

JAMES ADAM REDFIELD

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APPOINTMENTS

Associate Professor of Jewish Anthropology & Hermeneutics, Theological Studies, Saint Louis University, 2025

Visiting Associate Professor, Jewish Civilization & European Civilization, University of Chicago (since 2025)

Fellow of the [Saint Louis University Research Institute](#) (since 2021)

Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible & Talmud, Theological Studies, Saint Louis University, 2017–2025

Visiting Assistant Professor, History of Judaism, University of Chicago Divinity School, 2021–2025

EDUCATION

PhD, Religious Studies (Judaism), Stanford (2017).

Dissertation: "The Sages and the World: Categorizing Culture in Early Rabbinic Law." Ms., 334 pgs.

Visiting Researcher at Georgetown, Department of Theology & Religious Studies (2014-2016)

PhD candidate, Socio-cultural Anthropology, U.C. Berkeley (2010-2011: qualified for PhD in 2010, M.A. 2010)

B.A. *magna cum laude*, Comparative Literature (German & French: high honors in major). Dartmouth (2006)

PUBLICATIONS (* double-blind peer-reviewed submission; · solicited contribution)

BOOKS & JOURNAL VOLUME

*1. *Adventures of Rabbah & Friends: The Talmud's Strange Tales and their Readers*.

Providence, RI: Brown University, *Brown Judaic Studies* 374, 2025 (June). 438 pgs.

*2. *Talmud /and/ Philosophy: Conjunctions, Disjunctions, Continuities*. Ed. w/Sergey Dolgopolski.

Indiana University Press, *New Jewish Philosophy & Thought* series, 2024. 320 pgs.

*3. *The Making of Rabbinic Pasts*. Ed. w/Simcha Gross. Issue of *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, vol. 30 no. 4 (2023).

*4. *From a Distant Relation*. Ed. & trans., Yiddish stories of M.Y. Berdichevsky. Author of critical introduction (52 pgs.); bibliography; endnotes; glossary; and translation/revisions, from the Hebrew, of a Foreword by Avner Holtzman. Syracuse UP, *Judaic Traditions in Literature, Music & Art* series, 2021. 407 pgs.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

*1. "Kant's Racist Anthropology in Context: Ethnographic Archives of the German Enlightenment."

CROMOHS 27 (2024):1-32.

*2. "Creative Historiography Today: Re-enchanting Isaak Heinemann." *JSQ* vol. 30 no. 4 (2023):391-417.

*3. (w/Simcha Gross): "The Making of Rabbinic Pasts." Introduction to *JSQ* vol. 30 no. 4 (2023):355-66.

*4. (w/Tamar Gutfeld): "The Anxiety of Tradition: Unrealized Weddings in Berdichevsky's Yiddish Stories."

Naharaim 16 (1):101-127, 2022

*5. "Redacting Culture: Ethnographic Authority in the Talmudic Arrival Scene"

Jewish Social Studies 22 (1):29-80, 2016

*6. "Behind Auerbach's 'Background': Five Ways to Read What Biblical Narratives Don't Say"

Association for Jewish Studies Review 39 (1):121-150, 2015

- *7. "Towards a History of Presence: Husserl's Intersubjectivity and Rouch's Montage"

Journal of the Philosophy of History 7 (1):1-31, 2013

- *8. "Being Time: Zen, Modernity, the Contemporary"

Diogenes 58 (4): 88-103, 2012.

French trans. *La revue diogène*, 2010, 123-46; Chinese trans. 第欧根尼, 2014, 106-24.

- *9. "Cultural Identity from habitus to au-delà: Leïla Sebbar Encounters Her Algerian Father"

Research in African Literatures 39 (3):51-64, 2008

BOOK CHAPTERS

- *1. "Pragmatic Points of View: Kant and the Rabbis, Together Again."

In *Talmud /and/ Philosophy: Conjunctions, Disjunctions, Continuities*, ed. w/Sergey Dolgopolski.

Indiana University Press, 2024, 112-154.

- *2. "The Iridescence of Scripture: Inner-Talmudic Interpretation and Palestinian *Midrash*."

Studies in Rabbinic Narratives, Volume 1, ed. Jeffrey L. Rubenstein. *Brown Judaic Studies* 367, 2021, 115-175.

- *3. "Rabbinic Rites of the Suspected Adulteress." *Global Medieval Sourcebook* (Stanford DLCL), January 2021.

[Open-access](#) peer-reviewed annotated trans./intro./bibliography/ed. text, Babylonian Talmud Sotah 7a-8b.

- *4. "Auerbach at Saints Peter and Paul: Mimesis as Figural Autobiography."

In *Domenicani a Constantinopoli: prima e dopo l'impero ottomano*. Eds. Claudio Monge & Silvia Pedone. 2 vols. *Biblioteca di Memorie Domenicane* series. Florence: Nerbini, 2017. I:193-218.

- *5. "Crossing Border Lines: Daniel Boyarin's Life/Work."

In *Talmudic Transgressions: Engaging the Work of Daniel Boyarin*. Eds. Charlotte Fonrobert et al. *JSJ* Supplements series. Leiden: Brill, 2017. 541-65.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- *1. "Ethnography in Antiquity," in *Oxford Bibliographies in Anthropology*. Ed. John Jackson. New York:

Oxford University Press. 2019. 156 annotated entries; historical intro.; commentaries. Peer-reviewed.

ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLES

- 1. "Myth" (Rabbinic Literature). *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* (Berlin: de Gruyter), XX: 474-78. 2022.

- 2. "Names" (Rabbinic Literature). *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* (Berlin: de Gruyter), XX:681-85. 2022.

- 3. "Nation" (Hellenistic Judaism). *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* (Berlin: de Gruyter), XX:880-84. 2022.

TRANSLATIONS

- 1. "Grains of Wheat." Trans. of 1943 poem by Abraham Sutzkever, w/intro. & notes. In *Geveb*, 2025 (January)

- 2. "Migrants." Trans. of 1905-6 monologues by M.Y. Berdichevsky, w/intro & notes. *Dibur*. 2021. 15 pgs.

- 3. "Uri Zvi Before the Cross." Yiddish prose-poem by Uri Tsvi Grinberg (1922) w/notes. In *Geveb*, 2020 (July).

- 4. Four Yiddish tales by M.Y. Berdichevsky. *Pakn Treger*, June 2018; Yiddish Book Center site, October 2017.

- 5. Three essays on rabbinic literature from the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Zunz; Graetz; Hoffmann); notes.

Classic Essays in Early Rabbinic Culture and History, ed. Christine Hayes. London: Routledge, 2018.

WORKING PAPERS

- 1. "Cooking the Books: The Golem and the Ethics of Biotechnology"
Center for Biological Futures Working Papers 1, 2011. Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle
- 2. "'When X Arrived, he said': The Historical Career of a Talmudic Formula." Appendix to "Redacting Culture," 11/5/2016. Specialized philological study (12,400 words) on personal website (see CV header).

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

- 1. "The Hostages and Why We Must Redeem Them: A History," *Commentary*, 10/20/2023. 7 pgs.
(ed./trans. of Hebrew original by Avital Davidovich-Eshed, Ishay Rosen-Zvi, Youval Rotman, Haim Weiss.)
- 2. "Diaspora," in *Keywords in Political Theology*. Political Theology Network. 4/12/2022. 8 pgs.
- 3. "Fifty: A View from the Middle," *AJS Perspectives*. Association for Jewish Studies, 12/15/2018. 2 pgs.
- 4. "Fate on Hold: Jewish Collectors at War," *The Revealer*. NYU Ctr. for Religion & Media, 9/10/18. 15 pgs.
- 5. "Curiouser and Curiouser: In Search of the Rabbis' Ethnography," *Ancient Jew Review*, 2/20/2018. 10 pages.
- 6. "Der Opfer ist einfach zu dumm," *die tageszeitung*, 4/4/08, p. 15.

BOOK REVIEWS

- 1. Federico dal Bo, *Judaism, Philosophy & Psychoanalysis in Heidegger's Ontology*. In *Asdiwal* 20 (2025):114-17
- 2. A. Ophir & I. Rosen-Zvi, *Goy: Israel's Multiple Others & the Birth of the Gentile*, *Reading Religion* 8/28/19
- 3. Jane L. Kanarek, *Biblical Narrative and the Formation of Rabbinic Law*. In *AJSR* (40) 1:13-16, 2016
- 4. Sergey Dolgopolsky, *What is Talmud?: The Art of Disagreement*. In *La revue diogène*, 131-6, 2013 [French]
English original in *Diogenes* 61 (1):97-100, 2016

ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION

- 1*. חידוש ["Innovation."] In *Philological Practices: A Comparative Historical Lexicon*, ed. Glenn Most et al.
Princeton University Press. 1,212 words. Accepted by editors 6/2/2023. In proofs. Forthcoming 2026.
- 2*. "Commentary as Ethnography: The Case of Early Rabbinic Law." In *The Oxford Handbook of Global Commentary*, ed. Walid Saleh & Kenneth Yu. Oxford University Press. Accepted by editors. 7,753 words.

IN PROGRESS

- 1. Monograph: *Children of Prophets: Jewish Customs and Early Rabbinic Law*
- 2. Edited volume & introduction (w/Patrick Zoll): *What Can Philosophy Learn from Religious Traditions?*
- 3. Literary translation from Yiddish with my critical introduction & notes: Der Nister, *My Last Bequest* [1929]

EXTERNAL GRANTS & RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

- 1. National Yiddish Book Center translation fellowship for Der Nister, *My Last Bequest* (2026-2027)
- 2. Humboldt Foundation research fellowship at the University of Potsdam's *Institut für jüdische Theologie* (2021–2024)
- 3. Cornell University Society for the Humanities/Program in Jewish Studies faculty fellowship (2019-2020)
- 4. Stanford Humanities Center/Andrew W. Mellon Foundation dissertation fellowship (2016-2017)
- 5. National Yiddish Book Center translation fellowship for Berdichevsky, *From a Distant Relation* (2015-2016)
- 6. Center for Biological Futures/Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center research fellowship (2010-2011)
- 7. Regents fellowship/Dean's Normative Time fellowship for doctoral work in Anthropology, U.C. Berkeley (2008-13)
- 8. Fulbright Foundation scholarship, Israel. Declined due to conflict with U.C. Berkeley doctoral fellowship. (2008-09)
- 9. Institute for Cultural Inquiry Berlin, research fellowship in core Institute project *Tension/Spannung* (2007-2008)
- 10. DAAD scholarship at the Free University of Berlin, Szondi Institute of Comparative Literature (2006-2007).

INVITED LECTURES

1. École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris), "Les Aventures de Rabbah et ses amis," 3/19/26
2. École Pratique des Hautes Études (Paris), "Imagine Some Religion: Rabbis & Romans," 3/18/26 [in French]
3. La Sapienza University (Rome), "Le strane storie del Talmud: per una storia dell'interpretazione," 3/13/26
4. Tzu Chi Foundation, "The Recording and Essence of Religious History," Hualien (Taiwan), 6/18-6/25/25
5. Fordham/Primo Levi Center, "Filming Words: A Retrospective of Nurith Aviv's Films," NYC, 4/22–4/25/25
6. University of Toronto: "Commentary as Ethnography: The Case of Early Rabbinic Law," 3/1/24
7. Berlin Center for Intellectual Diaspora, "Aggadah, Myth, and Literature: Heinemann's Theopolitics," 7/11/23
8. Northwestern, Jewish/Religious Studies: "The Ethnography of Superstition in Late Ancient Judaism," 1/17/23
9. עמדה במינוח האגדה ["'Stance' in Aggadic Terminology"], World Union of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, 8/9/22
10. University of Chicago, "Reading Strange Talmudic Stories: Medieval to Early Modern Ashkenaz," 1/24/22
11. École Pratique des Hautes Études, "Quels genres grecs en Babylonie juive?: esquisse d'un modèle," 11/23/21
12. Princeton, Religion: "Dispatches from Whale Island: Babylonian Jewish Hellenization Revisited," 11/18/19
13. Cornell, Near Eastern Studies Dept. : "Alexander Goes East: Finding Romance in the Talmud," 11/11/19.
14. Duke, Clark Ctr. for Late Ancient Studies: "Stranger than Fiction: Talmudic Paradoxography," 10/24/19
15. Northwestern, *German-Jewish Hermeneutics* faculty conference: "Berdichevsky's Christianities," 10/29/18
16. NYU, *Rabbinic Narratives* workshop: "From Place to Space: The Remaking of Late Antiquity," 6/4/18
17. Oxford Centre for Hebrew/Jewish Studies, *Patterson Lecture*: "Berdichevsky's Yiddish Translations," 6/5/17

HONORS

1. Honorable Mention, Senior Faculty Scholarly Works Award [2025 monograph], Saint Louis University, 2026
2. Finalist for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching award, St. Louis University (2019 & 2020)
3. Belgian American Educational Foundation Honorary Fellow (declined; 2019-20)
4. Finalist for Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study faculty fellowship (2019-20)

PROFESSIONAL & INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

1. Co-editor, Ancient & Medieval submissions, *Prooftexts: A Journal of Jewish Literary History*, 2018–present
2. Co-chair, 2022-2025; steering committee member, 2017-2021: Society of Biblical Literature program unit, "The Religious World of Late Antiquity"
3. Peer reviewer: Cambridge University Press; Oxford University Press; UC Press; numerous scholarly journals
4. Advisory Board member, *Center for Religious and Legal History*, Saint Louis University, since 2020
5. Co-coordinator, *Law, Religion, and Politics* Program, Saint Louis University, 2024–present
6. Co-chair, University Lectures Committee, Saint Louis University (2024-2025)
7. Member, Undergraduate Studies Committee, Saint Louis University (2024-2025)

DOCTORAL SUPERVISION (* : advisor or co-advisor; ** : committee member)

- *1. Laura Locke Estes, Assistant Professor of Religion, Pepperdine University (PhD Saint Louis University, 2022).
- **2. Samuel Catlin, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Trinity College (PhD University of Chicago, 2022).
- *3. Jenifer Mabray, Saint Louis University, Theological Studies (M.A. SLU 2023; PhD at Brandeis, History).
- *4. William Potter, Saint Louis University, Theological Studies PhD student (MLIS at Univ. of Illinois, 2022).

TEACHING

1. "Jewish Civilization I," University of Chicago Social Sciences Collegiate Division, Fall 2026 [appointed]
2. "European Civilization I," University of Chicago Social Sciences Collegiate Division, Fall 2025
3. "Jewish Civilization I," University of Chicago Social Sciences Collegiate Division, Fall 2025
4. "Judaism & Ethnography," University of Chicago Divinity School, Spring 2025
5. "How to Interpret Scripture: Methods & Perspectives," Theological Studies, St. Louis University, Spring 2025

6. "Tradition & Modernity in Modern Jewish Thought & Literature," Univ. of Chicago Div. School, Winter '25.
7. "Writing the Other in the Ancient World," University of Chicago Divinity School, Spring 2023 & 2022
8. "Law & Culture in Rabbinic Literature," University of Chicago Divinity School, Spring 2023 & 2022
9. "The Legal Imagination in Judaism." Theological Studies, Saint Louis University, Spring 2025, Summer 2024, Spring 2023, Summer 2023, Spring 2021. (Core course in *Law, Religion & Politics* program).
10. "World Religions & Human Problems."
Theological Studies, Saint Louis University. Fall 2024, Spring 2022, Fall 2020 (2 sections)
11. "Tradition & Modernity: The Jewish Case and Beyond." Cornell University, Jewish Studies, Spring 2020
12. (w/Eleonore Stump): "The Pathos of Narrative: Jewish & Christian Perspectives on Human Suffering."
Theological Studies/Philosophy, St. Louis University, Spring 2019
13. (w/Atria Larson): "At the Crossroads of Jewish & Christian Law."
Theological Studies, St. Louis University, Spring 2019
14. "Stranger Things: People & Places through Religious Travelers' Eyes." Theological Studies, SLU, Fall 2018
15. "Judaism & Christianity in Antiquity: Textual & Comparative Approaches."
Theological Studies, St. Louis University, Spring 2018; Fall 2025
16. "Introduction to Old Testament/Hebrew Bible." Theological Studies, Saint Louis University. Undergrad (Spring 2024 x 2; Spring 2019, Fall 2018, Spring 2018, Fall 2017); Grad (Fall 2024; Spring 2021, Fall 2017)

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

1. (w/Patrick Zoll, SJ). *What Can Philosophy Learn from Religious Traditions?: New Dialogues between the Bible, Talmud & Philosophy* Hochschule für Philosophie/Saint Louis University. Siemens-Stiftung, Munich, 15–17 October '25 (E. Fiano, A. Bielik-Robson, E. Lapidot, C. Rutishauser, T. Schärftl-Trendel.)
2. *Futures of Tradition*. Cornell Society for the Humanities/Jewish Studies, 11-12 September 2022 (J. Boyarin; S. Catlin; E. Fiano; T. Gutfeld; A. Kirk; N. Lebovic; L. Monroe; D. Padilla-Peralta; K. Sonia; M. Vidas; E. Yiğit; K. Yu; A. Zirkle.)
3. (w/Simcha Gross.) Faculty seminar: *Rabbinic Historical Horizons*, Association for Jewish Studies, 12/2019. (J. Rubenstein, S. Gross, J. Redfield, M. Balberg, N. Dohrmann, H. Lapin; A. Yoshiko Reed.)
4. Panel: *Re-reading the Self (Biblical/Rabbinic)*, Association for Jewish Studies, 12/17/2018 (J. Levinson; J. Vayntrub; D. Lambert. Chair: K. Sonia)
5. Panel: The Art of Nostalgia in Ancient Jewish Literatures, Association for Jewish Studies, 12/17/17 (J. Vayntrub, A. Yoshiko Reed, I. Rosen-Zvi, S. Weitzman)
6. (w/Zvi Septimus.) Panel: The Rite of the Suspected Adulteress, Association for Jewish Studies, 12/19/16 (C. Fonrobert, S. Dolgopolsky, D. Weiss, G. Hasan-Rokem)
7. (w/Jonathan Boyarin.) Panel: Rabbinic Anthropologies, American Anthropological Association, 11/20/15 (N. Rubin, S. Fishbane, E. Berkowitz, S. Guzman Carmeli)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

1. "From Cultural Ambassadors to Babylonian Avatars: Nahote Revisited," *Talmudic Literature*, Yale, 4/23/23
2. "Traveling Rabbis and the Talmud as History"
Teaching & Transmitting the Past, *6th Annual Symposium on Medieval & Renaissance Studies*, 6/20/18
3. "Embedding, Sublation, Ambivalence: Ethnographic Techniques in Early Rabbinic Law"
What Did the Rabbis Know?, Association for Jewish Studies faculty seminar, 12/18/2017.

LANGUAGES

Proficient Reading, Orality, Writing: French, German

Proficient Reading, Advanced Orality, Intermediate Writing: Hebrew, Yiddish

Advanced Reading: Jewish Aramaic (Palestinian & Babylonian); Italian

Good Reading (1-year equivalent formal study, several years of reading groups + study): Syriac

Some Reading (min. 1-year-equivalent each of formal study, continued study): Latin; Koine Greek; Attic Greek

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP: Society of Biblical Literature

Last update: 20 March 2026