

## Dr Michael T Miller-Wierzbicki

<a href="mailto:michael.miller@nym.hush.com">michael.miller@nym.hush.com</a> <a href="https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8120-1645">orcid.org/0000-0001-8120-1645</a>	Polish Institute of Advanced Studies Stefana Jaracza 1 Warszawa 00-378 Poland  <a href="https://uni-erlangen.academia.edu/MichaelMiller">uni-erlangen.academia.edu/MichaelMiller</a> <a href="https://gires.org/speaker/michael-t-miller-phd/">gires.org/speaker/michael-t-miller-phd/</a>
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**OUTPUTS: Published monograph and 16 articles; 8 years teaching experience; 31 conference papers presented.**

### QUALIFICATIONS

**2014. PhD, Theology (Jewish Studies/Philosophy): University of Nottingham**

Title: *The Metaphysical Meaning of the Name of God in Jewish Thought.*

This project analyses the role that the Divine Name plays in biblical, rabbinic, hekhalot and kabbalistic material, and explicates this through the use of modern Jewish philosophers – Rosenzweig, Derrida, Levinas, etc. I argue that the Divine Name forms an integral part of Jewish mystical thought, determining several areas of metaphysics which have since gone on to influence the thought of modern Jewish philosophers.

Supervisors: Prof. Agata Bielik-Robson, Dr Holger Zellentin.

Funding: Departmental Stipend for quality of research awarded for years 2-4.

**2009. MA, Religious Studies (Distinction): Lancaster University**

Ninian Smart Prize for best MA dissertation.

**1999. BA, Philosophy: University of Hertfordshire**

### PUBLICATIONS

#### Books

2023 (Forthcoming) *Ben Ammi Ben Israel: Black Theology, Theodicy and Judaism in the Thought of the African Hebrew Israelite Messiah* (Bloomsbury: Black Religions and Cultures, 2023)

2016 *The Name of God in Jewish Thought: A Philosophical Analysis of Mystical Traditions from Apocalyptic to Kabbalah* (Routledge: Jewish Studies, 2016)

#### Refereed Journal Articles

2023 (Forthcoming) "Bishop Allan Wilson Cook (Rabbi Haling Hank Lenht), Queen Malinda Morris, and the Independent Church of God: A Missing Piece in the History of Hebrew Israelite Black Judaism" *Black Theology* 21.1

2021 "Ben Ammi's Adaptation of Veganism in the Theology of the African Hebrew Israelites" *Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society* 7.2 (2021)

2020 "The Name of God and the Name of the Messiah: Jewish and Christian parallels in Late Antiquity" (with Mariano Troiano) *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 15 (2019): 148-72

2020 "The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem and Ben Ammi's Theology of Marginalisation and Reorientation" *Religions* 11.2 (2020): 87

2019 "Black Judaism(s) and the Hebrew Israelites" *Religion Compass* 13.11 (2019): e12456

2018 "Allowing the Fly to Leave: The Chance Meeting of Wittgenstein and Buñuel at a Mexican Dinner Table" (with James Batcho) *Film-Philosophy* 22.3 (2018): 384-405

2016 "Kaplan and Wittgenstein: Atheism, Phenomenology, and the Use of Language" *Melilah: Manchester Journal of Jewish Studies* 12 (2015): 70-83

2016 "The Evolution of the Patriarch Enoch in Jewish Tradition" *Distant Worlds* 1.1 (2016): 128-141

2015 "Abraham Abulafia's Mystical Theology of the Divine Name and its Philosophical Revision in Walter Benjamin" *Medieval Mystical Theology* 24.1 (2015): 80-94

2013 "Folk Etymology and its Influence on Metatron Traditions" *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 44.3 (2013): 339-355.

2012 "Chaos and Identity: Onomatology in the Hekhalot Literature" *Bamidbar* 2.1 (2012): 36-51.

### **Book Chapters**

(Forthcoming) "Metaphysics of the Name in Israelite Thought: The Hebrew Conception of God's Nature" in *A Paradise of Paradoxes: Resolute Perplexities of Israel's Inscrutable Edenic Trees and Ineffable God*, ed. Alex S. Kohav & Ori Soltes (Routledge)

2023 (Forthcoming) "Layers of Liminality and Marginality in the African Hebrew Israelite Community" in *Betwixt and Between Liminality and Marginality: Mind the Gap*, ed. Zohar Hadromi-Allouche & Michael Hubbard MacKay (Lexington, 2023) pp.15-36.

2021 "The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem: A Borderline Case" in *The Stranger in Early Modern and Modern Jewish Tradition*, ed. Catherine Bartlett & Joachim Schlor (Brill) pp.28-46.

2021 "Jewish Practices and Traditions in the Medieval World" and "Journeys to the Other World: Medieval Jewish Traditions" in *Prognostication in the Medieval World: A Handbook*, ed. Matthias Heiduk et al (Walter de Gruyter, 2021) pp.342-355; pp.818-820.

2014 "The Name of the Beast: Monstrosity and Self in Michael Gira and Nietzsche" in *Monstrous Reflections*, ed. Petra Rehling & Elsa Bouet (Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2014) pp.63-70.

### **Encyclopaedia Entries**

2023 "African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem" in *World Religions and Spiritualities Project* ed. David G. Bromley: <https://wrldrels.org/2023/01/06/african-hebrew-israelites-of-jerusalem/>

2022 "Name Theology: Judaism" in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* ed. Barry Dov Walfish et al., vol.20 (Walter de Gruyter): 659-663.

2021 "The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem" in *Critical Dictionary of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements* ed. James Crossley & Alastair Lockhart (Panacea Charitable Trust): [www.cdamm.org/articles/ahij](http://www.cdamm.org/articles/ahij)

2017 "Apocalypse of Enoch" in *End of Days: An Encyclopaedia of the Apocalypse in World Religions* ed. Wendell Johnson (ABC-CLIO): 20-22.

## Book Reviews

2023 "Review: Christopher M. Driscoll, *White Devils, Black Gods: Race, Masculinity and Religious Codependency*," *Journal of the British Association for the Study of Religion*

2022 "Review: Laura Arnold Leibman, *Once We Were Slaves: The Extraordinary Journey of a Multi-Racial Jewish Family*," *Sephardic Horizons* 12.1

2019 "Review: MaNishtana, *Ariel Samson: Freelance Rabbi*," *British Association for the Study of Religion Bulletin* 134, May 2019.

2019 "Review: Daniel Lis, William Miles, & Tudor Parfitt, *In the Shadow of Moses: New Jewish Movements in Africa and the Diaspora*," *Jewish Culture and History*

2017 "Review: Richard A. Cohen, *Out of Control: Confrontations between Spinoza and Levinas*," *H-Net Reviews*.

2016 "Review: Brian Ogren, ed., *Time and Eternity in Jewish Mysticism*," *Jewish Culture and History* 17: 178-81.

2014 "Review: Peter Schäfer, *The Origins of Jewish Mysticism*," *Reviews of the Enoch Seminar*.

## Other Publications

2022 "Black Hebrew Israelites, Black-Jewish relations, and contemporary antisemitism" *Centre for the Study of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements* blog (commissioned)

2020 "Black Hebrew Israelites: Extremes of Hate and Hope" *Centre for the Study of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements* blog (commissioned)

2019 "ReThinking: James Landing's *Black Judaism*," *British Association for the Study of Religion Bulletin* 135, November 2019: 11-13.

## In Preparation

2023 *Black Hebrew Israelites* (Cambridge University Press: Elements in New Religious Movements)

## PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2020-2022: Associate Researcher (Gerda Henkel Stiftung Scholarship). Polish Institute of Advanced Studies, Warsaw.

2019-2020: Research Fellow. IKGF, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, Erlangen-Nürnberg, *Fate, Freedom and Prognostication: Strategies for Coping with the Future in East Asia and Europe*. Project: "Verbal and Visual Vistas: Differentiating two modes of Prophetic Revelation and Prognostication in Medieval Jewish Mysticism"

2018-2019: Research Assistant. Dept of Theology, Philosophy and Religious Studies, Liverpool Hope University. Project: Liverpool Archdiocese Survey

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2016-2019, Visiting Lecturer in Jewish Studies, Liverpool Hope University.

Designed, delivered and assessed:

- 1<sup>st</sup> year survey module "Introduction to Jewish Traditions"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year module "Advanced Jewish Traditions", (Jewish mysticism from biblical to modern times, including the influence on popular culture).
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year module "Modern Jewish Theology", (Rosenzweig, Fackenheim, Mordecai Kaplan, Joseph Soloveitchik, Judith Plaskow, and Ben Ammi).
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year unit "Jewish Ethics" (Abortion and animal ethics)

2017-2018, Visiting Lecturer in Jewish Studies and Philosophy, Chester University.

Lectured and assessed:

- 1<sup>st</sup> year Encountering Religions: Judaism
- 1<sup>st</sup> year Philosophy & Ethics
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year Violence and Nationalism in Religious and Philosophical Perspectives.

2015-Ongoing, Private tutor.

One to one A level, BA and MA tuition in RS, Philosophy.

2017, Guest Lecturer in Philosophy of Religion, Newman University Birmingham

Lectured and assessed 3<sup>rd</sup> year Philosophy classes on Metaphysics, Post/Modernity, and Death of God.

2016-18, Cover Lecturer, Philosophy/Theology, Liverpool Hope University

Lectured and ran seminars for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Philosophy and Theology classes due to research leave.

2011-2015, Teaching Associate, University of Nottingham

1<sup>st</sup> year Philosophy for Theologians, covering the influence and use of philosophy in monotheistic theology, from Ancient Greece to 20<sup>th</sup> century. Led seminars, lectured and assessed.

1<sup>st</sup> year Introduction to Judaism. Led seminars, lectured and assessed.

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

2021: The Spalding Trust – Small grant for completion of Gerda Henkel research Oct 2021

2020: Gerda Henkel Stiftung Research Grant: “The Evolution of a Black Jewish ‘Hebrew Israelite’ Group from Messianic Revolutionaries to State Sponsors, 1969-1990” Oct 2020 – Sep 2021.

2020: Religion Compass “Most Downloaded Article” award for “Black Judaism(s) and the Hebrew Israelites”.

2019: Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies – Bursary to present research at Oxford Summer Institute for Modern and Contemporary Judaism

2019: Anglo-Jewish Association / Spalding Trust – Dual Grant to cover teaching expenses for Jewish Studies modules (Liverpool Hope University)

2018: European Association for Jewish Studies – Conference grant to present research at EAJS Congress 2018, (Krakow)

2017: European Association for Jewish Studies – Full bursary for *Multidisciplinarity in Jewish Studies Program and Teaching* workshop

2015: The Herzl Institute – Full bursary for *Young Scholars Workshop* (Jerusalem) and to present research at *Philosophical Investigation of the Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud and Midrash* (Jerusalem).

2014: The Woolf Institute – Full bursary for *Bridging the Great Divide* e-learning course.

2013: The Spalding Trust – travel grant to present research at Society of Biblical Literature (St. Andrews) & World Congress of Jewish Studies (Jerusalem).

2011: Graduate School Travel Prize – travel grant to present research at *Philosophical Investigation of the Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud and Midrash* (Jerusalem).

2010: Departmental Stipend – partial funding for duration of doctoral studies.

2010: Full scholarship – Dip. *Messianism: Jewish and Christian Perspectives* (CEU Budapest).

2009: Ninian Smart Prize for best MA dissertation.

## EDITORSHIP

2014-2020. Religion and Theology Editor – *HARTS and Minds* journal, University of Bristol

## SERVICE & ADMINISTRATION

Peer Reviewer (Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy; Entangled Religions; Religions; Polish Journal for Arts & Culture)

Development of online teaching resources for Introduction to Philosophy and Judaism modules (University of Chester 2020-21)

Proofreading/Editorial assistance: Nicola Polloni, *Gundissalinus* manuscript (2019)

Proofreading/Editorial assistance: Federico Dal Bo, *Emanation and Philosophy of Language. An Introduction to Joseph ben Abraham Gikatilla*, (Cherub Press, 2019)

Assistant grant writer for Departmental project “Hermeneutics of Im/Mortality: Continuity and Discontinuity Between the Self and the Absolute in Religious Narratives of Death and Dying” (Liverpool Hope University, 2016)

Administrator for conference: Return to the Origins: The Qur’an’s Reformation of Judaism and Christianity (University of Nottingham, Jan 2013)

MOODLE (VLE) administration for 1<sup>st</sup> year course Atheism

Assistant editor for festschrift: *Faithful Reading: New Essays in Theology in Honour of Fergus Kerr*, OP (T&T Clark International, 2012)

## INVITED TALKS

2021 “The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem” (PIASt, December)

2020 “Modes of Prophecy in Medieval Jewish Mysticism” (IKGF, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg, 14 January)

2019 “Wittgenstein and Jewish Thought” (Revisiting Wittgenstein and Religion seminar, Jagiellonian University Krakow, 6 November)

2019 “New Diasporas and Shifting Centres of Power: Black Judaism(s)” (Oxford Summer Institute on Modern and Contemporary Judaism, Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, 1 July)

2019 “Black Jesus, Black Power: Visual and Musical aspects of the African American identification with Ancient Israelites” (Archbishop Desmond Tutu Seminar Series *Religion, Art and Conflict*, 15 March)

2019 “Claiming the Power to Define: The Black ‘Jewish’ Theology of the African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem” (Theology and RS Research Seminar Series, University of Chester, 27 February)

2018 “Life after the PhD” EAJS Emerge Early Career scholars section (*European Association for Jewish Studies*, Krakow, 18 July)

2018 “The Name of God in Jewish Thought”, Friends of Louis Jacobs (London, 24 June)

2017 “Anti-Semitism”, Hope Not Hate (Nottingham, 25 September)

## CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

### Conferences Organised

2011 Narratives of Trauma (University of Nottingham, May 2011)

### Papers Presented

2022 "The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem: Rewriting the Boundaries of Judaism" (*International Society for Religion, Literature and Culture*, Chester, 11-13 September)

2022 "Bishop Allan Wilson Cook (Rabbi Haling Hank Lenht), Queen Malinda Morris, and the Independent Church of God: A Missing Piece in the History of Hebrew Israelite Black Judaism" (*Afro-Jewish Studies Panel*, American Jewish Historical Society, New Orleans, 15-17 May)

2021 "The Dominion of Deception: The African Hebrew Israelites' Apocalyptic Prophecies and the End of This World" (*Innovative Religion and Apocalypticism: Dan David Conference*, Tel Aviv, 19-21 Dec)

2021 "The worship of God and the worship of nothingness in an African American 'Hebrew Israelite' group" (*Thinking About Nothing: Negation, Philosophy and the Mystical*, Liverpool Hope, 12-14 July)

2021 "The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem: a Black "Jewish" response to a world in crisis" (*British Assoc. for Jewish Studies*, Southampton, 5-7 July)

2021 "Tiny Steps Toward Peace: The African Hebrew Israelites and the State of Israel" (*Assoc. for Israel Studies*, Illinois, 7-10 June)

2020 "The African Hebrew Israelites and the Building of Peace with Israel" (*Virtual Oxford Summer Institute Modern Judaism*, 5-8 July)

2020 "The African Hebrew Israelites' Construction of Jews as White" (*Jews and Whiteness in Colonial Spaces*, SOAS (Virtual), 4-5 July)

2019 "A Speculative Reading of Kabbalistic Traces in Wittgenstein's Tractatus" w/ Katarzyna Wierzbicka, (*The Marrano Phenomenon: Jewish 'Hidden Tradition' and Modernity*, Warsaw, 17-18 September)

2019 "The End of This World: The Black 'Jewish' Apocalypticism of the African Hebrew Israelites" *The Study of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements: Critical and Interdisciplinary Approaches*, Bedford, 27-8 June)

2019 "The African Hebrew Israelite Community's Theology of Marginalisation" (*Liminal Spaces, Images and Texts*, Trinity College, Dublin 12-14 June)

2018 "The African Hebrew Israelite Community and the Theology of Marginalisation" (*British Association for the Study of Religion Conference*, Belfast, 3-5 September)

2018 "Redefining Religion, Nationhood and Belonging: The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem" (*British Association for Jewish Studies Conference*, Durham, 9-11 July)

2018 "Jewish concepts of God's Body: A Survey" (*European Association for Jewish Studies Congress*, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, 15-19 July)

2018 "Claiming the Power to Define: The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem" (*Identity and Memory in War and Peacebuilding*, Liverpool Hope University, 2 July)

2018 "One Body or Two: Eros and the Kabbalistic Tree of Sefirot" (*Mystical Theology in Dialogue with Contemporary Thought*, KU Leuven, 30 May-2 June)



2016 "The Empty Self: Annihilation and *unio mystica* in Medieval Jewish thought" (*Mysticism in Comparative Perspective*, Glasgow University, 14-16 December)

2016 "Words on the Body of God: The Texture and Physicality of the Divine Stature" (*British Association for Jewish Studies*, Birmingham, 10-12 July)

2016 "The Original Language, and the Seventy Languages in Jewish Tradition" (*Untying the Mother Tongue*, ICI Berlin, 11-12 May)

2015 "God's Perfection and His Name" (*The Question of God's Perfection*, The Herzl Institute, Jerusalem, 20-23 December)

2015 "Kaplan and Wittgenstein: Atheism, Phenomenology, and the Use of Language" (*British Association for Jewish Studies*, Manchester University, 5-7 July)

2014 "The Name of the Beast: Monstrosity and Self in Michael Gira and Nietzsche" (*Mechanisms of Monstrosity*, Oxford University, 25-27 July)

2014 "Walter Benjamin's Messianic Theology of the Name of God" (*Mystical Theology and Continental Philosophy*, Liverpool Hope University, 11-13 July)

2014 "Redemption in the Name: Walter Benjamin's transformation of a Kabbalistic motif" (*Jewish Studies as Philosophy: Beyond Historicism and Sociology?* University of Cambridge, 23-25 March)

2013 "Creation through the Name: A Re-examination of the Concept in Early Rabbinic Literature" (*16<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Jerusalem, 28 July – 1 August)

2013 "The Name of God and Creation: A Reassessment of Jarl Fossum's Evidence" (*International Meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature*, St Andrews, 7-11 July)

2013 "Prophecy and the Active Intellect in thirteenth-century Kabbalah" ('Jewish Prophecy' Panel, *Second Sight and Prophecy*, Aberdeen, 14-16 June)

2013 "After the Life of Enoch: the Active Intellect in thirteenth-century Kabbalah" (*Eighteenth Joint Postgraduate Religion and Theology Conference*, Bristol University, 7-9 March)

2011 "An examination of Metatron and principal angel figures within early rabbinic tradition" (*Philosophical Investigation of the Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud and Midrash*, The Shalem Center, Jerusalem, June)

2010 "The Metaphysics of Truth: The divine abstract in Enoch and Philo" (*Enoch Graduate Seminar*, Peter Pazmany University, Budapest, July)

2010 "Cutting the Shoots: Metatron as the human face of God" (*Angels and Demons*, University of Kent Canterbury, June)

## MEDIA & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS

2020 Interviewee for *BBC World Service* on Black Judaism

2020 Interviewee for *Dagen* on Hebrew Israelites and Black Judaism

2019 Interviewee for *Premier Christianity Magazine* on Hebrew Israelites



2017 Public Lecture for *Hope Not Hate* on antisemitism

## LANGUAGES

English: Native

Hebrew (Biblical-Medieval): Advanced

Hebrew (Modern): Advanced

Polish: Intermediate

## SOCIETY MEMBERSHIPS

2011 British Association for Jewish Studies

2012 Society for Biblical Literature

2012 World Union of Jewish Studies

2013 European Association for Jewish Studies

2016 Mystical Theology Network

2016 Association for the Continental Philosophy of Religion

2018 British Association for the Study of Religion

2019 Jewish-Muslim Research Network

2021 Association for Israel Studies

2022 Global Institution for Research Education and Scholarship (Committee Member)

## CONTINUING PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

2019 Oxford Summer Institute on Modern and Contemporary Judaism (Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies)

2018 Northern Partnership Post-Doctoral Training (Northern Jewish Studies Partnership, Manchester)

2017 *Multidisciplinarity in Jewish Studies Program and Teaching* workshop (EAJS, Girona)

2014 Certificate, Bridging the Great Divide: The Jewish-Muslim Encounter (The Woolf Institute, Cambridge)

2010 Diploma, Messianism: Jewish and Christian Perspectives, CEU Summer University (Budapest)

