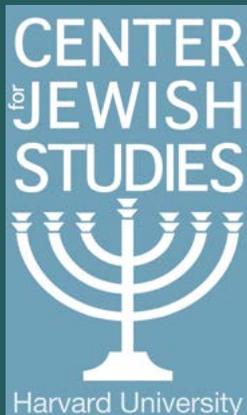


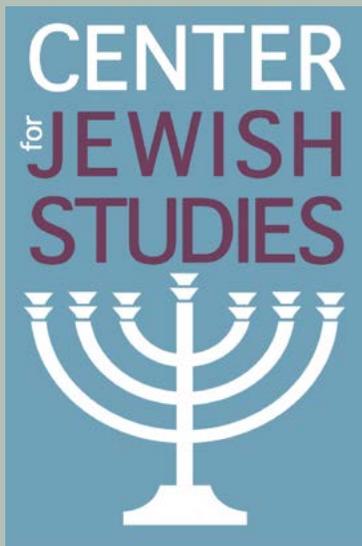


CJS NEWS



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ALLISON ANDREWS

We are pleased to introduce our Office Assistant, **ALLISON ANDREWS**, and to welcome Allison formally to the Center for Jewish Studies.

Allison started working part time at the Center only a few months ago, and has already helped us in many significant ways. Allison's exceptional organizational skills and attention to detail have been tremendous assets, and she has already helped to improve some of our procedures. We have been very fortunate to have Allison's help in organizing our financial files and archives, coordinating and proofreading materials for our newsletter, assisting at events, and aiding our visitors. In addition to Allison's tremendous administrative skills, we also appreciate her warmth and professionalism.

Some of Allison's past experience includes work at Harvard's Houghton Library (Manuscripts), the Medford, MA Historical Society & Museum, parish historian and restoration committee member at Grace Episcopal Church (Medford), for which she helped earn a 2017 Preservation Award from the Victorian Society of America/New England Chapter. We are thrilled to have Allison join our team.

WHAT IS THE **CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES?**

The Center for Jewish Studies serves as an umbrella organization, encompassing and coordinating the many academic and extra-curricular programs in Jewish Studies at Harvard University. Faculty, courses and other academic programs at the university are located in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the Harvard Divinity School, and the Harvard Law School. We sponsor our own conferences, lectures and seminars. We also cosponsor other seminars and lectures with departments across the Harvard campus, including lecture series with the Mahindra Center for the Humanities, the Center for European Studies and the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies. The Judaica Division of Widener Library boasts one of the world's greatest library collections in the world. Taken together, Harvard offers students and scholars resources in Jewish Studies virtually unparalleled anywhere in the world.

ON THE COVER: *The Harry Starr Fellows in Judaica 2017–2018, see page 5 for detail.*



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

During the past spring semester, the Center for Jewish Studies was extremely busy. The Center sponsored or co-sponsored nearly forty lectures, seminars, and workshops across the University. These included seminar series on Western and European Jewry in, respectively, the Center for European Studies and the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies; graduate student-led workshops in Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible; our annual co-sponsored lecture on Medieval Judaism co-sponsored with the Committee on Medieval Studies; and the Dreben Lecture on Jewish Law, co-sponsored with the Julis-Rabinowitz Program in Jewish and Israeli Law at Harvard Law School.

In addition, we welcomed seven Harry Starr Fellows and one Stroock Fellow, our annual Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellow, and several other visiting faculty and scholars affiliated with the Center. The spring Starr seminars were co-sponsored by the Department of Comparative Literature, devoted to the theme of **Jewish Languages and Literatures**. These were the most exciting and unusual seminars of this sort in which I have ever participated, with a Yiddish scholar responding to an expert in Judeo-Arabic literature and a specialist in Italian Jewish poetry commenting upon a paper on Aramaic and Hebrew code-switching in Rabbinic literature. All of these cross-disciplinary, inter-departmental, and University-wide initiatives are part of the Center's mission to spread Jewish Studies across the entire Harvard community.

This semester is just kicking off; it already seems as if summer never happened. At the very beginning of the academic year, the Center co-sponsored (with the Government Dept.) an international conference entitled "Circulating Across Europe? Transgressive Narratives About the Past" that dealt with issues of identity, forced exile, and migration over the last century; a number of the papers dealt with relevant Jewish cases. Looking forward, on November 7, our annual Doft Lecture will bring **Jack Lew, former Secretary of the Treasury in the Obama administration** and President Obama's Chief of Staff, to hold a public conversation with **Noah Feldman**, Felix Frankfurter Professor of Law and Director of the Julis-Rabinowitz Program. All our regular ongoing seminars, workshops, and lecture series will of course continue as well. This spring, we will be hosting six new Starr Fellows on the theme of the **History of the Jewish Book**.

In this issue of *CJS News*, I especially urge you to read the letters and reports from the many students who have received fellowships and grants from the Center, in which they describe their academic work and research. Student support is one of the Center's primary missions and over the last two years, we have made enormous efforts to elicit and support research and study projects by undergraduates—the number of applications has almost tripled. The students' projects, a good number of which we faculty have helped shape and oversee, are tremendous! Many of these students were not previously involved in Jewish Studies and, by supporting their projects, the Center is seeking to both expose them to the field and our courses, and to extend our own reach in the University. All of these initiatives are made possible only through the generosity of our many friends and donors.

I must conclude by stating, on behalf of all the members of the Center, our sadness over the death of **Professor Yaakov Elman**, one of the towering figures in the field of Rabbinics and a long-time Associate of the Center. On the following pages you will find personal reminiscences by our colleagues Professors **Jay Harris** and **Oktor Skjærø**. Professor Elman himself said that his time with us was the period during which he did his most important work. The Center extends its heart-felt sympathies and deepest condolences to the Elman family.

With best wishes for the New Year,

David Stern
Harry Starr Professor of Classical and Modern Jewish and
Hebrew Literature and Professor of Comparative Literature





YAAKOV ELMAN י"א
1943–2018

by **JAY M. HARRIS**

Harry Austryn Wolfson Professor of Jewish Studies, Harvard University, August 27, 2018

IT WAS FORTY YEARS AGO THIS FALL. I entered Rabinowitz Book Store on the Lower East Side for the first time. The manager, a sweet, soft-spoken man, introduced himself. “My name is Yaakov,” he said. Eager to help, he went right to the shelf to get what I had asked for. I well remember thanking him, to which he replied—as he always did—with his patented “not at all.” I had no idea that day that I was in the presence of one of the most extraordinary and versatile minds I would ever encounter. Nor could I know that this was to be the beginning of a wonderful friendship.

Yaakov Elman, 1943–2018, passed away on July 29, 2018, leaving behind a major void in the world of Jewish studies, and in the life of Harvard’s Center for Jewish Studies, with which he was affiliated for many years. His was a remarkable if improbable story; if one were to encounter it in a work of fiction, one might exclaim, “come on; that beggars belief.” A deeply religious man—who very much looked the part—he worked as a meteorologist before his time at the bookstore (itself a great Jewish institution of a time long gone). He moved on from Rabinowitz’s to KTAV, a Jewish publishing house, where he was an associate editor. While working there he was also a middle-aged doctoral student at NYU, finally becoming a

professor at Yeshiva University. From there he would go on to revolutionize the field of Talmud study.

The range of his writings is almost beyond belief, ranging from Assyriology and the ancient world of the Bible to contemporary Jewish thought. His primary area of expertise was the area we refer to as rabbinics, meaning the world of the ancient rabbis who produced a massive collection of works often coming under the headings of Talmud and Midrash (and, in his case, the full range of commentaries extending across nearly a millennium and a half). Yaakov’s expertise in this field was nearly unparalleled, but it was exceeded in some ways by his nearly iconoclastic willingness to think against the grain of the field. In his first book, he forcefully argued for the Babylonian provenance of a significant part of the Tosefta (an ancient rabbinic text), generally understood to be entirely a product of the Land of Israel.

But his real iconoclasm was still to come. In 2003 he came to Harvard as a Starr Fellow, and would remain a Visiting Scholar and Associate of the Center for many years. While at Harvard he began what amounts to nothing less than a new career in scholarship. Befriending our colleague in Iranology, P. Oktor Skjærvø, Yaakov began studying Middle Persian to better illu-

minate the Babylonian (i.e., Persian and Zoroastrian) context of the Babylonian Talmud. That the Talmud should be understood in such context may sound rather obvious, but—with very rare exceptions—scholars have generally approached the Talmud as if it were primarily a product of the Greco-Roman (i.e., “Western”) world. The reasons for this are complicated, and discussion of them will have to wait for another day. What is important for the moment is to appreciate how this sweet unassuming scholar, with the heart of a lion, demanded that an entire field be re-thought, in the process helping to advance the fortunes of an allied field—Iranology. Whether one agrees or disagrees with every one of his claims is of little importance;

what can never be denied is that the academic field of rabbinics will forever be changed thanks to his efforts.

I find that I can only reflect on his life with a sense of utter amazement. I stand in awe at his extraordinary energy, even in the face of great physical challenges; the openness of his mind; the determination to pursue the truth despite the resistance of the “old guard;” and finally, and most importantly, his generosity of spirit.

We at the Center are proud of the small role we played in advancing Yaakov’s intellectual trajectory, and extend our deepest condolences to his family. He will be sorely missed. ■

by P. OKTOR SKJÆRVØ

Aga Khan Professor of Iranian Studies Emeritus, Harvard University, September 7, 2018

IT WAS AT THE END OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2002–2003, while I was Chair of Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (NELC), that I was sitting in my office—the door open as usual—that a man, whom I mentally classified as “orthodox Jewish,” but with a cap, walked into my office and introduced himself as Yaakov Elman, a fellow (actually Harry Starr Fellow in Judaica) at the Center for Jewish Studies. I wondered why he was wearing a cap indoors instead of the kippah, and he said he thought I might object to him wearing it. I said no, I would not, and he put it back on.

He told me he wanted to read the Pahlavi *Mādayan ī Hazār Dādestān* “Book of a Thousand Judgments.” I had not yet grappled with this exceedingly difficult legal text (even though well-edited by that time) and I did not want to start just then, so, after we had gotten acquainted, I suggested various other texts. Pahlavi was the Persian language spoken during the Sasanian period, with an oral literature the origins of which reached back through several millennia, but flourished in the third to sixth centuries and was finally redacted and written down in the ninth-tenth centuries. What interested Yaakov

TRIBUTE, *next page*



P. OKTOR SKJÆRVØ, YISHAI KIEL, YAAKOV ELMAN

What I remember the most, perhaps, is how much fun we had. Laughter came easily to Yaakov. He was easygoing and infallibly optimistic during the adversities that life threw at him.

was the relationship between rabbis and the *dastwars*, Zoroastrian priests, in Ctesiphon (Babylon), capital of the Sasanian empire, as part of an arena of intellectual interaction.

We finally decided to read the *Hērbedestān*, an Avestan text with Pahlavi “translation” and commentary (*zand*), dealing with issues concerning young men studying to become priests. As we soon noticed that the most recent edition was insufficient, I started on a new one, while Yaakov began writing a commentary. Circumstances over the following years were not favorable, however, so the project languished.

In 2003/4, Yaakov’s student Shai Secunda joined us, and we decided to study another text, the *Šāyist nē šāyist* “What is OK and what is not OK” according to the Zoroastrian tradition, as well as the commentary to the *Videvdad*, another Avestan-Pahlavi legal text. It was during these early years of collaboration that the meaning of this legal Pahlavi literature, which till then I had been unable to understand what was about, was revealed to me by Yaakov and Shai’s background in the Talmud and other Jewish literature. As I used to say: to understand the Pahlavi texts you have to learn to think like a rabbi, because that was more or less how the Zoroastrian *dastwars* thought as well.

Encouraged by this new-found interest in Pahlavi, I also taught a Pahlavi language course counting close to ten students, among them Shana Shick, another student of Yaakov’s.

During the last year we worked together at Harvard, Yaakov used to stay with me. The first time he came, he went through my cupboards to see what I had of kosher dry food. I thought none, but, to my surprise, about half of it actually was kosher. Here, I also had the opportunity to talk about things other than Pahlavi and learned a lot about Jewish life style, much of which I found unexpectedly broadminded.

The first fruit of our collaboration was the participation in the conference at UCLA (May 5–6, 2007): “The Talmud in its Iranian Context,” where Yaakov spoke about “Toward an Intellectual History of Sasanian Law: An Intergenerational Dispute in *Hērbedestān* 9 and its Rabbinic and Roman Parallels” and I about “The Terminology and Style of the Pahlavi

Scholastic Literature.” Three years later, at a conference in Oxford (July, 2010) entitled “Zoroastrianism in the Levant and the Amorites,” we spoke about “The Shared Scholastic Culture of Late Sasanian Iran, or Does Pollution Need Stairs?” published as an article in two parts (my “Does Pollution Need Stairs?” and Yaakov’s “... and Does it Fill Space?”). And, a year later, at a conference at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (May 23–25, 2011) “By the Rivers of Babylon” arranged by Shai and Uri Gabbay, where Yaakov spoke about “Contrasting Intellectual Trajectories: Iran and Israel in Mesopotamia” and I about “The Zoroastrian Tradition—the *dēn*—in Sasanian and Early Islamic Times.” The titles of our talks and my bibliography will show how much I was influenced by my work with Yaakov and Shai. In 2012, yet another student arrived incited by Yaakov, Yishai Kiel (whom I had met at the Babylon conference), who stayed for two years. Together we, too—occasionally joined by Yaakov—worked on a legal text, the *Questions (and answers) of Ādurbād son of Farrokh*.

Circumstances beyond our control prevented us from meeting over the years after Yaakov stopped coming to Cambridge, other than a few times when I was in New York, where he invited me to his home one Friday, unbeknownst to his wife, Bryna. Reminiscing with Bryna at Yaakov’s shiva, it appears I had not been a bad *Shabbes goy*. By and by, however, Yaakov and I were not in touch as much as we should have been, both being occupied with other matters.

Our work having become widely known among talmudic scholars, I was approached by Steven Fraade and Christine Hayes at the Jewish Studies Program at Yale about teaching Pahlavi there, which I did for a year (2016–17), and, during the same year, I had the opportunity to teach two other talmudists, Yaakov’s student Erez de Golan, who was at the Harvard Divinity School, and Miriam Simma Walfish, a student in Jewish studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Having now stopped teaching in a class context, I still have a small following of students online. Indeed, Yaakov’s influence on the reawakened interest in the study of Pahlavi language and literature among talmudists and Iranists alike cannot be underestimated.

But what I remember and appreciate the most, perhaps, is how much fun we had. Laughter came easily to Yaakov. He was easygoing and infallibly optimistic during the adversities that life threw at him and from which he would re-emerge full of intellectual energy. Sadly, that intellect will now awaken no more. ■

HARRY STARR FELLOWSHIP IN JUDAICA

The Harry Starr Fellowship in Judaica supports a group of scholars from around the world to gather at Harvard to engage in full-time research in Jewish Studies. This research fellowship was founded with a generous bequest from the estate of Harry Starr '21, former president of the Lucius Littauer Foundation.

The Starr Fellowship is open to scholars at different stages of their academic careers. Most years we organize the fellowship around a designated subject area and work together with an academic department in that field. This year, Professors Luis Girón Negrón, David Stern, and Saul Zaritt hosted a group in the area of “Jewish Literatures and Languages” with the Depart-

ment of Comparative Literature. Starr Fellows presented their works in progress at the Starr Seminars, weekly meetings during the spring semester. These presentations often elicit lively discussions between the Starr Fellows, other visiting scholars, and faculty and students from Harvard and other area universities.

Last year, we were able to invite six Harry Starr Fellows in Judaica to Harvard, and one honorary Starr Fellow. In addition, we were able to use the Alan M. Stroock Fund for Advanced Research in Judaica to bring an additional scholar to Harvard to join the Starr Fellows over the spring semester.

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER FELLOWSHIP

It was a pleasure to host **Rabbi Yonatan “Yoni” Birnbaum** of the Hadley Wood Jewish Community in London as our twenty-fourth Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellow. In addition to serving an active congregation, Rabbi Birnbaum is also working on a Ph.D. in the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at

University College London. This fellowship was established in memory of Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver '48 to enable an “active congregational rabbi who has demonstrated exceptional intellectual and academic interest, originality and energy” to engage in full-time research at Harvard for a semester.

WEINSTOCK VISITING PROFESSORS

The Gerard Weinstock Visiting Professorship, the generous gift of Gerard Weinstock, allows us to bring distinguished professors from outside Harvard to supplement our course offerings in areas of Jewish studies not covered by our current faculty.

Last year's Weinstock Visiting Professors were **Israel Knohl** in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (Yehezkel Kaufmann Professor of Biblical Studies, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem) and **Yael Berda** in the Department of Sociology (Assistant Professor, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem).



SCHOLARS IN THE WIND (L-R):
WILLEM SMELIK, KATHRYN HELLERSTEIN, JEFFREY SHANDLER,
ALESSANDRO GUETTA, URI SHACHAR, NILI SAMET, JONATHAN
DECTER, LUIS GIRÓN NEGRÓN, MIRIAM GOLDSTEIN, RABBI
YONI BIRNBAUM, SAUL ZARITT (INSET: GIL RUBIN)



CENTER
for
JEWISH
STUDIES

Visitor Viewpoints

MIRIAM GOLDSTEIN *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Starr Fellow*



MIRIAM GOLDSTEIN

The 2017–18 Starr Fellowship was my first time back to Cambridge since graduating Harvard College in 1999—and it was a wonderful reunion. Lamont Library, Widener Library, Houghton Library, and the Divinity School were all mostly as I'd remembered them, and were comfortable and inspiring places to work on my research on the medieval bestseller, *Toledot Yeshu* (The Life of Jesus), a polemical satire on the life of Jesus and the later history of Christianity. In

prior research, I had discovered that Judeo-Arabic versions of this work were extremely popular among the Jews of Arabic-speaking lands, and I devoted this year to further study and publishing regarding the many manuscripts and fragments I had found.

We began the year as three Starr Fellows—Uri, Willem, and I, who became friends immediately—and the spring brought new friendships and wonderful conversations when Nili, Jeffrey, and Alessandro joined. During the fall semester, I had the pleasure of auditing Luis Girón Negrón's course on the Literatures of Iberia, moving from Spanish to Arabic to Hebrew and back again. I met with teachers and mentors dear to me from the nineties, including Berel Septimus, Irit

"...a truly wonderful year at Harvard and in Cambridge!"

—Miriam Goldstein

Aharony, and Bill Graham, and met the faculty of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations—my home base during my college years. I broadened my horizons at numerous lectures and seminars of visiting scholars and faculty.

Thursdays at the Starr Seminar were something I always looked forward to: enlightening and enjoyable lectures and discussions with the participation of Kathryn Hellerstein, Caroline Sauter, Jonathan Decter, and Harvard faculty including Madeleine Cohen, Shaye Cohen, Luis Girón Negrón, David Stern, and Saul Zaritt. During my own presentation on my Judeo-Arabic materials, I found participants' comments very useful and thought-provoking, and I incorporated consideration of many of them into a number of articles that will be published soon. I especially enjoyed our semester-end party, where my children could meet other fellows and faculty and their families (oh, and climb all over the furniture in David Stern's building's reception room)!

My family and I are grateful to the Center for Jewish Studies, its staff and its supporters for providing us with this opportunity, which I believe we have imbibed to the utmost. ■

ALESSANDRO GUETTA *Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Starr Fellow*



I am currently studying the translations of Hebrew texts into Italian during the late Renaissance period, i.e., during the mid-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries. An important textual *corpus* is actually extant, partly printed, but mostly in manuscript form: it spans from biblical translations – written in elegant, literary Italian – to philosophical works (e.g., Maimonides' *Moreh*, Y. Albo's *Sefer ha-'ikarim*), and from medieval

poetry (adapted in Italian verses) to sapiential literature, as well as other types of texts.

The spring semester was rich in both learning and social interaction. Our cohort of fellows consisted of scholars from different places and intellectual horizons who study different literary *corpuses*; but we had in common the shared interest in the relationships between language, history, and culture, all in the context of Jewish studies. This dialectic of difference and communality of interests has been stimulating for my research. We often discussed the methodological issues or interpretative frames of our work and exchanged ideas and bibliographic suggestions. Talking to colleagues who study

“The weekly Starr Seminars provided precious moments of true intellectual enrichment.”

–Alessandro Guetta

Jewish texts written in Aramaic, Arabic, or Yiddish, whose fields of research span from the Bible to medieval Mediterranean culture to modern hermeneutics, did not drive me away from my subject of research; on the contrary, it broadened my vision of it.

The weekly Starr Seminars provided precious moments of true intellectual enrichment. Additionally, while I lived in and benefitted from a large community that encompasses Harvard and its cultural wealth (including its numerous lectures and libraries), I was also able to attend lectures and meet colleagues of other prestigious universities in the greater Boston area. The constant kindness and helpful attitude of Rachel Rockenmacher and Sandy Cantave Vil (in the CJS office) have been extremely important in attenuating the anxieties of my family and of myself, anxieties necessarily linked to settling in a new place.

If I might sum up a six-month period in one sentence, it would be the following: The Starr Fellowship has provided me with a very rich experience on both a human and on an intellectual level. ■

NILI SAMET *Bar-Ilan University, Starr Fellow*



My stay at Harvard as a Harry Starr Fellow during spring 2018 has been a productive and rewarding experience. The Center for Jewish Studies supplied me with the ideal conditions for carrying out in-depth research and gave me the opportunity to discuss it with fellow scholars from diverse disciplines and backgrounds. This in turn gave rise to academic and personal contacts that will hopefully mature into future collaborations.

During my term as a Starr Fellow,

I was able to complete two studies on Qohelet's language: "Qohelet's Idiolect: The Language of a Jew in a Changing World" and "Linguistic Dating of the Book of Qohelet: A New Direction." Both of these studies touch upon core issues of the 2018 fellowship theme, including dialectology, bilingualism, language contact, language, and Jewish

“I greatly benefitted from the discussions during the weekly seminars, and was inspired by the other fellows' research projects.”

–Nili Samet

identity. I thus greatly benefitted from the methodological discussions during the weekly seminars and was inspired by the other Fellows' research projects. In addition, during my time at CJS I had the opportunity to make a significant progress in my commentary on Qohelet, which will be published in the *Mikra LeYisrael* series.

I am grateful to Professor David Stern for his kind and welcoming hospitality, to my fellow members for their friendship and thought-provoking insights, and to Rachel and Sandy for their extraordinary consideration of everything we needed in the warmest way possible. ■

HARRY STARR SEMINARS IN JUDAICA, SPRING 2018

TOPIC: JEWISH LITERATURES AND LANGUAGES

JANUARY 25, 2018

PROFESSOR LUIS GIRÓN NEGRÓN

Harvard University

Opening meeting

FEBRUARY 1, 2018

WILLEM SMELIK

University College, London

The Multilingualism of Early Rabbinic Literature

FEBRUARY 8, 2018

NILI SAMET

Bar-Ilan University

Qohelet's Ideolect: The Language of a Jew in a Changing World

FEBRUARY 15, 2018

ALESSANDRO GUETTA

INALCO Paris

Italian Translations of Hebrew Texts in the Early Modern Period: An Inventory and a Few Questions

FEBRUARY 22, 2018

SHACHAR PINSKER

University of Michigan

Yiddish in Israeli Literature and Culture

MARCH 1, 2018

KATHRYN HELLERSTEIN

University of Pennsylvania

China Comes to Warsaw, or Warsaw Comes to China: Melech Ravitch's Travel Poems and Journals

MARCH 6, 2018

URI SHACHAR

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

The Judeo-German Dukus Horant—An Eastern Mediterranean Epic?

MARCH 22, 2018

JEFFREY SHANDLER

Rutgers University

On Writing a Biography of Yiddish: Wrangling with a Metaphor

APRIL 12, 2018

JONATHAN DECTER

Brandeis University

"Torah Speaks in the Language of Men:" Medieval Hebrew/Judeo-Arabic Bilingual Poetry

APRIL 26, 2018

MIRIAM GOLDSTEIN

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Interreligious Polemic in Islamic Lands: Toledot Yeshu in Judeo-Arabic

MAY 3, 2018

SAUL ZARITT

Harvard University

A Taytsh Manifesto: Yiddish, Translation, and Jewish Language Afterlives

Wind-up meeting



URI SHACHAR *Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Starr Fellow*



The fellowship at the Center for Jewish Studies without a doubt made for one of the most academically satisfying experiences of my career. This is due in no small part to the resources at the University that are truly unmatched, but mostly thanks to the intellectual generosity exemplified by the hosts and conveners. David, Luis, and Saul created an exciting and welcoming environment, which made it very easy to feel at home. None of this, however, would have been

possible if it were not for the extraordinary dedication of the wonderful staff at the Center—Rachel and Sandy.

The theme for this year brought together a diverse group of scholars, both local and visiting, who joined in thinking about the idioms that Jewish authors devised in order to convey their experiences in a wide range of contexts. The multiple disciplines and perspectives that were present around our table helped us appreciate collectively, over the course of the spring semester, the composite qualities which became manifest in the various literary traditions that we examined.

As a Starr Fellow, I started a new project that set out to investigate the work of multilingualism as the condition that shaped inter-

“The fellowship... without a doubt made for one of the most academically satisfying experiences of my career.”

—Uri Shachar

communal entanglement in the late medieval Mediterranean. One of the objectives of this project is to ask how multilingualism informed the way neighboring groups communicated across and within societies, and how languages—liturgical, intellectual, mystical, and literary—functioned during this highly tumultuous period. In the winter, I started researching a manuscript that presents a highly compelling example of the kind of linguistic hybrid that was in play during this period. This codex, which was discovered in the Cairo Genizah, contains a unique copy of a Middle High German epic copied in Hebrew script. The paper that I presented on this manuscript joined an ongoing conversation in our group on the territorial and political claims that were (and are!) involved in invoking Yiddish and other hybrid Jewish languages. I am grateful for this conversation, and hope it will be reflected in the essays and book that will grow from this experience. ■

JEFFREY SHANDLER *Rutgers University, Starr Fellow*



I was commissioned by Oxford University Press to write a book on Yiddish for their series, “Biography of a Language.” Responding to the series title, I’ve chosen to address the topic through the rubric of a biographical profile, in a series of fourteen short thematic chapters: Name, Date and Place of Birth, Family Background, Gender, Education, Occupation, Political Affiliation, and Life Expectancy, among others. This proves to be an especially provocative approach to

writing about a language. Even though language use may epitomize what it means to be a human being, anthropomorphizing a language employs a metaphor that is both compelling and challenging. My approach to writing a “biography” of Yiddish foregrounds connections of the language to its speakers and their sense of self as reflected

“...a richly rewarding opportunity for me to advance my work.”

—Jeffrey Shandler

in language use and in ideas about language. This rubric is especially productive for a study of Yiddish, given not only its close imbrication with the experience and culture of Ashkenazi Jews, but also its complex interrelation with the other languages spoken over the centuries by these Jews and their neighbors around the world.

The Starr Fellowship was a richly rewarding opportunity for me to advance my work on this project. It was especially valuable to learn about the other Fellows’ research, which has stimulated my thinking about larger issues concerning the interrelation of language, people, and culture generally and among the diversity of Jewish communities over time and space. The collegial exchange among fellows was intellectually stimulating, leaving me with much food for thought about Jewish language use for this current research project and beyond. ■

WILLEM SMELIK *University College, London, Starr Fellow*



As a Harry Starr Fellow in Judaica during the fall of 2017 and the spring of 2018, I explored the bilingual nature of early rabbinic literature. During the fall, I focused on the socio-historical conceptualizations of the three main Jewish languages in Roman Palestine—Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew—over the course of several centuries, from the Late Second Temple period to the first centuries CE, to cast the status of Aramaic as a choice language into greater relief. I addressed this

topic under the title “No Ordinary Tongue: When Hebrew Went Numinous” at the invitation of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome on May 10. At the same time, I analysed early rabbinic bilingualism, a project which is informed by sociolinguistic studies of both written and conversational code-switching. This project is to be published as “Code-switching in the Yerushalmi.” I also studied the linguistic

“...atmosphere that was as inquisitive as it was cordial.”

—Willem Smelik

impact of contact-induced change on Hebrew and Aramaic and the extent of bi-directionality between Hebrew and Aramaic. And, finally, I briefly worked on a new Aramaic fragment of the *Toledot Yeshu* narrative, which included possibly unique features that shed new light on the *corpus*, in particular, the Aramaic versions.

The weekly Starr Seminars proved to be highly stimulating encounters with knowledgeable peers, which not only provided useful feedback on my own research, but also new ideas and insights thanks to the research and conversation of all others present, all in an atmosphere that was as inquisitive as it was cordial—qualities personified by the convenors of the seminar, David Stern, Luis Girón Negrón and Saul Zaritt. I am likewise most grateful to colleagues at Harvard whom I met on separate occasions, as well as the most hospitable and helpful staff of the Center for Jewish Studies. It has been an incredible experience. ■

KATHRYN HELLERSTEIN *University of Pennsylvania, Stroock Fellow*



During my semester as a Stroock Fellow at the Harvard Center for Jewish Studies, I worked on two projects. My main project was my ongoing book, *China Through Yiddish Eyes: Cultural Translation in the Twentieth Century*. I gave two talks at Harvard from this project. The first was a working paper for the Starr Seminar, “China Comes to Warsaw, Or, Warsaw Comes to China: Mel-ech Ravitch’s Travel Poems and Journals.” (I also presented this lecture at the Jewish Public Li-

brary in Montreal.) The second talk was cosponsored by the Center for Jewish Studies and the “Re-thinking Translation Seminar,” hosted by Sandra Naddaff (Comparative Literature) and Stephanie Sandler (Slavic Languages and Literatures), “Yiddish Chinoiserie: China in Modernist Yiddish Translations.” Thanks to an invaluable suggestion from Starr Fellow Jeffrey Shandler (Rutgers University), I also discovered and worked on a 1925 Yiddish translation of a medieval Chinese classic play, which I presented as a conference paper, “China in Yiddish: Translations of Poetry and Theater,” at a University of

An invaluable suggestion from another Fellow contributed to and expanded her work.

Pennsylvania conference I co-hosted at Nanjing University in June, “China and Ashkenazic Jewry: Transnational Encounters.”

The second project was editing and revising my *Anthology of Women Yiddish Poets*, which is under contract with Stanford University Press. I was fortunate to work with a wonderful research assistant, Elena Hoffenberg, a recent Harvard College alumna, whose knowledge of Yiddish and the Harvard libraries helped me greatly in propelling the project toward completion. I spoke to the Advanced Yiddish class (Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations), taught by Mandy (Mindl) Cohen, about this project, and also gave a talk to the Boston Workmen’s Circle on “Brazen and Modest: Women and the Making of Modern Yiddish Literature.”

I especially enjoyed the opportunity to participate in the Starr Seminar every week. I learned a lot from the Starr Fellows’ presentations and the lively discussions and conversations about the year’s topic of Jewish Literatures and Languages. I am grateful for the opportunities that the Center for Jewish Studies offered me this past spring. ■

YONI BIRNBAUM *Hadley Wood Jewish Community, Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellow*



My time at the Center for Jewish Studies has been tremendously rewarding. As a busy community rabbi in London, as well as a doctoral candidate, the Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellowship provided me with a precious opportunity to focus on my research within the unique scholarly environment at Harvard.

Even more significantly, it has been wonderful to learn from and interact with the Starr Fellows and faculty members at the Center. Their knowledge and

expertise in a diverse range of disciplines associated with Jewish studies have produced extremely rich discussions in the various seminars

"It has been wonderful to learn from and interact with the Fellows and faculty."

—Yoni Birnbaum

and lectures I have attended, and have helped me reflect on my own research methods and scholarly development. I return to London with a wealth of knowledge which I look forward to sharing with my community.

It has been a true privilege to spend this semester at the Center for Jewish Studies, and I take this opportunity to thank Professor Stern, the faculty members, staff, and the rest of the team for their guidance and support. May the Center go from strength to strength. ■

THANKS TO ALL OUR VISITORS LAST YEAR!

WEINSTOCK VISITING PROFESSORS

Israel Knohl, Yehezkel Kaufmann Professor of Biblical Studies, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Courses: "The Birth of Biblical Religion," Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations
"Messianism in Early Judaism and Christianity"
Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, with David Stern

Yael Berda, Assistant Professor, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Course: "Doing Transnational Historical Sociology,"
Department of Sociology

VISITING SCHOLARS AND FELLOWS

2017–2018 Harry Starr Fellows in Judaica:

Miriam Goldstein, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Alessandro Guetta, Institut National des Langues at Civilisations Orientales, Paris
Nili Samet, Bar-Ilan University
Uri Shachar, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
Jeffrey Shandler, Rutgers University
Willem Smelik, University College London
Jonathan Decter, Brandeis University (Honorary)

Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellow:

Rabbi Yonatan "Yoni" Birnbaum, London

Fellows:

Jeremy Cohen, Tel Aviv University
Andres Enrique-Arias, University of the Balearic Islands
Rachel Greenblatt, Dartmouth College
Kathryn Hellerstein, University of Pennsylvania
Gil Rubin, Israel Institute Postdoctoral Fellow

Visiting Scholars:

Ofra Tirosh-Becker, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

THE JUDAICA DIVISION, WIDENER LIBRARY, PUBLISHES LATEST VOLUME IN ITS STUDENT RESEARCH PAPERS SERIES

Reflecting the close ties between the Harvard Judaica Collection and undergraduate research, the latest number in the Harvard Judaica Collection Student Research Papers Series has just appeared: the senior honors thesis of **Nancy Ko**, Class of 2017. Titled *Civilizing Omission: French-Jewish Philanthropy and Historical Amnesia During and After the Iranian Constitutional Revolution*, the thesis explores the relationship between the Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Jewish community in Iran in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Nancy's thesis utilized materials in the Judaica Collection as well as in the archive of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* in Paris. Of particular interest with regard to the role of the Judaica Collection in facilitating her research is the fact that Nancy combined working on documents in the Paris archive with subsequent work on those same documents in digital format at the Harvard Library. This was possible thanks to a Judaica Division digital project in 2011 involving the Alliance and the National Library of Israel's Central Archive for the History of the Jewish People. At the Judaica Division's initiative, this tripartite consortium digitized microfilm copies of most of the AIU archive. In this fashion, digital copies of the documents that Nancy studied during her trip to Paris enabled her to have extended access to these same documents at Harvard.

Nancy acknowledged the value of these digitized resources for her and for other researchers in her thesis: "While the bulk of my source compilation was conducted at the Alliance headquarters in Paris, I have 'converted' my citations, where possible, to reflect Harvard University's digitized record of the Alliance archives. I have done so for two reasons: First, the digitized archives are more accessible for those readers interested in following my paper trail. Second, the digitized archives are in the form of PDF documents, which has allowed me to cite specific pages as opposed to entire files—a task I hope will save future researchers much hassle."

Nancy's thesis advisers were **Afsaneh Najmabadi**, the Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History and Professor of Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, and **Jay M. Harris**, the Harry Austryn Wolfson Professor of Jewish Studies and Dean of Undergraduate Education. Nancy also consulted with

Derek Penslar, the William Lee Frost Professor of Jewish History. The significance of her thesis is attested to by Professor Najmabadi in the Preface: "Conceptually and intellectually, Nancy Ko's thesis is a genuinely original, indeed doctoral level, contribution to several fields of history." The Judaica Division is pleased to have assisted in this research project by providing Nancy access to the needed research resources as well as by disseminating to the global scholarly community—on paper copy as well as online—this contribution to Jewish and Middle Eastern historiography.

The entire series of fourteen publications is available online through HOLLIS, Harvard Library's online catalog, by searching the title entry: "Harvard Judaica Collection Student Research Papers."

This is the fourteenth publication in the Judaica Division's Harvard Judaica Collection Student Research Papers Series. This series is intended to focus attention on research done by undergraduates at Harvard that makes use of the Library's Judaica holdings. Through the publication of a selection of outstanding student papers, such as honors theses and seminar papers, we hope to encourage other students—and their faculty advisors—to select research topics that make use of Harvard's extraordinary Judaica resources, as well as to promote closer ties between faculty, students, and the library. Publication of such Judaica research papers is an extension of the Judaica Division's long-time role in providing bibliographic guidance to students working on Judaica-related topics and of the Division's ongoing outreach efforts to make students and scholars aware of the extensive and multifaceted Judaica resources that are available in the Harvard Library. The Judaica Division is very pleased to add to this series Nancy Ko's thesis, which was awarded a Thomas T. Hoopes Prize for Excellence.

Previous publications in the Series cover a wide range of topics and illustrate the interdisciplinary nature of Jewish Studies at

Harvard as well as the extraordinary resources of the Harvard Judaica Collection, which encourages and supports research in any area of Jewish Studies. The entire Series is also freely available online through HOLLIS, Harvard Library's online catalog, by searching the title entry: "Harvard Judaica Collection Student Research Papers."

The thirteen other publications in this Series feature research into: medieval Jewish history (Moshe Ibn Ezra; Hebrew poetry in Spain); modern Hebrew literature (M.Y. Berdichevsky); modern Jewish history (Zionist historiography; Jews in 19th century German literature; European synagogue architecture); Israel (Ethiopian Jews; 1960s politics); Yiddish (the comedian

Shimen Dzigal; Shulamis operetta); and Jewish music (Oriental Jewish music in Israel; musicians in New York 1881-1945; and Jewish musical traditions). The Judaica Division derives great satisfaction from publishing what is in most cases the author's first scholarly publication.

This series is made possible by the Judaica Division's Sherman H. Starr Judaica Library Publication Fund in the Harvard Library. ■

- Charles Berlin, Ph.D.
Lee M. Friedman Bibliographer in the
Harvard College Library

THE JULIS-RABINOWITZ PROGRAM ON JEWISH AND ISRAELI LAW, HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

The Julis-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law at the Harvard Law School pursues excellence in the scholarly study of Jewish law, conceived as a dynamic religious system, and Israeli law, the legal system of a state formally committed to democratic and Jewish values. We study the two subject matters as distinct, while also taking particular interest in points of overlap and contestation and the competing claims they sometimes make on one another. We emphasize methodological and ideological diversity and strive to present the full range of opinion and critique, internal and external, consistent always with the academic values of civility, openness, and mutual respect.

The Julis-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law at the Harvard Law School pursues excellence in the scholarly study of Jewish law, conceived as a dynamic religious system, and Israeli law, the legal system of a state.

Our annual conference for 2018 will focus on "Progressive Halakhah" and will feature keynotes by **Ethan Tucker**, President and Rosh Yeshiva at Hadar, **Sharon Cohen-Anisfeld**, President of Hebrew College, and **Jane Kanarek**, Associate Dean at Hebrew College. The two-day event includes panels on a variety of topics, including: Movements and Post-Movements, Communal Boundaries, and Progressivism, Zionism and Messianism. Please be sure to check our website for updated information. The conference will be held on December 19–20 at Harvard Law School and is open to the public.

We are busy organizing activities for the Fall 2018 semester. Highlights include:

- Discussion of Israel's Nation-State Law, with **Noah Feldman**, **Avishay Ben Sasson-Gordis** and **Fady Khoury**;
 - Book launch to celebrate the publication of *Jewish Legal Theories: Writings on State, Religion and Morality*, edited by **Yoni Brafman** and **Leora Batnizky**, a co-sponsored event with Brandeis University's Tauber Center for European Jewry; and
 - Advocacy for Transgender Israeli Prisoners: Notes from the Field, with **Lihli Yona** and **Ido Katri**.
- Susan Kahn, Ph.D.
Associate Director for Content and Curriculum
Julis-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law
Harvard Law School



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DAVID STERN AND SHAYE COHEN

ANNUAL RECEPTION • FEBRUARY 14, 2018

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MIRIAM GOLDSTEIN



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SEPTIMUS, AND SAUL ZARITT



WILLEM SMELIK

NAMED FUNDS IN JEWISH STUDIES

Those pursuing Jewish studies at Harvard University may benefit from a number of funds established over the years. New funds are formed continuously; the following funds are currently supporting students and scholars in their pursuit for greater knowledge and achievement in this field. These also may support publications and events at the Center for Jewish Studies. For further information on establishing a named fund, or contributing to one, go to cjs.fas.harvard.edu.

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Harry and Cecile Starr Prizes in Jewish Studies
Alan M. and Katherine W. Stroock Family Fellowship for Advanced Research in Judaica Studies
Isadore Twersky Fellowship

NAMED TEACHING AND RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

Morris and Beverly Baker Foundation Yiddish Language Instruction Fund
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Freed Research Fund in the Center for Jewish Studies
Isaac-Melech, Icla and Zelman Rykles Memorial Fund
Edwin Lichtig, Jr. Research and Teaching Fund

Joseph Morton Miller Endowed Fund for Yiddish Studies
Rohr Visiting Professorship in Modern Israel Studies
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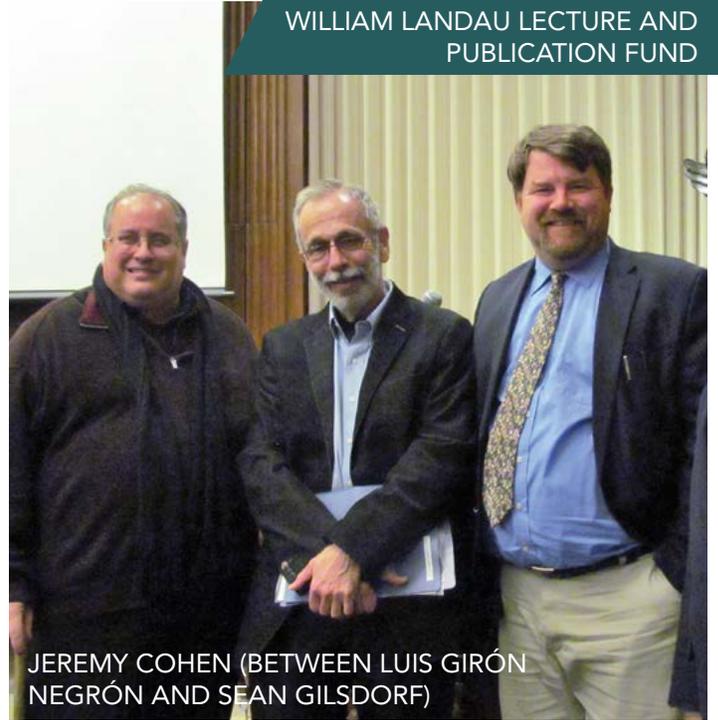
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HARRY ELSON LECTURE AND
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KATHRYN HELLERSTEIN

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In December 1984, Peter Solomon (AB '60, MBA '63) announced the establishment of the Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies. The Friends of CJS seeks to provide an ongoing base of support for the Center and to enable it to expand its present areas of activity. Annual support from the Friends helps shape the future of Jewish Studies and sustains the Center as an influential, multifaceted enterprise at Harvard.

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- doctoral dissertation advising by specialized scholars from outside Harvard;
- group discussions of research in progress for faculty and students in Jewish studies at the Harvard Jewish Studies Workshop.

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ONLINE: To make a gift by credit card to the Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University, please click [HERE](https://community.alumni.harvard.edu/give/16040850) (<https://community.alumni.harvard.edu/give/16040850>) for Harvard University's online giving form and follow the instructions.

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Please make checks payable to "The President and Fellows of Harvard College" and include a note in the memo line of the check that this is for the "Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies" (or the name of the other fund of your choice).



JON D. LEVENSON

FEBRUARY 1, 2018

Miscategorizing Chosenness

JON D. LEVENSON

Albert A. List Professor of Jewish Studies, Harvard Divinity School

Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies Fund with the Hebrew Bible Workshop and Harvard Jewish Studies Workshop

FEBRUARY 12, 2018

Engaging the Past, Envisioning the Future: Reflections of/on a Spanish Jewish Exile

JEREMY COHEN

Abraham and Edita Spiegel Family Foundation Professor of European Jewish History, Tel Aviv University

William Landau Lecture and Publication Fund with the Committee on Medieval Studies and the Jewish Societies and Cultures Seminar, Mahindra Humanities Center, Harvard University

FEBRUARY 14, 2018

ANNUAL CJS SPRING RECEPTION

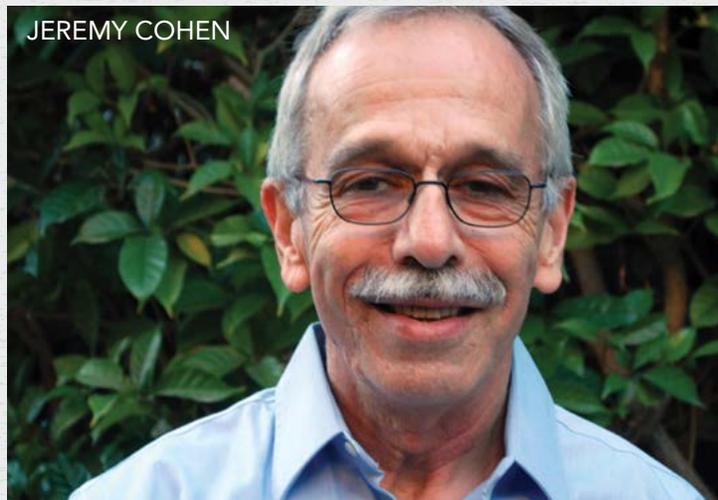
FEBRUARY 14, 2018

The Wrong Family Holocaust Story: Survival of Polish Jews in Stalin's Russia

ELLEN G. FRIEDMAN

Professor, The College of New Jersey

Leon I. Mirell Lecture Fund with the Seminar on Russian and Eurasian Jewry, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University



JEREMY COHEN

FEBRUARY 15, 2018

German Jewry and the Allure of the Sephardic

JOHN M. EFRON

Koret Professor of Jewish History, University of California, Berkeley

William Landau Lecture and Publication Fund with the Jews in Modern Europe Study Group, the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies; Real Colegio Complutense, Harvard University; and the Jean-Monnet ad Personam Chair in European Union Law and Government, Harvard University

FEBRUARY 22, 2018

A Rich Brew: How Cafes Created Modern Jewish Culture

SHACHAR PINSKER

Associate Professor of Hebrew Literature and Culture, Department of Near Eastern Studies; Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, University of Michigan

Harry Elson Lecture and Publication Fund

FEBRUARY 26, 2018

Tell Me a Story with a Happy Ending: Harvard Hillel's Fourth Annual Rissman Forum on Politics and Policy

SAYED KASHUA AND ETGAR KERET

In 2014, Etgar Keret, a Jewish-Israeli writer, and Sayed Kashua, a Palestinian-Israeli writer, published a series of letters to one another in *The New Yorker*. They discussed their apprehensions and hopes regarding a country that they have both called home

Yanoff-Taylor Lecture and Publication Fund with Harvard Hillel and the Julis-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law, Harvard Law School

MARCH 5, 2018

Canon and Commentary: Rashi's Resisting Readers

ERIC LAWEE

Associate Professor, Department of Bible, Bar-Ilan University; 2017-2018 Shoshana Shier Distinguished Visiting Professor, University of Toronto

Yanoff-Taylor Lecture and Publication Fund with the Harvard Jewish Studies Workshop and the Jewish Societies and Cultures Seminar, Mahindra Humanities Center, Harvard University

MARCH 6, 2018

The Turbulent History of Kosher Certification in America: Jewish Communal Self-Governance in a Liberal Society

TIMOTHY D. LYTTON

Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development; Distinguished University Professor and Professor of Law, Center for Law, Health and Society, Georgia State University College of Law

Robert and Florence Dreben Lecture and Publication Fund with the Julis-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law, Harvard Law School

JEWISH STUDIES STUDENT WORKSHOP

MEETING DATES: 10/16/17, 10/30/17,
11/13/17, 02/07/18

BELOW:

Visit to the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Mass. The whole group, from left to right: Uri Schreter (Ph.D. candidate, Music), Derek David (teaching fellow in Music), Madeleine Cohen (Preceptor for Yiddish), Rachel Slutsky (Ph.D. candidate, Committee on the Study of Religion, student in Advanced Yiddish), Jacob Slutsky (Rachel's husband), Caroline Kahlenberg (Ph.D. candidate in History and Middle East Studies), Abigail Ory (freshman, student in Beginning Yiddish), Benjamin Glass (senior, Statistics, taking an independent study on Early Yiddish), Ari Berman (Junior, Government, student in Beginning Yiddish), Alexander Price (master's student at the Divinity School, student in Beginning Yiddish).

STEFANO GARZONIO

Professor of Slavic Studies, Pisa University

Yanoff-Taylor Lecture and Publication Fund with the Seminar on Russian and Eurasian Jewry, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University

MARCH 23, 2018

A City of Many Faces - Architecture, Literature & Memory of my Diverse Hometown of Haifa

NILI GOLD

Professor of Modern Hebrew Literature, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania

Harry Edison Fund with the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Israeli Law, Literature and Society Seminar Series, Harvard University

MARCH 25, 2018

Trip to the Yiddish Book Center, Amherst MA

DR. MADELEINE COHEN

Preceptor in Yiddish, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University

Abraham and Rachel Bornstein Fund with Harvard Hillel



ERIC LAWEE



NILI GOLD





YONI BIRNBAUM

MARCH 26, 2018

Israeli literature re-reading the New Testament: Judas by Amos Oz

RUTH KARTUN-BLUM

Professor of Modern Hebrew Literature, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Harry Edison Fund with the Harvard Divinity School and the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University

APRIL 9, 2018

Synagogues of Habsburg Hungary: Typology, Genealogy and Architectural Significance

RUDOLF KLEIN

Ybl Miklós Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Szent István University

William Landau Lecture and Publication Fund with the Jews in Modern Europe Study Group, the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard University

APRIL 10, 2018

Yiddish Chinoiserie: China in Modernist Yiddish Translations

KATHRYN HELLERSTEIN

Associate Professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures, specializing in Yiddish, and the Ruth Meltzer Director of the Jewish Studies Program at the University of Pennsylvania; and the Alan M. Stroock Fellow, Harvard University

Harry Elson Lecture and Publication Fund with the Jewish Societies and Cultures and the Rethinking Translation Seminars, Mahindra Humanities Center, Harvard University

APRIL 12, 2018

A Mosaic for Miriam

PHYLLIS TRIBLE

Baldwin Professor of Sacred Literature Emerita, Union Theological Seminary

Harry Edison Fund with the Committee on the Study of Religion and the Hebrew Bible Workshop, Harvard University, and the Women's Studies in Religion Program, Harvard Divinity School

APRIL 16, 2018

Origins of the Hebrew Language

AARON RUBIN

Malvin E. and Lea P. Bank Professor of Jewish Studies, Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies, and Linguistics, The Pennsylvania State University

Jeannette and Ludwig Goldschmidt Bequest for the Benefit of the Center for Jewish Studies

APRIL 18, 2018

Brodsky Among Us: One Book, Two Cultures

ELLENEA PROFFER TEASLEY

Author; Co-founder, Ardis Publishers and Russian Literature Triquarterly

Yanoff-Taylor Lecture and Publication Fund with the Seminar on Russian and Eurasian Jewry, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University

APRIL 30, 2018

Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz

OMER BARTOV

John P. Birkelund Distinguished Professor of European History, Brown University

Leon I. Mirell Lecture Fund with the Jews in Modern Europe Study Group, the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard University

MAY 1, 2018

Modern Rabbinic Dilemmas: Inclusivism in the Works of Twentieth Century American Orthodox Posqim

YONI BIRNBAUM

Rabbi, Hadley Wood Jewish Community, London; Ph.D. candidate, University College, London Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies; 2018 Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellow, Harvard University

Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellowship



MAY 3, 2018

END OF YEAR RECEPTION FOR CJS VISITORS

JUNE 11-13, 2018

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF JEWISH RESEARCH (AAJR) RETREAT

Presidential talk by **Gershon Hundert**, McGill University

AAJR Past and Present: Its Role and Mission—Looking toward the Centennial

David Sorkin, City University of New York

Marsha Rozenblit, University of Maryland

Chair: Derek Penslar, Harvard University

AAJR's Public Face and Digital Possibilities: Past and Future

Rachel Deblinger, The Humanities Institute at University of California, Santa Cruz (guest speaker)

Report of the Nominating Committee

AAJR and Scholarly Disciplines: Approaches and Methods in Jewish Studies

Lila Corwin Berman, Temple University

Jonathan Boyarin, Cornell University

Chair: Kay Kaufman Shelemay, Harvard University

New Approaches to the Study of Judaic Texts

David Stern, Harvard University

Christine Hayes, Yale University

Benjamin Sommer, Jewish Theological Seminary

Chair: Adele Reinhartz, University of Ottawa

Harvard's Judaica Collection Tour and Discussion

AAJR: Dissemination of Scholarship to the Scholarly Community and the Broader Public

Samuel Kassow, Trinity College

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, New York University

Beth Wenger, University of Pennsylvania

Chair: Jeffrey Veidlinger, University of Michigan

What's the Role of the AAJR in the Changing Environment of Academia, Jewish Studies, and the Humanities?

Deborah Dash Moore, University of Michigan

Maud Mandel, Brown University

Magda Teter, Fordham University

Chair: Shaye Cohen, Harvard University

Sponsored by the American Academy of Jewish Research with the Alan M. and Katherine W. Stroock Fund for Innovative Research in Judaica

JUNE 13, 2018

Friends of Center for Jewish Studies, Cambridge Reception

DAVID STERN

Harry Starr Professor of Classical and Modern Jewish and Hebrew Literature and Professor of Comparative Literature, Director of the Center for Jewish Studies, Harvard University

The Director updated Friends of the CJS on recent events and new initiatives at the Center—on our new faculty, our many lecture series, special talks, and conferences, and our initiatives in raising our profile among the undergraduate student population. Each annual meeting features a faculty member who will discuss his or her research. This year, Professor Saul Zaritt gave a presentation on Yiddish Afterlives.

Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies



DEREK PENSLAR, DAVID STERN, AND JONATHAN DECTER



MIRIAM GOLDSTEIN AND KATHRYN HELLERSTEIN

SEMESTER-END VISITORS CELEBRATION • MAY 3, 2018
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MIRIAM GOLDSTEIN'S DAUGHTER



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ALESSANDRO GUETTA AND YONI BIRNBAUM

Elena Lourteva



RIGHT: A manuscript fragment discovered in binding

FAR RIGHT: Top (L-R): Prof. David Stern, Phillip Kadaev, Alex Todorova, Shoshana Boardman
Bottom (L-R): Alejandro Quintana and Hannah Hess



THE "BOOKS WITHIN BOOKS" PROJECT

by Hannah Hess

UNDER THE LEADERSHIP of Professor David Stern, the director of CJS, a team of ten Harvard undergraduate students participated this semester in a unique project in Harvard University's Houghton Library repository for rare books and manuscripts.

Every Wednesday and Thursday afternoon from February through April the undergraduate team met for two hours to meticulously search through nearly ten thousand rare books in the basement stacks of Houghton. However, rather than focusing on the content of these books, they examined the materials used in the bindings.

Their work was fruitful; the team discovered over 120 manuscript fragments which had been recycled as binding materials to reinforce books from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. The fragments dated from the 14th century to the 19th century and included texts in Hebrew, Judeo-Arabic, Greek, Latin, French and English. The Hebrew and Judeo-Arabic material included diverse types of manuscripts, such as sections from Talmud, Bible, a medical text, prayers, and halachic works.

This operation was part of an international project of affiliated academics called Books within Books (BwB), which seeks to recover rare fragments of medieval Hebrew books and documents from book bindings and notarial files in various libraries and archives in Europe, Israel, and the U.S. that were reused in the production of later printed works. As noted on the BwB website, the richness and diversity of this *corpus*, referred to as the "European Genizah", is an analogy to the treasure trove of Hebrew fragments recovered from the Cairo Genizah. The

findings of this project offer an opportunity to reconstruct the history of the Hebrew book and of the Jewish communities in Medieval Europe.

Undertaking this project was an ambitious venture by Professor David Stern, who saw the rare books library at Houghton as offering a rich and uncharted potential for the discovery of new Hebrew fragments. Professor Stern inspired student works on the first day in explaining his motivation for the project, joking that "saving a Jewish book is a like saving a Jewish soul." Given that the *corpus* of Jewish books is so small, Professor Stern asserted that every Jewish text found holds a high significance.

Harvard's participation in this project was funded by generous funding from the Center for Jewish Studies. Thanks to their support, Harvard became the first North American institution at which Hebrew fragments have been found as part of the BwB project.

The findings from the Harvard project will be uploaded to the BwB database, which is available online to all registered users at www.hebrewmanuscript.com. ■

The author of this article, Hannah Hess, is a Harvard College senior who worked to organize the Books within Books project at Harvard. Hannah Hess began her work within Books within Books in Paris last summer with support from the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard, under the guidance of Judith Schlanger. She has been excited to be part of the inaugural Harvard Project.



STUDENT PROFILE: W. SASSON CHAHANOVICH

Sasson is spending two years in Turkey writing his dissertation, which he hopes to finish next year. “I’m never bored,” he explains. After discovering many interesting questions to pursue in his review of primary research, Sasson has already found many new research projects for the future.



WHEN SASSON CHAHANOVICH GREW UP in Oklahoma, his parents were determined to move “back East.” He noticed that members of his family spoke in a different manner than his friends whose families had been in Oklahoma since the land rush, and he learned to adapt his manners of speech to assimilate into these different groups. Here at Harvard, Sasson’s professors have spoken of his remarkable talent not only for learning languages, but also for picking up various dialects and accents—so much so that people mistake him as a native of various cities around the world.

When he was fifteen, Sasson’s family moved to Baltimore. Bullied in high school, he applied for a scholarship to study in Germany to get away. He enjoyed living in a different culture with a German family, and still visits them every year. He discovered his passion for languages while learning to speak German. In the German Club at Georgetown University, a graduate student encouraged him to study Arabic. He took an Arabic class sophomore year, was smitten, and graduated as an Arabic major (to the dismay of his parents who hoped he would choose something “more practical”).

The summer following his first year of graduate school, after a “horrible break-up,” Sasson decided he needed to pick himself up from his heartbreak by doing something productive—studying Hebrew. He picked up the phone and found a class he joined that day. Back at Harvard in the fall, he “walked into Irit [Aharony]’s class, fell in love with the Hebrew language, and adored the amazing instructor.”

Sasson’s interest in Hebrew may have also been influenced by his family. Sasson has Jewish ancestry, but he was not raised Jewish. His mother was informally adopted by the grateful parents of a young Jewish cancer patient she had helped as a nurse. “They were my closest grandparents” and raised his awareness of Jewish holidays and culture.

Sasson describes how Dr. Irit Aharony’s warmth, teaching skill, and encouragement to compare Arabic and Hebrew literature in her classes—from both the Arabic and Hebrew sides—drew his interest further. She valued his role as an “interloper,” with background in Hebrew and Arabic. “Studying each of these two languages gives insights into the other. [This work] doesn’t just open up modern literature, but also earlier literature and knowledge of religious traditions. Jewish sources, for example, give insight into Islam and Islamic intellectual history.”

Sasson describes his dissertation on Ottoman apocalypticism as “a fusion of traditions. ... Without Hebrew, going to Israel and seeing many archives [in Israel], I would not know about Jewish apocalypticism and its influences on Islamic apocalypticism or about Islamic apocalypticism’s influence on Jewish apocalypticism. ... For example, people talk about Sabbateanism as if it occurred in a bubble, but this is not true. Shabbatai Zvi [who believed he was the messiah and had many followers in the 17th Century] was an Ottoman Jew. ... The more I read, I see how the Ottoman environment influenced Shabbatai Zvi.” He finds many connections between these two traditions over time. For example, Abraham Geiger, the 19th Century German-Jewish

scholar who is considered the “founding father” of the Reform movement, also “kickstarted Koranic studies in the West.”

Last summer, Sasson presented a paper at a conference in Venice on Islamic Esotericism in comparison with Judaism and Christianity. The paper was about how we can see Sabbateanism as a “co-phenomenon,” influenced by Islamic apocalypticism of that period. “Examining religious traditions and phenomena in isolation limits the capacity to understand them fully. ... It is much more important to understand each in the context of surrounding cultures and ideas. ... Sabbateanism was one of the most influential events in Jewish history,” according to Sasson, and “fundamental to understanding Jewish experience in this period.” Letters about this phenomenon were sent as far as Amsterdam.

Previously, Sasson has studied and written on Mizrahi Jewish poetry. “Using intellectual tools from Arabic literature helped me to understand Mizrahi identity in Israel today. It is important to know what is written about Arab Jews by Arabs, as well as Jews.”

Sasson is extremely grateful to Dr. Irit Aharony for her exceptional generosity of knowledge and warmth. “She even invited

me to Thanksgiving dinner in her home. Her selfless giving has no artifice or pretense.” He is also very grateful for all the funding he has received from the CJS for summer research projects essential to his dissertation, including archival research last summer, as well as trips to archives in Cairo, Berlin, Copenhagen and Paris with other support. Sasson is spending two years in Turkey writing his dissertation, which he hopes to finish next year. “I’m never bored,” he explains. After discovering many interesting questions to pursue in his review of primary research, Sasson has already found many new research projects for the future.

Sasson hopes to pursue an academic career, but “know[s] that there are not so many jobs in the humanities. ... Teaching gives me fulfillment.” He particularly enjoys “giving students the opportunity to question so much in life. ... I used to believe life was a straight path, but my experiences proved me wrong.” He proudly shared a story about convincing a student who had planned to go directly to a job on Wall Street after graduating to, instead, take a little time to travel and study languages first. Aside from his research, Sasson enjoys writing fiction. “I already have a pseudonym made up.” ■

SELMA AND LEWIS WEINSTEIN PRIZE IN JEWISH STUDIES

The Selma and Lewis Weinstein Prize is given annually to the best undergraduate essay in Jewish studies. Each year we are pleased with the many excellent essays submitted for the prize. We’re delighted to share the abstracts for this year’s winners, Raya Rivka Koreh and Hannah Hess

RAYA RIVKA KOREH '18, ADAMS HOUSE

“Jewish Justice’: The Capture of Adolf Eichmann and the Evolution of Anti-Semitism, 1960-1962”

Abstract: In May 1960, Israeli forces abducted Adolf Eichmann—a Nazi official who led the Department for Jewish Affairs of the Reich Main Security Office—and brought him to Jerusalem to stand trial for his crimes during World War II. In the months following Eichmann’s capture, American Jewish organizations sought to emphasize Eichmann’s crimes against humanity—as opposed to his crimes against the Jewish people—in order to assuage fears that the trial would be seen as unjust “Jewish vengeance,” a common accusation in the American Christian press. Although American Jewish leaders continued to maintain their own reservations about the Eichmann case, they feared that the trial’s vital moral questions regarding guilt and complicity would be overshadowed by persistent debates about the legal particularities of the case and Christian publications’ anti-Semitic comparisons of the “vengeful” trial to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The American Jewish organizations swiftly reversed their position in early 1961, defending Israel’s right to try Eichmann while newly confronting Christian and secular leadership about the Christian roots of anti-Semitism and Christian Europe’s

complicity with the Third Reich. By analyzing the major American Jewish organizations’ responses to the anti-Semitic backlash in major Christian periodicals, this paper demonstrates the central role of the memory of the Holocaust in the transformation of American Jewish organizations’ conception of anti-Semitism from 1960 to 1962.

HANNAH HESS '19, MATHER HOUSE

“Machloket at Harvard University: The Contrasting Understandings of Maimonides by Harvard’s First and Second Judaic Studies Chairs”

Abstract: This paper examines the different scholarly legacies of Harry Wolfson and Isadore Twersky, subsequent Judaic studies chairs at Harvard University from approximately 1925 to 1993. They shared a background of a rigorous Judaic textual education and an observant Jewish upbringing but expressed different philosophies on the place of Judaic Studies in the academy. This divergence is analyzed through their differing interpretations of the texts of the medieval Jewish intellectual, Maimonides. Wolfson and Twersky’s debate on this topic reflects as much about the different time periods in which they were active at Harvard as it does about their scholarly outlooks.

From the CJS Mailbox!



Many thanks to the Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund and the Center for Jewish Studies for providing me with a generous grant to continue my study of modern Hebrew at The Hebrew University's *ulpan*. Though my original program was cancelled at the last minute, I was fortunately able to enroll in a

later, shorter (but equally intensive) program, the Mt. Scopus *ulpan*. This means that for most of the summer I worked on my own projects, including a paper comparing two Hebrew-language autobiographies by Palestinian Israelis (Anton Shammass and Sayed Kashua) with a key text they rely on, Amos Oz's *My Michael*. **I also visited my friend the Bedouin poet Muhammad Fanatil al-Hajaya, about whom I recently published a book!** Back in Jerusalem, my girlfriend and I attended lectures at the Van Leer Institute, walking tours with Yad Ben Zvi, and films at the Jerusalem Theater. And in addition to visiting many of our friends there, we traveled to Tel Aviv, Nablus, Jericho, Kibbutz Ashdot Ya'akov, Tiberias, the Golan Heights, Tzfat, the Biriya Forest, Zikhron Ya'akov, and Pardes Hana. *Ve-ka-muvan lamadeti harbeh ivrit!* Many, many thanks to you!

— William Tamplin

Ph.D. candidate, Comparative Literature

"Following my research in Israel, I traveled to Berlin...We had a fascinating conversation about the history of the Jewish Museum Berlin and its approach to memorializing the Holocaust."

— Liat Rubin



This summer, I received funding from the Suzanne and Dr. Lawrence Fishman Fellowship Fund to research Holocaust memorialization at the Jewish Museum in Berlin. I began my travels with a visit to Israel, where I did research at Yad Vashem,

the Ghetto Fighter's House Museum, and a variety of other museums relating to the Holocaust and Jewish history. **I was fascinated by the different presentations implemented at the museums, ranging from the harsh architecture and environment at Yad Vashem to the integration of technology and 3D models at the Ghetto Fighter's House Museum.** I was especially struck by a special exhibition at Yad Vashem chronicling the use of photography by both Nazis and brave Jewish people who smuggled cameras into ghettos and concentration camps to document conditions there. It also discussed the use of propaganda images and films, like those by Leni Riefenstahl, to push the National Socialist agenda and indoctrinate German citizens.

Following my research in Israel, I traveled to Berlin, Germany and interviewed Cilly Kugelman, the Program Director and Vice Director of the Jewish Museum Berlin from 2002–2017. We had a fascinating conversation about the history of the Jewish Museum Berlin and its approach to memorializing the Holocaust. The museum's permanent exhibition is under renovation until 2019, so we also discussed the curatorial strategies and community-based efforts that will be integrated into the new exhibition.

I'm eager to return to campus and continue researching Jewish people's use of photography and art to chronicle their persecution. Ultimately, I hope to analyze points of comparison between Jewish Nazi-era photography and Jim Crow Era photography by black people in the US.

— Liat Rubin

Harvard College '19



With the generous help of the Edward H. Kavinoky Fellowship and the Center for Jewish Studies, I was able to travel extensively in Germany and Poland this summer. The main goal

of my travel was to visit three major landmarks of the Holocaust—Sachsenhausen in the outskirts of Berlin, Dachau near Munich, and Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland. **My research asks the question of how traditions of biblical Judeo-Christian lament may be identified in a secular world today.** In this context, it is necessary to visit sites that deal with the problem of how to lament a profoundly tragic history in very visible and public ways. These memorial sites deal very differently with the problems of apology, lament and trauma. Sachsenhausen presents itself primarily as a museum, even making room for a café in the center of the camp for hungry tourists, whereas Dachau is very careful to introduce itself as a cemetery first and foremost—*“ein Ort der Trauer und Gedenkens”* (“a place of sorrow and remembrance”)—rather than a tourist destination. Much like Auschwitz-Birkenau, Dachau requires something of its visitor—a solemnity that should not *“in irgendeiner Form die Totenruhe zu stören”* (“disturb the peace of the dead in any way” as found on the Dachau welcome sign). Dachau and Auschwitz-Birkenau intentionally blur the boundaries between “history lesson” and graveyard so that the visitor cannot leave feeling at ease, but must be haunted by a history that is still very much present, as Elie Wiesel says, in “the prisoner in his cell, [in] the patient who is dying on his bed alone, [in] the starving child.”

As I visited these places, it occurred to me that these questions remain open, unsolved and pressing, and it reinforced in me the desire to write a dissertation addressing how literature and biblical traditions of lament offer insight to the problems faced by any memorial site: how to do justice to trauma without making it a commodity. This project requires proficiency in German, Russian, and Biblical Hebrew. The funding also allowed me to stay at the University of Tübingen and to enroll in a one-on-one high-level German conversation course, in which we discussed German poetry and developed professional conversation skills. This was an unusual opportunity to expand and enrich my German both inside and outside the classroom setting. I am deeply grateful for the support I received.

— Sarah Corrigan

Ph.D. candidate, Comparative Literature



Thanks to the Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund and the Center for Jewish Studies, this past summer I traveled to Israel with a group of students led by Prof. Giovanni Bazzana. One of the many highlights of this trip was the opportunity to gain firsthand archaeological

experience at the site of Magdala, an ancient town currently under excavation near the Sea of Galilee. As my classmates and I unearthed coins and pottery shards in this 2000-year-old village, **I not only developed a deeper appreciation for the value of archaeological data as tools for making sense of the past, but also was confronted by archaeology's challenging ethical questions:** Why are we digging? To whom are we responsible? Who decides at which layer to stop digging? Why do we stop at a certain layer, cherishing its contents, while discarding objects from other periods? Who gets (or does not get) to decide which data are historically important? Just as I have been learning in class to reflect critically on the writing of “history” (e.g., who gets to tell history's stories), I concluded my summer trip considering the ethical aspects of history's physical excavation.

— Joseph Kimmel

Ph.D. candidate, Committee on the Study of Religion

The Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund Fellowship allowed me to participate in the Seventh Enoch Graduate Seminar, hosted in late July at the Université de Lausanne in Switzerland. The Enoch Seminar is an international academic organization that promotes the study of ancient Judaism. Every other year, they host a special conference, the Enoch Graduate Seminar, which allows a small group of doctoral students to present their in-progress research in a productive, supportive workshop-type setting featuring both peers and senior scholars. Rather than formally delivering a talk as at most conferences, student participants in the Seminar circulate their papers amongst each other in advance, allowing everyone to read each other's work and come prepared for discussion. **I shared a research paper about biblical exegesis in the Qumran Community Rule, which grew out of my work in Prof. D. Andrew Teeter's “Exegesis at Qumran” seminar at Harvard in the fall of 2017.** The constructive feedback that I received from the Seminar participants has helped me think about next steps in this project. Given the costs of international travel, I would not have been able to participate in this remarkable conference without the aid of the Center for Jewish Studies. I am so grateful for their support!

— Ethan Schwartz

Ph.D. candidate, Committee on the Study of Religion

At the start of the summer of 2018, I returned to Israel to begin a longer phase of fieldwork for my dissertation project, to last throughout the upcoming academic year. I have continued my research with third-generation musicians who are concerned with cultural memory and Mizrahi identity in their work. My research moves between doing a wide ethnographic scan of the art world in its burgeoning and shifting present moment, and delving deeper into the work of particular musical groups.

To that end, I attend a wide variety of performances and cultural events and interview a wide range of musicians and cultural workers—and also zoom in on a number of projects. Specifically, **I have become more deeply invested in two projects, one *Gulaza* and the other *Abiadi*. *Gulaza*, the project of Igal Mizrahi, works with the repertoire of Yemeni women’s songs, which are songs on subjects of daily life, in Arabic, and transmitted in the oral tradition in contradistinction to men’s songs, which are written down, in Hebrew, Aramaic and Judeo-Arabic, and are sacred in their subject matters.** *Gulaza* confounds overlapping structures of preservation, ethnicity and gender. *Abiadi*, the project of Amit Hai Cohen and Neta Elkayam, works with the repertoire of Zohra Al Fassiya, a Jewish Moroccan singer whose career changed drastically with her immigration to Israel in the 1960s. *Abiadi* uncovers a Moroccan history of social intimacy between Jews and Muslims, and of Mizrahi (specifically Moroccan) experience in Israel. Both projects reveal processes in which suppressed knowledge is resuscitated, reinvented, discarded, and complicated, and both bring forward pressing questions about cultural memory, its reconstructions and its failures under past and present social conditions.

I am grateful for the support of the Center for Jewish Studies and the Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund in this project, and look forward to continuing my fieldwork research in the coming months.

— **Tamar Sella,**

Ph.D. candidate,
Ethnomusicology,
Department of Music



Starting in late 1948, a group of Soviet writers and literary bureaucrats began to organize what became known as the “anti-cosmopolitan” campaign against assimilated Jews in the Soviet Writers’ Union. From 1949 to Stalin’s death in 1953, many Jewish writers were expelled from the literary profession for being “rootless cosmopolitans.” **My research**

this summer focused on the continuing impact of this anti-Semitic campaign on the Soviet literary world in the 1950s.

I examined documents from the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (RGANI) that are held on microfilm by Harvard libraries. The documents I consulted were from the Department of Science and Culture of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, which was the main decision-making body in the field of culture in the Soviet Union. Based on my previous research with archival sources, I hypothesized that the same literary figures who were involved in the anti-cosmopolitan campaign were aligned with the “conservative,” pro-Stalinist faction in the Soviet Writers’ Union in the 1950s. This turned out to be the case.

Reading through the documents, I found that the key figures who spearheaded the anti-cosmopolitan campaign remained in the leadership of the Soviet Writers’ Union after Joseph Stalin’s death in 1953. I followed their fierce struggles with the representatives of the more “liberal” faction in archival documents as well as other sources from the time. After Stalin’s death their anti-Semitism became more muted, but leaders of the Writers’ Union continued to target Jewish writers and use loaded language about “cosmopolitans” well into the mid-1950s. After Nikita Khrushchev repudiated Stalin in his famous 1956 “Secret Speech,” the “liberal” faction was empowered to speak out more boldly against the anti-Semitism of the Stalin era. **The archival documents that I consulted in the Harvard libraries showed that anti-Semitism was a major factor in the factional struggles in the Soviet Writers’ Union in the 1950s to a degree that is not widely acknowledged in the historical literature on the period.**

Thanks to the Center for Jewish Studies and the Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund, I was able to strengthen my treatment of this subject in the first chapter of my dissertation, “The Cultural Politics of the Nation in the Soviet Union after Stalin, 1952-1991.” In the future, I plan to develop this research by consulting RGANI documents from the 1960s.

— **Erin Hutchinson**

Ph.D. candidate, History Department
Project: *Anti-Semitism in the Soviet Literary World*



Growing up as a Jew in Berlin, I always felt slightly estranged from my non-Jewish peers but never judged for my identity—until recently, that is. For Germans, last year was marked by the growth of anti-Semitic Rap music and social media-fueled conspiracy theories.

This frightening trend hit home when my younger brother, only 15 years old, was forced to leave his public school after weeks of violent anti-Jewish bullying.

It was this incident that sparked my interest in the phenomenon of anti-Semitism in youth culture. **Thanks to support from the Barry Shrage Travel and Research Fund for Jewish Studies and the Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies Fund, I was able to spend my summer break conducting qualitative research on anti-Jewish tendencies among European young people.** My interviewees were enthusiastic about the timely project and came from many walks of life. They included Italian legal scholars, Hungarian Jewish youth program leaders, and many more.

I will continue my work this semester as an independent study program with History of Art Professor Joseph Koerner, in which we will thoroughly evaluate the material from an academic and artistic standpoint. At the end of the semester I hope to open an installation on my findings to draw more attention to this worrying subject.

— **Isaiah Michalski**
Harvard College, '21

The sun rising over the Sea of Galilee was the first scene I saw in Tiberias. It marked the beginning of a phenomenal experience of learning, digging, exploring, and developing. Our cohort had the outstanding privilege of transporting our Harvard classroom to Israel. We did preservation work in Magdala on a building whose foundation dates back to the first century BCE! We heard fantastic scholars from The Hebrew University in Jerusalem lecture. We immersed ourselves in sites found in the ancient texts we had studied in Cambridge, and we discovered that there were both similarities and radical differences between our imaginations and our experience.

As an emerging scholar, this research opportunity provided me an invaluable experience to bring life to the texts and traditions of ancient Judaism and Christianity. My research as a doctoral student explores how laws and narratives affected ancient people, justly and unjustly. Hopefully, my project can shed insight on present strategies for creating just laws while resisting narratives that dehumanize people. In my work, I dive into ancient texts in Hebrew, Greek, Coptic, and Latin to gain a glimpse into the past, and going to Israel and Palestine allowed me to dive even deeper. Thanks to the Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund at the Center for Jewish Studies, I have been profoundly changed by this experience.

— **Jeremy Williams**
Ph.D. candidate, Committee on
the Study of Religion



Funding from the Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund at the Center for Jewish Studies allowed me to participate in a travel seminar on the "Historical Jesus" which cooperated with various Scandinavian universities to explore questions of space, art, and identity in late ancient churches, synagogues, and mosques. **Our trip not only included archaeological preservation work at Magdala—presumably the hometown of Mary Magdalene—but also allowed us to explore the ancient art and architecture surrounding the Galilee and Jerusalem.** One of the most eye-opening moments on the trip for me was our visit to Capernaum and the religious and political importance placed upon

the site as the "Town of Jesus." The course helped me think more critically about what message is being sent through every archaeological decision made—to what century do we dig? What do we preserve? What do we expose and present to the public? What religion(s) are given priority in the history of this site and others, particularly of Islam within the historical narrative of this land? Who funds or preserves archaeological digs and sites? Our explorations are leading me to question further how religious, social, and political history is constructed and presented so that we can try to find what narratives have been overlooked or under-appreciated.

— **Chance Bonar**
Ph.D. candidate, Committee on the Study of Religion



This summer I had the opportunity to explore an academic approach to the most important texts in Judaism thanks to the Judith and David Lobel Fund for the Center for Jewish Studies. I participated in a high-level Talmud course at the Hadar

Institute that sought to resolve textual difficulties and understand the development of Biblical interpretation in a dynamic way. **The approach began with an examination of the relevant passages in the Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim. We then moved to the Rabbinic responses to these texts, paying special attention to the interpretive work done by the Jewish sages.** Finally, the analysis focused on the Babylonian Talmud, seeking to understand how the Gemara attempts to harmonize, synthesize, and rework the opinions of earlier authorities. Special attention was paid to parallel sources such as the Jerusalem Talmud and relevant historical accounts of contemporary Jewish practice.

The most valuable lesson I internalized from the experience is the importance of carefully and explicitly identifying the interpretive choices made when reading a text. Linking these decisions with social, political, and theological motives provides a context to the development of the Jewish tradition. This experience has encouraged me to think deeply and critically during textual study, and I am confident that the skills I acquired will serve me well on the rest of my journey.

— *Beckham Myers*

Harvard College '21

"The issue of whether the Dead Sea Scrolls are a library—and if so, in what sense—is one that has puzzled me while writing my dissertation on ancient libraries."

— *Alexandra Schultz*

Questions about how books are housed, organized and preserved, and how people use them brought me to Colorado for a brief research trip to view the Dead Sea Scrolls (!!) on exhibit at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. The issue of whether the Dead Sea Scrolls are a library—and, if so, in what sense—is one that has puzzled me while writing my dissertation on ancient libraries.



The first few rooms of the exhibition featured a range of ancient Israelite objects, including an 8th century BCE ostrakon from Lachish with an abecedarium. But the most exciting part was the central hall of the exhibition where the scrolls and other objects from the Qumran caves, including linen scroll wrappers, tefillin, and an inkwell, were on display.

At the center of the cavernous exhibition hall, I found myself looking down at the cracked surface of 4Q57, a fragment of Isaiah, fissures snaking through it like an old tortoise shell. Seeing the scrolls in person is simply stunning. Coming from a background in working with Greek papyri, which are sometimes written calligraphically but are often quite scribbly, I was not prepared for how beautifully penned the Dead Sea Scrolls are.

I was overwhelmed by the sense of thematic and aesthetic cohesion. Yes, they came from eleven different caves, and yes, there were documents and other materials mixed in. But most of these scrolls were undoubtedly precious objects, treasures that belonged to a shared tradition and a community for whom living in accordance with, reinterpreting, and preserving these written works was vital. As I turned this over in my mind, I arrived at the last fragment I had not yet seen. Fate had a little trick to play on me: it was 4Q1, aka Genesis, where it all began.

I'm immensely grateful to the Center for Jewish Studies and the Anna Marnoy Feldberg Memorial Fund for funding an unforgettable research trip. And to my new friends 4Q57, 4Q252, 4Q256, 11Q10, 4Q418, 4Q386, 5/6Hev46, 8HevXIIgr, 4Q84, and 4Q1: until we meet again!

— *Alexandra Schultz*

Ph.D. candidate, Department of Classics

Student Funding 2017–2018

GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS: ACADEMIC YEAR 2017–2018

- **Zhan Chen** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Lewis and Alice Schimberg Graduate Student Fellowship, Aaron and Clara Rabinowitz Trust Fellowship
- **Eric Fredrickson** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Alan M. Stroock Fund for Advanced Research in Judaica Fellowship
- **Will Friedman** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Isadore Twersky Fellowship
- **Tal Grebel Avihai** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Sosland Family Fellowship
- **Matthew Hass** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Center for Jewish Studies Fellowship
- **Joanna Greenlee Kline** (Committee on the Study of Religion) Mandell L. Berman Fellowship
- **Jesse Mirotznik** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Sidney L. Solomon Fellowship
- **Ethan Schwartz** (Committee on the Study of Religion) Lewis and Alice Schimberg Graduate Student Fellowship
- **Miriam-Simma Walfish** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Leo Flax Fellowship

GRADUATE STUDENT J-TERM FELLOWSHIPS: ACADEMIC YEAR 2017–2018

- **Jacob Abolafia** (Government), Lewis and Alice Schimberg Graduate Student Fellowship
- **W. Sasson Chahanovich** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations), Lewis and Alice Schimberg Graduate Student Fellowship
- **Zalman Rothschild** (Harvard Law School), Lewis and Alice Schimberg Graduate Student Fellowship
- **Tamar Sella** (Music), Lewis and Alice Schimberg Graduate Student Fellowship
- **Rachel Slutsky** (Committee on the Study of Religion), Lewis and Alice Schimberg Graduate Student Fellowship
- **Rephael (Rafi) Stern** (History), Lewis and Alice Schimberg Graduate School Fellowship

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT J-TERM FELLOWSHIPS: ACADEMIC YEAR 2017–2018

- **Jacob Bindman '19** Judith and David Lobel Fund for the Center for Jewish Studies and the Harry Edison Fund
- **Brianni (Jeemin) Lee '20** Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies Fund and the Harry Edison Fund
- **Sarah Perlmutter '19** Harry Edison Fund

GRADUATE SUMMER SUPPLEMENTAL RESEARCH AND STUDY FUNDING: 2018

- **Avishay Ben Sasson-Gordis** (Government) Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund Fellowship
- **Chance Bonar** (Committee on the Study of Religion) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund Fellowship
- **W. Sasson Chahanovich** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund Fellowship
- **Joshua Carl Abramson Cohen** (Committee on the Study of Religion) Edward H. Kavinoky Fellowship
- **Sarah Corrigan** (Comparative Literature) Edward H. Kavinoky

Fellowship

- **Allison Hurst** (Committee on the Study of Religion) Edward H. Kavinoky Fellowship
- **Rachelle Grossman** (Comparative Literature) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund Fellowship
- **Erin Hutchinson** (History) Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund Fellowship
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- **David Alexander Romney** (Government) Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund Fellowship
- **Alexandra Schultz** (Classics) Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund Fellowship
- **Ethan Schwartz** (Committee on the Study of Religion) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund Fellowship
- **Tamar Sella** (Music) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund Fellowship
- **Rachel (Renz) Slutsky** (Committee on the Study of Religion) Edward H. Kavinoky Fellowship
- **William Tamplin** (Comparative Literature) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund Fellowship
- **Jeremy Williams** (Committee on the Study of Religion) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund Fellowship

UNDERGRADUATE SUMMER RESEARCH AND STUDY FUNDING: 2017

- **Matt Jelen '21** (undeclared) Abraham and Rachel Bornstein Fund, Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies Fund
- **Hanaa Masalmeh '18** (Anthropology) Harry Edison Fund
- **Isaiah Michalski '21** (undeclared) Barry Shrage Travel and Research Fund for Jewish Studies, Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies Fund
- **Theodore Motzkin '19** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and Classics) Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies Fund
- **Beckham Myers '21** (undeclared) Judith and David Lobel Fund for the Center for Jewish Studies
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- **Sarah Perlmutter '19** (Visual and Environmental Studies) Barney and Essie Cantor Scholarship Fund
- **Liat Rubin '19** (History and Literature) Suzanne and Dr. Lawrence Fishman Fellowship Fund
- **Hana Seita '19** (Government and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Harry Edison Fund

CONGRATULATIONS
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Basia Rosenbaum '18



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