

The Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has triggered one of the largest refugee crises in recent European history. Over 1.2 million Ukrainian citizens have received temporary protection in Germany, while a significant number of refugees—Jewish or of Jewish origin—have also sought refuge in Israel and received citizenship under the Law of Return. The experiences of Ukrainian Jews in the wake of the war offer an important lens through which to examine broader patterns of Jewish migration from Eastern Europe over the past four decades.

This two-day interdisciplinary conference, organized by the Leonid Nevzlin Research Center for Russian and East European Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Leibnitz Center for Contemporary History Potsdam and the Center for Israel Studies at Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, aims to juxtapose two pivotal periods of Jewish migration to Israel and Germany—the post-Soviet 1990s and the post-2022 Ukrainian crisis. By bringing together scholars from the humanities and social sciences, the conference seeks to enrich our understanding of the shifting meanings of Jewish belonging, displacement, and diaspora in the 21st century. Through historical, sociological, and cultural analyses, we aim to build a comparative framework for analyzing Jewish migration in the context of political rupture, memory politics, and transnational identity formation.

SPEAKERS

Jan C. Behrends
Europa-Universität Viadrina,
Frankfurt (Oder)/ ZZf Potsdam

Marguerite Bertheau
LMU Munich

Franziska Davies
ZZf Potsdam

Dmitry Dubrovski
Charles University, Prague

Semion Goldin
The Hebrew University of
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Gelinada Grinchenko
LMU and Oral History
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Maria Kaspina
The Central Archives for the
History of the Jewish People

Natalia Kireeva
The National Library of Israel

Karen Körber
Institute for the History of the
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Anna Kushkova
The Hebrew University of
Jerusalem

Boris Lanin
Adam Mickiewicz University,
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Social Sciences Department,
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Katja Petrowskaja
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Marina Sapritsky-Nahum
University College London

Ghilad H. Shenhav
LMU Munich

Anna Shternshis
University of Toronto

Daria Vakhrushova
LMU Munich

LMU LUDWIG-MAXIMILIANS-UNIVERSITÄT MÜNCHEN Lehrstuhl für Jüdische Geschichte und Kultur

10.12. 14–18 Uhr
LMU Leihrturm · VU 104
Prof.-Huber-Platz 2

10.12. 19 Uhr
»Als wäre es vorbei« – Lesung und
Gespräch mit Katja Petrowskaja
LMU Hauptgebäude · Hörsaal M110
Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1

11.12. 10–16 Uhr
IBZ · Amalienstraße 38

Organized by the Leonid Nevzlin Research Center for Russian and East European Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Leibnitz Center for Contemporary History Potsdam and the Center for Israel Studies at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich.



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Jewish Immigration from Eastern Europe to Israel and Germany in Light of the War in Ukraine (1991–2025)

Narratives, Memory and Identity Formation



International Conference
10.–11.12.2025

Wednesday December 10		LMU Leharturm · VU 104 Prof.-Huber-Platz 2
2:00-2:30	Greetings Philipp Lenhard LMU Munich Semion Goldin The Hebrew University of Jerusalem	
2:30-4:00	PANEL I »Kontingentflüchtlinge« and the Transformation of German Jewry Rethinking post-Soviet Jewish Immigration to Germany: Narratives, Networks and the Russian-Ukrainian War Karen Körber Institute for the History of the German Jews, Hamburg Immigration as Atonement: »Kontingentflüchtlinge« and the German Political Discourse Marguerite Bertheau LMU Munich Is Yiddish still a »mame-loshn«? Imposed, Discarded and Liberated Identities among Soviet Jewish Immigrants in Germany Daria Vakhrushova LMU Munich	
4:00-4:30	Coffee break	
4:30-6:30	ROUNDTABLE East European Jewish Immigration: Categories of Belonging Chair: Philipp Lenhard LMU Munich Semion Goldin The Hebrew University of Jerusalem Franziska Davies ZZf Potsdam Anna Shternshis University of Toronto Jan C. Behrends Europa-Universität Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder) / ZZf Potsdam	
6:30-7:00	Break	
7:00-8:30	»Als wäre es vorbei...« (in German) Katja Petrowskaja in conversation with Philipp Lenhard Introduction: Ghilad H. Shenhav LMU Munich	

Thursday December 11		IBZ · Amalienstraße 38
10:00-11:30	PANEL II Jews and the War in Ukraine: Questions of Identity Russian-Ukrainian War through Jewish Eyes: Ethnic Sensibilities, National Allegiances, Global Consciousness Anna Kushkova The Leonid Nevzlin Research Center for Russian and East European Jewry, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem Memories in a Bag: Ukrainian War Refugees and the Objects They Carried in Forced Migration to Israel Maria Kaspina The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People Spiritual Coping Strategies in Overcoming Trauma and Navigating New Realities: Narratives of Ukrainian Repatriates in Israel (2022–2024) Michal Natalie Kireeva The National Library of Israel	
11:30-12:00	Coffee break	
12:00-1:00	PANEL III Jews and the War in Ukraine: Narratives of War Research without a Research Agenda: Early Encounters with Ukrainian Jewish Refugees in Germany Marina Sapritsky-Nahum University College London Bombs, Miracles and Yigrot Kodesh: Narratives of Ukrainian Jewish Refugees of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine 2022–2024 Anna Shternshis University of Toronto	
1:00-2:00	Lunch for Participants	

2:00-3:30	PANEL IV The War in Ukraine: Narratives of Documentation When and How Testimonies Become History: The Possibilities and Limitations of Data Collection in the Pass of Events Oksana Mikheieva Kyiv School of Economics (KSE) Oral History and Documenting the Unfinished War: Limitations, Pitfalls and New Applications Gelinada Grinchenko LMU Munich / Oral History Association, Ukraine »What Are We Building On? Methodological Assemblages for War Documentation« Natalia Otrishchenko Center for Urban History of East Central Europe, Lviv	
3:30-4:00	Coffee break	
4:00-5:30	ROUNDTABLE Scholars as Migrants: Questions of Belonging and Identity Chair: Semion Goldin The Hebrew University of Jerusalem Maria Kaspina The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People Dmitry Dubrovski Charles University, Prague Boris Lanin Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań Marina Sapritsky-Nahum University College London	
5:30-6:00	Concluding Discussion Ghilad H. Shenhav LMU Munich	
Picture on the cover: Bus evacuating elderly members of the Kharkiv Jewish community to Moldova, with hand-written red crosses on the windshield (early March, 2022) . From the Project »Ukrainian Jewish Repatriates in Israel: Jewish Identity in the Context of Russian-Ukrainian War« (The Leonid Nevzlin Research Center for Russian and East European Jewry, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem).		