

Monday, September 7, 2026

20:00 Welcome dinner

Tuesday, September 8, 2026

9:00–9:30 — Welcome and opening remarks

Director of the Institute of Languages and Cultures of the Mediterranean and the Near East

Workshop organizers

9:30 Rethinking Returns: Uses of the past

Chair: Yuval Evri (Brandeis University)

9:30–10:00

Ella Shohat (New York University)

Reading “the Rihla”: Between Baghdad and Al-Andalus

10:00–10:30

Eric Calderwood (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)

Thinking with al-Andalus: The Futures of the Past

10:30–10:50 — Coffee Break

10:50–11:20

Almog Behar (Tel Aviv University)

Ariel Bension 1880–1932 and the Imagination of the Zohar between Sepharad, Al-Andalus, and España

11:20–11:50

Sina Rauschenbach (University of Postdam)

“Transculturación”: The Portuguese Jewish Atlantic, Latin American Studies, and Sephardi Studies in the Twenty-First Century

11:50 -12:20 Coffee break

12:20 Mizrahiut: turns and returns

Chair: Aviad Moreno (Ben Gurion University of the Negev/ University of Florida)

12:20–12:50

Gideon Katz (Ben Gurion University of the Negev)

From Silencing to Sound: Piyyut and the Mizrahi Turn in Israeli Culture

12:50–13:20

Erica Consoli (Universidad de Barcelona)

Encountering and Translating Mizrahi Culture as an Outsider

13:20-15:00 — Lunch

15:00 Feminist Returns to Sephardi/Mizrahi Histories

Chair: Yemima Hadad (University of Leipzig)

15:00–15:30

Katja Šmid (ILC-CSIC)

Sephardic Prayer and Worship Reconsidered: Tehinot Rahel, the First Modern Ladino Prayer Book for Women

15:30–16:00

Anabella Esperanza (Tel Aviv University)

Judeo-Spanish Women’s Social Histories: Repositioning Embodiment in Sephardi Studies

16:00–16:30

Sigal Nagar-Ron (Sapir Academic College)

What Can We Learn from Twenty-Five Years of Research on Mizrahi Women in Israel and the Diaspora?

16:30-17:30 — Group discussion

17:30–20:30 — Free Time

20:30 — Dinner

Wednesday, September 9, 2026

9:00 Transnational Returns: Migration, Diaspora, and Belonging

Chair: Angy Cohen (ILC-CSIC)

9:00–9:30

Orit Ouaknine-Yekutieli (Ben Gurion University of the Negev)

“My Heart Is in the West”: Post-Diasporic Turns and Returns

9:30–10:00

Sigal Nagar-Ron (Sapir Academic College) and Aviad Moreno (Ben Gurion University of the Negev /University of Florida)

Mestizaje, Mizrahi Israeliness, and the Global Sephardi Diaspora: Relational Orientalism Across the Atlantic

10:00–10:30

Zohar Yanko (Universidade Católica Portuguesa)

Returning to Grandma’s House: Israeli Migration, Sephardic Memory, and Belonging in Portugal

10:30-11:00: Coffee break

11:00- 12:30 — Roundtable
Sephardi and Mizrahi Modernities:
Continuities and Ruptures
Chair: Almog Behar (Tel Aviv University)

Yossi Yonah (Ben Gurion University of the Negev)
*Jews and Modernity in the Islamic World: The Burden
of Testing Choices*

Roy Shukrun (Utrecht University)
*Rootedness, Anachronism and Adaptation: stories from
the making of a Sephardi diaspora*

Angy Cohen (ILC-CSIC)
In-Betweenness as a Modern Sephardi Standpoint

Yuval Evri (Brandeis University)
*Return Beyond Origins: Recreating Memory, Remaining
Futures*

12:10-13:30 Concluding discussion and future steps

13:30 — Farewell Lunch

Organized by
**Angy Cohen (ILC-CSIC),
Yemima Hadad (Universität Leipzig),
Yuval Evri (Brandeis University) and
Aviad Moreno (Ben Gurion University
of the Negev/University of Florida)**

This international workshop brings together scholars working on contemporary Sephardi histories, cultures, migrations, and intellectual production. Through the concept of return, the workshop explores how Sephardi pasts are remembered, reimagined and mobilized in relation to different cultural conditions, political and intellectual projects, and social changes

This workshop has been funded by the European Association for Jewish Studies, with additional support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, through the IDG project “The Voice of the Mothers: Feminist Reclaiming of Jewish Tradition among Sephardi Women in Israel” (PI: Angy Cohen), and from the Belzberg Program in Israel Studies at the University of Calgary.

RETURNS

Rethinking Sephardi Modernities, Pasts and Futures

International Workshop
7–9 September 2026
Sala Sur, Residencia de Estudiantes
(Edificio Transatlántico, C/ Pinar 23, Madrid)

