



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

Palazzo Butera,
Palermo
July 7-8, 2026

JEWES AND THE WORLDS OF THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN

Archaeology, Scholarship, and
Networks of Collecting (c.1840-1940)



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FONDAZIONE
MUSEO EBRAICO
DI ROMA



Centre for the
Study of the Bible
Oriental College | UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

*Organised by Silvia Davoli (Strawberry Hill House/University of Oxford)
and Tom Stammers (Courtauld Institute).*

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Conference Room, Palazzo Butera

DAY 1 — Tuesday 7 July 2026

09.30 Arrival and Registration

09.40 Welcome, Introduction and Reflections

Claudio Gulli (Palazzo Butera), Silvia Davoli (Strawberry Hill House/University of Oxford), Tom Stammers (Courtauld Institute), and Abigail Green (University of Oxford)

10.00 KEYNOTE — Suzanne Marchand (Louisiana State University)

The Problem of 'Aryan' Prehistory

Chair: Tom Stammers (Courtauld Institute)

10.45 Coffee

11.10 PANEL 1 — Collecting Antiquities and Cultural Networks

Chair: Silvia Davoli (Strawberry Hill House/University of Oxford)

Colette Bellingham (University of Oxford) — *Beyond the Collector: Ferdinand de Rothschild Navigating Antiquities*

Anna Di Castro (Jewish Museum of Siena) — *The Mieli-Servadio Archaeological Collection: Memories of a Jewish Family in 19th-Century Tuscany*

Luisa Levi D'Ancona Modena (University of Oxford) — *"The mother of Venice", and the Lady of the Water Lilies in Asti: Case studies of archaeological donations by Italian Jews in Liberal Italy*

Orietta Rossini (independent researcher) — *Sigmund Freud, Emanuel Loewy and Ludwig Pollak in Vienna, 1917*

13.00 Lunch

14.00 PANEL 2 — Orients and Origins

Chair: Giuseppe Mandalà (Università Statale di Milano)

Thomas Gertzen (Freie Universität Berlin) — *Navigating 'Semitism': The Life and Works of Egyptian-Jewish Egyptologist Joseph Leibovitch (1898–1968)*

Miriam Goldstein (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem) — *Considering Medieval Judeo-Arabic Literature from the Crimean Peninsula: Karaite Manuscript Collectors in the 19th Century*

Martina Mampieri (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne) — *Fragments of the Past: Isaiah Sonne and the Study of the Cairo Genizah*

15.30 KEYNOTE — Hindy Najman (University of Oxford) and **Paul Collins** (British Museum)
The Fragment as Method: Jewish History and Curatorial Practice
Chair: Abigail Green (Oxford)

16.15 Coffee

16.45 PANEL 3 — Monuments, Documents, Memories

Chair: Luisa Levi D'Ancona Modena (University of Oxford)

Jocelyn Burney (remote, University of Missouri) — *Belle Mazur's 1932 Excavation of the Aegina Synagogue Between Archaeology and Ideology*

Santino Alessandro Cugno (Parco Archeologico dell'Appia Antica) & **Jessica Dello Russo** (Yeshiva University Center for Israel Studies) — *The 'Kokh' Tomb Typology in Rome: A Jewish Instigation?*

Germano Maifreda (Università Statale di Milano) — *Visualising Jewish 'Monuments': Photographic Mapping as Resistance in Italy and the Mediterranean (1924–1938)*

18.15 Break

18.45 Conference Dinner, Palazzo Butera

DAY 2 — Wednesday 8 July 2026

09.15 KEYNOTE — Steven Fine (Yeshiva University)
Theology Covert and Overt: Christian, Jewish and Classicist Visions of Ancient Jewish Art
Chair: Hindy Najman (Oxford)

10.00 PANEL 4 — Translating and Reimagining Antiquity

Chair: Steven Fine (Yeshiva University)

Nora Goldschmidt (Durham University) — *The Imaginary Archaeology of Shaul Tchernichovsky*

Giacomo Loi (University of Haifa/Sorbonne Nouvelle) — *Digging Jewishness: Literary Responses to Jewish Archaeology in Mandatory Palestine*

Hemdat Kislev (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) — *Antiquity and Primitivism in the Sculptures of Avraham Melnikov and Eric Gill*

11.30 Coffee

11.50 REFLECTION — Giulio Disegni (Coordinator of the Southern Jewish Project, Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane, UCEI).
A look at the Jewish World in Southern Italy today

12.00 KEYNOTE — Giuseppe Mandalà (Università Statale di Milano)

Remembering the Jewish Past in Sicily

Chair: Giulio Disegni (to be confirmed)

12.45 Lunch

13.30 Tour of the Palazzo Butera, led by **Claudio Gulli**

15.00 PANEL 5 — Unearthing Jewish Sicily

Chair: Olga Melasecchi (Museo Ebraico di Roma)

Gianfranco Ferlisi (Independent Researcher) — *Memory without Stone: Archives and Genealogies of Sicilian Jewry*

Francesco Melia (University of Palermo) — *The Archaeologist and the Philologist: A Cultural Synergy in 1920s Palermo*

Anastazja Buttitta (Independent Researcher) — *Pantelleria between Sicily and North Africa: Mapping Jewish Presence at a Crossroads of Mediterranean Networks*

16.30 Closing Words (Silvia Davoli and Tom Stammers)

17.00 Depart for (optional) guided visit to the Museo Archeologico Regionale Antonino Salinas (Piazza Olivella 10, Palermo). The visit will run from 17.30 – 19.00.