



The Ben Zvi Institute for the Study of Jewish Communities in the East

Call for papers

Three Hundred Years of the Hida: Travel, Study and Creation in the Mediterranean Basin and Europe
in the Eighteenth Century

A research conference marking the tricentennial of the Hida's birth

/ March 26-27, 2024 / 16-17 Adar,

Yad Ben Zvi, Jerusalem

The year 2024 is the tricentennial anniversary of the birth of Rabbi Haim Yosef David Azoulai (Jerusalem, 5484/1724 – Livorno, 5566/1806), known as Hida. Hida was born in Jerusalem, lived in Hebron and wandered for many years in North Africa and Europe before settling in Livorno, Italy. He authored more than a hundred books in a huge variety of genres – halakhah, sermons, commentaries, Kabbalah, bibliography, autobiographical travel writing, and more. An examination of the Hida's writings uncovers the richness of his intellectual and cultural milieu, illuminating the multifaceted nature of this individual. Born in the Jerusalem, his travels between diverse cultural spaces endowed him with characteristics reflective of the modern worlds he encountered. Reading his work, one becomes acquainted with a plurality of points of view: outstanding rabbinic scholars from Jerusalem, the wealthy Portuguese-speaking milieu living in Amsterdam, Jewish and Christian book collectors throughout Europe, princes from the principalities of northern Italy, and a long list of many others.

Hida's influence can be found at a variety of intersections even today: he is responsible for a crucial step in the birth of the bibliography of the Hebrew book – a fundamental field in Jewish studies to this day. No less important is his influence on North African Kabbalah, on the liturgy of Sephardic communities, and of course, on the world of halakhah and on his successors such as Rabbi Haim Falaji and Rabbi Yosef Haim of Baghdad.





The Ben-Zvi Institute wishes to mark the 300th anniversary of Hida's birth with a celebratory conference that will discuss the many aspects of eighteenth-century Judaism that are reflected in his character: on the one hand, we will discuss his own writings, and on the other – the cultural spaces in which he participated and within which he worked, at defining moments of modern history, in the age of revolutions. The topics to be discussed at the conference include the institution of *shadarut*; halakhah; scholarship; books and libraries; the dissemination of knowledge and the culture of printing; the foundations of Sephardic Kabbalah; transitions of knowledge between cultures; leisure culture and travel.

We invite scholars to submit proposals for individual papers or sessions at the conference. We will consider both proposals regarding both the many professional fields arising from Hida's work, and the broad cultural contexts – in the Mediterranean basin and Europe during the eighteenth century – in which his figure and activity were shaped.

Proposals (in Hebrew or English, up to 250 words), together with a CV, should be sent by February 10th, 2024, to Mrs. Haya Sigal at mbz@ybz.org.il.

Academic Committee: Prof. Maoz Kahana, Dr. Oded Cohen, Prof. Miriam Frenkel, Dr. Assaf Tamari

