

UCLA CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

presents

The First Natalie Limonick Symposium on Jewish Civilization

The
Ethics *of the*
Neighbor

MAY 16 - 17, 2004

314 ROYCE

Sunday, May 16

1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

**THE FIGURE OF THE NEIGHBOR IN CLASSICAL
JEWISH TEXTS AND THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL**

MENACHEM LORBERBAUM

(Tel Aviv University)

“Jewish Collectivity and Gentile Otherness”

SUZANNE LAST STONE

(Cardozo Law School)

*“The Neighbor, the Stranger, and Humanity’s Shared
Image of God in the Jewish Legal Tradition”*

DAVID MYERS

(UCLA)

“Politics and Piety in Kiryas Joel”

NOMI STOLZENBERG

(USC)

*“What’s Keeping the Other Out of Kiryas Joel?
A Legal Perspective on a Liberal Problem”*

7 p.m. - 8 p.m.

RECEPTION

IN HONOR OF NATALIE LIMONICK

8 p.m.

EVENING ROUNDTABLE:

**THE CONCEPT OF THE NEIGHBOR
IN JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY**

RABBI HAROLD SCHULWEIS

(Temple Valley Beth Shalom)

DR. JACK MILES

(The Getty Center)

Monday, May 17

MORNING SESSION: 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**THE NEIGHBOR IN JEWISH PHILOSOPHY, LITERATURE,
AND RELIGIOUS TEXTS**

KENNETH REINHARD

(UCLA)

*“The Ethics of the Neighbor in Jewish Thought:
Universalism, Particularism, Exceptionalism”*

ADAM ZACHARY NEWTON

(University of Texas, Austin)

*“‘At a Near Distance’:
Bruno Schulz and Witold Gombrowicz by way of Levinas”*

12 p.m. - 2 p.m.

306 Royce Hall

SPECIAL LUNCHTIME DRASH WITH DANIEL BOYARIN (UC Berkeley)

“Judaism and Christianity as Neighbors”

(part of the *Talmud on One Foot* series)

AFTERNOON SESSION: 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.

MICHAEL ZANK

(Boston University)

“The Ethics of Rebuke”

DANA HOLLANDER

(McMaster University and UCLA)

*“Hermann Cohen on ‘the Neighbor’:
Between Ethics, Politics, and Religion”*

PAUL MENDES-FLOHR

(Hebrew University and University of Chicago)

*“Love, accusative and dative.
Reflections on Leviticus 19:18”*

7:30 p.m.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

JAN TOMASZ GROSS

(New York University)

“Blinded by Social Distance”

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The symposium is open to the public at no charge. Advance registration is not required. Please note that seating is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. A list of UCLA restaurants open on Sunday and Monday will be available at the conference. Please purchase a parking permit (\$7) at the kiosk at Hilgard and Westholme Avenues, the parking attendant will direct you to the nearest parking lot. For further information, please call (310) 825-5387.

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The Ethics of the Neighbor

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Beggars Receiving Alms at the Door of a House
1648. Rembrandt Harmenez van Rijn, Dutch, 1606–1669.
Etching, drypoint and burin. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

The UCLA Center for Jewish Studies is pleased to announce the inaugural year of the newly endowed Natalie Limonick Symposium on Jewish Civilization. Each year, the symposium will take up an issue in Jewish Civilization of crucial historical and contemporary importance. This year, the topic will be *The Ethics of the Neighbor*. The concept of the neighbor that arises from the biblical injunction to “love thy neighbor as thyself” (Lev. 19:18) has generated a vast history of commentary in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. These “People of the Book,” in this Islamic expression, are indeed “neighbors,” insofar as they embrace closely related narratives, texts, and figures. Yet this proximity has produced a history of conflict, including the exegetical and social struggles to define the ethics of the neighbor. The obligation to the neighbor implied by the passage in Leviticus has traditionally opened up a series of difficult questions: who counts as my “neighbor”? what kind of relationship to other people is implied by “love”? Indeed, what kind of subjectivity is involved in the “love of the self” on which this relationship is based? If questions such as these arise and take on their urgency originally in religious discourses, they do not remain exclusive to those discourses for long, but soon pass into a wide range of secular traditions of thought and literature. Neither brother nor stranger, the neighbor is that particular other who marks the ambiguous realm between family and polis, hence serves as a touchstone for an ethics not determined by the obligations of kinship or state. The neighbor is both too close to be entirely reified or abstracted and too distant to be fully identified with the subject’s set of intimates.

The conference will address the question of the ethics of the neighbor from several points of view, including religious, historical, political, and philosophical.

It is commonly assumed in this country that American culture is secular or at the very least “non-denominational.” But this is to forget that the U.S. Constitution separates church and state not only to prevent the infiltration of religious ideology into government, but also in order to protect religion from governmental interference. The world we live in is both deeply religious (consciously or not), and increasingly ravaged by religious strife. Nevertheless, it is this very inextricability of religion and the social that perhaps offers the last chance of finding some *rapprochement* to the struggles that threaten to tear our world apart, from within and without. For it is religion, for better or worse, that provides our fundamental conceptions and vocabularies of authority, freedom, responsibility, the individual, the nation, and universalism — ideas whose value we indeed hold to be self-evident for democracy.



Commemorative Coin
of the Holyland. 2000/5760

It is our hope that the Natalie Limonick Symposium on Jewish Civilization and this year’s conference on *The Ethics of the Neighbor* will approach this set of difficult issues and imbrications with equanimity, modesty, and optimism.