

Jewish Studies at Rutgers

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The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life • Department of Jewish Studies

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We Remember Allen Bildner

Allen Bildner and his late wife, **Joan Lebson Bildner**, were the visionaries who founded the Bildner Center at Rutgers in 1996, paving the way for the establishment of the Department of Jewish Studies and for the growth of Jewish life and culture both on campus and in the community. Allen and Joan's shared dedication to public education, social justice, the celebration of cultural diversity, and the reduction of prejudice has informed the Bildner Center's varied programs and educational initiatives since its inception. Students, faculty, and community members from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds continue to be drawn to the Center's programs. The Bildners' hands-on leadership and tremendous generosity through the years were vital to the

➤ See **ALLEN BILDNER** on page 11



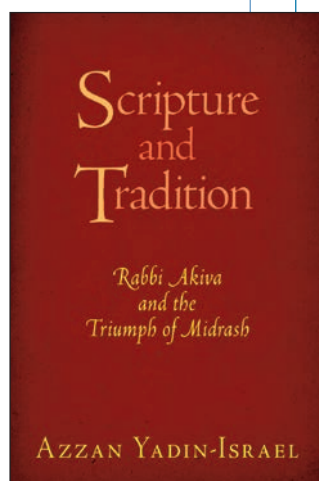
New Book on Rabbinic Literature

Azzan Yadin-Israel, who was recently promoted to full professor of Jewish studies and classics, has published his second book, *Scripture and Tradition: Rabbi Akiva and the Triumph of Midrash* (University of Pennsylvania Press). The volume is part of the Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion series.

Yadin-Israel's work offers a detailed study of the Sifra, the earliest rabbinic commentary on the book of Leviticus. The Sifra is considered a quintessential example of Rabbi Akiva's scriptural school of rabbinic midrash, but though once widely studied, it has received little attention from modern-day scholars until now.

Scripture and Tradition presents a radical rereading of both the Sifra and its authorship, with far-reaching impact on scholarly understanding of rabbinic literature as a whole. Yadin-Israel contends that the Sifra features distinct layers of interpretation that bring dramatically different assumptions to bear on the biblical text. Earlier parts engage Scripture in ways that are in keeping with contemporary rabbinic interpretations, such as the school of Rabbi Ishmael. Later elements, Yadin-Israel asserts, seek to present oral traditions as though they were Scripture-based injunctions.

➤ See **NEW BOOK** on page 4



Director's Desk



I always marvel at the excitement that one experiences in such rare moments of “discovery” involved in academic work. It may happen upon realizing that a word or an expression opens up a new perspective for interpreting a text, in finding a new angle to look at a familiar reality and turn it into an interesting subject for study, or in uncovering a new material in the archive or while doing fieldwork. As a teacher, there is nothing more rewarding than seeing students discover this excitement while they pursue their own research or as they analyze a historical process or discover a common theme running through different texts.

The work of the Bildner Center and the world of scholarship are closely interlinked, expanding this excitement in various venues. Through its diverse programs, the Center opens up the study of Jewish history and culture to various constituencies including Rutgers faculty and students, public and private school teachers, and the general public. The Center draws on the close collaboration with colleagues in Jewish studies and other departments and centers throughout the university, and it is further supported by guest speakers and visiting scholars from American, European, and Israeli universities.

The Center's vitality as a resource, in turn, enhances Rutgers' global outreach and contributes to its firm commitment to public education in the classroom and beyond. The large audiences that the Center's programs attract provide an ongoing testimony to the success of its outreach activities. Moreover, students are encouraged to attend the public programs, including the annual Rutgers Jewish Film Festival. In addition, the scholars, writers, and filmmakers brought to Rutgers by the Center also come to classes to meet and talk with students. We are currently planning special events for students, working with other schools and universitywide programs to expand their impact.

The productive interplay between the Center's programs and teaching has also brought about some creative outcomes that had not been planned. For me, the most recent evidence of this emerged from the intense work of screening and discussing films before and during the Rutgers Jewish Film Festival, inspiring me to develop a new course on Israeli film offered by the Department of Jewish Studies and the Cinema Studies Program. Students watch and discuss as well as research and write about the films, learning about Israeli society through these works. The Rutgers Jewish Film Festival offers an unusual opportunity to see additional new films that may not have been widely screened for American audiences, and it allows students to meet directors or actors in person.

The creation of these links between the various facets of my work has added new moments of discovery in the process of planning the fall semester that have made this work all the more engaging and fun.

—Yael Zerubavel, Director
The Allen and Joan Bildner Center
for the Study of Jewish Life

From the Chair



The scope of Jewish studies ranges not only over millennia and around the globe but also across cultural borders. Central to our department's mission as scholars and teachers of Jewish studies is examining the relations between Jews and their neighbors.

From ancient times to the present, the interactions that Jews have had with other peoples have shaped Jews' political lives, the ways that they worship, the languages that they have spoken, and the cultural practices that have defined their daily lives.

Many of the undergraduate courses offered in the Department of Jewish Studies address these relationships explicitly: “Christians, Pagans, and Jews”; “Jewish-Christian Relations through the Ages”; “Race, Culture, and Politics: Blacks and Jews in America”; “Arab-Israeli Conflict.” But the engagements of Jews with other peoples figure in more courses that our department offers—not only in subjects, such as the Inquisition or the Holocaust, that center on Jewish persecution, but also topics that focus on times and places where Jews and their neighbors have engaged in cultural give-and-take.

A class on the Dead Sea Scrolls, for example, introduces students to a foundational period for both rabbinic Judaism and Christianity. Courses on classical and modern Jewish philosophy explore the encounter of Jewish thinkers with the practice of philosophy and track their interchanges with other philosophers from the Middle Ages to the modern period. “American Jews and the Media” explores both the impact that new communications technologies of the past century have had on American Jews and the different ways that members of this community have figured in the nation's mass media. And a Byrne Seminar for first-year students on the cultural effects of Nazism and Communism examines the personal experiences of both Jews and Poles during World War II and the Cold War. Even in courses about Diaspora Jewish cultures—such as “Sephardic Jewish History” and “The Culture of Yiddish”—students learn that, as distinctive as these cultures are, they are the product of complex, dynamic interactions among Jews and their neighbors.

In addition to crossing cultural boundaries, these Jewish studies courses reach across to other humanities departments and programs in the School of Arts and Sciences. Almost every course the Department of Jewish Studies offers is cross-listed with other departments and interdisciplinary programs, including the departments of American Studies, Art History, Classics, History, Philosophy, Religion, and Women's and Gender Studies; and the Cinema Studies, Comparative Literature, Germanic Languages and Literatures, and Middle Eastern Studies programs. Moreover, our department regularly cross-lists courses originating in other departments that address topics relevant to Jewish studies. Cross-listing our courses helps bring a more diverse group of students into our classrooms, and it also demonstrates to students that there are many possibilities for encountering Jewish studies and for examining Jewish experience from a liberal arts perspective.

—Jeffrey Shandler, Chair
Department of Jewish Studies

Nancy Sinkoff Champions European Studies

Nancy Sinkoff, associate professor of Jewish studies and history, recently marked the end of her first year as director of the **Center for European Studies (CES)** at Rutgers. CES hosts programs that foster a richly nuanced understanding of European history, culture, and contemporary life, and it provides a venue for faculty, visiting scholars, and students to engage in fruitful interdisciplinary study.

"With the world increasingly focused on the East, it is important to remember Europe's global importance," Sinkoff posits. "Moreover, Europe was absolutely central to Jewish history." She values the way the CES platform enables her to bring Europe to the fore, while breaking down academic barriers, because "the more we do with colleagues from other disciplines, the richer our intellectual experiences."

In September 2014, she collaborated with **Rebecca Cypess**, assistant professor of music at the Mason Gross School of the Arts, to create "**Sara Levy's World: Music, Gender, and Judaism in Enlightenment Berlin.**" The multidisciplinary public symposium offered performances, academic panels, and a roundtable discussion with **Christoph Wolff** (Harvard University), a world-renowned scholar of Johann Sebastian Bach.

A daughter of a musical Jewish family and a member of Berlin's enlightened circles, Sara Levy (1761–1854) overcame religious and gender barriers to transform the cultural ideals of her era. She performed on the harpsichord and fortepiano in both private salon concerts and the public venue of a major Berlin musical society, suggesting that elite women of the day used music making to push social boundaries. She also helped catalyze the nineteenth-century Bach revival, illustrating the central role that Jews played in German musical history. The impressive collection of eighteenth-century instrumental music she acquired during her lifetime was exiled to Kiev during the Cold War, then repatriated to Berlin after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Its discovery precipitated renewed interest in Levy as a historical figure.

CES cosponsored the event with Mason Gross, the Bildner Center, the School of Arts and Sciences, and several academic departments in that school, including Jewish studies. The German Academic Exchange Service and the New Jersey Council for the Humanities also provided support.

A reprise of the symposium concert performed by Rebecca Cypess with her musician colleagues took place this past May at New York's Center for Jewish History, with support from the American Society for Jewish Music and the Leo Baeck Institute.

Sinkoff is nearing completion of her book "From Left to



Right: Lucy S. Dawidowicz, the New York Intellectuals, and the Politics of Jewish History," about the prominent Jewish American historian. Through Dawidowicz's life, Sinkoff explores questions about Jewish politics and culture, and the representation of Eastern European Jewry, in a post-Holocaust world.

As a young Yiddishist, Dawidowicz spent a year at the Yiddish Scientific Institute–YIVO in Vilna (now Vilnius), fleeing Europe in late August 1939, but returned after the war as an educational worker for the Joint Distribution Committee. Working with Jewish displaced persons, she also

helped salvage part of YIVO's stolen library, stored in the Offenbach Archival Depot outside Frankfurt. She later spent nearly two decades in the American Jewish Committee's research department and began publishing on the Holocaust

and Eastern European Jewish history. Sinkoff's book plumbs Dawidowicz's extensive archival record, housed at the American Jewish Historical Society, the American Jewish Archives, and YIVO, among other archives.

In March, Sinkoff gave a talk entitled "The Jew and the Prince" at Warsaw's new POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, where she consulted on the development of the "Encounters with Modernity, 1772–1914" gallery. Her lecture explored the unusual friendship between Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski, an admirer of Enlightenment ideals, and Menachem Mendel Lefin, a learned Polish Jew and proponent of the Haskalah movement.

This fall at Rutgers, Sinkoff is teaching the course "History of Jewish Women" and a mini-course entitled "Jewish Historical Fiction." In the spring, she will offer the courses "Jewish Society and Culture II: The Modern Experience" and "Exile under Nazism and Communism." She is also planning a study trip to Poland for students.



Nancy Sinkoff (right) and Rebecca Cypess (also performing above)

"With the world increasingly focused on the East, it is important to remember Europe's global importance. . . . Europe was absolutely central to Jewish history."

Faculty Seminars

The Henry Schwartzman Endowed Faculty Seminar

Natalie Naimark-Goldberg, a research fellow in the Department of Jewish History at Bar-Ilan University, presented a talk, “Away for a Health Cure: German-Jewish Encounters at Central European Spas in the Eighteenth Century.” Scholars and graduate students from numerous disciplines gathered for the seminar, which examined the early stages of a modern phenomenon in which thousands of Jews joined the community of summer vacationers at spas and resorts in Central Europe. Naimark-Goldberg showed how this practice became fashionable with the rise of the bourgeoisie, and how visits to these places symbolized the adoption of the middle-class lifestyle by a Jewish clientele. The spas were often visited for medical reasons, which largely determined the social reality there and in certain cases helped overcome cultural barriers between Jews and non-Jews.

Additional faculty seminars:

- **Aviva Halamish**, Visiting Scholar: “1934: A Year in the Life of the Jewish Community in Palestine (the ‘Yishuv’)”
- **Dorothea Salzer**, University of Potsdam: “A Still Small Voice: The Hebrew Bible for Jewish Children in 18th–19th-Century Germany”

Cosponsored faculty seminars:

- ***Frozen Time, Liquid Memories, 1942–2012***, a film by Dragan Kujundzic. Film screening and lecture by Kujundzic, University of Florida. *Cosponsored with the Cinema Studies Program.*
- **Comparative Literature in Dialogue Biennial Conference: “The People of the Book, People of Books”**
- **The 10th International Symposium on Bilingualism**

Bildner Center Visiting Scholar



Erez Tzfadia, the Israel Institute Visiting Scholar, will spend a year at Rutgers thanks to a grant from the **Israel Institute’s Teaching Fellows Program**. He will be a visiting scholar at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy’s Center for Urban Policy Research in the fall semester and at the Bildner Center for the spring semester. Tzfadia is a senior lecturer and the head of the Department of Administration and Public Policy at Sapir Academic College in Israel. He earned his Ph.D. in geography at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Beersheba, Israel, in 2002, and was a Lady Davis postdoctoral fellow at the Hebrew University in 2003. He coauthored *Rethinking Israeli Space* (Routledge, 2011) and *Israel since 1980* (Cambridge, 2008), and he coedited *Abandoning State—Surveilling State: Social Policy in Israel, 1985–2008* (Sapir and Resling, 2010, in Hebrew). His research interests include the politics of space, militarization and spatial policy, ultra-Orthodox communities in development towns, and the privatization of space. Tzfadia will give a public lecture in December on the mixed city in Israel, sponsored by the Bildner Center, and in the spring semester will teach the course “Israeli Culture” for the Department of Jewish Studies.

► NEW BOOK from page 1

Using this new understanding of the Sifra as his starting point, Yadin-Israel also demonstrates an evolution in the portrayal of Rabbi Akiva. In earlier rabbinic sources, the sage appears as a straightforward midrashist, but here he is transformed into an inspired, prophetic interpreter of Scripture in the Babylonian Talmud. The transformation of Rabbi Akiva is motivated by an ideological shift that puts greater emphasis on scriptural authority and moves away from a focus on oral traditions.

With this insight, Yadin-Israel sheds new light on the nettling question of midrash and oral tradition in rabbinic sources. Through close examination of a difficult text, he also recovers a vital piece of the history of rabbinic thought.



Azzan Yadin-Israel

Yiddish Princess Rocks Yiddish Culture Class

Yiddish Princess, a Yiddish rock band from Brooklyn, performed at Rutgers in March, at the Victoria J. Mastrobuono Theater in New Brunswick. The band, which mixes power pop and hard rock with traditional Yiddish music, reflects the powerful mix of cultures found in Brooklyn and other hipster outposts around the world today. The free concert was open to the public, and it attracted a lively crowd of students, faculty, and community members.

The concert was presented in conjunction with Professor **Jeffrey Shandler's** undergraduate Jewish studies course "**The Culture of Yiddish**," which surveys Yiddish language and culture from the Middle Ages in Europe to contemporary Brooklyn. His scholarship of contemporary Yiddish culture includes groups that break the mold, such as Yiddish Princess.

"The idea of a hard rock Yiddish band may seem surprising to some people, who think of Yiddish as being tied to the past," says Shandler, "but many young musicians are busy creating twenty-first-century Yiddish culture. For me, Yiddish Princess exemplifies contemporary Yiddish hipster culture, which draws on the riches of Yiddish going back generations and energizes it with the most up-to-date sounds and sensibilities."

The performance was followed by a discussion with members of the band, moderated by Shandler. One



enthusiastic student expressed his appreciation for the concert experience by relating it to memories of his own grandmother. "I did not know what to expect, but was pleasantly surprised to hear music that my generation can relate to and Yiddish that I remember from my grandmother."

Sarah Mina Gordon, the band's lead singer and one of its cofounders, has recorded and performed with top Yiddish groups worldwide, including the Klezmatics and Frank London's Klezmer Brass Allstars. She is the daughter of the late Adrienne Cooper, a leader in Yiddish revival and interpretation of Yiddish music. **Michael Winograd**, another cofounder of the band, is a leading Klezmer clarinetist and the group's keyboardist. The band released a self-titled EP in 2010.



Jeffrey Shandler (left) talks with members of Yiddish Princess after the concert.

Israeli Filmmaker Visits Jewish Studies Classes

The opportunity to meet the award-winning Israeli filmmaker **Eran Riklis** drew students, faculty, and film festival supporters to the Bildner Center in March. Riklis chatted with students and festival patrons over falafel sandwiches before showing clips from his films and speaking about how his interest in literature as a college student led to a storied career in filmmaking. Long acquainted with the annual Rutgers Jewish Film Festival, Riklis screened two of his films, *The Syrian Bride* and *Lemon Tree*, at past festivals and submitted his newest venture, *A Borrowed Identity*, for the 2015 festival.

The event was scheduled to coincide with **Orly Moshenberg's** course "**Contemporary Hebrew Literature and Media**" so that students in the class would have the opportunity to meet the filmmaker. Riklis talked about the complications he has encountered in adapting works of literature for the screen and the challenge of depicting the complexities of Israeli identity and society.

Later the same day, Riklis visited the Jewish studies class "**Jerusalem Contested: A City's History from Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives**," taught by Dr. **Elliot Ratzman**. Earlier in the semester, students had watched Riklis's film *Lemon Tree* in anticipation of his class visit. They appreciated the opportunity to meet and talk with the director, whose work so skillfully explores the effects of family values, rituals, and politics on Israeli identity and culture.

Cross-listed with the Department of History and the Middle Eastern Studies Program, "Jerusalem Contested" is designed to engage students with a wide range of sources and help them to develop the critical tools to study the history of one of the world's most enduringly significant and contested cities from multiple perspectives.

The Department of Jewish Studies and the Bildner Center are deeply committed to enriching the student experience by bringing important writers, filmmakers, and other cultural figures to campus. Such experiences are invaluable for students in bridging the gap between their academic studies and a deeper, more experiential understanding of the realities of contemporary Jewish life.

BILDNER CENTER PROGRAMS

Outreach to Teachers

Can you imagine spending your first week of summer vacation in a classroom? Then go one step further and imagine spending that week studying the history and pedagogy of the Holocaust. That's exactly what twenty-five extraordinary middle and high school teachers did at the Bildner Center during the final week of June.

Taught by the program's faculty adviser Joanna Sliwa, an adjunct professor at Rutgers, the mini-course "History of the Holocaust" provided a chronological history that included Jewish life prior to World War I, the emergence of Nazism, World War II and the Final Solution, victim groups, the camps and ghettos, and stories of rescue. After a lunch break and an opportunity to compare notes with fellow teachers, the program continued each day with interactive presentations about various ways to teach this complex subject and

implement the material in the classroom.

The film *The Last Days*, which details five survivors' experiences in Hungary and as produced by Stephen Spielberg, led to a spirited discussion about the power of visual images and the appropriateness of showing graphic photos to students. Colleen Tambuscio, the program's pedagogical consultant, demonstrated a number of innovative ways to incorporate survivor testimony in the classroom, and the teachers participated in a seminar introducing them to the Echoes and Reflections resource guide (a joint project of Yad Vashem, the Shoah Foundation, and the Anti-Defamation League), which all participants received for their classroom use. This unique course provides teachers with the opportunity to discuss a comprehensive teaching approach to the Holocaust with peers.

—Karen Small, Associate Director

Film Festival Celebrates Fifteen Years

When the Bildner Center launched the **Rutgers Jewish Film Festival** in 2000, its eminent goal was to give New Jersey moviegoers the chance to see cutting-edge, critically acclaimed Jewish films in a theater close to home. It also hoped to attract diverse audiences that would become a flourishing film-going community. Now in its sixteenth year, the festival has long achieved both aims, thanks to the support of the **Karma Foundation** and a cadre of generous patrons, as well as the Bildner Center's commitment to keep the festival fresh and exciting by offering films and speakers that feature the many facets of the modern Jewish experience.

The slate of films screened at the 15th annual Rutgers Jewish Film Festival provided insight into a wide array of current and historical events and contemporary social challenges that impact the global Jewish community. The riveting drama *Gett: The Trial of Viviane Amsalem* portrays the struggle of a woman seeking a get, or religious divorce, from a rabbinic court in modern-day Israel. Two stirring French films—*The Art Dealer* and *24 Days*—offer a window into the Jewish experience in France, of particular interest given the significant rise in anti-Semitism there. A dramatic thriller that made its U.S. debut at the festival, *The Art Dealer* examines the issue of art stolen by the Nazis during World War II.

Other festival selections focused on important periods and issues in American life, highlighting Jewish involvement in them. The



Film Festival Advisory Committee with Nancy Spielberg. From left: Karen Small, Steven Gorelick, Nancy Spielberg, Peter Avery, Sharon Karmazin, Leslie Fishbein, Marcel Rozencweig, Yael Zerubavel

documentary *Joachim Prinz: I Shall Not Be Silent* tells the story of the Newark-based rabbi who became a leading figure in the civil rights movement. After the first screening, the audience and panelists—the late Professor **Clement Price** (see page 11), Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor of History and director of the Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience at Rutgers–Newark, and Rabbi **Bennett Miller** of Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple in New Brunswick—discussed issues that remain a source of pain and conflict in the United States. Rabbi Prinz's daughter, **Deborah Prinz**, and a codirector of the film, **Rachel Pasternak**, were special guests at the second screening. **David and Sylvia Steiner** continued their festival support through the sponsorship of this film.

Race and identity were also explored in the documentary *Little White Lie*, after which the filmmaker and subject of the film, **Lacey Schwartz**, fielded questions and talked with the audience about her biracial identity.

Nancy Spielberg and Sharon Karmazin on opening night



Each year, the Rutgers Jewish Film Festival distinguishes itself by offering entertaining, thought-provoking films and engaging discussion for appreciative New Jersey audiences. Contemporary Israeli cinema is an integral part of the effort, bringing to audiences new works and unique Israeli experiences through films like the complex human and political documentary *The Green Prince* and dramas such as *Magic Men*, *Hunting Elephants* and *Quality Balls: The David Steinberg Story* added an element of comic relief. Audiences also enjoyed a delicious taste of the completely unexpected at a screening of the new film *Deli Man* before its release to the general public and in the company of the director, **Erik Anjou**. The film documents the rise of the deli and its staying power as a beloved Jewish communal experience, even as Jewish culture blends further into mainstream American life.

Festival Outreach to Students

The Bildner Center extended its effort to reach new audiences, with a particular focus on students. Because the previous year's free screening of *No Place on Earth* for New Jersey high school students was such a success, the Center made the opportunity available again to students from four public high schools and one Jewish day school. Their exposure to a film about the Holocaust on the wide screen, coupled with a special presentation by **Chris Nicola**, the film's narrator, had enormous impact. As one student from **Bayonne High School** wrote after the screening, "It was an eye-opening event for me and it is something that I will always treasure in my heart."

Rutgers students attended a special showing of *Above and Beyond*, a documentary about the birth of the Israeli air force and volunteer pilots, mostly from America, who fought for Israel in 1948, helping to turn the tide of the war that threatened the existence of the nascent Jewish state. **Adam Rothman**, a New Jersey native who volunteered in the Israeli army after graduating from college, shared his own experience after the screening, which was cosponsored by the Bildner Center and Rutgers Hillel. The film's producer, **Nancy Spielberg**, joined the festival at the East Coast premiere screening on opening night and spoke about the making of the film.



Deborah Prinz, a daughter of Rabbi Joachim Prinz, filmmaker Rachel Pasternak, and Karen Small



Gene Woods's class from Bayonne High School with Chris Nicola (standing at center)

First Audience Choice Awards

The festival's new Audience Choice Awards generated a great deal of buzz, both for the winning titles and for the festival itself, furthering the Bildner Center's goal of fostering meaningful conversations and a sense of community among attendees. The interactive voting process encouraged audience members to select their favorite films of the 2014 festival. Two awards were given: Best Documentary Film to *Above and Beyond* and Best Narrative Film to *24 Days*.



ADDITIONAL PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Sara Levy's World: Music, Gender, and Judaism in Enlightenment Berlin

(see page 3)

Sacred Music Hits the Israeli Pop Charts: Money, Music, and Identity

Galeet Dardashti, Reitman Visiting Scholar, Bildner Center

The Ruth and Alvin Rockoff Annual Lecture Defining Neighbors: Religion, Race, and the Early Zionist-Arab Encounter

Jonathan Gribetz, Princeton University

Hanukkah in America

Dianne Ashton, Rowan University
Supported by the Sagner Family Foundation

The Richard D. Heffner Open Mind Lecture in Communication and Human Values DR. RUTH: Refugee, Scholar, Media Icon, American Sex Therapist

Presented by the School of Arts and Sciences Honors Program and cosponsored by the Bildner Center, among others

BILDNER CENTER PROGRAMS



Guided tours of the Zimmerli art exhibit *Odessa's Second Avant-Garde: City and Myth* included Alexander Freidin's *At The Window*, 1978, oil on canvas.*

How Odessa Inspired a Jewish Renaissance: Lecture and Art Exhibit

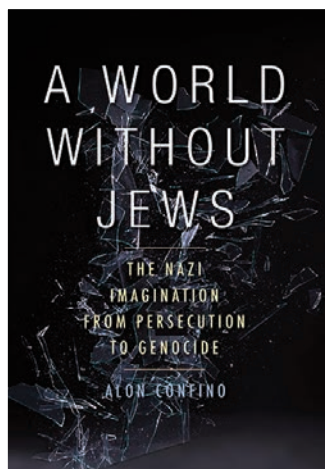
In early 2014, an exciting collaboration was initiated with the **Zimmerli Art Museum** at Rutgers. A curator of Russian art at the museum contacted the Bildner Center about the development of a new exhibition of art from Odessa, which led to plans for a public program related to the importance of the city to Jewish history and culture. Cosponsored by the Bildner Center and the Zimmerli, the program would become the Center's annual **Toby and Herbert Stolzer Endowed Lecture**.

On September 14, 2014, more than 250 people arrived at the Zimmerli Art Museum for the lecture "**Inventing Odessa: Jewish Culture on the Edge of the Russian Empire.**" Free and open to the public, the program was an auspicious kickoff to the Bildner Center's fall slate of programs.

Professor **Olga Litvak**, the Michael and Lisa Leffell Chair in Modern Jewish History at Clark University, gave a talk about how city life in nineteenth-century Odessa inspired a Jewish renaissance that altered the course of Russian-Jewish history. Through the eyes of some of its most famous Jewish residents, Litvak showed how Russian-speaking, secular Jewish Odessa became the incubator of Jewish nationalism, producing a Hebrew revival and a political movement committed to Zionism. Litvak is a leading scholar of Jewish Eastern Europe; her recent books include *Haskalah: The Romantic Movement in Judaism* and *Conscription and the Search for Modern Russian Jewry*. She is currently working on a study of early Russian Zionism.

Holocaust Scholar Alon Confino Visits Rutgers

On April 14, the renowned historian **Alon Confino** came to campus for a special evening that culminated with a public talk about his new book, *A World without Jews: The Nazi Imagination from Persecution to Genocide*. Alumni and current teachers in the **Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education** (MTI) joined guests and faculty for a private



dinner at the Douglass Campus Center before the lecture. Guests included **Egon Berg, Len Littman, Roy Tanzman, Barney and Diane Hoffman, and Naomi Cogan**, program officer at the **Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany**.

Confino, a professor of history at the University of Virginia and Ben-

Gurion University in Israel, spoke to the group about the challenges of teaching about the Holocaust in 2015. **Victoria Kessler**, a teacher at **Somerville High School** and a longtime participant in the MTI, spoke for the other teachers when she described the high-quality instruction she received and the strong peer ties she developed in the teacher education program. In fact, her training resulted in the recent decision by her school district to add the elective course "Human Conscience," developed by Kessler, which incorporates lessons from the Holocaust in teaching models of tolerance.

Later in the evening, about 300 people packed Traves Hall in the Douglass Campus Center to hear Confino deliver the **Raoul Wallenberg Annual Lecture**, funded by **Leon and Toby Cooperman**. Confino moved the focus away from debates over what the average German did or did not know about the Holocaust and explored instead how Germans came to conceive of a Germany without Jews. He traced the stories that the Nazis told themselves about their past and how these narratives led to and legitimized the conclusion that Jews must be eradicated in order for the new Nazi civilization to arise. The lecture provided a thought-provoking contribution to the commemoration of Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom HaShoah).

The Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center

Revisiting Key Events in Holocaust History

In fall 2014, teachers in the **Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education (MTI)** spent the semester reconsidering key events and themes of the Holocaust. As archives have opened in Europe and new information has come to light, scholars have had the opportunity to reexamine historical events using a different lens.

Rutgers associate professor of history **Paul Hanebrink** presented a session about the Holocaust in Hungary and current debates on memory and memorialization there. The Soviet encounter with the Nazi camps was the emphasis of a talk by Rutgers history professor **Jochen Hellbeck**, who is doing groundbreaking work in this area. **Jürgen Matthäus**, a

senior scholar at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, spoke about the Wannsee Conference and the crucial steps leading up to the Final Solution.

The case of Israel Kasztner, who faced postwar condemnation in Israel for negotiating with the Nazi official Adolf Eichmann to save more than a thousand Hungarian Jews, was examined in a session on rescue and moral responsibility. Teachers watched the documentary film *Killing Kasztner* and participated in a discussion with the director, **Gaylen Ross**, and Bildner Center visiting scholar **Aviva Halamish**, professor of Jewish history at the Open University of Israel. One of the highlights of the semester was a trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to meet with curator **Susan Bachrach** and view the new exhibition, *Some Were Neighbors: Collaboration & Complicity in the Holocaust*.

Justice after the Holocaust

Last spring, the MTI took its program in a new direction by exploring the theme of justice as it relates to the Holocaust and other tragedies. In the course of five sessions, invited scholars examined how the memory of the Holocaust has shaped ideas about justice in relation to international law, human rights issues, military intervention to prevent genocide, and property restitution.

The Holocaust and its aftermath served as the primary focus; the late **Sheri Rosenberg**, director of the Cardozo Law Institute in Holocaust and Human Rights at Yeshiva University, spoke about justice for the twenty-first century; **Mark Lewis**, associate professor of history at the College of Staten Island, City University of New York, spoke about the influence of the Holocaust on international law; and Dr. **Brigitte Sion**, of New York University, presented a session on

restitution after the Holocaust.

However, the sessions also encouraged teachers to reflect on how other genocides have influenced the evolution of those issues; **Khatchig Mouradian**, coordinator of the Armenian Genocide Program at the Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights at Rutgers–Newark, addressed the Armenian genocide and its impact on Rafael Lemkin, the Polish Jewish lawyer who coined the word “genocide” in 1944 to describe the Nazi policy of systematic murder of the Jews. **Natasha Zaretsky**, a visiting scholar at the Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights at Rutgers–Newark, presented a session on the struggles for justice, truth, and memory in the wake of the Argentinian genocide. Through presentations by these esteemed experts and an examination of teaching resources, teachers gained a refined understanding of the complexities of achieving justice after genocide.



Participants in the MTI's summer course (see page 6)

The following is adapted from a teacher's thank-you letter:

In my twenty-five years of going to in-service and professional development programs, this is easily one of the best, if not the best program I've seen. For four days, I was able to listen to information and ideas, converse with colleagues, and get excited about how I could translate what I learned into the classroom. So much of what was presented can have a direct impact in my classes—both English and science—and in our Holocaust/genocide education exhibit. Your program is to be commended for the very highest levels of professionalism displayed and education provided.

—John B. Thompson, North Plainfield Middle School



Claims Conference ועידת התביעות
The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany

This educator training project has been supported by a grant from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

Additional support provided by:

The Marjorie and Egon Berg Holocaust Education Fund
and **The Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences**

Donor Support Appreciated

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- **The Marion and Norman Tanzman Charitable Foundation** (see page 11)
- **The Karma Foundation**, led by **Sharon Karmazin** DC'67, SC&I'69, and **Dina Elkins**, for its commitment to Jewish culture through a multiyear grant to the **Rutgers Jewish Film Festival**.
- **Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany** for a matching grant to support the **Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Education**.

Pacesetter Gifts

- **Shelley and Steven Einhorn** RC'70 for sponsoring a film in the **Rutgers Jewish Film Festival**.
- **The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation** for its continued support of the Department of Jewish Studies **Curriculum Enhancement Fund**.
- **Judith and Lee S. Wasserman** for their contribution to the **Deborah S. and Herbert B. Wasserman Endowed Research Award**.

We are grateful for the generosity of all our supporters.

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For more information, contact **Paul Kuznekoff** at 848-932-6457, or visit our website, <http://bildnercenter.rutgers.edu/contribute>.

Announcing the Marion and Norman Tanzman Hall of Jewish Learning

We express our gratitude to the **Marion and Norman Tanzman Charitable Foundation** and to its president, **Jeffries Shein** RC'62, and trustee **Roy Tanzman** RC'73, CLAW'76, for their generous support of the establishment of the **Marion and Norman Tanzman Hall of Jewish Learning** within Miller Hall, adjacent to the Bildner Center. The new hall, endowed in perpetuity by the Tanzman Foundation, will augment Jewish learning and the Bildner Center's educational mission by serving as a dedicated space for Jewish studies classes and for seminars, small conferences, and other activities of the Bildner Center and the Department of Jewish Studies. The newly designed space enhances Rutgers' commitment to remain at the center of learning for people of all faiths and to educate students about the value of diversity as they strive to become future leaders in business, government, and our communities. The formal dedication of the hall is planned for April 2016.



Jeffries Shein and Roy Tanzman

In Memoriam

Ruth Marcus Patt, a beloved member of the Rutgers Jewish Film Festival advisory committee, was an author, historian, and award-winning philanthropist. Born and raised in New Brunswick, she was a graduate of Rutgers' New Jersey College for Women, later Douglass College, and worked as a psychiatric social worker with the Marlboro Psychiatric Hospital. She was deeply involved with Hadassah and Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple in New Brunswick, on whose board of trustees she was one of the first women to serve. She also served the city of New Brunswick, chairing its tercentenary celebration in 1980 and earning the city's Citizen of the Year Award. Along with her twin sister, Adelaide Zagoren, she was a trustee of the Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, which established the Blanche and Irving Laurie Chair in Jewish History at Rutgers. The founder and longtime president of the Jewish Historical Society of Central Jersey, Ruth also wrote several books about Jewish life in New Jersey, including *The Jewish Experience at Rutgers*.

Clement Alexander Price, a dear friend and colleague, was a distinguished professor at Rutgers, a renowned scholar of American History, and the founder of the Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience at Rutgers–Newark, which was renamed in his honor. Price, who made his last public appearance at the Rutgers Jewish Film Festival, was named Newark city historian and chairman of the committee organizing the city's 350th-anniversary celebration, scheduled for 2016. He is remembered not only as a powerful and insightful chronicler of African-American history in Newark and beyond, but also as a charming and compassionate friend to the city and its inhabitants.

► ALLEN BILDNER from page 1

development of Jewish studies at Rutgers, and their foundation's support of a wide variety of initiatives at the university earned them Rutgers' prestigious Medal of Philanthropic Excellence in 1999.

Allen, who died February 5, was the former chair and CEO of Kings Super Markets, a family-owned company for fifty-two years; a past chair of the Food Marketing Institute, the supermarket industry's national

and global trade association; and a founder and past chair of the New Jersey Food Council. In 2002, Allen was named by *Supermarket News* as one of the fifty visionary food industry leaders of the previous fifty years.

Allen was also a respected leader in the Jewish and secular communities, serving on numerous nonprofit as well as for-profit boards, including the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, the Maltz Jupiter Theatre in Florida, Yankees Entertainment and

Sports Network, New Jersey Bell, and Seton Hall University. Allen's community and industry honors include the Dartmouth Alumni Award, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Social Justice Award for Lifetime Achievement from Dartmouth College, the Charles Evans Hughes Humanitarian Award of the National Conference for Community and Justice, and, along with Joan Bildner, honorary doctorates from Bloomfield College and Rowan University.

Joshua Blachorsky: Hooked on Jewish History and Texts

Joshua Blachorsky has been engaged with Jewish texts for much of his life. Growing up in Paramus, he attended Jewish day school, and later, yeshiva in Israel, where he bolstered his fluency in biblical and modern Hebrew, as well as Aramaic.

Josh arrived at Rutgers as a junior. It was during his first semester, while taking the course “Jewish Society and Culture I” (on ancient and medieval periods) with Professor **Gary A. Rendsburg**, the Blanche and Irving Laurie Chair in Jewish History, that Josh encountered a more historical method of interpretation. “Jewish history and texts opened up for me in a way they had never done before,” he recalls. “I was hooked.”

Josh elected to major in history and minor in Jewish studies, and both disciplines are reflected in his history honors thesis, “The Romans and the Early Rabbis.” Under Rendsburg’s guidance, he examined the basis of rabbinic authority using the Mishnah and the Talmud of the Land of Israel as primary sources, matching his findings with evidence from the broader Roman historical narrative and from archaeological discoveries.

This past January, thanks to a **Baruch S. and Pearl W. Seidman Award** in Jewish studies and an **Aresty Undergraduate Research Fellowship** made possible by funds from the Franklin J. Marryott Undergraduate Research Award for a Henry Rutgers Scholars thesis, Josh visited several of the archaeological sites in northern Israel referenced in his thesis. Among them were the catacombs in Beit Shearim, which provided him with critical extra-rabbinic evidence demonstrating the advance of the rabbinic movement, and the synagogue at the archaeological site of Sepphoris, which features an example of the mosaic of particular interest to him.

Rendsburg observes, “Josh tackled a complicated issue. He proposed it articulately, argued it clearly, and defended his findings well. He combines the best of two worlds: a superb knowledge of classical Jewish texts and an acute understanding of history.”

Josh, who served as the Hillel Orthodox community’s education chair and co-president, believes that getting to know his professors shaped his Rutgers experience. As it turned out, those relationships also played a critical role in redirecting his career, facilitating his decision to forgo law school and pursue a doctorate instead. “Jewish studies faculty supported my choice, helping me navigate the complicated process of graduate school applications,” he says.



Joshua Blachorsky and Professor Gary A. Rendsburg

He had the opportunity to assist Rendsburg on several projects, including the reprint of the professor’s book *The Redaction of Genesis* and a website related to the ancient book of Ben Sira. He also worked with Professor **Azzan Yadin-Israel** on the index for his recent book, *Scripture and Tradition*, which gave him insight into the exactitude that academic research demands.

Josh was awarded the **Harold and Betty Perl Award** in Jewish studies upon his graduation from Rutgers in the spring. He is currently pursuing a master’s degree in Jewish studies at the University of Oxford, focusing on the historical transition from the Second Temple Era to rabbinic Judaism. Next fall, he will begin a doctoral program at New York University.

Jewish Studies Graduates 2014–2015

Major

Samara Wright

Minors

Joshua Blachorsky

Talia Friedman

Joshua Herzfeld

Aaron London

Zev Newman

Stephanie Reiter

Jeffrey Thompson

Noah Whittenburg

Ariel Zaksenberg

M.A. Degree

Emily Bernstein

Student Award Recipients, 2015

Sarah Baron '15
Baruch S. and Pearl W. Seidman Award

Joshua Blachorsky '15
Harold and Betty Perl Award

Leila Gordon '17
Ruth Feller Rosenberg Award

Michael Guggenheim '16
Dr. Benjamin F. Glasser and Lillian Glasser Award

Arie Gutman '16
Betty and Julius Gillman Memorial Award

Charles Loder (graduate student)
Maurice Meyer III and Irma Meyer Award

Aaron London '15
Sandra and Stephen M. Greenberg Award

Zev Newman '15
Bernice and Milton I. Luxemburg Award

Lincoln Richman (graduate student)
Rudolph and Mary Solomon Klein Award

AWARDS FOR STUDY IN ISRAEL
Supported by Herbert and Jacqueline Klein

Paulina Banasiak
Irene L. Foster
Jelysa Hernandez
Yushi Wang

Rutgers School of Social Work
Program in Israel, Winter 2015

2015–2016 Academic Year
Anna Gichan, DanceJerusalem,
Hebrew University
Mason Gross School of the Arts

Alon Rabinovich (graduate student)
Technion–Israel Institute of Technology
Graduate School Rutgers–Newark
(Environmental Geology)

For photos and to learn more
about our award winners, visit
JewishStudies.rutgers.edu.

Jewish Studies Year-End Celebration

At the end of every academic year, faculty members look forward to celebrating student accomplishments and graduating seniors. They honor the Jewish studies undergraduate and graduate students who have won awards for academic excellence, as well as students from across the university who have been awarded international travel grants through the Bildner Center and the Department of Jewish Studies.

The event showcases the interdisciplinary nature of Jewish studies and the many opportunities that exist for students throughout Rutgers to receive support. This year, travel awards to Israel were granted to students in social work, environmental geology, and the performing arts.

The program and reception reflect the tight-knit and supportive community that is nurtured in the Jewish studies department. Family members gathered with students, faculty, and staff for this year's celebration, held on May 5 at Brower Commons.

The event included honors theses presentations by graduating seniors **Joshua Blachorsky** (see page 12) and **Aaron London**, an English major and Hebrew language minor, who wrote a thesis entitled "Voice from the Ashes: An Exploration of Witness in Second Generation Holocaust Poetry." Graduate student **Paulina Banasiak** rounded out the program with moving remarks about her experience in the Rutgers School of Social Work's Study Abroad Program in Israel.

The following is adapted from the speech by Paulina Banasiak:

One of the principles that are instilled at the start of the Rutgers social work program is cultural competency. The school doesn't just teach us about being culturally sensitive; it allows us to practice it through its curriculum and study abroad programs.

I was fortunate enough to receive the Herbert and Jacqueline Klein Award for Study in Israel from the Department of Jewish Studies. That award enabled me to visit—no, I didn't just visit: I experienced Israel. We went to the Sea of Galilee, Haifa, Tel Aviv, Eilat, Be'er Sheva, and Jerusalem, to name a few.

We were able to see how Israeli social workers practice with their own diverse and vulnerable populations, such as African refugees, the LGBTQ community, and individuals with disabilities.

At the same time, we had historical and cultural excursions that enabled me to create a connection to Israel. . . . We visited a town called Kiryat Yam, where I met a young girl named Sara who can't wait to serve her country. I asked her if she ever thought about leaving and going abroad; she said she could not imagine doing so. As an immigrant myself, from Poland, I thought that was a little strange. She told me that nowhere will she feel as free and comfortable being Jewish as she does in Israel. That really struck me. . . .

That weight of the past, and unfortunately the present—the fear of scrutiny and discrimination—affects young people such as Sara. As a social worker, I need to go beyond getting rid of my own biases, and attempt to spread cultural competency around me. Being in Israel was inspiring; it turned what I thought was going to be an educational trip into a thought-provoking—perspective-shifting—life lesson.



Paulina Banasiak and Karen Small

FACULTY UPDATES

Ziva Galili's article on Zionism in the Soviet Union from the 1917 revolution to World War II ("Tziyonut Bebrit ha-Mo'atzot mi-Mahapekhat 1917 ad Milkhemet ha-Olam ha-Shniya") was included in a three-volume history of Russia's Jews (*Toldot Yahadut Rusya*), edited by Israel Bartal and published by the Historical Society of Israel and the Zalman Shazar Center, Jerusalem. She presented the following talks: "The Paradox of Soviet Influence: The Case of Kibbutz Hashomer Hatza'ir from the USSR" at the "International Conference for Mediating Israeli History & East European History," Saitama University, Tokyo; "Documenting Socialist and Laborist Zionism in Soviet Russia, 1917–1932" at the "Roundtable on Zionism in the Soviet Union in the 1920s," Institute of History, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow; and "Memory and the Collective: Kibbutz Afikim's Founders in History, Memory, and Fiction," Inter-University Research Forum, Tel Aviv University.

Martha Helfer, with William C. Donahue, organized the Fourth Biennial German Jewish Studies Workshop at Duke University and coedited the volume *Nexus 2: Essays in German Jewish Studies* (Camden House). She also presented the following papers: "Lessing and the Limits of

Enlightenment" at the international symposium "Sara Levy's World: Music, Gender, and Judaism in Enlightenment Berlin," Rutgers University; and "Arachnid Aesthetics: Gotthelf's *The Black Spider*" at the 38th Annual German Studies Association Conference, Kansas City, Missouri. She delivered the talk "Eckbert's Secret: Trauma and Mystery in Ludwig Tieck's German Romantic Tale *Blond Eckbert*, (1797)," Williams College.

Gary A. Rendsburg delivered the following talks: "How Could a Torah Scroll Have Included the Word *Za'atut*?" University of Oxford; "*Za'atut*: Meaning and Derivation, from Qumran to Jerusalem," University of Strasbourg, France; "The Two Building Blocks: Alliteration and Repetition with Variation in the Book of Genesis," Bar-Ilan University; "Septuagint, Synagogue, and Symbiosis: The Jews of Hellenistic Egypt," Lanier Theological Library, Houston; "The Dead Sea Scrolls: The Texts and Their Significance for Early Judaism and Early Christianity," Colgate University; "The Psalms as Hymns in the Temple of Jerusalem," Brigham Young University and Utah State University; and "Eschatology, Messianism, and Apocalypticism in Rabbinic Judaism," Princeton Theological Seminary. He published the following articles in various

monograph collections: "The Psalms as Hymns in the Temple of Jerusalem"; "What We Can Learn about Other Northwest Semitic Dialects from Reading the Bible"; and "Moses the Magician."

Jeffrey Shandler chaired the steering committee for the International Conference on Memory, Media, and Technology, convened by the USC Shoah Foundation, marking the twentieth anniversary of the foundation's Visual History Archive. He served as codirector of the American Academy for Jewish Research's Workshop for Early Career Faculty in Jewish Studies, held at Rutgers (see page 15). He was also invited to join the editorial board of the book series Jewish Cultural Studies and the Academic Advisory Council of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, University of Michigan. He gave the following talks: "Behold the Vanished World: Visions of Pre-War East European Jewish Life in the Wake of the Holocaust," Center for Yiddish Culture, Warsaw; "The Way (Back) to Our Youth: YIVO's Autobiographies of Jewish Adolescents in Interwar Poland," Museum of the City of New York; "Jewish Studies and Material Culture: The Modern and Contemporary Periods," 46th annual Association for Jewish Studies conference, Baltimore; "Seeing as

Believing: Watching Videotaped Interviews with Holocaust Survivors," Jewish Studies Program, Vassar College; "The Anne Frank Phenomenon," Museum of Jewish Heritage, New York; "Images of the Shtetl in Twentieth-Century Yiddish Literature," Museum at Eldridge Street, New York; "Imagining Yiddishland," University of Regensburg; "*A kuk af der farshvundener velt fun mizrekheuropeishn yidntum*" (Looking at the Vanished World of East European Jewry), annual Sholem Aleichem Lecture (in Yiddish), Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich; and "The Visitor's Gaze on East European Jewish Poverty," European Summer University for Jewish Studies, Jewish Museum Hohenems, Austria.

Nancy Sinkoff co-organized a multidisciplinary international symposium, "Sara Levy's World: Music, Gender, and Judaism in Enlightenment Berlin," at Rutgers (see page 3). She gave the introductory lecture for a program, "In Sara Levy's Salon," held by the Leo Baeck Institute, in conjunction with the American Society for Jewish Music, at the Center for Jewish History, New York. She participated in a research workshop at Rutgers on the Universal Races Congress of 1911, a collaborative project of the Center for Race and Ethnicity and the Rutgers British Studies Center, and she presented a paper, "On Modernizing Jews and Their Utopian/Internationalist Impulse in the Early Twentieth Century," which focused on Felix Adler, Israel Zangwill, and L. L. Zamenhof—all of whom attended the Congress—at the culminating symposium. She gave the following lectures: "Dubnow's Other Daughter: Lucy S. Dawidowicz and the Beginnings of Holocaust Research in the United States," University of Haifa School of History Colloquium and the Rabbi Seymour Siegel Memorial Lecture, St. Lawrence University; "*The Golden Tradition*," Lucy S. Dawidowicz (1915–1990) and the Representation of East European Jewish History in Postwar America," Hebrew University and the Zalman

Jewish Studies Faculty, 2015–2016

Core Faculty

Gary A. Rendsburg*
Jeffrey Shandler,
Department Chair
Nancy Sinkoff
Paola Tartakoff
Azzan Yadin-Israel**
Yael Zerubavel,
Bildner Center Director

* Graduate Director

** Undergraduate Director

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Maurice J. Elias
Leslie Fishbein
Ziva Galili
Judith Gerson
David Greenberg
Douglas Greenberg
Paul Hanebrink
Martha Helfer
Michael G. Levine
Phyllis Mack
Barbara Reed
Emma Wasserman

Instructor

Hilit Surowitz-Israel

Visiting Scholar

Erez Tzfadia

Part-time Lecturer

Elliot Ratzman

Language Instructor

Orly Moshenberg,
Hebrew-Language
Coordinator

Shazar Center, Jerusalem. She gave the inaugural lecture, "The Jew and the Prince," in a new series, "Old and New Questions in the History of the Jews," at the POLIN museum. She also prepared a videotaped lecture, "The Centrality of the Polish Language and Polish History to the History of European Jewry," for the symposium "The Polish Language at Columbia: History and Functionality," Columbia University; and "Parallel Lines That Do Not Meet: Teaching Polish and Polish Jewish History," for a workshop on Polish-Jewish studies, Princeton University. She published "Sefer Heshbon ha-Nefesh," in *Enzyklopädie jüdischer Geschichte und Kultur*, vol. 5, edited by Dan Diner (Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler, 2015); She is a recipient of the Lowenstein-Wiener Fellowship of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA). She served as director of the Center for European Studies (see page 3).

Paola Tartakoff was on sabbatical last year working on a new book: "Conversion, Circumcision and Ritual Murder in Medieval Europe." She gave the following talks: "Fear of Conversion to Judaism in Medieval Christian Segregatory Legislation" in Nantes, France, at the final conference of the

Programme RELMIN, a five-year research project on religious minorities in medieval Europe, financed by the European Union; and "Conversos, Inquisitors, and the Problem of Indeterminate Circumcisions" at the annual conference of the American Historical Association in New York. Her review of *Parallel Histories: Muslims and Jews in Inquisitorial Spain*, by James Amelang (Louisiana State University Press, 2013), was published in the Association for Jewish Studies' *AJS Review*.

Azzan Yadin-Israel was promoted to full professor and published a new book, *Scripture and Tradition: Rabbi Akiva and the Triumph of Midrash* (University of Pennsylvania Press) (see page 1). He also published "Some Uses of Deixis in Rabbinic Hebrew" in the *Journal of Semitic Studies*, "Bavli Menahot 29b and the Diminution of the Prophets" in the *Journal of Ancient Judaism*, and a number of entries in *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception* ("Rabbinic Interpretation") and *The Cambridge Dictionary of Ancient Mediterranean Religions* ("Rabbi Akiva," "Rabbi Ishmael," and individual entries on each of the early midrashic collections). He presented the following conference talks: "Contact Linguistics as a

Model for Cultural Exchange: The Case of the Rabbis" at Northwestern University; and "Rabbinic Historiography" at Boston University. He continued to serve as the coeditor of the book series *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism*, and on the advisory board of the *Journal of Ancient Judaism*. He received funding from Rutgers' Centers for Global Advancement and International Affairs toward his English-Romance cognate dictionary.

Yael Zerubavel delivered the following lectures: "Mapping Loss: Place Names, Numbers, and Collective Remembrance in Israeli Culture," at the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and "Numerical Commemoration and Commemorative Place Names: Memory and Forgetting in Israeli Public Space," at a seminar sponsored by the Institute of Contemporary Judaism and the Cherrick Center for the Study of Judaism, Hebrew University, Jerusalem. She also participated in numerous conferences and symposia. She was a panelist for "The Formation of Jewish History: An Academic Research or a National Project?" at the conference "Making History Jewish: The Dialectics of Jewish History in

Eastern Europe and in the Land of Israel," Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Her presentations included "Between Memory and Forgetting" at the symposium "Does Memory Have a Language?," The Kibbutz Movement House, Tel Aviv; and "Yosef Trumpeldor in Israeli Memory: The Transformations of a Public Image" at the conference "From Port Arthur to Japan: Yosef Trumpeldor and Japan," Tel-Hai College, Israel. She participated in an international workshop "Rethinking Peace Studies and Memory Studies," cosponsored by the Japan International Christian University Foundation and the Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights, Rutgers–Newark. She continued to serve on the advisory boards of the academic journals and presses *Israel Studies*, *Israel Studies Review*, *Journal of Israeli History*, *AJS Perspectives*, and *Postscripts: The Journal of Sacred Texts and Contemporary Worlds*; the Rutgers University Press series *Jewish Cultures of the World*; and the Academic Studies Press series *Israel: Society, Culture, and History*. She continued to serve on Rutgers University's Advisory Council on Jewish Student Life and on the New Jersey–Israel Commission of the State of New Jersey.

American Academy for Jewish Research Workshop Held at Rutgers

The American Academy for Jewish Research (AAJR) held its biennial workshop for early career scholars in Jewish studies at the Bildner Center in June. Fourteen recent Ph.D.'s in fields ranging from biblical literature to contemporary American Jewish culture participated in this four-day workshop, which was organized by **Martha Himmelfarb**, William H. Danforth Professor of Religion and director of the Program in Judaic Studies at Princeton University, and **Jeffrey Shandler**, chair of the Department of Jewish Studies at Rutgers. The workshop addressed issues of special concern to Jewish studies scholars during the first years of their careers, including teaching, academic publishing, and community relations. Established in 1920, the AAJR is the oldest organization of Jewish studies scholars in North America.

Jewish Cultures of the World Series



The latest book to appear in the Rutgers University Press series *Jewish Cultures of the World* is *Kabbalistic Revolution: Reimagining Judaism in Medieval Spain* by **Hartley Lachter** of Lehigh University. In this groundbreaking new study, Lachter demonstrates how the set of Jewish mystical teachings known as Kabbalah, often imagined as timeless texts, flourished in a specific time and place, emerging in response to the social prejudices that Jews faced. *Jewish Cultures of the World* is published in association with the **Bildner Center**. This year **Marcy Brink-Danan**, senior lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, joined **Jeffrey Shandler** as coeditor of the series.

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PUBLIC PROGRAMS FALL 2015

***The Raoul Wallenberg Annual Program
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Staging Public Memory***

James E. Young, Univ. of Massachusetts
Amherst
September 30, 7:30 p.m.

***Between Morocco and Israel:
Jewish Memory and Heritage***

Aomar Boum, Univ. of California,
Los Angeles
André Levy, Ben-Gurion Univ. of the Negev
October 11, 3:00 p.m.

*Supported by the Sagner Family Foundation.
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and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies*

Rutgers Jewish Film Festival

October 28–November 8
Ticket sales begin October 1.

***Not in God's Name:
Confronting Religious Violence***

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks
November 16, 7:30 p.m.
*Supported by the Blanche and Irving
Laurie Foundation*
Tickets required for admission.

***The Ruth and Alvin Rockoff Annual Lecture
Living Together Separately:
Israel's Jewish-Arab City***

Erez Tzfadia, Israel Institute Visiting Scholar
December 3, 7:30 p.m.

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