SHAKESPEARE & THE JEWS
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Abstracts and speaker biographies

Shiran Avni Barmatz

Biblical Echos in Meir Wieseltier's Hebrew Translation of Macbeth

John Milton's *Paradise Lost* was translated into Hebrew in 1871 by Isaac Edward Salikson, a Christian convert and an ordained Presbyterian pastor and missionary who was hoping to convert the Jews of Vienna to the truth of the Gospel. Salikson believed that *Paradise Lost*'s biblical narrative of the fall of Adam and Eve, translated into the language of the Bible, would appeal to Jewish readers and might possibly convince them to convert to Christianity as well. What Salikson realized, and Hana Scolnicov later established was that “Biblical Hebrew is not a neutral language, that easily encompasses new ideas. It holds within itself a whole universe of associations, beliefs, stories, and prayers, that become the language’s own intertext. Every word and verse refer to the original.”[1]

This paper will explore the way in which Meir Wieseltier's Hebrew translation of *Macbeth* (1985), taught as part of the literature matriculation exam in Israeli high schools, gives the play an additional layer of biblical meaning that is not evident in the English original. Wieseltier's translation portrays the weird sisters as cosmic beings, insinuated to relate to the Hebraic God, whereas Lady Macbeth as a figure of Eve, who tries to seduce and manipulate Macbeth into murdering the king and usurping the throne. I will seek to compare the Wieseltier’s translation to that of other translators, as well as other translations by Wieseltier himself.

Shiran Avni Barmatz is a second year PhD candidate at the Department of English at UCL. She researches the Hebraism of John Donne (1574-1631) as it manifests itself in his sermons and poetry, setting it in its historical, theological and linguistic contexts. Among her interests are Christian Hebraism, linguistics, Hebrew teaching in early modern England, translation and text perception.

Alessandra Bassey

Shylock and the Nazis – Continuation or Reinvention?

While library shelves often groan under weighty volumes about Hitler’s political rule and the Second World War, a closer glance at the years between 1933 and 1945 makes it apparent that there is still a great lacuna of academic research on the topic of arts under the Nazis. One of the most neglected aspects is the output of German theatres. While some attention may have sporadically been given to German playwrights, actors, and directors, one of the most consistently present playwrights within the theatre staples, has been the one to be relatively widely ignored – his name is William Shakespeare. A few exceptions include Gerwin Strobl’s works on Shakespeare and the theatre under the Nazis;[2] more ‘Shylock-specific’ works include Ludwig Schnauder’s in-depth analyses of the 1943 Viennese production of *The Merchant of Venice*,[3] and, of course, the less recent but important analysis of Shylock’s representational development over the past four centuries by John Gross.[This

paper gives due and extended attention to Shakespeare performance, and specifically to the 1943 *The Merchant of Venice* performance in Vienna, examining the ways in which Shylock was portrayed and potentially misused for propagandistic purposes by the regime.

The approach will be both primarily analytical and comparative. Archival material sourced from the theatre museum in Vienna (‘Theatermuseum’) and the ‘Burgtheater’ will form the base of this research, alongside archival material from the same institutions that are drawing upon the Shakespeare productions directed by Max Reinhardt during the period of the Weimar Republic. The question ‘how was Shylock performed under the Nazis?’, will thus be accompanied by ‘to what extent was the play modified?’, and ‘how does the Vienna production differ from previous, celebrated productions?’.

Considering that *The Merchant of Venice* is a play which, up until today, often upsets audiences, and is repeatedly considered too problematic for the present-day stage, one might assume that a performance analysis of this play under the Nazis might be too crude an endeavour. This paper, however, aims to demonstrate that no matter how painful or uncomfortable a topic may be, ‘Erinnern macht frei’ - remembrance can set you free (Marko Watt).

Alessandra Bassey is a PhD Candidate in the English Department at King’s College London, and she holds a Master’s Degree in ‘Shakespeare in History’ from University College London. Her current research interest lies on the representation of Shakespeare’s plays on stage in autocratic contexts, particularly in Nazi Germany (1933-45). In her PhD research, ‘Shakespeare and Autocracy: From Text to Stage. The Conflicting Positions of Shakespeare’s Plays in Germany between 1933 and 1945’, she focuses on the potential use of Shakespeare’s plays for propagandistic purposes, and examines the racial implications of the portrayals of Shylock and Othello in the context of the Third Reich, and the wider colonial and imperial history of Germany.

Sara Coodin

**Midrash from the Margins: Rewriting Shakespeare for the Modern Yiddish Stage**

In the wildly popular 1947 play *Shayloks Tokhter*, the Yiddish writer-actor-producer Maurice Schwartz creatively refashions Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* for the Yiddish stage by focusing on the struggles of Shylock’s daughter Jessica, who contends with whether to conform to traditional ways of life or pursue a culturally assimilated path via marriage to a Christian man. One of the principal strategies that Schwartz adopts to update his play for Jewish audiences uses Hebrew Biblical narratives such as the story of Esther to help contextualize Jessica’s struggle. My paper discusses how Schwartz’s strategy of using episodes from the Torah to adapt Shakespeare’s play forms part of a pervasive turn within Yiddish adaptations of Shakespeare in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries towards midrashic modes of adaptation that rely on stories from the Hebrew Bible to negotiate the challenges posed to traditionally Jewish ways of life in the modern diaspora. My paper argues that midrash, a mode of scriptural interpretation that originates in rabbinic exegesis, operates as the primary means through which Yiddish writers lend immediate moral relevance to Shakespeare’s plays for Jewish audiences in this period. I discuss why female characters such as Jessica were a particular object of focus for Yiddish writers in their adaptation of Shakespeare’s work, and consider the hermeneutic implications of the particular biblical inter-texts taken up in Schwartz’s play, addressing how stories such as the Exodus narrative attempt to both delineate and question women’s changing roles within modern Jewish family life in this period.

Sara Coodin is assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma, where she teaches Shakespeare and other English Renaissance literature. Her research interests center on Shakespeare and philosophy, including the theological dimensions of Shakespeare’s plays, questions of moral agency in Shakespeare, and Shakespeare and the Classical virtue ethics tradition. Along with publications in scholarly journals and a number of edited volumes, Coodin has a forthcoming monograph, *Is Shylock Jewish? Scriptural Citation and the Moral Agency of Shakespeare’s Jews*, which examines the Judaic interpretive legacy of Hebrew Scripture in *The Merchant of Venice*, and will be published with Edinburgh University Press this June. She is currently working on a new book project that discusses North American Yiddish adaptations of Shakespeare.
Tobias Döring

Staging *The Merchant of Venice* in post-holocaust Germany has always been a fraught, precarious and problematic venture, and yet the play – despite demands to ban it altogether – quickly regained prominent status and presence in theatrical repertoires after the war. As Ackermann and Schülting argue in their recent study (2011), the Shylock figure could serve postwar German audiences both in their desire to repress and to come to terms with an atrocious past, offering a cultural reference point for public debates on hate as well as guilt and shame. What, then, about later generations? How may the institution of the theatre, and the performance of this particular play, offer them ways to negotiate between memory and forgetting? How does the old Stage Jew speak anew to current needs or interests, and how is he spoken for? How can contemporary actors and directors approach the loaded legacy he stands for? And what, in an age of mass migration and displacement, are the stakes in staging Shakespeare’s ungentle revenger?

The proposed paper sets out to address such questions with reference to three Munich productions, in which three directors, representatives of different backgrounds, artistic styles and generations, responded to the challenge and engaged with the difficulties or attractions of the play: George Tabori’s now legendary 1978 “improvisations on Shylock”, entitled *Ich wollte meine Tochter läge tot zu meinen Füßen und hätte die Juwelen in den Ohren* [I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ears] produced by the Munich Kammerspiele; Dieter Dorn’s 2001 production at the Munich Residenztheater; and Nicolas Stemann’s recent post-dramatic rendering, which opened a new era at the Kammerspiele in October 2015, where it played in repertory with Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*. Very different in approach and concept, all three productions share a clear concern with the politics of space and place, not least perhaps because they are themselves located in a city once known in the Nazi era as “the movement’s capital”, a local heritage which Munich has long been reluctant to address. Against the background, therefore, of public developments such as the opening of the new synagogue (in 2006) and the NS Documentation Center (in 2015), the paper will discuss the strategies by which German Shylocks prompt and haunt contemporary debates, while turning from figures of memory to post-memory performance.

Tobias Döring teaches literature in the English Department of the University of Munich, Germany, where he holds a Chair. His research interests are Shakespeare, Early Modern Literature, and Postcolonial Studies. Books include *Thomas Mann and Shakespeare* (co-edited with Ewan Fernie, Bloomsbury 2015), *Edward Said’s Translocations* (co-edited with Mark Stein, Routledge 2012), and *Performances of Mourning in Shakespearean Theatre and Early Modern Culture* (Palgrave 2006). He served as president of the German Shakespeare Society, 2011 to 2014.

Neslihan Ekmekçioğlu

Shakespeare and Aemilia Bassano Lanier’s ‘Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum’
In the early 1970s, A.L. Rowse identified Aemilia Bassano Lanier as “the Dark Lady” of the *Sonnets* of Shakespeare and announced her as the lover of the bard. Aemilia Bassano was of Jewish and Venetian origin coming from a family of court musicians and became the mistress of Lord Chamberlaine, Henry Carey, the illegitimate son of Henry VIII and brother of Queen Elizabeth I. When Aemilia was pregnant with Henry’s child, she was married to another court musician called Alphonso Lanier. She has been brought up in the court and was educated by Countess Susan Bertie and her mother, the Duchess of Suffolk. Later John Hudson set up a new claim asserting that Aemilia was not merely Shakespeare’s lover, but his collaborator, stating that “this black Jewish woman, Emilia Bassano (the first woman to publish a book of original poetry) wrote Shakespeare’s plays.

Her work entitled *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* is a long narrative poem which articulates a woman-centered account of *The Bible*. According to McBride her poetry “manifests in its form and language an ‘internalisation and rewriting of the Psalms’ which had a profound effect on shaping Lanyer’s poetic style”. As a Jewish woman who has got “a voice of her own”, Aemilia Lanier deals with the maltreatment of the women and how they are expected to be an emblem of silence in their historical presence which is indeed an absence.

My paper will deal with Aemilia Lanier’s new perspective upon the Biblical women and the Passion of Christ as reflected in her poem, *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*. 
Anna Carleton Forrester

“Which Is the Merchant here, and Which Is the Jew?: Alterity, Sameness, and Irony in Venice

Antonio’s melancholy in *The Merchant of Venice* has long attracted scholars, spectators, and students of Shakespeare to the play. Critics have offered important explanations for this sadness, pointing to the likelihood of ventures abroad, medical consequences, or romantic impulses. However, I contend his sadness is instead tied to something more latent, comprehensive, and socially binding. My paper argues that, though the declaration of Antonio’s melancholy predates his bond with Shylock, it is his pre-existing, unwanted similarities with Shylock—and all Jewish usurers of Venice—that propel him into sadness.

While Venetian law favored Christian subjects by denying Jewish denizens fundamental rights, they were permitted to work as usurers, and their work greatly contributed to the financial prowess of the mercantile capital as did merchants. In the play, however, the Duke refuses to favor the Christian and risk the loss of Shylock’s bond, since to do so would be to wilfully undo Venice’s unimpeachable status (3.3.26-31). In the eyes of law and economy then, the two are as equally expendable as they are valuable. Additionally, common religious and ancestral origins unite their religious affiliations and humanity, as do scriptures that name usury a sinful, irrational practice within one’s religious group.

The play then asks us to see the Christian and Jew, merchant and usurer as subjects who are, despite insistence upon absolute difference, similar. When the bond dissolves, Shylock’s forced conversion confirms the erasure of those once asserted disparities: Shylock is an assumed member of the Christian community; he is forbidden to practice usury within that community and can even become a merchant; and his salvation is on par with the Christians’. The melancholy of Antonio then is based on and compounded by his oppositions to Shylock’s profession, religion, and humanity—ironically, the very things that make them so similar.

Anna Carleton Forrester is a PhD student at the University of Georgia studying Renaissance and Postcolonial Literatures. She is particularly interested in Shakespeare adaptations and appropriations, and studying the ways in which the playwright’s name and works have not only been used as a tool for colonial and nation-building projects, but also seized and deployed for messages of dissent. Her dissertation project will map performances of Shakespeare in Turkey—from their arrival in the nineteenth century to their active legacy today—and explore the extent to which Shakespeare's works have shaped Turkey's national dramatic identity.

Maria-Clara Versiani Galery

Shylock, Al Pacino and Michael Radford’s *Merchant of Venice*: A Study of Reception

Gershon Shaked has pointed out that “no play presents more difficulty to a Jew of every generation and class than Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*.” Tyrone Guthrie, in a different context, referred to the play as a document of anti-Semitism. Certainly, the Holocaust and other historical events in recent history have been significant in our reading and reception of the work. An outcome of this is that Shylock has become a much more important figure than Shakespeare may have initially conceived him. But this is not such a recent phenomenon: in reality, the centrality of Shylock’s role in *The Merchant of Venice* has been one of the play’s most striking aspects since the eighteenth century. Shakespeare’s Jew has been performed by some of the most renowned actors in celebrated productions of the play in the history of the English stage. The cinema, however, is much more recent medium and there are few screen renderings of this problematic work. Considering all this, I propose a discussion of the reception of Michael Radford’s film version of *The Merchant of Venice* by examining selected reviews published when the film was released, in 2004. The paper will focus on responses to Al Pacino’s
Xiu Gao

The Reconstructed Image of Jews from the Perspective of Imagology in Two Chinese Translations of The Merchant of Venice

In The Merchant of Venice, Shakespeare constructs an image of Jews, Shylock in particular, which is controversial because of the anti-Semitism embedded in it. My presentation deals with the reconstruction of this image in two Chinese translations of the play by Laura White (1914-5) and Shiqiu Liang (1936/2001).

To analyze this case study, I employ imagology, a research branch originating in comparative literature, which deals with the construction and transformation of the image of the ‘other’ in literary works. In the course of time, “the emphasis of imagological study has shifted from [...] checking if the image is accurate to exploring the formation of the image” (Cao 2013: 29). Two major researchers who contributed to this development are Daniel-Henri Pageaux (1989) and Jean Marc Moura (1992). For Pageaux, the image of the ‘other’ in a literary work can be analyzed on three levels which are both separate and interdependent: (1) lexical items, (2) larger textual units, and (3) the entire plot.

My presentation will focus on the lexical level (i.e., words used to address and describe Jews) in the two translations. I intend to show how their rendering of the figure of the Jew on this level was influenced by several factors: the way Jews were looked at in the history of China, the historical events that took place at the time of publication, and the translators’ identities. White, an American missionary, stressed the negative aspects of Shylock vis-à-vis the Christian figures. Liang, on his part, portrayed Shylock as an emblem of the oppressed who eventually fight back, alluding to the situation of the Chinese at that time.

Xiu Gao is a PhD student at Bar Ilan University, Israel. She received her Bachelor’s Degree from Yantai University, China in 2009 and her Master’s Degree from Harbin Engineering University, China in 2012. She then worked as a translator in Taishan Gypsum Co., Ltd until September 2013. Her research interests mainly include Translation Studies and Imagology. The topic of her doctoral dissertation is “The Image of Jews in Translated Chinese Texts: Translations of Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice and Dickens’s Oliver Twist as a Case in Point”.

Araceli Gaton

The Black Hawk Down Curse of the Stereotype and the Extent of Shylock’s Game

‘The theatre is often presented as the archetype of a new commercialism which emerged in the late sixteenth century, fixed and oriented towards profit, rather than transient and oriented towards survival.’ (Ward: 133). Shakespeare acted as a member of the theatrical performative and creative space, an active creator and provider of images and topics that were exchanged in the marketplace of ideas. In this paper, I discuss how Shakespeare intends to strike a new version of a Jewish character, Shylock, that offers a new angle to the race and purchase of new commodities. It is controversial as much as it aims to confront the stereotyped version that was handed in by Barabas of Marlowian stock. I will analyze how the Jewish character has enlarged under the shadow and scope of its immediate precursor, which has many times inadvertently, reduced and minimized the real extent and significance of the Shakespearean character downcasting its place in the new logics of the marketplace. In this paper I intend to illuminate these specific areas of the character by posing the question of what was the real real extent or significance of Shylock for the early modern theatregoer, and what type of information could be gathered and was possibly being transferred on by the playwright in the new London-based commercial frame.
I will place the image of Shylock from a new perspective and will argue that Shakespeare could be intending at demolishing the given stereotype, but not of the character itself. I finally delve on how the interaction between Shylock and Antonio could offer hints about how commercial negotiations took place while I intend to show some of their very underpinnings, which are staged through the paradoxes, at a moment of great economic upheaval but also of profound economic changes.

Araceli Gaton is a PhD student at CEU San Pablo University in Madrid. Her PhD focuses on Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* where she traces the origins of its textual significance. Her research interests lie in the study of cultural trends that have influenced and shaped the world we live in. She is interested in the versatility and transformation of cultural trends. She is broadly interested in Shakespeare’s reception in a diversity of formats and age ranges, and which comprise but are not restricted to the performative.

Rebecca Gillis

*Teatrum Mundi: Teaching Shakespeare Performance to Israeli Medical Students*

Israeli doctors are among the most accomplished practitioners and researchers in the world. We also enjoy the dubious reputation of being unfeeling, arrogant, opinionated and altogether incapable of listening to patients’ concerns; to such an extent that the success of treatment can be seriously compromised, on both a scientific and human level. In an attempt to combat these shortcomings, Israel has followed other countries’ lead in incorporating exposure to the humanities as an integral part of the medical curriculum. But resources are limited and time is short, so it is essential to choose areas of study which will maximally benefit these doctors in the making.

Philosophers, anthropologists and social scientists show ever increasing interest in what it means to perform: on stage, in one’s profession, in rituals both secular and religious, in politics. Nowhere is this more relevant than in the practice of medicine. Patients too assume familiar “sick roles”: recognizable behaviours resulting from pain, grief, mourning, anger and frustration. Sometimes there is heartfelt gratitude which may embarrass us. I argue, therefore, that the theatre and Shakespeare in particular, provides a unique platform for an often surprising discussion of the ways in which we approach our own and our patients’ mental and physical pain.

In my talk I will address the particular challenges of teaching Shakespeare to multicultural Israeli medical students (native born Jewish Israelis; English, Russian or French speaking Jewish immigrants; native born Israeli Arab citizens: Muslim, Christian and Druze) and the value of resourcing performances in Hebrew and Arabic as well as English. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach I will employ performance theory and cultural studies to shed light on the profound insights to be gained by exposure to contemporary Shakespeare performance which can directly impact the students’ present and future experience as medical practitioners.

Dr Rebecca Gillis is a paediatrician and neonatologist practicing in Jerusalem. She received her doctorate in Shakespeare performance from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. During the last 20 years she has also participated in various community theatre and professional productions in Israel in both English and Hebrew. At present she teaches in the medical humanities programme offered to 2nd year medical students at the Hadassah Hospital Hebrew University Medical School. Her research interests include contemporary Shakespeare performance in Israel (in English, Hebrew and Arabic) with particular emphasis on the liminal significance of the productions’ openings and closings; and more recently the contribution Shakespeare studies can make within the burgeoning field of medical humanities.

Atar Hadari

*The Word of the Lord to Shylock: Biblical and Post-Biblical Forms in the Translations of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* into Hebrew*

Some years ago I reviewed the Hebrew translation of Richard III and was struck that Queen Margaret’s speech (4.4) in the Hebrew translation was clearly an evocation of the Biblical book of Lamentations. Dror Abend-David has devoted an entire PhD thesis to a comparative literary analysis of the German, Yiddish and Hebrew translations of *The Merchant of Venice* but has restricted his study to the broader cultural context and political
intentions of the translations, limiting his textual analysis more or less to the translators’ approach to one line, the closing one of Shylock’s famous speech: “it shall go hard”.

I propose to examine more closely the full text of the two complete translations into Hebrew by Simon Halkin (1929) and Avraham Oz (1972) and to detect what Biblical or post-biblical Jewish texts the translator called on, consciously or unconsciously, to translate that major speech as well as other key phrases such as “my duckets or my daughter” and gauge thereby what it reveals about their actual attitude to the character and indeed what the literary resources of the Hebrew language itself can make of Shylock.

My thesis is that even a line like “my daughter or my duckets” which may be considered a simple bit of pseudo-Jewish posturing in English must in Hebrew be situated somewhere in the history of the language and would have to echo particular Mishnaic or Talmudic language in its formulation.

Abend-David’s emphasis is on the anti-Jewish character of the play and the anti-Diaspora Jewry thrust of the Hebrew translations but I suspect the translations themselves might tell a more complicated story about Jewish assimilation of this reflection in a Christian mirror.

Atar Hadari is currently writing a thesis under the supervision of Gergely Juhasz on the traces of the Jewish commentators in the Biblia Rabinica which may be detected in William Tyndale’s translation of Deuteronomy and its numerous revisions to the 1611 King James Version. He has also been contributing a series of verse bible translations to the journal MOSAIC for the past three years. Atar Hadari’s Songs from Bialik: Selected Poems of H. N. Bialik (Syracuse University Press) was a finalist for the American Literary Translators’ Association Award and his own collection, Rembrandt’s Bible, was published by Indigo Dreams. Lives of the Dead: Poems of Hanoch Levin was recently awarded a Pen Translates 2016 grant and is forthcoming from Arc Publications this October.

Richard Hillman

Mercy Unjustified: A Further Intertext for The Merchant of Venice

The Merchant of Venice has regularly been approached in terms of the conflict between the Old Testament – specifically Jewish – Law of Justice and the Christian Law of Mercy, at least since the argument of Lewalski in 1962. Yet not only is there little warrant for doing so in the recognised sources, but such readings have depended on abstract (if widely diffused) theological commonplaces, notably as propounded by the epistles of Paul and as transmitted symbolically through the medieval tradition opposing the Synagogue to the Church.

This paper proposes a hitherto ignored French dramatic intertext, if not necessarily as a supplementary source, at least as a lens through which the tragic tendencies of Shakespeare’s comedy appear more starkly. The ‘Tragique comedie françoise de l’Homme justifié par foy’, by Henry de Barran, a pastor with connections to the court of Navarre, was published in 1554; five copies are extant, including one in the Bodleian. The play is an allegorical interlude of a kind familiar enough within English tradition. Also familiar is its presentation as tragicomic of the

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standard Christian pattern, albeit with Protestant specificity, of a fall into sin and despair, followed by repentance and redemption.

There are, however, distinctive anticipations of Merchant not found elsewhere: the advocate of Law who ensnares the Mankind figure is identified as ‘Rabbi’; he inveigles Mankind into the power of Sin and Death, who, in a highly dramatic confrontation, physically open Mankind’s breast to examine his heart, which they find corrupted by Concupiscence, exposing his hypocrisy. Thanks to the intervention of Paul, who preaches salvation by Faith, a penitent Mankind receives Mercy, provided by divine Grace.

This version of the Christian schema substantially illuminates the problematic position and representation of Antonio in Shakespeare’s play. It also serves ironically to foreground the legal trickery of Portia as obviating the exposure of the heart and subsequent penitential process which should be necessary to receive Mercy. Instead, Shylock is forcibly cast in the role of sinful Christian in Antonio’s place, with the double effect of exposing him as scapegoat for a venal and hypocritical society and of highlighting his thoroughly human suffering.

Richard Hillman is a professor at the Université François-Rabelais, Tours, France (Department of English and Centre d’Études Supérieures de la Renaissance/CNRS). His monographs include Self-Speaking in Medieval and Early Modern English Drama: Subjectivity, Discourse and the Stage (Macmillan, 1997) and three books focussing on links between early modern English theatre and France: Shakespeare, Marlowe and the Politics of France (Palgrave, 2002), French Origins of English Tragedy, and French Reflections in the Shakespearean Tragic: Three Case Studies (Manchester University Press, 2010 and 2012). He has also produced translations/editions of a number of early modern French plays, most recently the Tragique comédie françoise de l’homme justifié par foi, by Henry de Barran (1554).

Zoltán Imre

Theatre and Ideology: Staging The Merchant of Venice at the Hungarian National Theatre in 1940 and 1986

My paper deals with the 1940 staging of The Merchant of Venice at the Hungarian National Theatre and with a 46-year gap between 1940 and 1986 when it was not allowed to be staged in Hungary. The first part of my paper analyses with the 1940-staging which happened in circumstances when Hungary had already introduced laws against people with Jewish background. These laws marginalized and penalized the Jewish population of Hungary and made them the fearful inside Enemies/Others against whom the so-called ‘real/true’ Hungarians could be united. At that time, staging Shakespeare’s play at the National Theatre could be considered either as the National assisted to the right-wing ideology, or it protested against that ideology by staging the play. Either way the National played against or with the dominant ideology. During the socialist era (1947-1989), The Merchant of Venice was seen as a very problematic play, and was not allowed to be staged until 1986. The second part of my paper deals with this 46-year gap, and investigates why The Merchant of Venice was considered as an anti-Semitic play, and why the socialist party leaders censored the National Theatre and the other theatres in Hungary to stage the play. As a result, I would like to draw attention to the ways how the dominant ideology of the given era influenced the staging or the lack of staging and the interpretation of Shakespeare’s play.

Zoltán Imre received his PhD from Queen Mary College, University of London (2005), and is now a reader at the Department of Comparative Literature and Culture, Eötvös University, Budapest. His publications include Transfer and Translation: Intercultural Dialogues (co-editor, author, 2002), Theatre and Theatricality (2003), Transillumination: Hungarian Theatre in European Context (editor, author, 2004), On the Border of Theatre and Sociology (co-editor, 2005), Alternative Theatre Histories (editor, author, 2008), Staging Theatre – Theories, Histories, and Alternatives (2009), Staging the Nation - The Changing Concept of the Hungarian National Theatre from 1837 until Today (2013); and various articles on Hungarian and European theatre.

Adriana X. Jacobs

Ha-im ata dome le-yom aviv? Anna Herman Translates the Sonnets

In this talk, I will address contemporary translations of Shakespeare’s Sonnets, specifically a group of ten sonnets translated by the Israeli poet Anna Herman. Herman’s translations appeared in 2006, in the fourth issue of the literary journal Ho! and mark a departure from previous Hebrew translations, most of which were
translated by men. My discussion of Herman’s translations will address the translation history of the Sonnets, from Avraham Regelson to Shimon Sandbank, and how their retranslation illuminates and complicates our understanding of shifts in the development of modern Hebrew writing and translating in the twentieth and twenty first centuries (Toury, 1995/2012). In what ways does Herman’s status as a woman poet and translator productively disrupt and revise this history, and with it the canonical status of previous (male) translators? How do her translations “compare,” as it were, with the translations that have come before, particularly those by male translators? Herman’s work is part of a neo-formalist turn in contemporary Hebrew poetry; nevertheless, while Herman applies conventions of form and meter to her own translations, I will call attention to the ways in which her translated sonnets revitalize both the original Shakespearean English and its later Hebrew translations, thereby constituting an all-together contemporary text.

Adriana X. Jacobs is Associate Professor of Modern Hebrew Literature in the Faculty of Oriental Studies and Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. At Oxford, she is co-convenor of the research programme Oxford Comparative Criticism and Translation. She has published widely on contemporary Hebrew and Israeli poetry and translation, including articles in Shofar, PMLA (forthcoming), Studies in American Jewish Literature, and Prooftexts, as well as chapters in several edited volumes. Her monograph Strange Cocktail: Translation and the Making of Modern Hebrew Poetry is currently under review. Her translations of the American Hebrew poet Annabelle Farmelant appeared in Women’s Hebrew Poetry on American Shores: Poems by Anne Kleiman and Annabelle Farmelant (Wayne State UP, 2016). She is the 2015 PEN/Heim Translation Fund grant recipient for her translation of Vaan Nguyen’s The Truffle Eye.

Gad Kaynar-Kissinger

Shylock in Buchenwald: Hanan Snir’s Israeli-German Production (Weimar 1995)

The Merchant of Venice has been a barometer for the fluctuant state of Jewish-German relations. Its history on the German-speaking stage includes a long if discontinuous tradition of philo-Semitic interpretations of Shylock, especially, not exclusively, while acted or directed by Jews. This tradition began with the Jewish emancipation in the mid-18th and the first half of the 19th centuries (with Shylock portrayed by Schröder, Fleck, Iffland, Devrient and Costenoble). There followed an anti-Semitic relapse in the 1840s (when the role became both a star-vehicle for Dawison, Seydelmann and Mitterwurzer, and an homeopathic tool to combat anti-Semitism). This trend was reversed during the Weimar Republic era, which stretched from the 1890s to 1933 (with Bassermann, Kortner and Schildkraut rendering paradigmatic philo-Semitic interpretations of Shylock. The play was misused and abused by the Nazis (less than one would suppose) and finally rehabilitated after WW2 (mainly by Regietheater directors such as Piscator, Zadek and Tabori).

The extreme model for post-Holocaust German-Jewish relations is the production staged by the Israeli director Hanan Snir and his artistic team at the Weimar National Theater in 1995. Snir imagined The Merchant as a viciously anti-Semitic play-within-a-play staged by SS personnel in the officers’ club of the nearby Buchenwald concentration camp with Jewish inmates compelled to play Shylock, Jessica and Tubal. This conception was intended to exact rhetorical revenge on behalf of the Nazis’ victims against the spectators, conceived of as accomplices and heirs of the perpetrators. Plagued by failed communication both on and off the stage, this production, however bold and ingenious, exemplified the cultural incongruity of German and Israeli/Jewish post-Holocaust perspectives.

Gad Kaynar-Kissinger is Associate Professor Emeritus at Tel Aviv University, where he also served as Chair of the Theatre Arts Department. He has also been Visiting Professor at Hebrew, Munich LMU, and Venice International Universities. In 2004 and 2010, he won grants from the Israel Science Foundation. He has published numerous articles on such topics as dramaturgy, Israeli, German and Scandinavian Drama, Holocaust Theatre, Theatre and Education, and Acting and Directing Theory. Recent publications include: Another View: Israeli Drama Revisited with Zahava Caspi (Ben Gurion University Publication, 2013); The Cameri Theatre of Tel-Aviv (Cameri Theatre, 2008); Habima: New Insights on National Theatre, as co-editor (Resling, 2016); as well as chapters in The Routledge Companion to Dramaturgy (Routledge, 2015) and New Dramaturgies: International Perspectives (Methuen, 2014). A new book, German Dramaturgy at the Turn of the Millennium (Forum Modernes Theater series) will appear in 2018. Kaynar has been editor or co-editor of books on Sturm und Drang, Brecht, G handheld, and The Cameri Theatre of Tel Aviv; and is/was co-editor of the quarterly Teatron; and Regional Managing Editor for Israel of The Theatre Times. He has curated several festivals in Israel and abroad and has worked on Israeli stage, film and TV as dramaturg, actor and director, and has translated texts from English, German, Norwegian and Swedish.
For his Ibsen translations and research, he was designated in 2009 as ‘Knight First Class of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit’.

Gideon Kouts

*The Merchant of Venice and the Hebrew Press*

The relationship between the Hebrew culture, including theater critics and press coverage, and *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare, have been and still is complicated and delicate. This paper will discuss diachronically two matters, far half a century from each other: the first Hebrew press review of the play "The Merchant of Venice", and the press coverage of the first production of the play on the Hebrew stage and the public debate that accompanied it.

The first theater review in Modern Hebrew press was published in the first Hebrew daily *Ha-Yom* in St. Petersburg on 23 August 1887 and addressed the showing of *The Merchant of Venice* by Russian actors, on a summer theater stage in the Ozerki northern quarter of the city. The reviewer was the writer and critic David Frishman. His article deals with the interpretation of the play, the concept of the show, criticism of the staging and the actors, but he addresses also some actual sarcastic remarks, rather not in the expected direction, about the meaning of the play for the Jewish public who attended the show. The reception of the play on “Gentile” stage is then juxtaposed to its presentation on Hebrew stage.

*The Merchant of Venice* was first presented in Hebrew in May 1936 by Habima Theater in Tel Aviv, directed by Leopold Jessner who escaped from Germany, with Aharon Meskin and Shimon Finkel alternating in the main part. The Hebrew press of the time have launched an extensive coverage of the preparations for the show, rehearsals and discussions with its creators, director and actors, description of the premiere and the public debate around the production of the play in the context of the violent riots in the country and the rise of Nazism in Europe, including articles, interviews, press conferences and various events. The coverage was comprehensive within all the frames - including news articles, feature stories and gossip. The opinions and reviews that were published crossed the ideological lines between the newspapers. Among the writers and participants in the public debate were poets like Jacob Fichman and Leah Goldberg, and some of the creators of the show as the director Leopold Jessner and the translator Shimon Halkin. But *The Merchant of Venice* Affair in Palestine culminated in a ‘literary trial” conducted by the Circle of Friends of Habima in the form of a real court, which was detailed in the press, with an indictment, a legal discussion and a motivated judgment, with the participation of the most prominent intellectuals of the time, including Asher Barash and Jacob Fichman at the presidency of the Court. Tchernichovsky and Pinchas Lachover as judges, Alexander Penn as an accusation witness and Dr. Epstein- Levi as a defense witness. The court acquitted Shakespeare and Habima, but the general audience thought otherwise. The play was showed less than fifty times, and the press also discussed the reasons for the failure.

Gideon Kouts is Full Professor of Modern Jewish History and Communications and Head of Jewish, Hebrew and Israel Studies Department at Paris 8 University. He is also European Bureau Chief and Senior International Correspondent for the Israel Broadcasting Authority, Commentator for France 24 Television and BFM Radio networks, Editor of REEH - the European Journal of Hebrew Studies and of “Kesher” - the International Journal of Jewish Press and Communications History Research and Honorary President of the French Foreign Press Association. Professor Kouts has also lectured at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem (1992-4). His publications include books and scholarly articles on Jewish Press and Communications History, Foreign Reporting, Propaganda and National Identity studies. He also authored some satirical short stories and theatre plays. Prof. Kouts holds a Ph.D. in Communications from Paris 2 University (1980) and a Doctorat d’Etat (French State D.Lit., 1997), as well as some other degrees like a Diploma from The Hague Academy of International Law (81), another Diploma from the European University Institute in Florence (82) and a Professional degree in Foreign Reporting from the Sorbonne and the French Journalism Training Center.

Douglas Lanier

*Patrimony, Paternity, and Appropriation: Redeeming Jewish Culture in Howard Jacobson's Shylock is My Name*
Howard Jacobson's novel *My Name is Shylock* uses elements of *The Merchant of Venice* as a means to address the question of continuity for Jewish culture in the contemporary world, a question particularly vexed for secularized Jewish intellectuals ambivalent about matters of faith but reverent about the world of high culture. In the novel, Shylock returns to the present to function as an ironic, ascerbic religious conscience for Strulovitch the art collector, a contemporary Jew struggling with a fatal sense that his cultural patrimony is facing a decisive rupture. The novel's central metaphor for that rupture is the loss of daughters to their fathers, in this case of Strulovitch's young daughter Beatrice to a boorish Christian, a loss orchestrated by his Christian rivals, and the parallel case of the loss of Jessica to Shylock. Jacobson identifies *The Merchant of Venice*'s emotional center with that loss, and with the rupture of Jewish cultural continuity by the Christians, through both the destruction of Shylock and the appropriation of Jewish tenets for Christian ends. Replaying that threat to continuity in the presence of Shylock, a Jew who has faced it all before, Strulovitch comes to reconnect his devotion to artistic patrimony to a renewed—if somewhat ironic—appreciation of Jewish religious ritual in the form of covenant and circumcision. Shylock, in turn, is given an opportunity to redeem himself by defending his choices in Shakespeare's play, but more importantly, by replaying the trial scene, this time recasting the Christian appeal to mercy from Christians as a specifically Jewish tenet, in effect reappropriating a stolen doctrine and restoring to its proper cultural place. These strategies of restorative counter-appropriation also bear upon Jacobson's own complex relationship to Shakespeare throughout the novel, on the one hand deeply concerned with maintaining continuity with the Shakespearean source and on the other appropriating Shakespeare against the Christian perspective he has long seemed to serve.

Douglas Lanier is Professor of English at the University of New Hampshire. For 2016-7, he is the Fulbright Global Shakespeare Distinguished Chair at Queen Mary University of London and University of Warwick. He has published widely on modern appropriations of Shakespeare; his book *Shakespeare and Modern Popular Culture* was published by Oxford University Press in 2002. He has won multiple awards for teaching and is a past trustee of the Shakespeare Association of America. His current project is a book-length study of *Othello* on screen, though he is also working on various specific cases of post-cinematic adaptation of Shakespeare in the twenty-first century.

Caroline Lion

**Beyond Violence: *The Merchant of Venice* in 2017**

This paper will argue that Shylock makes a journey that is analogous to a movement from Reform to ultra-Orthodox Judaism: from the position that focuses on oral interpretation, imagination, community, and societal concerns (Reform) to a position that is more focused on the covenant and the laws (Orthodox). In doing so, it will go on to suggest, Shylock reveals the need for a synthesis he cannot himself manage, a synthesis where intimacy with God involves the active inclusion of different perspectives, from within Judaism and beyond. Shakespeare’s *Merchant* is after all a play which brings Christianity into dialogue with Judaism in a context (Venice) which brings both into contact with Islam. The paper will draw on theorists and theologians, critics and philosophers, including J. Caputo, J. Derrida, E. Fernie, Rabbi A. Green, E. Levinas, F.Rosenzwieg, Rabbi J. Sacks and Talmud. Its ultimate argument will be that in *The Merchant of Venice* we can see through the clash of civilizations and religions which has haunted us till the present-day towards the precious possibility of a new religious and political unity and peace.

Caroline Lion’s fiction, plays, research and teachings have been endorsed and/or supported by respected novelists, dramatists, rabbis and scholars. Her work has been termed “visionary and inventive.” She has engaged in graduate studies at The Tisch School of the Arts, the Claremont School of Theology, the Academy for Jewish Religion, the Sorbonne and the Conservative Yeshiva and has an MA in French (theater and philosophy) from Middlebury College. The former literary manager of the award-winning Magic Theater of San Francisco, she has been mentored by beat poets and theatre artists of that lineage. Her plays/screenplays have received recognition and two of her novels have been published as well as many rabbinic teachings in respected newsletters. She has been an advisor in Hebrew interpretation for Shakespeare scholars as well as for Shakespeare-America. She is the widow of John Lion and has raised their four beautiful children in Ashland Oregon where she is adjunct professor of playwriting and research/fiction writing at Southern Oregon University and Rogue Community College. A PhD research student at The Shakespeare Institute beginning in 2017, she is actively involved in her dissertation on *The Merchant of Venice*. 

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Yair Lipshitz

Hebrew Letters and the Performativity of Language in a Spoken Word Macbeth

In 2014, a Spoken Word adaptation of The Tragedy of Macbeth premiered at the Incubator Theatre in Jerusalem. This adaptation stresses, as stated onstage in the performance itself, “the power of words” – reflected not only in the play's plot (the power of the Witches' prophecy) and the history of its reception (the superstition regarding the explicit naming of “the Scottish play”), but also in the theatrical performativity of language manifest both on Shakespeare's stage and in the contemporary poetics of Spoken Word performances.

As I will argue in this paper, another important intertext for the production’s emphasis on words and their power is the Jewish mystical tradition regarding the creative force of Hebrew letters. The biblical depiction of the world as being created by God's speech has been developed in some Jewish traditions into a notion of creation through the combination of Hebrew letters, and this notion has been wed to a hermeneutic system that attached interpretive meaning to each letter in the Hebrew alphabet as well as to their various amalgamations. In The Tragedy of Macbeth, Shakespeare’s play has been translated and adapted so that various Hebrew words (such as Macbeth's name spelled in Hebrew) are deconstructed into letters in order to supposedly unearth their deeper meaning. While the performance hardly abides to the religious or mystical underpinnings of the Jewish tradition, it utilizes it in order to create a specifically Hebrew theatrical strategy through which Shakespeare is channeled. At the same time, it also playfully questions the performative force of the Hebrew language, and the value attached to it – and to language in general.

Yair Lipshitz is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Theatre Arts in Tel Aviv University. His main field of research is the various intersections between theatre, performance and Jewish religious traditions. He is the author of two books in Hebrew, The Holy Tongue, Comedy's Version: Intertextual Dramas on the Stage of ‘A Comedy of Betrothal’ (2010) and Embodied Tradition: Theatrical Performances of Jewish Texts (2016). He has also published several papers dealing with topics ranging from Jewish-Italian theatre in the Renaissance to the reception of King Lear in Hebrew theatre, and from the reactivation of biblical and rabbinic spaces in modern drama and performance to the queering of Scripture in Angels in America. His current project focuses on time in the theatre and traces the interrelations between Hebrew theatre, Jewish traditions, and the temporalities of Zionism.

Thomas Luk

Shakespeare and Appropriation: Arnold Wesker’s Re-Writing of Shylock in The Merchant

Since 1945, there have been many new interpretations of Shakespeare’s The Merchant of Venice by directors – Jonathan Miller’s staging for Laurence Olivier in 1970, with its Fascistic young anti-Semites, is one of the cases in point. However, most traditional interpretations of Shakespeare and The Merchant of Venice often subscribe complacently to run of the mill interpretations of heroes and villains, money and usury, which formulate the conventional reading. Shakespeare’s play as a work of the theatre is capable of revealing qualities other than moral correctness, and should be judged by its aesthetic and theatrical merits and ever changing adaptability and contemporaneity. In the field of early modern adaptation studies, the play’s interpretability is amenable to adaptation, appropriation or revision, which provides a source of cultural capital for defying the bard’s cultural and ideological authority.

Hence, it may be most interesting to liberate this canonical text by rewriting so as to create new sites of reading to compete with some traditional or hegemonic reading practices. This paper is to argue that among these sites is Arnold Wesker's 1978 The Merchant with both its subversion and extension of Shakespeare's play, in theme, plot and characterization. Wesker’s rewriting puts in question received opinions and attitudes, the text, the context, the reader and interpretation:

Wesker incorporated a self-conscious method of reworking the canon by means of a counter-discourse, focused on two episodes in Shakespeare’s play: Jessica’s conversion to Christianity and Shylock’s often cited self-defense. The new treatment serves as alternative comments on Shakespeare’s play, and a challenge to the conventional discourse and its latent paradigm. The rewriting of Wesker conspires to disrupt the built-in mechanistic binary or opposition as well as the conception of the Jew rooted not so much in empirical reality as in association with Christian iconography with sin and the devil in The Merchant of Venice, a conception going back to the medieval imaginations of Christians that bestow upon the Jew the ‘protean quality’ to represent just about any sort of “Other” but themselves.
Wesker demonstrates how things can be viewed from different angles, and his treatment of the characters, especially Antonio and Shylock repudiates any fixing of the stereotypical characterization embedded in the original play. Engaging himself as both ethnic and cultural critic, Wesker puts Shakespeare’s work under scrutiny as a culturally-constructed world where life can be re-positioned, and margins moved to the centre to be viewed in a new light.

Thomas Luk is Professor of English and Dean of School of Humanities and Social Science at Hang Seng Management College, Hong Kong. He is the author of Film and Literature and From Script to Stage: Adaptations of Western Drama in Hong Kong. Recent publications include: "From Brecht, Artaud, And the Absurd to Sha Yexin and Gao Xingjian: Two Cases of Rapport De Fait," Comparative Literature Studies (2011), and "Hollywood's Hong Kong: Cold War Imagery and Urban Transformation in Edward Dmytryk's Soldier of Fortune," Visual Anthropology (2014).

Jeanette R. Malkin and Eckart Voigts

Beyond Shylock: Contemporary British-Jewish Theatre and Shakespeare’s The Merchant of Venice

How does Shakespeare’s ambivalent character, in turns victim and revenger, sinned against and sinning, affect British theatre artists of Jewish heritage today? Since the 1970s, stage adaptations of The Merchant by British-Jewish directors and actors (Jonathan Miller, Jack Gold, David Suchet, Warren Mitchell, Antony Sher, Henry Goodman) have struggled to glean an interpretation that would make The Merchant relevant or palatable for a post-Shoah generation. In addition, three British-Jewish dramatic adaptations of The Merchant have been written since the 1970s that ‘write back’ to Shakespeare and situate their strategies in contexts that give Shylock some “nobility of purpose,” as British-Jewish playwright Ryan Craig put it.

Arnold Wesker’s character re-writing in The Merchant (1976) and Charles Marowitz’s deconstruction in Variations on the Merchant of Venice (1977) belong to the genre of apologetics. For both, Shylock needs to be aggressively recovered and defended. The latest adaptation by a younger generation, Julia Pascal’s 2008 The Shylock Play, is a poetic and highly theatrical reverie on history. A play-within-a-play, it takes place in contemporary Venice where Sarah is waiting for the start of a tour of the Jewish quarter. Sarah, originally played by the 78-year-old Jewish actor Ruth Posner, is (like Posner) a Holocaust survivor. While waiting, she comes upon a dress rehearsal of Shakespeare’s Merchant of Venice into which she enters like the angel of history. Unlike Wesker and Marowitz, this poetic version of the play centers on ‘viewing,’ on the gaze of a historied Sarah upon an ancient fiction which she tries, and fails, to alter.

The focus of this paper will be double: we will discuss the difference between the adaptations of the older generation of Wesker and Marowitz, and Pascal’s contemporary version of the play. Secondly, we will focus on the reaction of contemporary Jewish theatre artists in Britain to Shakespeare’s play and to the centrality of Shylock as THE canonical figure of the Jew in Britain. What affect does Shylock have on British-Jewish theatre artists today? How do they assess the complexities of positioning themselves as artists with a Jewish heritage vis-à-vis this problematic Shakespearean creation? Is Shylock an anti-Semitic stereotype in need of an ‘update’? Or a trigger warning’ for contemporary audiences? Must Shylock be re-written against Shakespeare’s grain? Or should his Merchant not be performed today at all?

In order to answer these questions we asked a number of contemporary British-Jewish theatre artists – from Tom Stoppard to Gail Louw – about their personal relationship to Shylock and we will, for the first time, present and assess their responses to our query.

Jeanette R. Malkin is Chair of the Theatre Studies Department at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She co-edited the book Jews and the Making of Modern German Theater (University of Iowa Press, 2010) with Freddie Rokem and is the author of: Memory-Theater and Postmodern Drama (University of Michigan Press, 1999); and Verbal Violence in Contemporary Drama: From Handke to Shepard (Cambridge University Press, 1992). Her articles on ethnicity and theatre culture, on modernist German Theatre, on Heiner Müller, Thomas Bernhard, Samuel Beckett, Robert Wilson, and on Postmodernism have appeared in numerous academic journals and books. Dr. Malkin served as a Member of the Board (Beirat) of the Franz Rosenzweig Research Centre for German-Jewish Literature and Cultural History at the Hebrew University Jerusalem from 1998-2006. She is the recipient of a ISF grant (the Israel Science Foundation) for her research project “Triangulation: Jewish Cultural Markings in German and American Theatre” (2005-9); and of a co-grant from the German Lower Saxony-Israel Joint Project, together with Prof. Eckart Voigts, for their current research project “Hyphenated Cultures: Contemporary British-Jewish Theatre” (2016-19).
Eckart Voigts is Professor of English Literature at TU Braunschweig, Germany. As President of the German Society for Contemporary Theatre and Drama in English (2010-2016), he has published widely on contemporary British theatre and drama. He also contributed the essay on the production history of The Tempest to Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan’s The Tempest: A Critical Reader (Bloomsbury, 2014). He has written, edited and co-edited numerous books and articles, such as Introduction to Media Studies (Klett 2004), Jane Spotting and Beyond: British Heritage Retrivers since the Mid-1990s (Narr 2005), Reflecting on Darwin (Ashgate 2014), Dystopia, Science Fiction, Post-Apocalypse (WVT 2015) and the special issue of Adaptation (OUP vol. 6.2, 2013) on transmedia storytelling and participatory culture. He is currently co-editing the Routledge Companion to Adaptation Studies.

Cynthia May Martin

Shylock and Shylock: One Man (Shows) and Two Identities

Post-Holocaust approaches to the portrayal of Shylock usually require considerable awareness of and sensitivity to the horrors of recent history and living memory to the extent that Shakespeare’s Jew has seemingly undergone a binary conversion from villain to victim. Two textually removed, one-man show appropriations of The Merchant of Venice, however, interrogate the societal pressures, motivations, and processes behind Shylock’s makeover in the recent global marketplace: Gareth Armstrong’s 1999 Shylock and Mark Leiren-Young’s 1996 Shylock both utilize the one-man show theatre construction to engage the audience in an emotive, albeit one-sided, conversation on the historical and current oversimplification of Jewish identity, both before and after the Holocaust. However, whereas Armstrong utilizes the character of Tubal, Shakespeare’s lesser known Jew, to explain, defend, and empathize with Shylock’s behavior, Leiren-Young argues for a Jewish actor’s artistic license to play Shylock as an unredeemable villain in a post-Holocaust world. Although Armstrong and Leiren-Young present Shylocks from opposite ends of the spectrum, both establish the problematic nature of qualifying Jewish identity based on a one-dimensional question of good and evil. Moreover, while Armstrong and Leiren-Young depict vastly different Shylocks from one another, both play on the expectation of an empathetic post-Holocaust representation of Shylock not just to discuss these anxieties and complexities regarding modern Jewish identity, but also to articulate how Gentile identity has become defined by its depictions of Jews in light of the Shoah.

Cynthia May Martin holds an MLitt in Shakespeare Studies from the University of St Andrews and is currently a second year PhD student at Queen’s University, Belfast. Her thesis explores the impact of the Holocaust on productions of The Merchant of Venice.

Michaela Mudure

Shakespeare and the Romanian Extreme Right during the Interwar Period

The Interwar period was an age of significant economic and cultural development for Romania. Political forces of various orientations, from the extreme right (the fascist organization ‘The Legion of Archangel Michael’) to the extreme left (the Romanian Communist Party) tried to take power.

In this complex political context, Shakespeare remained a constant cultural presence and an indicator of eternal moral values. Shakespeare had already been translated into Romanian and played on the Romanian stages but it is during this period that the first Romanian contributions to Shakespeare studies were published by Haig Acterian and Dragoş Protopopescu.

Interesting enough, both these early Shakespeare scholars from Romania were attracted by extreme right ideologies. Haig Acterian (1904-43) was a film and theatre director, journalist and political activist. He was influenced by Edward Gordon Craig whom he met personally as well. In 1938 Acterian published the first Romanian monograph study on Shakespeare.

Dragoş Protopopescu (1892-1948) was a Romanian novelist, journalist, and English Studies specialist. In 1924 he defended his Ph.D. thesis at Sorbonne, Paris under the supervision of Louis Cazamian. Protopopescu was the director of the National Theater in Chernivtsi (1926-7) and also a press attaché at the Romanian Legation in London (1928-30). In the spring of 1938 he was arrested during the conflict between King Charles II of Romania and the fascist organization ‘The Iron Guard’. In 1948 he was arrested by the Communist
authorities but he succeeded in committing suicide. In 1925 Protopopescu published a collection of essays on English Literature entitled *English Pages* [Pagini engleză] where he also commented on Shakespeare.

In the present paper we shall analyze the contradiction between these two scholars’ extreme right ideology and their admiration for Shakespeare, especially in their treatment of Shylock.

Michaela Mudure is professor at Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. She has been guest professor in Turkey and the Czech Republic and a member of the Beatrice Bain Research Group at the University of California at Berkeley. Dr. Mudure is interested in the British Enlightenment, the intersection between gender and ethnicity, and Jewish Studies. Her publications include: *Feminine* (2000); Katherine Mansfield. *Plucking the Nettle of Impressions* (2000); *Ethnic America* (2008); and *Lecturi canadiene. Canadian Readings* (2009). Dr. Mudure is also a versed translator from English and French into Romanian and from Romanian into English.

Edna Nahshon

**A Hebrew-Speaking Shylock on the New York Stage: Shylock ’47 at the Pargod Theatre (1947)**

*The Merchant of Venice*, more than any other work of literature, challenged post-Holocaust Jews to find a way to negotiate the consequences of anti-Semitism in Western culture. The question was openly articulated in *Shylock ’47*, a Hebrew-language stage production presented by the Pargod Theatre, a small Semi-professional New-York-based Hebrew-language Company. Conceived and directed by Peter Frye (1914-91) *Shylock ’47* was constructed as a play within a play. It combined original scenes culled from Simon Halkin’s Hebrew translation of *The Merchant of Venice* with present-based transitional scenes, created mostly through improvisation and discussion between director and cast. What eventually emerged was a script based on Shakespearean’s text with added dramatized discussions about the play’s meaning and relevance to Jews at that particular moment in history.

This metatheatrical approach was a modernistic Jewish meditation on the moral problems involved in producing *The Merchant* in shadow of the Holocaust. *Shylock ’47* conveyed the “behind the scene” relationship between actors and director, the critical and aesthetic strategies they examine, discard and select, their on-going conversation with the Shakespearean text as both actors and Jews, and their rebellion against the final words Shakespeare assigned to Shylock.

The (unpublished) playscript consists of three acts. The first takes place ten days before the opening, the second, two days later, and the third, at the night of the performance. Act I takes place in sixteenth century London, Act II, is situated in post-Reformation Germany, and Act III, in a British internment camp in Cyprus run by the British.

In my presentation I will discuss the creative process of this unique theatrical experiment within the historical moment of its creation and will discuss the many questions it raised and tried to resolve.

Edna Nahshon is professor of Jewish Theater and Drama at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, and senior associate of the Center for Hebrew and Jewish studies at Oxford University in the UK. Her premier interest lies in the intersection of Jewishness, performance, and drama. In addition to numerous articles, book chapters, encyclopedia article and book reviews, her work includes the following books: *New York’s Yiddish Theater: From the Bowery to Broadway* (Columbia University Press, 2016); *Jews and Theater in an Intercultural Context* (Brill Academic Publishers, 2012); *Jewish Theatre: A Global View* (Brill Academic Publishers, 2009); *Jews and Shoes* (Berg, 2008); *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot: Israel Zangwill’s Jewish Plays* (Wayne State University Press, 2005); *Yiddish Proletarian Theatre: The Art and Politics of the Artef, 1925–1940* (Greenwood, 1998). Most recently she was the curator of “New York’s Yiddish Theater: From the Bowery to Broadway,” a major exhibition presented at the Museum of the city of New York (March 2016 - August 2016).

Özlem Özmen

**Identity and Gender Politics in Contemporary Shakespearean Rewriting: Julia Pascal’s *The Yiddish Queen Lear***

This paper aims to argue that Julia Pascal’s play, *The Yiddish Queen Lear* (2003), as a dramatic adaptation of Shakespeare’s *King Lear* from a Jewish perspective, merges racial identity politics with gender politics as the play both traces the history of the Yiddish theatre and makes a feminist criticism of Shakespeare’s text. The use of
King Lear as a source text for a play about Jews illustrates that contemporary Jewish engagements with Shakespeare are more varied than widely known reinterpretations of The Merchant of Venice. While informing the audience about the loss of traditional Yiddish theatre due to the Holocaust, Pascal’s play introduces some Jewish customs, employs Yiddish translation of some of Shakespearean lines, hence revealing the influence of Pascal’s Jewish background on her literary productions.

The central figure of Pascal’s play, Esther is a re-imagination of the actual Jewish actress Ester Rachel Halpern who is the most remembered name of Yiddish theatrical history. The fictional Esther’s struggle to preserve the tradition of the Yiddish theatre against her daughters’ favour of the American cabaret is manifested in the form of the problematic relationship between King Lear and his daughters. Pascal’s use of a strong woman protagonist fits in the current feminist criticism that points out the misogynist undertones in Shakespeare’s plays and the lack of emphasis on Queen Lear particularly in King Lear. This feminist response is also a challenging outcome of Pascal’s disapproval of the stereotypical representation of the domestic Jewish woman figure in other dramatic texts. Additionally, the fact that Ruth Posner, as an actress who was a real survivor of the Warsaw ghetto, performed the role of Esther in the original production of The Yiddish Queen Lear brings the feminist and racial criticism of this particular Shakespearean appropriation together, and contributes to the play’s relevance to modern history with anti-semitism as its central topic.

Özlem Özmen is a PhD candidate and a research assistant at the Department of English Language and Literature, Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey. Her dissertation project is about the socio-historical analysis of the contemporary rewritings of Shakespeare’s plays in British drama. She carried out research for her dissertation in the Department of Drama at School of English and Drama in Queen Mary University of London in 2015-6. Besides Shakespearean adaptation, her areas of interest include British women playwrights, political drama, post-colonial literature and classical literature. She has recently published a book chapter titled “Feminist Counter-Discourse against Shakespeare’s King Lear: Elaine Feinstein and Women’s Theatre Group’s Lear’s Daughters” and an article titled “Turning over Feudalism with Communism and the Process of Remaking Society in David Hare’s Fanshen.” Another book chapter concerning a Shakespeare adaptation titled “Challenging Hamlet: Erotic Representation of Gertrude in Howard Barker’s Gertrude-The Cry” is about to be published shortly.

Rosa Reicher

“Go out and learn”: Shakespeare, ‘Bildung’ and the Jewish Youth Movement in Germany between Integration and Jewish Self-Identification

One of the main concepts that influenced Jewish youth and their Jewish self-perception in the 19th century was ‘Bildung’ – the idea of self-cultivation and education. This cultural and philosophical "movement" focused on an ideal individual: enlighten, humanist and free; a man of the world, whose culture is not rooted in any specific religion or nation, he is the European par-excellence. Because of ‘Bildung’s’ emphasis on the individual, many of the young Jews in Germany perceived it as an ideal tool for full assimilation. According to ‘Bildung’ it doesn’t matter where one comes from, it only matters where one is headed, and therefore it is no wonder many Jews adopted ‘Bildung’ enthusiastically. The overall acceptance of ‘Bildung’ in the minds of German-Jewish youth changed the content of both Judaism and Germanism for them. The very term ‘Bildung’ became part of their Jewishness; cultural artifacts that in the past were considered German and foreign, were now perceived as the very essence of their culture.

The ‘Bildungs’ ideal of a Jewish humanism included not only Goethe, Hölderlin, Stefan George, but also Shakespeare.

Julius Bab, a German dramatist, theater critic and a cofounder of the ‘Kulturbund Deutscher Juden’, wrote in his article, “The cultural problem of the Jews in Germany today”, [‘Der Morgen’, 1933]: “And again we are committed to the community of European nations, whose essence Lionardo and Michelangelo, Cervantes and Shakespeare, Voltaire and Rousseau, Dostojewski and Ibsen have determined.”

These literary heroes, writers and thinkers were their leaders, through which the Jewish youth experienced their Jewishness. Especially Shakespeare oeuvre was part of the reading at school and at home.

This proposal deals with Shakespeare’s reception of Jewish youth in Germany.

The young Jews reaffirmed their ethnicity and reconstructed their Jewishness in innovative ways inside the Jewish youth movement as a response to the pressures of antisemitism and the rise of National Socialism. The discussion with the Jewish youth movement is more than the analysis of a constituent of the German youth movement; it is concrete discussion with German-Jewish history.
My thesis is that by the youth movement the youth could develop new identity aims, through a new interpretation and creation of a European ‘Bildungs’ ideal and value which implies the knowledge and awareness of the significance of Shakespeare.

Rosa Reicher is completing a PhD thesis on “Gershom Scholem as a ‘Bildungs’ theorist” at the University of Heidelberg’s Institute of Education. She has lectured in the Department of Educational Science at the University of Heidelberg on Holocaust Studies, memory culture and Jewish education. Her main research areas are Jewish philosophy, Jewish history, Hebrew literature and Jewish education. She is also interested in Jewish youth movements, the Italian Jewish Renaissance, and Irish Jewish history. Her recent publications include a book review on Ittai Joseph Tamari’s “Das Volk der Bücher” in Jüdisches Leben in Bayern. Mitteilungsblatt der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde in Bayern (2014) and “Die Ikonographie der Haggadot. Ein kurzer Streifzug durch die jüdische Buchkunst” in Jüdisches Leben in Bayern. Mitteilungsblatt der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde in Bayern (2013).

Esther Schupak

Teaching Shakespeare in Israel

In my experience of teaching Shakespeare in Israel, I have learned to dread the question that invariably pops up at some point: was Shakespeare anti-Semitic? Since this question has no simple answer, I quickly find myself embroiled in a discussion of the issues brought up by James Shapiro in his magisterial Shakespeare and the Jews, but I am almost never in a position to give the topic the time and attention it deserves. I have decided to rectify the situation by devoting an entire semester to teaching The Merchant of Venice. Using performance methods combined with historical study and letter-writing methodology, I will explore this question together with my college students.

We will use performance as a platform for interpretation. Performance theorists often draw an analogy between the text of a play and a musical score or the choreography of a dance: “[T]he notes or steps may be unchanging in the written score of a piece, but the way in which these are executed will vary greatly from artist to artist” (Blair 2006: 168). We will therefore perform the drama in class and view scenes from several videos in order to compare and contrast the dramatic choices of the performers. Historical context is also particularly important to understanding this play, so we will study the history of the Jews in England in order to better understand the framework in which the play was written and originally performed. To appreciate the cultural impact of the drama, we will also study its performance history. As we work through the material, students will write letters to the class in which they explore their reactions to the text, the various performances, and the history. These letters will open topics for discussion and provide a written record of the learning process of the class.

By engaging with Merchant through these multiple methodologies, we will come to a deeper apprehension of this drama’s complex dance with anti-Semitism.

Esther Schupak currently teaches at Talpiot Academic College and Bar-Ilan University, where she attained her doctorate. Her research interests focus on Shakespeare, listening rhetoric, and pedagogy. She has published in Shakespeare Survey: “‘Lend Me Your Ears’: Listening Rhetoric and Political Ideology in Julius Caesar” and has a number of articles currently under review. In addition to teaching rhetoric, academic writing, and literature courses, she teaches Shakespeare to both undergraduate and graduate students.

Cynthia Seton-Rogers

The Exceptions to the Rule: Jews in Shakespeare’s England

The character of Shylock in Shakespeare’s The Merchant of Venice has not only shaped the popular notion of what a Jew is centuries later, but much like the Jewish literary villains created before him, he became the literary embodiment of the Jew. Did William Shakespeare conceive the character who has become arguably the most famous Jew in literary history without ever having met a Jew? The Merchant of Venice was written during the Period of Expulsion, or The Middle Period in England, defined by scholars as beginning in 1290 with King Edward I’s edict expelling all non-Baptized Jews from England and ending in 1656 when Cromwell repealed this edict and readmitted Jews into England. This paper will argue, however, that although Jews were not officially
allowed in England until 1656, Jews’ presence was tolerated as long as they were discrete and performed the duties the Christians could not. There is evidence suggesting that there was a small Sephardic Jewish community in London throughout this period, including during Shakespeare’s lifetime. This evidence, however, is limited and largely indirect as this community could not exist openly. Despite a lack of concrete evidence, there are several clues that, while by themselves are not sufficient evidence of a Jewish community, when put together they comprise enough confirmation to reasonably support an argument for its existence. This paper will identify and examine these clues, as well as the probable reasons for the lack of enforcement of Edward’s edict in order to disprove the idea that Shakespeare lived in a country bare of Jews.

Cynthia Seton-Rogers is a PhD candidate at The University of Texas at Dallas. Her degree concentration, The History of Ideas, is an interdisciplinary program in the humanities that interweaves history, literature, and philosophy. She spent five years as a research and teaching assistant with Drs. Zsuzsanna Ozsváth, David Patterson, and Nils Roemer. Currently she is working as a Communications Specialist for The Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies. Her fields of interest are Early Modern European history, anti-Semitism, and the representation of the Holocaust in Literature.

Michael Shapiro

The Merchant ON Venice [Boulevard, Los Angeles] (Chicago, 2007): Universalizing Shakespeare’s Play

Productions and adaptations of The Merchant of Venice from 1945 to the present generally employ one of four strategies: continuing, historicizing, decentering, and universalizing.

Continuing means following 19th-century English productions in making Shylock “more sinned against than sinning.” While Jewish immigration to England increased geometrically, actors like Booth and Irving made Shylock a maligned and sympathetic outsider, while burlesque versions caricatured him as an immigrant peddler. Immigrant Shylocks survive on English-speaking stage and some even break out into Yiddish, but with increasing assimilation they risk seeming sentimentalized and remote from current social reality.

Historicizing means setting the play in Germany or Italy between 1933 and 1945, a context in which Shylock, however sharp-edged, is automatically a sympathetic victim, as in the first of George Tabori’s versions, ostensibly performed by the prisoners of Auschwitz, or Joshua Sobel’s production set in Mussolini’s Italy.

Decentering means making Jessica’s story at least as important as Shylock’s if not more so. Maurice’s Schwartz’s Yiddish adaptation, Shaylok un zayn tokhter, gave Jessica equal billing while many productions and especially recent prose adaptations by feminist writers like Erica Jong, explore Jesssica’s plight as immigrant’s daughter, belle juive, forlorn wife, or remorseful child.

Universalizing means mapping the play’s Jewish-Christian conflict onto other racial, religious, or ethnic antagonisms, so it becomes another example of inter-communal strife. Peter Sellars’s production thus had Jewish characters played by Afro-American actors and incorporated clips of Los Angeles policemen beating an African-American and of the protests following their acquittal. A radical adaptation, The Merchant ON Venice, depicts the multi-faceted conflict between a Muslim “Shylock” and his Hindu neighbors in Los Angeles. It also includes a trenchant Hindu critique of its source, when “Nerissa” halts the persecution of Shylock by invoking not mercy, which implies condescension, but empathy, i.e. a realization of shared humanness.

Michael Shapiro is Professor Emeritus of English and was founding director of the Program in Jewish Culture and Society at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has been a visiting professor at Cornell, Reading, Tamkang, and Loyola Universities. He is the author of Children of the Revels (Columbia University Press, 1977) and Gender in Play (University of Michigan Press 1994), as well as articles, notes and reviews in early modern English literature and drama, and in modern Jewish secular literature. He currently lives in Chicago, where he served on the Joseph Jefferson Committee, which grants annual awards for excellence in theater arts.

Jeffrey Shoulson

Shakespeare, King Lear, and the Jewish Job

There was considerable interest in the Book of Job throughout the medieval and early modern period, among both Jewish and Christian readers. Sermons on Job abounded and many of the most influential theologians of
the period—including Luther and Calvin—made significant use of the book as a means for exploring matters of faith, of justice, and of divine sovereignty. Although there were several Job plays written and performed in France, Germany, Spain, and Italy, the same cannot be said for England, where we only have record of one sixteenth-century play, Richard Greene’s *The History or Tragedy of Job* (1594). As many critics have noted, however, the book serves as an important influence on a number of Shakespeare’s plays, including *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, and perhaps most notably, *King Lear*.

Shakespeare wrote his great tragedy amid a growing awareness of alternative traditions of biblical interpretation, not just competing Protestant and Catholic readings, but also rabbinic exegetical and homiletic approaches. While Jewish and Christian approaches to what many have considered the most puzzling book in the Hebrew Bible did occasionally overlap, there are some important differences that reflect distinctive perspectives on many of the central concerns of a play like *King Lear*. Though this paper will not be making any claims about Jewish influence, *per se*, it will examine how reading Job Jewishly broadens and complicates the Jobean influence on Shakespeare’s play.

Jeffrey Shoulson is the Doris and Simon Konover Chair of Judaic Studies, Professor of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages, and Professor of English at the University of Connecticut, where he also serves as the Director of the Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life. His books include *Milton and the Rabbis: Hellenism, Hebraism, and Christianity* (Columbia UP, 2001); *Hebraica Veritas? Christian Hebraists and the Study of Judaism in Early Modern Europe* (Penn Press, 2004); and *Fictions of Conversion: Jews, Christians, and Cultures of Change in Early Modern England* (Penn Press, 2013). His current research is on English Bible translations from Tyndale to the King James Version.

Eran Shuali

**The Use of Biblical Language in Isaac Salkinson’s Hebrew Translations, with Special Attention to His Translations of *Othello* (1874) and *Romeo and Juliet* (1878)**

Isaac Salkinson’s Hebrew translations of John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1871), William Shakespeare’s *Othello* (1874) and *Romeo and Juliet* (1878), Christoph August Tiedge’s *Urania* (1876) and the New Testament (1885) are characterized by strict adherence to Biblical Hebrew and by extensive use of phrases borrowed from the Hebrew Bible. The first part of this paper will illustrate this literary choice and translation technique through several examples picked from Salkinson’s translations of *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

The second part of the paper will attempt to understand Salkinson’s choice to “biblicize” the texts he translated by examining his remarks on this subject, which are found in the paratexts accompanying his translations and in his letters. Particular attention will be given to the influence of the theological convictions of Salkinson—a Jew converted to Christianity and working as a missionary to the Jews—on his way of translating.


Efraim Sicher

**The Conversion of Jessica: Race, Religion, and Gender in *The Merchant of Venice***

The Jew’s “fair daughter” in Shakespeare’s play *The Merchant of Venice* converts and is redeemed from the cursed Jewish people. Recent attention, however, to changing ideas of race and identity in the early modern period has brought into question the divisions of Christian/Jew/Moor. Can Jessica convert and no longer be considered the Jew’s daughter? As “gentle” and “fair” is she to be considered gentle and in no way dark (spiritually or racially)? And has she adopted a new faith—seen the light in conventional narratives of the conversion of Jews—or is she another Shakespearean figure who switches identity or gender in order to resolve the love plot and pair up in the final couplings in Belmont? Jessica’s conversion has little religious meaning, but rather (like Abigail in *The Jew of Malta*) she is saved from the Jew her father and she is saved by marriage to Lorenzo. Is it to
be considered a matter of convenience that might, as Launcelot quips, raise the price of hogs? These questions have implications for our understanding of the function of the Other in the debates around unstable national identities (as Shapiro and Berek have shown), especially when we recall that the clandestine presence in England of a Marrano community raised concerns in the wake of the Lopez affair.

Discussion of *The Merchant of Venice* usually centres on Shylock and the question of “anti-Semitism.” This paper differs in focusing on Jessica and addressing the gendering of difference in the play. I aim to show that the play’s idea of the “Jew” is connected to wider concerns about the shifting and unstable boundaries of nation, color, and religion, as well as about gender and sexuality, in the context of a debate over trust and fidelity in religious conversion and in the new mercantilism evident in increasingly competitive trade in the Mediterranean.

A graduate of London and Oxford universities, Efraim Sicher is a professor of English and comparative literature at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. He has published seven books and edited two volumes of essays, as well as numerous articles in comparative literature and modern Jewish studies. He has also edited the uncensored works of the Soviet Jewish short-story writer Isaac Babel in English (Penguin), Russian, and Hebrew (3 volumes). His most recent books include *Under Postcolonial Eyes: The “jew” in Contemporary British Writing* (with Linda Weinhouse, 2012) and *Race, Color, Identity: Rethinking Discourses about "Jews" in the 21st Century* (as editor, 2013). His new book *The Jew’s Daughter: A Cultural History* is forthcoming from Lexington Books in 2017.

Lisa S. Starks

**Ovid, Protean “Personation,” and the Figure of the Male Jew in Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta***

In his Prologue for Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* at the Cocke-Pit, Thomas Heywood describes the late Edward Alleyn, who had formerly portrayed Barabas, as a “Proteus for shapes, and Roscius for a tongue, / So could he speake, so vary” (10-11). Here and elsewhere, Ovid’s Proteus—icon of author and actor—was appropriated to conceptualize the early modern player’s metamorphic “personation” of character, which involved all aspects of the theatrical experience: acting, playing space, and audience affect.

It is especially appropriate that Proteus is invoked in the Prologue of this particular play, and Pygmalion—Ovidian icon of the artist—in its Epilogue. As Sara Munson Deats and I have argued, *The Jew of Malta* is highly meta-theatrical, embodying both the creative energy of the stage and the dangers that anti-theatricalists claimed it posed.1 In that article, however, we do not examine the role of Ovid in the debate on theatricality nor the link between it and the stereotype of the male Jew as demonized, ‘bleeding’ Other. In *The Jew of Malta*, Marlowe comments on this debate – and on conceptions of Jewish masculinity – via Ovid. In his gleeful plotting and role-playgoing, Barabas resembles the playwright and actor; his Protean shape-shifting presents theatricality as dangerously evil while reveling in its imaginative, generative vitality. Marlowe thus invests the figure of the male Jew with the poetic vigour of Ovid. Through Barabas, therefore, Marlowe exceeds and transforms the anti-Semitic male stereotype, thereby satirizing both that stereotype and the anti-theatricalists’ condemnation of the stage.

Lisa S. Starks is Professor of English at University of South Florida St. Petersburg, where she chairs the Department of Verbal and Visual Arts and directs the MLA in Liberal Studies Program. She has published articles, edited special issues of journals, and co-edited book collections on sexuality and violence in Renaissance drama, Shakespeare on screen, and other topics. Her most recent publication, a scholarly monograph, is entitled *Violence, Trauma, and Virtus in Shakespeare’s Roman Poems and Plays: Transforming Ovid* (Palgrave, 2014). She is currently working on two new projects: a book collection on Afterlives of Ovid in early modern English theater, and monograph on Levinas, Shakespeare, and appropriation.

Adriana Streifer

**Jewish Renegades and Renegade Jews in Robert Daborne’s *A Christian Turned Turk***

Though often dismissed for its chaotic plotting and its alternately stilted and overwrought language, Robert Daborne’s *A Christian Turned Turk* (1612), has attracted scholarly attention for its representation of English attitudes toward Islam and the Ottoman Empire, the economic and cultural allure of piracy, and the religious and political stakes of conversion. Yet the play also deserves to be considered for its treatment of Jewish
characters, whose dynamicty complicates early modern understandings of Jewish difference. Daborne’s play links Jews to renegades – individuals who threaten England’s integrity by rejecting religious and national ties for the sake of personal profit. Applying the epithet, “Renegado Jew,” to its main Jewish character, A Christian Turned Turk requires us to wonder if Jews, members of a (to the English) reprobate religion and unaffiliated with a particular national identity, can ever become renegades, or if Jews, for the very same reasons, are always renegades?

I argue that A Christian Turned Turk offers Jewishness as the proper lens through which to understand the allures and dangers of renegadism. The play does this by defining Jews, like renegades, as figures of extreme self-interest and untrustworthiness. Daborne’s play attempts to address fears of such self-serving figures (the same fears stoked by the competitiveness of early modern Mediterranean commerce, and famously embodied in Marlowe’s Barabas) by adding an element of self-destructiveness to its Jews and renegades. But the play vacillates between framing self-destructiveness as a palliative for and an exacerbation of anxieties that Jews and renegades alike are successful, adaptable, and attractive. In readings of Ward’s (the titular English pirate) and Benwash’s (the Jewish-Muslim renegade) parallel convert statuses and heavily policed sexual desires, I show that transitively, to be a renegade is also to some degree to be Jewish – a hybrid identity both coveted and reviled.

Adriana Streifer is an Assistant Professor and Assistant Director at the University of Virginia’s Center for Teaching Excellence. She publishes on effective teaching and course design practices and runs programs dedicated to helping faculty and graduate students achieve their teaching goals. Prior to transitioning to the field of educational development, Adriana received her Ph.D. in English literature. Her research focuses on representations of Jews and Jewishness in early modern drama, particularly the ways in which Jewish characters express English commercial and colonial aspirations and anxieties. Adriana teaches undergraduate courses on Shakespeare, medieval and early modern literature, feminism and theater, and composition.

José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim

Elizabethan Orientalia: “Jews” in late Tudor England and the Ottoman Jews
Did William Shakespeare knew personally some of the Jews who inspired his plays?

Elizabeth I had people of Jewish origin in her personal circle, such as the famous and ill-fated physician Rodrigo Lopes who, interestingly enough, was a relative of an influential Jew called Álvaro Mendes. Mendes was born in Portugal, and latter took refuge in the Ottoman Empire, where he was known as D Shelomo ibn Ya’ish; and we know that he exchanged correspondence with Elizabeth I, and the Queen always favoured/protected him in her missives to the Ottoman Sultan Murad III. Elizabeth I knew that Álvaro Mendes received, while a Christian, a Knighthood in the Order of Santiago, since she dubbed him as "Eques" in her correspondence. So even if D. Shelomo lived exiled in the Ottoman Empire, Elizabeth I still considered him as a "Westerner."

The question that arises is: to what extent this pragmatic diplomacy of Elizabeth I with Islamic states where some "Western" Jews appear as pivotal elements shaped their image in Elizabethan England, especially in the eclectic circles where Shakespeare lived?

José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim holds a PhD in Portuguese Studies from the Universidade Nova de Lisboa. He is Senior Researcher and Professor at the Centro de História, Faculdade de Letras, University of Lisbon, as also Collaborator Member at the Research Center CIDEHUS, in Évora University (Portugal). He is also the Chair of the Seminar “Jews in Portugal and in the Diaspora”, at the University of Lisbon. He has published two books on the Jews and the Portuguese Expansion and is the author of more than 60 articles published in Portuguese, Castilian, French, English, Hebrew, Turk and Arabic. Together with Professor Maria Filomena Lopes de Barros, he is the editor of Hamsa: Journal of Judaic and Islamic Studies. Together with Filomena Barros and Lúcia Mucznik, he recently edited In Iberia Peninsula and Beyond: A History of Jews and Muslims (XV–XVIII Centuries) (Cambridge Scholars, 2015).

Eran Tzelgov

The Task of the Hebrew Translation: Isaac Salkinson, Perez Smolenskin and Shakespeare in Hebrew

The 1870s mark the first translations of Shakespeare plays into Hebrew, Ithiel ha-Kushi (Othello, 1874) and Ram ve-Yael (Romeo and Juliet, 1878). These translations, by the converted Jew of Vienna, Isaac Edward Salkinson,
were made following an explicit request of his editor, one the most prominent figures of Hebrew culture of that era, Perez Smolenskin. In this talk, I will examine this relationship, and focus in particular on how Salkinson and Smolenskin negotiated one of the most controversial cruxes in Shakespeare's oeuvre.

In the original English, Othello's final speech includes a key comparison (5.2), which the First Quatro (1622) relates as follows: "the base Indian [that] threw a pearl away richer than all his tribe". However, in the First Folio published one year later, the passage reads as "the base Iudean". Both "Indian" and "Iudean" have strong support from discerning editors, and Shakespeare scholars often argue whether this passage is more racist towards indigenous people or more anti-Semitic in nature.

As a Hebrew scholar, the question of how a converted Jew, a missionary among the Jews of Vienna, engaged such a problematic passage is one that interests me. Salkinson chose to privilege the First Folio – and translated this particular phrase as "אותו היהודי" ('That Jew'). To problematize Salkinson's choice even more, it is noteworthy how Salkinson "mistranslated" the passage's coda. Where in the original English the base Indian/Iudean throws away a pearl, Salkinson's work reads a sapphire. Though one can easily criticize Salkinson's work for being inaccurate or too "domesticated" (to borrow Schleiermacher's term), his choice to replace a pearl with a sapphire is at least a very surprising one. In my talk, I will meditate on the Indian-Iudean crux, and offer a critical reading of Salkinson's "mis-translation" in light of Smolenskin's lengthy critique of Hebrew literature. Thereby, I will offer an understanding of the inter-relations within the Hebrew literary republic of the era: the role of the translator and of the editor, and how it is still relevant in modern Hebrew literature.

Eran Tzelgov is a Hebrew poet, translator and scholar. He is interested in cultural activism and sees literary works as social agents. His interests include translation and gender studies, postcolonial theory and contemporary Israeli poetry. He held teaching position at Ben-Gurion University, Minshar College of art, Northwestern, NYU and the Open University in Israel. In 2012 Tzelgov founded the independent publishing house “Ra’av”, challenging the often ‘too homogenized’ nature of the Israeli canon. His debut collection of poems Bhirot (2013) was awarded the Israeli Ministry Of Culture and Sports award for ‘New and Upcoming Poets’. In summer 2015 his translation of Dylan Thomas’ Under Milk Wood was published by Shocken Books and received rave reviews. His latest publication is Gam He-Hatul: Shirbutim, a collection of poems and sketches, published in summer 2016.

Richard H. Weisberg

Triangulation as a Problem in the Plays and Sonnets

Everything goes wrong when a character in Shakespeare's plays or a figure in the sonnets commandeers a relationship that had earlier engaged two other figures directly. Their previously unmediated obligation to each other is diluted and degraded by the triangulator. Antonio, The Merchant of Venice, is a paradigmatic triangulator, a character whose whole raison d'etre involves meddling into other parties' relationships and manipulating outcomes to their detriment. His interventions always seem to involve Portia, whether he oversees Bassanio's courtship of her or usurps her responsibility in open court to dictate Shylock's fate under the 'Alien Statute'.

Triangulation – defined here as the deliberate assumption by a third party of a prior direct obligation binding two other individuals, or linking legitimate rulers to their subjects – can involve Shakespeare's explicit category of 'surety' (Merchant/Sonnet 134) or it can be produced by authority figures who voluntarily yield power to third persons. Whether in King Lear or Measure for Measure, or Hamlet, the delegation to or tolerance for triangulated governance debases the pre-existing relationship of leader and community. Works that otherwise differ widely as to genre, form, and theme, collectively counsel steadfastness by individuals vested with responsibility (personal or political) to try as best they can to fulfill their roles without delegating them prematurely to others. Lear's disastrous abdication cedes power to his older daughters, just as the Duke's appointee (Angelo) shatters the community of Vienna, and the usurper of the Danish throne wrecks havoc, allowed to do so by a Prince whose direct filial and political duty is to restore soundness to his people by dispatching the intermeddler. Triangulation is so universally disastrous in Shakespeare that the failure of direct engagement takes on higher-level meanings, both secular and religious. The body of Shakespeare's work advises us to be skeptical of political delegation, which is increasingly typical of 21st century western governments, where public power becomes 'privatized'; and more significantly still, we are advised to remain personally and directly responsible to God or to whatever sacred value we hold as a placeholder for the Deity, declining every opportunity – and there are many – to shunt
off to others (saints, priests, shamans, the media, etc.) commitments that are ours alone to fulfil. The body of work here studied finally prefers Shylock’s ‘Old Testament’ approach, pridefully direct with God and man alike, to the ‘new’ political theology of infinite triangulation, a theology this paper traces (as does the Bard in *Merchant*) to the ‘New Testament’.

Richard H. Weisberg is the Walter Floersheimer Prof. of Constitutional Law, Benjamin N. Cardozo Law School of Yeshiva University, and a pioneer in the American Law and Literature movement. His newest book, *In Praise of Intransigence* (OUP, 2014), extends his analysis of Shakespeare into a fifth decade of scholarly and theatrical activity. His essay in *Poetics* (Columbia University Press, 1992) on *The Merchant of Venice* has been widely anthologized and translated and has won critical praise. He serves currently on the Executive Committee of the MLA discussion group on Literature and the Law. He has taught that subject in graduate and undergraduate departments in the US, at law schools around the country, and in France, Denmark, Germany, Australia, and China, where he is an Honorary Prof. of Law at Wuhan University. He has enjoyed a residence in the English Department at Brandeis University as Fannie Hurst Visiting Prof. of English Literature, and he has taught theatre at Paris-X (Nanterre). Weisberg has lectured widely in the UK (Cambridge, Warwick, Birbeck, UCL, Swansea) on Shakespeare. His stagings of legal dilemmas in great fictional works, including "The Merchant of Venice", have won notices from the NY Times, the National Law Journal, and the New Yorker magazine. He has been a Guggenheim Fellow and recipient of Rockefeller Foundation (Bellagio Center), NEH, and ACLS grants. His Ph.D from Cornell is in French and Comparative Literature. While teaching those subjects on the graduate faculty of the University of Chicago, he earned his JD from Columbia Law School, where he was an editor of the Law Review.

**Roger Wooster**

**Deproblematising Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*: Text and Pretexts for Changing Subtext**

This paper focuses on the challenges of *performing* such a play as *The Merchant of Venice* in the twenty first century. It remains one of the most popular plays, but the inherent anti-Semitism creates barriers between the plays’ artistic attributes and a contemporary liberal Western audience. Whereas the universality of most Shakespearean plays find easy resonance with audiences, this play is one that sits uneasily in the repertoire. It appears to be imbued not with timeless human insight (Macbeth’s corruption by power, Hamlet’s existential indecision, the political manoeuvrings of *Julius Caesar*…) but with prejudice specific to a historical context that we wish to believe we have transcended.

This paper will consider using aspects of dramaturgy, particularly subtext and the moulding of objectives, to undermine aspects of *The Merchant* that we now find distasteful. The paper will argue that the quality of the text justifies its continued place in the theatre canon, but that the anti-Semitic content can be undermined by interrogating and manipulating the subtext. This effect on the themes of the play can further be augmented by other, non-textual decisions as to character, staging and costume.

This approach, however, if successful, may fly in the face of the playwright’s original intention. Is this justifiable? ‘If Shakespeare were alive today…’ Can we argue that we are reflecting the social culture of our audiences as Shakespeare was his? What are the ethical limits of manipulating a playwright’s text to produce an effect other than that originally intended? It may be that we can perceive an ethical difference between art that reflects genuine ‘universals’ and that which has been infected by the prejudice of the day. We can use the logic and power of Shylock’s courtroom speech as a justification for expanding the play’s empathetic content. But once we accept that the text is merely a ‘given’ that can be politically moulded through other aspects of dramaturgy, have we unleashed a precedent that could lead to writers’ works being distorted and abused. Subtext belongs to the actor; do we owe a loyalty to the text of the originator?

Now retired, Roger Wooster (MA, BA, PGCE, FHEA) was Senior Lecturer at the University of South Wales until 2011. During his career he was also an actor and has published widely on theatre and drama in education as well as giving many papers to international conferences, many as part of the IFTR.

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