CONFERENCE

The Intellectual Heritage of the Jews of Vilnius

10–11 October 2023, Vilnius

KONFERENCIJA

Vilniaus žydų intelektualinis paveldas

2023 m. spalio 10–11 d., Vilnius



PROGRAMME

VILNE | ווילנע

1323-2023 | 5083-5783



Organisers:

LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

ISRAEL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

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THE LITHUANIAN JEWISH (LITVAK) COMMUNITY

On 10–11 October 2023, the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities are holding the international scholarly conference 'The Intellectual Heritage of the Jews of Vilnius'.

In Lithuania, the year 2020 was the Year of Lithuanian Jewish History and of the Vilnius Gaon, Elijah ben Solomon Zalman, in commemoration of the 300th anniversary of his birth. A conference of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Vilnius was part of the commemorative programme.

Unfortunately, this goal did not materialise because of the pandemic. As soon as it was over, both academies decided to revive the idea of the conference.

As part of the celebrations of the 700th anniversary of Vilnius and in view of the influence of the Jewish people and culture on the history of Vilnius, a decision was made to broaden the scope of the conference by exploring the rich intellectual heritage of the Jews of Vilnius from the eighteenth century onwards and the impact it has had on Vilnius and the wider world.

To achieve this goal, the conference will focus on the intellectual heritage of Vilnius Jews in the eighteenth-nineteenth centuries (the first day of the conference), the process of the intellectual modernisation of the Jews of Vilnius, and the spread of the Jews of Vilnius in the world (the second day of the conference).

Thanks to the support of the Research Council of Lithuania, we were able to invite such world-renowned experts in Jewish history and culture as Prof. Israel Bartal, Prof. David E. Fishman, Prof. David G. Roskies, Prof. Benjamin Brown, Prof. Alex Lubotzky, Prof. Marcin Wodziński, Dr Jon Seligman, Prof. Avner Holtzman, Prof. Tsvia Walden, Prof. Mordechai (Motti) Zalkin, and others.

The conference will also feature presentations by prominent Lithuanian scholars: Prof. Giedrė Jankevičiūtė, Prof. Mindaugas Kvietkauskas, Dr Lara Lempertienė, Prof. Jurgita Verbickienė, and the doctoral student Saulė Valiūnaitė.

Promotion of scholarly cooperation between the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities is one of the central goals of the conference.

The conference 'The Intellectual heritage of the Jews of Vilnius' is the first joint scholarly event organised by the two academies.

PROGRAMME

English is the official language of the conference

Registration

10 October

THE INTELLECTUAL HERITAGE OF THE JEWS OF VILNIUS IN THE EIGHTEENTH-NINETEENTH CENTURY

GRAND HALL,
LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES,
Gedimino Ave. 3, Vilnius

8.30–9.00 *Participant registration, welcome coffee*

Plenary meeting
Chair Prof. Jūras Banys

9.00–9.30 OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE.
WELCOME ADDRESSES.

Prof. Jūras Banys, President
of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences

Prof. David Harel, President
of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities

Hadas Wittenberg Silverstein, HE Ambassador
Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Israel
to the Republic of Lithuania

9.30–10.10 OPENING LECTURE. **Prof. Benjamin Brown,**
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
The Vilna Gaon's Theopolitical Legacy

10.10–10.25 Discussion

10.25–10.40 *Coffee break*

10.40–14.50 **The Intellectual Heritage of the Jews of Vilnius in the Eighteenth-Nineteenth Century**

Chair Prof. Yadin Dudai

10.40–10.50 INTRODUCTION. **Prof. Yadin Dudai,** The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities

10.50–11.30 KEYNOTE LECTURE. **Prof. Israel Bartal,** The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. **Each Generation and its Scholars: The Changing Faces of the 'Historian's Gaon'**

11.30–12.10 **Prof. Alex Lubotzky,** Weizmann Institute, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. **The Mathematics of the Vilna Gaon**

12.10–12.30 Discussion

12.30–13.30 *Lunch break*

Chair Prof. Vladas Algirdas Bumelis

13.30–13.50 **Prof. Jurgita Verbickienė,** Vilnius University. **The Space of Intellectual Life: Jewish Socio-Topography of Vilnius in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century**

13.50–14.30 **Prof. Marcin Wodziński,** University of Wrocław. **Two Enlightenments: The Case of Josef Rosensohn of Vilna**

14.30–14.50 Discussion

AFTERNOON PROGRAMME

THE VILNA GAON MUSEUM OF JEWISH HISTORY, Naugarduko St. 10, Vilnius

15.30–16.00 **Dr Jon Seligman,** Israel Antiquities Authority. **Excavating the Other Cathedral of Vilnius: The Great Synagogue of Vilna**

16.00–16.15 Discussion

16.15–16.45 EXHIBITION TOUR

16.45–18.00 Screening of the film *Daughter of Vilna: The Life in Song of Masha Roskies*

11 October



THE INTELLECTUAL MODERNISATION OF THE JEWS OF VILNIUS

GRAND HALL,
LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES,
Gedimino Ave. 3, Vilnius

Chair Faina Kukliansky

9.00–9.40 KEYNOTE LECTURE. Prof. David E. Fishman, Jewish Theological Seminary. **Nationalism, Socialism and the Modernisation of the Jews of Vilna**

9.40–9.55 Discussion

9.55–11.30 **Jewish Culture and Modernity in Interwar Vilnius**

Chair Prof. David G. Roskies

9.55–10.15 **Prof. Mindaugas Kvietkauskas,** Vilnius University. **The Yiddish Avant-garde Group *Yung Vilne* and Vilnius University: Separate or Interconnected Worlds?**

10.15–10.35 **Saulė Valiūnaitė,** Vilnius University. **Unknown Soldiers? Women in the Politics of Doikayt in Interwar Vilnius**

10.35–10.55 **Dr Lara Lempertienė,** Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania. **On Vilna with Love. Zalman Shneur and Hermann Struk**

10.55–11.15 **Prof. Giedrė Jankevičiūtė,** Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuanian Culture Research Institute. **Art of Jewish Women Artists in Interwar Vilnius**

11.15–11.30 Discussion

11.30–12.15 *Lunch break*

12.15–15.15 **The Spread of Jewish Ideas from Vilnius to the World**

Chair Prof. Mindaugas Kvietkauskas

12.15–12.55 KEYNOTE LECTURE. **Prof. David G. Roskies,** Jewish Theological Seminary. **A Tale of Two Cities: Growing Up in *Vilne de-Kánade***

12.55–13.35 **Prof. Avner Holtzman,** Tel Aviv University. **Vilnius, a Centre of Hebrew Enlightenment**

13.35–14.15 **Prof. Tsvia Walden,** Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. **From Kalman Schulman in Vilnius to Hebrew Speaking Children in Israel: Laying the Foundations of Modern Hebrew Culture**

14.15–14.55 CLOSING LECTURE. **Prof. Mordechai (Motti) Zalkin,** Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. **The Intellectual Heritage of Lithuanian Jewry: Reflections and Thoughts**

14.55–15.15 Discussion

15.15–18.20 A Tour of the Jewish Vilnius. Tour guide Julijus Gurvičius

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CONFERENCE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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Miša Jakobas, Avia Solutions Group, director of administration

Prof. Dr Mindaugas Kvietkauskas, dean of the Faculty of Philology, Vilnius University

Dr Lara Lempertienė, head of the Judaica Research Centre at the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania

Prof. Dr Jurgita Verbickienė, head of the Center for Studies of the Culture and History of East European Jews, Vilnius University

Faina Kukliansky, chair of the Lithuanian Jewish Community

† **Jaša Markas Zingeris**