

# Fellows

**Kerstin Mayerhofer**

IFK\_Junior Fellow

Duration of fellowship

01. October 2021 bis 30. June 2022

## Kerstin Mayerhofer

### PROJECT TITLE

»quam mulieres menstruosi sunt«. The Motif of Jewish »Male Menstruation« as an Example for Pre-Modern Christian Mechanisms of Discrimination

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A number of Christian sources from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries relate of Jewish man as afflicted by an anomalous bleeding disease, neither resulting from injury or chronic illness. The bleeding is interpreted as form of »male menstruation« and symbolises the Jews' religious and social inferiority. The present dissertation collects material sourced from theological, medical, and political writings and scrutinises the image of the »men-struating« Jew. Jewish »male menstruation« is understood as a literary motif that can elucidate the intentions of respective texts in view of their audiences. The project aims to demonstrate how religion, physiology, sex, and gender are interrelated categories of social determination. They forge a notion of identity and difference with proto-racial characteristics.

## CV

Kerstin Mayerhofer completed Slavonic studies (Russian) and Jewish studies at the University of Vienna. Her research focuses on Christian-Jewish relations and mechanisms of discrimination in pre-modern times, the conceptualization of the Jewish body, and gender(s) and sexualitie(s) in Judaism. She has worked as Project Assistant at the Department of Jewish Studies, University of Vienna, between 2017 and 2021. Since 2018, she is working on her PhD project on the motif of Jewish »male menstruation« in pre-modern Christian sources. Her project is co-supervised at Queen Mary University London. Kerstin Mayerhofer is co-editor of the series *An End to Antisemitism!* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019–2021). She is member of various work and study groups on Gender History and Religion and Gender at University of Vienna, University of Erfurt and Queen Mary University London.

## Publications

»Inferiority Embodied: The »Men-struating« Jew and Pre-Modern Notions of Identity and Difference«, in: gem. mit Armin Lange, Dina Porat, Lawrence H. Schiffman (Hg.), *Confronting Antisemitism through the Ages – A Historical Perspective (= An End to Antisemitism!, Band 3)*, Berlin 2021, S. 135–59; gem. mit Armin Lange, Dina Porat, Lawrence H. Schiffman (Hg.), *Confronting Antisemitism through the Ages – A Historical Perspective (= An End to Antisemitism!, Band 3)*, Berlin 2021; gem. mit Dieter J. Hecht, Louise Hecht, Avraham Siluk, Stephan Wendehorst, *Quellen zur jüdischen Geschichte im Heiligen Römischen Reich und seinen Nachfolgestaaten: Judendeutsch, Jiddisch, Hebräisch, Judenspanisch, 16.–20. Jahrhundert*, Wien, 2014.