

BAD YIDDISH * בעד יידיש

FARBINDUNGEN 2025

FEBRUARY 2-3, 2025 | VIRTUAL

Farbindungen / פאַרבינדונגען Yiddish Studies Conference

Bad Yiddish / בעד יידיש

Sunday, February 2nd and Monday, February 3rd, 2025 | virtual

Sponsored by the Mayrent Institute, an undertaking of the Mosse/Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Farbindungen Yiddish Studies is accepting proposals for papers and workshops in Yiddish Studies from graduate students, advanced undergraduates, and early career professionals for our virtual 2025 conference, **Bad Yiddish / בעד יידיש**.

About the Conference | Our conference invites submissions for two types of session:

- **Paper presentations (15 minutes each)** featuring original research are delivered in moderated panels grouped around a single theme. Moderators facilitate conversation after panelists have presented their papers. Presenters are encouraged to use slides or other visual aids as supplements.
- **Interactive workshops (60 minutes each)** offer participants the opportunity to actively and collaboratively engage with a topic. In interactive workshops, facilitators guide participants through discussion around source material, a pedagogical practice, or a topic of professionalization.

Proposals (abstracts) for papers and workshops may be in **English or Yiddish** and should address the theme of **Bad Yiddish / בעד יידיש**. Proposals should not exceed 250 words and should be submitted by 11:59:59 ET on Friday, November 15th at <https://bit.ly/farbindungen25>. Please direct questions to farbindungen@gmail.com.

About our Theme: Bad Yiddish / בעד יידיש

Fartaytsht un ... farergert? For **Farbindungen 2025**, we invite participants to consider the category of “bad Yiddish”—aesthetically, morally, politically, polemically. We are seeking papers that investigate the dismissed, sidelined, marked, or marginalized. Proposals may consider:

- **authenticity and artificiality:** Where, how, and why are hierarchies of Yiddish culture established? How is authenticity invoked in spaces of art and representation, language acquisition, translation, and identity? How are nostalgia and authenticity connected? What

pathways have been precluded by calls to authenticity?

- **propriety and prescriptivism:** What is “good” Yiddish? Who defines the standard, and to what ends? What dialect biases have impacted Yiddish communities and Yiddish Studies historically, and how do they manifest today? How can Yiddish Studies better engage with Hasidic Yiddish? We invite papers that consider the vast range of standards and benchmarks that exist, and have existed in Yiddish orthography, pedagogy, publishing practices, and beyond.
- **exclusion and derision:** Where have Yiddish speakers been excluded, and where has Yiddish or Yiddish Studies been dismissed or diminished? Who and what is given primacy *within* Yiddish culture and Yiddish Studies? How has Yiddish been used as a tool of exclusion? What is taboo in Yiddish, and in Yiddish Studies? We are interested in questions of race, ethnicity, gender, and identity; dis/ability and access; genre and media, including *shund*; and anthropocentrism and the exclusion of the non-human.
- **otherworlds and underworlds:** How do normative systems of law, politics, religion, or ethics and morality, impact the world(s) of Yiddish? How are these systems and challenges to them represented? How have groups and individuals imagined spaces *outside* of these systems? How does Yiddish code particular actions, people, or groups as evil? What makes a Yiddish villain, or a Yiddish monster? We see space here for studies of radicalism, revolt, and rebellion; crime and transgression; *apikorses* (heresy) and superstition; borders and boundaries.
- **death and dying:** Yiddish is no stranger to tragedy. We invite papers that investigate Yiddish’s literary, cultural, and linguistic responses to catastrophe and decline, both personal and systemic. How does Yiddish represent Jewish and non-Jewish suffering? How does Yiddish account for and represent perpetrators of tragedy or violence? Alternatively, how have Yiddish texts, writers, and/or histories responded to or resisted ideas of Yiddish as already dead or dying?
- **futurity and reproduction:** Yiddish has long been shadowed by anxieties around its future. Will the transmission of language and culture continue successfully, or will it be deficient? How does Yiddish Studies reproduce itself, and where do we want to take it? How might questions of pedagogy and translation help us to embrace various forms of “bad” Yiddish?

We value scholarship that speaks to, builds on, challenges, or points to flaws in our interpretation of **Bad Yiddish**, gives voice to marginalized and underrepresented perspectives, and offers new ways of grappling with moral, aesthetic, and political aspects of Yiddish language and culture. We encourage proposals from people not affiliated with formal academic spaces. Don’t hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions: farbindungen@gmail.com.



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