

MENDEL KRANZ

Program in Jewish Studies, Rice University | Lovett Hall 311 | mendel.kranz@rice.edu

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2023 - Samuel W. and Goldye Marian Spain Postdoctoral Fellow, Program in Jewish Studies, Rice University

EDUCATION

2023 Ph.D. with Distinction, Philosophy of Religions, University of Chicago Divinity School

2016 M.A. University of Chicago Divinity School

2013 B.H.L. & Rabbinic Ordination, Chaim Yaakov Shlomo College of Jewish Studies

RESEARCH INTERESTS AND TEACHING AREAS

Modern Jewish History and Thought; Philosophy of Religions; Postcolonial Studies; Race and Racialization; Anti-Semitism; Islamophobia; Jews in the Muslim World; Secularism; Diaspora; Continental Philosophy; Critical Theory

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Under review *The Postcolonial Jewish Question: Colonialism, Anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia in Postwar France* [Under review]

Articles and Book Chapters

In process "Jews and Empire, Colonialism and Postcolonialism," co-written with Annie Greene, Alma Heckman, and Lior Sternfeld, in *Reimagining Jewish Life in the Modern Middle East: History, Society, and Culture*, ed. Lior Sternfeld, Orit Bashkin, Michelle Campos, Orit Ouaknine-Yekutieli, and Menashe Anzi [Under contract with Stanford University Press]

2025 "The Politics of the Arab-Jew: Colonial Memory, Immigration, and Postcolonial Futures in North African Jewish Writing of the 1980s," in *Jewish Ideas of France: Migration, Diaspora, and Empire*, ed. Meredith Scott and Nick Underwood, Routledge University Press [Forthcoming in June 2025]

2020 "Translator's Preface," *Levinas Studies* 14 (2020): 1–6.

2019 "Postcolonial Zionism: Theological–Political Paradigms in Levinas and Memmi," *Hebrew Studies* 60 (2019): 293–321.

Book Reviews

2025 Julie Kalman, *The King of Algiers: How Two Jewish Families Shaped the Mediterranean World during the Napoleonic Wars and Beyond*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2023. *The Journal of Religion* [Forthcoming in 2025]

2020 Adi Gordon, *Toward Nationalism's End: An Intellectual Biography of Hans Kohn*, Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2017. [George L. Mosse Program in History](#)

Translations

2020 Levinas, Emmanuel. “We Lack a Culture: Reflections on Hebrew Education,” *Levinas Studies* 14 (2020): 6–18.

Public Scholarship

2021 “The Problem with Freedom from Religion: Laïcité Must Reckon with the Continuing Impact of French Colonial History,” *Sightings*

2018 Interview with Cynthia Baker on *Jem*, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2017. [New Books Network](#)

Works in Progress

Edited Volume: *Rethinking Anti-Antisemitism and Philosemitism*

“The Politics of Recognition: Notes on Jewish and Indigenous Studies”

“Léon Poliakov and the Racial Afterlives of Jewish Thought”

“The Minority Condition: Jacques Hassoun and the Subversion of Homogeneity”

SELECTED FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

National and International

2021–22 Georges Lury Charitable and Educational Trust Fellowship — year-long research trip to France

2019 Social Science Research Council (SSRC) Dissertation Proposal Development Program, Northwestern University

2015–16 Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship (FLAS), Intermediate Yiddish

University of Chicago

2023–25 Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship, Divinity School [Declined]

2022–23 Residential Fellowship, Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture

2022–23 Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Divinity School

2022–23 Junior Fellowship, Martin Marty Center for the Public Understanding of Religion

2022 Excellence in Teaching Award, Divinity School

2020–21 Teaching Fellow, Chicago Center for Teaching, University of Chicago

2020 Alma Wilson Teaching Fellowship, Prize Lectureship, Divinity School

2019–20 Inclusive Pedagogy Fellow, Divinity School

2019 Conference Funding: Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies; France Chicago Center; Franke Institute for the Humanities; Graduate Council

2019 Summer Research Grant, Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies, University of Chicago

2019 François Furet Travel Grant, France Chicago Center

2019 Conference Development Grant, Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies, University of Chicago

2016–17 Fuerstenberg Fellowship, University of Chicago

2015–16 Fuerstenberg Fellowship, University of Chicago

PRESENTATIONS

Invited Lectures and Presentations

2025 “Unsettling Europe: Jewish Thought and Postcolonial Critique,” Department of Philosophy, University of Louisville

- 2025 “Postcolonialism and the Politics of Anti-Semitism,” *Rethinking Anti-Antisemitism and Philosemitism*, Rice University, Houston, TX
- 2025 “Postwar Jewish Thought,” Congregation Brith Shalom, Houston, TX
- 2024 “Judaism in Europe,” *Boniuk Institute Educator Professional Development Conference: World Religions and Culture*, Rice University, Houston, TX
- 2024 “Reassessing the Campus Anti-Semitism Narrative: Where We Go from Here,” Jewish Community Center, Houston, TX
- 2024 “Decolonization and the Question of Jewish Politics,” Department of Philosophy and Religion, University of North Texas

Conferences

- 2024 [Panel Organizer and Presenter] “Francophone Jewish Thought and the Colonial Question,” *Association for Jewish Studies (AJS)*
- 2023 “The Jew and the Muslim Question in Contemporary France,” *American Academy of Religion (AAR)*, Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit, San Antonio, TX
- 2022 “Albert Memmi: The Promises and Perils of Postcolonial Judaism,” *Association for Jewish Studies (AJS)*, Modern Jewish Thought and Theology Unit, Boston, MA
- 2022 “The Politics of the Arab-Jew in 1980s France,” *American Academy of Religion (AAR)*, The Study of Judaism Unit, Denver, CO
- 2022 “Decolonization and the Jew: Between Colonialism and Anti-Semitism” at *Sources of Decolonization: Interdisciplinary Approaches Toward the Ends of Empires*, Department of Modern History, University of Marburg
- 2021 “A Turning Point: Jewish and Colonial Difference in Post-1967 France” at *Association for Jewish Studies (AJS)*, Modern Jewish History in Europe, Asia, Israel, and Other Communities Unit, Chicago, IL
- 2021 “Jacques Hassoun and the Writing of Jewish-Muslim History” at *Jews in the Muslim World: Histories, Memories, and Narratives*, Online
- 2019 “Jewish Politics? Between Hannah Arendt and Albert Memmi” at *Jewish Difference Under Empire: Identity and Alterity Across France, the Maghreb, and Israel-Palestine*, Chicago, IL
- 2017 “The Literary Diaspora of Edmond Jabès” at *Dreams of Home: Home and Homeland in the Jewish Imagination*, University of Indiana, Graduate Student Conference, Bloomington, IN

Responses

- 2022 Responder, book event: Hajjat, Abdellali. *The Wretched of France: The 1983 March for Equality and Against Racism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2022.
- 2017 Panel respondent: “Witnesses to Exile: Blackness and Jewishness Between France and America” *American Academy of Religion (AAR)*

Workshop Presentations

- 2023 “Racism, Anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia,” Martin Marty Center for the Public Understanding of Religion Junior Fellows Workshop, University of Chicago
- 2023 “The Politics of the Arab-Jew: Colonial Memory, Immigration, and Postcolonial Futures in North African Jewish Writing of the 1980s,” Jewish Studies Workshop, University of Chicago
- 2020 “Jewish-Muslim Entanglements in the letters of Abdelkébir Khatibi and Jacques Hassoun,” Jewish Studies Workshop, University of Chicago
- 2019 “On the Borders of Europe: Zionism and (Post) Colonialism in Memmi and Levinas,” Philosophy of Religions Workshop, University of Chicago
- 2018 “‘These Ghosts Never Vanish:’ Franz Rosenzweig and the Question of Secularism,” Jewish Studies Workshop, University of Chicago

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Rice University

- 2025 Race, and Religion
- 2025 Jewish History, 1500-1948
- 2024 Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia
- 2023 Politics and Religion: The Jewish Question

University of Chicago

- 2021 Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Historically and Today
- 2020 Course Design and College Teaching (TA, Graduate course)
- 2019 Reading Cultures I: Collection, Humanities Core (TA)
- 2019 Jewish Civilizations: History, Thought, and Literature: Medieval to Modern (TA)
- 2018 Philosophical Perspectives II, Humanities Core (TA)

Pedagogical Training and Certification, University of Chicago

- 2022 College Teaching Certificate, Chicago Center for Teaching
- 2021 Certification in the Craft of Teaching in the Academic Study of Religion, Divinity School
- 2020 Whiteness in the Classroom, Race and Pedagogy Workshop
- 2019 Course Design and College Teaching, Chicago Center for Teaching
- 2017 Principles of Teaching Writing, Writing Program

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

Conference Organization

- 2025 Co-Organizer: *Rethinking Anti-Antisemitism and Philosemitism*, Rice University, Houston, TX
- 2019 Co-Organizer: *Jewish Difference Under Empire: Identity and Alterity Across France, the Maghreb, and Israel-Palestine*, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

Jewish Studies

- 2022– Article reviewer: *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* and *The Jewish Quarterly Review (JQR)*
- 2018–20 Co-Coordinator, Jewish Studies Workshop, University of Chicago
- 2017–20 Student Advisory Board Member, Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies

Additional Professional Experience

- 2021 Graduate Assistant in Pedagogical Programming Development, Chicago Center for Teaching
2018 Research Assistant, Professor Na'ama Rokem
2018 Writing Tutor, University of Chicago, The College

ACADEMIC WORKSHOPS AND ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

- 2024 American Academy of Jewish Research Early Career Workshop, Williams College, MA
2023 Summer Institute for the Study of Antisemitism, York University
2017 Middlebury College Language School, Advanced French
2015 Leo Baeck Summer University in Jewish Studies, Berlin, Germany
2013–14 University of Virginia, Religious Studies Department, Student-at-large
2008–11 Talmudical Seminary Oholei Torah

LANGUAGE COMPETENCY

- French: Advanced reading, writing, and speaking
Hebrew: Advanced reading and speaking
Yiddish: Proficient reading and speaking
German: Basic reading
Aramaic: Basic reading

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- Association for Jewish Studies (AJS)
American Academy of Religion (AAR)
American Historical Association (AHA)