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German Historical Institute

Pacific Regional Office

University of California, Berkeley

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# In Global Transit

Forced Migration of Jews and  
Other Refugees (1940s – 1960s)

May 20 – 22, 2019

The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life

University of California, Berkeley



**In Global Transit**  
**Forced Migration of Jews and Other Refugees (1940s - 1960s)**

**May 20 - 22, 2019**

**German Historical Institute | Pacific Regional Office at the  
University of California, Berkeley**

Second Conference in the Series "In Global Transit" organized by the  
German Historical Institutes in Washington and London

In cooperation with the Max Weber Stiftung Branch Offices in Delhi and Beijing, and The Magnes  
Collection of Jewish Art and Life, University of California, Berkeley

Conveners:

**Wolf Gruner**

USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research, Los Angeles

**Simone Lässig**

German Historical Institute Washington

**Francesco Spagnolo**

The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life, Berkeley

**Swen Steinberg**

Queen's University, Kingston

Cover Photo: "On to the West" reads the sign on the railroad car in which these Polish Jews were repatriated from the Asiatic region of the USSR.

John Vachon © 1946 | Archives of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee

## Monday, May 20

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The Magnes Collection, Allston Way, Berkeley

4:00 p.m.

### **Welcome**

**Simone Lässig**, German Historical Institute Washington

4:10 p.m.

### **Exhibit Program: Memory Objects**

**Francesco Spagnolo**, The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life,  
University of California, Berkeley

**Shir Gal Kochavi**, The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life,  
University of California, Berkeley

4:45 p.m.

### **Borders and Boundaries**

Panel 1

Citizenship Denied. Jewish Refugees in Mexico in a Legal Limbo

**Daniela Gleizer**, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico  
City

Transit, Borders and Integration: Travel and Arrival of Holocaust Survivors to  
Argentina

**Emmanuel Kahan**, National Council for Scientific and Technological  
Research, Argentina

Chair

**Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann**, University of California, Berkeley

5:45 p.m.

Break

6:00 p.m.

Keynote

### **Wandering Jews or Jewish Migrations? How Jewish Scholars Conceptualized Migration**

**Tobias Brinkmann**, Pennsylvania State University, University Park

7:15 p.m.

Reception

## Tuesday, May 21

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The Magnes Collection, Allston Way, Berkeley

9:00 a.m. **Translating and Producing Knowledge**  
Panel 2

“Send me letters and I will send you packages”: Polish Jewish Refugees around the Globe Share Knowledge and Resources

**Eliyana Adler**, Pennsylvania State University, University Park

Politics of Refugee Internment and Knowledge Production in Colonial India

**Razak Khan**, Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg

Chair

**Sören Urbansky**, German Historical Institute Washington DC

10:00 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. **Conflicting and Converging Identities: Emotions in Transit**  
Panel 3

“We were refugees and carried a special burden:” German Jewish Emigrés and the Emotional Struggle of Finding a new Home in São Paulo

**Björn Siegel**, Institute for the History of German Jews, Hamburg

Post-World War II Brazil: A New Homeland for Jews and Nazis

**Sarah da Rocha Valente**, The University of Texas at Dallas

Chair

**Indra Sengupta**, German Historical Institute London and Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office, New Delhi

11:30 a.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. **Production and Use of Networks in Transit**  
Panel 4

World Sojourners: Jewish Migration to Bolivia and Guatemala

**Sandra Gruner-Domic**, University of Southern California, Los Angeles

Haven in British East Africa: German and Austrian Jewish Refugees in Kenya

**Natalie Eppelsheimer**, Middlebury College, Vermont

“We are not going to wait until 1939 ... this is 1933.” The Role of Popular Unity Government and Pinochet's Dictatorship in the Holocaust Survivors' Decision to Emigrate from Chile

**Nancy Nicholls**, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago

Chair

**Claudia Roesch**, German Historical Institute Washington

3:00 - 6:00 p.m. **Excursion - Conceptualize Transit**

Museum of the Chinese Historical Society of America / walking tour through San Francisco's Chinatown

**Free evening in San Francisco**



## Wednesday, May 22

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The Magnes Collection, Allston Way, Berkeley

9:00 a.m. **Refugees in Processes of Decolonization, State Building, and State Crisis**  
Panel 5

Notun Yehudi (The New Jews): A Study of the Refugees from East Pakistan in Post-Partition India

**Pallavi Chakravarty**, Ambedkar University Delhi

“Shifting Figures in a Shifting Landscape:” Holocaust Refugees in Young Independent India

**Margit Franz**, Karl-Franzens University, Graz

Chair **Isabel Richter**, University of California, Berkeley

10:00 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. **Power Structures and Shifting Settings: Class, Race, and Gender**  
Panel 6

Trauma, Privilege, and Adventure: Jewish Refugees in Iran

**Atina Grossmann**, Cooper Union, New York

By die huis, thuis, zu Hause: Circles of Identification within the Communities of Dutch and German Jewish Refugees in South Africa (1938 – 1948)

**Geraldien von Frijtag Drabbe Künzel**, Utrecht University

Chair **Andrea Sinn**, Elon University

11:30 a.m. Break

12:00 p.m. **Departing as Child – Arriving as Adult: Age and Generation**  
Panel 7

“Living Across Border:” Agency and Displacement of Polish Jewish and Ethnic Polish Migrants after the War (1945 – 1960)

**Anna Cichopek-Gajra**, Arizona State University, Tempe

Musical Migration: Ruth Schönthal from Mexico City to New York

**Andrea Orzoff**, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces

Chair **Sheer Ganor**, University of California, Berkeley

1:00 p.m. Lunch

2:00 p.m.  
Panel 8

**Neighborhoods Between Belonging and Alienness**

American Dreams: Jewish Refugees and Chinese Locals in Post-World War II Shanghai

**Kimberly Cheng**, New York University

Home and In Transit Location for Holocaust Survivors in Mexico

**Yael Siman**, Iberoamericana University, Mexico City, and Anáhuac University, Naucalpan de Juárez

Chair

**Nick Underwood**, German Historical Institute Washington, Pacific Regional Office Berkeley

3:00 p.m.

Break

3:15 p.m.  
Panel 9

**Narrating Transit and Forced Migration**

From Auschwitz to Bogotá: When Genocide and Political Violence Converge

**Lorena Ávila Jaimes**, Konrad Adenauer Foundation Rule of Law Program for Latin-America

Bolivia as Transitory Refuge: Memoirs of Jewish Refugees

**Helga Schreckenberger**, University of Vermont, Burlington

Chair

**Andrea Westermann**, German Historical Institute Washington, Pacific Regional Office Berkeley

4:15 p.m.

**Concluding discussion**

Chairs

**Wolf Gruner**, USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research, Los Angeles

**Swen Steinberg**, Queen's University, Kingston

5:00 p.m.

Break

6:30 - 9:00 p.m. **Conference dinner**





**Eliyana Adler** is an associate professor in the department of history and Jewish studies at Pennsylvania State University, University City. She is the author of *In Her Hands: The Education Jewish Girls in Tsarist Russia* (2011) and articles published in *Polin*, *East European Jewish Affairs*, *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, *Yad Vashem Studies*, *Dapim*, and other journals. She co-edited volume 30 of *Polin* (2018), *Reconstructing the Old Country: American Jewry in the Post-Holocaust Decades* (2017) and *Jewish Literature and History: An Interdisciplinary Conversation* (2008). Her current project focuses on the experiences of Polish Jews who survived World War II in the un-occupied regions of the USSR.



**Lorena Ávila** is a researcher and project manager at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation Rule of Law Program for Latin-America. She holds an MA in public policy from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, an LLM in Public International Law and an MSc in Victimology and criminal justice from Tilburg University. Her publications have comprehended issues on sexual violence in international criminal law, transitional and criminal justice, among others. She is a research affiliate at the USC Shoah Foundation.



**Tobias Brinkmann** is the Malvin and Lea Bank Associate Professor of Jewish studies and history at Pennsylvania State University, University City. He received a Dr. phil from the Technische Universität Berlin in 2000. Brinkmann is a member of the Academic Council of the American Jewish Historical Society and of the Board of the Leo Baeck Institute, London. He is currently completing a study about Jewish migration from Eastern Europe between 1860 and 1950. His books include *Sundays at Sinai: A Jewish Congregation in Chicago* (2012), and *Migration und Transnationalität: Perspektiven deutsch-jüdischer Geschichte* (2012).



**Pallavi Chakravarty** teaches history at the Ambedkar University in Delhi. Her area of expertise is Modern Indian history. She earned her PhD from the University of Delhi for her research on the rehabilitation of the 'partition refugees' in post-Independent India in the long decades of 1947-71 with a focus on the rehabilitation of the Punjabi refugees in Delhi and Bengali refugees in Calcutta. Her doctoral thesis will soon be published as *Rehabilitating the Refugee: An East-West Story (1947-1971)*.



**Kimberly Cheng** is a doctoral candidate in the Joint PhD Program in Hebrew and Judaic studies/history at New York University. Her fields are modern Jewish history and modern Chinese history, and her research broadly centers around historical points of contact between Jewish and Chinese populations in Europe, the United States, and Asia. She holds a M.S.Ed from the University of Pennsylvania and an A.B. from Cornell University in history, Jewish studies, and German studies.



**Anna Cichopek-Gajraj** is an associate professor of history at Arizona State University, Tempe. Her fields of expertise include modern East European Jewish history, social and comparative history, history of Polish/Jewish relations, antisemitism, and post-Holocaust studies. Her book, *Beyond Violence: Jewish Survivors in Poland and Slovakia in 1944-1948* (2014) was a finalist of the 2016 Jordan Schnitzer Book Award and a recipient of the 2015 Barbara Heldt Prize Honorable Mention. She currently works on social history of the global postwar displacement of Polish Catholics and Polish Jews in the first twenty years after World War II (1945-1965).



**Natalie Eppelsheimer** is an associate professor of German at Middlebury College, Vermont. In her forthcoming book *Roads Less Traveled: German Jewish Exile Experiences in Kenya*, she examines the experiences of German-speaking refugees in Colonia Kenya between 1933 and 1945. Dr. Eppelsheimer holds a PhD in German with emphasis in comparative literature from the University of California, Irvine.



**Margit Franz** is a research fellow and lecturer at the department of history of the Karl-Franzens University in Graz, Austria. Her research focuses on the history of exile between 1933 and 1945 in Asia and Africa with special emphasis on British India. Her publications include *Gateway India. Deutschsprachiges Exil in Indien zwischen britischer Kolonialherrschaft, Maharadschas und Gandhi* (2015). She co-edited *Going East - Going South. Österreichisches Exil in Asien und Afrika* (2014).



**Geraldien von Frijtag Drabbe Künzel** is an associate professor in the department of political history at Utrecht University, Netherlands. She has published widely on WWII, the Holocaust and Dutch reactions to Nazi occupation-policy. Her latest book, *Hitler's Brudervolk* (2015/2017), examines the Dutch participation in the Germanization of the occupied East. Her current research projects concern women in exile from Franco's Spain and Nazi-Germany (together with professor Helena Houvenaghel), a local history of the Dutch town Hilversum during WWII and Jewish-Gentile relations in modern European metropolises (1930-1960).





**Sheer Ganor** is a PhD candidate at UC Berkeley's department of history. She is currently completing her dissertation, "In Scattered Formation: Displacement, Alignment and the German-Jewish Diaspora", which studies the global network of Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany.



**Daniela Gleizer** is an associate researcher at the Institute of Historical Research of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico City. Gleizer earned her PhD in history from El Colegio de México, Mexico City in 2007 and has received various awards for her work. Her principal book, *Unwelcome Exiles. Mexico and the Jewish Refugees from Nazism* (2014) addresses the subject of the Mexican stance towards Jewish refugees during Nazism. She also focuses on the relationship between the Mexican state and foreigners, particularly on immigration and naturalization policies. She is a member of the National Researcher's System of Mexico, the Latin American Jewish Studies Association, and is an affiliated researcher at the USC-Shoah Foundation.



**Atina Grossmann** is professor of history at Cooper Union, New York. Publications include *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany* (2007), which won the George L. Mosse Prize of the AHA and the Fraenkel Prize, Wiener Library, and *Reforming Sex: The German Movement for Birth Control and Abortion Reform, 1920-1950* (1995). She recently co-edited volumes, *Shelter from the Holocaust: Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union* (2017, with M. Edele and S. Fitzpatrick) and *The JDC at 100: A Century of Humanitarianism* (2019, with A. Patt, L. Levi, M. Mandel). Her current research focuses on "Remapping Survival: Jewish Refugees in the Soviet Union, Iran, and India" as well as the entanglements of family memoir and historical scholarship.



**Wolf Gruner** is the Shapell-Guerin Chair in Jewish studies and professor of history at the University of Southern California (USC). In 2014, he became the founding director of the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research. He is a specialist for Holocaust and German-Jewish history, topics on which he has published eleven books and around 60 articles and book chapters by now. Currently, he is conducting research on forgotten acts of individual defiance, opposition and resistance of German and Austrian Jews during the Holocaust.



**Sandra Gruner-Domic** is a social anthropologist and independent researcher at the University of Southern California and California State Long Beach University. Her research includes global migration, representation and identity in transnational context. Ongoing projects are narratives of Guatemalan genocide survivors and Holocaust survivors' migration to Bolivia and Guatemala. Publications include "Socialist Labor Migration: East Germany 'contract workers'" in: *Migration Refugees and Asylum. Concepts, Actors since the Second World War in Perspective*, (2019), and "Consent, Mediation, and Complicity: the complex ethics of informed consent and scholarly representation in violent contexts" (with Miranda Hallet), in: *Geopolitics* (forthcoming 2019).



**Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann** is an associate professor of late modern European history at the University of California, Berkeley. He received his M.A. from Johns Hopkins University in 1993 and his doctorate from the Universität Bielefeld in 1999. His main research interests are: post-Enlightenment sociability and social thought; human rights and internationalism; post-catastrophic cities; Begriffsgeschichte; and the theory of history. His recent publications include the following: *Ethics of Seeing, Photography and Twentieth-Century German History* (as co-editor) and *Sediments of Time: On Possible History* (as co-editor and co-translator).



**Emmanuel Nicolás Kahan**, is a researcher at the National Council for Scientific and Technological Research, Argentina and a professor in the field of political theory at the sociology department of the National University of La Plata. He has published several books as well as articles in national and international journals. In 2013, he received the American Jewish Studies Association's Best Dissertation Award, and in 2015 he was awarded with the Scientific Labor Price by the National University of La Plata. He earned his PhD in history and memory studies from the National University of La Plata.



**Razak Khan** is a research fellow at the Erlangen Centre for Islam and Law in Europe at Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany. He was awarded a PhD from the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, Free University Berlin in 2014. His current research project is titled "Minor Cosmopolitanism: Politics of Education, Translation and Modern Islam in the life and writings of Syed Abid Husain (1896-1978)" and examines the entangled history of Muslim and German-Jewish intellectualism.





**Shir Gal Kochavi** is an assistant curator at . She received her PhD from the University of Leeds, UK (2017). Her experience includes a researcher position at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, an assistant position at Christie's auction house in Tel-Aviv and in contemporary art galleries and antiques galleries in Israel and in the UK. She recently published the paper: "The 1951 Diplomatic Gift: The Role of a German Eighteen Century Hanukkah Lamp in Israeli-American Relations", in: *Artis On 7*(2018) *Art and Power*.



**Simone Lässig** has been the director of the German Historical Institute (GHI), Washington DC, since 2015. She is currently on leave from Braunschweig University, where she holds a professorship in modern history. She is co-editor of the journal *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* and founded the *Journal for Educational Media, Memory, and Society* (JEMMS), which she edited until 2015. Her main fields of research are modern Jewish history, the history of knowledge, migration history and digital history. Simone Lässig currently works on two research projects: a study of a German-Jewish family from the early nineteenth century to the present, and a study on religion as an agent of change, preliminary entitled "Coping with Disruptive Change: Jews, Middle Class Culture, and Social Transformation in Germany, 1800-1860".



**Nancy Nicholls** is a lecturer at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile with a focus on themes of memory, oral history and contemporary Chilean history. She earned her PhD in sociology from the University of Essex, UK.. She works on experiences of repression among victims of the Chilean dictatorship (1973-1990) and on survival, migration and adaptation among Holocaust survivors migrating to Chile. Recent Publications include "Mobility, Migration and Integration: Experiences and Narratives of Holocaust Survivors in Chile, Colombia and Mexico", in: *Lessons and Legacies 14*, (with Lorena Avila and Yael Siman, forthcoming 2019).



**Andrea Orzoff** is an associate professor of history and honors at New Mexico State University. She is the author of *Battle for the Castle: The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe, 1914-1948* (2009), and is currently completing her book project *Music in Flight: Refugees, Exiles, Fugitives, and the Politics of Music in Latin America*. Her most recent articles address the German-speaking chapters of the International PEN Club during the Cold War; she also contributed an overview of democracy and democratic internationalism in interwar Europe to the *Oxford Handbook on Europe 1900-1945* (2016). Her research and teaching interests lie in the intersection of ideas and power in transnational context.



**Claudia Roesch** is a research fellow at the German Historical Institute Washington. She specializes in contemporary American history and history of the family. She studied contemporary history, English and American Studies at Humboldt University Berlin and the Universidad de Oviedo. Her first book *Macho Men and Modern Women: Mexican Immigration, Social Experts and Changing Family Values in the 20th Century United States* was published in 2015.



**Helga Schreckenberger**, professor of German and chair of the department of German and Russian at the University of Vermont. Her research focuses on modern Austrian literature and exile studies. Recent publications include the editions *Networks of Refugees from Nazi Germany: Continuities, Reorientations, and Collaborations in Exile* (2016), and *Shoah und Exile. Jahrbuch für Exilforschung*, (with B. Bannasch und A. Steinweis, 2016).



**Indra Sengupta** is the head of India Research Programme at the German Historical Institute in London and the head of the India Branch Office of the Max Weber Stiftung, New Delhi. She holds a PhD in history from Heidelberg University. Her research interests include the production and practice of knowledge on India in colonial India and Europe, and German Orientalism. Her current research is on monument making in late colonial India, incorporating local, colonial, and metropolitan perspectives.



**Björn Siegel** studied Jewish history and Culture at the Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich and Tel Aviv University. His PhD thesis *Austrian Jewry between East and West - The Viennese Jewish Alliance, 1873-1938* was published in 2010. He works at the Institute for the History of the German Jews (Hamburg) and focuses on his two projects: "The ship as a place in Jewish history: European shipping companies and the Jewish migration to Palestine 1920-1938" and secondly, "Fritz Pinkuss: A modernizer on both sides of the Atlantic".



**Yael Siman** has a PhD in political science from the University of Chicago. She is a lecturer on antisemitism, Holocaust and genocide at Iberoamericana University, Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México and Anáhuac University. She is an affiliated researcher at the USC Shoah Foundation and associate professor of Facing History and Ourselves. Her recent published articles include: "Antisemitism in Mexico and Latin America: recurrences and changes" (with J. Bokser Misses-Liwerant, 2016); She currently conducts a research project on the migration experiences and narratives of Holocaust survivors in Mexico.





**Andrea Sinn** is the O'Briant Developing Professor and an assistant professor of history at Elon University, North Carolina. She is a historian of modern Germany who specializes in Jewish history and is deeply engaged in debates concerning the Third Reich and the immediate post-Holocaust period. She is the Director of Elon's Jewish studies program. Her scholarship focuses on war and social change in modern Germany, notably the 20th century. She earned her PhD in Modern History from Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Germany, in 2012.



**Isabel Richter** is DAAD Professor at the department of history and the department of German studies at the University of California, Berkeley. She received her PhD from the Technical University in Berlin in 2000 and her habilitation from the University of Bochum in 2009. Her research interests include cultural history and cultural anthropology, the history of National Socialism, popular cultures and youth cultures in the 20th century. Her most recent research deals with the boom of traveling overland to India in the 1960s and 1970s.



**Francesco Spagnolo** is a multidisciplinary scholar focusing on Jewish studies, music, and digital media. At the University of California, Berkeley, he is the curator of The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life and an associate adjunct professor in the department of music. As a scholar, his research interests center on the intersections of music and synagogue life, particularly among Italian Jews, an arena in which Ashkenazi and Sephardic liturgical and popular musical traditions have historically come together in unique ways.



**Swen Steinberg** is a Post-doctoral researcher and assistant professor at the department of history at Queen's University, Kingston/Ontario and an affiliated scholar of the GHI's Pacific Regional Office in Berkeley. He earned his PhD from Dresden University in 2013. Dr. Steinberg's research is focused on the intersection of migration and knowledge, forestry and mining, refugee and exile studies, corporate culture concepts and economic transformations. He recently co-edited (with S. Lässig) *Young Migrants in the History of Knowledge, special issue KNOW: A Journal on the Formation of Knowledge* (2019).



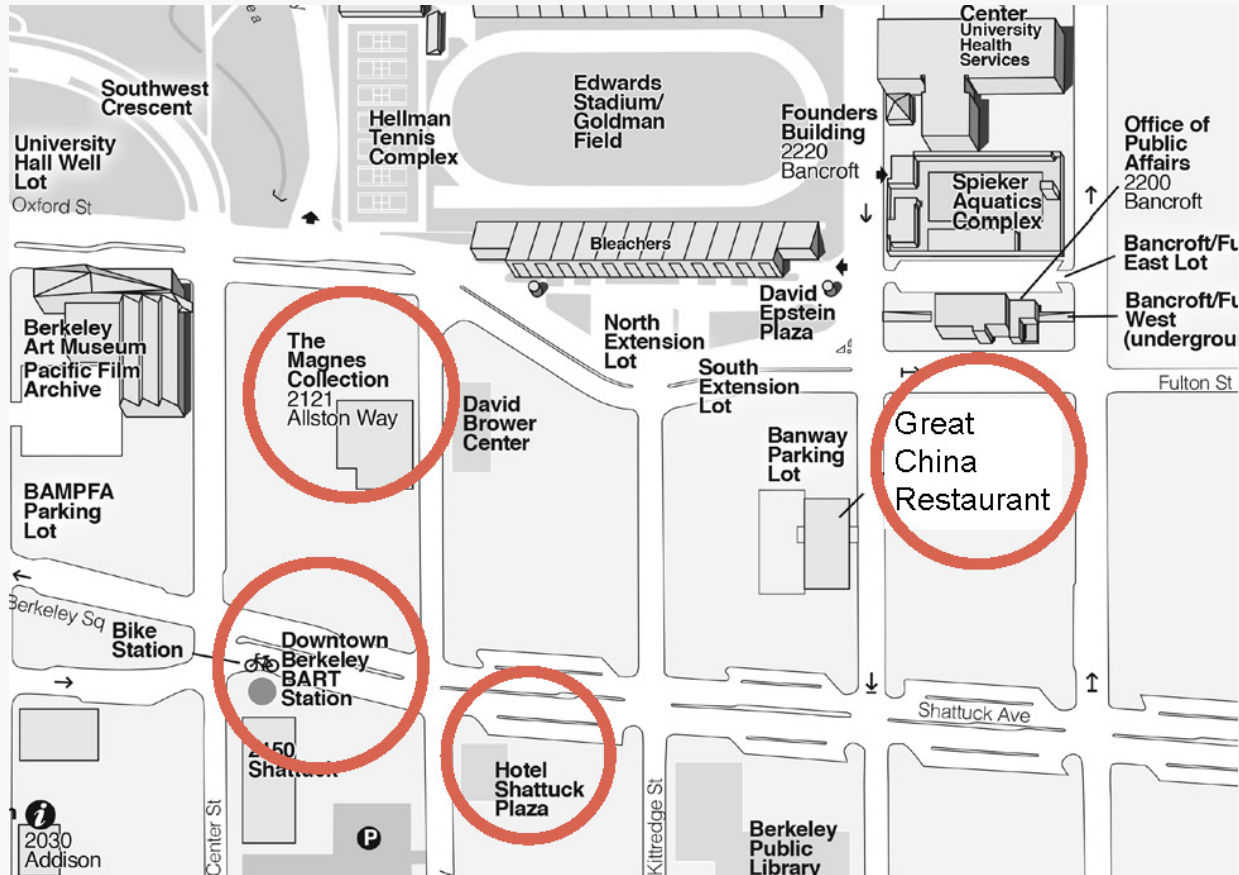
**Nick Underwood** received his PhD from the University of Colorado Boulder in 2016. He serves as the managing editors for the journals *East European Jewish Affairs* and *American Jewish History* as well as project manager for the *Digital Yiddish Theatre Project*. Between 2015-2016, he served as lecturer at Sonoma State University and Napa Valley College. His first book project is titled *Yiddish Paris: Nation and Community in Interwar France*.



**Sören Urbansky** is a research fellow at the German Historical Institute Washington. He is the author of *Kolonialer Wettstreit: Russland, China, Japan und die Ostchinesische Eisenbahn* and *Beyond the Steppe Frontier: A History of the Sino-Russian Border*. Dr. Urbansky is a historian of Russia and China in the modern era, specializing in imperial and racial entanglements, emigration and the history of borders. He is currently embarking on a new project that examines anti-Chinese sentiments in a global perspective.



**Sarah R. Valente** is a PhD candidate in the history of Ideas at the University of Texas at Dallas. As a Belofsky Fellow at the University's Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies, Valente focused her doctoral studies on Holocaust studies as well as translation studies. Her dissertation examines Post-Holocaust Jewish narratives published in Brazil from 1945 to the present. Valente is editor-at-large of *Reunion: The Dallas Review*.



**Hotel Shattuck Plaza**  
2086 Allston Way, Berkeley

**The Magnes Collection**  
2121 Allston Way, Berkeley

**Great China Restaurant**  
2190 Bancroft Way, Berkeley





This painting hangs in the social hall of Congregation B'nai Emunah in San Francisco. It shows five of the synagogue's founding generation and traces their routes from Germany via Belgium and China to San Francisco. You can read their stories on the artist's website: <https://anneruthisaacson.com/journeys-of-survival>.

Painting by Anne Ruth Isaacson © 2016