



CMES
CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



SOAS
University of London

The Jews of Iraq – Engagement with modernities
Conference 16-18 September 2019 at SOAS, London

A conference organised by the British Institute for the Study of Iraq in collaboration with
The Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Chicago and the
Department of History, Religions and Philosophies
at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London

Location: The Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, Thornhaugh Street Russell Square, London, SOAS

The conference aims to evaluate the many contributions of the Jewish community in Iraq within the spheres of the arts and culture, social policy, education, government and the economy in the early modern and modern period. Iraqi Jews constituted one of the world's oldest and most historically significant Jewish communities and were in Iraq for over 2,500 years. There is a widening academic interest in the history and contributions of the Jewish community as well as growing interest in Jewish history in contemporary Iraq. This conference will bring together UK, Iraqi and international scholars interested in exploring and researching the contributions of this important community to modern Iraq.

Conference Steering Committee:

Joan Porter MacIver (BISI Vice-Chair)
Orit Bashkin (University of Chicago)
Zvi Ben-Dor Benite (New York University)
Daniel Lowe (British Library/BISI Council)
Glen Rangwala (Cambridge University/BISI Council)
Joseph Sassoon (Georgetown University)
Ella Shohat (New York University)
Ali Khadr (BISI Executive Officer)

Memory Panel, Chair:

Avi Shlaim (University of Oxford)

Academic Host:

Erica C D Hunter (SOAS)

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PROGRAMME

Day 1 – Monday, 16 September 2019

- 13.00 – 13.45 **Registration**
- 13.45 – 14.00 **Welcoming Remarks**
- 14.00 – 16.00 **Memoires, Memories and Personal Histories:**
Moderator – Ella Shohat
- **Avi Shlaim (Chair)**
 - **David Basson**
 - **Linda Menuhin Abdel Aziz**
 - **Sami Zubaida**
- 16.00 – 16.30 **Tea/Coffee**
- 16.30 – 17.30 **Panel Discussion and Q & A**
- 18.30 – 20.30 **BISI Conference Reception at The British Academy**
10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1 5AH

Day 2 – Tuesday, 17 September 2019

- 8.30 – 9.00 **Registration**
- 9.00 – 9.30 **Historical Overview – Zvi Ben-Dor Benite & Orit Bashkin**
- 9.30 – 11.00 **Panel 1: Jews in Iraqi Society; sociological and cultural aspects**
Chair: Orit Bashkin
- **Geoffrey Khan**, University of Cambridge – *The Aramaic-speaking Jewish communities of Northern Iraq*
 - **Sara Farhan**, American University of Sharjah – *Jewish Medical Professionals in Hashemite Iraq: The Making and Unmaking of State-Intermediaries*
 - **Pelle Valentin Olsen**, University of Chicago, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations – *Iraqi Jews and the Production and Consumption of Leisure*
- 11.00 – 11.30 **Tea/Coffee**
- 11.30 – 13.30 **Panel 2: Ottoman Iraq and its Jews – Early experiments with modernity**
Chair: Zvi Ben-Dor Benite
- **Annie Green**, College of William & Mary – *The Political Roots of the Iraqi Statesman Sassoon Efendi Hasqail*
 - **Lital Levy**, Princeton University – *Literary Translation and Iraqi Jewish Modernity: Judeo-Arabic Fiction Published in India*
 - **Yuval Evri**, Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at King's College London – *Between Al-Andalus and Baghdad: Tracing Iraqi-Jewish Literary Visions in the Turn of the Twentieth Century*
 - **Zvi Ben-Dor Benite** (New York University) *Empire and the Ocean: Iraqi jews in India, China and Back home*
- 13.30 – 14.30 **LUNCH**
- 14.30 – 16.30 **Panel 3: The Hashemite period: New roles for Iraqi Jews**
Chair: Joseph Sassoon
- **Emile Cohen**, Independent Researcher – *Iraqi Jewish education and impact on Iraqi Society*
 - **Hanaw Mohammed Taqi Mohammed Amin**, Independent Researcher – *Urban Jewish Cultural Heritage*
 - **Sasha R. Goldstein-Sabbah**, Leiden University – *Baghdadi Transnational Networks in the Hashemite Period*
 - **Orit Bashkin** (University of Chicago) – *When Jews marched for Hussain – Jews in southern Iraq*

Day 2 – Tuesday, 17 September 2019 continued

16.30 – 17.00

Tea/Coffee

17.00 – 18.15

**Film screening – *Remember Baghdad* with a Q & A with David Dangoor
Moderator: Orit Bashkin**

DAY 3 – Wednesday, 18 September 2019

9.15 – 11.15

Panel 4: Music, Cinema, and Performance: Cultural Considerations

Chair: Ella Shohat

- **Dafna Dori**, Uppsala University – *Ṣāliḥ al-Kuwaytī as a modern Iraqi composer*
- **Liliana Carrizo**, Harvard University - *Intermusicality and Musical Remembrance: The Convergence of Muslim-Jewish Soundscapes in the Private Songs of Iraqi Jews*
- **Sara Manasseh**, Independent Researcher (London) – *Musical Life in Baghdad c. 1910–1950: Changing Attitudes towards Iraqi Jewish Women as Performers and Participants*
- **Yaron Shemer**, The University of North Carolina--Chapel Hill – *Home, Nostalgia, and Post-Memory in the Films of Second and Third Generation Iraqi-Jewish Immigrants*

11.15 – 11.45

Tea/Coffee

11.45 – 13.15

Panel 5: Representing the Past: Archival, Literary and Culinary Dimensions

Chairs: Joseph Sassoon & Ella Shohat

- **Daniel Montereescu**, Central European University, & **Joel R Hart**, Oxford University – *The Diasporic Social Life of Amba: Culinary Schismogenesis Among Iraqi Jews in London and Israel*
- **Hana Morgenstern**, Cambridge University – *Fire in the Camp: Committed Arab Literature and the Transit Camp Narratives*
- **Sigal Goorgi**, Ben-Gurion University – *The Culture and the Identity of the Iraqi Jews as reflected in their literary works*

13.15 – 14.15

LUNCH

14.15 – 16.15

Panel 6: Painful dislocation and exile and future

Chair: Zvi Ben-Dor Benite

- **Khairuldeen Al Makhzoomi**, Georgetown University – *The Forgotten Minorities: The History of Iraqi Jews from 1948-1971*
- **Gadi Algazi**, Tel Aviv University – *Protest on the Frontier: Iraqi Jews in an Israeli Transit Camp (1951–1952)*
- **Ronen Zeidel**, The Moshe Dayan Center for ME studies, Tel Aviv University – *“Where are the Iraqi Jews ?”: Difficulties in Communication Between the Second Generation of Iraqi Jews in Israel and Non Jewish Iraqis*
- **Sa’ad Salloum**, College of Political Sciences of Mustansiriya University, Baghdad – *Is there any future for the existence of Jewish Minority in Iraq?*

16.15 – 16.45

Tea/Coffee

16.45 – 17.30

Closing Panel – Orit Bashkin, Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, and Ella Shohat

Chair: Thabit A. J. Abdullah (York University)

Closing Remarks & Appreciation – Joan Porter MacIver