

## **Eighth Annual**

### **OXFORD SUMMER INSTITUTE ON MODERN & CONTEMPORARY JUDAISM (OSI)**

**July 2-6, 2023**

Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, University of Oxford  
in conjunction with the Berman Center for Jewish Studies, Lehigh University

#### **Authority and Leadership in Modern and Contemporary Judaism**

The Oxford Summer Institute on Modern and Contemporary Judaism (OSI) is an interdisciplinary workshop where scholars of Jewish religion and culture from around the globe join a large contingent of European Jewish Studies specialists, along with select faculty from the University of Oxford, for a week of intensive study and intellectual exchange. Designed to facilitate rigorous academic engagement on key themes in the Jewish religion, it provides a framework for raising original and challenging perspectives from a broad range of disciplines, with the potential to provide novel insights into contemporary Judaism.

Entering its eighth year of in-person gatherings (not including two years of virtual meetings due to the Covid pandemic), the OSI has facilitated unique informal interfaces between veteran and early career researchers from diverse geographic and disciplinary backgrounds. It has a particular interest in contributing to the ongoing expansion of Jewish Studies throughout Europe. OSI 'alumni' are today a worldwide network of researchers, who continue to learn and collaborate with each other. These scholars attest to the profound experience that the OSI offers for rigorous interaction with colleagues in a relaxed but focused framework that spurs creativity and critical but non-judgmental discussion. The conveners of this gathering are [Miri Freud-Kandel](#) (Oxford University), [Jodi Eichler-Levine](#) (Lehigh University), [Adam Ferziger](#) (Bar-Ilan University), and Hartley Lachter (Lehigh University).

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The theme of OSI 2023 is 'Authority and Leadership in Modern and Contemporary Judaism'. Researchers utilizing a range of analytical tools will consider how these two categories function in Jewish communities, both separately and together. We value scholarship on pre-modern and modern matters that facilitates comparative historical analysis of current developments, and we welcome proposals from scholars working in any area of Jewish Studies.

Some of the broader questions that will frame the seminar are:

- What are the differences and points of connection between the categories of authority and leadership in Jewish culture and thought?
- In what ways are these helpful frames for considering the relationship between Jewish ideas and Jewish communal life, and in what ways might they require theoretical interrogation?
- How do new ideas or modes of discourse become authoritative, and in what ways does that support new modes of Jewish leadership?
- Are there forms of authority that are separate from communal leadership? And are there forms of leadership that make no particular claims to authority?

- How have claims to authority and leadership in Jewish communities changed during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries?
- In what ways do novel forms of leadership or assertions of authority in the contemporary period make recourse to pre-modern sources or practices?
- How do these categories function in Jewish spaces that are outside of the traditional models of Jewish communities?
- How do modern and contemporary Jews grapple with issues of tradition and innovation in terms of authority and leadership?

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Applicants who are accepted will be offered funding to cover reasonable travel costs and will be provided with food and accommodation. They will be asked to prepare an original paper (15-20 pages) that will be distributed to the participants one month prior to the event. This maximises constructive exchange and feedback during the workshop itself.

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### **Application Procedure**

**Application Deadline: January 15, 2023**

**Please note that we prioritise applications from the European continent.**

In your application to participate, please include the following:

- A completed **application form**
- A **resume and list of publications**
- A detailed **cover letter** describing your current position, academic background, current research projects, what you plan to present at the Institute, and how you would benefit from participating
- An **abstract (250-500 words) of your proposed paper**
- The names of two academic references**

All documents should be sent as a **single PDF** and submitted by email. Please submit documents in **one** email.

We will only consider **complete** applications. We will inform you regarding the results of your application as soon as possible after the deadline.

**To apply, please email all required materials in a single PDF to OCHJS Academic Administrator, Ms Priscilla Lange, at [academic.administrator@ochjs.ac.uk](mailto:academic.administrator@ochjs.ac.uk) before the deadline.**