

Krystian Propola, University of Rzeszów

The Fate of Jews in the Soviet Union and on the Eastern Front During World War II in Light of Israeli and Jewish Russian-language Media

My studies focus on the role of Israeli and Jewish media, and in particular Russian-language web portals, in shaping historical memory of former Soviet Jews and their descendants. By applying methods characteristic of both historical research and media studies, I try to answer a number of questions about the role of memories and history in Russian-language Jewish media.

Because of the subject of my research, it is extremely important to me to determine what function memories fulfill in the Russian-language Jewish media content, and most of all, who the authors of them actually are. Are the veterans or the victims of the crime predominant among them? These questions seem to be crucial, because thanks to them it is possible to determine whether the articles published in press and other mass media are used to create a pattern of Jewish behavior during the war or if an attempt is made to create myths around selected participants of the mentioned events. For this reason, it is also important to me to define the concept of “heroism” as understood by the authors.

The results of my studies make it possible to present the characteristic elements of the historical narrative of Russian-speaking Jewish communities in Israel, the United States, Germany and Russia in a broader perspective. They also contribute to showing the most significant differences in the interpretation of the events of World War II between the Soviet historiography, the contemporary Russian politics of memory and former Soviet Jews. My project is closely related to the topic of my dissertation entitled ‘The Fate of Jews in the Soviet Union and on the Eastern Front During World War II - in the Light of the Online Edition of the ‘Yevreiski Mir’ Newspaper’.

Tom Eshed, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

“Jerusalem or Babylon”: Israel and the Universalization of Holocaust Memory during the 1980s

In November 1978, then United States President, Jimmy Carter, announced the establishment of the “President’s Commission on the Holocaust”, to be chaired by the intellectual, author, activist and Holocaust survivor, Eli Wiesel. The commission’s work led to the establishment of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, opened to the public in 1993. This was part of broader developments at the time in which Holocaust memory and commemoration became increasingly important not only in the United States, but globally. In Israel, this change was understood both as an opportunity and a challenge. As Dov Shilansky, Holocaust survivor and Israeli politician, explained in the early 1980s, they worried that the increased American interest in Holocaust memory will move the center of Holocaust memory from Jerusalem to “Babylon”.

In my paper I will follow the reaction of the Israeli government and Yad Vashem to the universalization of Holocaust memory during the 1980s. I shall examine two conferences organized by the Israeli government, the “World Assembly to Commemorate Jewish Resistance and Combat during WWII” of 1983, and the “World Assembly to Commemorate 40 Years since the Defeat of Nazi Germany and Her Satellites” of 1985, which were a direct reaction to these changes and were meant to turn foreign public attention in general, and of diaspora Jewry in particular, to Israel as the world center for Holocaust commemoration. I will show how the contents of these conferences were envisioned as means to create a universalized memory of the Holocaust originating from the Jewish state. More broadly, I will discuss why the universalization of Holocaust memory was considered both a risk to the Israeli public image and

its foreign policy, and an opportunity for Israel to improve its cultural relations with Europe and the United States.

Roi Irani, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

“Sexuality as a Practice” in Historical Research as a Theoretical Opportunity: A Case Study from the State of Israel’s Formative Era

This paper discusses the main reasons for the lack of historiography and social research on sexuality 'as a practice' (Howard 1999). It is done in the context of the Zionist movement, the Yishuv, and the state of Israel, before the wide usage of contraceptive pills (roughly 1968). Theory of practice has thus far been used primarily in the context of non-normative sexuality (Engelsteina and Rachamimov 2019; Brom and Zaritsky 2022; Boord 2019 is an exception). The current paper argues that it is crucial to expand this theoretical lens to observe also heteronormativity. Luckily, contemporary changes in sexual discourse and recently-exposed personal archives of deceased historical agents, make new primary written and oral sources accessible, thus making sexuality 'as a practice' methodologically possible. The paper uses as a case study the sexuality practiced among young Polish-originated men, "soon-to-become Middle Class" heterosexuals (Helman 2007), during Israel`s formative era. It argues that research referring to sexuality as a discursive phenomenon, or from a socio-medical perspective, yields important but very limited knowledge (Boyarin 1997; Cavaglione 1999; Gluzman 2007; Kozma 2010; Yosef 2010; Kanias 2017). Namely, studying what is perceived as appropriate sexuality and the main agents structuring it, may provide knowledge on a very specific and hegemonic group. In contrast, asking how historical agents have experienced sexual activities, i.e., made sense of their own sexual practices and translated sexual norms into actions, leads to a more diverse knowledge of sexualities and of diverse agents. This allows to situate sexual practices in the life of agents according to their gender, class and ethnic identities. Moreover, it highlights moments of meetings and exchanges of norms. Finally, the tools presented in this paper facilitate broader view the effect of general daily practices on changing and adapting global norms in other fields.

Wawoczny Magdalena, Cracow University of Economics

National culture and the perception of risk in tourist behavior on the example of residents of Poland and Israel

The issue of the impact of risk on consumer decisions on the tourism market is addressed to a limited extent in Polish and foreign literature. In recent decades, there have been many economic and social transformations in the world, caused by political, economic, or natural crises. They resulted in changes in the behavior of market entities, including consumers, in the area of meeting their needs, including tourist needs. Consumer behavior on the tourism market is accompanied by various dimensions of risk, which manifest themselves with different strength. The perception of risk, its types, multiplicity and strength is conditioned by many factors; in the work among them, special attention will be paid to national culture. It should be emphasized that national culture plays a significant role in risky situations, given that the perception of risk is shaped by the cultural values in force in a given society. As consumer behaviors are "carriers of the cultural content of societies", it is the national culture that determines the behavior of tourists in the decision-making process on the tourism market; at the same time, it is shaped by various factors, e.g., age, gender (i.e., demographic factors). Each individual has a personal culture, thus creating a national culture, because it has individual characteristics resulting from the character, as

well as from the characteristics of the nation in which it grew up. The research will be conducted among the inhabitants of Poland and Israel, as representatives of two countries representing different cultures.

In my research I also deal with the problem of image of Israel as a tourist destination among Polish inhabitants. Israel is still considered a destination mainly for pilgrimages; the main purpose of travel is to visit places of worship. It is associated as a dangerous place, with a long history of conflict, but attractive for tourists. In further research in the field of marketing and economics, I try to explore what steps can be taken to modify the image of Israel.

Jakub Katulski, Jagiellonian University

Perception of Israel and Jewish National Identity among the Polish Jewish Diaspora after 1991

According to the 2011 census, some 7,500 Polish citizens reported being of Jewish nationality. Numerous Jewish organizations are active in Poland and operate both through cooperation with Polish institutions and partners in Israel. 1991 was chosen as the starting point of the research, the moment when diplomatic relations between Poland and Israel were re-established, followed by a revival of relations between the nations. Israeli politics absorb Polish public opinion, as evidenced by the relatively frequent presence of this topic in journalism. It is therefore important to examine the identity and perceptions of the Polish Jewish community, which will help in assessing their influence on politics, social life and international relations.

The following hypotheses have been put forward: a) the presence and activity of the Jewish Diaspora influences Poland's relations with Israel, b) the experience of successive generations of Jews influences their attitude towards Israeli policy. The hypotheses will be verified through answering the following research questions: a) how did the respondents' experience influence their decision to live in Poland?, b) how do Jews in Poland feel connected to Israel?, c) how do Jews living in Poland interpret Israeli policies?, d) how do Jews living in Poland interpret historical events that they and/or their ancestors experienced? Answering these research questions will help determine how Jews living in Poland self-identify, what ties they declare to Israel, and their attitude toward Poland.

The main research method will be a semistructured interview, used along with a comparative and case study analysis. The respondents will be Jews living in Poland, both those born in Poland and those emigrating to Poland. It will be crucial to apply quantitative analysis to the content of the interview, along with qualitative capture. An important role will also be played by a search of archival and press materials.

Agnieszka Jez, The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw

Music and dance in Zionist youth movements in the Second Polish Republic in the light of publications and archival materials

My thesis concerns the problem of presence and function of music and dance in the Zionist youth movements in interwar Poland, especially in Ha-Shomer ha-Tzair and Agudat Ha-Noar ha-Ivri "Akiba". In my research I mostly based on press sources in Polish (but also in Hebrew and Yiddish) and the archival material collected during the scholarship from the TAU University and the interviews with the Holocaust Survivors in Poland and Israel as well. These materials, often unique, are abundantly quoted in the dissertation, which was not only to present them, but also to present a unique picture of the world seen through the eyes of the youngest members of the Jewish community living in interwar Poland. Describing this world from an emic perspective allows us to capture the details that are sometimes

eluded in the study of the micro-history of everyday life, which was the territory of Jewish experiences and of children and adolescents. Their special situation in the period and place in question requires special attention due to the civilization-related transformation processes taking place at that time, affecting the religious, social, political and economic spheres. The subject of my research was involved in the phenomenon of modernization of life in almost all its aspects. Giving a voice to the children and young people themselves, we have a chance to hear what the reception of these changes was like and what the response to the turbulent changes brought about by the first four decades of the 20th century.

Ziv Slama, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Grappling with Westernness

Westernness remains the sole criteria by which art music in Palestine/Israel has been defined, much in the way it had conditioned the entire Zionist project. Art music and Westernness were therefore synonymous; the first had to meet the latter's criteria in order to gain its status as art music. This paradigm has been slow to change and difficult to challenge. Imports of non-Western musical traditions were often seen as mere raw materials in need 'corrections' and as such they were left outside the discourse that catalyzed aesthetic shifts. My talk discusses these shifts, focusing particularly on *Neharot* by Betty Olivero (2006) and *Behind All This...*(1997) by Mark Kopytman.

Olivero seems to undermine the relationship between what is being embellished and the embellishment itself, as ornamentations take up more space on the page and consume more musical time than the ornamented material. Paraphrasing a specific type of Arab ornamentation, these embellishments challenge the Western classical musician in fundamentals like sound production. Kopytman, comparatively, employs in his works heterophony, namely, the simultaneous unfolding of variants for the same melody. A central texture in Arab classical music, heterophony is one of its key features, yet Kopytman had developed it against the backdrop of polystylistic compositional approaches in the USSR of the 1960s and 70s (of which he was a part), and furthered it in Israel after studying Yemenite Jewish music. In other words, Kopytman had developed his writing regardless of the Western criteria that had evolved in Israel. Olivero and Kopytman thus attest to the power relations in art music in Israel while signaling crucial discursive and aesthetic transitions.

Tal Chenya, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Mind The Gap: Local Jewish Communities in Transition Between Empires

Ottoman rule in Jerusalem came to an end in 1917 after the city surrendered to the British Empire, anticipating a new protectorate. This dramatic transition, alongside with the Balfour Declaration, brought on political turmoil and further fueled the Jewish-Arab national collision course. Contrary to popular perception, the change was not all-inclusive, as it featured ongoing incongruities between the political climate and the socio-cultural identity of local communities in Jerusalem. While the immigrant-based Jewish society developed Zionist ideals with political aspirations, Jerusalem's local Jewish communities upheld previous norms, practices, and values from Ottoman times. Such incongruities are evident in numerous examples: local Jerusalemite residents defied the attempts to enforce "Hebrew (i.e. Jewish) labor" and continued to hire their Arab neighbors; they used the services of the old ethnic burial societies instead of the new national burial association; and continued to send their children to Missionary-led schools rather than the nascent Zionist education system.

Discussing these frictions between the political radicalization during the Mandate era and the perpetuation of socio-cultural norms and values from the Ottoman period, this talk also aims at a more historiographically accurate portrayal of this transition, which cannot be disciplined by political dates.

Maya Kreiner, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Palestine in the British Empire: The Legislative Council as a Case Study

The British attempts in the 1920s and 1930s to establish a legislative council have been a recurring theme in the political historiography of Mandatory Palestine. However, this topic was usually discussed from the local perspective and against the backdrop of the Arab-Jewish conflict. Thus, the larger imperial context of these attempts was left out: the fact that Britain was preoccupied at the time with similar experiments of ‘democratization’ and constitutional reforms in its colonies. In my presentation, I will explore the role the imperial experience played in the discussions of British officials in the early 1930s on Palestine’s future legislature. I will show that British officials drew on the constitutional experience gained elsewhere in the empire when devising the plans for the Legislative Council in Palestine, thereby revealing this region’s ambiguous position in the imperial framework.

Alongside the obligation to develop the Jewish National Home and preserve the local populations’ civil and religious rights, the Mandate imposed on Britain the obligation to install self-governing institutions. The British government aspired to give effect to this provision by establishing a legislative council, a parliamentary body composed of British officials and local representatives. This obligation, however, remained unfulfilled throughout the 1920s as both Arabs and Jews were reluctant to accept the form of self-government the British were willing to suggest. This presentation will focus on the British renewed attempts in the early 1930s to establish a legislative council in Palestine, which came to a halt with the outbreak of the Arab Revolt in April 1936. On the basis of original documents of the Colonial Office in London, I will trace the connections colonial officials drew between Palestine and other colonies and reconstruct the place it occupied in their imperial imagination and epistemology.

BIOS (arranged alphabetically)

Krystian Propola, a PhD candidate at the University of Rzeszów. His research focuses the role of Israeli and Jewish media, and in particular Russian-language web portals, in shaping historical memory of former Soviet Jews and their descendants. In 2022, he completed an internship at the University of Münster. Member of several scientific societies: Polish Association for Jewish Studies, Polish Geopolitical Society and Polish Historical Society. In addition to his research, he also conducts active journalistic activities.

Tom Eshed is a PhD candidate at the Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He completed a BA in History and MA in Jewish History at the Hebrew University. Tom’s dissertation, under the supervision of Professor Amos Goldberg, explores Holocaust commemoration and remembrance in Israeli cultural diplomacy from the 1950s to the early 2000s. Tom is a George L. Mosse Program in History fellow (2020-2024), Rotenstreich for Outstanding Doctoral Students fellow (2021-2024) and The President’s Scholarship for Excellence in Science and Innovation fellow (2022-2025).

Roi Irani is a research student in the department of History. His M.A. Thesis under the supervision of Prof. Moshe Sluhovsky focused on sexuality of young males in the big cities of Israel during its first two decades. Irani completed his M.A. in the department of History and in the Lafer Center for Women and Gender Studies as a member of the M.A. Honors Program at the Mandel School. He completed his B.A. in the School of History excellence program and Amirim excellence program in Humanities. As apart from his academic position, Irani also works as a tour guide abroad.

Magdalena Wawoczny is PhD student of Economics at Cracow University of Economics and MA student of Jewish Studies at Jagiellonian University in Cracow. She graduated BA and MA in tourism management at Cracow University of Economics. She published scientific articles in the field of tourism. She visited Israel twice; as part of a scholarship from the World Union for Jewish Studies, thanks to which she completed a Hebrew language course at Tel Aviv University, and as part of a grant from the Cracow University of Economics, thanks to which she completed a research stay at Ariel University. Currently, expect PhD dissertation, she is working on MA thesis, which consists Jewish heritage after II world war in Raciborz, Silesia, Poland.

Jakub Katulski, graduate of political science at the University of Gdansk and Middle Eastern studies at the Institute for the Middle and Far East at Jagiellonian University. In 2016/2017 he was a student of the Academy of Young Diplomats program, and in the same year completed a Hebrew language course at Haifa University. As part of the author's "Stosunkowo Bliski Wschód" (Relatively Near East) project, he is active as a columnist on Middle Eastern politics and culture in podcasts and on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. He collaborates with the weekly publication "Przegląd" (Review) and the portal Krytyka Polityczna (Political Critique). Publicity specialist in the PR department of the Galicia Jewish Museum in Krakow.

Agnieszka Jez, a graduate of musicology and postgraduate studies in Library and Information Science at the University of Warsaw. From 2018 to 2022, she was a PhD student at the Faculty of Arts and Culture of the University of Warsaw; currently she is preparing to defend a dissertation on music and dance in Zionist youth movements in interwar Poland. In 2020, she was a fellow of the University of Tel Aviv. She is the author of works in the field of music and musical culture of Jews in Poland in the Second Polish Republic and various issues related to dance (biodanza, traditional Greek dance).

Ziv Slama, a PhD candidate at the Joint PhD Composition track at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, is a composer and a saxophone player specializing in contemporary art music in addition to classical Turkish and Egyptian music. Slama earned his M.Mus. and B.Mus. in composition from the Jerusalem academy of music and dance, and is currently a member of the Tel Aviv saxophone quartet, a classical saxophone teacher, and a music educator. His music is performed regularly worldwide. Slama's dissertation studies art music in Israel and the immanent link between Westernness and the choices made and rejected across its development.

Tal Chenya is a Research Associate at the Cherrick Center for the study of Zionism (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem). His research focuses on the coexisting identities in Jerusalem during the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the British Mandate. For example Tal Analyzes the Jewish residents' tension between their former identity and new nationalistic values can explain such complexities in other cultures as well. In his master's thesis, Tal examined this phenomenon through the

biography of David Yellin and Gad Frumkin, who both became prominent Zionist leaders despite being raised in the Old Yishuv. His articles are forthcoming in *Israel*, and *Iyunim Bitkumat Israel*.

Maya Kreiner is a PhD candidate at the Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her doctoral project, written under the supervision of Prof. Yfaat Weiss, examines constitutional knowledge transfers from the British Empire to Mandatory Palestine. In the past year, she was a fellow at the Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University and coordinated the Israeli Research Forum for the Study of Mandatory Palestine. Currently, she is a research associate at the Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow (DI), Leipzig.

Katarzyna Kipek is a doctoral student at the Cracow University of Economics, Master of Law and International Relations. For years she has specialized in international relations in the Middle East and, more precisely, the conflicts taking place there. At the moment, she is conducting research for my PhD thesis, in which she will analyze the peace movement in Israel, focusing on the NGOs that form it. Katarzyna is relying on qualitative data, interviewing activists, politicians, staff and supporters of the organizations, reading their reports and analyzing their ways of working. This topic is partially covered by publications in English, but there is no literature adequately defining and presenting holistically the sector of Israeli NGOs focusing on the conflict with the Palestinians. Researchers have so far attempted to characterize and analyze the impact of the activities of individual peace organizations on society. Katarzyna analyses the political opportunities, mobilization structure, and the narrative of the movement. She seeks to explore the current state of the peace movement and decipher its marginality.