelberg, Germany and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. She completed her PhD at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the post-doctoral studies at the International Institute for Holocaust Studies in Yad Vashem, Israel. Her research and publications deal with the art and visual culture of the East, Central and Southeast European artists of Jewish origin active during the 19th century, the inter-war period and the Holocaust. She is co-editor of *Ars Judaica*, The Bar-Ilan Journal of Jewish Art.



**Mirjam Rajner**

## **Sarajevo's Forgotten Avant-Garde. The "Collegium Artisticum" and Jewish Creativity on the Eve of World War II**

In 1938, due to the worsening political situation in Europe, many young intellectuals studying abroad returned to their native Sarajevo, then a backwater Bosnian city in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Among them were a number of young Jews—architects, musicians, choreographers and visual artists of Sephardic and Ashkenazic origin, most of whom had to interrupt their studies in Prague. Returning home to an atmosphere of despair caused by poverty and political stagnation and acutely aware of the dangers that the spread of fascism and Nazism posed for liberal-minded Europeans, they opted for an avant-garde inspired action. Hoping to bring to Sarajevo some of the lively, avant-garde and artistic atmosphere characteristic of the Prague of the 1930s, filled with leftist émigré artists and writers, they formed a “synthetic theater” called the “Collegium Artisticum”. It was inspired by “Dorival 38”, a similar Prague avant-garde theater founded and directed by the Czech poet, journalist, musician and actor, Emil František Burian. “Collegium Artisticum”, which continued its activities until early 1941 at the very outset of World War II in Yugoslavia, combined music, pantomime, architecture, painting, film, drama and poetry. In addition, the members organized exhibitions and held

public lectures, all of which were meant to raise awareness of the upcoming danger and to offer solutions steeped in anti-fascism, leftism and communism.

Most of the group's participants joined Tito's partisans and managed to survive World War II. After the war, many achieved leading positions in the mainstream of Socialist Yugoslavia's cultural and political life, however their success seemed to encourage their detachment from this early, adolescent avant-garde enterprise, which sank into oblivion. But the “Collegium Artisticum” and its activities was to surface once more in the early 1990's, when Sarajevo, again threatened by war, sought in it inspiration and encouragement.

The paper will examine some of the “Collegium Artisticum's” unique enterprises, present the artists involved in them and offer a picture of a little-known period of intense avant-garde creative activity, which united Jews and non-Jews while stressing, at a time of threatening racial and ethnic animosity, belief in humanism and universalism.

**Mirjam Wilhelm** is a PhD student at the Department of Visual Culture Studies at Carl-von-Ossietzky-University Oldenburg. She studied at Goldsmiths College at the University of London and the University of Trier, where she completed her undergraduate degree in Art History. She holds a graduate degree in Art History and Curatorial Studies from Goethe-University Frankfurt/M. and Städelschule—Hochschule für Bildende Künste. Her research interests encompass 20th- and 21st-century avant-gardes in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Visual Primitivism and Jewish “Modernisms”.

**Mirjam Wilhelm**

## **On Vjera Biller, or: The (Im-)Possibilities of Being a Jewish Paintress. Female Artisanship within the 21st-century Interwar Avant-Gardes**

My presentation will focus—informed by an overall Panofskyian approach—on strategies of female artisanship within the MA, Sturm and Zenit avant-gardist movements during the 1920's, exemplified by a detailed art-historical case study of one particular and hitherto completely unrecognized protagonist in this realm: the Jewish paintress Vjera Biller. Born in Đakovo in 1903 to an Ashkenazi family of Austrian descent, Biller attended the Hungarian National Art Academy in Budapest, where her family had moved to as early as 1912. After engaging in different exhibitions with the MA group around Lajós Kassak, Biller moved back to Yugoslavia in 1924 and quickly became one of the most successful female figures within Zenitism, the Yugoslav avant-garde movement in Zagreb and Beograd. Her works were not only on permanent display at the Zenit Gallery in Beograd but were also reproduced in the monthly journal *Zenit*, published by Zenitist leader Ljubomir Micić. In 1922, Biller spent a year in Berlin exhibiting at Herwarth Walden's prominent Galerie Sturm and established connections to local expressionists. However, with the rise of National Socialism and after the "annexation" of Austria in 1938, Biller's life came under immediate threat. Having settled in Vienna two years prior to the "Anschluss", Biller was now repeatedly and involuntarily hospitalized in a Viennese psychiatry. In 1941 Biller was murdered in the "psychiatric ward" at Hartheim

during the Nazi's "euthanasia-program". Nevertheless, fragments of Biller's oeuvre were not destroyed by the Nazi-terror: This small series of artworks do not only attest to her artistic mastery of the expressionist medium of linocuts, but they also show a profound influence of elaborated folkloristic, primitivistic and above all Jewish imageries in terms of their iconography, which—at times—seem reminiscent of Marc Chagall's artistic renderings. A fact, that has not been addressed fully in prior research and has often resulted in the dismissal of Biller's artistic language as allegedly "foreign", "naïve" and "child-like". The little existing art-historical scholarship references such categorizations with almost tautological circularity slotting Biller's oeuvre as mere marginalia in questionable categories such as "the Balkan avant-garde". On the contrary, I will argue that Biller's leitmotif, derived from a primitivistic approach to Jewish imagery and far from being dilettante articulations, indicate her multi-focal engagement with her own triple marginalization: as an artist from Eastern Europe within the Berlin expressionist circles, as a Jewess within the Zenit, MA and Sturm contexts and finally, as a woman in an overall male-dominated, transnational avant-garde culture.

**Bojan Aleksov** is an associate professor of the History of South-eastern Europe at the University College London (UCL). He studied history in Belgrade, Budapest and Berlin and worked as a postdoc in Berlin and Florence. His main research interests are the relationship between religion and nationalism and the influence of modernization on religious institutions and popular religiosity in Central Europe and the Balkans. In the last few years he is researching the exodus of German (and other) Jews to the Balkans 1933–1945.

**Bojan Aleksov**

## **Memoirs of the Jewish Refugees in the Balkans**

Thousands of mostly Jews (and their partners or family members) fled to the Balkans after 1933. Some settled there whereas others were only in transit. Many were stuck when Yugoslavia and Greece were invaded in 1941 and brutally murdered. Others survived the war years in the Balkan highlands or Adriatic islands in hiding or joining local resistance movements. Historiography on the Jewish refugees in the Balkans is patchy at best because of the lack of traditional historical sources or biases in national historiographies and Holocaust studies. Many survivors, however, left testimonies describing in detail their experiences and the apparent paradox of the European backwaters and its peoples, offering refuge to people escaping from the very capitals of European culture and civilization (Vienna, Prague, Berlin).

My paper is the first attempt to analyze and situate this large body of literary and historiographical works. Refugee Jews in the Balkans could not be a more complex group, arriving from a multitude of countries and diverse class, political and social backgrounds. Scattered across the world after the war, with no formal links or organizations, their stories remained hidden for decades. Not being famous their authors did not boast any authority. Most saw themselves as protagonists and hardly as victims. Few of them recorded their experiences during or immediately after the plight and even those remained hidden for decades such as the diaries and recollections of Gertrude Naimann, Ludwig Biro or Irene

Grünbaum. Writers among the refugees like Theodor Csokor, Alexander von Sacher Masoch, Tilla Durieux, Dina Nelkman kept notes and wrote their novelistic accounts right after the war, but there was not much interest for the topic in post-war Europe. However, the impending death of some of the survivors and a fundamental shift of the general attitude towards the Holocaust in the 1980s prompted many to publish their memoirs or accounts of wartime survival in Yugoslavia or Albania. In my talk I will offer some preliminary conclusions on their literary and historical significance and (missing) relationship to the Jewish literature and culture in Southeast Europe.

**Ljiljana Dobrovšak** is a scientific adviser at the Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar in Zagreb. She studied History at the University of Zagreb, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences where she completed her MA and PhD. Her primary areas of research are the history of the Jews in the 19th and 20th centuries and the cultural history of World War I. She is the author of five books, editor of five books and one exhibition catalogue as well as 66 variously categorised academic papers published in Croatian and foreign academic journals and publications.

**Ljiljana Dobrovšak**

## **Branko Polić's Memoir Records**

Next to his memoir records, this paper presents Branko Polić (1924–2014) as a person who was a journalist, music writer, critic and Jewish activist. Branko Polić descends from a Jewish family from Zagreb. His family was detained by the Independent Croatian State's regime in camps in Kraljevica and Kampor (Island of Rab); until their liberation in 1943 family Polić joined the Yugoslav Partisan movement and survived the horrors of war. Branko Polić completed high school in 1945 in Zagreb, studied at the Sorbonne obtaining a degree in French Language and Literature. Later, he received another degree in English Language and Literature from the University of Zagreb. Under the influence of his stepfather, Prof. Fritz Lunzer (vocal pedagogics), Branko Polić—even though without previous education—became involved with music. After graduating from university, Polić worked first as a journalist and later as a music editor for Radio Zagreb. He is the author of numerous music shows as well as critical music reviews and essays which he published in Croatian and international journals. He published four memoirs resp. autobiographical records: *Vjetro-njasta klepsidra* (Airy Clepsydra. Autobiographical Notes 1924–1942, Zagreb, 2004), *Imao sam sreće* (Memoirs of a man who was lucky, Zagreb, 2006), *Pariz u srcu studenta* (Paris in the heart of a student, Zagreb, 2008) and *Na pragu budućnosti* (At the threshold of the future, Zagreb, 2010). The first book depicts his life from 1924 to 1942. It provides rich descriptions of Zagreb between the two World Wars emphasizing cultural events in the city. The second book follows events in Polić's life during the most

turbulent years of the 20th century, namely between 1942 and 1945. The third book tells about his stay in Paris and his studies from 1945 until August 1948. The fourth book as last biographical work documents the period from 1948 to 1950. Therefore, based on his style and the scope of his writings, his memoir records hold a unique place in Croatian Literature. Those are not the recollections of a politician, but of an “ordinary” man—a man who is at the same time witness, participant and companion as well as victim of the events which marked the turbulent times in Croatia inside Yugoslavian space. His records mark Polić as a meticulous writer who was endowed with incredible cognitive abilities to recollect every single detail, in particular those related to his parents and grandparents' contemporaries. He also took great care in recording events, expressions and personalities, turning his book into a valuable document not only about personal history, but also about so many known and unknown contemporaries. However, his memoirs are above all recollections about Polić's immediate and wider family, friends and teachers who were killed in the Holocaust.

**Kujtim Rrahmani** is a professor of Literature at the Institute of Albanology in Prishtina, Kosovo. He studied at the University of Prishtina and completed his PhD in Prishtina and his post-doctoral studies in Washington and Berlin. He has been a researcher/visiting professor in many research centers and universities abroad (University of Michigan, University of Freiburg, University of Heidelberg, LSE, Humboldt University, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris, Free University of Berlin etc.) His research interests encompass literature, anthropology and philosophy.



**Kujtim Rrahmani**

## **Historical-Fictional Faces of a Paradox. *The Memoirs of a Jew***

This paper aims to shed light on the complex Albanian-Jewish liaisons during World War II, through the interrogation of historical and fictional discourses in Kosovo. How did Kosovo Albanians (most of them Muslims) deal with Jews during World War II? What was their national/religious policy vis-à-vis Judaism in times of Nazism? How were national ideologies and religious doctrines intertwined? To what extent were these historical relations and their memories converted into literature?

Kosovo has been one of the safest Jewish shelters in South-eastern Europe. But, paradoxically the Nazi occupation was also “welcomed” by the Albanian population due to national and/or ideological circumstances. Not very often a historical event is transcended into fiction and the Kosovo literary imagination was an illustrative paradigm of this phenomenon. The historical novel *Kujtimet e një çifuti* (The Memoirs of a Jew) by Ardian Haxhaj deals with this topic. Throughout the novel a very complex ideological setting, which is transformed into a paradox of ideological exclusions and inclusions, is present. Historically, during World War II, Kosovo and other Albanian territories in Macedonia and Montenegro, experienced a kind of liberation. It seems a paradox but the Kosovo Albanians felt free under Nazi-fascist occupation, free from the Serbian regime. The interplay of the trinity homo

politicus—homo religiosus—homo poeticus within the historical and literary context will be examined in order to bring forward the big picture of this very intriguing topic.

**Olga Ungar** graduated from the Academy of Arts of Novi Sad, Serbia and continued to pursue higher education at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, where she earned an MFA degree. She completed her PhD in 2017, at the Program in Contemporary Jewry, Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan, with a dissertation concentrating on the Hungarian Jewish sculptor Michael Kara (1885–1964) as a doorway to the historical analysis of Hungarian-speaking East-Central European Jewish communities. Her current research examines the phenomenon of the erection of Holocaust memorials in Jewish cemeteries in Vojvodina, the northern province of Serbia, by local Jewish communities in the immediate aftermath of World War II. She is currently employed as a content developer and educator at the E-Learning Department at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies. She is also active as an independent artist.

**Olga Ungar**

## **Remembering the Victims of the Holocaust. Monuments in Jewish Cemeteries and Public Spaces**

At the beginning of World War II, 18,518 Jews lived on the territory of Vojvodina. The number of the victims of the Holocaust is 15,411—81% of the pre-war Vojvodina Jewish population. In my talk I will investigate the post-war memorialization of Jewish victims of the Holocaust in Vojvodina by providing examples of relevant commemorative monuments and memorials and practices around them.

The presentation will include a photo-documentation and an analysis of the memorials commemorating the victims of the Holocaust erected in Jewish cemeteries, as well as of monuments erected outside Jewish cemeteries, such as memorial plaques on buildings that belong (or once belonged) to Jewish communities or at places where those once stood. In addition, I will analyze selected memorials dedicated to all victims of fascism. The criterion for selecting this type of memorial is its goal to commemorate the Jews who perished during World War II, either by listing the names or by giving the number of the Jewish victims. Included are also memorials that were erected on the sites of former camps and other places of mass-civilian extermination, even if they do not explicitly mention the Jewish victims. Through commemorative

practices by the Jewish communities, the Federation of Jewish Communities of Serbia, the Embassy of Israel in Serbia as well as by local and state authorities these places became crucial for the formation of a memory culture, for the collective memory and for the identity of certain cities.

Both groups of monuments, in Jewish cemeteries and public spaces, will be analyzed from today's point of view, through the demythologization of their ideological function and by analyzing their aesthetic and historical value and their role in preserving the memory of the vanished Jewish communities. In addition, I hope to draw attention to the rich Jewish material culture in Vojvodina, but also to the alarming situation of the Jewish cemeteries and other Jewish heritage sites in the province.

**Rudolf Klein** is a professor of 19th- and 20th-century architectural history at Saint Steven University in Budapest, formerly at Tel Aviv University, David Azrieli School of Architecture.

He researches 19th century synagogues in Central Europe and the Jewish contribution to secular architecture from the early emancipation to late 20th-century movements. He published 12 books in the field of architectural theory and history. In 2017, he published his main work, a comprehensive book titled *Synagogues in Hungary 1781–1918*. In 2018, he published the first comprehensive book on Jewish funerary art, titled *Metropolitan Jewish cemeteries in Central and Eastern Europe* published by ICOMOS Germany. He is currently preparing a comprehensive volume on synagogues in the Habsburg Empire.

**Rudolf Klein**

## **Metropolitan Jewish Cemeteries of the Balkans. Art, Morphology and Trajectories of Influence**

The talk presents parts of a survey on metropolitan Jewish cemeteries in Europe carried out by the author between 2008 and 2018 within the frame of a UNESCO World Heritage nomination procedure. Its scope includes elements of fine arts, architecture, urban planning, landscaping, general history, Jewish studies, monument preservation, typography, poetry, etc.

The talk gives a short history of the cemeteries and focuses on grave typology, cemetery morphology, gates and fences, tahara houses and ceremonial buildings, religious and professional symbols on the graves, different types of social segregation inside the Jewish communities as reflected in cemetery planning, inscriptions, vegetation and many other factors in order to chart processes of secularisation, modernisation and inclusion of the Balkan funerary art in the European mainstream.

Seven cemeteries will be presented, in alphabetic order: the Ashkenazic Jewish Cemetery in Belgrade, the Sephardic Jewish Cemetery in Belgrade, the Ashkenazic Jewish Cemetery in Bucharest, called "Philantropia", the Sephardic Jewish Cemetery in Bucharest, the Jewish section of the Central Cemetery of Sofia, the Great Sephardic Jewish Cemetery in Sarajevo and the Jewish Section of the Zagreb Mirogoj Central Cemetery.

A special feature of this talk will analyse the trajectories of influences, the spread of Austro-German funeral traditions to the territories formerly belonging to the Ottoman Empire, the interaction between Ashkenazim and Sephardim on a local level and wider, the Jewish-Christian dialogue and the current condition as well as future perspectives of metropolitan cemeteries on the Balkans.

The talk closes with reflections on the historical and art historical significance of Jewish burial places in the Balkans, their condition and the main principles of their preservation as well as their utilisation for cultural and touristic purposes.

**Maciej Czerwiński** is a professor of Slavic Philology at Jagiellonian University in Kraków. He habilitated in 2013 at Jagiellonian University, where he also received his PhD (2004) and MA (2000); and he was a visiting assistant in Research in the History Department at Yale University in 2003 and a fellow at the Imre Kertész Kolleg in Jena (2015). He has authored numerous publications on South Slavic languages, literatures and cultures in the 20th century in semiotic, discursive and historical perspective, including five books and edited volumes as well as literary criticism and essays on Balkan affairs. He co-authored an exhibition on Ivan Meštrović in Krakow (2017).

**Maciej Czerwiński**

## **The Question of Guilt in the Novel by Miljenko Jergović *Ruta Tannenbaum***

In contrast to Serbian literature, the Holocaust is poorly represented in Croatian fiction. In contemporary literature apart from the novel in question (and some episodes in other novels such as *The Walnut Mansion*), fictional books on the Shoah are hardly written with the exception of Daša Drndić and Nebojša Lujanović (the Romani Holocaust). There are also historical and firsthand accounts (Slavko and Ivo Goldstein).

Jergović's narrative is set in the Zagreb milieu. It is rather gloomy since all Croatian characters are depicted either as evil or opportunistic. They either contribute to the persecution of Jews (the Ustasha) or do nothing to stop it ("normal" citizens). The novel provoked a hot discussion in Croatia. Some critiques of a right political affiliation were called anti-Croatian (Croats were metonymically associated with the citizens of Zagreb). Jergović was condemned as a stranger (a Bosnian who does not know the kajkavian dialect of Zagreb and does not have relevant knowledge about the historical reality concerning World War II). Yet, the novel is a fictional account. It is indeed set within particular chronotopic constraints but it attempts primarily to understand the nature of evil in general, implicitly referring to Ivo Andrić's story *Buffet Titanic*. Whilst Andrić, however, was searching for psychological foundations of evil, Jergović is concentrating on social dimen-

sions. It is social interactions, which transform human beings into criminals. Thus, in contrast to Andrić, Jergović opened the question about the Croatian role in the Holocaust (this is why he was criticized).

In the year of the publication of the novel, 2006, the new permanent exhibition in the Jasenovac Memorial was launched. Some scholars argued that it implicitly whitewashed Croats of their guilt. Jergović's book gave a different view but did it in a figurative way. I will discuss the role of fictionality as a performative act that constructs controversial historical "truths", which are open then to critics.

**Rebecca Krug** is a research associate of Russian and South Slavic literatures at the Department of Slavic, Turkic and Circum-Baltic Studies at the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz in Germany. She studied Slavic studies, political science and ethnology at the University of Mainz, where she also completed her PhD on the influence of Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* on the Russian literature in the 1920s and 1930s.



**Rebecca Krug**

## **Just a Small Cog in the Wheel? Imagined Identities and the “Banality of Evil” in David Albahari’s *Gec i Majer***

David Albahari’s *Gec i Majer*, written in 1998, is the first novel which deals with the extermination of Jews in the concentration camp Sajmište near Belgrade in the years 1941/1942.

The novel recounts how in the summer of 1990, shortly before the violent break-up of Yugoslavia, a middle-aged teacher of Serbo-Croatian language and Yugoslavian literature from Belgrade starts to explore the history of his family. Due to his Jewish origins and his profession, he finds himself—in the face of the ever more growing nationalism—in a personal crisis. He is forced to create a new identity for himself by recollecting his Jewish roots. Therefore he starts to reconstruct the fate of his ancestors—who were interned and killed in the concentration camp Sajmište—by the aid of precise investigations and historical documents. Doing so, he tries to fill the gaps of these objective sources with his own imagination. However, the first-person narrator does not only imagine the last months in the lives of his murdered relatives, he also imagines the perpetrators. In order to understand real people like his relatives, he needs to create “unreal” people first. In that way, Götz and Meyer, the historically verified drivers of the lethal gas vans, do not only advance to the archetype of Nazi accomplices,

in the narrator’s fantasy they are—although always faceless—also unexpectedly normal and human, full of everyday worries. Seeing themselves as conscientious soldiers who only take orders and want to do their jobs as carefully as possible, they neither analyze their killing business nor the system behind the bureaucratically organized and scientifically optimized extermination of the Jews. Drawing on Hannah Arendt’s thesis of the ‘banality of evil’, I will focus on the narrator’s search for identity and his projection of Götz and Meyer as compared to that of his Jewish relatives.

**Miranda Levanat-Peričić** was born in Rijeka 1966. After she graduated in Indology and Comparative Literature at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb (Croatia), she lives, works and teaches since 1992 in Zadar, where she completed her Master Degree in Linguistics. She received her doctorate in Comparative Literature 2012 at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. Today she is employed as an associate professor at the Department of Croatian Studies, University of Zadar where she teaches courses in comparative literature, contemporary literature and literary theory. In addition, she is head of the branch Interdisciplinary humanities on Postgraduate doctoral study of Humanities at University of Zadar. Her various research interests include literary posthumanism, speculative fiction and dystopian novels, monster theory/monster studies, post-Yugoslav literatures and Balkan Studies. Recently she published two books in Croatian: *Introduction to the Monster Theory: from Humbaba to Caliban* (2014) and *Comparative Binoculars: on Croatian Literature and Culture* (2017).

**Miranda Levanat-Peričić**

## **(Re)Writing the Holocaust in Aharon Appelfeld's and Daša Drndić's Novels. Lost and Found Languages**

Aharon Appelfeld (1932–2018) was an Israeli writer from Bucovina who wrote in Hebrew, recalling in his prose almost exclusively Eastern Europe, the lost Jewish world of Czernowitz. Among the many stories, he wrote on the basis of his experiences as a survivor of the Shoah, there is one—*Sippur Hayyim*, 1999 (The Story of a Life, 2004)—which is partly included as intertext in the novel *Totenwände* by the Croatian authoress Daša Drndić (1946–2018). Although Appelfeld's and Drndić's thematic foci are mostly the same, i.e.—the (post)Holocaust world with alienation, displacement and exile as frequent motifs—their style and genre choice differ significantly. While Appelfeld started in his writing from his own traumatic experience without any openly expressed social engagement, Daša Drndić wrote about the Holocaust from an outside position, as a non-Jewish writer who embraced the responsibility to transmit the experience of trauma, explicitly accusing post-Holocaust Europe for being built on the looting of Jewish property. In contrast to Appelfeld who tried to escape from historical facts and documents and who did write about unutterable emotions, Drndić incorporated in her prose documents, photos, court records, original testimonies and lists of victims' names. Settling in Palestine in 1946, Appelfeld learnt

Hebrew but rarely recalls and depicts his childhood memories in this language. After leaving her former life in Belgrade in the 1990s, Daša Drndić also had to learn the “new” form of Croatian. Although she did it so reluctantly, this inspired her to a creative research of language and style. However, while Appelfeld's style is minimalistic, full of silence and pauses which have to be filled by the reader, Drndić's novels are full of facts and ready-made material that need to be read carefully by the reader as well who will be able to differentiate between the factual and the fictional. Furthermore, the most interesting question is how Daša Drndić connects the Holocaust narrative with the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. In his book *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust* (1988) James E. Young suggested that literary and historical truths of the Holocaust may not be entirely separable. Starting from his statement that difference between “hard history” and “softness in their literary reconstruction” is kind of a false problem, this paper will explore the different genre choices in writing trauma and the plurality of meanings generated with different discourses, reaching from the (pseudo)autobiographic to the (meta)historiographical.

**Sabina Giergiel** is an associate professor of Slavonic Literatures at the Department of Philology at the Opole University in Poland. She graduated from Slavonic Philology (specialization: Serbian literature) at the Jagiellonian University. She completed her habilitation in the field of memory in contemporary prose writers from the former Yugoslavia (book: *To Save by Memory. The Practices of Remembering and Forgetting in the Contemporary Post-Yugoslavian Prose*, Opole 2012) at the University of Opole. She was co-author and researcher of the project “Emigration Literature of the Visegrád Group and Other Slavic Nations” within the Visegrád Fund grant. Her current research focuses on the problem of Holocaust memory in the culture of the former Yugoslavia.

**Sabina Giergiel**

## **Additional Testimony. Photographs in the Prose of Daša Drndić and Aleksandar Hemon**

In my presentation, I will reflect on the role of photographs in the works of Daša Drndić and Aleksandar Hemon. Mixing fictional and documentary modes is a characteristic feature of their texts. It is achieved among others by utilizing visual representations of the past. In my paper I aim to outline the strategies of visualization applied by the two authors (especially the traumatic, Holocaust-related experience), which materialize through photographs included in their works of literature.

In the case of Drndić the visuals include for instance contemporary or archival photographs of places marked by the Holocaust and of Jewish inhabitants of Vienna as well as portraits of war criminals. In Hemon's case, archival photographs complement the story about the murder of a Jewish boy, which took place in America in 1908. Generally speaking, in both authors' texts the photographs function as concretisation of the memory of injustice, of trauma and ultimately of the Holocaust.

In both cases, the photographs are by no means neutral images though they are commonly perceived as such. Interaction between the text (itself skirting the boundary between fact and fiction) and the image puts the latter in a position that is far from neutral. In Hemon's works the photos illustrate the successful attempt of the photographer to assume the prerogative of interpretation.

The time perspective of the recipient (reader/viewer) facilitates, though, an interpretation different from the one initially assumed. Transformed by the passage of time, such photographs—while still playing the traditional role of reference—map not the object but rather the social hierarchy (of power and subordination). In Drndić's case, the photos are often used as an inventory (archival) practice, but they constitute predominantly a way of overcoming the crisis, related to the intention of giving an account of the past, particularly a testimony on the Holocaust.

**Eva Kowolik** is a research assistant at the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Halle-Wittenberg. She studied at the University of Halle-Wittenberg and the University of Voronezh (Russia). She completed her PhD at the University of Halle-Wittenberg. Her research interests include war and trauma in contemporary South Slavic literature, children and youth literature.

**Eva Kowollik**

## **Hidden Jewish Identity from an Intermedial Perspective. Strategies of Postmemory in Filip David's Novel *Kuća sećanja i zaborava* and Goran Paskaljević's Film *Kad svane dan***

Filip David (\*1940), along with David Albahari, is considered one of the best-known contemporary Serbian authors of Jewish descent. His 2014 novel *Kuća sećanja i zaborava* (The House of Remembering and Forgetting) thematizes Jewish identity in relation to the trauma of the Shoah.

In 2012, Filip David wrote the screenplay (together with Goran Paskaljević) for Paskaljević's film *Kad svane dan* (When Day Breaks), which deals with the retired music professor from Belgrade Miša Volf, who learns by chance of his Jewish heritage. As child he had survived with a false identity the camp on the old fairgrounds outside Belgrade and certain death in a gas van. Filip David later incorporated this story as a separate story line into his novel *Kuća sećanja i zaborava*.

Two complexes of questions and considerations will guide my presentation. First, how can the motif of the hidden child be described on the level of the plot in the novel and film with Marianne Hirsch's concept of post-memory and, thus, what role does

the Southeastern European—here Serbian—perspective play in the global discourse of post-memory in the context of the Shoah? What specific strategies are available to literature and film as a medium of (post-)memory? Second, the chapter “Kad svane dan” is specifically contextualized by the actual plot of the novel. Plot fragments in Paskaljević's film (e.g. the stigmatizing of Roma and refugees from Bosnia) serve a similar contextualizing function. How, then, is the memory and remembrance of the Shoah in Serbia placed, interpreted through these various intermedial framings? What other conclusions can be drawn when one considers as well Paskaljević's non-Jewish identity, his commitment to socially controversial questions and, further, Filip David's own understanding of himself as a Jewish author?

**Dona Danon** studied Social Anthropology at the Central European University in Hungary. She finished her B.A. in Ethnology with a minor in Spanish language and literature at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb. She is a correspondent of *Ha-Kol*, a Jewish newsletter in Croatia. Her research focuses on the renegotiation of Jewish identities in ex-Yugoslavia after 1991, especially on the social adaptation to nation-states and capitalism through a generational perspective. She wrote on Bosnian Sephardic women identities and their multiple migrations through their personal histories, as well as on the redefinition of the concept of home and social identity in the post-war multi-ethnic villages in Croatia.



**Dona Danon**

## **Adaptation of Two Generations of Zagreb Jews to Post-Socialism and the New Croatian Nation-State**

My presentation shows how two successive generations of Zagreb Jews, one born in the 1960s and the other in the 1970s, are adapting to the new circumstances of post-socialism and the new Croatian State. The older group's late formative years were in the 1980s, the time of late socialism, while the younger group's were in the 1990s, a time marked by exclusivist and xenophobic nationalism. Reflecting on the socio-political context of the 1990s and the 2000s, using the method of semi-structured interviews, I investigate how these two generations, growing up in two ideologically different contexts, articulate their relationship towards the new nation-state and society and how they construct their concepts of Jewishness.

A majority of my informants replaced their earlier Yugoslav civic identity with an ethnic Jewish one. From one side, this shift in identity conceptions represented a strategy to distance themselves from what was going on in Croatia, but from the other side, they may not have been accepted as 'authentic Croatians' because a majority of them were born in mixed marriages and some had clearly non-Croatian family names. However, a significant distinction between these two generations is that the younger one embraced traditional and religious aspects of being Jewish, while the older one continued to develop a so-called cultural or humanistic expression of Jewishness which flourished in late socialism.

Concerning the state and its territory, the older group tends to identify with either a narrower space (the city of Zagreb or its quarters) or a broader space than the Croatian state (as members of the former Yugoslavia comprising Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia), while the younger group does not question their identification with the territory of Croatia. They mainly accept the fact of Croatian sovereignty and themselves as its citizens. In addition, older informants expressed a certain loss of security and alienation towards the post 1991 society, while the younger ones seem better adapted to nationalist and neo-liberal discourse/culture along with a more materialistic and conservative orientation or value system.

Therefore, I argue that the big socio-political shift which occurred in the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia and Croatia had direct and significant impacts on creating such a difference between these two consecutive generations, something that would "normally" occur over a much longer period of time. It is possible, too, that those external/contextual factors might have had a greater impact on the category of generation, than on other categories of gender, class, education, etc. within this minority group.

**Bettina Hofmann** is senior lecturer in American studies at the University of Wuppertal, Germany. Her research focuses on American ethnic literatures. Her latest publications include *Performing Ethnicity, Performing Gender: Transcultural Perspectives*, ed. Bettina Hofmann and Monika Mueller. New York: Routledge, 2017. *Translated Memories: Transgenerational Perspectives on the Holocaust*, ed. Bettina Hofmann and Ursula Reuter will be published with Lexington Books in 2020.

**Bettina Hofmann**

## **George H. W. Bush Sr. in Babi Yar. Aleksandar Hemon on History and Immigration**

Among contemporary Jewish immigrant writers, Aleksandar Hemon (born in 1964), recipient of the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award among others, is certainly one of the more distinguished authors. David Bezmozgis, Gary Shteyngart, Lara Vapnyar or Anya Ulinich are other important names on the contemporary literary scene and have both an impact on American literature in general and Jewish writing in particular. These authors immigrated to North America (Canada and the U.S.) after the collapse of the Soviet Union and Russian is their substratum language. In their writings, they depict the immigrant experience at the beginning of the 21st century by discussing the transition from successor states (Russia, Ukraine, Latvia) to the New World. In contrast to this cohort, Hemon was born in Sarajevo, Bosnia and thus comes from a different linguistic, geographical and political region. Nevertheless, the disintegration of Yugoslavia with the ensuing civil war happened in the wake of the break down of the Soviet Union and thus links Hemon to the other Jewish authors of Eastern Europe.

In his novels, Hemon time and again turns to questions of historic continuity and discontinuity between Europe and the U.S. and establishes repeatedly links to (Jewish) Ukrainian history in particular. For instance, in his novel *Nowhere Man* (2002), one of

the major characters from Sarajevo attends a speech by the late George H.W. Bush at Babi Yar, a scene in which Jewish, European and American history coincide. The Ukraine is also the place of origin of many who early in the 20th century immigrated to the U.S. and made American Jewry into what it is like today. Names such as Abraham Cahan, Anzia Yezierska come to mind as the founders of Jewish American literature.

In my talk I will situate Hemon in this intersection of Jewish immigrant writers, both of the 20th and the 21st century and how he constructs history from his marginal position.

**Goran Lazičić** is PhD-candidate at the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Graz. He has completed his graduate studies at the Department of Serbian Literature, Faculty of Philology at the University of Belgrade and his master studies at the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Vienna. He works as project assistant at the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Graz and external lecturer at the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Klagenfurt. He is currently a DOC-Fellow of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

**Goran Lazičić**

## **Kabbalah Revisited in Milošević's Serbia. The Case of the Novel *Leeches* by David Albahari**

The paper focuses on the novel *Pijavice* (2005) (*Leeches*, 2011) by the contemporary Serbian-Jewish author David Albahari (b. 1948). In historical respect the plot of the novel unfolds just before the NATO bombing of Serbia and in the final phase of Slobodan Milošević's rule. The first person narrator is a Belgrade journalist, though not Jewish himself, but in close contact with a group of local Jewish intellectuals. After publishing a series of subversive political articles, the narrator receives numerous death threats from far right and anti-Semitic organizations and finally leaves the country. Based on narrative patterns of paranoia, theories of conspiracy and interpretations of the Kabbalah, Albahari's novel is a subversive political narrative about Serbian nationalism.

In the paper, I will focus on a curious manuscript that plays an important role in the plot. It depicts the history of Belgrade Jews since the 18th century, i.e. after their settling in the former border zone between the Habsburg and the Ottoman empires. After reading it, the protagonist tries to explain the mysterious events around him based on Jewish mysticism and Kabbalah. The manuscript is described as an extraordinary, hybrid text, an example of hypertext, which refers to various philosophical and literary traditions, to the old Chinese scripture *I Ching*, the Kabbalah-in-

fluenced magical concept of an "absolute book" in early German Romanticism, to *The Book of Sand* by Jorge Luis Borges. In the analysis, I will focus, firstly on intertextual aspects between the novel and Kabbalistic traditions (Gershom Scholem); secondly on the author's diverse narrative approaches and modes of referring to the Kabbalah heritage (irony, parody, fantastic features, etc.); and thirdly on the question how this postmodern narrative adaptation of Jewish tradition goes along with the socially and ideologically critical literary engagement in the post-Yugoslav context.

**Sonja Koroliov** took a double First in Greats (Classics) at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where she also completed a Masters degree in Modern Languages (Russian and German). She moved to Heidelberg for her doctorate on the Russian and Jewish philosopher Lev Shestov. She has worked as a classicist and ancient philosopher, as a lecturer in Russian literature at the Humboldt University and as a researcher at the Interdisciplinary Centre for Research on the European Enlightenment in Halle/Wittenberg. Since 2012, she has been teaching Russian and Southeastern European literature at the University of Innsbruck. She is currently writing a book on laziness and doing nothing.

**Sonja Koroliov**

## **Multidirectional Irony. Time, Space and Humour in Angel Wagenstein's novels *Isaac's Torah* and *Farewell, Shanghai***

This paper will look at the literary work of the Bulgarian and Jewish author Angel Raymond Wagenstein. His extremely changeful life reads like a panorama of Europe in the 20th century. He has been a refugee, a film student, a guerrilla, a war reporter; he was both highly honoured and sentenced to death. After World War II, he made films and worked successfully as a screenwriter and director both in Eastern and Western Europe. He has also written prize-winning novels that were translated into numerous languages.

Nevertheless, his work is not as well known as it could be and has rarely been the object of literary scholarship.

In this paper, I will look at how time and space, their relationship and their shifts work together and flow into the specific type of humorous story telling employed by Angel Wagenstein in his novels *Isaac's Torah* and *Farewell, Shanghai*. I will also set this exploration in the context of multidirectional memory as explained by Michael Rothberg by highlighting the interplay of Holocaust memory with discourses of decolonisation. Furthermore, I will look at the role of Jewish humour and story telling as a token of continuity in an age of historical upheaval.

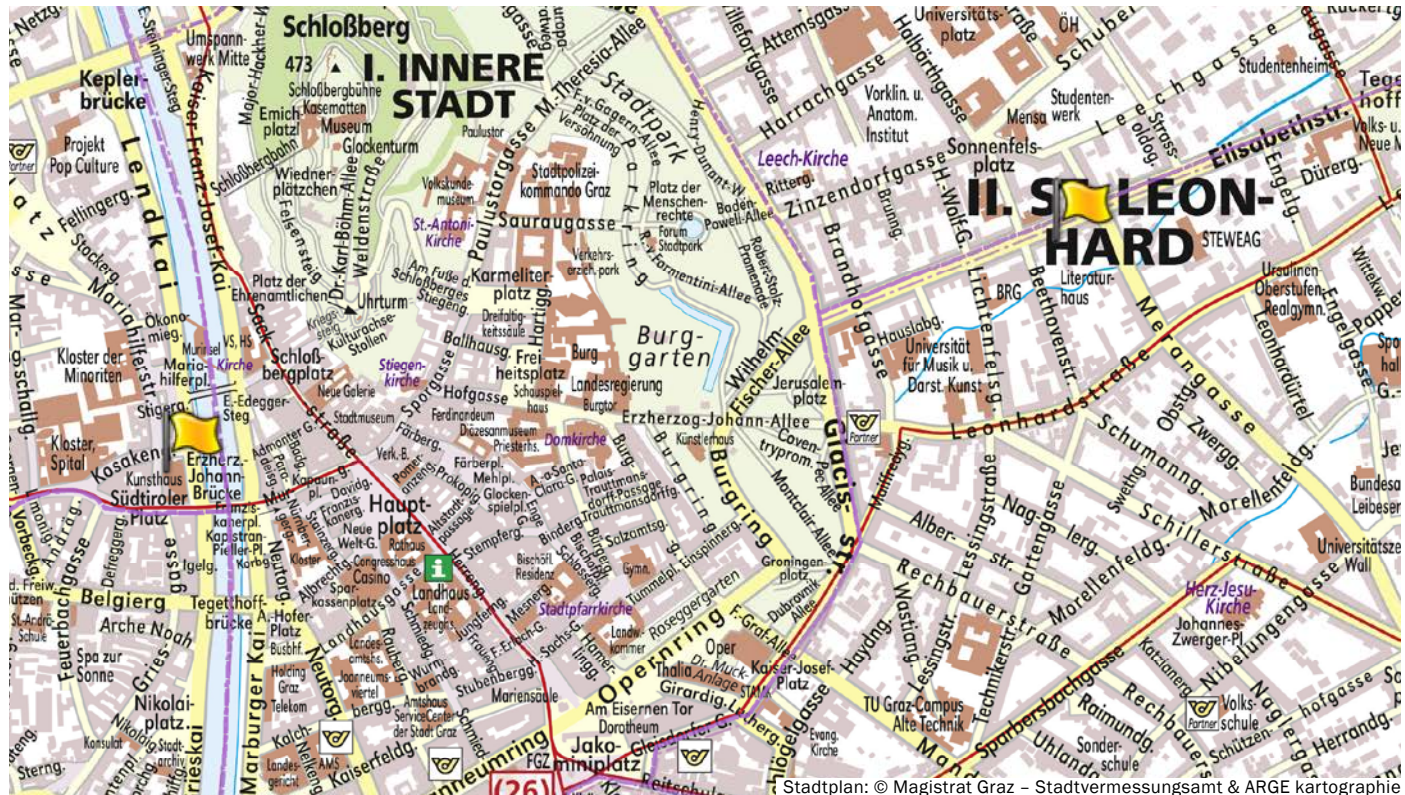




# City Map

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