

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

# Conceptualizing and Representing the *Other* in the Jewish (Hebrew and Yiddish) Cultural Field

17-18 March 2025 | University of Florence  
FORLILPSI Department, Via Laura, 48 – Florence

Within the framework of the PRIN PNRR 2022 project **“Othering Ourselves”**. **Conceptualizing and Representing “the Other” in Jewish (Hebrew and Yiddish), Ukrainian, and Polish Cultural Fields: Metaphors, Similitudes, Symbols, Paths of Exclusion/Inclusion** (UPHER), the Department of Education, Languages, Interculture, Literature and Psychology (FORLILPSI) of the University of Florence will host a meeting centered around modern Jewish literature in Hebrew and Yiddish (coordinator: Romina Vergari). Special attention will be given to the cultural and linguistic environment, where the Jewish and Slavic (Polish and Ukrainian) worlds come into close contact.

This meeting comes after the opening conference dedicated to the Polish cultural area (Genoa, 5-6 June 2024) and precedes the one dedicated to the Ukrainian area (Rome; coordinator: Oxana Pachlovska).

The project's aim is to explore the different conceptualizations and representations of otherness in a multilingual (Hebrew, Polish, Ukrainian, Yiddish) and transnational (Poland, Ukraine, Israel) literary corpus that is the result of intense language and cultural contact. This phenomenon will be explored also in the field of figurative and performative arts. The relevant time frame encompasses the 20th century with special attention paid to the decades between the Shoah and the present day.

This conference intends to contribute to the ongoing debate on multidirectional memory in central and Eastern Europe as well as in Israel.

No reference is made here to the many theoretical frameworks that have been brought to bear on the concept of otherness in recent decades, leaving it instead to the participants to choose both the definition and the framework that they deem appropriate to their own field of investigation.

The papers must focus on the following topics:

- Through what means does a given language encode otherness?
- Who is represented as *other* in the relevant texts?
- What metaphors, similes, symbols and other expressive devices are associated with the representation of the *other* in the relevant language and texts?
- What linguistic and rhetorical strategies and devices of exclusion/inclusion of the *other* are put into operation?
- Which recurring motifs relating to the extermination of the Jews are found in the texts that are written in the aftermath of the Shoah, and what is both their narrative and rhetorical function?

**Event format:** mixed (online and in-person).

**Papers in the following languages will be accepted:** Italian, English.

Paper proposals must be submitted via e-mail to Romina Vergari ([romina.vergari@unifi.it](mailto:romina.vergari@unifi.it); subject line **“UPHER FLORENCE PAPER PROPOSAL”**) by **15 December 2024**. All proposals should include a **title** and a **brief abstract** (ca 1000 characters).

All contributions presented at the conference are eligible to be published in an international peer-reviewed academic volume or journal.

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Krzysztof Bednarski, “Ja, Bruno Schulz”