



## The Jewish Family - Myth and Reality

The Second Conference of European Female Rabbis, Cantors,  
Jewish Activists and Scholars

### Programme

#### Conference Venues

Centrum Judaicum (CJ)  
Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin  
Oranienburger Strasse 28/29  
10117 Berlin

*Great Hall, Synagogue*

*Tent, Mifgash*

*Class Rooms:*

*1<sup>st</sup> Floor: 1.15*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: 2.16, 2.17*

Jüdische Oberschule/ School (S)  
Große Hamburger Strasse 27  
10115 Berlin

*Class Rooms*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: 2.11, 2.12*

*2.13, 2.14*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Floor: 3.09, 3.10*

---

#### Exhibition:

Sculptures - Rachel Kohn & Marion Kahnemann  
Centrum Judaicum / Seminary Room (1<sup>st</sup> Floor)

(Opening Times: Fri 13-15.45; Sat 12.30-14.45, 18.30-21.15; Sun 12-14.45; Mon 18-20.30)

Friday, June 1

10.00 *CJ Mifgash* Registration at the conference co-ordination centre

11.00 *Krausnickstrasse 6, Berlin-Mitte*

Inauguration of a plaque dedicated to Regina Jonas,

Speeches: Elisa Klapheck & Lara Dämmig (Bet Debora), Joachim Zeller (Mayor of Berlin-Mitte),  
Dr. Hermann Simon (Director of the Centrum Judaicum)

Songs: Cantor Avitall Gerstetter

16.00 *CJ Great Hall* Opening:

- Dr. Antje Vollmer, Vice President of the German Bundestag
- Dr. Christine Bergmann, Minister of the Federal Ministry of Family, Senior Citizens, Youth and Women
- Dr. Boris Schapiro, Member of the Board of the Jewish Community of Berlin
- Jael Botsch-Fitterling, Member of the Council of Representatives of the Jewish Community of Berlin

Introduction of the speakers and honorary guests: Lara Dämmig & Elisa Klapheck

Songs: Cantor Avitall Gerstetter

17.30 *CJ Great Hall* Lectures:

Feministic Approaches to the "Jewish Family"

- Historic Perspective: Dr. Andrea Petö
- Personal and Rabbinic Reflections: Rabbi Elizabeth Tikvah Sarah

Moderation: Lara Dämmig & Elisa Klapheck

19.30 *CJ Great Hall* Kabbalat Shabbat

Rabbi Alexandra Wright, Cantor Avitall Gerstetter, Prof. Dr. Alice Shalvi

21.00 *CJ Tent* Kiddush, Dinner

Saturday/ Shabbat, June 2

10.00 Parallel Shabbat Services

*CJ Great Hall* - Reform: Rabbis Sylvia Rothschild, Elizabeth Tikvah Sarah & Alexandra Wright

*CJ Synagogue* - Traditional: Rabbi Prof. Dr. Eveline Goodman-Thau

*CJ 2.16* - Alternative - Discussion and Meditation: Rabbi Daniela Thau

13.00 *CJ Tent* Lunch

15.00 Parallel Workshops and Shiurim

- *CJ 1.15* - Family Religion from the Times of the Judges to the Period of the Kings:  
Lynn Feinberg & Bente Groth
- *S 2.11* - My Partner (he or she) isn't Jewish: Dr. Rachel Monika Herweg
- *S 2.12* - Children of Jewish Fathers: Jessica Jacoby
- *CJ 2.16* - Oral History as Spiritual Witnessing: Lori Klein & Irene Reti
- *S 2.13* - How does the Mishna interpret "Family": Esther Kontarsky
- *CJ 2.17* - Agunot - When it Comes to Divorce: Prof. Dr. Alice Shalvi
- *CJ Synagogue* - Women Prophets: Rabbi Nelly Shulman
- *S 2.14* - Marginal Jews: Rabbi Daniela Thau
- *CJ Great Hall* - Discussion Round with Re-Founders of the "Jüdischer Frauenbund" after the Shoah - Lilli Marx, Ruth Galinski and Inge Marcus; Moderation: Iris Weiss (German)

17.00 Parallel Workshops and Shiurim

- *CJ Synagogue* - The Women of Shemot (Exodus): Adina Ben-Chorin
- *S 2.12* - Judaism and Gender in Talmud and Midrash: Rabbi Dr. Eveline Goodman-Thau
- *CJ 2.16* - Jewish Selfconsciousness between I- and We-Identity I: Collective Images: Ruth Herzka

- S 2.11 - Taking Responsibility - Judaism as a "Calling" - Religious and Secular Identities: Elisa Klapheck & Wanya Kruyer
- S 2.13 - Living with "Survival: Discussion Round with Jacqueline Rothschild & Sascha Rossberg
- S 2.14 - Creating New Liturgy: Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild
- CJ 1.15 - Lesbian and Gay Jewish Weddings: New & Old Rituals and Ceremonies: Rabbi Elizabeth Tikvah Sarah
- CJ 2.17 - Women in the Rabbinate - Priestess, Prophetess or Princess?: Rabbi Alexandra Wright
- CJ Great Hall - Discussion Round with activists from Central- and Eastern Europe: Dragica Levi (Sarajevo), Rabbi Nelly Shulman, etc.; Moderation: Lara Dämmig

19.00 CJ Tent Dinner

Afterwards - 20.00 CJ Synagogue reading session by Petra Kunik (German)

21.30 CJ Great Hall Songs and Havdala with Cantor Mimi Sheffer  
(22.37 Havdala Service)

### Sunday, June 3

9.00 CJ Synagogue Shacharit (Reform), Rabbi Nelly Shulman & Lara Dämmig

10.00 CJ Great Hall

Panel Discussion: "Being Left Behind - Living after the Shoah:  
(Re-)Building Jewish Life in Europe"  
with Lynn Feinberg (Oslo), Dr. Jael Geis (Berlin), Dr. Eleonore Lappin (Vienna), Dr. Andrea Petö (Budapest), Wanya Kruyer (Amsterdam); Moderation: Sandra Lustig

12.30 CJ Tent Lunch

15.00 Parallel Workshops and Shiurim

- CJ 1.15 - Ageing, Death and Mourning: A Jewish Perspective: Adina Ben-Chorin
- S 2.12 - Being a Single Mother in an Orthodox Community: Lynn Feinberg
- CJ 2.16 - Jewish Selfconsciousness between I- and We-Identity II: Personal Images: Ruth Herzka
- CJ 2.17 - Jewish Women in Film: Jessica Jacoby
- S 2.13 - The Religious Construction of Gender: Dr. Susanna Keval
- S 2.11 - The Jewish Family during the Shoah and afterwards: Dr. Eleonore Lappin
- S 2.14 - Galut HaNeshama - Empty Space and "belted" Silence - The Female Body in Jewish Tradition and Modernity: Dr. Hanna Rhein
- S 3.09 - Working with people who want to enter Judaism - When "mixed" families become Jewish: Jacqueline Rothschild
- CJ Synagogue - New Liturgies for the Life Cycle of Women: Rabbis Sylvia Rothschild & Alexandra Wright
- S 3.10 - Miriam, Moses and Aaron - Three Spiritual Leaders in One Family: Cantor Mimi Sheffer

17.00 CJ Great Hall Lectures

- Mater Familias between Spirituality and Reality: Rabbi Prof. Dr. Eveline Goodman-Thau
  - On the Pressure of Becoming a Mother: Prof. Dr. Alice Shalvi
  - The Religious Construction of Gender: Dr. Susanna Keval
- Moderation: Dr. Rachel Monika Herweg

19.00 CJ Tent Dinner

20.30 CJ Great Hall Culture Programme  
"Froyen Shtimme" - Yiddish Songs of Female Composers  
(Helen Greenberg, Mariana Krutojarskaia and Marie-Janne Serero)  
Anne-Lisa Nathan (Mezzo Soprano), Tuyet Pham (Piano)

Monday, June 4

9.00 *CJ Synagogue* Shacharit (Renewal), Lori Klein & Elisa Klapheck

10.00 *CJ Great Hall* Panel Discussion: Courage for Plurality  
with Adina Ben-Chorin (Zurich), Dragica Levi (Sarajevo), Dr. Hanna Rheinz (Munic), Rabbi Nelly  
Shulman (Minsk), Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild (Orpington); Moderation Lara Dämmig & Elisa Klapheck

12.30 *CJ Tent* Lunch

14.30 Steamboat trip along Berlin's rivers and canals - past places where Jewish women were active  
in Berlin (starting point: Alte Börse)

20.30 *CJ Great Hall* Bet Debora - Final Concert:  
Jalda Rebling & Ensemble  
Medieval Songs on Jewish Women and Love

## Speakers and Description of Workshops

### **Adina Ben-Chorin**

American-born, she received an intensive Jewish education, culminating in a Jewish Studies degree from Gratz College, Philadelphia while pursuing her academic and professional studies (Urban Planning). In Israel she took a Certificate in Translation in Judaic Studies and worked as a translator for 15 years. After living in Israel for 30 years, she moved to Switzerland in 1996, when her husband, Tovia Ben-Chorin, was appointed rabbi at the Jüdische Liberale Gemeinde Or Chadash in Zurich. Now she teaches and lectures on Judaism and Jewish texts. Bible study is a major theme as well as women's role in Judaism.

#### **Workshops:**

##### **The Women of Shemot (Exodus; 2. Book Moses, Sat 5 p.m.)**

Both Genesis and Exodus begin with stories in which women play a central, determining role (Creation/Gan Eden on the one hand and the slave condition of the Jews in Egypt on the other). But that is where the similarity ends. We will take a close look at the women of the Book of Exodus, individually and as a group, both from the point of view of the biblical text and of the commentators and the midrashic literature. (Please bring a Bible with whatever translation you please, the more the merrier. If you have any other relevant material, please bring it along.)

##### **Aging, Death and Mourning: A Jewish Perspective (Sun 3 p.m.)**

We spend a lot of time and effort preparing for school, preparing to enter the workforce, preparing for a career, preparing for motherhood, etc. We even prepare for retirement on a certain level, mostly financial. Preparing for old age is another matter; and death - well, other than assuring oneself a place in a Jewish (?) cemetery, death is a subject rarely discussed in the open. The Jewish tradition has much to say on all these matters: general concepts and detailed instructions combine to create a meaningful philosophy of life.

### **Lara Dämmig**

studied Librarianship and worked as an editor of a Librarians' Journal, as well as in a women's project and at the Lauder Jewish House of Learning. She has helped to arrange exhibitions at the Prenzlauer Berg Museum Berlin on Jewish life in Prenzlauer Berg, as well as on school history and forced labour. She is doing research on the biographies of Jewish women in Berlin, where she has been co-founder of a Rosh Chodesh group and an Egalitarian Minjan. Lara Dämmig is one of the initiators of Bet Debora.

#### **Discussion with Women Activists from Central and Eastern Europe, Dragica Levi (Sarajevo), Rabbi Nelly Shulman (Minsk), etc. (Sat 5 p.m.)**

How do Jewish Communities come to terms in their daily work with the fact that many Jewish men and women live in mixed families? What is the status of non-halachic Jews and Jewesses? What efforts are being made to integrate non-Jewish family members? How important are these questions when it comes to building up Jewish life in Europe?

### **Lynn Feinberg**

Born in Oslo, where she still lives. Single mother and activist in the orthodox Jewish Community, in which her father previously also played an important part. Very involved in Jewish themes as seen from a feminist perspective. Founder of two Rosh Chodesh groups she is looking for new ways to experience religion and wants more spiritual "inclusiveness". At present she is studying for a Master's Degree in the History of Religions – the subject of her thesis is the relation of gender to prayer and ritual purity.

#### **Workshops:**

##### **Family religion from the times of the judges to the period of the kings (with Co-Speaker Bente Groth, Sat 3 p.m.)**

In our talk we shall give an outline on theories regarding women's and men's social roles and possible lives at the time of the Judges until the time of the Kings. We will show proposed scenarios of their ritual, cultic lives in early history. Our work is based on archaeological finds, anthropological and sociological theories as well as texts of the Hebrew Bible.

##### **Being a Single Mother in an orthodox Jewish Community (Sun 3 p.m.)**

In my workshop I shall give a short introduction and outline of my experiences as a female Jew in an orthodox Jewish synagogue connected to a liberal Jewish environment in Oslo. I will explore issues related to the problem of being a single mother today. My hope is that my introduction will lead to a group discussion where we can share experiences and learn from each other.

### **Dr. Jael Geis**

was born in Zürich (1948) and grew up in Amsterdam, Karlsruhe and Düsseldorf. She is a Registered Nurse, has an M.A. in Chinese Studies, American Studies and Sociology, and a Ph. D. in History. Her thesis has been published as a book under the title "Übrig sein – Leben 'danach' Juden deutscher Herkunft in der britischen und amerikanischen Zone Deutschlands 1945-1949" ("Left over - Life 'afterwards' Jews of German descent in the

British and American Zones of Germany 1945-1949"). Member of the Jewish Group (Jüdische Gruppe) Berlin from 1982 until 1997.

**Rabbi Prof. Dr. Eveline Goodman-Thau**

Born in Vienna in 1934, survivor of the Shoah, lives in Jerusalem since 1956, where she studied and taught history of Jewish religion and philosophy. Since 1985 she has been shuttling between Israel and Germany. She had professorships at various universities in Germany and the USA. Recently she received as the first Jewish woman in history an orthodox smicha. She officiates as a rabbi at the liberal synagogue "Or Chadash" in Vienna.

**Workshop: Judaism and Gender Questions in Tradition and Modernity (Sat 5 p.m.)**

Using Bible, Talmudic and Midrashic sources we shall trace the Gender Question in Judaism and discuss it in today's context. Particular emphasis will be placed on the ordaining of men and women rabbis, above and beyond the denomination debate within contemporary institutionalized Judaism, where genuine religious devotion is being more and more forced into the background by hierarchic paternalistic structures, in order to make room for the power of office. As far as the third part of the debate on women in Judaism is concerned, we shall talk less about rights and roles and more about the rules of effective participation. We shall also emphasize the responsibility - which Jewish women worldwide are prepared to take on - for continuing a tradition caught in the conflict between origin and revival.

**Dr. Rachel Monika Herweg**

born in 1960, is a Jewish scholar, educator, family therapist and lecturer - in particular on inter-religious and intercultural dialogue, communication and gender. She ran the youth department of the Jewish Community of Berlin, she was an assistant professor at the Free University and manager of the German Association for Educational Science. She is one of the founders of Bet Debora and author of "Die jüdische Mutter. Das verborgene Matriarchat" (The Jewish Mother. The Hidden Matriarchy, Darmstadt 1994) and editor of the CD-ROM "Tour durch die Bibel" (ORT Germany inc. 1999)

**Workshop: My partner (he or she) isn't Jewish (Sat 3 p.m.)**

Discussion on personal experiences with the "Mixpoche" - Jewish family and family togetherness with Rea Gorgon and Felice Ben-Chanan. Topics to be discussed include inter-religiousness, hetero- and homosexuality and transgender.

**Ruth Herzka Bollinger**

grew up in a traditional Jewish family in Zürich and is "second generation". She studied Psychology and Ethnology both in Zürich and abroad - England, Israel and Berlin. Also in Zürich, she founded the "Wyber-Shabbes" (Women's-Shabbes). Postgraduate study of Art Therapy at Haifa University. She is at present working as a psychologist and psychotherapist in Basel where she was a founding member of Ofek, Association for Pluralistic Judaism. She follows further training courses, writes and publishes on intercultural subjects.

**Workshops:**

**I. Jewish self-consciousness between I- and We-identity - collective images (Sat 5 p.m.)**

On the basis of a modern text, discussing and using creative, artistic techniques, we shall work on the problem of sharing various group specific characteristics. This Workshop is not suitable for Shomrei Shabbat.

**II. Jewish self-consciousness between I- and We-identity -- personal images (Sun 3 p.m.)**

Through creative, artistic methods and discussion and looking at photographs we shall examine our own family situations. Participants are kindly requested to bring their family photos with them.

**Jessica Jacoby**, born in 1954, grew up in West Berlin. She founded the Lesbian Feminist Shabbes Circle in 1985, and was one of the editors of "Nach der Schoah geboren. Jüdische Frauen in Deutschland" (Born after the Shoah. Jewish Women in Germany, Berlin 1994). She works as a free-lance journalist with emphasis on film and historical topics, amongst others for the "Jüdische Allgemeine Wochenzeitung" (Jewish Weekly Newspaper)

**Workshops:**

**Children of Jewish Fathers (Sat 3 p.m.)**

How did Jewish matrilineal tradition develop historically from an inclusive to an entirely exclusive institution? How have non-halachic Jewish men and women really been treated in Jewish communities, and what does this mean for us today with regard to the relations between the sexes and the forming of a feminist Jewish identity?

**Jewish Women in Film (Sun 3 p.m.)**

Jewish women conquered the director's chair at the same time as they stepped on to the Bima. In their films they tend to choose a biographical approach to their themes - their Jewish and female

identities, their family history and love affairs. I shall present some of these film-makers and their films.

#### **Dr. Susanna Keval**

Born 1955 in Bratislava, Susanne Keval came to the Federal Republic of Germany in 1968 and is a cultural sociologist. She is editor of the Jewish Community Newspaper in Frankfurt am Main and also lecturer at the Frankfurt and Marburg Universities, as well as being the author of numerous publications on women's spirituality and Jewish women in Germany.

#### **Workshop: The Religious Construction of Gender - Dr. Susanna Keval (Sun 3 p.m.)**

In which ways have religious patterns, often unconsciously, determined our specifically sexual roles? To what extent is it possible for us to free ourselves both from these influences and from our religious education, in order to develop appropriate new liturgical forms? What are the greatest obstacles with regard to this development? We shall try to answer these questions in the Workshop.

#### **Elisa Klapheck**

Editor-in-chief of the Jewish Community Magazine "Jüdisches Berlin" (Jewish Berlin) and initiator of Bet Debora. Author of "Fräulein Rabbiner Jonas – Kann die Frau das rabbinische Amt bekleiden?" - Miss Rabbi Jonas – Can a woman take up rabbinic office?- published by Hentrich & Hentrich, Teetz 1999. Student of the Aleph Smicha programme.

#### **Workshop: Taking Responsibility – Judaism as a "Calling" – Religious and Secular Identities (Sat 5 p.m.)**

Does the future of Judaism depend on the continuance of the family? Both Wanya Kruyer and Elisa Klapheck have contributed – without families – to the revival of Jewish life in Berlin and Amsterdam. Both are "professional Jewesses", in the sense that they have taken on the responsibility for handing on Jewish traditions, but are nevertheless non-conformist. The Workshop is open to all those for whom religion is not just a "private matter" and Judaism not a "family business".

**Lori Klein** is a student in the Aleph rabbinical programme, an attorney and a prayer leader for the Jewish Renewal Chavurah, Chadeish Yameinu, in Santa Cruz, California.

#### **Workshop: Oral History as Spiritual Witnessing (with Co-Speaker Irene Reti, Sat 3 p.m.)**

What family stories do you carry with you and how are they part of our story as Jews? Six times the Torah instructs us to Zachor (remember) life-changing events. Through meditation, story-telling, an oral history interviewing exercise, discussion and sharing, we will explore our individual, family's and collective histories as Jewish women. (**Irene Reti** is an oral historian at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She is also the author of *The Keeper of Memory*, a memoir about her experience as the daughter of two Holocaust refugees who kept their Jewish identity a secret.)

#### **Esther Kontarsky**

lives in Berlin and is a scholar in Jewish liturgy, music, scripture, philosophy and the history of the Jewish religion.

#### **Workshop: How does the Mishna interpret "Family" (Sat 3 p.m.)**

#### **Wanya F. Kruyer**

has a Master's Degree in Sociology and Contemporary History, and currently writes for the Dutch Jewish Weekly, magazine of Reform Judaism, and other publications in the Netherlands, on Jewish academic thought and current trends in Judaism. She is the Co-founder and former president of Beit ha'Chidush ("house of renewal"), the progressive, egalitarian community founded in Amsterdam in 1995.

#### **Workshop: Taking Responsibility – Judaism as a "Calling" – Religious and Secular Identities (Sat 5 p.m., please see details under "Elisa Klapheck")**

#### **Dr. Eleonore Lappin**

has studied German, English, comparative literature and Jewish cultural history in the USA and Israel and has been working since 1989 at the Institute for Austrian Jewish History. She is co-founder of the Or-Chadasch movement in Vienna and editor of "Keschet", Journal of the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

#### **Workshop: The Jewish Family during the Shoah and afterwards (Sun 3 p.m.)**

Referring to published and unpublished material of Shoah survivors, who either originally came from Austria or who managed to survive there, we shall discuss the following questions: What importance did "family" have for survival? How do the members of different generations interpret this survival and what were its effects on the family itself?

**Dragica Levi** activist of "La Benevolencia" in Sarajevo.

**Sandra Lustig**

was born in Washington, DC, USA of German-Jewish parents, and has lived in Germany most of her life. She has been an active member of Geshet - Forum for Diaspora Culture for three years, and was instrumental in organizing Geshet's conference "Galut 2000 - Towards a European Jewish Identity" in December 1998. She is currently working on a doctoral dissertation in environmental policy. She holds a Diplom in Urban and Regional Planning from the Technische Universität Berlin and a Master's in Public Affairs from Princeton University.

**Left Behind - Living after the Shoah: (Re-)Building Jewish Life in Europe (Sun 10 a.m.)**

The panel discussion will locate current issues concerning Jews and family in the particular historical and societal context of Europe since the Shoah. The members of the panel are activists and will speak about their work in this context. The second part of the discussion will focus on specific facets of family-related issues.

**Dr. Andrea Petö**

studied history and sociology and has a Ph.D. in Contemporary History. She has been lecturing on post Second World War, Central European history, oral history and on women's history. She was an assistant professor at the Central European University. She published extensively on post World War II women's history, history of Jewish women, theoretical problems of gender relations, transition and history of communism in different scientific journals of renown. Her first monograph "Women in Hungarian Politics" (Budapest 1998) is due to be published soon in English. She writes regularly for Midrash (Warsaw) and Szombat (Budapest).

**Dr. Hanna Rheinz**

Psychologist and cultural scholar, her fields of research include the history of Jewish women and Jewish culture. Until 1999 she was in charge of the Augsburg Museum for Jewish Culture. Publicist and university lecturer, Hanna Rheinz is the author of "The Jewish Woman - the Search for a Modern Identity" (GTB 1998).

**Workshop: Galut Ha-Neshama – Empty Space and "belted" Silence – The Female Body in Jewish Tradition and Modernity (Sun 3 p.m.)**

My lecture, which will be illustrated with slides and text collages, will present aspects of the female body in Jewish tradition. What is the significance of a woman's body as far as Jewish spirituality is concerned? Does her body represent her soul in exile or is her soul her body's prisoner? Sources from the Talmud, Chassidic literature, Jewish medicine and psycho-hygiene (Taharat ha'Mishpacha, Nidda, Schechina etc.) will be brought into play with body impressions and the subjective ideas of Jewish women writers and painters. Those taking part in the Workshop are asked to be open and receptive for their own "soul pictures" and emotional images.

**Jacqueline C. Rothschild-Frankenhuis**

Born in the Netherlands 1952 and daughter of concentration camp survivors, Jacqueline C. Rothschild-Frankenhuis was a film-cutter for Dutch television until her marriage to Walter Rothschild in 1983. She then moved to the North of England where she began to teach men and women who had decided to become Jewish – Giur. She has lived in Berlin since 1998 and has three children – Nechama (14), Jacob (12) and Bracha (almost 7).

**Workshops:**

**Working with people who want to enter Judaism. When "mixed" families become Jewish (Sun 3 p.m.)**

We shall try to look inside the bewildering world of men and women who decide to become Jewish. How do they manage to change from a non-Jewish world to a Jewish one? What feelings are aroused? How do Jewish men and women react to these "conversions"?

**Living with "Survival" (Sat 5 p.m.)**

Are we capable of leading an independent life or are we ourselves only survivors? A spontaneous discussion with Alexandra Rossberg, President of Esra, and Jacqueline Rothschild.

**Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild**

Married, two children, has been a rabbi for 14 years, all of them as the rabbi of the Bromley and District Reform Synagogue in South East London. Chair of the Rabbinic Assembly, lay member Bromley Health Trust Ethics Committee. Co-edited "Taking up the Timbrel" (New Liturgies for Women - with Rabbi Sybil Sheridan, SCM Press 2000). Rabbi on "totallyjewish.com website"

**Workshops:**

**Creating New Liturgy (Sat 5 p.m.)**

Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild co-edited 'Taking up the Timbrel' a collection of essays and liturgies written by women and for women at different stages of their lives. Alexandra Wright contributed to that volume



together with Sylvia and other colleagues. How do you create a new liturgy or ritual? What are the opportunities in our lives that allow us to pause and place an event into a religious or spiritual framework? In this workshop, there will be an opportunity to hear about the process of creating new liturgies and to explore possibilities of creating new rituals for your own lives.

**New Liturgies for the Life Cycle of Women (Sun 3 p.m.)**

Many women turn to Judaism to express something important that is happening in their lives, only to find that often there is a blank space in the traditional liturgies. Be it pregnancy or coming to terms with infertility, aging or celebrating the birth of a daughter, a ritual to express feeling about marriage or one to feel free after a divorce, our tradition has never recorded such events. In the past decade there has been a blossoming of women's writing for just such situations, and more and more women are taking up the challenge of creating their own words and actions so as to express their Jewish souls. The workshops will look at some published material, and will also give the tools for people to begin to create their own.

**Rabbi Elizabeth Tikvah Sarah**

Studied Sociology at the London School of Economics and Rabbinics at the Leo Baeck College in London. Since her ordination (1989) she has worked as a full-time congregational rabbi, as Director of Programmes for the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain, Deputy Director of the Sternberg Centre and as a free-lance rabbi. She is currently a part-time lecturer in Hebrew and Spirituality and rabbinic tutor at the Leo Baeck College, where she also chairs the Rabbinic In-Service Training Team, and a part-time minister of the Brighton and Hove Progressive Synagogue. She has edited three books and contributed three dozen articles and several poems to various journals and anthologies.

**Workshop: Lesbian and Gay Jewish weddings: New & Old Rituals and Ceremonies (Sat 5 p.m.):**

This workshop will focus on the growing phenomenon of Jewish lesbian and gay weddings within a context in which the meaning of Jewish marriage has changed over time. Participants will have an opportunity to engage with the issues of language and ritual, and the different ways in which increasing numbers of lesbian and gay couples are choosing to express their commitment to one another in a Jewish setting.

**Prof. Dr. Alice Shalvi**

Born in Germany in 1926; educated in England (1934-1949); Aliyah (1949). Member of the English Department of Hebrew University (1950-1990). Principal of Pelech, Religious Experimental High School for Girls (1975-1990). Founding chairwoman of the Israel Women's Network (1984-2000). Married to Moshe Shalvi, editor and translator, since 1950. Mother and grandmother. Until recently Rector of the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem (1996-2000).

**Workshop: Agunot – When it comes to divorce (Sat 3 p.m.)**

**Cantor Mimi Sheffer**

grew up in Israel in an orthodox family. She passed her final schools examination at the religious grammar school "Chorev" with Judaism as her special subject, and completed her studies of the flute and singing at the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. She trained as a singer at the Joan Caplan Studio in New York, was cantor at the West End Reconstructionist Synagogue in New York City and at the Emanuel Temple in West Hartford. She now lives with her family in Berlin and is cantor at the Egalitarian Synagogue in the Oranienburger Straße, where she holds workshops with the aim of building up a Jewish liturgy with a tradition of its own. Regular concert performances of synagogal and classical music.

**Workshop: Miriam, Moses and Aaron – three spiritual leaders in one family (Sun 3 p.m.)**

Interpretation on the basis of classical and comparative commentaries.

**Rabbi Nelly Shulman**

was born in St. Petersburg, Russia. She received her rabbinical ordination at the Leo Baeck College in London in 1999. For the past three years she has been working in Minsk, Belarus, as a rabbi for the Belorussian Union for Progressive Judaism.

**Workshop: Women Prophets (Sat 3 p.m.)**

We shall take a look at the Midrashim which describe the lives of Miriam, Deborah and other women prophets, and will try to examine their role in shaping early Jewish history.

**Rabbi Daniela Thau**

born in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1952. Her family moved back to Germany in the late fifties. She was the first woman in Germany, after Regina Jonas, to become a rabbi. She was ordained at Leo Baeck College in 1983.

**Workshop: Marginal Jews (Sat 3 p.m.)**

**Iris Weiss**

studied Social Sciences and Education. She has worked as an educational adviser on Jewish town history and tradition, as well as in further social education since 1995. a free-lance journalist, she writes for the press and radio and also for Ha Galil ([www.hagalil.com](http://www.hagalil.com)) on Jewish life in Berlin. Co-editor of the European Jewish Magazine "Golem", translator and editor of the CD-ROM "Tours through the Bible", ORT Germany e.V., Co-author of "The Scheunenviertel Barn Quarter - from a lost to a newly invented town district" (to be published shortly).

**Discussion with Lilli Marx (Düsseldorf), Ruth Galinski and Inge Marcus (both from Berlin), on the New Founders of the "Jewish Women's Association" in Germany after the Shoah. (Sat 3 p.m.)**

**Rabbi Alexandra Wright**

is the rabbi of Radlett and Bushey Reform Synagogue (with approximately 1300 women, men and children) in Hertfordshire. She has taught Classical Hebrew at Leo Baeck College and is currently co-ordinator of the rabbinic tutors. She has contributed articles on Judaism and on feminist theology to various books and journals. She worked on the editorial committee for the new Liberal Jewish Prayer book, Siddur Lev Hadash.

**Workshops:****Women in the Rabbinate - Priestess, Prophetess or Princess? (Sat 5 p.m.);**

How are women shaping their identity in the Rabbinate? What is the role of a woman Rabbi? Is it different from her male counterpart? How does a woman with a partner and/or children, or on her own, survive in the role of Rabbi? How do we encourage women of the next generation to explore the idea of becoming Rabbis?

**New liturgies for Women's Life Cycles (Sun 3 p.m., please see details under "Sylvia Rothschild").**