

# THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY JEWISH STUDIES PROJECT

cordially invites you to a lecture by

## Felicia Waldman

University of Bucharest

### From Demoness to God's Partner: The Astonishing Career of the World's First Feminist, Lilith.

As Raphael Patai put it in his book *The Hebrew Goddess*, “a citizen of Sumer ca.2500 BCE and an East European Hassidic Jew in 1880 CE had very little in common as far as the higher levels of religion were concerned. But they would have readily recognized each other’s beliefs about the pernicious machinations of Lilith, and each other’s apotropaic measures for driving her away or escaping her enticements.”

This lecture will therefore try to propose answers to questions such as:

How did the Assyrian-Babylonian “lilitu,” the female demon or wind spirit, part of a triad used in magic invocations, with its intermediate Hebrew form “lilin,” loosely translated as demons, become “Lilith”?

How did the succubus of the Talmudic times turn into Adam’s first wife?

What was it that made Lilith become the first feminist?

How did she convince God to release her from the Garden of Eden?

How many names, husbands and faces did she end up with?

Ultimately, how did she work herself up from a lowly she-demon associated with nocturnal animals to the rank of God’s consort?

Is Lilith representative today for female power or female frustration?

Last but not in the least, is Lilith unique or can she be found in other cultures as well?

Tuesday, October 18 at 6 p.m.  
In Gellner Room

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Felicia Waldman (PhD) is assistant professor of Jewish thought and Hebrew language at the University of Bucharest, and visiting professor of Jewish thought at the “Al. I. Cuza” University of Iasi. She coordinates the Goldstein Goren Center for Hebrew Studies at the University of Bucharest and is the editor of its academic journal, *Studia Hebraica*. Waldman is a member of various international academic societies and associations and of the Romanian Delegation to the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research. Her most recent publications include “Mystical Encounters: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Mysticism in 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century Spain” in Antti Laato, Pekka Lindkvist (eds.), *Encounters of the Children of Abraham from Ancient to Modern Times*, Brill, Leiden-Boston, 2010; “Some Considerations on Enoch/Metatron in the Jewish Mystical Tradition” in Philip Alexander, Armin Lange, Renate Pillinger (eds.), *In the Second Degree: Paratextual Literature in Ancient Near Eastern and Ancient Mediterranean Culture and Its Reflections in Medieval Literature*, Brill, Leiden-Boston, 2010; “Jewish Studies in Romania” with Michael Shafir, in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, vol. 10, issue 1, Routledge, 2011.

A reception will follow