

public
lecture

ELLIE SCHAIKER



The public lecture
will take place on

6 Tuesday
November, 2018
18:00

All guests are requested
to be seated by 18:00

Office of the NaUKMA
Jewish Studies programs

Kyiv, Voloska Street 8/5,
Building 5, basement

CONFESSIONS OF THE SHTETL: CONVERTS FROM JUDAISM IN IMPERIAL RUSSIA

Alongside of Tevye the Dairyman's daughter Chava (think *Fiddler on the Roof*), there was a small but steady stream of Jews in tsarist Russia who voluntarily converted to Christianity and married Christian partners over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This talk explores the drama of these conversion stories and asks how Jews found the social and institutional means to undergo baptism in the shtetls of Eastern Europe and how Jewish families and communities tried to contest these conversions both within and outside of the law. A century before the conversion crisis in Israel and debates over Jewish identity and mixed marriages in North America, Jews in Eastern Europe grappled with interfaith relationships, apostasy, and defining the boundaries of Jewishness in the modern age.

Dr. Ellie Schinker is associate professor of modern Jewish history at Emory University (USA). Her research interests include Russian Jewish history, conversion studies, and the history of religion and empire. She is the author of *Confessions of the Shtetl: Converts from Judaism in Imperial Russia, 1817–1906* (Stanford University Press, 2017), which won a 2017 National Jewish Book Award. Dr. Schinker is currently working on a book about Jewish religious reforms and non-traditional forms of Judaism in the late Russian Empire.