

ELCHANAN REINER

Elchanan Reiner is Professor of Jewish History at Tel Aviv University and a senior research fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem.

Reiner specializes in the study of the popular religious culture of medieval Jews in Palestine, dealing with oral religious traditions and local myths connected to sacred places. His early work on pilgrimages to Palestine in the Middle Ages has been followed by related publications such as "From Joshua to Jesus: The Transformation of a Biblical Story to a Local Myth (A Chapter in the Religious Life of the Galilean Jew)". His last publication in this field, that is going to publish soon, deals with the raise of the mythical figure of R. Shimon bar Yochai in the Galilee in the late Antiquity. In the last three years he runs a research project on Meron, a sacred place in the Upper Galilee, that became during the ages, and especially in the last decades, the most important Jewish pilgrimage site in Eretz Israel.

His other field of research is the cultural history of Ashkenazi, especially Eastern European Jewry in the Early Modern Period. In his research he is focusing on the beginning of the printed culture in the Ashkenazi milieu, the history of the Hebrew book and the history of the Early Modern Yeshivot and scholarship ("Lamdanut").