



**ISRAEL AND IONE MASSADA FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAMME
WORCESTER COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

Hilary Term Massada Public Seminar

**Professor Yemima Ben-Menahem,
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

**Cleopatra's Nose: Historical
Contingency and Why it Matters**

What do we mean when we characterise certain events, such as the collapse of the Soviet Union, or the spreading of a new mutation of COVID as necessary or inevitable? Conversely, what do we mean when judging these to be contingent, supposing they could have turned out differently (if only ...)? These familiar notions sound beguilingly unproblematic; indeed, they pervade common thinking about determinism and chance. Yet, perusing their place in history, literature, the evolution of life, and the present climate crisis, this talk sheds new light on the concepts of historical contingency and necessity, and explores some of their moral implications.

**Sultan Nazrin Shah Auditorium, Worcester College
Tuesday February 21st at 17:15**

The presentation will be followed by discussion and drinks.
The event is free and open to all.