

[CfP: Workshop on "Jews and Gardens in European History", Berlin, June 2020](#)

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Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

June 11, 2020

Location:

Germany

Subject Fields:

Anthropology, Cultural History / Studies, European History / Studies, Environmental History / Studies, Jewish History / Studies

Jews and Gardens in European History - CfP

The *Gärten der Welt* in Berlin-Marzahn are currently establishing a Jewish garden. The authors of the plan are the Consortium Manfred Pernice – Wilfried Kuehn – atelier le balto who have been selected in a 2018 competition combining artistic demands as well as those rooted in landscape architecture. The Jewish Garden in the *Gärten der Welt* is a project of the state of Berlin, represented by the Senate Department for the Environment, Transport and Climate Protection, in turn represented by the GrünBerlin GmbH. The project is supported by the Allianz Umweltstiftung, the Axel Springer Stiftung and the German Federal Environmental Foundation.

On behalf of GrünBerlin the Consortium with the involvement of the historian Philipp Nielsen will host a one-day workshop on June 11, 2020. The workshop's goal is to establish the history of the involvement of European Jews in garden and park movements as well as landscape architecture, and on the changing importance and roles of green spaces for Jews from the middle-ages until today.

The connection of Jews to their natural environment in Europe has been contested over the centuries. Antisemitic stereotypes, legislation and persecution depicted Jews as rootless and at the same time barred them from acquiring land and engaging in agricultural activity. Even following their legal emancipation, these antisemitic stereotypes lived on. This did not mean, however, that Jews did not engage with issues of horti- and agriculture or that gardens held no importance for them. Their engagement with the topic always occurred in dialogue with their non-Jewish environment, in reaction to wider social developments and movements, of which they too were a part, and in defense against antisemitic stereotypes. Gardens that were planted, planned or supported by Jews, thus also always reflect, consciously or unconsciously, their social relations and roles.

In this context the contributions to the workshop should offer suggestions/stimulation for the Consortium on how to develop the garden. The garden's aim is to offer an active and lively way to engage with the Jewish history of the city in dialogue with its Jewish present. It shall also offer an important impulse for a culturally pluralistic urban society and its relationship to green spaces. Here environmental awareness as a holistic and methodological approach is of central importance. Considering that the spatial turn is well under way in the field of Jewish studies, we aim

to bring together scholars from diverse disciplines to discuss the history of Jews and nature in Europe, be it in gardens or in managing agricultural land.

As we, the planners of the Jewish Garden in Berlin on behalf of GrünBerlin, are responsible for the planting of the garden, we are particularly interested in research related to practices of planting and inhabiting green spaces, be it gardens, estates or forests. To that end, we are inviting papers from the fields of history, geography, anthropology, food studies, cultural studies and sociology. The call is open to scholars of other disciplines who study these questions as well. Papers can range from studies in the contemporary use of gardens by Jewish communities in Europe to historical practices ranging as far back as the middle ages. In light of the location of the garden in Berlin-Marzahn, we especially encourage papers relating to the history of gardens in and around Berlin with a focus on the periods prior and following the Shoah.

The workshop will be held in English. It will take place in Berlin.

We will contribute towards travel and accommodation expenses in Berlin, with the potential for full reimbursement. If you are interested in participating in this workshop, please send us a **proposal of no more than 500 words** and a short **CV** by **15 January 2019** to JewishGardenBerlin@posteo.de. Papers should be no longer than 20 minutes to leave ample time for discussion.

Philipp Nielsen, Sarah Lawrence College, New York on behalf of the Consortium on behalf of GrünBerlin GmbH.

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