

The Project

“Below the Line: The Feuilleton & Modern Jewish Cultures” is an ongoing collaborative project in Judaic Studies with scholars from U-M, MSU, OSU and contributors from all over the world. It aims to foster research into the *feuilleton*, a popular form of writing in newspapers in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The project, funded by the NEH (National Endowment for the Humanities), was originally conceived as a series of international conferences and workshops. Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus of the project became creating an online collection of *feuilletons* in Omeka S.

Using Omeka S for Digital Humanities: A Case Study

Sharing experiences and lessons learned to help future research teams understand the strengths and weaknesses of Omeka S.

Challenges and Solutions

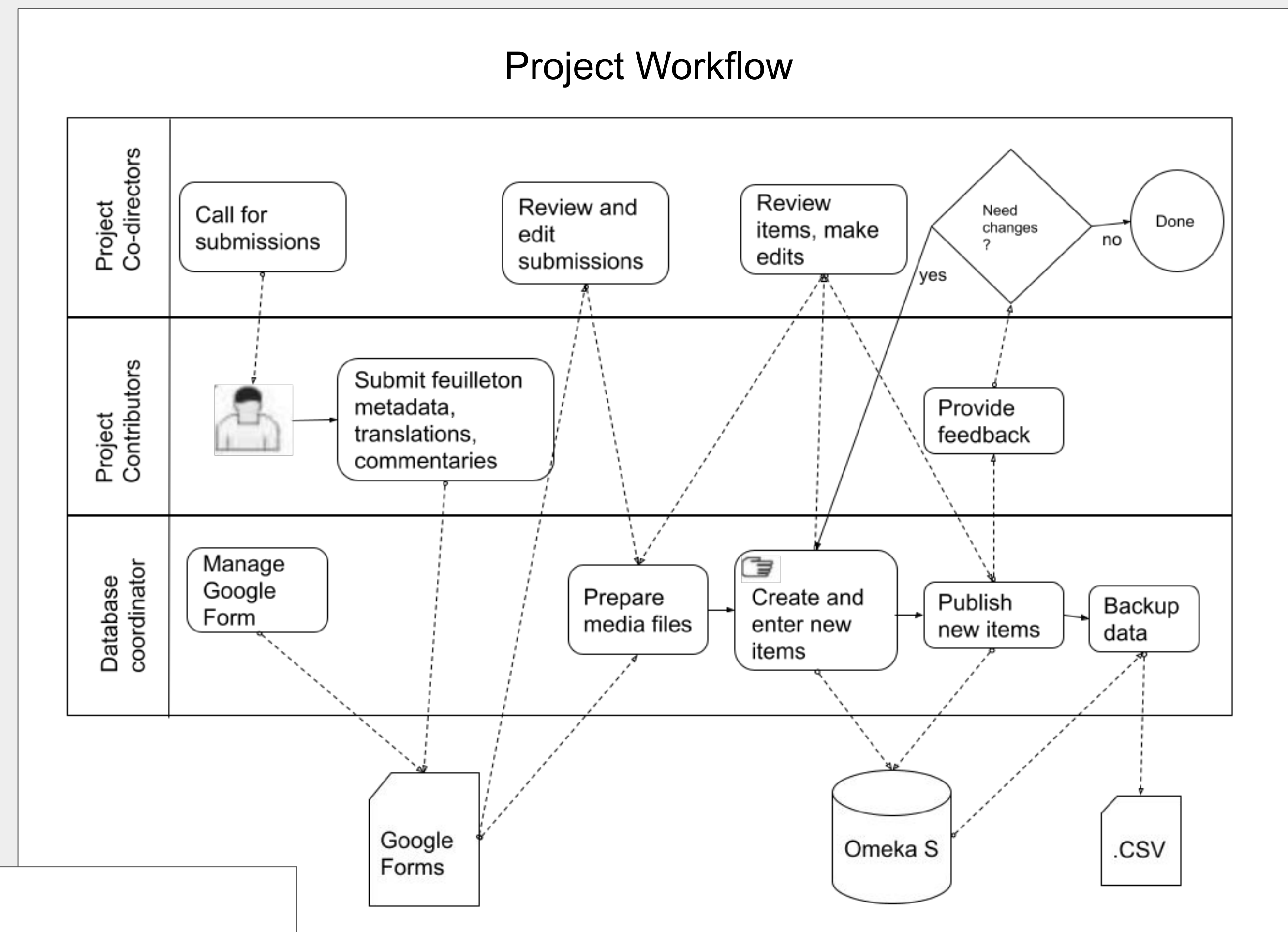
- The rapid shift in project goals and scope required a new project plan**
 - Co-directors and web developer assumed various project management roles.
 - We developed a workflow and tools for collecting, reviewing, and editing data.
- Omeka S can store metadata only as plain text**
 - We created HTML templates for complex fields (e.g., article with footnotes).
 - These pieces of content are being stored in the database as media files.
- Media files are not searchable in Omeka S**
 - Plain-text abstracts and keywords were added to each item to improve searchability.
- Omeka S is built for data storage and not for display**
 - A graphic designer was hired to create a unique look-and-feel for the website.
 - We customized the Omeka S Default theme to implement this design.
 - We developed a structured process for entering data to ensure its proper representation on the website.
- Omeka S cannot store independent images (and other media files) through the administrative web interface; all media must be associated with an item**
 - “Fake” logos and items were used to store independent, illustrative images.
- The project relies on custom-made theme and templates and creative workarounds, which makes it less sustainable**
 - Web developer wrote a detailed manual that describes all phases of the project and includes step-by-step instructions and templates.

BELOW THE LINE
The Feuilleton & Modern Jewish Cultures

feuilleton (noun)
an arts and entertainment section of newspapers, often located “below the line” separating it from the daily news

What Is a Feuilleton?
Since the late eighteenth century, the feuilleton has been one of the most popular and most controversial forms of writing in newspapers throughout the world. The French word *feuilleton* is a diminutive of *feuille* (“leaf” or “page”); hence, *feuilleton* means “small leaf.” In the decades after 1800, the *feuilleton* spread across Europe and beyond, rapidly establishing itself as a genre of urban writing well-suited for the new mass-oriented press and wildly popular with the emerging educated bourgeoisie. Many Jewish writers, journalists, and political figures wrote *feuilletons*. As a result, the *feuilleton* became associated — both in Jewish and antisemitic discourses — with Jews and Jewishness. The *feuilleton* was an important feature in the creation of a transnational modern Jewish press as well as a vehicle for Jews to partake in national cultures.

About the Project
“Below the Line” provides open-access resources for those interested in learning more about the *feuilleton* and its importance in the formation of modern Jewish cultures. Started in 2017, the project aims to foster conversation about and research into the *feuilleton* as a historical forum that attracted many different types of writing, writers, and readers. This site is intended for the general public, including educators, students, and scholars. We hope you will take a look at the original texts, get a sense of how the *feuilleton* appeared when it was first published, and read through the English translations — all with an eye toward what the *feuilleton* can tell us about the formation of modern Jewish cultures and new media landscapes today.



Explore Feuilletons

Uncle Bohor and His Wife Djamilia

View Original Text | View Translation | View Commentary

ABSTRACT
Moshe Cazés's satirical *feuilletons* in Ladino give us a glimpse of life in Jewish Salonica in the late 1930s. Both texts feature conversations between a husband and wife, mocking the older generation of Jews, those born between the 1860s and 1890s, while ironically identifying with their inability to cope with the changes of the late 1930s.

TITLE (ENGLISH)
Uncle Bohor and His Wife Djamilia

TITLE (ORIGINAL)
סוּחַ בּוּחֹר וְאִשְׁתּוֹ דְּיַמִּילִיָּה

TITLE (TRANSLITERATED)
Tio Bohor i su mujer Djamilia

DATE ISSUED
1939

PLACE ISSUED
> Salonica

AUTHOR
> Cazés, Moshé

NEWSPAPER
> Mesajero

LANGUAGE
> Ladino

CONTENT TYPE
Feuilleton

TRANSLATOR
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RELATED TEXT
> Uncle Ezra and His Wife Benuta

KEYWORDS
modernization, secularization, Ottoman Empire, women, Jewish tradition, Sephardic culture

Feuilletons

Title Ascending Sort

- FLYING LETTERS
- THE END OF THE CENTURY
- JEW OR EUROPEAN
- THE REFUGEES
- CONVERTING FOR LOVE
- A BUNDLE OF TKHINES
- A CITY AND MOTHER
- THE VALLEY OF CEDARS
- AWAKENING

Scan here to see examples of other Omeka S projects on campus

- Prison Creative Arts Project
- Anishinaabe Plants
- Detroit Under Fire

Lessons Learned

- What kinds of projects are best suited for Omeka S:**
 - Digital collections with light narration
- Omeka S is not well suited for:**
 - Long-form journalism
 - Digital editions
 - Fully custom-built websites
 - Blogging
 - Podcasting
 - Exhibitions
 - Long-term preservation of digital materials
- Skills and resources needed to create an Omeka S project:**
 - For more advanced projects: PHP (for customization), HTML, CSS, GitLab (for version control and file management)
 - For all projects: metadata, image editing, research data workflow

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Prof. Naomi Brenner (OSU)
Prof. Matthew Handelman (MSU)



Scan here to learn more about “Below the Line: The Feuilleton & Modern Jewish Cultures”