

# **Prof. Avner Ben-Zaken**

## **CV**

### **Academic Training and Positions**

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1991-1996 BA, MA Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Middle East History & History  
1998-2004 PhD University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) - History of Science  
2004-2008 Harvard Society of Fellows  
2007 – Israeli Institute for Advanced Studies  
2009 – Establishing and chairing honorary interdisciplinary program in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Ono Academic College.  
2014-2016 Visiting Professor, Max Weber Kolleg für kultur und sozialwissenschaftliche studien, Universität Erfurt  
2020 – Founder and chair of the Institute for Israeli Thought

### **Teaching**

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2019 – Seminar - Jews in the History of Science, Ono Academic College.  
2018 – Seminar - The Material Culture of Science, Bezalel Academy of Arts.  
2017 – Seminar - Science and Law, Ono Academic College.  
2013 – Seminar - The Visualization of Sciences, Bezalel Academy of Arts.  
2012-2013 – From a Closed World to an Infinite Universe. Hebrew University, Jerusalem.  
2012 – The Philosophy of Law. Ono Academic College.  
2011 – What is Justice? Ono Academic College.  
2010 – Introduction to Early Modern History of Science. Ono College.  
2007 – Seminar - Exchanging, Borrowing and Adopting: World History of Science. Tel-Aviv University.  
2007 – Seminar - Themes in the Historiography of Science. Tel-Aviv University.  
2003 – The Scientific Revolution. Department of History, UCLA.  
2002 – Themes in History of Medicine. Department of History, UCLA.  
2002 – World History: 600 to 1760. Department of History, UCLA.  
2001 – Introduction to Early History of Science. Department of History, UCLA.  
2001 – History of the Biological Sciences. Department of History, UCLA.  
2001 – History of Physics in the Enlightenment. Department of History, UCLA.

### **Awards and Fellowships**

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2011 – Nomination for the best book of the year for Cross-Cultural Scientific Exchanges in the Eastern Mediterranean 1560-1660, The British Society For Science and Literature (BSLS).  
2007 – The Institute of Advance Studies, Jerusalem. Fellow in a research group – "The Transmission and Reception of Greek Natural Philosophy into Judaism."  
2006-2007 – The Harvard Milton fund for Faculty research  
2004 – Elected to the Academy of Achievement.  
2004 – The ISEF (International Fund of Education) Israeli PhD graduates award for Outstanding Academic Achievements.  
2004 – Harvard Society of Fellows  
2003 – Winner of the History of Science Society's Schuman Prize for the best paper of 2003 "Hebraist Motives, Pythagorean Itineraries and the Galilean Agendas of Naples: On the Margins of Text and Context."

2003 – Dissertation Year Fellowship  
 2002-2003 – The Clark Library Fellowship  
 2002 – The ICFOG Pre-Dissertation Fellowship, UCLA  
 2002 – The ISOP Pre-Dissertation Fellowship, UCLA  
 2001-2002 – The Amado Fellowship for Sephardic Studies, UCLA  
 1998-2002 – The International Sephardic Education Fund Fellowship for Outstanding Israeli Doctoral Candidates  
 2000-2002 – The History Department Teaching Assistant Award, UCLA  
 1998-1999 – The Amado Fund Fellowship, UCLA

## Publications

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### Books

1. *The State of the Israelis* (Institute for Israeli Thought, 2026). (Hebrew).
2. Coernelius Agrippa, *On the Nobility and Preeminence of the Female Sex* (editor), (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 2026). (Hebrew).
3. A. Ben-Zaken, M. Cohen, B. Ravid Yosef, L. Liat Savin, *The New Regionalism: From Polarization to Cohesion* (Institute for Israeli Thought, 2025). (Hebrew).
4. A. Ben-Zaken, S. Elbaz, *The New Israel* (Institute for Israeli Thought, 2024). (Hebrew).
5. *Reading Hayy Ibn-Yaqzan: Cross-Cultural History of Autodidacticism* (Johns Hopkins University Press: 2011).
6. *Cross-Cultural Scientific Exchanges in the Eastern Mediterranean 1560-1660*. (Johns Hopkins University Press: 2010).
7. Communism as Cultural Imperialism (Resling, 2007). (Hebrew)
8. *Copernicus in Practice*. In progress.

### Articles

1. "Traveling with the Picatrix: Cultural Liminalities of Magic and Science", Religious Individualization in Historical Perspective, (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2020), pp. 1033-1063.
2. Avner Ben-Zaken, "Intellectual, Scientific and Technological Relations between Christian and Muslim Civilizations 1580-1822", in David Thomas, & John Chesworth, Christian-Muslim Relations. a Bibliographical History. Volume 13 Western Europe (1700-1800), (Boston: Brill, 2019), pp. 35-45.
3. "Global Microhistory of the Tulip: From Micro Mechanism, through Interpolation and Extrapolation", Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales (commissioned to a special issue, work in progress).
4. "אין מקום לחרטות: המקורות הימי ביניים של מרטין היידגר". הארץ, 28 בדצמבר 2018.
5. "Clues beneath the Lamp: On Copernicus's magical "other"", work in progress.
6. "The Son, the Father and the Spirit of Catastrophe", Haaretz, 23 May 2015.
7. "רמזים מתחת למנורה: על האחר הכישופי של קופרניקוס - דיווח ראשוני", בצלאל, כתב עת לתרבות חזותית וחומרית, גיליון 2, יוני 2015.
8. "Cross-Cultural History: Difficulties and Possibilities", Cultural History Journal, Vol. 2, April 2013, pp. 1-15.
9. "From Universal Values to Cultural Practices", Mapping the Jewish World: 1929 (ed.) Hasia Diner (New York University Press, 2013).
10. "Shakespeare in Jerusalem: on Magic, Science and Theater", Haaretz Magazine, Nov. 15, 2012.
11. "Traveling with Picatrix: on the Cultural Liminalities of Magic and Science" forthcoming in a special issue of Quaderni Storici, 2013, Ed. Antonella Romano.
12. "Amatus Lusitanus and his intellectual Quarrels", forthcoming in a special Issue of Journal of Jewish History, 2013. Ed. Anthony Molho.

13. "Placing Uranus in Geocentric Cosmology: the Liminalities of the Copernican Revolution", co-writing with Daniel Stolz, (in progress)
14. "If I am to Myself, then What Am I?", Kivunim Hadashim (New Directions), Tel-Aviv, Dec. 2011. (Hebrew).
15. "The Revolving Planets and the Revolving Clocks: Circulating Mechanical Objects in the Mediterranean", History of Science, xlix (2011).
16. "Bridging Networks of Trust: Sixteenth Century Jewish Astronomers of Salonika in between Europe and Islam", Journal of Jewish History, Vol. 23 no.4, 2009.
17. "From Naples to Goa and Back: A Secretive Galilean Messenger and A Radical Neapolitan Hermeneutist" History of Science, xlvii (2009).
18. "The Heavens of the Sky and the Heavens of the Heart: The Islamic Cultural Context for the Introduction of Copernicanism", The British Journal for History of Science, 37:1, March 2004.
19. "Recent Currents in the Study of Ottoman-Egypt Historiography, with Remarks about the Role of the History of Natural Philosophy and Science", Journal of Semitic Studies, XLIX/2, Autumn 2004.
20. "Political Economy and Scientific Activity in the Ottoman Empire", The Turks, vol. 3 (The Ottomans), (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Publication, 2002), pp. 776-794.
21. "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Bilimsel Faaliyetler", Türkler, vol. 11, (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Publication, 2002), pp. 218-237.
22. "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Kopernik Sistemi", Türkler, vol. 11, (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Publication, 2002), pp. 289-302.

## Reviews

1. Toby E. Huff, Intellectual Curiosity and the Scientific Revolution: A Global Perspective (Cambridge University Press, 2009). 354pp. British Journal for History of Science, Winter 2012.
2. "Can Free-Standing Ideas be Contagious?" a review of Justin Stearns, Infectious Ideas: Contagion in Premodern Islamic and Christian Thought in the Western Mediterranean (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011). Metascience, vol. 22, issue 1, March 2013.

## Papers

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"Amatus Lusitanus and the Making of Science in Motion", World History Association, Bilbao, June 2022.

"The Judaized Skepticism of Cornelius Agrippa", Jewish Skepticism in the Scholarship of Richard Popkin, May 2022, Hamburg.

"שיטת בחירות אזוריות: על ייצוג הוגן לחברה הישראלית", המכון למחשבה ישראלית, באר שבע, אפריל 2022.

"Toward an Israeli Republic: Scientific-Historical Perspective", July 2021, Institute for Israeli Thought, Tel Aviv.

"Amatus Lusitanus and the Making of Science in Motion", Imagining the Renaissance / Defining the Jews. Jerusalem, January 2020.

"Copernicus as a Jurist", colloquium Faculty of Law, Ono Academic College, December 2019.

"Clues Beneath the Lamp: on Copernicus's magical 'Other'", UCLA, History of Science Colloquium, October 12, 2015.

"Clues Beneath the Lamp: on Copernicus's magical 'Other'", Gotha Library, Gotha-Erfurt University. June 17th, 2014.

"Traveling with the Picatrix: on the Cultural Liminalities of Science and Magic". Max-Weber-Kolleg für kultur- und sozialwissenschaftliche Studien, Universität Erfurt. May 6th, 2014.

"Visual versus Linguistic Morphologies in Sixteenth Century Natural History" Bodies in Motion, UBC, Vancouver, 21 March 2013.

"From a Refuge City to an Intellectual Center: Amatus Lusitanus and his Intellectual Quarrels", The International Hellenic University, Salonika. June 26th, 2012.

"Traveling With the Picatrix: Cultural Liminalities of Science and Magic", European University Institute, Florence, May 17th, 2012.

"What is Cross-Cultural History?", Les fabriques impériales de la modernité, Centre d'histoire, Sciences Po, Paris, January 14th 2011.

"Cultural History, Whither?" Tel-Aviv Department of History, January 11th, 2011.

"History of Science and the Convivencia", Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, May 25th, 2010.

"Sampling History of Autodidacticism", XXIII International Congress of History of Science and Technology: Ideas and Instruments in Social Context, 28 July - 2 August 2009, Budapest.

"New Cosmologies and Old Hermeneutics: The Hebraist Vantage Point". Hebraic Aspects of the Renaissance: Sources and Encounters. University of Haifa, May 11-13, 2009.

"From Incommensurability of Cultures to Mutually-Embraced Zones", History of Science Society (HSS) Annual Convention, Pittsburgh, Nov. 1, 2008.

"Bridging Networks of Trust: Astronomy in Sixteenth-Century Salonika", UCLA History of Science Colloquium, Oct. 22, 2007.

"Objects in Motion" workshop "Circulation and Locality in Early Modern Science", Clark Library, Los Angeles, Oct 19, 2007.

"Objects in Motion", workshop "Networks and Exchange in Early Modern Mediterranean", University of Toronto, Oct. 15, 2007.

"Bridging Networks of Trust: Astronomy in Sixteenth-Century Salonika", HSS Annual Convention, Washington, Nov. 2, 2007.

"Seeing Things from Below: Prodigies, Autodidacts and Experimentalists Networking Anti-Dogmatism", Department of History of Science, Harvard University, May 10, 2006.

"Embodied Contemplations on a Far-Flung Island: The Cultural Context for the Construction of Hayy Ben-Yaqzan", workshop of Arabic Philosophy, Yale University, May 1, 2006.

"No Utopia is an Island", History of Science Society, Annual convention, Minneapolis, Nov. 4, 2005.

"The Decade When the Sky Fell and a New Astronomy Arose", History of Science Society, Annual convention, Austin, Nov. 19, 2004.

"A Globe, a Clock and a Captive: The Circulation of Scientific Objects in the Trading Zone of the Eastern Mediterranean", Department of History of Science, Harvard University, Nov. 3, 2004.

"The Heavens of the Sky and the Heavens of the Heart: The Islamic Cultural Context for the Introduction of Copernicanism", History of Science Colloquium, UCLA, December 2003.

"The Search for the 'Fallen Knowledge' in the Ottoman-Safavid-Mogul Empires", conference Global science and technology: Mediterranean and East Asian Perspectives, World History MRU Meeting, UCI, February 2003.

"Hebraist Motives, Pythagorean Itineraries and the Galilean Agendas of Naples: On the Margins of Text and Context", History of Science Colloquium, UCLA, Fall 2002.

"From Print to Scribe: Print Culture in Early Modern Islamic World", conference History of Printing and Publishing in the Languages and Countries of the Middle-East, Gutenberg Museum, Mainz, Germany, WOCMES, Summer 2002.

"Astrology, Astronomy and Copernicus in the Ottoman Empire: Peculiarities and Possibilities", conference West Coast History of Science (HSS) at UCLA, Clark Library, Los Angeles, April 2001.

## Languages

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Hebrew, English, Arabic, Italian

Reading: Latin, Spanish, French