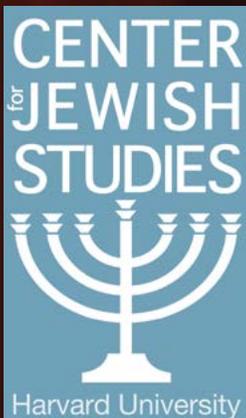


News from the  
Center for Jewish Studies  
at Harvard University

Online at [cjs.fas.harvard.edu](http://cjs.fas.harvard.edu)

# CJS NEWS



An Afternoon with PETER J. SOLOMON  
Interview by NANCY KO  
Cover photo by Wendy Barrows

## 2019 SPRING REVIEW

November 2019

### IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the Director . . . . .	1
Cover Story . . . . .	2
Faculty Update . . . . .	7
Visitors to CJS . . . . .	8
Donors & Friends of the CJS . . .	19
Student News . . . . .	22
CJS Mailbox . . . . .	28
Lectures & Events . . . . .	36



PETER & SUSAN SOLOMON

## 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. The Center supports student and faculty research, teaching, and visiting research scholars from around the world in Jewish studies.

We also sponsor and co-sponsor conferences, lectures and seminars, and work closely with departments across the Harvard campus as well as with the Mahindra Center for the Humanities, the Center for European Studies, the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, and the Julis-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law in Harvard Law School. 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.



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David Stern

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## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

It's our great pleasure to dedicate this issue of *CJS News* to **Peter Solomon** in honor of his birthday last spring and of his thirty-five years of leadership as Chairman of the Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies (CJS).

I first met Peter when I was appointed Director of the CJS, some four years ago. Personally and professionally, he is an inspiration and mainstay for me, a constant source of wise advice, enthusiastic support, and good humor—as I know he's been for all my predecessors. It is not an exaggeration to say that without Peter, there would be no Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University.

To be sure, Peter's devotion to Harvard is no less strong than it has been to the CJS. Peter received his A.B. *cum laude* from Harvard College in 1960 with a concentration in Government, and then earned an M.B.A. from Harvard

Business School in 1963. Through his early postgraduate years, he worked for Lehman Brothers, ultimately becoming a director of the firm. He then entered government as Deputy Mayor for Economic Policy and Development and Chairman of the New York City Health and Hospital Corporation under Mayor Ed Koch and, subsequently, Counselor to the U.S. Treasury Secretary. In 1981, Peter returned to Lehman Brothers, after which he founded PJ Solomon, a boutique financial advisory firm. In 2013, he returned to public service, working with Governor Mario Cuomo on tax reform and government efficiency. And during all this time, he was an active alumnus of Harvard.

A member of Harvard's Board of Overseers from 1982–88, he founded the Solomon Scholar Program, which has supported over 100 scholars. A major collector of children's books, Peter and his wife, Susan, recently donated their extraordinary collection to Houghton Library and have contributed a lion's share to the current renovation of Houghton's first floor, including the reading room, the lobby, and exhibition space. Peter gathered support and coordinated the fundraising that established the CJS in 1978. Finally, he has served as Chairman of the Friends of the CJS since 1984. Peter has been instrumental in establishing many of the chaired professorships and endowed fellowships that make our program as distinguished as it is; he still personally thanks our Friends for all their gifts.

Facts alone can't capture Peter's outsized personality, his infectious good will and boundless enthusiasm, his great charm, and unstoppable drive. When we decided to dedicate this issue of the newsletter to Peter, we thought: "What better way to convey Peter to our friends and readers than to send one of our own to interview him?" Luckily, we had the perfect person—**Nancy Ko**, a Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (Jewish studies) alum who graduated in 2017 and is now working on her Ph.D. in Modern Middle Eastern History at Columbia. She has earned numerous accolades, including a Rhodes Scholarship, our Weinstein Prize, the Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans, and was a 2015–16 Edmund J. Safra Undergraduate Fellow in Ethics. Nancy's writing will give you a real sense of Peter's personality and why he's been so important to the CJS. Everything else described in this newsletter—all our events, the grants and fellowships we give out to our extraordinary students, the seminars and postdoctoral fellowships we're privileged to run—are simply part of our debt to Peter's leadership.

With best wishes as always,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Stern".

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



# ON THE COVER: HARVARD CELEBRATES A MASTER OF GIVING



“Over the years, Peter has dedicated his support to many different areas of the University, including, of course, the Center for Jewish Studies and, most recently, the Houghton Library. Countless members of our community and beyond have been inspired by Peter’s generous spirit. He continues to leave his mark throughout the University—and to make Harvard better.”

— Lawrence S. Bacow,  
President of Harvard University

**P**ETER J. SOLOMON received his A.B. cum laude from Harvard College in 1960 with a concentration in Government, and then earned an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School in 1963. For much of the '60s and '70s he worked for Lehman Brothers, becoming a director of the firm. In 1978, he entered government, served as New York City Mayor Ed Koch’s Deputy Mayor for Economic Policy and Development and Chairman of the New York City Health and Hospital Corporation. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter appointed him Counselor to the United States Treasury Secretary. In 1981, Peter returned to Lehman Brothers, eventually becoming Vice-Chairman of the firm and Chair of its merchant banking division until 1989, when he founded the PJ Solomon boutique financial advisory firm that was one of the first private investment banks in America. In 2013, he returned to public service as Co-Chairman of Governor Mario Cuomo’s Tax Reform and Fairness Commission and served on Governor Cuomo’s Spending and Government Efficiency Commission.

“In multiple ways, Peter Solomon has provided transformative support for Houghton Library. His collection of children’s literature, which he has begun to donate, will provide scholars, students, and visitors to the library an incredibly important resource from which they can learn, study, and enjoy. Peter is also the lead donor for a major renovation of Houghton Library, a major project that will create a more accessible, welcoming, and vibrant environment for all who utilize the library. Peter has brought vision and passion to the library and we have greatly benefited from our partnership with him.”

— Thomas Hyry, Florence Fearington Librarian of Houghton Library; Director of Arts and Special Collections of Harvard College Library

“I am inspired by the breadth and depth of Peter J. Solomon’s support of Harvard. As a generous longtime supporter of the Center for Jewish Studies, Peter has made extraordinary contributions to Jewish scholarship at the University. As an ardent lover of books and learning, he is making the timely renovations of Houghton Library possible. A committed alumnus, Peter has advanced the life of the University through his extensive philanthropy. We are all fortunate to be able to count Peter as a remarkable leader in our alumni community.”

— Alan Garber, Provost of Harvard University



# An Afternoon with Peter Solomon

*An interview by Nancy Ko*

**E**ARLY IN OCTOBER 2019, Nancy Ko, A.B. '17, visited Peter Solomon, A.B. '60, M.B.A. '63, in his midtown Manhattan office at the eponymous PJ Solomon boutique investment bank, one of the first of its kind. The two alumni took distinct paths following graduation: Peter Solomon went into investment banking and public service, while Nancy recently returned from two years at Oxford to start her Ph.D. in History at Columbia. The two native New Yorkers share a loyalty to the Center for Jewish Studies—and a love for conversation. These commonalities came together in an interview, where topics ranged from books to bee-collecting to bouillon cubes. Here is an excerpt.

## EXPERIENCE AND INSIGHT

**Nancy Ko (NK):** *So how did your connection to Harvard and to the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard begin? If I'm not mistaken, you went to Harvard, twice. What happened?*

**Peter Solomon (PS):** Yes, I went to the college, Class of 1960 and HBS '63.

I went to Collegiate School, and then Lawrenceville. I applied to Harvard, Cornell, and Dartmouth, as everybody did in those days. I got turned down by Dartmouth and put on the waiting list at both Harvard and Cornell.

Now, to get waitlisted at Harvard, given my educational background, was pathetic. Many members of my family had gone to Harvard.

**NK:** *Maybe this was one of your greatest achievements, getting waitlisted at Harvard?*

**PS:** [Given your record of achievement,] I know you never had this experience. I was admitted to Harvard sometime in July—but only on the proviso that I could get myself a room. Harvard had no more rooms in the Yard.

**NK:** *And where was your room?*

**PS:** My family was from Boston, my uncle knew a lot of people and he found me a room with an Harvard Business School professor of labor relations, Benjamin Selekman. He had

I got turned down by Dartmouth and put on the waiting list at both Harvard and Cornell...given my educational background, [this was] pathetic.



Photographer unknown

I asked Prof. Twersky one day to put his arm around me as we walked across the Yard so that people might say, “That Solomon...must be smarter than we think.”

a gorgeous, three-story house at 22 Francis Avenue, behind Memorial Hall. But Ben said to my uncle, “Sydney, there’s one problem: Peter will have to share the bathroom with professor Harry Austryn Wolfson, who is a bit of a recluse.” So, my freshman year I shared the second floor with Wolfson.\*

**NK:** *The Harry Austryn Wolfson.*

## On Harry Austryn Wolfson & Prof. Isadore Twersky

**PS:** And it was fabulous. It changed my life. And Professor Wolfson is one of the reasons that there’s a Center for Jewish Studies today and why I am involved.

**NK:** *Now, were you interested in Jewish studies?*

**PS:** No. I don’t want you for a moment to think I was then or now overly academic or a superpowered intellectual. In fact, when I became Chairman of The Friends, I asked [Professor Isadore] Twersky one day to put his arm around me as we walked across the Yard so that people might say “That Solomon isn’t very smart, but Twersky has his arm around him and is listening to him, so he must be smarter than we think.” \*\*

**NK:** *Did it work?*

**PS:** I hope so. I was socialized into the Jewish studies world based on my relationship with Wolfson.

**NK:** *What was your relationship with Wolfson like?*

**PS:** Wolfson was not known for having

close personal relationships. He was an unusual man and did little else beyond scholarship. He never married. But I had a close relationship with him. He had cousins and other professors whom he’d see, but I was one of the few people with whom he had a personal relationship. Living with him was not the typical freshman experience—for example, many winter nights we had soup; he loved my soup. I made it from bouillon cubes.

**NK:** *Did he know that it was made from cubes?*

**PS:** Eventually. The walk from his office in Widener was so cold in winter, so I would make him a hot soup. And once he asked me, “What is that made of, it’s so delicious?” And I showed him the cubes. He was amazed.

**NK:** *Tell me more about Wolfson.*

**PS:** Harry was about 5’5” with bushy white hair. And he had this little study in the basement of Widener. In 1958, my junior year, the library offered to relocate him up to the top floor next to famous professors such as, Paul Tillich and [Richard Reinhold] Niebuhr and I think [Arthur] Schlesinger [Jr.]. He was reluctant to move, a bit intimidated, so along with others I had to make him go. We actually helped move him physically, upstairs. He managed to clutter that wonderful big room quickly. He also was always open to questions. I once asked him a question related to Socrates, and he went into a file cabinet—this is 1958—and removed a manuscript he had handwritten on Socrates in 1935, but had not yet completed.

\*

**Professor Harry Austryn Wolfson** was the first Nathan Littauer Professor of Hebrew Literature and Philosophy at Harvard, the first full-time professorship in Judaica in the US and possibly in the world. Professor Wolfson’s trail-blazing study of Jewish thinkers from Philo of Alexandria to Benedict Spinoza, and his systematic integration of the study of Jewish, Islamic, and Christian philosophy, attracted wide international attention. For more information, see <http://cjs.fas.harvard.edu/history/>

\*\*

**Isadore Twersky** was Nathan Littauer Professor of Hebrew Literature and Philosophy at Harvard University following Prof. Wolfson (his dissertation advisor) from 1965 to 1997, and was the Director of the Center for Jewish Studies from its founding until 1993. Professor Twersky was a renowned scholar of Jewish intellectual history, particularly Maimonides. In addition to his academic role, Twersky came from the Hasidic dynasty of Chernobyl, and succeeded his father as the Talner Rebbe of Boston, where he also served as the spiritual leader of a congregation.

I don't believe in relying on other people to get things done. I think that if you see something that needs to be fixed, don't wait for other funding. Do it yourself.

Another time, a student asked him about a quotation. Harry apparently took the student into Widener and found the source. He then asked the student whether he understood Sanskrit.

**NK:** *Did you surprise Wolfson?*

**PS:** I think I amused him. Once I had to write an essay on the *Divine Comedy* for Humanities 2. Dante was beyond my comprehension. I asked Harry for advice and generously he explained it.

He approved of my essay, but my section man gave me a “C.” Harry just thought that was hysterical.

By the way, that section man, Robert Durling, had a distinguished career. He became one of the world's leading experts on Dante.

## On Philanthropy: Travel alone and get things done

**NK:** *To flip the question: Did anything about Wolfson surprise you?*

**PS:** Wolfson may have been a recluse, but he really knew the world. As I neared graduation and sought career advice, he told me I would do a lot more in life if I earned a lot of money and then used it effectively as opposed to a career in public service.

Mayor Ed Koch, under whom I served as Deputy Mayor, put his finger on my pattern. I asked him, “Why did you hire me as Deputy Mayor?” I mean, we didn't know or like each other at the time. He said, “I heard you travel alone and get things done.”

And that's exactly right. I believe in getting things done on your own. Rather than relying on other people to get things done. I think that if you see something that needs to be fixed, don't wait for other funding. Do it yourself.

**NK:** *Does this amount to your philosophy of philanthropy?*

**PS:** Yes. My philosophy of everything. That's what happened with Houghton [Library]. Susan and I went to Harvard with a proposal to give it our children's book and illustration collection if it would renovate Houghton to make it more accessible to students, scholars, and visitors. Harvard provided a sensible plan and asked if we would fund part of the project. We said, “We will fund 100 percent, because if we wait for you to raise the rest of the money, I'll be dead.”

## On the Center for Jewish Studies

**NK:** *Let's go back to Harry Wolfson and Jewish studies. Tell me how your philanthropic and professional life intersected with the world of Jewish studies.*

**PS:** First in the 1960's, Wolfson put me on the Visiting Committee for [the Department of] Near Eastern Languages and Literatures (later renamed Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations). Now, I don't know what that Committee looks like today, but the Visiting Committee in the late '60s and early '70s was all incredible academics specializing in Assyriology and all kinds of other subjects I'd never even heard of. I was barely conversant in English.

So that was my first and unusual introduction to the world of Jewish studies. I stayed on that visiting committee for only one term, realizing that I was out of my depth. Shortly thereafter, because of my relationship with Wolfson, Harry Starr asked me to join the board of the Lucius Littauer [Foundation]. Littauer originally aimed to promote Jewish academia, to promote Jewish studies and Jewish professorships.

I've helped to continue the ties between the Foundation and Harvard Jewish studies and the larger world.\*\*\*

\*\*\*

**Lucius Littauer** AB 1878, earned his fortune in the glove business and became an advocate for the wellbeing of immigrants and for Jewish communities around the world facing anti-Semitic violence. He founded the Nathan Littauer Professorship of Jewish Literature and Philosophy at Harvard, likely the first academic chair in post-Biblical Jewish studies at a secular university.

In 1929, the **Lucius N. Littauer Foundation** was founded and has supported Jewish studies programs at Harvard and many other universities. Harry Starr AB '21, JD '24, helped Lucius Littauer found the Littauer Foundation in 1929, and served as its secretary, president and then chairman until his death in 1991.

The **Lucius N. Littauer Foundation** offered to fund the construction of a building to house the Center for Jewish Studies. Instead, under Prof. Isadore Twersky's directorship, the CJS decided instead to put that money toward establishing and endowing the Harry Starr Fellowship in Jewish Studies, which brings a group of scholars from around the world to Harvard University to conduct research in a designated subject area in the field of Jewish studies.

The smartest decision was not to build a building to house CJS. Instead, money has been invested in professorships, fellowships, research, and lectures... We need to make more undergraduate students understand the scope and excellence of the Center and its courses.

**NK:** *Have you been happy with the way that the CJS has grown?*

**PS:** Yes. The smartest decision was not to build a building to house CJS. Instead, money has been invested in professorships, fellowships, research, and lectures. Over the years, Rachel Rockenmacher is the rock, the constant holding it all together.

**NK:** *What is your vision for Jewish studies at Harvard?*

**PS:** The CJS faculty is phenomenal. Since Twersky, every director of the CJS has worked for the program to make the program stronger. We need to make more undergraduate students understand the scope and excellence of the Center and its courses.

### **On Wasting Time Constructively and the importance of family**

**NK:** *Your new book is called Wasting Time Constructively: A Guide to a Balanced Life. We've talked a lot about your philanthropic and financial activities. Can you tell me more about how that relates to your notion of the balanced life?*

**PS:** A strong family at your core gives you the confidence to investigate and participate in many activities.

**NK:** *That's what my mother says.*

**PS:** Well your mother's right. People should listen to their mothers.

**NK:** *She'll be very happy to read that.*

**PS:** My wife and I spend a huge amount of time on family matters. You have to work hard to maintain a family. When our family business was sold, it was a positive financially, but the business was central to our extended family. It could have dissolved the cohesiveness of our family. My brother, my cousins and I have managed, thirty plus years later, to keep the cohesiveness, quite amazingly. But it takes a lot of bar and bat mitzvahs, a lot of weddings—and *bris(es)*!

**NK:** *May the Center for Jewish Studies be as much of a source of cohesiveness as your family.*



#### **About the Interviewer:**

**Nancy Ko** is a 2017 graduate of Harvard College. She grew up in the Bensonhurst neighborhood in New York, where she first became interested in Jewish history and culture. After coming to Harvard, she determined to explore more about the world she grew up in. This led to a trip to Israel during the summer of 2014 with Professor Jay Harris, where she was exposed to Mizrahi culture. After this, she began studying cultures of Jewish communities in the Muslim world—and the languages that facilitate these studies.

Nancy is now working on her Ph.D. in Modern Middle Eastern History at Columbia. She has earned numerous accolades, including a Rhodes Scholarship, the CJS Weinstein Prize, the Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans, and she was a 2015–16 Edmund J. Safra Undergraduate Fellow in Ethics.

# FACULTY UPDATE



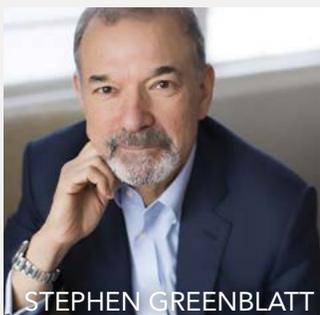
## SARA FELDMAN

- **Book Chapter:** Wrote "The Shekhinah's Empty Nest: Tracing the Imagery of Apostasy in H. N. Bialik," in Julie Hansen's *Living through Literature: Essays in Memory of Omry Ronen* (2019, Uppsala University). Visit this website to view: <http://uu.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1268970&dswid=8588>.
- **Play:** Sara will be appearing in a Yiddish play, "Kraft," in the role of Madam Kino (Madame Cinema) at the Jewish Federation of San Diego County. Further information at: <https://jewishinsandiego.org/san-diego-jewish-community-calendar/the-world-premiere-of-the-yiddish-play-kraft-power-1557794453-1>



## PETER GORDON

- **Lectures:** In June 2019, delivered the Adorno-Vorlesungen at the Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, co-sponsored by the Institut für Sozialforschung and Suhrkamp Verlag. The lectures, over the course of three evenings, were titled, "Adorno and the Sources of Normativity." Further information at: <http://www.ifs.uni-frankfurt.de/wp-content/uploads/Adorno-2019-Flyer.pdf>



## STEPHEN GREENBLATT

- **Lectures:** In the spring, talks focused on Shakespeare, literature, and the humanities in Germany, Iceland, and Boston. Click available links for more information or go to [stephengreenblatt.com/news/lectures-events](http://stephengreenblatt.com/news/lectures-events):

Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Halle, Germany, <https://muhlenbergcenter.uni-halle.de/events/muhlenberg-lecture-2019/>; Amerikahaus, Bavarian Center for Transatlantic Relations, Munich, Germany, <https://www.amerikahaus.de/en/events/detail/shakespeare-politics-and-power/>; Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, Massachusetts, <https://www.gardnermuseum.org/calendar/event/lucretia-virginia-botticelli-20190330>; Trinity Church, Boston, Massachusetts; University of Iceland, Reykjavík, Iceland



## JON LEVENSON

- **Book:** A new translation of *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence*. Korean edition: Seoul: Holy Wave Plus, 2019
- **Articles:** "The New Jews: Supersessionism, Political Theology, and the American Left," *Tablet*, February 28, 2019, at <https://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-arts-and-culture/280888/the-new-jews>; "What It Means to Read the Bible as Nothing More than Great Literature," *Mosaic*, February 11, 2019, at <https://mosaicmagazine.com/response/2019/02/what-it-means-to-read-the-bible-as-nothing-more-than-great-literature/>; "The Contrast Between the Bible's Idea of History and the Modern Idea," *Mosaic*, August 13, 2018, at <https://mosaicmagazine.com/response/2018/08/the-contrast-between-the-bibles-idea-of-history-and-the-modern-idea/>.
- **Lectures:** "Beyond 'Universal' and 'Particular,'" a presentation at the Tikvah Summer Seminar: Two Chosen Nations? America and Israel at the Foundings, Cambridge, MA, July 22, 2019; and "What Induced G-d to Take Israel out of Egypt? A Theological Debate in Midrashic Form," a talk at Meor of Harvard, Cambridge, MA, March 27, 2019.



## ERIC NELSON

- **Book:** *The Theology of Liberalism: Political Philosophy and the Justice of God* will be released by Harvard/Belknap Press in October. A description can be found here: <https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674240940>

## DAVID STERN

- **Book:** *The Jewish Bible: A Material History* (University of Washington Press, 2019) has been released in paperback.

## VISITORS TO CJS

### **Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellow:**

**Rabbi David Greenstein**, Congregation Shomrei Emunah, Montclair, NJ (spring term)

### **Visiting Professors:**

#### ***Weinstock Visiting Professor in Judaica:***

**Yair Zakovitch**, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (fall term)

#### ***Visiting Professor in History:***

**Eyal Naveh**, Tel Aviv University (spring term)

### **Visiting Scholars, Fellows and Post-Doctoral Fellows:**

**Miriam Goldstein**, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (summer)

**Michal Ohana**, Ben-Gurion University (fall term)

**Sara Ronis**, St. Mary's University (summer)

**Gil Rubín**, Israel Institute Post-Doctoral Fellow (academic year)

**Christina Späti**, Universität Freiburg, Switzerland (academic year)

### **Harry Starr Fellows in Judaica 2018-19:**

**Abraham Berkovitz**, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (spring term)

**Aleksandra Buncic**, Independent scholar (academic year)

**Jason Lustig**, University of California at Los Angeles (academic year)

**Martina Mampieri**, Sapienza University of Rome (academic year)

**Nathan Mastnjak**, Indiana University (academic year)

**David Sclar**, Independent scholar (academic year)

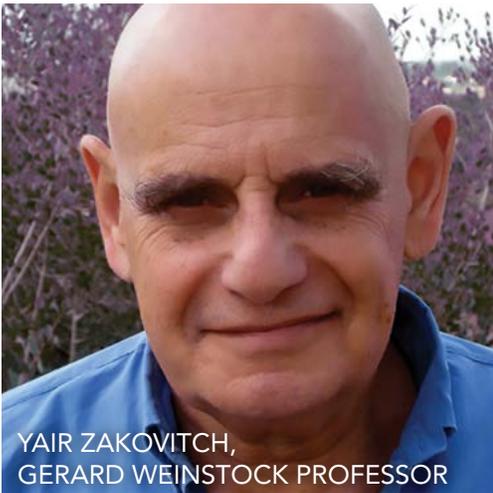
## SILVER FELLOW RABBI DAVID GREENSTEIN

I spent a wonderful Spring 2019 semester as the **Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellow** at the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard. The experience was a once-in-a-lifetime gift! As a congregational rabbi I spend my time devoted to studying, teaching and affirming my Jewish traditions, values and way of life and hoping to be of service to others...this Fellowship gave me the opportunity to concentrate more fully on my love of learning. I have been able to delve deeply into the history of the Jewish people's struggle to apply to messy reality the utopian vision of the Sabbatical Year - Sh'mittah. This is a subject that I have been studying and teaching about for many years and I finally was able to focus on it without competing obligations. And what better place to do it than in this utopian paradise! I have learned so much. I hope the research and thinking I have done and the writing that I have finished will continue and lead to a full-length study. This would not be a thinkable idea without my experience this semester.

**The Center has been a great place for me! I have been so fortunate to mingle with and learn from world-class scholars and interact with younger scholars who are breaking new ground in their disciplines. This has been a dream come true. Now I awoken from my dream renewed and refreshed and very grateful.**



*It was a pleasure to host Rabbi David Greenstein of Congregation Shomrei Emunah in Montclair, NJ as our twenty-fifth Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellow. In addition to his rabbinic ordination, Rabbi Greenstein also holds a Ph.D. in Medieval Jewish Thought from New York University, an M.F.A. in painting from Queens College, an M.A. in Talmud and a B.A. in Philosophy from Yeshiva University. 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.*



YAIR ZAKOVITCH,  
GERARD WEINSTOCK PROFESSOR



EYAL NAVEH, VISITING PROFESSOR

## 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 Professor was Yair Zakovitch (Father Takeji Otsuki Professor Emeritus of Hebrew Bible at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem) in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations for the fall semester. In addition to our Weinstock Visiting Professor, we were also able to invite an additional professor in the area of modern Israel studies. Prof. Eyal Naveh (Department of History, Tel Aviv University) was appointed in Harvard's Department of History during the spring semester.

### Yair Zakovitch, Gerard Weinstock Visiting Professor of Jewish Studies

Father Takeji Otsuki Professor Emeritus of Hebrew Bible, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

“Biographies in the Hebrew Bible,” Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

“Reading the Song of Songs,” Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

### Eyal Naveh, Visiting Professor in History

Professor of History, Tel Aviv University

“The State of Israel in Comparative Perspective,” Department of History



IDAN DERSHOWITZ & DAVID SCLAR AT STARR SEMINAR

## VISITING SCHOLARS, FELLOWS, & POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWS



GIL RUBIN

### Gil Rubin, Post-Doctoral Fellow (Israel Institute)

**D**uring the academic years 2017–2019, I was an Israel Institute Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for Jewish Studies. This fellowship was one of my most academically satisfying experiences and I am grateful to the Center for providing me with resources and support that allowed me to advance my research.

My primary focus during my fellowship term was conducting research and writing my book manuscript, *The Future of the Jews: Planning for the Postwar Order*. My book is a history of Jewish planning for the reconstruction of Jewish life in Eastern Europe and Palestine after the Second World War. Drawing on sources in Yiddish and Hebrew, it tells the story of how Jewish leaders abandoned the dream of national autonomy in Eastern Europe and publicly embraced a program for a Jewish ethnic-nation state in Palestine. I argue that these developments were not simply a response to the Holocaust, but are part of how Jews grappled with the expulsion of minorities and emergence of ethnically homogenous nation-states throughout Eastern Europe during and after the war. My book traces how changing attitudes toward minorities in Eastern Europe reshaped the terms of the Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine and seeks to offer a new perspective in the study of Jewish responses to the Holocaust. Jewish leaders and thinkers engaged with the issue of extermination of Jews not only as a question of rescue, but also as a geopolitical question with wide ramifications for the Jewish future.

I also had the opportunity to participate in the vibrant academic life at the university. I presented a paper on the last year of Zionist Revisionist leader Vladimir Jabotinsky's life at the Jewish Studies Workshop, a paper on Zionist responses to the 1939 White Paper at the conference "The Balfour Declaration in Jewish History" and, a paper on plans to expel Jews from Eastern Europe after the Second World War at the Jews

in Modern Europe Study Group. During the academic year 2018–2019, I served as co-chair of the Jews in Modern Europe Study Group at the Center for European Studies with support from the Center for Jewish Studies. It was an incredibly rewarding experience to get to meet many scholars and discuss some of the most exciting new work in Jewish studies with various members of the Harvard community.



CHRISTINA SPÄTI

### Christina Späti, Visiting Scholar University of Fribourg (Switzerland)

**D**uring my stay at the Harvard University Center for Jewish Studies, I worked on a research project on Swiss victims of National Socialist persecution. Since Switzerland was not occupied by Nazi Germany, it is generally thought that there were no Swiss among their victims. In my work, however, I have found several thousand Swiss who lived abroad and were persecuted by the Nazis for political or racist reasons as well as in many cases, purely arbitrarily. For instance, I have identified more than sixty Jewish men and women with Swiss citizenship who were interned in French camps in Drancy or Compiègne between 1941 and 1944. While most of them were eventually released and forced to return to Switzerland, more than a dozen were deported to concentration camps. Only a very small number of these Swiss Jews survived.

I worked mainly with thousands of documents which I had previously photographed at the Swiss Federal Archive. The excellent libraries at Harvard were of tremendous help. I also very much enjoyed and profited from the many lectures and talks that were offered by the CJS as well as other departments and the scientific exchange that came along with them. I am very grateful to **Professor Stern** to have invited and welcomed me as a Visiting Scholar. I would also like to thank the CJS staff, **Rachel Rockenmacher** and **Sandy Cantave Vil**, who have been extraordinarily helpful and supportive.

**T**he 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 N. Littauer Foundation.

The Starr Fellowship is open to scholars at different stages of their academic careers. From a record number of applicants, we selected six Starr Fellows for 2018–19. Most years, we organize the fellowship around a designated subject area and work together with an academic department in that field. Last year, we invited a group of scholars early in their careers around the topic of the History of the Jewish Book. Starr Fellows presented their works in progress at the Starr Seminars, weekly meetings during the spring semester. We were also able to invite some outside speakers to present to the group. These presentations often elicited lively discussions between the Starr Fellows, other visiting scholars, and faculty and students from Harvard and other area universities.

## THE HARRY STARR FELLOWS 2018–2019



David Stern (Left) with Starr Fellows AJ Berkovitz, Jason Lustig, Martina Mampieri, Silver Fellow Rabbi David Greenstein, Aleksandra Buncic, and Nathan Mastnjak



## Abraham "AJ" Berkovitz

My Spring 2019 Harry Starr Fellowship has already become a defining moment in my academic career. The Center for Jewish Studies supplied me not only with the time and space to encourage critical thought, but a warm and generous cohort with which to share intellectual fellowship. The incredible group with youthful energy (all pre-tenure) and unending inquisitiveness highlighted the best of living an academic life. The weekly seminars developed my technical knowledge of Judaism and the history of the book and also provided a platform for thinking about the important theoretical issues surrounding textuality, materiality and reading practices.

**Ensnared in such an environment, I found my semester as a Starr Fellow as successful and productive as it could be. I began the long and laborious process of turning my dissertation, *The Life of Psalms in Late Antiquity*, into a monograph. The project looks at the Psalter and its early history through the lens of book history.**

It examines the material form of the Psalms and answers how readers produced meaning from it by accounting for ancient conceptions of textuality and reading practices. It was quite stimulating, therefore, to develop my ideas in concert with a group committed to thinking deeply about the role of materiality and reading in shaping the course of human history. During my stay as a Starr Fellow, I was also able to write two articles. The first examines a late antique Jewish Aramaic poem that has not been brought into conversation with other works on the Psalter and its reception. The article performs a task made

famous by history: recovering and contextualizing lost data. The second article explores the limits of theories of paratextuality by taking as its evidence the readers of Psalm titles.

Overall, the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard provided a highly successful space to work, think and have the best kind of scholarly fun. I am grateful to **David Stern** for organizing and shepherding such a vibrant fellowship, am thankful to all those who enriched the weekly seminar with their generous feedback and am indebted to the staff at the Center for making the experience both seamless and pleasant.



## Aleksandra Buncic

I want to express my deepest gratitude to the Center for Jewish Studies for the opportunity to be a Starr Fellow for the 2018–2019 academic year. This fellowship was one of the most valuable experiences for me as a young female scholar.

I appreciated the availability of materials at Harvard to conduct my research. It has been quite difficult to conduct research on medieval Jewish illuminated manuscripts using resources from institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region. Manuscripts and references are very hard to come by and one of the main resources, the National library in Sarajevo which held more than two million titles, burned to the ground during the 1992–1995 war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. I have to rely heavily on resources and funding from foreign institutions for my research.

**The Harry Starr Fellowship gave me the opportunity to access the requisite references and archives. The program also allowed me to exchange ideas with renowned scholars and to contribute to the dynamic intellectual life of the Center for Jewish Studies, as well as of Harvard University.**

During my fellowship, I worked on two separate projects that address the iconography of illuminated manuscripts produced for Jews in medieval Catalonia. During the fall semester, I worked on an essay dedicated to abstraction in medieval art. In this essay, entitled *Painting G-d: Representational Strategies in the Sarajevo Haggadah*, I explore the various ways in which God's presence was indicated throughout the manuscript. During the spring semester, I studied the dissemination of scientific knowledge in medieval Catalonia. Using resources at the Harvard libraries I was able to identify three fourteenth-century manuscripts on astronomy and astrology and to study the relationship between them. In February 2019, I opened the Starr seminar "season" with the lecture entitled "Art of Religion and Science: Two Illuminated Manuscripts from Medieval Catalonia." Also, I participated in many lectures, workshops, and events at Harvard and in the Boston area, including the 50th Association for Jewish Studies conference.

It has been a true privilege to be part of the Center for Jewish Studies and the academic community at Harvard.



## Jason Lustig

I was very pleased to visit Harvard as a Harry Starr Fellow in the 2018–19 academic year. This year has been a great opportunity to meet a range of scholars doing excellent work in a range of fields and especially in the history of the Jewish book. This year my focus has been on completing my book manuscript, *A Time to Gather: Archives and the Control of*

*Jewish Culture* and in also writing a set of articles, including "Epistemologies of the Archive: Toward a Critique of Archival Reason" (which appeared in *Archival Science*), "Mere Chips from his Workshop': Gotthard Deutsch's Monumental Card Index of Jewish History" (*History of the Human Sciences*), and "Introducing Jewish History Matters" (*Shofar*). These works, together with my book manuscript, represent an attempt to engage with the theoretical and practical aspects of the meaning of the materiality of knowledge and culture. In addition, this year I continued my work on the "Jewish History Matters" podcast, posting about twenty episodes that engage with new research and enduring debates in Jewish studies and why they matter in a broad context.

**In the spring semester, the weekly Starr Seminar was a wonderful forum for discussing and debating the research that I and the other Starr Fellows have been conducting, as well as that of other colleagues at Harvard.**

In this spirit, I and the other Starr Fellows came together to record a special episode of "Jewish History Matters" (see page 17), supported by the Center for Jewish Studies, where we talked about our research, the history of the Jewish book and the materiality of Jewish culture, and why it matters.



## Martina Mampieri

The Harry Starr Fellowship allowed me to accomplish my research goals and to thrive in a rich intellectual environment. My main project involved research on the remarkable collection of manuscripts and early printed books that once belonged to the Galician scholar Isaiah Sonne (1887–1960), today preserved in Jerusalem. From this topic, I presented two papers: at the 50th Annual Conference of the Association for Jewish Studies in Boston (December 2018) and at the 65th Annual Meeting of the Renaissance Society of America in Toronto (March 2019). For the Starr Seminar (April 2019), I

# STARR SEMINARS 2019

Hosted by Professors Jay Harris, Hannah Marcus, and David Stern

**January 31, 2019**

**Professor 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

*Text and Book in Jewish Manuscript and Early Print Culture*

Orientation meeting

**February 7, 2019**

**Aleksandra Buncic**, Independent scholar

*Art of Religion and Science: Two Illuminated Manuscripts from Medieval Catalonia*

**February 14, 2019**

**Nathan Mastjnak**, Indiana University

*The Jeremiah Collection and the Imagined Book of Jeremiah*

**February 21, 2019**

**David Sclar**, Independent scholar

*A Communal Tree of Life: Western Sephardic Jews and the Ets Haim Library in Early Modern Amsterdam*

**March 7, 2019**

**Idan Dershowitz**, Junior Fellow, Harvard Society of Fellows

*Material Redaction in the Bible*

**March 14, 2019**

**Rabbi David Greenstein**, Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellow

*Adjusting Utopia: Utopian Visions Encounter the Real World*

**March 28, 2019**

**Tamar Morsel-Eisenberg**, Junior Fellow, Harvard Society of Fellows

*Print, Knowledge Organization, and Halakha: Codification and Disorder*

**April 4, 2019**

**Martina Mampieri**, Sapienza University of Rome

*Studying and Collecting Medieval and Early Modern Judaica and Hebraica Treasures Between Fascist Italy and Postwar America. Isaiah Sonne (1887-1960) and His Collection*

**April 11, 2019**

**Jason Lustig**, University of California at Los Angeles

*Digital Archives, Virtual Collections, and an Enduring Dream of Reassembling the Jewish Past*

**May 3, 2019**

**Abraham (A.J.) Berkovitz**, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

*Materiality, Paratextuality and Ancient Jewish Readers: The Case of Psalm Titles in Late Antiquity*

**May 6, 2019**

**Michelle Chesner**, Norman E. Alexander Librarian for Jewish Studies, Columbia University

**Marjorie Lehman**, Associate Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics, The Jewish Theological Seminary

**Adam Shear**, Associate Professor, University of Pittsburgh

**Joshua Teplitsky**, Assistant Professor, Stony Brook University

*Footprints: Jewish Books Through Time (workshop at Houghton Library) (see page 18)*

The session was divided between a brief presentation of the project goals and a longer hands-on period of involvement with artifacts available from the Houghton and Widener Libraries.

**May 9, 2019**

**Professor Jay Harris**, Harry Austryn Wolfson Professor of Jewish Studies, Harvard University

Wind-up meeting

**May 16, 2019**

**Dr. Patricia Kennedy Grimsted**, Senior Research Associate, Ukrainian Research Institute, Associate, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University; Honorary Fellow, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam

*Pan-European Trails of Nazi-Looted Books*

**Dr. James McSpadden**, Visiting Postdoctoral Fellow, German Historical Institute (Washington, DC)

*Nazi Looted Books, Allied War Booty, and American Libraries*

## NOTES [MAMPIERI], continued from p. 13

offered an extended version of these two papers under the title “Studying and Collecting Medieval and Early Modern Judaica and Hebraica Treasures between Fascist Italy and Postwar America. Isaiah Sonne (1887-1960) and His Collection.” At Harvard, I was also invited to give a public lecture on Italian Pesach haggadot in manuscript and in print from a research project I was working on some years ago.

I also managed to finish and submit the final draft of my first monograph (based on my Ph.D. thesis, 2017) entitled “Living under the Evil Pope: The Hebrew Chronicle of Pope Paul IV by Benjamin Nehemiah ben Elnathan from Civitanova Marche (16<sup>th</sup> Cent.),” which will be published by Brill in Fall 2019. I also submitted other two articles related to Jewish-Christian relations and confiscation of Hebrew books in early modern Italy.

I am grateful to **Professor David Stern**, the Starr and Silver Fellows as well as other participants of the Starr Seminars for their feedback on my research and for their conviviality.

**Participants’ thoughtful comments, remarks, and suggestions to my paper were extremely helpful in shaping my next book project, that will be an intellectual and cultural biography of Isaiah Sonne.**

I was lucky to connect with many people at Harvard through the Starr Seminars, the Early Modern Workshop, the many events in the History of the Book and other seminars. I also thank **Irit Aharony** for having invited me to deliver the lecture on Italian haggadot. Many thanks to **Rachel Rockenmacher**, **Sandy Cantave Vil**, and **Allison Andrews** for their graceful handling of all aspects of the fellowship. I will always remember this incredible year. Harvard is really a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



## Nathan Mastnjak

I had the pleasure to spend a full year as a Harry Starr Fellow. I spent the majority of this time working on my book, *The*

*Scrolls of the Prophets*, which examines the biblical prophetic literature from the standpoint of its material form and format. Rather than imagining the works that we call Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel as books, I argue that in their origins they should be imagined as collections of multiple textual objects.

**I have been trained primarily in biblical criticism, and this research has led me to adjacent fields, including New Philology and Book History... interaction with the other Starr Fellows, all of whom are engaged in research on various moments in the history of the Jewish book, has been extremely valuable.**

Both the spring seminar and daily interactions with the other fellows were helpful for articulating questions about the sociology of texts and their material forms.

I also benefited from conversations with faculty and graduate students from the Divinity School and profited from attending the Hebrew Bible Workshop. Over the course of the year, I enjoyed many happy and constructive hours in the Divinity School library where I also completed an article on the laments of Jeremiah as a form of effective magical speech.

I am grateful to the Harvard University Center for Jewish Studies and the Starr Fellowship for a year of intellectually engaging and productive work.



## David Sclar

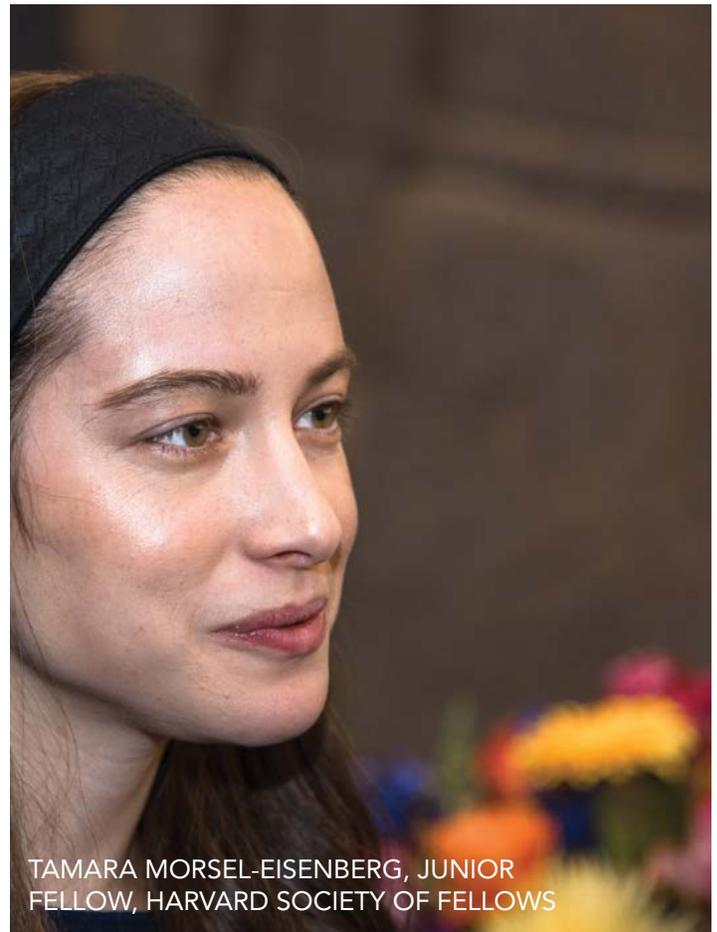
My work focuses on the social and religious history of early modern Jewry, with an emphasis on the history of the book. Over the past year as a Harry Starr Fellow, I furthered my research on Western Sephardic (or Portuguese) Judaization and the development of the Ets Haim Yesiba in 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Amsterdam.

**I explored the Yesiba’s book collecting practices, analyzing extant library shelf lists and decades of acquisition records from the period.**

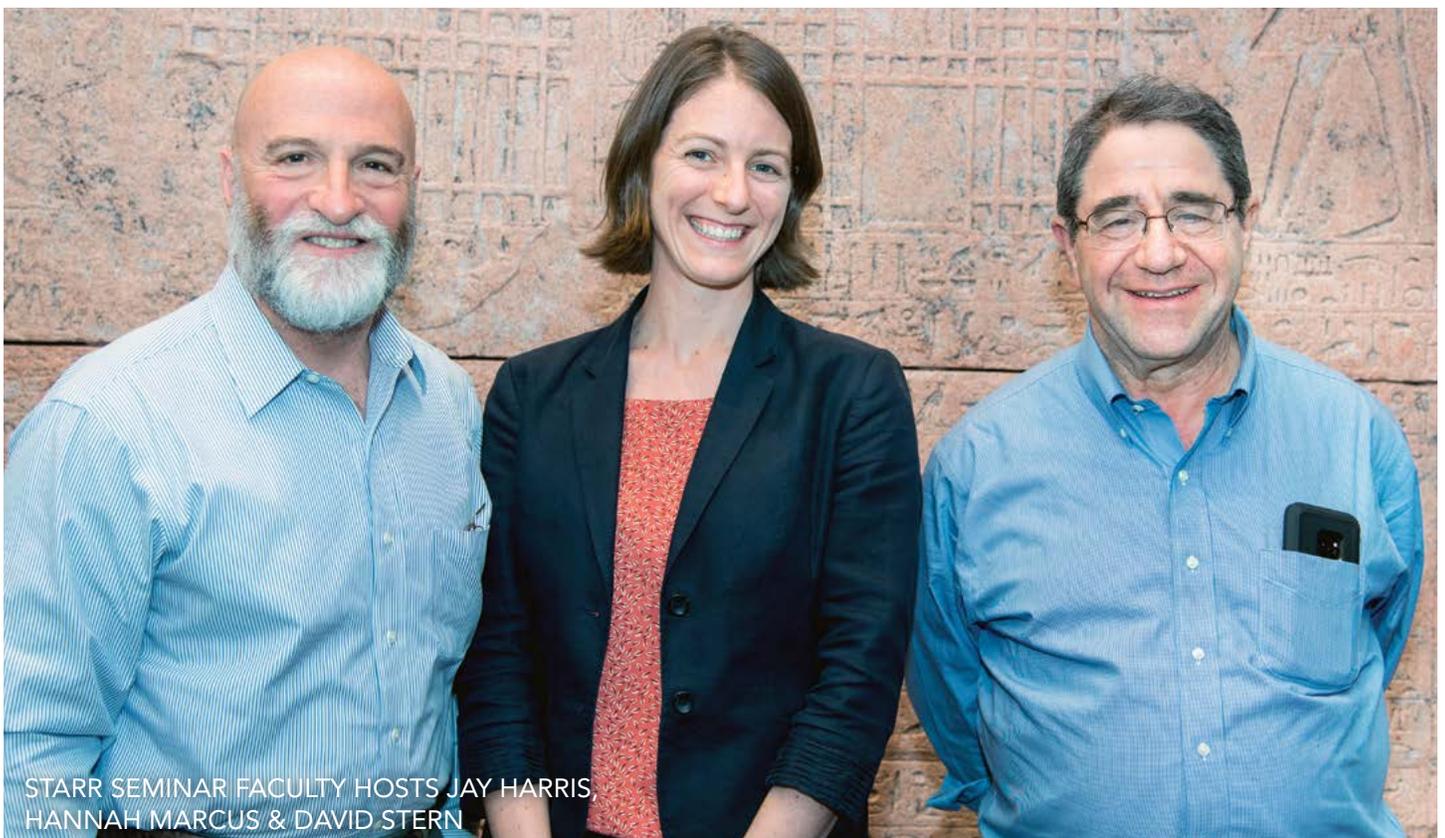
NOTES [SCLAR], continued from p. 15

The Yesiba was established to educate boys and young men in traditional Jewish thought and ritual, and my research thus far has revealed an emphasis on rabbinic literature, with little interest in philosophy, science, or Kabbalah. This contrasts sharply with what we know of Amsterdam's cosmopolitan Portuguese Jews, suggesting (through analysis of a range of sources) that the institutionalized educational system reflected an idealized religiosity heavily influenced by Ashkenazic rabbinic culture.

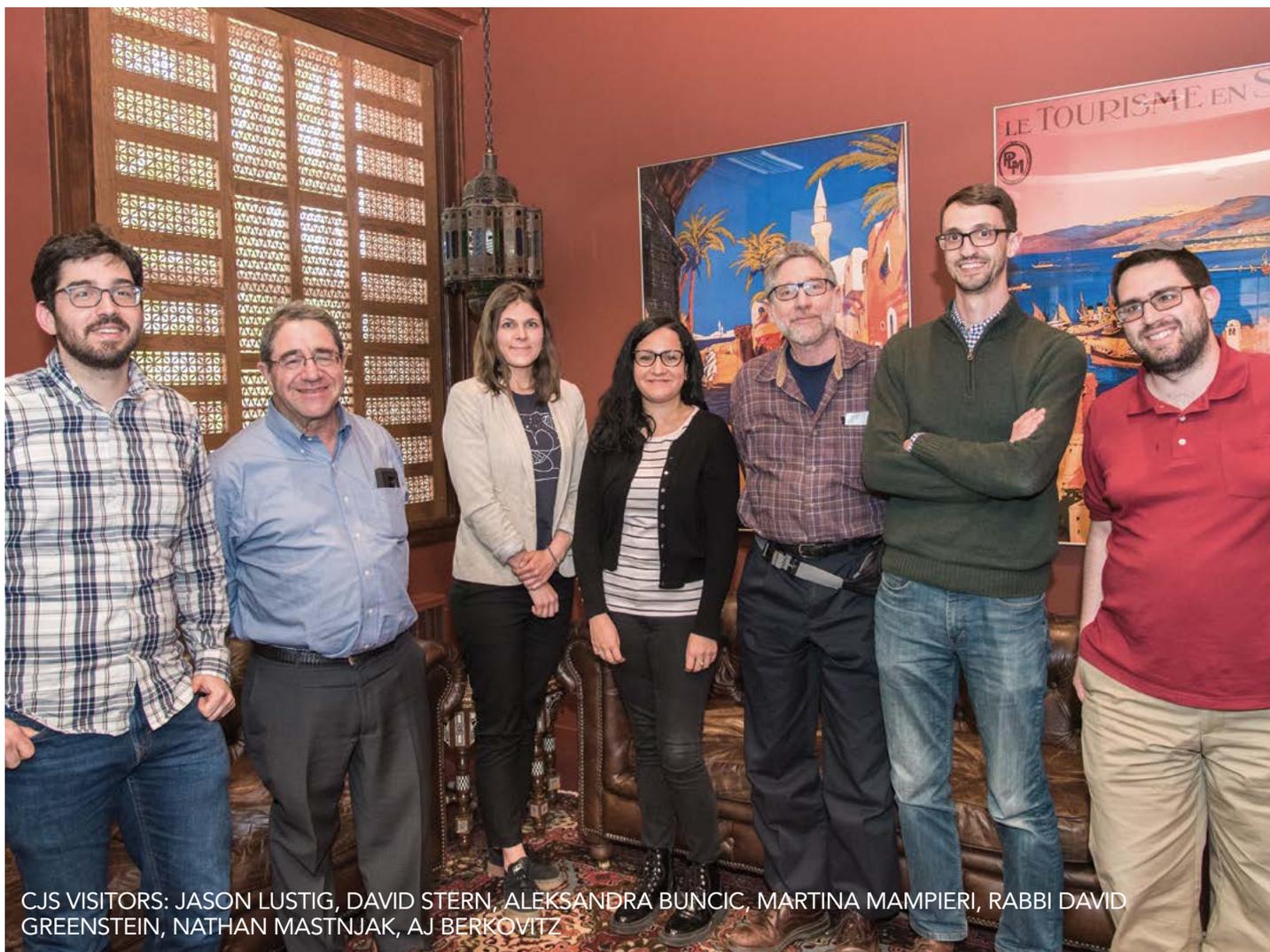
In addition to conducting research this past year, I attended Harvard's seminars on early modern and book history, and enjoyed conversations with faculty, fellows, curators, librarians, and students. I consulted rare material in Houghton Library on a number of occasions, discovering a fragment of a Mishnah (Istanbul, 1643; Heb 2306.43.1) that includes a very rare bifolium on yellow paper. In addition to my activity in Cambridge, I participated in several workshops and conferences elsewhere. ■



TAMARA MORSEL-EISENBERG, JUNIOR FELLOW, HARVARD SOCIETY OF FELLOWS



STARR SEMINAR FACULTY HOSTS JAY HARRIS, HANNAH MARCUS & DAVID STERN



CJS VISITORS: JASON LUSTIG, DAVID STERN, ALEKSANDRA BUNCIC, MARTINA MAMPIERI, RABBI DAVID GREENSTEIN, NATHAN MASTNJAK, AJ BERKOVITZ

## STARR FELLOWS ON JEWISH HISTORY MATTERS PODCAST

by Jason Lustig, Harry Starr Fellows in Judaica fund 2018–19

**Jewish History Matters** is a podcast that features interviews and in-depth discussion of new research and enduring debates about Jewish history and culture and why it matters.

We recorded a special episode of Jewish History Matters with the Harry Starr Fellows, including **Aleksandra Buncic, David Sclar, Nathan Mastnjak, and Jason Lustig**, as a roundtable discussion on the history of the book and the materiality of knowledge in Jewish culture. In the episode, we tried to tie together the work we have been doing this year and what we can learn from it about book history and material culture. The podcast relates to the work we have been doing at Harvard.

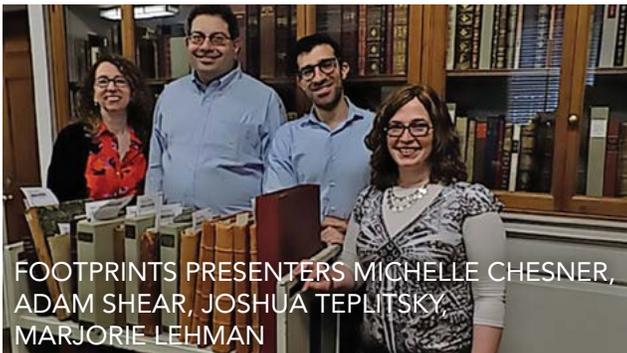
We thank the **Center for Jewish Studies Harry Starr Fellows in Judaica** fund for its support of this episode of Jewish History Matters. The podcast episode was published in May 2019, and will be available through the Jewish History Matters website, [www.jewishhistory.fm](http://www.jewishhistory.fm), as well as Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts, and other podcast services. The episode, titled "Roundtable Discussion on the Materiality of Jewish Culture with Aleksandra Buncic, Nathan Mastnjak, David Sclar, and Jason Lustig," was published Sunday, May 26th, at <https://www.jewishhistory.fm/roundtable-discussion-on-the-materiality-of-jewish-culture-with-aleksandra-buncic-nathan-mastnjak-david-sclar-and-jason-lustig/>.



# Footprints: Jewish Books Through Time and Place

May 6, 2019 • Presenters: Michelle Chesner, Marjorie Lehman, Adam Shear, and Joshua Teplitsky

*This workshop was based on a project that is creating a database to track the circulation of printed “Jewish books” that currently exist—in scattered form and different places—to a central source, to track the movement of these books across time and from place to place. In addition to a presentation, the group worked hands-on with artifacts from the Houghton and Widener Libraries during the afternoon.*



FOOTPRINTS PRESENTERS MICHELLE CHESNER, ADAM SHEAR, JOSHUA TEPLITSKY, MARJORIE LEHMAN



JASON LUSTIG, DAVID STERN, & MARTINA MAMPIERI



RACHEL SLUTSKY & ALEKSANDRA BUNCIC

# NAMED FUNDS & GRANTS

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, please contact our office at [cjs@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:cjs@fas.harvard.edu)

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## NEW GRANT: THE CHARLES H. REVSON FOUNDATION GRANT IN SUPPORT OF GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY IN JEWISH STUDIES

We are grateful to the **Charles H. Revson Foundation** for establishing a new grant to support student research and supplemental study in Jewish studies. This grant will support the work of undergraduate and graduate students over the

J-term (January) and the summer in the field of Jewish studies. A special thanks to **Dr. Stacy Dick**, a dedicated Friend of the Center for Jewish Studies, for his help in initiating this effort.

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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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## Oh, the places they go!

Inquiring minds need to explore! The Center for Jewish Studies and its donors support Harvard students locally and internationally in their quests for knowledge. Summer and J-term (January) funding opportunities for enrolled Harvard students are posted on our website [here](https://cjs.fas.harvard.edu/fellowships-and-prizes/)

[cjs.fas.harvard.edu/fellowships-and-prizes/](https://cjs.fas.harvard.edu/fellowships-and-prizes/)



IN DENMARK, 2014



AT MAGDALA, SEA OF GALILEE, 2018



AT THE NATIONAL YIDDISH BOOK CENTER, 2017



IN BERLIN, 2013

## 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 receive many excellent essays submitted for the prize. We are pleased to share the abstracts for our 2019 winners: Joshua Moriarty, Spencer Glesby, and Richard Yarrow.



JOSHUA MORIARTY



SPENCER GLESBY



RICHARD YARROW

### Joshua Moriarty '21, Pforzheimer House

"The Golden Age of Exile: Depictions of Israel in Hispano-Jewish Poetry"

**Abstract:** This paper investigates the role that the Neoplatonic motif of individuals' souls (as manifestations of the divine Universal Soul that were exiled in human bodies) played in Jewish conceptualizations of exile during the Islamic Middle Ages in Spain. It does so by analyzing two poems from the period, Solomon ibn Gabirol's "*Mah Lakh Yehidah*" ("What's Troubling You, My Soul?") and Moses ibn Ezra's "*Nafshi Ivitikha Balaylah*" ("My Soul Longs for You in the Night"), along with supplementary works by both authors. In each poem, the author appears to radically reconfigure the Jewish exile story in terms of the Neoplatonic exile motif, transforming a national experience of exile into an individualistic yearning for union with God and allegorizing the land of Israel's redemptive status. Yet a closer reading of ibn Ezra's poem indicates that he actually revises ibn Gabirol's individualistic Neoplatonism by superimposing the Jewish view of exile onto it, portraying a physical return to Israel in the Messianic Age as the way to achieve the Neoplatonists' desired union of the soul with the divine on earth. The two poems illustrate the creative ways

in which Jewish thinkers related their own tradition to the secular intellectual traditions around them, engendering new understandings of the relationship between Jews, God, and Israel in the process.

### Spencer Glesby '19, Dudley House

"Zecher L'Churban: The Schola Levantina and the Evolution of Venetian Synagogal Form"

**Abstract:** In June of 1541, the Levantine Jewish community of Venice, which had previously been treated as itinerant merchants by the city's government, were allowed to take up residence within the Ghetto Vecchio along with the Ponentine (Spanish Sephardic) community. By 1589, the Levantines had completed their synagogue, called the Schola Levantina (School of the Levantines) in Venetian. This structure, rumored by some to be designed by preeminent neoclassical architect Baldassare Longhena, was a drastic evolution from the previous clandestine synagogues of the Ashkenazic, Provençal, and Italian synagogues established in the Ghetto Nuovo. This was primarily due to the pronounced influence of various secular and ecclesiastical buildings located outside the Ghetto's walls, as well as the institution of Kabbalic symbolism

previously utilized by the Ponentines in their own synagogue. The ways in which the structure parallels and turns away from both of these sources speak to the dichotomous view the Levantines had of themselves within the city, and also points towards the evolution of the synagogue's role within the Jewish communities of Venice.

### Richard Yarrow '19, Lowell House

"A Chemist Witnesses the Decline of Nation and Science: Jewish and German Scientists in a Post-1918 Era of Personal Reform and Despair"

**Abstract:** The end of World War I and the years that followed exerted tremendous pressure on Germany's community of elite scientists, a pressure that both devastated the individuals and tore the group apart. These tensions provoked many of Germany's elite scientists and scientific Nobel laureates into deep crises of social position and identity. Only two years after World War I concluded, clear fault-lines—which previously did not exist within the elite German scientific milieu—emerged to separate leading Jewish and far-right scientists. Although the collapse of Germany's elite scientific community and the resurgence of Jewish identity among "secular" or converted German Jews is often seen as a product of the

1930s, I argue that tensions over German defeat and the non-fulfillment of German nationalism in 1918–19 quickly became crucial in transforming elite German scientists' identities: from "Germans" to "Jews," from scientists into "anti-mathematical" Nazis, or from defenders of a scientific order to individuals who could passively watch its collapse without striving to protect their former Jewish-German friends and colleagues. ■



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# SUMMER FUNDING 2019

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

**Shoshana Boardman '21**, Barry Shrage Travel and Research Fund for Jewish Studies

**Kalia Firester '20**, Abraham and Rachel Bornstein Fund

**Hayley Jaffe '20**, Suzanne and Dr. Lawrence Fishman Fellowship Fund

**Matt Jelen '21**, Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies

**Adam Nahari '20**, Harry Edison Fund

**Liat Rubin '19**, Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies

**Adam Sella '22**, Barney and Essie Cantor Scholarship Fund

**Eliya Smith '20**, Josephine and Martin Gang Memorial Fund

**Rebecca Thau '20**, Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies

## GRADUATE STUDENTS

**Jan Burzlaiff** (History) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund

**Roy Ginsberg** (Slavic Languages and Literatures) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund

**Jacobe Huet** (History of Art and Architecture) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund

**Allison Hurst** (Study of Religion) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund

**Erin Hutchinson** (History) Edward H. Kavinsky Fellowship

**Eric Jarrard** (Study of Religion) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund and Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund

**Jesse Mirotznik** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Edward H. Kavinsky Fellowship

**Jessica Rosenberg** (Harvard Divinity School) Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies

**Alexandra Schultz** (Classics) Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund

**Rachel Slutsky** (Study of Religion) Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund

**Raphael Stern** (History) Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund

**Miriam-Simma Walfish** (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund

**Rachelle Grossman** (Comparative Literature) Edward H. Kavinsky Fellowship

# STUDENT PROFILE: MATT JELEN

Harvard College, '21

He ended up enrolling in several Jewish studies classes that he had visited initially just out of curiosity. He continues to enjoy engaging with the professors he has met in the field of Jewish studies, who "showed me...that one can be honest and critical about one's Judaism without abandoning one's faith."



**M**ATT JELEN grew up mostly in Stamford, Connecticut, though he was born in Palo Alto and lived for a couple of years in Toronto. His experience at Salanter Akiba Riverdale (SAR) High School, was "formative to thinking critically about Jewish practice [and to learning about] serious text study." Matt describes this modern Orthodox high school in the Bronx as "pioneering" in its handling of Jewish philosophy. A junior year class on theodicy, faith and doubt laid the groundwork for his interest in Jewish thought and prepared him to face issues of Judaism and modernity as he and his classmates began to head out into the broader world. After graduating, he spent a year at Yeshivat Har Etzion in Israel.

Matt came to Harvard thinking about studying philosophy and government; he did not plan to pursue academic work in Jewish studies. Then he enrolled in **Saul Zaritt's** Freshman Seminar course, "Heretics, Gangsters and Writers," about people who "pushed the envelope" in Jewish literature. "This introduction to Yiddish literature in academia captivated me," says Matt. He was aware of how much Ashkenazi culture and Yiddish language had been lost since his grandparents emigrated from Eastern Europe and, though his father grew up speaking the language, Matt did not know it and was not engaged with it.

Two summers ago, with a summer fellowship from the Center for Jewish Studies, Matt attended Yiddish Farm, a total language immersion program within an Orthodox Jewish context in New York state. Yiddish Farm is an actual working farm that survives along with a matzo-baking business and

educational programs. Here, he studied the language and worked on the farm, where all communication was in Yiddish. He appreciated how welcoming this program was to "outsiders," appreciated "engaging with Yiddish as a living language," and learned a great deal during the three-week program. A highlight was when his father, who had gotten out of practice speaking Yiddish, stayed for Shabbat. "A lot came back in 24 hours." In addition to Yiddish Farm, Matt also studied *safrut*, Jewish scribal arts.

At Harvard, the early-semester "shopping" period for classes allowed him to "try things out." He ended up enrolling in several Jewish studies classes that he had visited initially just out of curiosity. He continues to enjoy engaging with the professors he has met in the field of Jewish studies, who "showed me... that one can be honest and critical about one's Judaism without abandoning one's faith."

Particularly inspiring was a course taught by **Prof. Jon Levenson** at Harvard Divinity School, a literary analysis of Jewish wisdom literature. Then he took another class with Prof. Levenson. "I've come to really look up to him not only as a scholar but also as a wonderful man. He puts his students at ease; he never makes them feel unworthy."

Matt was one of only a few undergraduates in these graduate-level courses, but he welcomed the challenge. "Harvard Divinity School is a special place; the professors there are clearly engaged in their studies also for their own personal growth. It feels very open and authentic." He also enjoyed working with **Prof. Anne Monius** at the Divinity School, and her course

last semester on religion and literature. Prof. Monius tragically passed away this past summer. “Beyond her formidable intelligence, she was one of the kindest professors I’ve had here. She leaves behind a void.”

Matt values his discussions with **Prof. David Stern** and hopes to study with him. He thanks Prof. Stern for leading him to his project last summer, a two-week rigorous study of Hebrew manuscripts as part of the now-international Books Within Books project under project head **Judith Schlanger**. The work is identifying what are often fragments of very old Jewish manuscripts used to repair other old books. “Some are the only fragments we have of these texts.” Seeing the variety of fragments helped him to “recognize the vastness of halakhic and Hebrew literature. There is so much out there to discover!”

Matt attended a two-week workshop on the study of Hebrew manuscripts at the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, focusing on paleography (the study of scripts and handwriting) and codicology (the study of other physical aspects and dating of manuscripts). “This was a robust introduction into the study of these manuscripts in their historical contexts.” With a background now in safrut, he appreciates the artistry that goes into writing these documents. One of the real highlights was a viewing of an original text of the Rambam’s *Peirush HaMishnayot*, with annotations in the margins in the author’s own hand. It was “thrilling” to actually hold these mostly medieval documents, some from as early as 800 CE. Guest speakers were “phenomenal” and gave background on the history of manual transcriptions, the history of the manuscript, and their historical contexts.

Currently, Matt is concentrating in the Study of Religion, with a focus on religion and literature. “Judaism has played more of a role than I expected.” Matt explains, “Not all academia needs to challenge the foundations of faith. Some things enhance it.” He finds satisfaction studying religion with a critical lens and was fascinated by the experience of the Hebrew manuscript workshop, “where people devote their lives to engaging with sacred texts while not engaging in daily religious practice. It was a new phenomenon for me.”

Matt enjoys the environment at Harvard Hillel. “It is refreshing to go back to where I feel I’m on the same page as others who have a shared experience.” He has become one of the leaders of the Orthodox minyan and enjoys working with his friends there. He has also just agreed to be the student monitor of Widener 745, the Jewish Studies Reading Room at Widener Library, which the Center for Jewish Studies recently renovated to become a study and gathering place for students in Jewish studies from many schools and departments at Harvard. Matt is not sure what the future will hold. For now, he is pleased that he and his roommates have just moved to Leverett House from the Quad, where they feel closer to the center of campus. ■

## CONGRATULATIONS 2019 GRADUATES!!

Jacob Emmett Smith Bindman (Applied Mathematics in Architecture)  
Corey Alex Gold (Committee on the Study of Religion, Computer Science)  
Spencer Dylan Glesby (History of Art and Architecture)  
Hannah Ella Hess (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, History)  
Jacob Frederick Link (History)  
Theodore Nathaniel Motzkin (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Classics)  
Emma Orcutt (Economics)  
Sarah Rose Perlmutter (Visual and Environmental Studies)  
Claire Moelis Rivkin (History and Literature)  
Hana Seita (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Government)  
Richard Leon Yarrow (History, Philosophy)

# STUDENT PROFILE: CAROLINE KAHLENBERG

*Ph.D. Candidate, Joint Program in History and Middle Eastern Studies*



While in Jerusalem, Caroline became particularly interested in intimate interactions between different groups of people in the city in daily life: at coffee shops, the university, markets, and more.

Growing up outside of Washington, D.C., **CAROLINE KAHLENBERG** believes that her love of history was sparked in part by the easy and free access to the museums of the Smithsonian Institution nearby. As an undergraduate at Middlebury College, Caroline majored in history and gender studies. She attributes her passion for Jewish studies to the welcoming atmosphere of Middlebury's small Jewish studies program.

Caroline knew she wanted to go to graduate school, but first hoped to gain experience in other fields. During her junior year, she studied in Istanbul, fascinated by the history of the city. After that, she was awarded an Israel Institute Fellowship to work in Jerusalem, where she assisted on a book project examining conflicts at holy sites. This project opened her eyes to the complex history of the Middle East. While in Jerusalem, Caroline became particularly interested in intimate interactions between different groups of people in the city in daily life: at coffee shops, the university, markets and more.

"I am having a great time here [at Harvard]; I feel lucky," says Caroline. She came to Harvard the same year as **Professor Derek Penslar** (now William Lee Frost Professor of Jewish History), took a class with him and hoped to work with him. Now he is her primary advisor. "Derek Penslar is great to work with. He gives good advice and gets back to me promptly, even when he is on sabbatical." She has also particularly appreciated working with **Rosie Bsheer**, Assistant Professor

of History and **Afsaneh Najmabadi**, Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History and Professor of the Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. She enjoys the faculty and students in the History program, Harvard's amazing library collections, and the generous support of the Center for Jewish Studies and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies for summer research opportunities.

Co-hosting the Jewish Studies Student Workshop with fellow graduate student **Rachel Slutsky** has been a real highlight. "At the first meeting we only had about five students, and we grew to about ten to fifteen over the year." She appreciated being able to learn about students' work, as well as the culture of peer feedback at these meetings. Caroline also appreciates her supportive professors, colleagues, and friends in the History Department.

When she worked as a teaching assistant at Middlebury, Caroline knew she loved to teach and hoped to go into academia. "Teaching makes me think of things differently, especially outside of my field—I learn so much teaching." She has especially enjoyed the opportunities to teach here at Harvard, as a discussion section leader for courses including one on the British Empire and another on "Europe and its Others." We wish Caroline all the best in her future work! ■

# 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 begin research for my dissertation in Israel! I spent two weeks in Jerusalem working at Yad Vashem, Israel's official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, and writing in the Old City's bustling cafés.

During the first week, I met up with Prof. Dan Michman, chief historian at Yad Vashem, and finished an article. This essay, to be published in December 2019 in the *Journal of Genocide Research*, probes a **comparative history of genocide and mass violence**, using the Shoah as an example. For the second week, I began working on the topic of survival of European Jews through memoirs and personal narratives, something that will culminate in my dissertation project in this academic year. I feel very grateful for discovering Jerusalem and its surroundings – to the fund from the Center for Jewish Studies, a heartfelt "thank you!"

— **Jan Burzlaff**

*Ph.D. candidate, Department of History*

"I began working on the topic of survival of European Jews through memoirs and personal narratives, something that will culminate in my dissertation in this academic year."

— **Jan Burzlaff**

"I return to Harvard better prepared to continue my Yiddish literature research and I am most grateful for the generous support."

— **Roy Ginsberg**



Thanks to the generous support of the **Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund** and the **Center for Jewish Studies**, I was able to spend last summer studying Yiddish at the Naomi Praver Kadar International Yiddish Summer Program at Tel Aviv University. This intensive language program included conversation hours, cultural events, and a "Landmarks of Yiddish Literature" lecture series. Highlights included a one-man dramatization of Bashevis Singer's "Gimpel the Fool," a trip to the National Library in Jerusalem, and a screening of *Black Honey: The Poetry and Life of Avraham Sutzkever* with producer Yair Qedar. Before beginning the summer program, I was able to spend three weeks in Jerusalem, where I worked with a language tutor and continued my research on the poetry of Peretz Markish. I was able to present that research at the Yiddish Summer Program's Research Symposium for Graduate Students.

The progress that I made in my Yiddish language studies will greatly benefit my studies as a Ph.D. student in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. **Over the course of the summer, I improved my Yiddish language proficiency and refined my research interests in Yiddish Modernism across the former Russian Empire and early Soviet Union.** The Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund and the Center for Jewish Studies allowed me to hone my Yiddish language skills and progress in the development of my dissertation topic. I return to Harvard better prepared to continue my Yiddish literature research, and I am most grateful for the generous support.

— **Roy Ginsberg**

*Ph.D. candidate,*

*Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures*

I am incredibly grateful for the generosity of the **Center for Jewish Studies** and the **Edward H. Kavinoky Fellowship**, which enabled me to participate in the recent international conference, “Canon? Practice? Commodity? The Past, Present and Future of the Literary Anthology” at Queen Mary University of London.

This conference was an opportunity for me to discuss my work on post-Holocaust Yiddish publishing and the anthology. Rather than fade from use, as scholars have argued about the trajectory of Yiddish in North America, Yiddish in Latin America actually gained momentum in the post-war years, and, curiously, between the 1950s-80s there was a great proliferation of Yiddish literary anthologies published in Argentina.

It was particularly useful to discuss the role of digital humanities in anthology studies and how the anthology itself can be thought of as a kind of literary network. Curated by an editor, each story and author included in an anthology functions as a node with multiple connections. **This insight has pushed me to think more closely about the intervention of the editor in the anthologies I study and how literary objects reflect larger networks that connect reader, writer, editor, publisher, and funder.**

This conference allowed me to discuss what has become a central focus of my dissertation and think through the affordances of the anthology for post-Holocaust Yiddish with colleagues from other areas of comparative literature. Participating in this conference helped me sort through these ideas as I wrote the beginnings of a dissertation chapter, and I look forward to developing and refining it over the coming months. Many thanks for your support!

— **Rachelle Grossman**

*Ph.D. candidate, Department of Comparative Literature*



“This conference allowed me to discuss what has become a central focus of my dissertation and think through the affordances of the anthology for post-Holocaust Yiddish with colleagues from other areas of comparative literature.”

— *Rachelle Grossman*

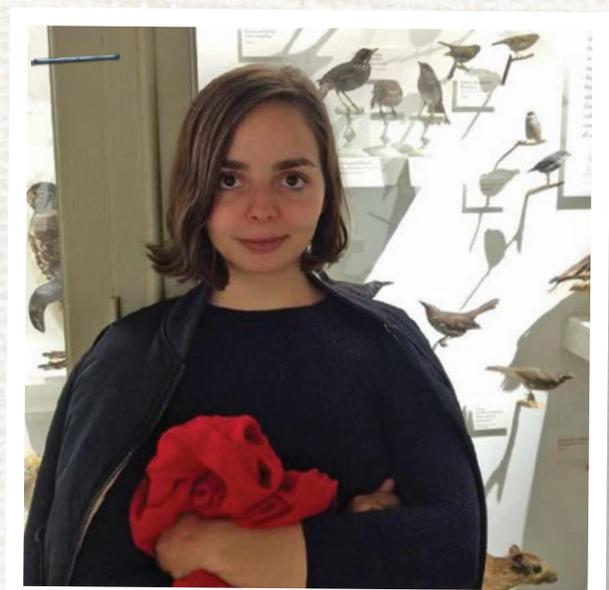
Many thanks to the **Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund** at the **Center for Jewish Studies** for supporting my summer research!

My dissertation explores historical and visual associations between European modernist architecture and Mediterranean vernacular styles. Between the 1910s and the 1960s, creative and political authorities claimed a kinship between the white box-like architecture of European modernity and traditional cubes of the Maghreb and the Middle East. I critically consider such claims in the context of three architects’ careers – Adolf Loos, Marcel Breuer, and Le Corbusier – and the contemporary development of three cities – Tel Aviv, Algiers, and Marseille.

Thanks to this fellowship, **I visited and documented both Israeli modernist and Palestinian vernacular buildings in Tel Aviv, Jaffa, Haifa, Hebron, Jericho, Ramallah, and Jerusalem.** In these contested spaces, architectural belonging – in this case, European and/or Mediterranean – encapsulates geopolitical stakes. I then travelled to Paris to spend time researching at the Fondation Le Corbusier. I uncovered documents relating to Mediterranean, the Middle East, and Zionism from the architect’s personal and professional archives.

— **Jacobe Huet**

*Ph.D. candidate,  
Department of History of Art and Architecture*



Thanks to the generous support of the **Edward H. Kavinsky Fellowship**, I continued my ongoing dissertation research on anti-Semitism in the Soviet literary world. Over the summer, I examined Soviet government documents from the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (RGANI) that are held on microfilm by Harvard Libraries, as well as published sources such as document collections. My previous research in this area (also supported by the **Center for Jewish Studies**) had focused on efforts among writers in the 1950s to come to terms with the persecution of Jewish writers in the late Stalin era.

I explored the evolution of anti-Semitism in the Soviet literary world in the 1960s. **Whereas in the 1950s anti-Semitism had been closely linked to support for Stalinism, in the 1960s it also became prevalent among intellectuals who were influenced by Russia's pre-revolutionary cultural heritage.** Anti-Semitic works from the pre-revolutionary period like *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* began to secretly circulate among certain groups of Russian intellectuals. Ultimately, the documents suggest that a shared anti-Semitic ideology helped to unite the older generation of "Stalinists" with emerging Russian nationalist intellectual groups who were influenced by older anti-Semitic ideologies from the pre-revolutionary period. Thanks to the funding provided by the Center for Jewish Studies, I was able to strengthen my treatment of anti-Semitism in the Soviet literary world in the third chapter of my dissertation, "The Cultural Politics of the Nation in the Soviet Union after Stalin, 1952-1991."

— Erin Hutchinson

Ph.D. candidate, Department of History



"Ultimately, the documents suggest that a shared anti-Semitic ideology helped to unite the older generation of 'Stalinists' with emerging Russian nationalist intellectual groups, who were influenced by older anti-Semitic ideologies from the pre-revolutionary period."

— Erin Hutchinson

Last summer, I was fortunate to participate in the second season of archaeological excavations at the Shmunis Family Foundation Excavations at Kiriath-Jeari, Israel. **I spent two weeks excavating during the day, washing potsherds in the afternoon, and attending lectures by esteemed scholars and archaeologists in the evening.** Professors Israel Finkelstein, Thomas Römer, and Christophe Nicolle direct the excavation, and it was a privilege to meet and learn from them. Because of this experience, I have a better understanding of how archaeologists and their findings can be important resources for biblical scholars (and vice versa). This would not have been possible without generous funding from the **Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund** through the **Center for Jewish Studies**, and I am extremely grateful for the experience.

— Allison Hurst

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

Many thanks to the **Barney and Essie Cantor Scholarship Fund** for allowing me to pursue advanced Hebrew studies at a Tel Aviv ulpan last summer! With this support, I was able to advance my Hebrew to a more academic and literary level. Outside of class I spent a lot of time with my Israeli family and friends, with whom I spoke only Hebrew. I also explored the art and music scene in Tel Aviv—going to concerts, galleries, dance performances and Israeli and Palestinian movies. As a sophomore interested in comparative literature and philosophy, last summer exposed me to the possibility of focusing my interest in the arts and humanities of different people, languages and cultures.

— Adam Sella

Harvard College, '22



I am exceedingly grateful for the generous funding from the **Barney and Anne B. Malloy Memorial Fund** and the **Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund**. Because of this generosity, I was able to present my dissertation research at two international conferences last summer. Both conferences—the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Rome and the International Organisation for the Study of the Old Testament in Aberdeen, Scotland—allowed me to expose my research to continental perspectives and critiques. Happily, I can report that I received excellent feedback and encouragement from world-renowned scholars of Hebrew Bible on all four papers I presented.

One of the highlights of my trip to Rome was an unplanned trip to the Basilica di Santa Sabina all’Aventino, a fourth-century Dominican church and pilgrimage site and the oldest extant Roman basilica built on the Aventine Hill. Particularly remarkable about this structure are its cypress wood doors composed of twenty-eight wood-carved panels depicting various biblical scenes from the Hebrew Bible and New Testament. Seventeen of the panels remain, including what is thought to be the first known publicly displayed image of the crucifixion. Important for my own research is the depiction of the exodus event and lawgiving at Mount Sinai; both events play a pivotal role in my research, and their depiction on the Santa Sabina doors will be featured in my dissertation.

Incidentally, the **Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund** also provided funding to secure publication rights for a number of images required for my forthcoming article in *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, an important peer-reviewed academic journal in the field of the Hebrew Bible. My article, “Double Entendre in Exodus 34:29–35: Revisiting the  $\text{רַק}$  of Moses,” discusses the transformation of Moses’s appearance after coming in contact with the deity. While in Rome, I was able to see Michelangelo’s statue of Moses with horns, one of the most famous such renderings, at the Basilica di San Pietro in Vincoli. **This funding provided the indispensable opportunity for me to further my dissertation research in Europe last summer, in ways both planned and unplanned.** I am profoundly grateful for the generosity of the donors and the hard work and coordination of the **Center for Jewish Studies**.

— Eric Jarrard

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



“Particularly remarkable about [the Basilica di Santa Sabina all’Aventino] are its cypress wood doors composed of twenty-eight wood-carved panels depicting various biblical scenes from the Hebrew Bible and New Testament.”

— Eric Jarrard

I am very grateful to the **CJS** for providing me with a generous **Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund** travel grant last summer. This grant made it possible for me to participate in *Bibelwoche*, a decades-old German interfaith program for Jews and Christians located in a Westphalian monastery. **I had the opportunity to give a keynote lecture, titled “Hannah’s Prayer and the Magnificat” and I also served as a Jewish resource person for a weeklong interfaith Bible study group.** This program helped me to deepen my understanding of both the strengths and weaknesses found in contemporary interfaith dialogue, and it has fostered within me a sense of urgency that motivates me to continue my involvement in these efforts. I am proud to have been part of such a wonderful program, and I hope to one day do my part to pay the generosity of my grant forward to others who similarly desire to contribute to the field of Jewish studies. Thank you! *Danke schön!*

— Rachel Slutsky

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



Over the summer and with the generous support of the **Harry Edison Fund** at the **CJS**, I was able to conduct in-depth interviews with leaders and members of Ultra-Orthodox communities in Israel. My research focused on understanding whether religious individuals will inevitably seek to be exempt from anti-discrimination law whenever it conflicts with their beliefs.

This question is more difficult than it may initially seem. While some aspects of religious doctrine may bring people into direct conflict with anti-discrimination law, other aspects - particularly those emphasizing compassion and mercy - may converge with it. Indeed, my initial findings reveal that religious individuals are not inclined to defy the law, even as they believe the behavior protected by anti-discrimination law to be religiously forbidden. **They are torn between the desire to adhere to religious prohibitions and the desire to show religious lawbreakers love and compassion.**

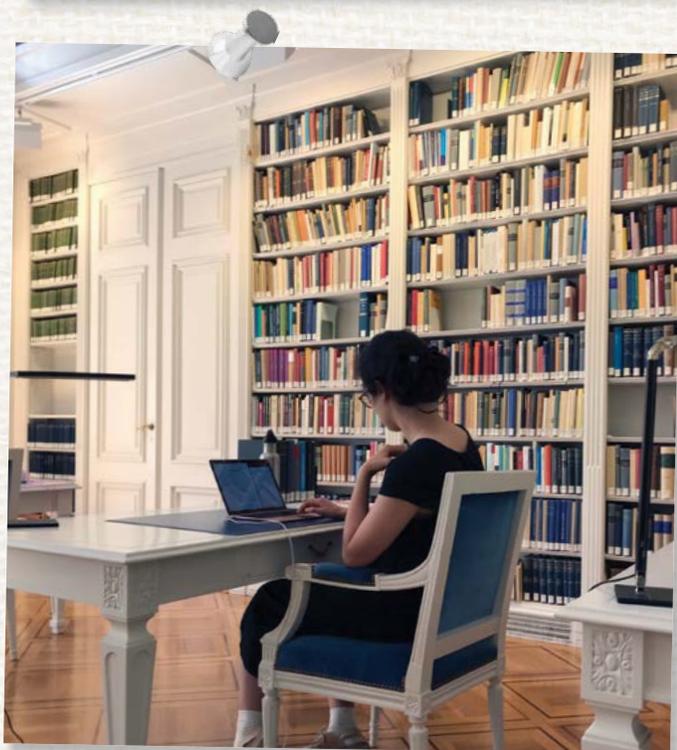
The ultimate goal of this research is to understand the motivations and modes of reasoning of religious individuals. Rather than framing the debate as a clash between religious values on one side and liberal values on the other, I wanted to examine how normative conflicts are perceived and handled by religious individuals themselves.

— **Adam Nahari**  
Harvard College, '20



“While some aspects of religious doctrine may bring people into direct conflict with anti-discrimination law, other aspects - particularly those emphasizing compassion and mercy - may converge with it. Indeed, my initial findings reveal that religious individuals are not inclined to defy the law, even as they believe the behavior protected by anti-discrimination law to be religiously forbidden.”

— Adam Nahari



Last summer I spent two weeks at the *Fondation Hardt*, a research institute in Switzerland that promotes the study of ancient Greece and Rome. I worked on my fourth dissertation chapter, which focuses on depictions of libraries in Hellenistic Jewish sources. In between I strolled around the Foundation's gardens, went swimming in Lake Geneva, and discussed my work with other scholars over fabulous meals prepared by the chef, Heidi. **The tranquil setting and atmosphere of absolute focus gave me the opportunity not only to read and write, but to think deeply about narrative patterns I found cropping up in different sources:** narratives about golden age kings founding and restoring libraries, about translation projects undertaken by teams of scholars, and about the origins of religious festivals and canonical texts. Ph.D. students rarely have such opportunities to conduct research among and receive feedback from an international community of scholars, and I am immensely grateful to the **Center for Jewish Studies** and the **Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund** for making this research possible.

— **Alexandra Schultz**  
Ph.D. candidate, Department of the Classics



I am deeply grateful for the support of the **Barry Shrage Travel and Research Fund for Jewish Studies** provided by the **CJS** which enabled me to spend last summer at Yeshivat Hadar in New York City. Hadar is an institution with a unique approach to the interactions between *halakhah* and gender egalitarianism. I spent a lot of time thinking about and discussing the ways this fits into the wider landscape of modern institutions and ideological frameworks.

In yeshivah we learned *masechet Yoma*, the tractate of Talmud which focuses on Yom Kippur. To begin, we discussed the five main prohibitions of Yom Kippur (eating/drinking, bathing, anointing, wearing shoes, and relations), determining how these actions relate to self-affliction, and proving that they are forbidden by the Torah. Later we talked about the overriding principle of saving a life and its relationship to self-affliction: for example, at what point should a sick person break their fast? I was in a track based largely on manuscript comparison and the historical development of the material. This was an illuminating glimpse into current academic theories about transmission and redaction of oral tradition.

In the afternoons I learned *halakhah* about the morning blessings, including the difficult blessing “blessed are you, Gd, ruler of the universe, who has not made me a woman.” We looked at different responses to alternative blessings that a woman (or perhaps all people) should make and the positions that have been taken throughout history. I was intrigued to discover that the most common alternative blessing for women was not originally a standard. It seems that halakhic decisors overheard that women were saying an alternative blessing and did not know where it had come from, but then accepted it as normative. **This gave us an insight into the relationship between absolute divine will and the actual facts on the ground, and the ways that each of these factors feed into the prescriptions of religious authorities.** My experience last summer was influential to my growth as a leader at Hillel and as a scholar of religion, especially in the ways that popular and official religion interact.

— **Shoshana Boardman**  
Harvard College, '21

Thanks to the grant from the **Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies**, I was able to work at the Magnes Collection for Jewish Art and Life at the University of California at Berkeley last summer. I assisted the curatorial staff in cataloging their recently acquired collection of the Polish-Jewish WWII-era cartoonist and artist Arthur Szyk’s work. **Working with the curators and staff at the Magnes Collection provided me with important skills to work with both artistic and ritual objects as well as the understanding of how to assess and curate a collection.** Working with the Szyk collection was both illuminating and haunting. Seeing many iterations of his political cartoons and drawings provided a personal and deeper context for my understanding of WWII and the Holocaust. Getting to know the collection was a rewarding experience, especially exploring the themes of human rights and Jewish art as political resistance, which is the focus of the upcoming exhibition.

Additionally, working with the staff at the Magnes was essential towards the progress and research of my master’s thesis. Upon discovering the museum’s large collection of amulets and incantation bowls, I narrowed my thesis topic towards Jewish magical rituals and ritual objects. I worked with the assistant curator to research a previously-unexamined 20th Century American amulet. By working through the divine names and biblical quotes invoked on the amulet, I learned about the seemingly lost art and practice of amulet-making as a dimension of Jewish faith and folk religion. Thank you again to the Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies for the support of last summer internship and research!

— **Jessica Rosenberg**  
M. Div. candidate, Harvard Divinity School



“My experience last summer was influential to my growth as a leader at Hillel and as a scholar of religion, especially in the ways that popular and official religion interact.”

— **Shoshana Boardman**

Thanks to the generous support of the **Center for Jewish Studies**, I spent a month in France conducting archival research for my undergraduate thesis, which focuses on Jacques Derrida's and Hélène Cixous's conceptions of their Jewish and Algerian identities. I began my research in Paris, where I worked in the media library of the *Musée de l'art et de l'histoire du Judaïsme* (Museum of Jewish Art and History), the archives of the *Bibliothèque nationale de France* (French National Library), and the collection of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*. In addition to these Parisian libraries, I spent several days in Saint-Germain-de-la-Blanche-Herbe, Normandy, where I consulted the Jacques Derrida papers at the *Institut Mémoires de l'édition contemporaine* (Institute for Contemporary Publishing).

In all four of these unique collections, **I found fascinating letters, manuscripts, and notes in both French and Hebrew, documentation that has given me a deeper understanding of these thinkers than their published materials ever could.** In addition to providing such a rich basis for my thesis, conducting this research alongside accomplished scholars in these archives was thrilling on a personal level. In Normandy, I was lucky enough to spend time with the other researchers, all of whom were finishing their doctorates or in the process of writing books. To discuss my own work with them, and to become a part of the world of scholarship myself, was a wonderful gift.

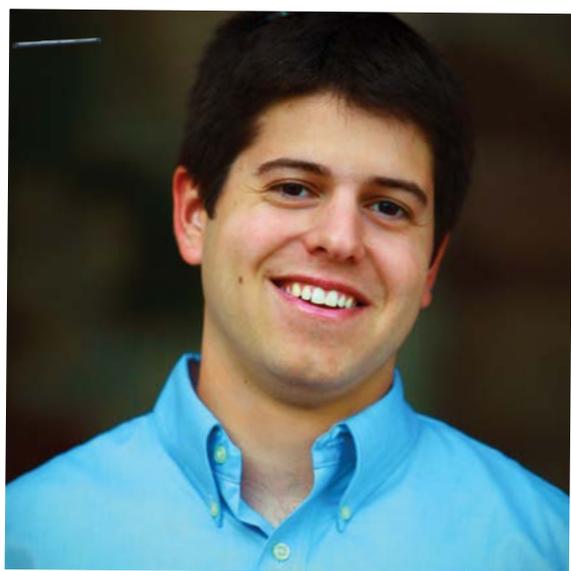
I am very much looking forward to returning to Cambridge, MA to embark on the next steps of my thesis work. I thank the **Friends of the Center for Jewish Studies** fund for making this opportunity possible.

— **Rebecca Thau**  
Harvard College, '21



"I was lucky enough to spend time with the other researchers, all of whom were finishing their doctorates or in the process of writing books. To discuss my own work with them, and to become a part of the world of scholarship itself, was a wonderful gift."

— **Rebecca Thau**



Thanks to the generous support of the **Center for Jewish Studies** and the **Anna Marnoy Feldberg Financial Aid Fund**, I split my time last summer between Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Boston, and Washington D.C.

I started off the summer at the Library of Congress and the National Archives in DC looking for material relating to American economic and legal involvement in the Middle East during World War II. Then I traveled to Israel to explore the Jewish and Zionist sources dealing with wartime rationing in Palestine. I capped off the summer back in the air-conditioned confines of Widener, connecting the dots and writing. **I was especially excited (but not entirely surprised) to find that Zionist legal and political figures were extremely involved in shaping the legal regime in wartime Palestine and that these institutions carried over into the early years of Israeli statehood.** I'm currently trying to figure out the extent to which Zionists interacted with American New Dealers. Over all, it was a really productive summer and I am excited to continue writing my dissertation in the coming year(s).

— **Rephael "Rafi" Stern**  
Ph.D. candidate, Department of History



JEWISH STUDIES  
WORKSHOP

## JEWISH STUDIES STUDENT WORKSHOP

### MEETING DATES:

10/9/18, 10/23/18, 11/6/18, 11/20/18  
2/26/19, 3/12/19, 3/26/19, 4/9/19

## HEBREW BIBLE WORKSHOP

### MEETING DATES:

10/18/18, 11/1/18, 11/12/18, 11/29/18,  
12/13/18, 2/7/19, 2/21/19, 3/14/19, 3/28/19,  
4/11/19, 4/25/19

Our spring 2019 Jewish Studies Workshop, co-coordinated by **Rachel Slutsky** and **Caroline Kahlenberg**, included a broad variety of presenters in various sub-disciplines. We heard a presentation about Yiddish writing in the post-war period by **Rachelle Grossman**, and we learned about the literary tropes of twinship and suicide in Israeli literature from **Will Tamplin**. **Uri Schreter** (current co-coordinator) shared wonderful klezmer music and its history with us, and we learned about Holocaust studies from visiting Princeton student **Jonathon Catlin**. We got to compare Jewish and Hindu texts with **Shoshana Razel**, and we learned about Hannah Arendt and the place of emotions from **Tsiona Lida**. It was a wonderful and vibrant semester and this lineup bespeaks the increasing sense of unity among students from all areas who find themselves under the umbrella of “Jewish studies.”

—Rachel Slutsky



## THANK YOU, COREY GOLD!

The Center for Jewish Studies thanks Corey Gold '19 for serving as our student assistant for two years, keeping an eye on the Jewish Studies Reading Room in Widener 745. We wish Corey all the best in his future plans!

# LECTURES & EVENTS



IRIT AHARONY & ASAF SABAN



JOEL KAMINSKY

JANUARY 29, 2019

*Always Abroad: Music, Jews and the Abode of Islam*

## EDWIN SEROUSSI

Emanuel Alexandre Professor of Musicology and Director of the Jewish Music Research Centre, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

*Yanoff-Taylor Lecture and Publication Fund* and the Department of Music, Harvard University

FEBRUARY 12, 2019

## ANNUAL CJS SPRING RECEPTION

FEBRUARY 15, 2019

*Film Screening of Outdoors followed by Q&A*

## ASAF SABAN

Film director and writer

Asaf Saban's short films have been screened at major film festivals and received awards. *Outdoors*, an independent project which he also produced, is his debut feature film.

*Harry Edison Fund*

MARCH 6, 2019

*Law and Emotions: Maimonides's Concept of Mourning*

## MOSHE HALBERTAL

Caroline Zelaznik Gruss and Joseph S. Gruss Visiting Professor in Talmudic Civil Law, Harvard Law School

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

MARCH 11, 2019

*Is There "Muslim Anti-Semitism" in France and Germany?*

## GÜNTHER JIKELI

Associate Professor; Justin M. Druck Family Scholar, Institute for the Study of Contemporary Anti-Semitism in the Borns Jewish Studies Program, Indiana University

Co-sponsored by the Center for Jewish Studies, Harvard University and the Jews in Modern Europe Study Group, the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard University

MARCH 13, 2019

*David Oistrakh (1908-1974)*

## OLEH KRYSA

Professor of Violin at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York

## HARLOW ROBINSON

Matthews Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of History, Northeastern University

Co-sponsored by the Center for Jewish Studies, Harvard University with the Great Russian Jews That Shaped the World Panel Series and the Seminar on Russian and Eurasian Jewry, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University

MARCH 14, 2019

*Jewish Reflections on Universalism and Particularism in Genesis*

## JOEL KAMINSKY

Morningstar Professor of Jewish Studies and Professor of Religion, Smith College

*Harry Elson Lecture and Publication Fund* with the Hebrew Bible Workshop



CHRISTINA SPÄTI & MARTINA MAMPERI



AJ BERKOVITZ, JASON LUSTIG, URI SCHRETER,  
& ALEKSANDRA BUNCIC

# WELCOME RECEPTION

FEBRUARY 12, 2019



RABBI HIRSCHY ZARCHI & DAVID STERN



THEODORE "THEO" MOTZKIN, MIRIAM-SIMMA  
WALFISH, RICHARD YARROW, & URI SCHRETER



EYAL NAVEH, TSIONA LIDA, &  
IDAN DERSHOWITZ



ALEKSANDRA BUNCIC



WILLIAM BRUMFIELD

APRIL 2, 2019

### *Back to the Future: Reviving the Legacy of Jewish Avant Garde*

#### **WILLIAM BRUMFIELD**

Professor of Slavic Studies and Sizeler Professor of Jewish Studies, Tulane University

The lecture examines the contributions of Russian Jewish architects to the development of Soviet architecture, with particular emphasis on the avant-garde (constructivism).

*Isaac-Melech, Ida and Zelman Rykles Memorial Fund with the Seminar on Russian and Eurasian Jewry, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies; the Department of History of Art and Architecture; the Jewish Societies and Cultures Seminar, Mahindra Humanities Center; and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Harvard University*

APRIL 8, 2019

### *My Journey to the Bench*

#### **RACHEL FREIER**

Hon. Rachel Freier, Civil Court Judge, Kings County Criminal Court; AEMT-Paramedic, Founder of *Ezras Nashim*, an all-female Orthodox Jewish volunteer EMT ambulance service

Rachel Freier, known as Ruchie by her friends and family, was elected as Civil Court Judge in November 2016 and is currently assigned to Kings County Criminal Court. Prior to becoming a judge, she maintained law offices in Borough Park and Monroe, NY, licensed to practice in NY, NJ and Washington, DC.

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

APRIL 10, 2019

### *Mikhail Botvinnik (1911-1995)*

#### **EMIL SUTOVSKY**

International Grandmaster, 2001 European Chess Champion and 2010 Olympic chess gold medalist

#### **JOHN DONALDSON**

International Chess Master

*Co-sponsored by the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University with the Great Russian Jews That Shaped the World Panel Series and the Seminar on Russian and Eurasian Jewry, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University*

APRIL 11, 2019

### *Pogrom: Kishinev and the Tilt of History*

#### **STEVEN ZIPPERSTEIN**

The Daniel E. Koshland Professor in Jewish Culture and History, Stanford University

The Kishinev pogrom that broke out in late-Tsarist Russia in April 1903, in which 49 Jews were killed and 600 more were raped and wounded, seized the imagination of an international public. It quickly became the prototype for what would become known as a "pogrom." It provided the impetus for endeavors as varied as the Hagannah, the precursor to the Israeli Army, "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," and the formation of the NAACP.

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



HON. RACHEL FREIER

APRIL 12, 2019

*Mah Nishtanah? Why is This Night Different from All Other Nights? Italian Passover Haggadot from Manuscript to Print*

**MARTINA MAMPIERI**

Sapienza University of Rome; 2018-2019 Harry Starr Fellow in Judaica at the Center for Jewish Studies, Harvard University

Martina Mampieri holds a double Ph.D. in History and Jewish Studies from Roma Tre University and the University of Hamburg (2017). Dr. Mampieri is the author of the forthcoming book *Living Under the Evil Pope: The Hebrew Chronicle of Pope Paul IV by Benjamin Nehemiah ben Elnathan from Civitanova Marche, 16th Century* (Brill, 2019).

*Harry Edison Fund*

APRIL 15, 2019

*Israel's Last Elections Results in Relation to Israel's Divided Society*

**EYAL NAVEH**

Department of History, Tel Aviv University; Head of the Academic Council, Kibbutzim College of Education; Head of the Israeli Institute of History Education; Visiting Professor in History, Harvard University

*Martin D. and Helen B. Schwartz Lecture Fund*

MAY 1, 2019

*Tzadeikis film talk: Presentation for Yiddish Program*

**EMILY CHEEGER**

Film director

Film screening and discussion for Yiddish students with Emily Cheeger.

*Abraham and Rachel Bornstein Fund*

MAY 2, 2019

*Like Dewdrops in the Waving Grass: Diamonds, Jews, and Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Trade*

**SASKIA COENEN SNYDER**

Associate Professor of Modern Jewish History and the Associate Director of the Walker Institute and International and Area Studies, University of South Carolina

A talk about the effects of the South African diamond discovery on the Amsterdam Jewish community, half of which depended economically on the diamond trade by the late 19th century.

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

MAY 16, 2019

**END-OF-YEAR RECEPTION**



READY FOR RECEPTION, FEBRUARY 12, 2019



MARTINA MAMPIERI



EYAL NAVEH



DAVID STERN WITH  
ZELDA & RABBI DAVID GREENSTEIN



MARTINA MAMPERI & PATRICIA GRIMSTED



YING ZHANG & RICHARD YARROW



COLORING SUPERSTARS

# YEAR-END RECEPTION MAY 16, 2019



ALEKSANDRA BUNCIC & SARA FELDMAN



NATHAN MASTNJAK & DAUGHTER

# Adorno's Aesthetic Theory, a Spring 2019 Lecture Series at Harvard University

2019 marked the 50th anniversary of *Aesthetic Theory* (first published posthumously in 1970), the final masterpiece of the philosopher and social theorist Theodor W. Adorno. A semester-long series of scholarly presentations reflected on the legacy and actuality of this major work.

Series sponsored by the Harvard Colloquium for Intellectual History in cooperation with the Department of Philosophy; the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures; the Center for Jewish Studies; and the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard University

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FEBRUARY 13, 2019

## SAMANTHA MATHERNE

Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University

*Adorno and the Default Theory of Aesthetic Value*

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FEBRUARY 20, 2019

## MICHAEL ROSEN

Senator Joseph S. Clark Professor of Ethics in Politics and Government, Harvard University

*Art Has No Power Over Schein Through Its Abolition*

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FEBRUARY 27, 2019

## MAX PENSKY

Professor of Philosophy, Binghamton University

*Natural History and Aesthetic Experience*

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MARCH 5, 2019

## SHERRY LEE

Associate Professor of Musicology and Associate Dean of Research, Trinity College, University of Toronto

*Adorno as Tourist*

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MARCH 13, 2019

## ESPEN HAMMER

Professor of Philosophy, Temple University

*Remembrance and Anticipation: Adorno's Reading of Proust and Beckett*

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APRIL 3, 2019

## EVA GEULEN

Professor for European Culture and the History of Knowledge, Humboldt University of Berlin

*Primacy of the Object: Adorno's Aesthetic Theory and the Return of Form*

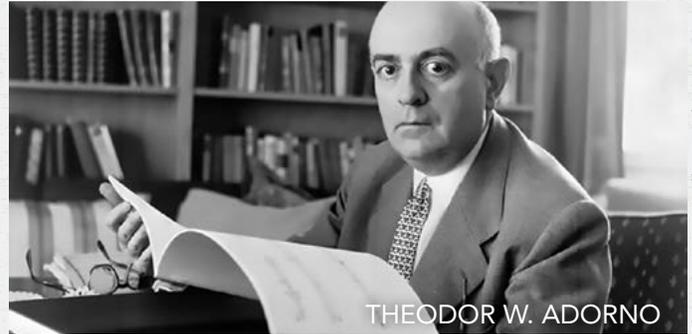


Photo by picture-alliance/akg-images

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APRIL 11, 2019

## JAY BERNSTEIN

Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, The New School for Social Research, New York

*Mind and World in Kant and Adorno: From Wild Beauties to Spiral Jetty*

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APRIL 16, 2019

## HENT DE VRIES

Paulette Goddard Professor of the Humanities, New York University

*On the "Spiritual" in Aesthetic and Metaphysical Experience*

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APRIL 23, 2019

## ROBERT PIPPIN

Evelyn Stefansson Nef Distinguished Service Professor in the Committee on Social Thought, Department of Philosophy, and the College at the University of Chicago

*Adorno, Aesthetic Negativity, and the Problem of Idealism*

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MAY 1, 2019

## MARTIN JAY

Ehrman Professor of History, Emeritus, University of California, Berkeley

*Adorno and the Dialectic of Aesthetic Sublimation*



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# CJS NEWS



### IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the Director . . . .	1
Cover Story . . . . .	2
Faculty Update . . . . .	7
Visitors to CJS . . . . .	8
Donors & Friends of the CJS . .	19
Student News . . . . .	22
CJS Mailbox . . . . .	28
Lectures & Events . . . . .	36

2019 SPRING REVIEW  
 November 2019