

WAG Scholars' Working Group on German Rabbis after 1933, LMU Munchen

Personal Details

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Statement of Interest

My longstanding invested interest in immigrant rabbinates, thus far within the context of the United States beginning the mass immigration era through the 1960s, combined with the history of Israeli Haredi society, led to exploring the internal struggles and rivalries within Haredi society since the 1950s regarding German Jewish Orthodoxy, its rabbis, and their legacy and heritage. This struggle began amidst the migration of German Orthodox Jews between the mid-1930s and the Postwar years, immigrants, survivors, and refugees, as well as communities and their spiritual leaders, from Europe, and settlement in the United States, British Mandatorial Palestine, and, later, the State of Israel. This legacy and heritage were and continue to be challenged, at times delegitimized within Haredi society. This is yet another challenge that German Jewish refugees and their leaders encountered while attempting to re-build their social, cultural, and religious frameworks after the Second World War.

Project Outline

This project is in a very initial stage and therefore the input of experts dealing with different topics although within historical and other relatively close proximities will clearly prove essential. The first step is to locate and document Haredi texts that address the German Jewish Orthodox legacy and heritage as perceived and presented by their authors, as well German Jewish non-Orthodox religious representations in this literature and present them in light of the existing historical-critical knowledge as to what this legacy and heritage indeed represented. This would enable to further understand the dynamics and process of the aforementioned delegitimization within Haredi society.

Presentation

Delegitimizing German Jewish Orthodoxy: Postwar Internal Haredi Rivalries

Short Bio

Kimmy Caplan is Professor of Modern Jewish History at the Israel and Golda Koschitzky Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry, Bar-Ilan University. His field of scholarly interest is Jewish Religious History in the 19th and 20th centuries, with a focus on religious streams, popular religion, sermons, and homiletic literature. His recent books include a biography of Amram Blau, one of the founders and leader of the extreme Haredi anti-Zionist Neturei Karta group (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 2017), and a co-edited volume with Nissim Leon entitled *Contemporary Israeli Haredi Society: Profiles, Trends, and Challenges* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2024).