**Jennifer R. Grayson**

Curriculum Vitae

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

3101 Clifton Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45206

Phone: (973) 204-8909 • Email: [jg](mailto:jg)rayson@huc.edu

**PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS**

2019-Present Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Assistant Professor of Jewish History, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (Cincinnati)

2018-Present Assistant Professor, Department of History, Xavier University (*Secondary Appointment*)

2018 Assistant Professor of Jewish History, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (Cincinnati)

**EDUCATION**

2017 PhD in History, The Johns Hopkins University

Dissertation: “Jews in the Political Life of Abbasid Baghdad, 908-1258”

Advisor: Marina Rustow

2016 MA in History, The Johns Hopkins University

Fields: Medieval Mediterranean and Genizah History (Rustow), Medieval Islamic History (Paul Cobb, University of Pennsylvania), Medieval European History and Historiography (Gabrielle Spiegel), Modern Jewish History (Kenneth Moss)

2013 MPhil in Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge

Thesis: “Geniza Fragments of the Introduction to *Kitāb al-Lumaʿ* by Jonah ibn Janāḥ”

Supervisor: Geoffrey Khan

2011 A.B., Magna cum Laude, Brown University

Concentrations in History with Honors and in Medieval Studies

**PUBLICATIONS**

*In Revision At the King’s Gate: The Jews of Abbasid Baghdad, 750-1258*

(Book Manuscript under review, University of Pennsylvania Press, Jewish Culture and Contexts series)

*In Revision* “No Need of Babylonia?” Constructing Rabbinic Authority in the Eleventh and Twelfth Century Mediterranean,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* (invited submission, accepted pending revisions).

2022Review of Eve Krakowski, *Coming of Age in Medieval Egypt: Female Adolescence, Jewish Law, and Ordinary Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018). *Journal of Jewish Studies* 73, no. 1 (Spring): 204-208.

2021 “‘Unable to dismiss them’: Re-assessing the Jewish “Court Bankers” of Abbasid Baghdad, 908-932,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient (JESHO)* 64: 25-54.

2020 “What the World of the Cairo Geniza can Teach us about Responding to COVID-19,” *Scriptions: Jewish Thoughts & Responses to COVID-19*. <https://scriptions.huc.edu/scriptions/what-the-world-of-the-cairo-geniza-can-teach-us-about-responding-to-covid-19>

2019 “Politics and the Rabbinate: A Medieval Perspective,” *CCAR Journal: The Reform Jewish Quarterly* (Summer).

2013 “Origin of Hebrew according to Rabbinic and Medieval Sources,” *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics,* Ed. Geoffrey Khan (Leiden: Brill).

*In Progress* “The Mantuan Rabbi, the Franciscan Priest, and the Academic Study of the Hebrew Bible: The 1742 Edition of Yedidya Nortzi’s *Minḥat Shay* in Xavier University’s Special Collections” (in collaboration with Anne Ryckbost)

*In Progress* “Jewish Midwives in the Cairo Geniza: Childbirth, Gender, and Communal Authority in Medieval Egypt”

**PRIZES, FELLOWSHIPS, AND GRANTS**

2022-2023 Rabbi Sally Priesand Ordination Anniversary Faculty Initiative Grant

2021-2022 Paula E. Hyman Mentorship Program Emerging Scholar, Association for Jewish Studies

2018 Named Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Assistant Professor of Jewish History, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

2018 Greater Cincinnati Consortium of Colleges and Universities (GC3) Celebration of Teaching Award

2017-2018 Association for Jewish Studies (AJS) Dissertation Completion Fellowship

2012-2017 Leonard and Helen R. Stulman Jewish Studies Award, Johns Hopkins University

2012-2015 William and Lois Diamond Fellowship, Johns Hopkins University

2014 Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Summer Language Study Travel Award

2014 The Offit Fund for the Study of Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations in the Premodern World Language Training Grant

2013 Islamic Studies Language Training Grant, Johns Hopkins University

2011-2012 Gates Cambridge Scholar, University of Cambridge

**INVITED TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**Academic**

2023 (*forthcoming*) “Jacob Mann and the Study of the Jews of Abbasid Iraq.” *Jacob Mann Centennial Seminar*, St. John’s College, Cambridge, UK. July.

2022 “Teaching Difficult Topics in Medieval Jewish History.” *Concerning Content Conference*, The Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, NY. March 14.

2020 “Studying the Jews of Abbasid Iraq.” Presentation via Zoom for *Documents and Institutions in the Medieval Middle East Workshop*, Princeton University. March 31.

2020 “At the King’s Gate: Jewish Government Officials and Rabbinic Authority in Abbasid Baghdad.” University of Illinois Program in Jewish Culture and Society, Urbana, Il. March 1.

2019 “Medieval Jews and Economic History,” Featured speaker in *Introduction to Historical Inquiry* (History Honors Seminar), Miami University, Oxford, OH. April 12, November 7.

2017 “At the Heart of Islamic Empire: the Jews of Medieval Baghdad,” Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati. March 16.

2017 “The Politics of the Babylonian Geonim: Rabbinic Authority and Abbasid Sovereignty in Abbasid Baghdad,” Department of Jewish Studies, McGill University. January 25.

**Reform(\*) and Greater Jewish/Interfaith Community**

2022 \* “The World of the Cairo Geniza: The Jews of Medieval Islam.” *Dorothee and Lewis Ryterband Lectures Series*. Temple Israel, Dayton, OH. May 1.

2022 “Jews and Jesuits: How has the Relationship Changed?” with Dr. William Madges (Xavier University). *Brueggeman Center for Dialogue*, Xavier University. February 9.

2021 Interviewee, “Episode 288: Chanukah,” *Shmanners Podcast*. November 26.

<https://www.themcelroy.family/2021/11/26/22803704/shmanners-hannukah>

2021 Panelist, “Shared Ideas and Worlds: Mystical Philosophy in the Middle Ages as a Case Study for Coexistence,” with Dr. Waleed El-Ansary (Xavier), Dr. Muhammad Faruque (UC), and Dr. Haim Rechnitzer (HUC). Presentation via Zoom for *Cincinnati Festival of Faiths.* August 26.

2021 \*“The World of the Cairo Geniza.” Presentation via Zoom for *L’Chaim Happy Hour*, Temple Sholom, Cincinnati. August 11.

2021 \*“The World of the Cairo Geniza: The Jews of Medieval Islam.” Presentation via Zoom for *HUC Connect Series on Judaism & History*. April 27.

2020 \* “Unetaneh Toqef: A View from Medieval History.” Filmed presentation for *Rabbi Aaron D. Panken z”l Memorial Shiur*. Westchester Reform Temple. September 28.

2020 “The Cairo Geniza and the Study of Medieval Jewish History.” Presentation via Zoom for *Jewish History: A Series of Talks by Guest Scholars*, Silverstein Base Hillel, Chicago, Il. July 30.

2020 “The Cairo Geniza and the Shifting Boundaries of the Jewish Community.” Presentation via Zoom for *Share and Tell: Shavuot Learning to Bring Torah to Your Life*, Adath Israel Congregation, Cincinnati, May 28.

2020 \* “Jewish History and the Jewish Future: The Cairo Geniza and the Shifting Boundaries of the Jewish Community.” Temple Jeremiah, Northfield, Il, February 29; University of Illinois (Illini) Hillel, Urbana, Il, March 1.

2019 \* “Beyond Tolerance: A Jewish Perspective.” Jewish representative on “Beyond Tolerance” panel, along with Dr. Marcia Hermansen (Muslim), Dr. Mark Swanson (Lutheran), and Dr. Safwat Marzouk (Mennonite).

*Champaign-Urbana Interfaith Exploration: Cultivating Hope in Anxious Times,* Central Illinois Mosque and Islamic Center, Champaign, Il. November 8.

2019 \* “Inaugural Address in honor of Rabbi Aaron D. Panken z”l,” Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati. April 14.

2019 \* “Rabbinic Leadership and Social Change: A Medieval Perspective,” Central Conference of American Rabbis Convention, Cincinnati. April 2.

2019 \* “Jews in Medieval Spain,” Rockdale Temple, Cincinnati. February 20 and 27.

2018 \* “Maimonides and Medieval Jewish Ideas about Gender,” Scholar-in-Residence, Temple Ner Tamid, Bloomfield, NJ. December 21.

2018 “Medieval Jewish Interpretations of Gender,” Global Day of Jewish Learning at Mayerson JCC, Cincinnati. November 11.

2018 \* “Jews and Politics in the Medieval Islamic World,” Presentation to HUC-JIR Central Region Board of Overseers, April 20.

**CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION**

**Panels Organized**

2018 “Re(de)fining the Boundaries of the ‘Jewish Community’ in Cairo Geniza Documents,” Association for Jewish Studies Conference, December 18.

**Papers Presented**

2021 “Of Midwives and Mohels: Childbirth, Gender, and Communal Authority in Medieval Egypt,” Association for Jewish Studies Conference, Chicago, Il. December 21.

2020 “‘The woman never received the Get…and they are threatening me!’ Regulating Jewish Family Life in and beyond the Indian Ocean, 1080-1204,” Association for Jewish Studies (AJS) Conference, Via Zoom. December 15.

2019 “Jews in Seljuq Iraq? Evidence from the Cairo Geniza,” Society for Judaeo-Arabic Studies, Antwerp, July 3.

2018 “‘By me, kings rule’: Babylonian Geonic Authority and Abbasid Sovereignty, 1175-1225,” Association for Jewish Studies (AJS) Conference, Boston, MA. December 18.

2018 “‘By religious law and by the hand of the government’: Jews and the Abbasid State, 1180-1225,” Middle Eastern Studies Association (MESA) Conference, San Antonio, TX. November 15.

2018 “The Myth of the Jewish Court Banker in Tenth-Century Baghdad,” Midwest Medieval History Conference, Milwaukee, WI. October 20.

2016 “‘His fathers are like sheepdogs!’ A Testimony of Jewish Communal Strife in Abbasid Baghdad,” International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI. May 15.

**CAMPUS TALKS, PANELS, AND GUEST LECTURES**

2021 “Medieval Jewish History.” *European History: Antiquity to Reformation* (Dr. Marita von Weissenberg), Xavier University. November 10.

2021 “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in a Medieval Jewish History Syllabus,” *Faculty Day of Learning and Sharing*, HUC. November 8.

2021 “‘No Need of Babylonia’? Constructing Rabbinic Authority in the Eleventh and Twelfth Century Mediterranean.” *HUC Faculty Research Colloquium* (via zoom). March 31.

2020 “Medieval Jewish History.” Presentation via Zoom for *European History: Antiquity to Reformation* (Dr. Marita von Weissenberg), Xavier University. November 9.

2020 “Jews and the Black Death of 1348,” Presentation via Zoom for *History of Epidemic Disease* (Dr. Karim Tiro), Xavier University. September 4.

2020 “Who owns the past?” Presentation via Zoom with Julia Olson, HUC Welcome Weekend Shabbaton. August 22.

2019 “‘He may seek refuge with a gentile’: Autonomy by Default in Early Abbasid Iraq, 750-861,” *History Department Research Colloquium*, Xavier University. November 20.

2019 “Medieval Jewish History.” *European History: Antiquity to Reformation* (Dr. Marita von Weissenberg), Xavier University. November 1.

2019 “Contextualizing Saadya Gaon.” *Medieval Jewish Philosophy* (Dr. Haim Rechnitzer), HUC. September 26.

2019 “The Shema in its Original(?) Historical Context,” with Benjamin Altshuler, HUC Shabbaton. August 10.

2019 HUC Representative, *Preparing Future Faculty Panel*, University of Cincinnati Graduate School. March 12.

2019 “The Myth of the Jewish Court Banker in Tenth Century Baghdad,” *History Department Research Colloquium*, Xavier University. March 4.

2019 “Mishnah and Talmud.” *Introduction to Theology* (Dr. Christine Thomas), Xavier University. February 13.

2018 “Contextualizing Saadya Gaon.” *Medieval Jewish Philosophy* (Dr. Haim Rechnitzer), HUC. August 27.

2018 “Jews under Islamic Rule in the Middle Ages,” *Senior Seminar for Rabbinical Students* (Rabbi Ken Kanter), HUC. April 11.

2018 “Applying for an Academic Position: Insights from the HUC-Xavier Searches,” with Dr. Nili Fox, *HUC Graduate Workshop*. April 10.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**Rabbinic and Graduate Courses at HUC**

“Medieval Jewish Travel,” Spring 2022.

“Medieval Jewish History,” Fall 2021, Fall 2020, Spring 2019, Spring 2018.

“Independent Study: Classical Arabic,” Fall 2021, Spring 2021, Fall 2020.

“Independent Study: Jewish Museums,” Fall 2020.

“Early Modern Jewish History,” Fall 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2020.

“Philosophies of History” (co-instructor with Dr. David Aaron), Spring 2020.

“Independent Study: Jews and Economic History,” Spring 2019.

“Race, Religion, and Exclusion in the Pre-Modern Mediterranean,” Fall 2018.

**Undergraduate Courses at Xavier**

“Jewish Civilization II,” Spring 2022.

“Jewish Civilization I,” Fall 2021.

“Medieval Travel and Globalization,” Spring 2021.

“Papyrus, Parchment, and Paper,” Fall 2020; Spring 2020; Fall 2019; Spring 2018.

“Research Seminar in Jewish History,” Spring 2019.

“Europe: Antiquity to the Reformation,” Fall 2018.

**Thesis and Capstone Project Advisor**

Jonathan Falco, “Of People and Politics” (Rabbinic Thesis, HUC-JIR), 2022

Eliza McCarroll, “Telling Their Stories: A retrospective on Jewish feminism in the Australian female rabbinate” (Rabbinic Thesis, HUC-JIR), 2022

Shmuel Polin, “Opening the Ark Project” (Rabbinic capstone, HUC-JIR), January 2021.

Sarah Grabiner, “‘The heavens declare the glory of God!’ An Exploration of the Greek Philosophy of the Music of the Spheres in Pre-Modern Jewish Texts” (Cantorial Thesis, HUC-JIR, New York), January 2019.

In Progress: Eliza McCarroll (Rabbinic Thesis, HUC-JIR), Jonathan Falco (Rabbinic Thesis, HUC-JIR), Matthew Derrenbacher (Rabbinic Thesis, HUC-JIR).

**Sermon Advisor**

Daniel Hotary, “Parshat Vayigash.” December 11, 2021.

Zoe McCoon, “Ki Tissa: Getting Justice, Accountability, and Atonement Right.” March 14, 2020.

Shmuel Polin, “Parshat Vayera.” January 25, 2020.

**Student Advisor**

2021-present: Rachael Houser

2020-present: Emily Dana

2019-present: Remy Liverman

2018-present: Ashley Barrett

**SERVICE TO PROFESSION**

2021 Manuscript Reviewer, *HUC Press*

2021 Proposal Reviewer, *Austrian Science Fund (FWF)*

2018 Peer Reviewer, *Jewish Social Studies*.

2018 Peer Reviewer, *Journal of Jewish Studies*.

**UNIVERSITY SERVICE**

**Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion**

HUC-JIR Faculty Handbook Revision Committee, October 2021-Present.

ACPE Committee, May 2021-Present

Co-Convener, HUC Faculty Research Colloquium, Fall 2020-Present.

DFSSM Student Tenure Committee, June 2021.

Online Learning Taskforce, 2020-2021.

Graduate Executive Committee (GEC), Fall 2019-Present.

Technology Advisory Board, Spring 2020.

Interview Committee, Office of Recruitment and Admissions, June 15 and 16 and March 10, 11, and 16, 2021; December 10 and March 17, 2020; January 16, March 27, and December 17, 2019.

Core Curriculum Taskforce (Cincinnati Campus), Fall 2019.

Orientation Shabbaton Committee, Summer 2019.

Second-Year Student Advisor, 2018-present.

**Xavier University**

University Special Collections’ “Sesqui Advisory Group,” Fall 2019-present.

Jewish and Interfaith Chaplain Search Committee, Spring 2019.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

2021-2022 Paula Hyman Mentorship Program, Association for Jewish Studies

2021 “HUC Faculty Days of Learning,” Hebrew Union College. June 1-2.

2021 Diversity and Inclusion Teaching Academy Semester 1, Xavier University. January 15-March 26.

2020 “Online Learning: Course Design and Best Practices,” Hebrew Union College. July 28-August 11.

2019 American Academy for Jewish Research Early Career Development Workshop for Faculty in Jewish Studies. May 29-30.

2015 Manfred R. Lehmann Memorial Master Workshop in the History of the Jewish Book, Katz Center for Advanced Jewish Studies

2014 Workshop on Textual Corpora and the Digital Islamic Humanities, Brown University

2014 Intensive Course on Arabic Manuscripts and Early Qurans, Princeton University

**LANGUAGES**

Modern Languages: Hebrew, Modern Standard Arabic, Spanish (Proficient); French (Reading) Ancient Languages: Classical Arabic, Judeo-Arabic, Classical Hebrew, Babylonian Aramaic (Proficient)

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS/AFFILIATIONS**

Working Group on Jewish Women’s Labor in the Premodern World

Association for Jewish Studies

Medieval Academy of America

Middle East Medievalists

Middle Eastern Studies Association

Midwest Medieval History Conference

Princeton Geniza Lab

Society for Judaeo-Arabic Studies