

Jonathan Z. Brack

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Education

- 2016: PhD, University of Michigan, Department of History
2010: MA, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies (Magna Cum Laude)
2010: American Numismatic Society (ANS) Graduate course
2007: BA, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies and Honors Program in History (Summa Cum Laude)

Employment

- 2023- : Assistant Professor, Department of History, Northwestern University
2020-2023: Assistant Professor, Department of Middle East Studies, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Fellowships and Awards

- 2022: Hava Lazarus-Yafeh prize for best article in Comparative Religions
2017-20: The Martin Buber Society of Fellows, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
2016: Honorable Mention, Dissertation Award, *The Foundation for Iranian Studies*
2016-17: Postdoctoral Fellow, ERC project “Mobility, Empire and Cross Cultural Contacts in Mongol Eurasia,” Hebrew University of Jerusalem
2014-2015: Graduate Research Fellow at the Eisenberg Institute of Historical Studies (University of Michigan)
2012-2015: Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship
2011: MEMS (Medieval and Early Modern Studies) summer research award
2010-2011: FLAS (Turkish)

Publications

Book:

Jonathan Brack. 2023. *An Afterlife for the Khan: Muslims, Buddhists, and Sacred Kingship in Mongol Iran and Eurasia* (University of California Press).

Articles:

- Jonathan Brack, Reuven Amitai, and Michal Biran. *Forthcoming*. "Back to Basics: A Re-examination of a Re-examination of the Mongol Conquest of Baghdad in 1258," *Medical History*.
- Jonathan Brack. 2023. "Rashid al-Din and the Jews: A Re-Examination," *ABA: Journal for the Study of the Jews of Iran, Bukhara, and Afghanistan*, 13: 16-34.
- Jonathan Brack. 2022. "Chinggisid Pluralism and Religious Competition: Buddhists, Muslims, and the Question of Violence and Sovereignty in Ilkhanid Iran," *Modern Asian Studies*, 56: 815-39.
- Jonathan Brack. 2021. "Disenchanting Heaven: Interfaith Debate, Sacral Kingship, and Conversion to Islam in the Mongol Empire, 1260-1335," *Past & Present*, 250: 11-53.
- Jonathan Brack. 2019. "A Mongol Mahdi in Medieval Anatolia: Reform, Rebellion, and Divine Right in the Post-Mongol Islamic World," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 139(3): 611-29.
- Jonathan Brack. 2019. "A Jewish Vizier and his Shī'ī Manifesto: Jews, Shī'īs, and the Politicization of Confessional Identities in Mongol-ruled Iraq and Iran (13th to 14th centuries)," *Der Islam*, 96(2): 374-403.
- Jonathan Brack. 2018. "Theologies of Auspicious Kingship: The Islamization of Chinggisid Sacral Kingship in the Islamic world," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 60(4): 1143-71.
- Yoni Brack. 2011. "A Mongol princess making *hajj*: the biography of El Qutlugh daughter of Abagha Ilkhan (r. 1265-82)," *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, Series 3*, 21(3): 331-59.

Chapters in Collective Volumes:

- Jonathan Brack. 2020. "Rashīd al-Dīn: Buddhism in Iran and the Mongol Silk Roads," in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia: Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, edited by Michal Biran, Francesca Fiaschetti and Jonathan Brack (University of California Press), 215-37.
- Jonathan Brack, Michal Biran, and Francesca Fiaschetti. 2020. "Introduction," in *Along the Mongol Silk Roads*, 1-24.
- Jonathan Brack. 2016. "Was Ede Bali a Wafā'ī Shaykh? Sufis, Sayyids and genealogical

creativity in the early Ottoman world,” in *Islamic Literature and Intellectual Life in Fourteenth and Fifteenth-Century Anatolia*, edited by Andrew Peacock and Sara Nur Yildiz (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag), 333-60.

Editorship of Collective Volumes:

Jonathan Brack, Michal Biran and Francesca Fiaschetti, eds. 2020. *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia: Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals* (University of California Press).

- Published in Korean as 몽골제국, 실크로드의 개척자들: 장군, 상인, 지식, *Mongol jegug, Silk Road-eui gaecheokja deul: janggun, sang'in, jisik'in* [The Mongol Empire and the Pioneers of the Silk Road: Generals, merchants and Intellectuals]. Tr. by Yi Jaehwang. Seoul: Chaekgwa hamgye (Cum Libro), 2021.

Book Reviews:

Jonathan Brack. 2021. Alan Strathern, *Unearthly Powers: Religious and Political Change in World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019). *Journal of Early Modern History* 25: 580-83.

Jonathan Brack. 2021. Ali Anooshahr, *Turkestan and the Rise of Eurasian Empires: a Study of Politics and Invented Traditions* (Oxford: University Press, 2018). *The Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, 7(2): 259-63.

Jonathan Brack. 2019. Bruno De Nicola and Charles Melville, eds., *The Mongols' Middle East: Continuity and Transformation in Ilkhanid Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2016). *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 139(3): 749-50.

Jonathan Brack. 2018. Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017). *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 81(2): 345-7.

Jonathan Brack. 2017. Patrick Wing, *The Jalayirids: Dynastic State Formation in the Mongol Middle East* (Edinburgh, 2016). *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 80(1): 149-50.

Jonathan Brack. 2014. Zeynep Yürekli, *Architecture and Hagiography in the Ottoman Empire: the Politics of Bektashi Shrines in the Classical Age* (Ashgate, 2012). *Der Islam*, 91(2): 450-58.

Jonathan Brack. 2011. *Genghis Khan and the Mongol Empire*, edited by William W. Fitzhugh, Morris Rossabi and William Honeychurch (Washington, 2009). *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, Series 3*, 21(2): 229-31.

Under Review

Jonathan Brack. "Chinese Medicine as Tajriba in Medieval Iran: on Cultural Brokerage, Translation, and Empire," in *Cultural Brokerage in Premodern Islamic Societies: Agents of Change and Exchange*, eds. Luke Yarbrough and Uriel Simonsohn. (Minor revisions)

Jonathan Brack. "Ibn Kammūna Is Going to Hell! Muslim-Jewish Polemics at the Ilkhanid Court," *Mamluk Studies Review*.

In Progress

"Debating Judaism, Islam, and the Destruction of the Temple at the Mongol Court in medieval Iran"

Invited Talks

2020: "Religious Tolerance and Inter-Religious Encounters in the Mongol Empire," Henry Luce Foundation Global Asia Lecture. Center for Global Asia, NYU Shanghai.

2019: "*Buddhist Relics, Fireproof Muslim Saints, Sacral Mongol Kings: Inter-Faith Court Debates and Conversion to Islam at the Mongol Court in 14th-century Iran*," *Nomadic Empires Seminar*, University of Oxford.

2017: "*The Mahdar Wars: Jews, Shi'is, and the Public Sphere in Ilkhanid Baghdad*," *SOAS*, London.

2014: "Was Ede Bali a *Wafā'i/Vefā'i* Shaykh? The transmission and translation of the *Menākib-i Seyyid Ebū'l-Vefā'* and genealogical creativity in the early Ottoman World," *Literature and Intellectual Life in Islamic Anatolia, 14th- 15th centuries: historical, social and political perspectives*, OII, Istanbul.

2013: "Conspirators and heretics: a different view on Ilkhanid succession history." *Migrations and knowledge transfer in Mongol Eurasia seminar*, Hebrew University.

Conference Organization

2021: "Ritual Objects in the Medieval Middle East" (BGU, May 24-27)

2019: "Multilateral Dynamics between the Middle East and Asia in the Mongol Era" (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, December 15)

2017: "Migrations in Mongol Eurasia: People, Ideas, Artifacts" (international conference, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, December 18-20)

Selected Presentations

- 2023: “Persian Israelites: Jewish History and Anti-Jewish Polemics in Rashid al-Din’s Works,” *Tenth European Conference of Iranian Studies (ECIS)*, Leiden.
- 2023: “Converting Taboo into Sin: Islam, Judaism, and Tenggeri in Medieval Iran,” *Ethics of Idolatry: Sun and Cosmos Worship in Judaism and Islam*, The University of Texas at Austin.
- 2023: “*Clouding Heaven*: Tenggeri and Mongol Sacred Kingship in medieval Iran,” *Religion and the Natural Environment – Multiple Perspectives*, BGU, Beer Sheva.
- 2022: “Muslim-Jewish Polemics and Manuscripts between Baghdad and Tabriz,” *The Mongols’ Baghdad: Knowledge Transmission Through Manuscript Cultures before and after the Conquest*, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna.
- 2022: “A Sino-Persian Medical Enigma: Rashid al-Din on Chinese Medicine,” *Rashid al-Din: New Perspectives, Unanswered Questions*, The Mongol Zoominar.
- 2022: “Translation, but not Transparency: Ruler Conversion to Islam in Mongol-Ruled Iran” *Conversion and Translation: Historical and Theoretical Intersections*, online workshop, Goethe Universität.
- 2021: “Shrines, Lights, and Saintly Kings: ‘Brokering’ Ancestral Veneration in Ilkhanid Iran,” *Towards a Theory of Cultural Brokerage in the Pre-Modern Islamic World, 600–1600*, The Hebrew University.
- 2021: “What can the Mongols’ interfaith court debates tell us about why Islam and Buddhism succeeded where William of Rubruck and Christianity failed?,” *Mongol and Seljuk Conversion to Islam and the Steppe Ideology*, the Northern Network for the Study of the Crusades.
- 2019: “Rashid al-Din’s Approach to Cross-Cultural Translation: from Chinese Medicine to Buddhism,” *Multilateral Dynamics between the Middle East and Asia in the Mongol Era*, The Hebrew University.
- 2019: “‘The King’s Speech’: the Muslim, Persian, Buddhist and Mongolian Contexts of the Ilkhan Öljeitü’s Questions,” MESA, New Orleans.

- 2018: “Jews and Shi’is in medieval Baghdad and the Ilkhanid Court,” *An International Workshop on the Jews of Iran: Society, Culture and Politics through the Ages*, Tel Aviv University.
- 2018: “Arguing *without* Scripture: Comparing notes between William of Rubruck and Rashid al-Din on Buddhism at the Mongol courts,” *China and the Middle East: Historical Connections and Comparisons Along and Beyond the Silk Roads*, Tel Aviv University.
- 2018: “Debating Heaven, Arguing over Hell: Muslim-Buddhist Polemics in 14th-century Mongol-ruled Iran,” *The Majlis Revisited*, Cordoba, Spain.
- 2017: “The Khan’s Court Debate or the Muslim Majlis? On the migration and integration of a Mongol institution in Ilkhanid Iran,” *Migrations in Mongol Eurasia: People, Ideas, Artifacts*, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- 2017: “Philosopher Kings in the Age of Chinggisid Auspicious Kingship: a Mongol Sahibqiran and His Mujaddid vizier,” MESA, Washington DC.
- 2017: “Avenging Karbala in Mamluk Damascus? ‘Alid Loyalism in the Mongol Conquest of Syria (1299-1300),” *Mongol Warfare between Steppe and Sown: Military and Cultural Perspectives*, Sofia, Bulgaria.
- 2017: “How the Dead Mattered in Ilkhanid Iran? The local and the global in Rashid al-Din’s three refutations of reincarnation,” *Networks Regions, and Institutions in Mongol Eurasia: a Meso-Historical Analysis*, Jerusalem, Israel.
- 2016: “Rashid al-Din’s epistles against the transmigration of Chinggisid souls: Islam, Buddhism and the polemics of Mongol sacred kingship in medieval Iran,” *Association for Asian Studies*, Seattle.
- 2016: “Islam, Buddhism and the Mongols: Debating the Fate of Chinggis Khan’s Soul in Medieval Iran,” *Forum of Research in Medieval Studies*, Ann Arbor.

Panel Organization

- 2017: “Between Assimilation and Exclusion: Cultural, Religious and Political Aspects of Jews and Judaism in Medieval Iran,” *The Middle East & Islamic Studies Association of Israel (MEISAI)*, Jerusalem

- 2017: Double panel on “Fashioning philosopher-kings in the post-Mongol Persian Cosmopolis (13th-19th c.),” MESA, Washington DC
- 2016: Double panel on “Tolerant Empires? Pluralism and Intolerance in Eurasian Courts,” *Association for Asian Studies (AAS)*
- 2015: “The Politics of Advice Literature in Ilkhanid Iran and Saljuq Anatolia,” *The Association for the Study of Persianate Societies*

Teaching

- 2022: Instructor: “Empire: Eurasian Empires in a Comparative View from Chinggis Khan to Akbar” (BA, in Hebrew)
- 2021: Instructor: “The Mongols in the Muslim World” (BA, in Hebrew)
- 2021: Instructor: “Jews and Religious Minorities in Iran” (MA, in Hebrew)
- 2021: Instructor: “The Silk Roads and Islam: Germs, Slaves and Gun Powder” (BA, in Hebrew)
- 2020: Instructor: “Pre-Modern Iran” (BA, in Hebrew)
- 2019: Instructor: “Messianism, Shi’ism, Dynasty: Early Modern Iran and its Neighbors” (MA, Hebrew University, in English)
- 2018: Instructor: “Islamic Empires in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia” (MA, Hebrew University, in English)
- 2017: Instructor: “Connected Histories? Empires and Courts in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia” (MA, Hebrew University, “Asian Sphere” program, in English)
- 2011: Graduate student instructor: “The Arab Israeli Conflict,” Department of History, University of Michigan

Service

- 2021-2022: Undergraduate Teaching Advisor, Middle East Studies, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
- 2021-2022: Initiator and co-organizer of a series of talks open to the public: “Lunch in Tehran”
- Spring 2020-: Together with Prof. Michal Biran, founder and organizer of the *Mongol Zoominar* (international forum for scholars of the Mongol Empire)
- Fall 2020-2023: Together with Dr. Oded Zinger, founder, and co-coordinator of *The Forum for Israeli Scholarship of Medieval and Early Modern Islamic History*

Advising

PhD

Shengye Bai (2022-): “Sufis’ Engagement with the Ilkhanid State and Society” (Hebrew University, with Michal Biran and Reuven Amitai)

MA

Rinat Peleg (2022-): “Imperial Harams in China and the Ottoman Empire” (Ben-Gurion, with Avi Rubin)

Membership in Dissertation Committees

Mordechai Levy (2021-): “Shaping Royal Self-Images: Self-Narratives in the Service of Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Dynasties in the 16th and 17th Centuries” (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Ronnie Agassi Cohen (2022-): “Persian Epic, Ottoman Historiography, and the Formation of Ottoman Imperial Identity in the Court of Bayezid II (1481-1512)” (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Yonatan Nizri (2022-): “Raphael Aharon Ben Shimon and the Creation of the Sephardic Tradition at the Turn of the Twentieth Century” (Ben-Gurion University)

Simone Ruffini (2023-): “Persian Panegyric Poetry of the Ilkhanid Period: Poets and their Patrons in the Mongol Milieu” (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Languages

Hebrew (Native), English (Native), Arabic (excellent: classical and medieval Arabic, modern Levantine), Persian (excellent: medieval and early modern sources), Judeo-Persian (reading), French (reading), German (basic).