The Sephardi encounter with modernity shows a counterexample to the Ashkenazi and European experience of secularization. The Mizrahi encounter with modernity offers a case study for thinking of secularization in Israel and beyond. This workshop explores the religious and secular aspects of what we view as Mizrahi renaissance in the context of intra-Jewish power struggles and political debates in Israel. A special focus will be given to the category Masortiut or Traditionism as reaction and alternative to the western religious-secular dichotomy.

This project is part of ReCentGlobe and Multiple Secularities beyond the West, beyond Modernities at the University of Leipzig. Multiple Secularities explores different forms of secularity in non-western regions. The Israeli case - unknown or overlooked - can highlight Mizrahi secularization experiences as key to the questions posed around global secularization beyond the West.

Sponsoring Institutions: The European Association for Jewish Studies – EAJS | The Jenny Belzberg Program in Israel Studies, University of Calgary | University of Leipzig.
‘Traditionism’ and Multifaceted Responses to Secularization amongst Mizrahim in Israel

9:00 | Welcome and Introduction
Yemima Hadad (University of Leipzig)
Angy Cohen (Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)/University of Calgary)
Yael Attia (University of Potsdam/University of Paderborn)

Welcoming words by the directors of Multiple Secularities: Monika Wohlrab-Sahr and Christoph Kleine (University of Leipzig)

9:30-11:00 | Secularism in Sephardi Contemporary History
Introduction: Angy Cohen (Universidad Complutense de Madrid/University of Calgary)
Yaakov Yadgar (University of Oxford): The Nationalization of Traditionism? Reflections on Secularism in contemporary Israeli Politics
Sigal Nagar-Ron (Sapir Academic College): Is there a future to traditionality? A sociological perspective on development towns educational system

11:00-11:30 | Coffee Break

11:30-13:30 | The Sephardi Experience and the problem of European Secularism
Chair: Ottfried Fraisse (Halle-Wittenberg University)
Yuval Evri (Brandeis University): Sephardi intellectuals in the Yishuv and the Question of Secularism Today
Omri Hannah Ben Yehuda (University of Lille): A Very Sweet Annunciation: From Luther to Ovadiah Yosef
Mati Shemoelof (Berlin): Brit Mila and Bar Mitzwah: Examining Secularization and Traditionism in the Arab-Jews (Mizrahi) context through the short stories of Ayelet Tsabari and Adamit Pereh

13:30-14:30 | Lunch Break

14:30-16:00 | Ethnicity, Diaspora and Migration
Chair: Sina Rauschenbach (University of Potsdam)
Eliaou Balouka (University of Southampton): From Coexistence to Disconnection. The Trajectories of Two Religious Minorities Through Their European Migrations. A Comparative Study of M’zabi Ibadi and M’zabi Jewish Collective Memories
Aviad Moreno (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev): Between the Migration of Jews and 'Jewish Migration': The Creation of Transatlantic Traditions Among Northern Moroccan Jews

17:00 | City Tour: Jewish Leipzig
19:00 | Dinner