Abstracts 14th Contact Day Jewish Studies in the Low Countries

Samanta Sint Nicolaas, Policing Jews in Early Modern Amsterdam

The early modern Dutch Republic has often been lauded for its 'tolerance', referring usually to the 'open' policies towards migrants, as well as the harmonious (interreligious) co-existence between migrants and their neighbours. During the sixteenth and seventeenth century, Amsterdam especially, became an attractive city for the settlement of Jewish refugees, and by the end of the eighteenth-century, Amsterdam was the city with the largest number of Jewish inhabitants across Europe.

The idealized picture of tolerance and harmonious co-existence is drawn into question when we consider the implications of these migration flows on social co-existence in practice, since high levels of urbanization have been linked to the overrepresentation of migrants and minorities before criminal courts. The interplay of migration and crime was a continuous issue of official concern from the sixteenth century onwards, and a crucial impetus behind the expansion and professionalization of the police forces across Europe. The same distinctions between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' that governed access to poor relief also led to biased policing and criminal prosecution, since poor 'outsiders' were increasingly associated with criminal behaviour and the disruption of public order. This in turn resulted in the development of vagrancy laws which in practice led to the targeted policing of minorities, including gypsies and Jews.

This paper will look anew at this assumption of tolerant co-existence between the Jewish inhabitants of Amsterdam and their non-Jewish neighbours. It will focus on the institutional treatment of Jewish defendants, as well as their interpersonal interactions with their neighbours, as documented in the archives of the urban judicial system. It will primarily focus on evidence for discriminatory patterns in the treatment of Jewish defendants, through the lens of 'crimmigration.' Crimmigration is the process of criminalization of migrants and minorities, resulting from growing anxieties about security and crime, and is usually explained through membership theory. Though not applied specifically to the early modern period, preliminary data on defendants in Amsterdam indicates the increasing overrepresentation of Jewish defendants in the period 1680-1790. One of the main questions of this paper will be to look at the interplay of law and praxis on the creation and prosecution of Jewish inhabitants as a distinct minority or 'outsider' group.

Rachel Kupferman, Kehilot Moshe: The Illustrated Bibles of 1720s Amsterdam

The two luxury runs of *Kehilot Moshe* (Amsterdam: 1724-1728), referred to as *The Twin Sets of Kehilot Moshe,* include thirty-two hand drawn, painted, and illuminated miniatures. In this illustrated Biblia Rabbinica, the first to be published and edited by a Jew, who is the unsigned artists of *The Twin Sets*? This paper summarizes studies from my dissertation on this piece of Jewish visual heritage from the Netherlands and presents a hypothesis that creates a rendering of the the artist's identity. The findings include the following investigations: How many hands worked on these objects?; are these illustrations datable?; can the project be geographically situated?; what can the formal qualities of the illustrations disclose about the artist's training, their social class, and religion?; and in what ways do these findings challenge presumptions of gender of the artist? The art historical theories that answer "Who is the unsigned artist?" are achieved through research from the larger case study on *The Twin Sets.* This methodology includes a wide range of evidence that informs ways to identify Jewish and Dutch iconography, contextualize Jewish artists in Europe's early modern period and their

relationship and access to artist guilds and art academies, and the sociology, economics, and education of Jewish and Christian artists. Additionally because the *Kehilot Moshe* project is published by Moses Frankfurt, (1672-1762, alt. Dayan Moshe ben Shimon Frankfurt) a judge to the *ashkenazi Beit Din*, the local Ashkenazi Jewish courts, as well as the head of the Ashkenazi *Ḥhevra Kadisha,* burial society, this paper includes an exploration of these institutional associations, politics, power, and polemics of Rabbinic leadership in Amsterdam. These contribute to studying the difference between Jewish freedom of religion and economy, and early modern Calvinist Dutch civic pride. The paper is structured to collate these studies and to systematically address the number of artists involved, the date and location of their work, the artists tutelage, and their socio-religious position. The studies on Jewish institutions provides comparisons of Protestant Dutch visual culture to Jewish Dutch visual culture, as well as measuring distinctions between Calvinist *vanitas* to Jewish ethics to death and dying. The paper concludes with an interdisciplinary resolution that addresses the technologies of printing and nostalgia for manuscript codexes, Jewish urban life and public education, access to art education, and an understanding that Jewish visual culture in the low countries has a preference for, and is often marked by, a hybridity of styles.

Aalt Smienk, Framing Jews in Dutch Newspapers Between 1890-1910

My research on the framing of Jews in Dutch newspapers between 1890-1910 is part of my PhD thesis*: Beeldvorming in berichtgeving* (Framing differences in the news) *(Smienk,2022)*. In this thesis I make a comparisson between the recent debates in the Dutch press on the position of Dutch Muslims (1990-2013) and the historical debate on the position of Dutch Jews around 1900. I use the historical debates on Dutch Jews to reflect on the recent debates on Dutch Muslims. In my contribution to the seminar I want to focus on the results of the research of the historical debate on Jews in Dutch newspapers between 1890-1910.

I use a method of content analysis with the focus on a specific part of the discussion in the newspapers: the representation of the position in society of Jews and Muslims respectively. To distinguish the different positions in society I use a set of four frames of reference: assimilation, segregation, integration and dominance. Besides these frames of reference, I also looked for the most relevant issues, news actors and news events. This method, which has an inductive approach, combines qualitative methods of content analysis with a computerized and quantitative analysis tool called AmCAT (https://amcat.nl).

I will discuss the results of both the quantitative part and the qualitative part of the content analyses. The quantitative part was based on 45.513 articles in six newspapers representing different political or religious etnic groups. One of them was the Jewish weekly *Het Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad.* For the qualitative content analysis I used a small selection of articles spread over the research period. The selection of eleven articles was based on the attention paid to the frames of reference and one of the three relevant issues: The persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe, antisemitism and zionism.

At the end I reflect on the lessons learned about the debate on the position of Jews in Dutch society and the position and contribution of Dutch Jews in that debate in Dutch newspapers in the last decade of the 19th century and the first of the 20th century.

Senske de Vries, Jewish Identity: A Never-Ending Quest

During my Bachelor's research (in 2021) about the experience of Jewish identity in Dutch society, I noticed that Jewish identity is diverse and dynamic. Identity can change, and so can people's Jewish identities. Aspects that are less important now can, over time, gain more importance and the other way around. It still develops in the twenty-first century and I want(ed) to capture this. I conducted observations and interviews, during the interviews there was one question included all the time: *what object symbolizes your Jewish identity to you?* By actively including symbols, it brought an extra dimension to the conversation. These objects are captured in a photograph and together with the story, they are part of the booklet. It shows how there can be a meaning behind something, other than the meaning one sees from the outside.

Together, the objects and the stories behind them illustrate how diverse Jewish identity and its meaning is – every story is different and every story is valuable. Moreover, it shows that there is more than only the meaning of the symbol or the meaning that is attached to the object without hearing people's stories. This is, in my view, often the case in more aspects of life too; things and people are not always how you expect them to be.

This booklet is all about the story behind the object that symbolizes the Jewish identity of the individual, and what it means to them. By capturing the hand(s) of the interlocutors in the photograph, it connects objects to people and their stories. Finally, it enables the reader to touch the photograph and connect with it too.

Huibert Schijf, Jewish Bankers: From Germany to Amsterdam, Antwerp, Brussels and Paris

Over the world financial services were disproportionately provided by members of ethnic or religious minorities for a long time. The minorities were excluded from land ownership or public offices but enjoyed success in finance because of their tight-knit networks of kinship and trust. Among them were Jews. Although part of a local community they had a cosmopolitan orientation. One explanation for the prominent position of Jews in finance might to be found in the intrinsic values of the Jewish religion. Of course, being the Jewish religion was part of their lives. But was it also part of their business as some authors have argued?

To explore these questions the history of two German-Jewish banker families be will be discussed. In the nineteenth century, many of the Jewish bankers who operated at the European level were of German descent. As economic migrants both families arrived in Amsterdam early in the nineteenth century. They stayed in that city for almost fifty years, and they never lived in the traditional Jewish neighborhood in Amsterdam. The Königswarters and the Bischoffsheims were families of internationally performing Jewish bankers. But both families were of rather modest descent. Whereas the Rothschilds are still known, the names of Königswarter and Bischoffsheim are almost forgotten.

Louis-Raphael Bischoffsheim founded a branch of his bank in Antwerp in 1827. The bank was soon to be directed by his younger brother Jonathan-Raphael. After Belgium became officially independent in 1839, Jonathan-Raphaël decided to found a semi-independent investment-banking house called Bischoffsheim & Goldschmidt in Brussels. In the capital he highly was regarded as a banker. As part of their international family network the Königswarters founded already a new bank in Paris in 1838. In 1861, Louis-Raphael Bischoffsheim left Amsterdam for good; he already started to live in Paris

around 1845, although he still kept an office in Amsterdam. In Paris he was involved in the foundation of a French-Dutch bank that still exists.

Discussing the story of the two families my argument be will that intrinsic Jewish values were less important for their business as some had argued. But privately they still lived in a Jewish world. It is this mixture that made up their Jewish identity.

Marleen van den Berg & Meta Huijsmans, Typical Trade: Exploring Trade Networks in Pre-War Rotterdam and Zwolle

When it comes to the history of Jews in the Netherlands, the Jewish community in Amsterdam is often the center of discussion. In order to add to the narrative and work towards a more inclusive national history, Marleen van den Berg and Meta Huijsmans will present on the history of the Jewish communities in Rotterdam and Zwolle, respectively. Both cities formed important hubs of trade and hosted a variety of networks. Rotterdam had (and still has) the largest port of the Netherlands and Zwolle was part of the Hanseatic League.

In our panel we will focus on the participation of Jews in trade in these two cities. Before 1796, Jews were subject to economic restrictions and often earned a living as peddlers or in international trade. After 1796, Jews were granted equal rights with gentiles and could thus make their way into other professions. However, most Jews continued to work in sectors as textiles, metal, food, diamond processing, trading, etc., in part because adhering to Jewish traditions made it difficult to integrate smoothly into the economic and social life of the Netherlands.

Questions we will pose and attempt to answer during our panel include: was there a specific trade in which Jews dominated over gentiles? Was the trade in which Jews participated mainly regional or more national/international? What did this mean for the Jewish networks in Zwolle and Rotterdam? What is the relationship between trade and the degree of assimilation? How does Rotterdam, with its large international port in the west, compare to Zwolle, a Hanseatic city with connections to the east?

Joris Kok, Jews, Diamonds, and Occupational Mobility: The Amsterdam Diamond Industry, 1873-1940

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Amsterdam diamond industry was one of the largest industries of the city and the largest diamond production centre in the world. Notably, a majority of its workers were Jewish, representing roughly 70 percent of the city's diamond workers despite Jews making up only 10 percent of the Amsterdam population. Ever since the arrival of the industry in Amsterdam in the beginning of the seventeenth century, the production of polished diamonds was an occupation open to Jews, unlike most other skilled work. At its peak—the first decade of the twentieth century—30% of Jewish men were employed in, or adjacent, the diamond industry. Thus, the diamond industry clearly stood at the core of the Jewish economic experience. The industry was also home to the first modern union in the Netherlands, the ANDB (*General Dutch Diamond Workers' Union*), founded in 1894. As unorganized workers were excluded from working in the factories, the ANDB was able to unionize virtually every diamond worker in Amsterdam by 1900. An extensive membership administration, starting in 1898, kept track of the number of weeks a member spent employed, unemployed, on sick leave or on strike for each year of membership. Combining this career information from the union's recently digitized membership administration

with additional demographic and occupational information from marriage certificates and population registries, full life courses and careers were reconstructed for representatives samples of 400 men and 400 women born between 1873 and 1922. Using life course analysis, this paper studies the individual determinants for occupational mobility for Jewish, non-Jewish, male, and female diamond workers, focusing particularly on differences between the two ethno-religious groups. Moreover, results are compared with a representative sample of the Amsterdam population from the Historical Sample of the Netherlands (HSN) to study the relative importance of working in the diamond industry for Jewish workers.

Adina Babeş-Fruchter, The Jewish Refugees in Brussels: A Socio-Demographic Portrait

Funded through Horizon 2020, the MSCA project 'Nobodies' Jews: Non-national Jews between Refuge and Deportation during the 1930s and the Holocaust' addresses the very recent and relevant issue of war refugees. Taking Belgium as a particularly relevant case study, this research will reconstruct the timeline of Jewish refugees' lives since their arrival, throughout the 1930s, and during the German occupation of Belgium from 1940 on. The project investigates Jewish refugees from Western Europe and Central and Eastern Europe alike by employing an analytical framework comprising legal, institutional, and social standpoints.

The conference presentation "The Jewish refugees in Brussels: a socio-demographic portrait" will introduce the public to some of the very first findings of this research.

Following Hitler's invasion campaign of Europe and using relevant archival sources held at Kazerne Dossin, this research employed statistical software to reveal socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., age, profession, nationality, family status, dates of arrival in Belgium) of Jewish refugees in Belgium, with a focus on Brussels, from 1938 until 1940. The presentation will reveal several of these characteristics for Jewish refugees originating in countries like Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland.

Jan Dewilde: Jewish Musicians and Composers at the Antwerp Conservatoire during the Interwar Period and the Second World War

This project focuses on the history of local Jewish music culture in the city Antwerp, a topic which has received little attention so far. The Antwerp Royal Conservatory archives are the point of departure for this research project which focuses especially on the precarious situation of Jewish musicians and composers in the turbulent period between 1940 and 1945. Who were the Jewish students and teachers at the Antwerp Conservatory? In which music organizations did they engage? Did they have specific artistic preferences, oriented to the past or the future? Was there something specific about the Antwerp context in comparison to other places in Europe? What happened to Jews affiliated to the Antwerp Conservatory during the Second World War? This history is approached from a music-historical, as well as analytical and artistic point of view. This project builds on existing expertise and knowledge from the Antwerp music field and reaches out to experts from and on the Jewish community.

Mark Verschooris, Martha's Labyrinth

After the Anschluss, Jews have little choice. The ultimate endeavour is to get away and land somewhere where they are accepted. All escape attempts follow a course of their own. Some succeed in reaching their goal - an overseas country. For others, the flight is a tough and terrible journey that sometimes ends dramatically. Some managed to live in a relatively good and protected area. In my presentation based on the life story of Martha Geiringer I will show how next to the people and events she encountered the choices she made co-determined survival.

Martha Geiringer is raised in Vienna's 20th district. She enjoys a carefree childhood with her two brothers and younger sister, the Augarten is their playground. She attends university from 1931 to 1934, where she studies natural sciences. She combines her studies with a thorough commitment to the Socialist Revolutionaries. This illegal movement arose as a result of the clerical and conservative Chancellor Dollfuss' seizure of power. He went on to ban all parties except his Patriotic Front. In 1935 she interrupts her studies to work as a researcher at the Vivarium, the institution of her mentor Hans Przibram. The 1937-38 year of academic work does not result in her obtaining Absolutorium or her doctorate. The Anschluss forces her to flee the country.

Martha's brother Alfred, who works at Reuters press agency, is the first of their family to make it to London. Martha and her sister Gertrude's escape route passes through Switzerland, France and Belgium. However, they do not reach their final destination in the Netherlands. Thanks to Camille Huysmans, the sisters find temporary shelter at the YWCA. Yet they do not obtain the status of political refugee. With only a transit visa and a for that time complex Belgian immigration policy, they are doomed to leave again. In the meantime, Martha befriends the married doctor Yvonne Fontaine, from the French-speaking liberal bourgeoisie. The support and shelter that Yvonne offers to Martha is unique, no refugee can count on such a similar protection. To the dismay of Yvonne's husband, the two highly educated and talented women share a deep and spiritual bond.

In Ghent, Martha hopes to obtain her master's degree and present her doctorate. Neither the ministry nor the faculty provide a positive outcome, despite the support of Professor De Waele, who highly values her scientific work. De Waele gives her a temporary job in his lab for General Zoology and Animal Physiology.

Alfred Geiringer wants his entire family to come to Britain and reaches out to his friends from the Vienna Rote Presse who are installed in Brussels. However, Martha does not board the Vienna-Brussels-London Express. She stays in Ghent and explores the city. The Jewish population of Ghent amounts to about 300 people, including about 15 Austrian, mainly Viennese refugees. Twenty percent of the Jewish population in Ghent has the Belgian nationality, for the whole of Belgium that is about 6%.

The justice department judges and demands that Martha does not give up her plans to emigrate. She tries to arrange a marriage at a distance with a Viennese friend who is in exile in the Philippines. He pushes for her to join him. With a Belgian passport and a visum of the American embassy, Yvonne pays for the tropical trip, with departure in Rotterdam. After seven weeks and a perilous crossing, Martha arrives in Manila, only to be greeted by great disappointment. The man who she thought would offer her a life of luxury, appears to be an unemployed and sickly man who can only offer a meagre hut as accommodation. Hurt and disappointed, she immediately decides to return. Martha luckily has the keys to Yvonne's house.

On 6 April 1940, Martha arrives in Genoa. At the Belgian Consulate General in Milan she applies for an extension of the validity of her passport and a return visa for Belgium. Because she does not have

the political refugee status, a swift return to Belgium is difficult. Martha remains in Italy until 10 June, the day Mussolini declares war on France. She takes the last train to Nice. Because she crossed the border illegally, she is sentenced to 1 month in prison. During her detention, the armistice is signed between France and Germany. Upon her release, she finds herself in Vichy France of general Pétain. Martha stays in Nice until 25 October 1940 and is fortunate enough - thanks to Yvonne - to return to Belgium.

Martha's return to Ghent coincides with the first anti-Jewish orders and leads to more trouble in Yvonne’s marriage. For Yvonne's husband Claessens, Martha's return to Ghent is nothing more than the pure terror of two conspirators. Because of his Nazi sympathies, Yvonne throws him out and files for divorce. Martha is imprisoned in a Ghent prison from 15 July to 16 October 1941.

Professor De Waele is no longer a point of contact for Martha. He flees in the black uniform that he also wears during his lessons. At the end of June 1942, Martha is arrested again for not wearing the Star of David and because she was still with Yvonne after 8 pm. Only a snitch can once again put an end to the magical bond between the two women. When she is released in October 1942, she is only a shadow of herself. Physically a wreck, tormented, mentally and emotionally damaged, she falls prey to severe persecution madness and hypochondria. On 11 January 1943, Martha is yet again detained at her official address. Her conversion from Judaism in 1931 led her to falsely believe that she was safe. She is part of convoy XIX which departs from Mechelen to Poland on 15 January 1943.