

'Jews, Liberalism and the Land'

Fondazione Hallgarten-Franchetti, Villa Montesca,
and the Palazzo Vitelli a Sant'Egidio, Città di Castello, Italy

June 9th - June 11th 2025

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME



Convened by Dr Fabrizio Boldrini (Hallgarten-Franchetti Foundation), Dr Maria Rita Bracchini, (Hallgarten-Franchetti Foundation), Professor Tobias Brinkmann (Penn State), Dr Silvia Davoli (Oxford), Professor Abigail Green (Oxford) and Dr Luisa Levi d'Ancona Modena (Oxford)



The conference organisers are grateful for the support of the Hallgarten-Franchetti Foundation, Palazzo Vitelli a Sant'Egidio, the University of Oxford's John Fell Fund, Brasenose College, Oxford, and Penn State University.

Above: Pupils in the vegetable garden at La Montesca, photographed 1900-1910. Image preserved at 'Archivio e la biblioteca dell'Opera pia regina Margherita di Roma', under the responsibility of Fondazione Hallgarten-Franchetti, Villa Montesca.

Sunday 8th June 2025

Arrival in Perugia. [Perugia Plaza Hotel](#), Via Palermo 88 06124 - Perugia

Monday 9th June 2025

- 09:45 Depart Perugia Plaza Hotel by coach
- 10:45 Arrive Palazzo Vitelli a Sant'Egidio, Piazza Garibaldi, Città di Castello. Coffee on arrival.
- 11:00 - 11:30 Welcome: **Riccardo Mancini** (President, Hallgarten-Franchetti Foundation), **Abigail Green** (University of Oxford) and **Luisa Levi D'Ancona Modena** (University of Oxford)
- 11:30 - 13:00 **Panel 1: Political visions**
Chair: Tullia Catalan (Trieste)
- **Sietske van der Veen** (Amsterdam). "A House, That Appears to Dominate the Valley": Louis Frederik Teixeira de Mattos and his Spelderholt Estate, 1905-1921(1939)'
 - **Stefania Baitella** (Rome, La Sapienza). 'Jewish Roots and Agrarian Reforms: The Role of Leone Wollemborg in spreading the Italian National Myth between the 19th and the 20th Centuries'
 - **Stefania Ragau** (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main). 'Liberating the land, reshaping a community: Franz Oppenheimer's cooperative dream between Socialism, Zionism and Liberalism'
- 13:00 - 14:00 Lunch
- 14:00 - 15:30 **Panel 2: Transforming the environment between Europe and Palestine**
Chair: Christoph Jahr (Humboldt University, Berlin)
- **Laura Brazzo** (Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea). 'Between the rice fields and the nation: the impact of Angelo Sullam's agricultural background on his Zionist engagement'
 - **Tom Stammers** (Courtauld Institute). 'Anglo-Jewry and the Cultural Politics of the Forest in Mandate Palestine, c.1918-39'
 - **Catherine Taylor** (Waddesdon Manor). 'The PICA archive and what it can tell us about land use in Palestine'

- 15:30 - 17:00 Visit to [Tela Umbra](#) museum in Città di Castello
- 17:00 - 17:45 Keynote: **Abigail Green** (Oxford)
 'In search of a constituency: Jews, liberalism and the land'
 Chair: Riccardo Mancini (the Villa Montesca Foundation)
- 17:45 Transfer to hotel (3-minute walk to the [Hotel Umbria](#) or by minibus to the [Hotel Park GE.AL](#)) and check in.
- 19:30 Minibus from the Hotel Umbria to the Hotel Park GE.AL.
 Dinner at the Hotel Park GE.AL

Tuesday 10th June 2025

- 09:15 Minibus departure from the Hotel Park GE.AL
- 09:20 All delegates to arrive at Palazzo Vitelli a Sant'Egidio, Piazza Garibaldi
- 09:30 - 11:30 **Panel 3. Educational innovation**
 Chair: Tobias Brinkmann (Penn State)
- **Fabrizio Boldrini** and **Maria Rita Bracchini** (Fondazione Hallgarten-Franchetti, Centro Studi Villa Montesca). 'Nature studies and agricultural environments in progressive pedagogy: the transformative influence of Alice Hallgarten, from Lucy Latter to Maria Montessori'
 - **Karin Kvicklund**, Nääs Slott. 'From Sweden to the World: The Nääs Sloyd Teacher Seminary and the Legacy of August Abrahamson and Otto Salomon'
 - **Christoph Jahr** (Humboldt University, Berlin). 'The "Ahlem Experiment" revisited. Utopia, Reality, and Impact of a Horticultural School in Germany'
 - **Laura Hobson-Faure** (Université Paris 1-Panthéon-Sorbonne). 'Gardeners and Farmers? The representations and uses of agriculture in Jewish Country Houses turned Jewish Children's Homes in France during the Holocaust'
- 11:30 - 11:50 Coffee
- 11:50 - 13:05 **Panel 4: Rothschild interventions**
 Chair: Michael Silber (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)
- **Pippa Shirley** (Waddesdon Manor). 'From Miss Belladrum to regenerative agriculture: Managing a Rothschild estate at Waddesdon from the 19th to 21st centuries'

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joachim Zettl (Waidhofen). 'Business and pleasure: Schloss Rothschild as summer-residence and centre of forestry' ▪ Heli Jacobs and Liat Hadar (Ramat Hanadiv). 'The Connection to the Land: Baron Edmond de Rothschild's Vision Reflected in the Management of a Human-Nature Park in Israel'
13:05 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 15:30	<p>Panel 5: Agricultural modernization (Italy and other places) Chair: Jonathan Schorsch (Potsdam)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tullia Catalan (Trieste). 'Rodolfo Brunner and the Villa Antonini Brunner agricultural estate in Cavenzano (1895-1937): between modernity and fascism' ▪ Tobias Brinkmann (Penn State). 'David Lubin: Liberal Reformer and Agriculturalist' ▪ Luisa Levi D'Ancona Modena (Oxford). 'Jewish women and men and rural peripheries in Liberal Italy, Portugal and beyond'
15:30 - 15:45	Comfort break
15:45 - 17:15	<p>Panel 6: Landlords Chair: Laura Hobson-Faure (Université Paris 1-Panthéon-Sorbonne)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Michael Silber (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem). 'Into the Woods: Jews in Secondary Agricultural Occupations, Forestry in Particular' ▪ Anna Dorothea-Ludewig (Potsdam). 'A perfect place? The holistic concept of Hugo Simon's estate in Seelow, Brandenburg' ▪ Cyril Grange (CNRS). 'Christian Lazard (1880-1942), banker and gentleman farmer'
17:30 - 19:00	Tour of the Villa Montesca
19:00	Dinner at the Villa Montesca followed by return transport to the hotels

Wednesday 11th June 2025

Hotel Park Ge.Al, Conference Room

09:15	Minibus transfer for delegates at the Hotel Umbria to the Hotel Park Ge.Al
09:30 - 10:30	<p>Jonathan Schorsch (Potsdam): Concluding remarks Chair: Abigail Green (Oxford)</p>

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 10:45 | Departure by coach for Castello Sonnino , Via volterrana nord 6/a
50025 Montespertoli |
| 13:15 | Arrival Castello Sonnino
(with short stop <i>en route</i> for picnic lunch) |
| 13:15 - 15:15 | Castello Sonnino welcome, coffee, and tour |
| 15:30 | Conference ends. Those participants not participating in the closed
meeting below free to explore Sonnino or depart. |
| 15:30 - 17:30 | Closed meeting at Sonnino (invited participants only) |
-