

**Talk title: "Negotiating with History: Cape Verdeans in
Conversation with Their Jewish Ancestry"**

Speaker: Alma Gottlieb

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Brief summary: How do contemporary Cabo Verdeans with Jewish ancestry negotiate their surprising history? Since 2006, Gottlieb has been conducting ethnographic research in Portugal, Cabo Verde, and the U.S. among Cabo Verdeans with Jewish heritage. (Some of their Jewish ancestors arrived in Cabo Verde as early refugees from the Portuguese and Spanish Inquisitions; others arrived in the late 19th-early 20th centuries, fleeing deteriorating conditions in Morocco). In this talk, Gottlieb explores the implications of a half-millennium of (hidden) Jewish influence in this diasporic African group. What difference does history make for contemporary Cabo Verdeans on and off the islands, as they learn (more) about their remarkably (and uniquely) mixed religious heritage?

Bio-note:

Dr. Alma Gottlieb is a cultural anthropologist specializing in West Africa, with expertise in religion, gender/families, and diaspora. She has conducted extended fieldwork with the Beng of Côte d'Ivoire, and with Cabo Verdeans in Portugal, Cabo Verde, and the U.S.

Dr. Gottlieb has received support from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities (USA), Social Science Research

Council (USA), and other agencies. She is the (co-)/author of nine books (including five on Côte d'Ivoire). The first of two memoirs of Côte d'Ivoire (co-authored with Philip Graham), *Parallel Worlds: An Anthropologist and a Writer Encounter Africa*, won the Victor Turner Prize in Ethnographic Writing; and her ethnography, *The Afterlife is where We Come from: The Culture of Infancy in West Africa*, was the Highly Commended Runner-up for the Amaury Talbot Prize in Africanist Anthropology. Her current book manuscript is *Africa across the Seder Table: Reclaiming Jewish Identity in Cabo Verdeans and Its Diaspora*.

A past president of the Society for Humanistic Anthropology, Gottlieb has held appointments at Princeton University, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris), Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium), Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas/Universidade Técnica de Lisboa (Lisbon), Université Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire (Abidjan), University of Virginia, and elsewhere. She is Professor Emerita from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and (since 2014) has been a Visiting Scholar in Anthropology at Brown University.

Her professional website/blog: <http://almagottlieb.com>.