



## Prof. Eliezer Lorne Segal

BA, MA, PhD

### Positions

Professor Emeritus

[Faculty of Arts, Department of Classics and Religion](#)

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### Background

## **Educational Background**

BA Philosophy, Jewish Studies, McGill University, 1972

MA Talmud, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1976

PhD Talmud, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1982

## **Biography**

Eliezer Segal is currently Professor Emeritus in the Department of Classics and Religion at the University of Calgary, specializing in Rabbinic Judaism. Originally from Montreal, he holds a BA degree from McGill University (1972) and MA and PhD in Talmud from the Hebrew University (1976, 1982). He has been on the faculty of the University of Calgary since 1986. In addition to his many academic studies of textual and literary aspects of rabbinic texts and the interactions of Jewish and neighbouring cultures, he has attempted to make the fruits of Judaic scholarship accessible to non-specialist audiences through his web site, newspaper columns and children's books.

He and his wife Agnes Romer Segal have three, five grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Some of his recent books include: *The Most Precious Possession* (2014), *Teachers, Preachers and Selected Short Features* (2019), *The Times of Our Life: Some Brief Histories of Jewish Time* (2019), *Beasts that Teach, Birds that Tell: Animal Language in Rabbinic and Classical Literatures* (2019).

## **Research**

### **Areas of Research**

#### *Rabbinic philology*

The philological and literary study of Jewish texts from the Rabbinic era (Talmud and Midrash), with special focus on the establishment of accurate texts and the understanding of the complex processes of redaction and written transmission of originally oral traditions.

#### *Midrash*

The examination of "Midrash," ancient Rabbinic works relating to Hebrew Bible. My research has focused on studying the different literary approaches characteristic of rhetorical homiletics (sermons) and of scriptural interpretation (exegesis). These reflect the geographical distributions between Israel and Babylonia, and the institutional division between synagogue and scholarly academy.

## *Judaism in the Classical environment*

Detailed topical studies examining statements and discussions by the ancient Jewish rabbis in the context of their contemporary Greek and Roman cultures.

## **Awards**

- Humanities Open Book Program for digital republication of volumes in Brown Judaic Studies series, National Endowment for the Humanities / Andrew W. Mellon Foundation., 2020
- Local Journalism Initiative, Canadian Heritage. 2019-
- Nachman Sokol-Chaim Yoel and Mollie Halberstadt Award for Scholarship: Biblical / Rabbinic, Helen and Stan Vine Annual Canadian Jewish Book Awards. 2006
- Visiting Professor Grant for research at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem., Lady Davis Fellowship Trust . 1999
- Itta and Eliezer Zeisler Memorial Lectureship, Department of Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies, University of British Columbia. 2003
- Annual Fellowship, Calgary Institute for the Humanities. 1991
- E. S. Rosenthal Memorial Award, Department of Talmud, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. 1985
- Finkelstein Scholarships, Lieberman Institute for Talmudic Research, Jewish Theological Seminary of America. 1985
- Doctoral Award, SSHRC. 1979
- Graduate Fellowship, Canada Council for Humanities and Social Sciences. 1978

## **Publications**

- [Beasts That Teach, Birds That Tell: Animal Language in Rabbinic and Classical Literatures](#). Segal, Eliezer. Alberta Judaic Library. (2019)
- [Chronicles and Commentaries](#). Segal, Eliezer. Alberta Judaic Library. (2015)
- [A Time for Every Purpose](#). Segal, Eliezer. Alberta Judaic Library. (2015)
- [The Most Precious Possession: The Ring of Polycrates in Ancient Religious Narratives](#). Segal, Eliezer. Peter Lang: American University Studies. (2014)
- [On the Trails of Tradition: Explorations of Jewish Life and Learning](#). Segal, Eliezer. Alberta Judaic Library. (2011)
- [For Signs and for Seasons](#). Segal, Eliezer. Alberta Judaic Library. (2011)
- [Reading Jewish Religious Texts](#). Segal, Eliezer. Routledge. (2011)
- [Judaism—the eBook](#). Segal, Eliezer. Journal of Buddhist Ethics Online Books. (2008)
- [Introducing Judaism](#). Segal, Eliezer. Routledge. (2008)
- [Sanctified Seasons](#). Segal, Eliezer. Alberta Judaic Library. (2008)
- [A Meeting-Place for the Wise: More Excursions into the Jewish Past and Present](#). Segal, Eliezer. Alberta Judaic Library. (2008)
- [In Those Days, at This Time: Holiness and History in the Jewish Calendar](#). Segal, Eliezer. University of Calgary Press. (2007)
- [From Sermon to Commentary: Expounding the Bible in Talmudic Babylonia](#). Segal, Eliezer. Wilfrid Laurier University Press. (2005)

- [Ask Now of the Days That Are Past](#). University of Calgary Press. (2005)
- [Holidays, History and Halakhah](#). Segal, Eliezer. Jason Aronson. (2001)
- [Why Didn't I Learn That in Hebrew School?](#). Segal, Eliezer. Jason Aronson. (1999)
- [The Babylonian Esther Midrash: A Critical Commentary Volume One: To the End of Esther Chapter 1](#). Segal, Eliezer. Brown Judaic Studies. (1992)
- [The Babylonian Esther Midrash: A Critical Commentary \(Volume Two: To the Beginning of Esther Chapter 5\)](#). Segal, Eliezer. Brown Judaic Studies. (1993)
- [The Babylonian Esther Midrash: A Critical Commentary \(Volume Three: Esther Chapter 5 to End\)](#). Segal, Eliezer. Brown Judaic Studies. (1994)
- [Case Citation in the Babylonian Talmud: The Evidence of Tractate Neziqin](#). Segal, Eliezer. Brown Judaic Studies. (1990)
- [Uncle Eli's Special-for-Kids, Most Fun Ever, Under-the-Table Passover Haggadah](#). Eliezer Segal (Author), Bonnie Gordon Lucas (Illustrator). NoStarch Press. (1999)
- [Uncle Eli Repents](#). Eliezer Segal (Author), Bonnie Gordon-Lucas (Illustrator). CreateSpace. (2014)
- [Re'eh: Ethical Consumption](#). Diana Lipton, ed.. Forbidden Fruit to Milk and Honey: A Commentary on Food in the Torah. 255-262. (2017)
- [Entries: "Omer"; "Oral Torah"; "Halakhah"](#). E. Orlin, ed.. The Routledge Encyclopedia of Ancient Mediterranean Religions. 383, 670, 675. (2015)
- [Haman: Rabbinic Judaism](#). Klauck, Hans-Josef, et al., eds.. Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception . 1:83-84. (2015)
- [Esther \(Book and Person\): Judaism: Rabbinic Judaism](#). Klauck, Hans-Josef, et al., eds.. Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception. 8: 19-21. (2014)
- [Judaism and Food](#). Paul B. Thompson and David M. Kaplan, eds.. Encyclopedia of Food and Agricultural Ethics. 1308-1315. (2013)
- [Judaism: Contemporary Expressions](#). Michael D. Palmer, Stanley M. Burgess, eds.. The Blackwell Companion to Religion and Social Justice. 190-203. (2010)
- [From Glutton to Gangster](#). Aubrey Glazer, Justin Lewis, Tzemah Yoreh, eds.. Vixens Disturbing Vineyards: The Embarrassment and Embrace of Scriptures—A Festschrift Honoring Harry Fox Le'Veit Yoreh. 246-265. (2009)
- [The Parnass, the Gabbai and the Ritual Committee](#). Sandra Morton Weizman and Agnes Romer Segal, eds.. The House that Jacob Built: Congregation House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel, Calgary, Alberta Centennial Commemorative Book. 60-61. (2009)
- [The Concept of Diaspora in Talmudic Thought](#). A. M. Ehrlich, ed.. Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora. 1:4-8. (2008)
- [Aristeas or Aggadah: Talmudic Legend and the Greek Bible in Palestinian Judaism](#). W. O. McCready and A. Reinhartz, eds.. Common Judaism: Explorations in Second-Temple Judaism. 159-172, 286-292. (2008)
- [Entries: "Berakhot", "Bikkurim", "Demai". Hallah", "Kilayim", "Ma'aser Sheni"](#). Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, eds.. Encyclopaedia Judaica. 3:399-400, 3:697, 5:547-548, 8:278, 12:154, 13:314. (2007)
- [Digital Discipleship: Using the Internet for the Teaching of Jewish Thought](#). H. Kreisel, ed.. Study and Knowledge in Jewish Thought, The Goldstein-Goren Library of Jewish Thought . 359-373. (2006)

- [Disarming Phineas: Rabbinic Confrontations with Biblical Militancy](#). D. Hawkin, ed.. The Twenty-first Century Confronts Its Gods: Studies in the Interaction between Religion and Society. 141-156. (2004)
- [Anthological Dimensions of the Babylonian Talmud](#). D. Stern, ed.. The Anthology in Jewish Literature. 81-107. (2004)
- [Jewish Perspectives on Restorative Justice](#). M. Hadley, ed.. The Spiritual Roots of Restorative Justice. 181-198. (2001)
- [Judaism](#). H. Coward, ed.. Experiencing Scripture in World Religions. 15-33. (2000)
- [Apéndice Documental: C. Poesias Encomiásticas Proemiales a Abraham Gómez Silveira En Sus Sermones \(1677\)](#). Kenneth Brown and Harm Den Boer, eds.. El Barroco Sefardí Abraham Gómez Silveira: Arévalo, Prov. De Avila, Castilla 1656 -- Amsterdam 1741: Estudio Preliminar, Obras Líricas, Vejámenes En Prosa Y Verso Y Documentación Personal. 256-260. (2000)
- [Judaism](#). H. Coward, ed.. Life After Death in the World Religions. 11-30. (1997)
- Unit 8: The Oral Law... The Mishnah, Jerusalem to Jabneh. I. Gottlieb [et al]. Everyman's University, Israel. (1981)
- [Towards a Definition of 'the Era of the Sages](#). Daat 86. 63-72. (2018)
- [A Funny Thing Happened to Me on My Way to Sodom](#). Journal for the Study of Judaism 46. 103-129. (2015)
- [Rabbi Eleazar's Perutah](#). Journal of Religion 85. 25-42. (2005)
- [Entries: "B'nai Brith", "Falashas", "Ginsberg, H.L.", "Glueck, N.", "Goldin, J.", "Gordis, R." \(\), "Hebrew University of Jerusalem", "Heschel, A. J.", "Jewish Congress, American", "Jewish Congress, World", "Talmud", "Torah"](#). J.D. Douglas, ed.. Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge. 113, 321-2, 356, 358, 362, 363, 363, 383, 389-390, 461-462, 462, 807-808, 829-830. (1990)
- ["The Few Contained the Many": Rabbinic Perspectives on the Miraculous and the Impossible](#). Journal of Jewish Studies 54. 273-282. (2003)
- ["Associative" Organization in the Talmud: Some Reconsiderations](#). Papers of the Chair in Quebec and Canadian Jewish Studies. (1999)
- [Anthological Dimensions of the Babylonian Talmud](#). Prooftexts 17. 33-61. (1997)
- [Interpreting Midrash 3: Midrash and the Tannaitic Aggada](#). Prooftexts 12. 188-192. (1992)
- [The Exegetical Craft of the Zohar: Towards an Appreciation](#). AJS Review 17. 31-49. (1991)
- [Sarah and Ischah: Method and Message in a Midrashic Tradition](#). Jewish Quarterly Review 82. 417-430. (1991)
- [Justice, Mercy and a Bird's Nest](#). Journal of Jewish Studies 42. 176-195. (1991)
- [Midrash and Literature: Some Medieval Views](#). Prooftexts 11. 57-65. (1991)
- [Human Anger and Divine Intervention in Esther](#). Prooftexts 9. 247-256. (1989)
- [Law as Allegory? An Unnoticed Literary Device in Talmudic Narratives](#). Prooftexts 8. 245-256. (1988)
- [The Petihta in Babylonia](#). Tarbiz 54. 19-46. (1985)
- [The Textual Tradition of the Columbia University Manuscript of TB Megillah](#). Tarbiz 53. 31-59. (1982)
- ["The Same from Beginning to End..." — on the Development of a Midrashic Homily](#). Journal of Jewish Studies 32. 158-165. (1981)

- [Marginal Glosses in the Bodlean Copy of TB Megillah Pesaro Edition](#). Alei Sefer 9. 130-139. (1981)
- ["The Goat of the Slaughterhouse..." -- on the Evolution of a Variant Reading in the Babylonian Talmud](#). Tabriz 49. 43-51. (1980)
- [Kenisah/Kenesah—Morphological-Semantic Distinction in a Mishnaic Hebrew Verbal Noun](#). Lehonenu 43. 157-160. (1979)
- [The Use of the Formula ki ha de in the Citation of Cases in the Babylonian Talmud](#). Hebrew Union College Annual 50. 199-218. (1979)
- [Variant Traditions of Cases in the Babylonian Talmud](#). Jewish Quarterly Review 70. 1-27. (1979)
- [The Terminology of Case-Citation in the Babylonian Talmud](#). Journal for the Study of Judaism 9. 205-211. (1979)
- [Aggadic Collections](#). Harvard Law School Julis-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law: Conference on "What is the Talmud?" (Zoom). (2022)
- [Gunsmoke & Gemara: Depictions of Jewish Life in Classic TV Westerns](#). Zoom presentation for Congregations Rinat Yisrael, Teaneck NJ and House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel, Calgary. (2022)
- [Lord – and Lady – of the Flies](#). Meeting of American Academy of Religion, Society of Biblical Literature and American Schools of Oriental Research Pacific Northwest Region. (2014)
- Aristeas or Aggadah: Talmudic Legend and the Greek Bible in Palestinian Judaism. Conference on "Common Judaism Explored: Second Temple Judaism in Context," Calgary Institute for the Humanities. (2005)
- Alternative E-Publishing: Reality and Practice. Workshop on "New Models in Academic Publishing: Dispelling the Myth" sponsored by University of Calgary Information Resources. (2002)
- Digital Discipleship: Using the Internet for the Teaching of Jewish Thought. International Conference on "Study and knowledge in Jewish Thought," Goldstein-Goren International Center for Jewish Thought, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel. (2004)
- From there to here, from here to there / Seuss-ifying Hebrew prayer. Faculty Colloquium "Across Cultural Boundaries" Faculty of Humanities, University of Calgary. (2001)
- The Temple as a Source of Unity and Conflict (So What Else is New?). "History, Issues, and Ideas--Lost Worlds: Jewish Life, Roman World," workshop organized by the University of Victoria Department of Greek and Roman Studies and Division of Continuing Studies, and Victoria Jewish Community Centre; University of Victoria. (2001)
- Presenting and Teaching the Talmud on the Internet. "Talmud Bavli--History of Transmission as History of Intertextuality," Workshop organized by the Kulturwissenschaftliche Forschungskolleg "Medien und kulturelle Kommunikation" of the University of Cologne, Germany. (2001)
- [Seventy Faces to the LXX: The Rabbinic Tradition on the Greek Translation of the Pentateuch Revisited](#). Greenfield Scholars Seminar, Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature. (2000)
- Little Contained Much': On the Sages' Attitude towards Philosophical Discourse. International Conference on Jewish Thought and Foreign Cultures: "Judaism and the

World-- Interaction, Influence and Impact," Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beersheva, Israel. (2000)

- Towards a Definition of "the Era of the Sages". Second Annual Conference on Research in Rabbinic Thought, Beit Morasha of Jerusalem Center for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem. (1999)
- Variants, Traditions and the Meaning of Prophecy. "Theories of the Text" an interdisciplinary workshop and panel discussion, University of Calgary Philology Research Group. (1999)
- Associative' Organization in the Talmud: Some Reconsiderations. Conference "A Heritage in Transition: Jewish Studies in Canada" sponsored by the Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies of Concordia University and the Centre for Jewish Studies at York University, Montreal. (1996)
- [The Distinctiveness of Babylonian Aggadah: Reflections on the Esther-Midrash](#). Canadian Society for Biblical Studies Annual Meeting, Calgary. (1994)
- [Aims and Means in the Preparation of Critical Editions of Tractates from the Babylonian Talmud](#). Eleventh World Congress of Jewish Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. (1993)
- The Law of Retaliation. Annual Meeting of the Association for Research into Religious Studies and Theology, University of Alberta. (1991)
- Peace or Victory? -- The Meaning of Purim in the Bible and Talmud. Canadian Society for Biblical Studies Conference on "Reading the Bible," University of Calgary. (1990)
- [Derash in Spite of Peshat: Some Medieval Justifications for Creative Exegesis](#). Annual Conference of the Association for Jewish Studies, Boston. (1989)
- [Case Citation, Wishful Thinking and Some Misunderstood Talmudic Terms](#). Association for Jewish Studies Twentieth Annual Conference, Boston. (1988)
- [The TB Megillah Esther Midrash and the Study of Babylonian Aggadah](#). Annual Conference of the Association for Jewish Studies, Boston. (1987)
- [Megillah No.1: The Whole Megillah](#). Eliezer Segal (guest speaker), Adina Karp (executive producer, interviewer). Interleaved: A Talmudic Podcast. (2021)
- [Review of: K. Lindbeck, Elijah and the Rabbis: Story and Theology](#). <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>H-Judaic. (2011)
- [Review of: P. Schäfer, The Origins of Jewish Mysticism](#). Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies 29:3. 158-160. (2011)
- [Review of: E. Diamond, Holy Men and Hunger Artists: Fasting and Asceticism in Rabbinic Culture](#). Journal of the American Academy of Religion 73:3. 911-913. (2005)
- [Review of: A. Goldberg, Tosefta Bava Kamma: A Structural and Analytic Commentary with a Mishna-Tosefta Synopsis](#). Journal of the American Oriental Society, 123.1. 662-664. (2004)
- [Review of: P. Heger, The Pluralistic Halakhah: Legal Innovations in the Late Second Commonwealth and Rabbinic Periods](#). Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses, 32:4. 520-522. (2003)
- <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>[Review of: M. Lockshin, Rashbam's Commentary to Leviticus and Numbers](#). Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses, 32:1-2. 212-214. (2003)
- [Review of: A. Cohen, Ravina ve-Hakhmei Doro](#). Jewish Quarterly Review 93:3-4. 675-677. (2003)
- [Review of: M. L. Satlow, Jewish Marriage in Antiquity](#). Journal of Religion, 83:1. 162-164. (2003)

- [Review of: J. I. Rubenstein, Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture.](#) Journal of the American Academy of Religion 69:4. 953-956. (2002)
- [Review of: H. Fox and T. Meacham, eds., Introducing Tosefta: Textual and Intertextual Studies.](#) Journal of the American Oriental Society, 121:3. 502-503. (2001)
- [Review of David Novak, Natural Law in Judaism.](#) Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses 29. 246-247. (2000)
- [Review of: A. Houtman, A Synoptic Comparison of the Tractates Berakhot and Shebiit.](#) Hebrew Studies 40. 365-367. (1999)
- [Review of: J. Lightstone, The Rhetoric of the Babylonian Talmud, Its Social Meaning and Context.](#) Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses 24:4. 506-508. (1995)
- [Review of: R. Kalmin, Sages, Stories, Authors and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia.](#) Religious Studies Review. 432. (1995)
- [Review of: B. Walfish, Esther in Medieval Garb: Jewish interpretations of Esther.](#) Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses 24:3. 371-372. (1994)
- [Review of: P. Alexander, Textual Sources for the Study of Judaism.](#) Religious Studies and Theology 13-14. 110-111. (1995)
- [Review of: J. Neusner, The Way of Torah.](#) Religious Studies and Theology 11:1. 45-46. (1992)
- [Review of: M. Doohan Mark—Visionary of Early Christianity.](#) Religious Studies and Theology 8:3. 53-54. (1988)
- [Review of: S. T. Lachs, A Rabbinic Commentary on the New Testament.](#) Religious Studies and Theology 8. 57-58. (1988)
- [Review of: E. Goldsmith and M. Scult, eds., Dynamic Judaism: The Essential Writings of Mordecai M. Kaplan.](#) Religious Studies and Theology 8. 85-88. (1988)
- [Review of: Donald Georgen, O.P., The Mission and Ministry of Jesus.](#) Religious Studies and Theology 7:2-3. 88-90. (1987)
- [Review of: J. Osterreicher, The New Encounter Between Christians and Jews.](#) Religious Studies and Theology 6:3. 68-70. (1986)
- [Review of: E.H. Flannery, The Anguish of the Jews.](#) Religious Studies and Theology 6:3. 66-67. (1986)
- [Transitional Period in Talmudic Judaism \(review article of B. M. Bokser, Post Mishnaic Judaism in Transition: Samuel on Breakout and the Beginnings of Gemara\).](#) Tarbiz 51. 315-318. (1982)

## In the News

- [Sarah Ogince: "On the 'Festival of Lights,' an opportunity to give back".](#) Baltimore Jewish Times. (2022)
- [J. Antebi: Hanukkah's Memorial.](#) Reader's Digest (Canada). (2008)
- [D. Flaim: For pets' sake.](#) Newsday. (2007)
- [J. Woodward: Christmas on Dec. 25 linked to Scripture.](#) Calgary Herald B5. (2005)
- [The ethics of panhandling.](#) Talk of the Nation, National Public Radio. (2005)
- [Uncle Eli Makes History on Jeopardy.](#) OnCampus Quarterly p. 4. (2004)
- [M. Kress: The Kabbalah craze.](#) The Dallas Morning News 1G-3-G. (2004)
- [J. Woodward: Feds fund media, religion centre.](#) Calgary Herald B6. (2003)
- [L. B. Hedley: Light a candle for religious Freedom.](#) Calgary Herald OS9. (2003)

- [E. Segal: Children's questions at the heart of Passover](#). Calgary Herald OS12. (2003)
- [E. Marcus: The platter laid out](#). Newsday. (2003)
- [J. Bonham: Due process is needed](#). Jewish Western Bulletin. (2003)
- [E. Segal: BC to BCE shuffle a distinction of note](#). Calgary Herald OS10. (2002)
- [Prayers and misunderstandings](#). The Gauntlet, University of Calgary Student Society . (2001)
- [J. Woodward: What's on the Seder table?](#). Calgary Herald OS10. (2001)
- [Uncle Eli Lends Touch of Seuss to Passover](#). University of Calgary Gazette 29:2. (1999)
- [G. Legge: Uncle Eli aims religious book at children](#). Calgary Herald B1-B2. (1999)
- [G. Legge: Religions seek to understand the dark side of the force](#). Calgary Herald A10. (1997)
- [E. Segal: Yom Kippur bridges gap to God](#). Calgary Herald A6. (1996)
- [C. Chavich: Jewish holidays are a time for sweet celebration](#). Calgary Herald D10. (1996)
- [Court Hears Keegstra's Views](#). Canadian Jewish News . (1992)
- [P. Nagle: Keegstra jury told to ignore opinions](#). Calgary Herald B1-B2. (1992)
- [Keegstra trial to hear Prof](#). Calgary Herald B5. (1992)