

Yiftach Ofek, Ph.D.

Lecturer in the Core Curriculum

Shalem College, Jerusalem, Israel

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(Updated: September 14, 2026)

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (SELECT)

Lecturer in the Core and in the Department of Philosophy and Jewish Thought Jerusalem, Israel
Shalem College October 2024 – Present

Teaching Fellow Chicago, IL
Divinity School and The College, University of Chicago September 2021 – August 2023

Head of NATO and European Union Desk Tel-Aviv, Israel
IDF Strategic Division July 2008 – August 2009

Junior Spokesman to the Foreign Press (Europe and North America) Tel-Aviv, Israel
IDF Spokespersons Unit November 2005 – July 2008

Lieutenant (Res.) in Israel Defense Forces

EDUCATION

University of Chicago Divinity School Chicago, IL
Ph.D. August 2021

Dissertation Title: *"The 'New Jew' of Zionist Historiography: The Social Vision and Historical Imagination of Yitzhak Baer, Gershom Scholem, and Yehezkel Kaufmann"*
Committee: Paul Mendes-Flohr (Chair), Na'ama Rokem, Shalom Ratzabi

Harvard University Cambridge, MA
M.A. November 2014

Thesis Title: *"Jacob Taubes and the Meaning of Jewish History"*
Advisor: Peter Gordon (History)

University of Chicago Chicago, IL
M.A., Masters Program in the Social Sciences August 2011

Thesis Title: *"Christianity as a Problem in the Political Philosophy of Alexis de Tocqueville"*
Advisor: Nathan Tarcov (Political Science; Committee on Social Thought)

University of York York, UK
B.A. July 2005

Undergraduate Thesis Title: *"Leo Strauss's Critique of Nietzsche"*
Advisor: Jon Parkin (Politics)

AREAS OF TEACHING COMPETENCE

Political Philosophy; Philosophy of History; Continental Philosophy; Israeli Intellectual History; Jewish Thought and History

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

1. "Politics and Theology in the Historical Works of Yitzhak Baer," *Religions* 13, no. 6 (2022): 537. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13060537>

Book Chapters

1. "Philip Rieff and the Politics of the Cold War," in William G. Batchelder and Michael P. Harding, eds., *The Philosophy of Philip Rieff: Cultural Conflict, Religion, and the Self* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2025), pp. 231–254.

Book Introductions

1. "Historical Context," in Yitzhak Shalev, *The Gavriel Tirosh Affair*, tr. Hillel Halkin (New Milford, CT and Jerusalem: The Toby Press, 2026), pp. xv–xx.

Book Reviews in Peer-Reviewed Journals

1. Yaacov Yadgar, *To Be a Jewish State: Zionism as the New Judaism*, *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* (04 June 2026), DOI: 10.1080/14725886.2026.2674586
2. Jan Zwicky, *Once upon a Time in the West: Essays on the Politics of Thought and Imagination*, *Philosophy in Review* 44, no. 2 (May 2024): 49–52.
3. Jeffrey Bloom, Alec Goldstein, Gil Student (eds.), *Strauss, Spinoza & Sinai: Orthodox Judaism and Modern Questions of Faith*, *Journal for the History of Modern Theology / Zeitschrift für Neuere Theologiegeschichte* 30, no. 1 (November 2023): 183–187.
4. Philip von Wussow, *Leo Strauss and the Theopolitics of Culture*, *The Journal of Religion* 102, no. 2 (April 2022): 300–302.

Essays in Non-Refereed Publications (Select List)

1. "Israel and the Post-Liberal World Order," *The Institute for Peace & Diplomacy* (Commentary), 22 September 2025.
2. "The End of the American-Jewish Symbiosis?" *Watersheds*, Vol. I: October 7 (February 2024), pp. 107–116.
3. "Milan Kundera and the Question of Jewish-Israeli Identity," *The Hedgehog Review* (Web Exclusive), 28 September 2023.
4. "Paul Gottfried: Apostle of the Old Conservatism" (Hebrew) and Interview with Paul Gottfried (with Yehuda Vizan), *Dehak* 14 (March 2022), pp. 447–453; 454–463.

5. "Hannah Arendt and the Challenge of Jewish Sovereignty," *Counterpoint: The University of Chicago Conservative Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (February 2011), pp. 23–29.

Translations

1. Renaud Camus, « Préface au „discours des fleuves de sang“ d'Enoch Powell » (French to Hebrew), with critical footnotes, *Dehak* 18 (May 2025), pp. 398–407.
2. Allan Tate, "What is Traditional Society?" (English to Hebrew), with Extended Postscript, *Dehak* 14 (March 2022), pp. 464–478.

Book Reviews in Non-Refereed Publications (Select)

1. Alexis de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*, new Hebrew translation by Hod Halevi (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2025) (Hebrew), *HaShiloach*, No. 43 (December 2025), pp. 245–253.
2. Patrick Deneen, *Why Liberalism Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018) (Hebrew), *Kin'at Sofrim*, April 5, 2023.
3. Mordechai Shalev, *Stealing the Gospel: The Literary Essays of Mordechai Shalev* (Hebrew), *HaShiloach*, No. 15 (July 2019), pp. 163–173.
4. James Kirchick, *The End of Europe: Dictators, Demagogues, and the Coming Dark Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), *Mosaic*, May 1, 2017.
5. Shimon Peres, *Ben-Gurion: A Political Life* (New York: Schocken, 2011), *Jewish Review of Books*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Spring 2012), pp. 16–18.

AWARDS AND ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIPS

Academic and Research Fellowships

Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies, University of Chicago	2020–21
Junior Fellowship, Martin Marty Center for the Public Understanding of Religion	2019–20
Sidney L. Solomon Endowed Fellowship, Harvard University (full scholarship and stipend)	2013–14
Postdoctoral Fellowship, Israel Institute (declined)	2023
Political Thought, Economics and Strategy, Tikvah Fund Fellowship	2011

Other Awards and Distinctions

Conference Travel Grant, Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies, University of Chicago	2015
Tuition Grant (1/3), Division of the Social Sciences, University of Chicago	2010–11
Outstanding Cadet (Platoon), IDF Officers Training School	2007
Outstanding Soldier Distinction, IDF Spokespersons Unit	2006
Historical Consciousness Youth Scholarship, Israel Ministry of Defense	2002

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"Trends in American Conservatism: Neoconservatism, Paleoconservatism, (Catholic) Postliberalism" (Hebrew)
Herzl Scholars Program, Argaman Institute, Jerusalem, Israel January 2026

- “Tocqueville” (Hebrew)
Exodus Scholars Program, Argaman Institute, Tel Aviv, Israel December 2025
- “Israel and the Postliberal World Order”
41st Annual Conference of the Association of Israel Studies, Haifa, Israel September 2025
- “The Revolt Against Liberalism” (Hebrew):
 Part I: Trends in American and World Conservatism;
 Part II: The Rise of Civilizational States
The Herzl Scholars Program, Argaman Institute, Jerusalem, Israel April 2025
- “Post-Liberalism, Post-Modernism, Post-Capitalism: on the Moral Core of Present Discontents”
Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, St. Pete Beach, FL January 2022
- “The Idea of a Jewish Society: Yitzhak Baer’s Israel Among the Nations Reconsidered”
Association for Israel Studies Annual Conference June 2021
- “Hayden White and the Possibility of Faith in History”
University of Notre Dame and University of Chicago Fifth Annual Joint Graduate Student Conference March 2019
- “Eric Auerbach 101”
The Divinity School “101” Series, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL January 2018
- “Gershom Scholem and Jacob Taubes on Messianism and History”
Midwestern Inter-University Workshop in Jewish Studies, University of Chicago, Chicago November 2015
- “Nachman Krochmal and the Possibility of post-Textual Judaism”
“Ways of Knowing” Graduate Conference in Religion, Harvard University, Cambridge October 2015
- “Jacob Taubes and the Meaning of Jewish History”
The Jewish Studies Workshop, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL April 2015
- “Liberalism and the Jewish Question in the Thought of Leo Strauss” (Hebrew)
Leo Baeck Institute in Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel May 2013

PUBLIC LECTURES

- “Lehi and the Struggle for Jewish Independence” (Introductory Talk, Film Screening)
Anshei Sholom Beit Israel Synagogue, Chicago, IL January 2020
- “Labor Zionism”
Hillel House, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL March 2019
- “What is Modern Judaism? Or: Prolegomena to Bialik”
Anshe Emet Synagogue, Chicago, IL February 2019

“The ‘New Jew’: Then and Now”

Temple Israel, Valparaiso, IN

May 2018

“Time and Timelessness in Jewish History”

Jacob Berman Community Center, Rehovot, Israel

August 2015

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Shalem College

Philosophy of History (Hebrew)

2025–26

Introduction to Greek Philosophy (Hebrew)

2024–25; 2025–26

Introduction to Political Philosophy (Hebrew)

2024–25

University of Chicago — Instructor of Record

The Global Revolt Against Liberalism

Spring 2023

Classics of Social and Political Thought III

Spring 2023

Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to the Medieval Period

Autumn 2022

Classics of Social and Political Thought I

Autumn 2022

Religion: Cosmos, Conscience, and Community III

Spring 2022

Jewish Civilization II: Early Modern Period to the 21st Century

Winter 2022

Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to the Medieval Period

Autumn 2021

Classics of Social and Political Thought I

Autumn 2019

University of Chicago — Teaching Intern

Classics of Social and Political Thought III

Spring 2019

Classics of Social and Political Thought II

Winter 2019

Classics of Social and Political Thought I

Autumn 2018

Other Teaching Experience

The Zionist Idea | Tikvah Fellowship Maimonides Program (Teaching Assistant)

July 2018

Political Thought | Leadership Academy at Ein-Prat, Israel

Sept. 2011 – May 2012

American Thought and Literature | Leadership Academy at Ein-Prat, Israel

Sept. 2009 – Jan. 2010

Other Teaching Qualifications

Certified Writing Consultant, University of Chicago Writing Program (Spring 2018)

LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

Hebrew

Native (High Pass, University of Chicago Proficiency Exam)

English

Native-Level Fluency

French	Fluent (High Pass, University of Chicago and Harvard Proficiency Exams; Certificat Militaire de langue Française)
German	Reading Knowledge (High Pass, University of Chicago Proficiency Exam)
Dutch	Reading Knowledge (lived in Belgium for 5 years)

REFERENCES

Available upon request.