



# UCSIA/IJS CHAIR

## Jewish-Christian Relations 2017-2018

### 10th Anniversary Conference

### Jews and Jesuits: Contacts Across the Ages

**February 1-2, 2018**

University of Antwerp | Hof van Liere, Prentenkabinet  
Prinsstraat 13 | 2000 Antwerpen

#### Organization

Institute of Jewish Studies (University of Antwerp)

University Centre Saint-Ignatius Antwerp (UCSIA)

Conference in English

Participation is free but registration is required

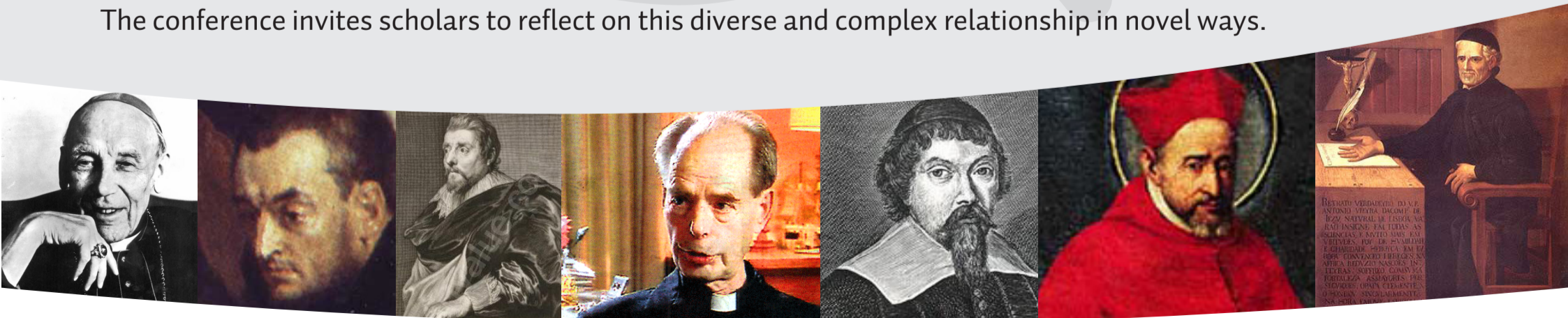
This conference, organized by the Institute of Jewish Studies of the University of Antwerp and the University Centre Saint-Ignatius Antwerp, is being held to mark the tenth anniversary of the Chair for Jewish-Christian Relations. The conference will focus on the interactions and mutual influences between the Society of Jesus and Jewish communities throughout history, including today.

The Chair for Jewish-Christian Relations was born of a concern that we owe it to each other to study each other's traditions, especially so as to understand the contributions of Jewish-Christian exchanges to contemporary European culture. The chair aims to explore common themes in order to reinterpret events from a current perspective and understand them through a historical lens.

The Catholic Reformation, triggered to a large extent by the Jesuits, had significant impact on Jews and Judaism, especially in early modern Italy and the Iberian Peninsula. The Jesuit university, particularly its commitment to humanistic learning, natural philosophy and science, served as a model for some Jews; so too did the spiritual discipline the Jesuits sought to impose on the laity. Jesuits also left their mark on the conversos and their search for religious meaning between Judaism and Christianity. Another realm of contact was the publication of books, specifically Christian Hebraica, and the role of censorship in early modern Europe.

What is the place of Judaism and Jews within Jesuit theology, and how did Jesuit thinking impact Jewish thought and society? How did the early Jesuits conceive of the Bible and post-biblical literature in their understanding of Christianity? Jesuits were deeply involved in the Christian mission to the non-Christian world. To what extent were Jews a focus (or, perhaps, a non-focus) of their missionizing, and why? Other questions concern Jesuits and the fight against anti-Semitism, their role in protecting Jews during the Holocaust, and their role in shaping Catholic attitudes towards Jews and others.

The conference invites scholars to reflect on this diverse and complex relationship in novel ways.



## Thursday February 1, 2018

14.00 - 14.15 Introduction by **David Ruderman** (Department of History, University of Pennsylvania)

### 14.15 - 16.00 **1. Intellectual Encounters between Jesuits and Jews**

Chair: **Vivian Liska** (Institute of Jewish Studies)

14.15 - 15.00 **Two Early Modern Flemish Jesuits and Their Encounters with Jews Past and Present**  
**Theodor Dunkelgrün** (Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH), University of Cambridge)

In this lecture, Dunkelgrün will look at two Flemish Jesuits, one born in the Northern Netherlands but active in Leuven and Antwerp in the sixteenth century, the other from Antwerp and active both there and in Amsterdam in the seventeenth century. The first, Johannes Willemsz Harlemius (1538-1578), was professor of Old Testament and Oriental languages at the Leuven Jesuit College, professor of Hebrew at the Leuven Collegium Trilingue and Jesuit Vice-Provincial of Flanders. Dunkelgrün will discuss Harlemius's biblical scholarship, his contributions to the Antwerp Polyglot Bible, and will try to uncover aspects of his reading of post-Biblical Jewish literature. In the second half of his talk, he will look at Franciscus van den Enden (1602-1677), a poet and political thinker, who was a Jesuit from 1619-1633. Van den Enden left Antwerp and the Jesuits for Amsterdam, where he founded a Latin school, and is most famous for having taught the young Baruch Spinoza there. Dunkelgrün will attempt to identify aspects of Spinoza's thought that might well have been shaped by Van den Enden. The cases of Harlemius and Van den Enden provide a variety of ways in which early modern Jesuits encountered Jews, on the page or in person. The encounter between Van den Enden and Spinoza, Dunkelgrün suggests, teaches us that the early modern legacies of Jesuit and Jewish learned culture can also be found far beyond Seminary and Synagogue, leaving deep traces in the lives and works of those formed in those communities which they never entirely abandoned.

15.00 - 15.45 **Robert Bellarmine: A Critical Advocate of the Rabbinic Bible**  
**Piet van Boxel** (Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford)

One of the major hallmarks of Church policy during the second half of the 16th century was the determined attempt to control the ever-growing book production either by means of prohibiting or expurgating books with blasphemous, heretical and offensive content. In this undertaking Jesuits such as Francisco Torres, Antonio Possevino and Robert Bellarmine played different roles. This paper will present a comparison of their activities with the main focus on Robert Bellarmine, whose selective and critical use of Jewish biblical commentaries created a platform for Jewish-Christian discussion.

15.45 - 16.00 **Q&A**

16.00 - 16.15 *Coffee break*

### 16.15 - 18.00 **2. Mutual Influences in the Formation of Identity and Authority**

Chair: **Vivian Liska** (Institute of Jewish Studies)

16.15 - 17.00 **In Search of (Epistemic) Authority: The Amsterdam New Jews and the Jesuit Heritage**  
**Irene Zwiep** (Institute of Culture and History, University of Amsterdam)

Much has been written on the conversos' return to Judaism. In their effort to develop a Jewish *modus vivendi* on the remnants of an Iberian past, the Amsterdam New Jews were considered an archetype of theological-political experiment. Much emphasis has been put on their culture as the outcome of encounter and conflict: between Renaissance and Rabbinism, and between Christian scholarly ferment and Jewish self-discovery. Plausible though this approach has proven, it tends to understate one aspect of the process: its transitory, transitional nature. For the Amsterdam New Jews, living and thinking Jewish was not a matter of restoration, but of transformation.

In this paper, Zwiep would like to take yet another look at the learned discussions that helped smooth the process by trying to square 'familiar' Scripture with the rabbinic canon. The *rejudaization* of Scripture not only triggered new forms of literacy (of *chumash* and *derash* rather than chapter and verse), but also raised the issue of epistemic authority. How to reconcile biblical truth with its—often oddly divergent—rabbinic understanding?

In the context of a young community-in-the-making, this question could not go unanswered. For obvious reasons, it was not the rabbinic establishment who took up the gauntlet, but a semi-elite of lay thinkers that included Uriel da Costa, Immanuel Aboab and Menasseh ben Israel. In this paper, we will zoom in on their basic epistemological parameters, most prominently on their conceptualizations of reason and revelation in relation to notions of authority and truth. As we shall see, it was their affinity with Jesuit Late Scholasticism that helped them safeguard Scripture as a source of Jewish knowledge. That is, until the appearance of Spinoza, whose *Tractatus* can be read as a systematic *Umwertung* of the dominant discourse of his youth.

17.00 - 17.45 **Jesuits and the Formation of Jewish Identity in Early Modern Italy**  
**David Ruderman** (Department of History, University of Pennsylvania)

This paper revisits the well-known and several less well-known sources suggesting the positive impact of the Society of Jesus in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries on various Jewish intellectuals in Italy. In several of his earlier books, Ruderman speculated on the impact of Jesuit spirituality, educational institutions, and moral reform on Italian Jewry. Others have subsequently noticed this same phenomenon. On the basis of this evidence, can we speak of a kind of Catholic/Jesuit Judaism emerging among certain Italian Jews who took note of Jesuit institutions and articulations of faith and identified profoundly with the religious and pedagogic values of their Catholic neighbors?

17.45 - 18.00 **Q&A**

20.00 - 22.00 **3. The History of the Exchange between Jesuits and Jews**

20.00 - 20.15 Welcome words by **Luc Braeckmans** (UCSIA) and **Vivian Liska** (Institute of Jewish Studies)

20.15 - 20.30 **Is There a Judeo-Christian Tradition? A European Perspective**  
Book Presentation by editor **Emmanuel Nathan** (Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, Australian Catholic University)

The term 'Judeo-Christian' in reference to a tradition, heritage, ethic, civilization, faith etc. has been used in a wide variety of contexts with widely diverging meanings. Contrary to popular belief, the term was not coined in the United States in the middle of the 20th century but in 1831 in Germany by Ferdinand Christian Baur. By acknowledging and returning to this European perspective and context, the volume engages the historical, theological, philosophical and political dimensions of the term's development. This book, published by De Gruyter Mouton in March 2016, is a collection of the contributions at the sixth edition of the UCSIA/IJS Chair for Jewish-Christian Relations in February 2014.

20.30 - 21.15 **Jesuits and Jews: A Tragic Couple**

Keynote lecture by **Robert A. Maryks**  
(Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences, Boston College)

The improved relationship between Jews and Christians, and particularly Jews and Jesuits, has been among the most significant and promising historical developments since the Second World War. The road toward that new situation has many markers but it would be a very common perception to see the adoption of the declaration *Nostra aetate* during the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) as the most decisive early step toward reconciliation between these two faith communities. The Society of Jesus has been a leader in the Catholic Church's dialogue with the Jewish people, most clearly, but certainly not exclusively, in the role that the Jesuit cardinal Augustin Bea (1881–1968) exercised in formulating this groundbreaking document. The history of the encounters between Jews and Jesuits has long been in need of a thorough investigation because both were significant players in Modernity and had important interactions. Jesuits and Jews did form a distinctive couple, in part because they were both the most frequent victims for those who sought a total, diabolical explanation for how history operated, although it must be said that the suffering that was endured as a consequence cannot be compared. This paper traces the most important markers in the history of the relationship between Jews and Jesuits in the last half millennium.

21.15 - 21.30 **Discussion**

21.30 - 22.00 Reception

## Friday February 2, 2018

09.30 - 11.15

### 4. Conversos and Jesuits

Chair: **Dominiek Lootens** (UCSIA)

09.30 - 10.15

#### **Father António Vieira S.J. on Conversion and Judeo-Gentile Interactions**

**Claude (Dov) B. Stuczynski** (Department of General History, Bar-Ilan University)

Father António Vieira (1608-1697) was a devoted missionary of Brazilian Amerindians and a committed advocate of Converso social and religious integration against Inquisitorial biased persecution and ethnic exclusion based on “purity of blood”. In this lecture Stuczynski will argue that his conversion plans for Gentiles and Jews (including Converso Judaizers) were conceived in two different historical moments. A combination of Vieira’s theological and prophetic tracts (e.g. the *Clavis Prophetarum*) and his political activities on behalf of both Amerindians and Conversos will show a strong Paulinian penchant. Stuczynski will ask whether his diachronic way of conceiving the conversion of the Jews and the Gentiles was related to his Jesuit affiliation.

10.15 - 11.00

#### **The Real Turning Point: Antonio Possevino (1533-1611), New Christians and Jews**

**Emanuele Colombo** (Catholic Studies Faculty, DePaul University, Chicago)

In this paper, Colombo studies three aspects of the life and the works of Antonio Possevino, one of the most fascinating and still understudied early modern Jesuits. First, his commitment in contrasting the anti-converso policy introduced in the Society of Jesus during the fifth General Congregation; second, his alleged Jewish ancestry; and third, Possevino’s attitude towards the Jews. These three aspects, often presented as intertwined, are from Colombo’s perspective three different and separate issues. Possevino does not show a sympathetic view towards Jews but emphasizes the value of their conversion. A sincere conversion and the sacrament of Baptism are “the real turning point” and are more efficacious than any blood or race distinction. This idea of conversion is at the origin of Possevino’s understanding of the Society of Jesus and the Catholic Church.

11.00 - 11.15

**Q&A**

11.15 - 11.30

*Coffee break*

11.30- 13.00

### 5. Jewish-Jesuit Relations Today

Chair: **Luc Braeckmans** (UCSIA)

11.30 - 12.15

#### **Dutch Jesuits with Jewish Roots in the 20th Century**

**Paul Begheyn S.J.** (Netherlands Institute of Jesuit Studies, Amsterdam)

Between the late 1920s and the end of the Second Vatican Council (1965) seven men of Jewish descent entered the Dutch Province of the Society: four Dutchmen, two Germans and one South-African. This paper presents the situation of the Jews in the Netherlands, including the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church and the Dutch Jesuits towards them. Of each of the Jesuits with Jewish roots the genealogical background is given, as well as the career within the Society of Jesus. Among them we find a novice master, the editors of the weekly newspaper *De Linie* and the monthly review *Streven*, the Postulator General in Rome, and missionaries in Indonesia and Zimbabwe. We have done research on their publications, in order to see if there are any references to the Jewish faith and history. A major part of this paper will deal with the life and work of Peter Gumpel (born 1923 in Hamburg), Professor emeritus of the Gregorian University in Rome, and relator in the cause for beatification of Pope Pius XII, which was halted in 2008 by pope Benedict XVI.

12.15 - 13.00

**Q&A and closing discussion on Jewish-Jesuit relations today****with Robert Maryks, Paul Begheyn S.J., Theodor Dunkelgrün, Dominiek Lootens and Vivian Liska**

## Speakers

**Paul Begheyn**, S.J. is founder and director of the Netherlands Institute of Jesuit Studies and bibliographer of the Society of Jesus worldwide. Until 2016 he was archivist of the Dutch Jesuits. His publications include *A Guide to the History of the Jesuits in the Netherlands 1540-1850* (2006), *Jesuit Books in the Low Countries 1540-1773* (2009), and *Jesuit Books in the Dutch Republic and its Generality Lands 1567-1773* (2014). The latter book gives a detailed description of all books, published in the Dutch Republic and its Generality Lands between 1567 and 1773 – the year in which the Society of Jesus was suppressed by Pope Clement XIV for political reasons –, written by Jesuits from the Low Countries and elsewhere. Locations of the books are given, as far as possible, as well as bibliographical sources. Many of these publications are pirate editions, mainly from France and Germany. Technical and historical introductions precede this bibliography, and several indexes and registers conclude this work. The titles show the areas in which Jesuits have been active, and indicate their influence in many fields.

**Emanuele Colombo** (Ph.D., University of Milan and Padua, Italy) is currently Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Catholic Studies at DePaul University, Chicago. He has received research fellowships in Italy (University of Milan), France (EPHE, Paris-Sorbonne), and the US (University of Notre Dame and Boston College). His research focuses on religious history in early modern Europe: theology and politics, Jesuit missions, and Christian-Muslim encounters in the Mediterranean. He has authored and edited several books and has published articles and book reviews in international journals. He is on the board of the Jesuit Studies Series (Brill), the executive editor of the *Journal of Jesuit Studies* (Brill), and a member of the *Accademia Ambrosiana* (Milan).

**Theodor Dunkelgrün** is Senior Research Associate at the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH) at the University of Cambridge, and College Research Associate of St John's College, Cambridge. His work focuses on the intersection of the history of the book, the history of scholarship, and intellectual encounters among Jews, Christians, and Muslims. He is also affiliated researcher at the Institute of Jewish Studies (University of Antwerp). Recent publications include "When Solomon met Solomon: A Medieval Hebrew Bible in Victorian Cambridge", *Journal of the Bible and its Reception* 3, no. 2 (2016), 205–53, and "The Testimonium Flavianum Canonicum: Josephus as a Witness to the Biblical Canon, 1566–1823", *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 23, no. 3 (2016), 252–68.

**Robert A. Maryks** is an associate director of the Institute for Advanced Jesuit Studies at Boston College, where he works as the editor of *Jesuit Sources*. He studied at the University of Warsaw and at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Naples before earning his Ph.D. in history from Fordham University. He is also an associate professor in the History Department at Boston College. He has published extensively on various aspects of the history of the Jesuits, including *Saint Cicero and the Jesuits* (2008), *The Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews* (2009), *Pouring Jewish Water into Fascist Wine* (2011), "The Tragic Couple": *Encounters Between Jews and Jesuits* (2013; co-edited with James Bernauer), *A Companion to Ignatius of Loyola* (2014), and *Jesuit Survival and Restoration* (co-edited with Jonathan Wright). He is editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, of Brill's book series of Jesuit Studies, and of Boston College Jesuit Bibliography.

**Emmanuel Nathan** is a senior lecturer in the comparative study of sacred texts and their theologies at the Australian Catholic University in Sydney. He also serves as the national Head of School for the School of Theology. His research interests are in early Jewish and Christian origins, biblical hermeneutics, contextual approaches to the Bible, comparative theology, and interreligious dialogue. His most recent publications include: *2 Corinthians in the Perspective of Late Second Temple Judaism*, CRINT 14 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), *Provoked to Speech: Biblical Hermeneutics as Conversation* (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), and *Is there a Judeo-Christian Tradition? A European Perspective* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016).

**David B. Ruderman** is the Joseph Meyerhoff Professor of Modern Jewish History; he was formerly Ella Darivoff Director of the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania from 1994-2014. Prior to coming to the University of Pennsylvania, he taught at the University of Maryland [1974-83] and at Yale University [1983-94]. He is the author of many books and articles, including *The World of a Renaissance Jew*, 1981; *Kabbalah, Magic, and Science*, 1988; *A Valley of Vision*, 1990; *Jewish Thought and Scientific Discovery in Early Modern Europe*, 1995, 2001, published also in Italian, Hebrew, and Russian; *Jewish Enlightenment in an English Key: Anglo-Jewry's Construction of Modern Jewish Thought*, 2000; *Connecting the Covenants: Judaism and the Search for Christian Identity in Eighteenth-Century England*, 2007, and *Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History*, 2010. Three of these books, including the last, won national book awards in Jewish history. He has also edited or co-edited five books and co-edited two popular textbooks. His most recent book, *A Best-Selling Hebrew Book of the Modern Era: The Book of the Covenant of Pinhas Hurwitz and its Remarkable Legacy*, appeared in 2014. He is a past president of the American Academy for Jewish Research.

**Claude (Dov) B. Stuczynski** is an Associate Professor at the Department of General History (Bar-Ilan University) and board member of the Center for the Study of Conversions and Interreligious Encounters (CSOC) at Ben-Gurion University. Having written a number of Contributions in various languages, his two main fields of research are: The Portuguese Converso phenomenon and the first encounters between Europeans and Amerindians. He is mainly interested in the relationship between religion and politics in Medieval and Early Modern periods. Actually he prepares a study of the theological-political dimension of the Converso phenomenon (what he calls: “The Marrano Paulinian Moment”). Among his contributions are *Between Religion and Religiosity among the New Christians of Bragança in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century*, (in Hebrew); *The New Christians in Portugal in the XX<sup>th</sup> Century* (Hebrew edition: The Israeli Historical Society, French forthcoming edition); ‘On Behalf of the Nation’. *New Christian Apologetics in the Iberian World*. He is co-editor with David Graizbord of a special issue of the Journal “Jewish History” dedicated to *Early Modern Portuguese New Christian Identities.*, editor of a special issue of the Journal of Levantine Studies on “The Political Dimension of the Converso Phenomenon”, of the forthcoming special Issue of the Journal of Jesuit Studies on “Jesuits and Conversos”, and on a special issue of the *Cadernos de Estudos Sefarditas* on “Iberian Judaeo-Christianities”.

**Piet van Boxel** is emeritus Curator of Judaica and Hebraica (2007-2011) at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. He was lecturer in Rabbinics and the New Testament at Utrecht University (1980-1994), lecturer in Jewish History and Rabbinics and Librarian at the Leo Baeck College (1994-2001), and Fellow/Librarian at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies (2001-2011). His most recent publication is *Jewish Books in Christians Hands; Theology, Exegesis and Conversion under Gregory XIII (1572-1585)* (Studia e Testi 498) (Città del Vaticano, 2016).

**Irene Zwiep** studied Classics and Semitic philology at the University of Amsterdam and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In 1995 she earned her PhD with a doctoral dissertation on medieval Jewish philosophy of language. From 1995-1997 she joined the London Warburg Institute as a Frances Yates Fellow. Since 1997 she has held the chair of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Her research focuses on Jewish intellectual history through a conceptual-historical lens, with particular emphasis on the history of Hebrew linguistic thought and the nineteenth-century Wissenschaft des Judentums.

## Registration & contact

Institute of Jewish Studies  
University of Antwerp  
Prinsstraat 13, L. 400  
BE - 2000 Antwerpen

T +32 (0)3 265 52 43

F +32 (0)3 265 52 41

[ijs@uantwerpen.be](mailto:ijs@uantwerpen.be)

[www.uantwerpen.be/ijs](http://www.uantwerpen.be/ijs)

**Venue**  
University of Antwerp  
Hof van Liere  
Prentenkabinet  
Prinsstraat 13  
2000 Antwerpen

