

Tzafrir Barzilay

Contact Information

E-mail tzafrir.barzilay@biu.ac.il \ tb2429@columbia.edu

Current Position

2022– Senior Lecturer, Department of General History, Bar Ilan University (Ramat Gan)

Education

2016 PhD in History, Columbia University (New York)
Dissertation: “Well Poisoning Accusations in Medieval Europe: 1250-1500”
(Directors: Adam Kosto, Elisheva Carlebach)

2013 MPhil in History, Columbia University (New York)

2012 MA in History, Columbia University (New York)

2010 MA in History, *magna cum laude*, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2008 BA in History, *magna cum laude* (Amirim Honors Program and the School of History), Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Pedagogical Experience

2022– Instructor, Bar Ilan University

2022 Instructor, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2018–2019 Instructor, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2018–2019 Instructor, Bar Ilan University

2019 Instructor, Ben Gurion University of the Negev

Publications

Barzilay, Tzafrir. *Poisoned Wells: Accusation, Persecution and Minorities in Medieval Europe, 1321-1422*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022).

Barzilay, Tzafrir, Eyal Levinson and Elisheva Baumgarten, eds. *Jewish Daily Life in Medieval Northern Europe, 1080-1350: A Sourcebook*, Documents of Practice Series (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications; Western Michigan University Press, 2022).

Barzilay, Tzafrir. “Beyond the Narrative: A Study of Medieval German Jewish Martyrs’ lists.” *Viator* 55 (2024): 271–309.

———. “Jews, Lordship, and the Experience of Power in Early Eleventh Century France,” *Journal of Medieval History* 50 (2024): 401–421.

Open Access - <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03044181.2024.2361922>

- . “Movement, Geography, and Rabbinic Culture in High Medieval Northern Europe.” *Religions* 15:34 (2024). Open Access - <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/15/1/34>
- . “The Term ‘Antisemitism’ as a Category for the Study of Medieval Jewish History.” In *Antisemitism and the Politics of History*, ed. Scott Ury and Guy Miron, 147–163 (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2024).
- . “Shock and Awe: Medieval Northern European Jews and the Language of Violence.” *Medieval Encounters* 28 (2022): 265–291.
- . “Ancient Waters from New Fountains: Municipal Water Sources in Fifteenth-Century Haggadot from Nuremberg.” *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 28 (2021): 406–428.
- . “The Term ‘Antisemitism’ as a Category for the Study of the History of Jews in the Middle Ages.” *Zion* 85 (2020): 195–207. [Hebrew].
- . “An Environmental Crisis and a Social Crisis: Plague-Spreading Accusations against Minorities during the Black Death.” *Zmanim* 142 (2020): 32–45. [Hebrew]
- . “The Investigation of the Jews of Savoy on Suspicion of Poisoning Wells: A Reappraisal” *Chidushim* 21 (2019): 114–143. [Hebrew]
- . “Retelling the Crusaders’ Defeat in Hungary: Cultural Contact between Jewish and Christian Chroniclers.” *Jewish History* 31 (2018): 173–196.
- . “Early Accusations of Well-Poisoning against Jews: Medieval Reality or Historiographical Fiction?” *Medieval Encounters* 22 (2016): 517–539.
- . “The Black Death in Aragon: Notes on a Jewish Chronicle.” *Hayo Haya* 8 (2010): 53–71. [Hebrew]

Awards, Fellowships and Grants

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| 2024 | The Rector Prize for Scientific Innovation, Bar Ilan University |
| 2023 | Jordan Schnitzer Book Award in the category of Medieval and Early Modern Jewish History and Culture (for <i>Poisoned Wells</i>), Association for Jewish Studies |
| 2023 | Salo Wittmayer Baron Prize for an outstanding first book in Jewish Studies (for <i>Poisoned Wells</i>), American Academy for Jewish Research |
| 2022–2025 | Israeli Science Foundation (ISF) Research Grant, ‘Digging Deep: Interdisciplinary Study of the Medieval Mikveh in Cologne’, in cooperation with Tanja Pothoff, Michael Wiehen and Christiane Twiehaus, MiQua, Köln, and Neta Bodner, The Open University of Israel |
| 2021–2022 | The Haifa Center for Mediterranean History Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Haifa University (Supervisor: Joseph Ziegler) |
| 2021–2022 | Member of the “Jewish European Environmental History” Research Group, Leo Baeck Institute, Jerusalem |
| 2019–2021 | The Kreitman School of Advanced Studies Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (Supervisor: Ephraim Shoham-Steiner) |

- 2021 Short-Term Research Associate, Hebrew University of Jerusalem – ERC Project “Beyond the Elite: Jewish Daily Life in Medieval Europe”
- 2020–2021 Halpern Center Research Fellow, Bar-Ilan University – Research Group “Rituals and Spaces in Jewish Communities, 1200-1900”
- 2020 Finalist – Mandel-Scholion fellowship
- 2019–2020 The Ephraim E. Urbach Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, New York
- 2016–2019 Post-Doctoral Fellow, Hebrew University of Jerusalem – ERC Project “Beyond the Elite: Jewish Daily Life in Medieval Europe” (Supervisor: Elisheva Baumgarten)
- 2019 The Israel and Golda Koschitzky Fund book publishing grant, the Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry, Bar-Ilan University
- 2018–2019 Warburg Post-Doctoral Prize, Mandel Institute for Jewish Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- 2017 Leo Baeck Institute Post-Doctoral Prize (for the dissertation)
- 2017 Robert Wistrich Dissertation Prize, International Center for the Study of Antisemitism
- 2015–2016 Felix Posen Doctoral Fellowship, International Center for the Study of Antisemitism
- 2010–2015 Richard Hofstadter Faculty Fellow, Department of History, Columbia University (New York)
- 2010 Meir Hefetz Award for Outstanding Historical Papers, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- 2008–2010 Rudin Scholarship, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- 2008–2009 Rector’s Scholarship, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Public Papers

- 2025 “Jewish River Travel, Communication Networks, and Culture in the Medieval Northern Europe” at *Jews interpreting space: an International Workshop*, Hebrew University
- 2025 “Water, Blood, Spirit: Baptism, Ritual Immersion and Jewish-Christian Conflict in Medieval Cologne” at *Digging Deep: New Insights into the Medieval Mikveh of Cologne: International Conference*, Cologne
- 2024 “Jewish Views on Governance and Lordship in Early Eleventh Century France: The ‘1007 Anonymous’ Reevaluated” at the 56th Association of Jewish Studies Conference
- 2024 “The Medieval Origins of Anti-Jewish Narratives” at *Never Again? the Return of Antisemitism: INIRE Workshop*, Palermo
- 2024 “A Garden Fountain: Running Water, the Body and the Sacred Community in Northern Europe” at *The Middle Ages, Now!*, Israel Institute for Advanced Studies
- 2023 “Poisoned Wells: Accusation, Persecution and Minorities in Medieval Europe, 1321-1422” at the American Academy for Jewish Research Seminar

- 2023 "Making Enemies: Imagined Muslim Conspiracies in Medieval Europe and the Apocalypse" at the Borchard Fellowship Symposium, Chateau de la Bretesche
- 2023 "Thinking about Water in Twelfth-Century Cologne and Beyond" at *Digging Deep: International ISF Workshop*, MiQua, Cologne
- 2023 "Spirituality and Technological Innovation in Medieval Europe" with Neta Bodner, a MiQua public lecture at the Belgischen Haus, Cologne
- 2023 "Man-made Sacred Nature: Fountains and the Religious Culture of Christians (and Jews) in High-medieval Europe" at the *Religion and the Natural Environment – Multiple Perspectives*, Ben Gurion University
- 2022 "Jews, Normans and Lordship before the Conquest" at the *Jews in Medieval England: New Sources, Fresh Perspectives. International ISF Workshop*, Bar-Ilan University
- 2022 "Matzot and Water Sources in Medieval Nuremberg: Environment and Tradition" at the 18th *World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Hebrew university of Jerusalem
- 2022 "The Making of Ashkenaz: Jewish Movement Patterns, Networks and Religious Culture in Medieval Northern Europe" at *Immigration and Religion: INIRE Workshop*, Bar-Ilan University
- 2022 "Dragons of Summer and Winter: Lay Traditions of Jews and Christians between South and North in Medieval Europe" *The Medieval-Renaissance Forum*, Haifa University
- 2022 "Poisoned Wells: The Persecution of Minorities in Medieval France" *Arbeitskreis Jüdische Geschichte*, Trier University
- 2022 "Rivers and Tolls: Freedom of Movement in the Thirteenth Century" at *The Middle Ages, Now!*, Bar Ilan University
- 2022 "Contesting Martyrs: Memory and Communal Identity" at *Belonging: Jews, Christians and Civic Identity in Medieval Europe*, Hebrew University
- 2021 "Embrace and Rejection: Political Institutions and Jewish Settlement in Northern Europe" at *The Medieval Lecture Series*, Ben Tzvi Institute, Jerusalem
- 2021 "Plague, Crisis and the Persecution of Minorities" at *The 44th Conference of the Historical Society of Israel: Man vs. Environment: Nature, Senses and Culture*, Bar Ilan University
- 2021 "Poisoning the Well: Anti-Jewish Movements in Medieval Europe and Their Aftermath," at *1700 Years of Jewish Life in Germany Lecture Series*, Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem
- 2020 "On Ritual and Environment: Jews, Christians, Matzot and Water Sources in Fifteenth Century Nürnberg," *The History Department Research Seminar*, Ben Gurion University of the Negev
- 2020 "The Black Death, Well-Poisoning Accusations and the Persecution of Jews" at *The Jewish History Department Research Seminar*, Ben Gurion University of the Negev
- 2019 "From a Rumor to a Charge: How did Legal Institutions Established the Notion that Lepers Poisoned Wells?" at *The 42nd Conference of the Historical Society of Israel: Law Crime and Enforcement*, Ben Gurion University of the Negev

- 2018 “Well-Poisoning Accusations against Minorities: Questions and Methodologies” at *The Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry Research Seminar*, Bar Ilan University
- 2018 “Well-Poisoning Accusations against Minorities and their Implications for Ashkenazi Jews” at *Forum Ashkenaz*, Israel Institute of Advanced Studies, Jerusalem
- 2017 “How to Poison a Well? Water and Danger in Fourteenth-Century Jewish Sources” at *Visual and Material in Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Culture*, Münster University
- 2017 “Well-Poisoning Accusations against Jews in 1349: Why Did They Took Place Mostly in the German Empire?” at *The Rosenzweig Minerva Research Center*, Jerusalem
- 2017 “The Well-Poisoning Conspiracy of 1390 – A Political Assassination?” at *The Middle Ages, Now!*, Haifa University
- 2016 “‘Evil Waters’: The Environmental Context of Well-Poisoning Accusations” at *The Forum of Environmental History*, Tel-Aviv University
- 2015 “Environmental Crises and the Persecution of Minorities – Cause and Effect?” at *The Israeli Conference of Environmental History*, Ben Tzvi Institute, Jerusalem
- 2013 “‘Evil Waters and Deadly Land’: Well Poisoning Accusations against Jews and Lepers in 1321” at *Later Medieval Social and Economic History*, Columbia University
- 2011 “Petrus Alfonsi’s Interreligious Competition” at *Competition in Medieval Society*, Columbia University
- 2011 “Healing Society in the Jewish Community of Aragon and Provence after the Black Death” at *Illness, Healing and the Body in the Middle Ages*, Princeton University

Organization of Academic Conferences

- 2023 “Religion and the Natural Environment – Multiple Perspectives: International Conference” At Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, in cooperation with Bar-Ilan University, 9-11 January
- 2018 “‘As We Are Used To Saying’: The Languages of Medieval Ashkenazic Jews Conference.” At the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 3-4 January

Languages

Hebrew	fluent spoken and written, paleography
English	fluent spoken and written
Medieval Latin	advanced reading, paleography
Medieval French	advanced reading, paleography
Medieval German	intermediate reading, paleography
French	advanced reading, basic spoken
Italian	intermediate reading, basic spoken
Spanish	intermediate reading
German	intermediate reading