



## CALL FOR INTEREST

### LEO BAECK INSTITUTE JERUSALEM RESEARCH GROUP IN JEWISH EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY

Environmental history or the study of human interactions with nature over time, has emerged as a subdiscipline during the 1980s and has ever since engaged with various other theoretical frameworks and historical subfields. Throughout the last decades environmental historians have investigated the manifestation of human perceptions and practices concerning the natural environment in relation to political, social, gender, religious, and economic aspects. Unfortunately, Jewish history has not yet gained sufficient attention within this context.

The historiography of European Jews, which in recent decades accepted the spatial turn in the humanities, has so far mainly dealt with aspects of Jewish urban life, albeit without specifically considering environmental aspects of city dwelling. In addition, the Jewish relationship to nature was so far mainly addressed in relation to Zionist youth movements and the work of the Hachsharot (agricultural training) in Europe. Moreover, studies of Zionism have already analysed images and practices related to nature and landscape in Europe as well as in Israel/Palestine. Nevertheless, they have not yet systematically engaged with the critical/ theoretical literature in environmental history and its key subjects.

In our research group, we intend to define the role of Jewish and Zionist history within environmental history and examine in what ways it is different and/or similar to other case studies. By doing so we also intend to stress the transnational, global and comparative aspects in Jewish history. In addition, alongside cultural environmental aspects we wish to also emphasise some of the material aspects in Jewish environmental history while examining attitudes and approaches to specific natural elements such as air, climate, water, soil, flora and fauna.

The research group will hold monthly online meetings, starting in October 2021, to discuss recent work in (German) Jewish Environmental history as well as work in progress by participants. We invite scholars who are interested in environmental history, history of science, intellectual history, cultural and social history as well as Jewish history more generally (from antiquity to modernity) to participate in the research group. Due to the focus of the Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem on German Jewish history the research group will be inclined to encourage scholarly work related to this geographical and cultural arena. However it will not exclude applications which focus on other geographies and other cultural contexts.

Please send a short project or interest description (not more than 500 words) and a CV, including academic affiliation and contact details to [leobaeck@leobaeck.org](mailto:leobaeck@leobaeck.org) before the 15th of June 2021.

For any questions on the research group please get in touch directly with the heads of the group,  
Dr Netta Cohen ([netta.cohen@history.ox.ac.uk](mailto:netta.cohen@history.ox.ac.uk))  
or Dr Dominik Hünig (dominik.huenniger@uni-hamburg.de).