

July 25, 2010

SCHEDULE OF THE DAY

12:00 **Jean Naggar**

“Sipping from the Nile: My Exodus from Egypt”

Jean’s very personal story is of a lost world of Sephardic Jews in Egypt. Biblical history repeated itself when the Jews once more had to flee Egypt. Jean was eighteen when shots rang out in Cairo.

12:30 **Prof. Marc Kligman**

“Maqam and Liturgy: Ritual, Music, and Aesthetics of Syrian Jews in Brooklyn”

The Aleppo Syrian Jews of both Brooklyn and Israel are known for their appreciation and punctilious maintenance of the Arab maqam—traditional Arabic music’s system of melodic modes—in their liturgy. While other studies have examined other aspects of Syrian Jewish liturgy, Kligman’s is the first to document and analyze Syrian musical practices.

1pm **Andrée Aelion Brooks**

“The Woman who Defied Kings: The Life and Times of Dona Gracia Nasi”

A brave young Jewish widow takes over her husband's international banking business, lends money to kings and dukes, exacts the freedom to flee from one country to another to escape the Inquisition, and rescues thousands of Jews. The story is true, based on documents discovered by Brooks in Spain, Portugal, Belgium, France, Italy, Jerusalem and Istanbul.

1:30 **Prof. Peninnah Schram** [*Young Adult / Childrens’ Hour*]

“The Hungry Clothes – And other Jewish Folktales”

This book presents a diverse selection of Ashkenazi and Sephardic fairytales, legends, parables, fables, tall tales, trickster and fool tales, and supernatural and mystical stories. They include *The Pots of Honey*, which teaches the importance of both justice and forgiveness and *The Boy Who Prayed with the Alphabet*, about an unlearned boy who finds a unique way to express his love for God.

2pm **Prof. Mara Cohen Ioannides** [*Young Adult / Childrens’ Hour*]

“A Shout in the Sunshine”

Set in 15th-century Ottoman Greece, this young adult novel tells the story of an extraordinary friendship between two boys from different cultural backgrounds. On the surface, Miguel, a refugee from post-Inquisition Spain, and David, the son of a wealthy Greek Jewish fabric merchant, have little in common. As they work together in David's family shop, they find they share a special connection that goes beyond the divide of rich and poor, Spanish and Greek.

SEPHARDIC JEWISH BOOK FAIR - AUTHORS & BOOK SIGNINGS

2:30 Jessica Jiji

“Sweet Dates in Basra”

Sweet Dates in Basra is a wonderfully written story that will capture the heart of anyone who reads it. While it deals with some heavy issues, Jiji's writing is such that they never weigh the reader down. It's a charming novel that anyone interested in other cultures should definitely pick up. Jiji does a remarkable job of evoking 1940s Iraq in her novel, from the colorful markets to the remote marshes, making for a vibrant read.

3pm Rabbi Dr. Marc D. Angel [*Key Speaker*] – *DOUBLE SESSION*

“Foundations of Sephardic Spirituality: The Inner Life of Jews of the Ottoman Empire”

Rabbi Angel chronicles their Iberian roots and their religious foundations; the Bible and the Talmud were the primary texts of their religious worldview. He explains their spiritual approach to Midrashic/Kabbalistic Judaism, the religious and social structure of their lives, and their Ladino folklore. He concludes that the Sephardic experience in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire demonstrates the triumph of the human spirit in the face of ubiquitous discrimination, poverty, and political weakness.

3:30 “Maimonides, Spinoza and Us: Toward an Intellectually Vibrant Judaism”

Rabbi Angel discusses major themes in the writings of Maimonides and Spinoza to show us how modern people can deal with religion in an intellectually honest and meaningful way. From Maimonides, we gain insight on how to harmonize traditional religious belief with the dictates of reason. From Spinoza, we gain insight into the intellectual challenges which must be met by modern believers.

4pm Abraham (Al) Sutton

“The Aristocrat: The Life and Legacy of Hillel Menashe Sutton”

Al Sutton was only eleven when Hillel Sutton died when a renowned rabbi from Jerusalem asked, "Do you know who your father was?" This question triggered a powerful need to know more about his beloved father and led Al on a journey of discovery, from Aleppo, Syria, where Rabbi Hillel Sutton was a leading member of the Sephardic community, to Jerusalem, and contemporaries, Hillel Sutton came alive to his son in new ways. The result is an extraordinary memoir.

4:30 Prof. Daniel Khazzoom

“No Way Back: The Journey of a Jew from Baghdad”

“When I was a boy, my grandmother used to sing ‘Baghdad sit leblad,’ or ‘Baghdad the lady of the cities of the world.’ Was this an instance of the victim identifying with the oppressor? Or was it perhaps a tribute to the only Baghdad my grandmother knew, the Jewish Baghdad of my memories?...”

5:00 Mitchell James Kaplan

“By Fire, By Water”

Kaplan, a screenwriter, sets his debut novel in 15-century Spain, amid the Inquisition, the attempt to unify the kingdoms of Spain under Christian rule, and the voyage of Christopher Columbus to what the seaman expects will be the Indies. The action centers on the historical figure of Luis de Santángel, chancellor to the king of Aragon and a converso, a Jewish convert to Christianity at a time when the Inquisition sought to repress ‘judaizing’....Kaplan has done remarkable homework on the period and crafted a convincing and complex figure in Santángel in what is a naturally cinematic narrative and a fine debut.