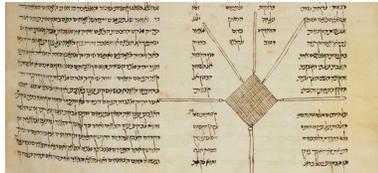




International Conference Moving Beyond Prevailing Narratives



פסוק שומישה רפס Paris, BnF, Ms. hébr. 1163, fol. 219v (detail) Provence, 15th
cent. (Source: gallica.bnf.fr)

MOVING BEYOND PREVAILING NARRATIVES: RETHINKING THE MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE OF PRE-MODERN JEWS AT THE CROSSROADS OF CULTURES, SOURCES AND TRADITIONS

Granada, 7-8 September 2026

The development of medicine and the provision of healthcare among pre-modern and early modern Jewish cultures have received significant scholarly attention, especially in recent decades. However, despite the extensive bibliography that continues to grow, important areas remain underexplored, particularly with regard to medical theories, concepts, practices, and beliefs as transmitted through a wide range of texts.

The long-standing academic tendency to prioritise the study of prominent medical authors has contributed to a partial and hierarchical understanding of the Jewish approach to medicine. While canonical figures and Hebrew translations of authoritative Jewish and non-Jewish works have received sustained attention, medical writings by anonymous or little-known authors, as well as so-called minor genres, have largely been neglected. This has obscured the fact that Jewish medical knowledge was often produced at the crossroads of genres, where medical ideas circulated through halakhic texts, poetry, ethical and religious literature, recipe collections, and other written forms that conveyed concerns about health, disease, and healing in everyday life. Moreover, the diversity of cultural contexts complicates any attempt to produce a comprehensive account of how medicine was developed, understood, and practiced within Jewish societies. It is precisely within this complex landscape that medicine may be fruitfully approached as a crossroads of knowledge traditions.

This conference aims to foster a sustained conversation among scholars examining medicine in Jewish contexts across different periods and from various perspectives. By moving beyond established narratives and placing the notion of **crossroads** at the centre of analysis, it seeks to redefine the canon of Hebrew medical literature and healing knowledge produced and consumed by Jews, thereby enhancing our understanding of how pre-modern and early modern Jewish cultures participated in the creation, transformation, and dissemination of medical knowledge across the Mediterranean and Europe.

Confirmed keynote speakers:

- Alexandra Cuffel (Ruhr University Bochum)
- Naama Cohen Ha-Negbi (Tel Aviv University)
- Lennart Lehmhaus (Universität Tübingen)
- Lola Ferre (University of Granada)

We invite proposals for 20 minutes papers from international scholars, including postgraduate students and early-career researchers, working at the intersection of Jewish studies and the history of medicine and health. Drawing on disciplines such as history, history of science, art history, archaeology and philology, participants will adopt comparative and interdisciplinary approaches, engaging with literary, visual and material sources. Particular attention will be paid to lesser-known texts and to neglected voices and agents of knowledge production, including the roles of artists, scribes and copyists, and annotators, as well as to the intersections of gender, social class, race, religion, and other relevant categories. Relevant topics and themes to be examined include, but are not limited to:

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Practical and non-learned writings and unconventional or non-traditional healing methods

- Healing agents outside learned textual traditions (midwives, healers, household practitioners, and others)
- Portions of lost or unknown treatises embedded in medical compendia
- Unexplored crossroads of transmission and reception
- Medical paratexts
- Visual elements often considered unimportant from an artistic point of view
- Clusters of recipes and loosely transmitted recipes
- The relationship between textual recipes and material evidence
- The role of languages in transmission
- Manuscript, codex and book production processes
- Medical knowledge embedded in non-medical manuscript
- Medical ideas and concrete remedies conveyed through other written genres.

The proposals must be uploaded through the **online form**. To complete the submission, you will need to provide a provisional title and abstract (no more than 250 words) and a brief biographical paragraph (no more than words).

The deadline for submissions is **15 April 2026**.

Decisions will be communicated by **early May 2026**

In case of questions please contact @email and @email

This conference is in-person only. Participants commit to attending the whole two-day event.

Lunches are included for speakers.

This conference is organised by Carmen Caballero Navas (University of Granada) and Sivan Gottlieb (Tel Aviv University). It is sponsored by the Spanish State Research Agency (AEI), Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities (**CROSSROAD - C** reación, **RecOpilación** y difuSión de **SabeRes** en el judaísmO **rAbínico** y **meDieval**/ Creation, Collection and Dissemination of Knowledge in Rabbinic and Medieval Judaism, PID 2023-147954NB-I00. R&D project), and by the European Commission HORIZON-MSCA-2021-PF-0 (VisHeK: **Visualizing Hebrew Knowledge**: Shape and Text in Scientific and Philosophical Manuscripts. 101063381).