

# ARYEH COHEN, PH. D.

UNIVERSITY OF JUDAISM  
15600 MULHOLLAND DR.  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90077-1599  
310 476-9777 x 262

1657 S. SHENANDOAH ST.  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90035  
310 858-8147

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## EMPLOYMENT

### CURRENT

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF RABBINIC LITERATURE, ZIEGLER SCHOOL OF RABBINICAL STUDIES, **UNIVERSITY OF JUDASIM**, LOS ANGELES, CA

### FALL 2001 TO SPRING 2005:

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF RABBINIC LITERATURE AND CHAIR OF RABBINICS, ZIEGLER SCHOOL OF RABBINICAL STUDIES, **UNIVERSITY OF JUDASIM**, LOS ANGELES, CA

### FALL 1995 TO SPRING 2000:

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF RABBINIC LITERATURE AND CHAIR OF JEWISH STUDIES, **UNIVERSITY OF JUDASIM**, LOS ANGELES, CA

### SPRING 1995:

INSTRUCTOR, RECONSTRUCTIONIST RABBINICAL COLLEGE, WYNCOTTE, PA.  
Course: Talmud

### FALL 1994:

INSTRUCTOR, RECONSTRUCTIONIST RABBINICAL COLLEGE, WYNCOTTE, PA.  
Course: Traditional Judaism

## COURSES TAUGHT

Graduate courses: Issues of Justice; Talmud with Rishonim Mishnah and Tosefta; Talmud with the Commentary of Rashi; Talmud with Alfasi and Tosafot; Talmud with Tosafot and Other Rishonim; Talmud Bekiyyut I; Talmud: Halakhah and Aggadah I; Introduction to Midrash; Teaching Rabbinic Texts as Spiritual Mentoring, Comprehensive (75 daf) Talmud Exam.

Undergraduate courses: Survey of Rabbinic Literature; Medieval Jewish Civilization; Midrash; Representations of Women in Talmud

## EDUCATION

SEPTEMBER, 1988 TO JUNE 1995:

**BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY**, DEPARTMENT OF NEAR EASTERN AND JUDAIC STUDIES.

PHD - FEBRUARY 1996

M.A. - FEBRUARY 1992

SUMMER 1992:

THE SCHOOL OF CRITICISM AND THEORY AT DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, HANOVER, NH.

SEPTEMBER, 1986 TO JUNE, 1988:

**SHALOM HARTMAN INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED JUDAIC STUDIES**, JERUSALEM, ISRAEL, RESEARCH FELLOW AND MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE'S CENTER FOR MEDICINE, ETHICS, AND HALAKHAH.

SEPTEMBER, 1982 TO JUNE, 1988:

**HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM**, DEPARTMENTS OF PHILOSOPHY AND JEWISH THOUGHT.

B.A. -JANUARY 1988.

JUNE, 1978 TO AUGUST, 1982:

**YESHIVAT HAR ETZION**, ALON SHVUT, ISRAEL.

SEPTEMBER, 1976 TO JUNE, 1978:

**YESHIVAT SHAALVIM**, D.N. EMEK AYALON, ISRAEL.

## BOOKS

*REREADING TALMUD: GENDER, LAW AND THE POETICS OF SUGYOT*, BROWN UNIVERSITY SERIES IN JEWISH STUDIES, SCHOLARS PRESS, 1998.

BEGINNING /AGAIN: TOWARDS A HERMENEUTICS OF JEWISH TEXTS, ED. WITH SHAUL MAGID, SEVEN BRIDGES PRESS, 2002.

## CURRENT PROJECTS

### Monographs

#### THE ANXIETY OF EXILE

This book length project looks at Exile/Diaspora as the narrative of origins of the Jewish community represented by and in the Babylonian Talmud. Reading legal texts in the Babylonian Talmud I argue that the Sages were caught in the irremediable tension between erasing Exile by mapping the Land of Israel on to Babylonia, and the paralysis born of the fear that the Exile is a divorce (from and by God) and not a temporary separation. At stake are the understanding of the issues of the centrality of the Land of Israel, the authority of the Rabbis and the integrity of the project of Rabbinic Judaism itself. (*forthcoming 2006*)

#### ISSUES OF JUSTICE

This book length project develops Levinas' notion of "humane urbanism" ("Cities of Refuge") by articulating three fundamental principles through an analysis of legal and aggadic texts in the

Babylonian Talmud. The method of analysis combines “sugyaetics”—the approach that I articulated in my first book—with an ethical sensibility derived from Emmanuel Levinas’ philosophy. The book suggests fundamental principles of justice by which to think about issues of justice in an urban setting. (*forthcoming 2007*)

## Articles

### STUDY OF TORAH AS A DISCOURSE OF VIOLENCE: *MILKHAMTAH SHEL TORAH*, VARIATIONS ON A THEME

The central argument of this essay is that Talmud study is not coincidentally violent but rather in some way essentially violent. The very act of study is referred to as war, students are seen as soldiers, the activity of learning material is characterized as sharpening swords, teachers and students are enemies, the valorized method of study is violent confrontation which sometimes ends in physical harm and even death.

At stake in this essay is ultimately what the self-fashioning of the Sages through “the war of Torah” can tell us about the study of Torah itself, and what was the aim of Talmud—as text, as cultural document, as the product of a specific community of Jews at a specific historical time. (*forthcoming 2006*)

### CONSTRUCTING A *SUGYA*/CONSTRUCTING MARRIAGE (AND DIVORCE)

In this paper I analyze the series of *sugyot* in Bavli Gittin 32a-34b. I will make two related claims. First, the opening *sugya* of the chapter introduces all the concepts that are later articulated as the central concepts of the following *sugyot*. The concepts are introduced under erasure. The second claim is that the concepts that the *stam* introduces construct a narrative of men, women and the court in which men are untrustworthy, women are dangerous outsiders (or dangerous because Other) and the court is the sole body which can interpret the actions of men. Marriage then becomes a contract between a woman and the court. (*forthcoming 2006*)

## ARTICLES

### Refereed articles

“GIDDUL’S WIFE AND THE POWER OF THE COURT: ON TALMUDIC LAW, GENDER, DIVORCE AND EXILE,” *RLAWS: REVIEW OF LAW, WOMEN AND SOCIETY*, VOLUME 9.2.

“‘THIS PATRIARCHY WHICH IS NOT ONE’: THE IDEOLOGY OF MARRIAGE IN RASHI AND TOSAFOT,” *HEBREW UNION COLLEGE ANNUAL*. VOLUME 70.

“‘DO THE DEAD KNOW...’ THE REPRESENTATION OF DEATH IN THE BAVLI,” *AJS REVIEW*, VOL. XXIV, NO 1, 1999.

“TOWARDS AN EROTICS OF MARTYRDOM,” *THE JOURNAL OF JEWISH THOUGHT AND PHILOSOPHY*, VOLUME 7, NUMBER 2.

**Invited articles/Book Chapters**

"BEGINNING GITTIN/MAPPING EXILE," IN *BEGINNING/AGAIN: TOWARD A HERMENEUTICS OF JEWISH TEXTS*, ED. ARYEH COHEN AND SHAUL MAGID, SEVEN BRIDGES PRESS (2002).

"THE TASK OF THE TALMUD: ON TALMUD AS TRANSLATION," IN A.A. DEN HOLLANDER, ULRICH SCHMID, WILLEM SMELIK, EDS. *TEXT AND PARATEXT*, E.J. BRILL, 2002.

"RESPONSE TO 'REVELATION REVEALED'," IN *TEXTUAL REASONINGS*, ED. NANCY LEVENE AND PETER OCHS SCM PRESS, 2002.

**Popular Articles**

"'SEEK THE WELFARE OF THE CITY TO WHICH I HAVE EXILED YOU...': TOWARD ANOTHER DIASPORA MANIFESTO," *SH'MA*, 35:616, DECEMBER 2004.

"TEACHING TROUBLING TEXTS," *SH'MA*, APRIL, 2001.

"TWO MIDRASHIM," *LIVING TEXT: THE JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY MIDRASH*, NUMBER 5, SUMMER 1999.

"ON FATHERS AND DAUGHTERS," *KEREM: CREATIVE EXPLORATIONS IN JUDAISM*, NUMBER 6, 1999.

"GETTING FROM TISHA B'AV TO YOM KIPPUR," *CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM*, SUMMER, 1997.

"READING, EXILE AND REDEMPTION: A MEDITATION ON THE TALMUDIC PROJECT," *THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST*, VOLUME 61, NUMBER 2, FALL 1996.

"ON JUDAISM AND JEWISH STUDIES," *TEXTUAL REASONING*, VOLUME 6, NUMBER 1.

"THE NEW SODOMITES," *TIKKUN*, VOLUME 12, NUMBER 1.

"NOTES TOWARDS AN EROTICS OF MATRYRDOM," *TEXTUAL REASONING*, VOLUME 5, NUMBER 2.

"FRAMING WOMEN/CONSTRUCTING EXILE: A READING OF BAVLI GITTIN 34B-35B," *THE POSTMODERN JEWISH PHILOSOPHY BITNETWORK*, VOLUME 3, NUMBER 1, MAY, 1994.

## BOOK REVIEWS

REVIEW OF GORDON TUCKER, TRANS., ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL, HEAVENLY TORAH AS REFRACTED THROUGH THE AGES. CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM (FORTHCOMING).

REVIEW OF DAVID KRAEMER, READING THE RABBIS: THE TALMUD AS LITERATURE, HEBREW STUDIES, VOL. 39 (1998).

REVIEW OF MIRIAM PESKOWITZ, SPINNING FANTASIES: RABBIS, GENDER AND HISTORY, AJS REVIEW, VOL. 25:1 (2000)

## PAPERS AT CONFERENCES

JUNE 2006:

Senior Commentator at Interdisciplinary Law & Humanities Junior Scholars Workshop to *Equality with a Vengeance - Women Conscientious Objectors in Pursuit of a "Voice" and Substantive Gender Equality*, Noya Rimalt, Faculty of Law, University of Haifa, Israel at University of Southern California Law School

DECEMBER 2005:

Organized session at Association of Jewish Studies Conference: On the Intersection of Theory and Practice: A Conversation About Justice Amongst Scholars, Rabbis and Activists

Paper at Association of Jewish Studies Conference: The Boundaries of Obligation: a reading of Bavli Sotah 46a

DECEMBER 2004:

Paper at Association of Jewish Studies Conference: For Whom are We Writing

DECEMBER 2003:

Paper at Association of Jewish Studies Conference: The Anxiety of Exile

NOVEMBER 2003:

Paper at American Academy of Religion Conference: Anxiously Unresolved.

MARCH 2003:

Paper at Shifting Frontiers V, a conference of The Society for the Study of Late Antiquity: Talmud as a Discourse of Violence: *Milchamta Shel Torah*, Variations on a Theme.

DECEMBER 2002:

Paper at Association for Jewish Studies Conference: Bruriah, R. Meir, Midrash and Exile: Revisiting the *Ma'aseh de-Bruryah*

NOVEMBER 2002:

Paper at American Academy of Religion Conference: Response to Menachem Fisch "Rational Rabbis".

JULY 2001:

Paper at Society for Biblical Literature International Meeting: "The Task of the Talmud: Talmud as Translation."

FEBRUARY 2001:

Chair of a panel and panelist at Being Human: Women and Jewish Philosophy, a conference at Arizona State University.

DECEMBER, 2000:

Paper at Association for Jewish Studies Conference: "Study of Torah as a Discourse of Violence: *Milkhamtah Shel Torah*, Variations on a Theme"

NOVEMBER, 2000:

Paper at American Academy of Religion Conference: "Dis-Covering Aggadah: Robert Cover and the Aggadic Context of Halakhic *Sugyot*."

DECEMBER, 1998:

Paper at Association for Jewish Studies Conference: "This Patriarchy Which is not One: The Ideology of Marriage in *Rashi* and *Tosafot*."

DECEMBER, 1997:

Paper at Association for Jewish Studies Conference: "We Are Still Slaves of Ahaseurus": Resistance to power, and resistance to redemption in Bavli Megillah.

NOVEMBER, 1997:

Paper at American Academy of Religion Conference: "The Representation of Death in the Bavli."

OCTOBER, 1997:

Respondent to Lori Hope Lefkowitz, "Passing as a Man: Narratives of Jewish Gender Performance," at the Feminist Center Research Group of the American Jewish Congress.

JUNE, 1997:

Paper at Textual Reasoning: An International Conference on Postmodern Jewish Philosophy and Rabbinic Text Reading: "Theorizing Talmudic Beginnings."

Respondent to Tikvah Frymer-Kensky, "Revelation Revealed," at Textual Reasoning: An International Conference on Postmodern Jewish Philosophy and Rabbinic Text Reading.

NOVEMBER, 1996:

Paper at American Academy of Religion Conference: "Towards an Erotics of Martyrdom."

DECEMBER, 1995:

Paper at Association for Jewish Studies Conference: "Beginning/Title/Map:Framing Gittin."

DECEMBER, 1994:

Paper at Association for Jewish Studies Conference: "Reading Power: Women, Men and Institutional Interpretive Practice: A Reading of B. Gittin 33a."

NOVEMBER, 1994:

Paper at American Academy of Religion Conference: "Mapping Exile/Imagining Divorce".

MAY, 1994:

Respondent to Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Were Pharisees and Rabbis the Leaders of Communal Prayer and Torah Study in Antiquity? The Evidence of the New Testament, Josephus, and the Church Fathers" at The Brandeis/Brown/Holy Cross Colloquium on Early Judaism and Christianity.

DECEMBER, 1993:

Paper at Association for Jewish Studies Conference: "Men, Women, Divorce and Exile: A Reading of B. Gittin 34b-35b".

DECEMBER, 1992:

Paper at Association for Jewish Studies Conference: "Ethics and Interpretation in an Aggadic Sugya: A Reading of BT Berachot 3b-4a".

DECEMBER, 1991:

Co-chair of session at Association for Jewish Studies Conference: "Graduate Student Dialogue".

DECEMBER, 1990:

Co-chair of session at Association for Jewish Studies Conference: "Work in Progress".

#### INVITED LECTURES

OCTOBER, 2005: SEMINAR ON ANCIENT JUDAISMS AND CHRISTIANITIES,  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

NOVEMBER, 2004: JEWISH STUDIES DEPARTMENT SEMINAR, STANFORD  
UNIVERSITY: "THE ANXIETY OF EXILE"

OCTOBER, 2003: MELLON SAWYER SEMINAR ON THE ETHICS OF THE NEIGHBOR,  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES, "THE NEIGHBOR IN TORAH AND  
TALMUD"

MARCH, 2000: FIRST ANNUAL THEOLOGY OF PURIM LECTURE, JEWISH  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, "WE ARE STILL SLAVES OF AHASEURUS: TOWARDS A  
RABBINIC THEOLOGY OF PURIM.

FEBRUARY, 2000: INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS FORUM LECTURE SERIES: "RELIGION  
AT THE TURN OF THE MILLENIUM", CALIFORNIA MUSEUM OF ANCIENT ART,  
"AFTER THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS: RABBINIC JUDAISM FOLLOWING THE  
DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE."

OCTOBER, 1999: SEMINAR ON JEWISH HERMENEUTICS, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES, "THE TASK OF THE TALMUD: ON TALMUD AS TRANSLATION AND TRANSLATING THE TALMUD."

APRIL, 1999: HOUSE OF THE BOOK, BRANDEIS-BARDIN INSTITUTE. "AMERICAN JUDAISM FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE BIRTH OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL: WASTELAND OR THE BIRTHPLACE OF A NEW JEW?"

FEBRUARY, 1998: DORSHA WALLMAN LECTURE IN MODERN TORAH INTERPRETATION, SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY: "THE PURIM/TISHA B'AV AXIS."

JANUARY, 1996: SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE AT RABBINIC ASSEMBLY, PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION CONVENTION.

#### ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Co-chair Study of Judaism Section, American Academy of Religion  
Outside referee for tenure committee  
Reader for University of California Press  
Reader for Jewish Quarterly Review  
Reader for Hebrew Union College Annual  
Member of Scriptural Reasoning group sponsored by The Center of Theological Reasoning at Princeton University  
Board Member *Society for Textual Reasoning*  
Editor, *Textual Reasoning*. 1997-2000  
Co-Chair, Fourth Annual Western Jewish Studies Association Conference, Los Angeles, CA, March 1998.  
President, *Progressive Jewish Alliance*, 2003-2005  
Secretary of Statewide Board, *Progressive Jewish Alliance*  
Advisory Board Member, *Sh'ma*

#### MEMBERSHIPS

Association for Jewish Studies  
American Academy of Religion  
Society for Biblical Literature  
The Authors Guild