



The Quest to Learn Hebrew: From Robert Wakefield (d. 1537/8) to Johann Buxtorf the Elder (1564-1629)

Lecture and Workshop by BGSH-Fellow Prof Joanna Weinberg (Oxford)
- 6./12.5.2020

In this workshop, we will examine how and why Christians were propelled to study Hebrew in early modern Europe. Though understandable that Christians wishing to follow the invocation “ad fontes” undertook the task of engaging with the Old Testament in its original language, it is not self-evident why they also would study rabbinic texts and medieval and post-medieval Jewish literature. We will study this phenomenon through the works of one of the first English “professors of Hebrew” Robert Wakefield, and those of, arguably, the most distinguished Hebraist of the early modern period, Johann Buxtorf of Basel. In the course of our scrutiny of their works we will necessarily have to consider how their study of Hebrew affected or was affected by their notion of Jews and Judaism. I will provide specimen texts in Latin, German and English translation on which to base our discussions.

Lecture: **Church Father or Rabbi: The Debate Over Philo of Alexandria in Early Modern Europe**; Wed, 6.5., 6.15 - 8.00pm, Departement Geschichte, Hirschgässlein 21, 4051 Seminar Room 3
Workshop: Tue, 12.5., 2 - 6pm (incl. small dinner), Departement Geschichte, Hirschgässlein 21, 4051 Basel, Seminar Room 4
Registration: bgsh.geschichte.unibas.ch/registration (Deadline: 1.5.2020)
Contact: laura.ritter@unibas.ch