

Sunday saw the ordination of four new Progressive rabbis trained at Leo Baeck College: Rabbi Zahavit Shalev, Rabbi Cantor Gershon Silins, Rabbi Daniela Touati and Rabbi Igor Zinkov. They are going on to serve Liberal, Reform and Masorti congregations in the UK and Europe.

Addressing the class of 2019, Dr Laliv Clenman, Senior Lecturer in Rabbinics, said, "I am delighted that Igor can trace his journey to semichah from Chelyabinsk in Russia to the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in London, Gershon from cantor in the USA to a cantor-rabbi supporting precious smaller local Liberal Judaism communities in the UK, Zahavit from Rabbi's Assistant at New North London Masorti Synagogue to a fully-ordained rabbi and Daniela from countless journeys on the Eurostar to becoming the fourth female (progressive) rabbi in France.

The new rabbis were ordained wearing the Leo Baeck College tallitot and kippot, specially commissioned directly from a women's ethical weaving collective in Guatemala who fashion these unique products for the College.

Dr Clenman reminded each new ordinand they are connected in semichah with the ordination chains of generations of rabbis, supporting and inspiring each of them in a tradition of responsibility, leadership, courage and scholarship.

Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris, Principal of Leo Baeck College noted that Leo Baeck is the only fully validated and accredited Jewish seminary in the UK. "The College is the heart of the intellectual and spiritual life of the Progressive Jewish community", she said. "Leo Baeck College combines inspirational, high calibre teaching with a commitment to developing rabbis, other professionals, and lay leaders who will continue to build sustainable, accessible, and thriving Progressive Jewish communities".



L-R Rabbi Igor Zinkov, Rabbi Daniela Touati, Rabbi Zahavit Shalev and Rabbi Cantor Gershon Silins