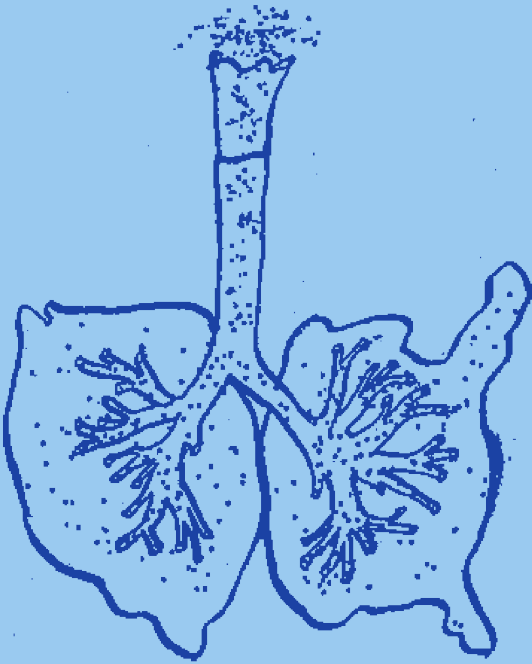




NEWS 2021

INSTITUTE FOR ISRAEL AND JEWISH STUDIES
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

DIRECTORS' LETTER



Dear Friends,

In 1930, a relatively unknown, young, immigrant scholar joined the faculty of Columbia University, to fill the role of a new established position. On its face, it may not sound like a particularly remarkable occasion but this appointment changed the course of how we study Jewish History. This year we celebrate the 90th anniversary of the arrival of Prof. Salo Wittmayer Baron, thanks to the establishment of the first professorship of Jewish History and Culture in the Western Hemisphere. Over the next several decades, Baron built the field of Jewish Studies into a scholarly discipline focused on the history, culture, and religion of the global Jewish experience. In this magazine you'll have the opportunity to learn more about Prof. Baron and how we continue his legacy of rigorous academic and interdisciplinary scholarship through the day-to-day work of the Institute.

The COVID-19 pandemic changed how we work, and it has also served as an impetus for creative adaptation. It made us create different pathways to reach our constituencies: to provide a virtual space for the public to reflect on Israel and Jewish Studies; to support our students as they continue their quests for knowledge unhindered; and to welcome faculty and scholars to inspire the next generation and provide the foundations for inquiry that will galvanize the future of Jewish Studies.

We welcomed Visiting Professor Charles Freilich, a scholar and a former Israeli deputy national security adviser, based in Israel, to teach a course on Israeli national security policy; and we welcome back Gershon Gorenberg, Knapp Adjunct Senior Research Scholar and Adjunct Professor of Journalism, who will again teach a course exploring the role of journalist as historian at the Journalism School this spring.

This year, we also welcomed Dr. Alon Tam as the Rabin-Shvidler Postdoctoral Fellow. Dr. Tam is furthering his own research on Jews in the Islamic world, utilizing Columbia's world-class library and archival resources. He is also offering two classes, which complement our course offerings by giving students a glimpse into modern Jewish life in the Middle East.

As we look ahead, we turn to you for your ongoing support. Please continue to join us for our online events, and share them with your network of friends and family. Please consider making a gift to the Institute to support our students and scholars. Our efforts would not be possible without donors like you.

Watching our students and faculty creatively adapt has been both humbling and invigorating. Although we have been physically separated, nevertheless we are still closely connected and able to collaborate and take our knowledge to new heights. The persistence and strength of our community has been astounding.

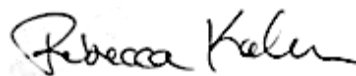
We do hope that in the near future, we can meet with you in person at Kent Hall. But until then, we look forward to virtually meeting you where you are, and wish you and your loved ones continued health in 2021.

To a happy and healthy new year,



Elisheva Carlebach

Co-Director, Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies
Salo Wittmayer Baron Professor of Jewish History,
Culture and Society



Rebecca Kobrin

Co-Director, Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies
Russell and Bettina Knapp Associate Professor of
American Jewish History

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"FROM EXODUS TO THE CORONAVIRUS" TO THE GENESIS PRIZE

In summer 2020, it became clear that the COVID-19 pandemic would continue through at least the fall semester. While there was uncertainty about the modality of classes, **Prof. Clemence Boulouque**, Carl and Bernice Witten Assistant Professor in Jewish and Israel Studies, pivoted and developed a course titled *"From Exodus to the Coronavirus: Scriptures and Narratives of Religious Responses to Epidemics."*

Dr. Michael Berelowitz, an M.A. candidate in Jewish Studies, reflects on this course and his remarkable fall semester.

During the fall semester of 2020, I was fortunate to experience a journey shared with 38 fellow students, as we embarked on an academic journey led by Prof. Clemence Boulouque. The overarching theme of *From Exodus to the Coronavirus: Scriptures and Narratives of Religious Responses to Epidemics* was of the religious responses to epidemics and pandemics to help us "find parallels" and "put current times into perspective."

I say that I was fortunate to participate in this class for several reasons. We were provided a well-considered curricular road-map, with materials ranging from the Talmud to Geoffrey Chaucer to Susan Sontag. This comparative approach led to rich conversations and expanded my view. Through it all, COVID-19 gave us an ever-present epidemic backdrop to the importance and immediacy of our learnings. When we started the semester, there had been over six million confirmed cases in the United States; by the time our semester was over, the number of cases stood at over 20 million. Almost all of us, I am sure, had experienced aspects of the epidemic personally.

My participation in this class added a layer to the diverse voices of our collective educational and public health experience. I am a physician, a specialist in internal medicine now retired from practice. I have personal experience with three epidemics – the polio epidemic of 1956-57 in Central Africa, the US HIV AIDS epidemic from its inception in 1981, and now COVID-19. I brought my personal and professional experiences to the class discussion – highlighting to a degree recent examples of the societal disruption these illnesses created. Part of the course reflected on how fear, discrimination, and persecution have followed epidemics from the earliest times to the present. My teachers and fellow students, in turn, brought a wholly new set of perspectives to my personal and professional experience.



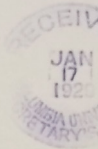
Their different religious, moral, and ethical viewpoints expanded my vantage point. They made my work outside the classroom that much more meaningful and allowed me to reconsider the inexplicable responses that epidemics have evoked – considerations of divine justice, collective guilt and blame, and recrimination.

While enjoying my graduate studies' educational experience, I worked as a consultant to biopharmaceutical companies involved in therapeutic development programs during the semester. Kamada Ltd., based in Rehovot, Israel, was one such company. Kamada has particular expertise in plasma-derived biotherapeutics. As the COVID-19 pandemic progressed, they could pivot their capabilities and resources to meet the needs of seriously ill patients by providing passive immunity. This involved giving patients COVID antibodies initially as convalescent plasma from patients who had recovered from the illness, later with purified immunoglobulin derived from such plasma. In recognition of their efforts, Kamada received an award from the prestigious Genesis Prize Foundation by the President of Israel at a virtual ceremony in January 2021. It seems ironic that research efforts with which I was associated – both at Pfizer, my previous company, as they launched the first COVID vaccine and my most recent colleagues at Kamada – coincided with our class' studies of epidemics over the millennia. In my case, from Exodus to COVID (and the Genesis Prize!)

I am fortunate to have had the privilege of participating in such a course, particularly at this time in our global experience. Perhaps, it is a shame that it came late in my career; most of my medical colleagues and I would have gained tremendously more value from the insights of this course at the outset of our careers, early on in learning to care for our patients.

New York December 16, 1929.

President Nicholas Murray Butler
Columbia University
New York City.



Dear Mr. President:

I feel highly honored by the recommendation of the University Committee to invite me to fill the Chair of Jewish History, Literature and Institutions, and it will give me great pleasure to have the opportunity of meeting you, Mr President, and discussing the whole subject more fully.

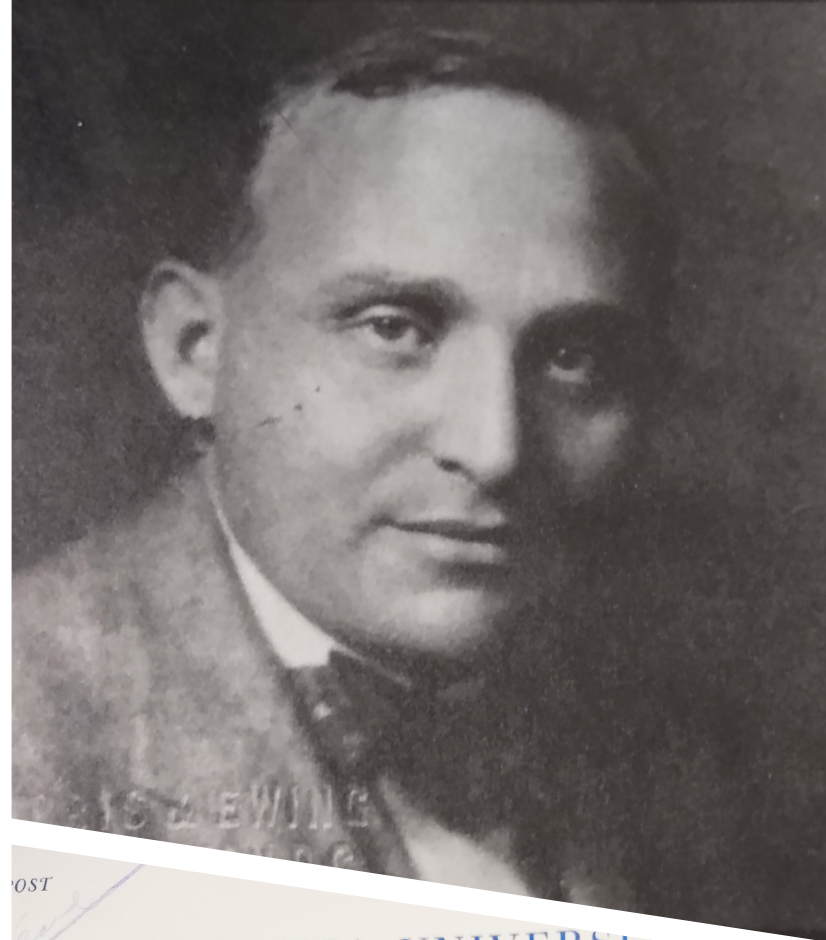
May I request you, sir, to fix the day and hour for this conference at your convenience? A message would reach me either at the Jewish Institute of Religion 40 West 68th Street (Tel. Wab 4050) or at home 310 West 75th Street (Tel. Susquehanna 1113).

Very truly yours

Abraham J. Heschel

CONTRACT

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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
CENTER OF ISRAELI STUDIES

Fellowships and Scholarships
FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1951-1952

Purpose

To prepare a limited number of well qualified students to understand Israel and its people both in its Near Eastern setting and in its historical connection with the Jewish people and with their religion and culture in other countries.

Program of Study

The Center attempts to give prospective specialists (a) a broad and well integrated knowledge of Israel, Judaism and the Near East (b) a command of a well developed specialty in a selected academic discipline as applied to those areas and (c) a broad training in the more general aspects of this selected discipline.

Entrance Requirements

The basic requirement is the A.B. degree from a recognized and accredited institution, preferably with a major in two branches of the social sciences.

Degree

The Center does not in itself offer a degree. Its program must be combined with the program leading to a degree in one of the Departments of the Graduate Faculties. For further information consult the catalogues of the appropriate Faculty or Department.

Tuition

Tuition is charged at the rate of \$20 per point. A normal program consists of fifteen points per semester.

Fellowships, Scholarships and Grants-in-aid

A limited number of fellowships, scholarships and grants-in-aid bearing stipends up to \$1500 are available to students of the Center. Application forms may be secured from the Office of Admissions, Columbia University.

Opening Date

The opening date for the Academic Year 1951-2 is Tuesday, September 25.

Information

Requests for further information should be addressed to: The Center of Israeli Studies,
New York City.

In 2020, we celebrated a historic 90 years since Salo Wittmayer Baron came to Columbia University and 70 years of the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies. This semester we hosted an event with Prof. Bernard Cooperman (University of Maryland) and Dr. Jason Lustig (University of Texas at Austin) who each presented their thoughts on Prof. Baron for the occasion.

THE LIFE AND SCHOLARSHIP OF SALO WITTMAYER BARON

1895 - Salo W. Baron born in Tarnow, a part of Austrian Galicia, a part of former Poland absorbed into the Austro-Hungarian Empire

1914 - Started both secular and Jewish studies in Vienna

1917 - Received a doctorate in philosophy at University of Vienna

1920 - Earned rabbinic ordination from Vienna's modern Israelitisch Theologischen Lehranstalt rabbinical seminary

1922 - Earned doctorate in political science at University of Vienna

1923 - Earned doctorate in law at University of Vienna

1926 - Recruited by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise to teach in New York at the Jewish Institute of Religion

1928 - Baron's seminal essay "Ghetto and Emancipation: Shall we Revise the Traditional View?" published in *Menorah Journal*

1930 - Baron appointed as the inaugural Nathan J. Miller Professor of Jewish History, Literature and Institutions, at Columbia University's Department of History

1933 - Baron worked with bookdealer David Fraenkel to purchase approximately 700 Hebrew and Jewish manuscripts for Columbia University Libraries

1934 - Married Jeannette Meisel, whom he met when she was a graduate student in economics at Columbia

1936 - Baron, with fellow academic Morris R. Cohen, founded the Conference on Jewish Relations (later called the Conference on Jewish Social Studies), which publishes the journal *Jewish Social Studies*

1937 - Ten Schermerhorn Lectures published into three-volume overview of Jewish history. This later grew into his eighteen-volume magnum opus, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*

1944 - Baron and Cohen organized and headed the Commission for Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, which tried to salvage the remains of Jewish cultural artifacts in Europe after the Holocaust

1950 - Baron established the Center for Israel Studies at Columbia, which later expanded to today's Institute

1961 - Baron testified at the trial of Adolf Eichmann about the history of anti-Semitism, and the Jewish community in Europe before World War II

1963 - Retired from teaching, earning the title professor emeritus

1979 - A group of Baron's friends established a chair at Columbia in his honor. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi - one of Baron's students - moved back to Columbia from Harvard to become the first Salo Wittmayer Baron Professor of Jewish History and the director of the Center for Israel and Jewish Studies

1983 - The Barons endowed the Salo and Jeannette Baron Prize in Jewish Studies, which is given every five years to the author of the best dissertation in Jewish Studies throughout the University

1985 - Jeannette Baron dies

1989 - Salo Wittmayer Baron dies

2021 - Baron's students, and their students, continue to lead, teach, and inspire new generations of young scholars to discover the riches of Jewish civilization

On opposite page: All images from the Columbia University Archives. Clockwise from upper right: Photo of Salo Baron (Faculty Photographs, 1938); Center for Israeli Studies: Fellowships and Scholarships (1951-1952), *Columbia Magazine*, 1982 (illustration by Marvin Friedman); Baron to Butler (Central Files, Linda Miller folder)

SALO BARON AND COLUMBIA'S JUDAICA COLLECTIONS

By Michelle Margolis Chesner



Salo Baron's impact on Jewish Studies in America is widely known. Less well known, however, is the impact he made in building the Judaica collection at Columbia University. Soon after Baron's arrival at Columbia, and long before he became known as the founder of Jewish historical studies in the United States, Baron became active in building his home institution's world class Judaica collections. In the annual *Report of the Librarian* for 1933, Baron's goal for Columbia's collection was cited as "a double one: to increase the existing Hebrew collections so as to accumulate a good working library for research students, and to develop...the Library...through the acquisition of manuscripts and rare prints." (Librarian's report, 1933, p.17) He would be very successful in these endeavors—the library's annual reports and internal memoranda regularly show acquisitions funded by Baron's endowment or acquired with his recommendation.

In the early 1930s, Baron was in contact with the Viennese bookdealer, David Fraenkel, regarding an extensive collection of manuscripts available for purchase. The collection was broken down to 18 categories, including "Bible, Books of Cabbala, [sic]. Documents of communities and Jewish history, Jewish law, Karaite Literature, and marriage documents," for approximately 650 manuscripts. After discussion with and approval by the library, Baron acquired the collection for Columbia with funds from the same endowment that had established his Chair in Jewish Studies in 1930.

As soon as the collection arrived, Baron dove right into the manuscripts. By 1937, he had written and published his first article using a manuscript from the new collection (Columbia MS X893.19 B29). Printed in Hebrew in a festschrift (a commemorative volume) honoring Professor Samuel Krauss (a professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary at Vienna), the article was about a dispute that took place in Verona between the Sephardic and Ashkenazic congregations there. The disagreement began when the Sephardic community opened a new synagogue in 1653, even though the community had agreed not to open a new synagogue there some twenty years earlier. Baron's first footnote on the article reveals some of his excitement in being able to cite the new Columbia manuscript (my translation from the Hebrew): "from the collection of manuscripts that were acquired from Rabbi David Fraenkel in the year 1932." It was not general practice to indicate acquisition information when citing primary sources, but clearly Baron was very pleased about this very new collection – as well he should have been!

Baron also wrote extensively on the Jews of Greece, focusing on the significant collection of Greek Jewish material in the Fraenkel archive. Baron certainly recognized the uniqueness and importance of these manuscripts, which documented a community that had not been studied very much (if at all) at that point. Baron published a series of articles describing various aspects of this diverse community. He published a piece in 1942 on *pidyon shevuyin*, the purchase (and thus redemption) of Jewish captives by the Jews of Corfu. The same article, using a *pinkas* (community record book) from the archive, discussed varied communal activities of the Jews in that city (Columbia MS X893.19 P653). Additional articles focused on the communal disputes between the dwindling native Greek Jewish population and the Italian emigre community in Corfu (Columbia MSS X893 Z8 vol. 3 no. 6 and X893.19 D35).

Baron also wrote an article about a prominent Paduan rabbi and scholar named Shemu'el David Luzzatto (*Shadal*), using a manuscript of his lectures as part of a piece on *Shadal's* thoughts on the Revolution of 1848 (Columbia MS X893 L9767).

Baron clearly worked extensively with the Columbia collections for his broader research as well. A passing line in his book *The Jewish Community: Its History and Structure to the American Revolution* (v.2, p. 200) refers to the sale of a 14th century Kabbalistic manuscript “now in the Columbia University Library” (Columbia MS X893 G363) for 26 gold ducats as part of a discussion on the cost of manuscripts in the medieval period.

Of course, Baron’s scholarship used materials far beyond Columbia’s Judaica collection. His impressive oeuvre cites manuscripts from around the world. But his impact on the Columbia collections—both in direct acquisitions and in his publishing—helped to firmly establish the University’s collections as one of the most important in the world to this day.

Bibliography

Baron, Salo, “Sikhsukh kehilot be-veronah ‘al pi teshuvat Rav Mordekhai Bassan be-sof ha-me’ah he-sheva-esreh” in *Sefer ha-yovel le-Profesor Shemu’el Kroyes* (Jerusalem, 1937), 217-254.

Baron, Salo, “Le-toledot ha-halukah u-pidyon ha-shevuym ba-me’ah ha-17”, *American Hebrew Year Book*, 6 (New York, 1942), 167-179.

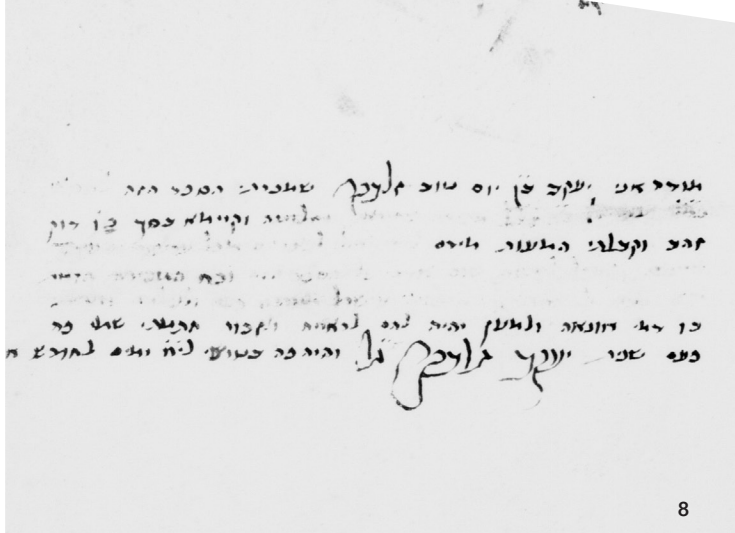
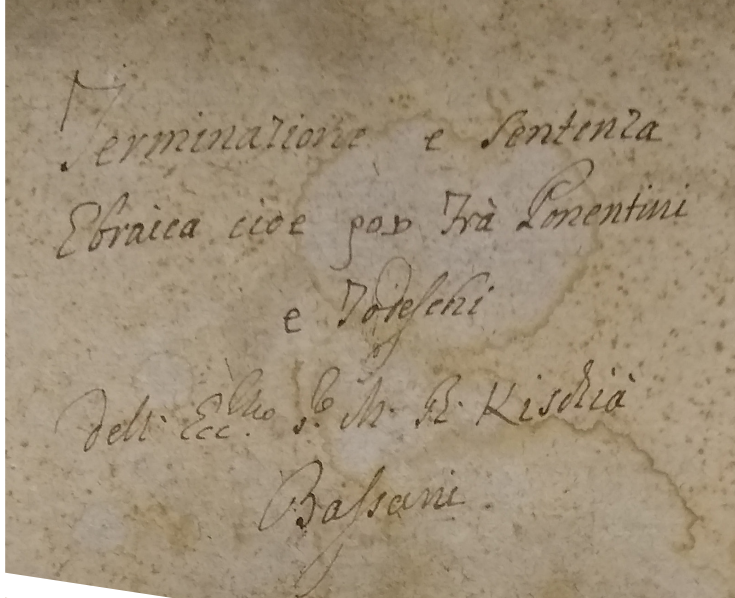
Baron, Salo, *The Jewish Community: Its History and Structure to the American Revolution* (Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1942), v.2, p. 200.

Baron, Salo, “Jewish immigration and Communal conflicts in 17th century Corfu,” *Joshua Starr Memorial volume* (New York, 1953), 169-182.

Baron, Salo, “Shadal ve-ha-ma-hapekhah be-shenot ha-1848-9” in *Sefer Asaf* (Jerusalem: Mossad HaRav Kook, 1953), 44.

Michelle Margolis Chesner is the Norman E. Alexander Jewish Studies Librarian.

Top: *She’elah ‘al sikhsukh ben ashkenazim ve-sefaradim be-Verona bi-shenat 1653* (Italy, 17th century), Columbia MS X893.19 B29. Middle: *Ketubah Corfu* (Corfu, 5495 Adar 1 [1735, Feb. 23]), Columbia MS X893 519998. Bottom: *Kabbalistic Miscellany* (Italy, 1405), Columbia MS X893 G363



COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

- **CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN JEWISH CULTURE**
- **DO YOU READ JEWISH? FROM YIDDISH TO ENGLISH**
- **FROM EXODUS TO THE CORONAVIRUS: SCRIPTURES AND NARRATIVES OF RELIGIOUS RESPONSES TO EPIDEMICS**
- **THE HOLOCAUST AND AMERICAN CULTURE**
- **ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS**
- **ISRAELI NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY, POLICY AND DECISION MAKING: PRIMARY ISSUES AND FUTURE DILEMMAS**
- **JEWISH BOOK CULTURES IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE**
- **JEWS IN THE CITY IN THE ISLAMIC MIDDLE EAST [GLOBAL CORE]**
- **JEWISH CULTURE IN TRANSLATION IN MEDIEVAL IBERIA [GLOBAL CORE]**
- **MODERN JEWISH INTELLECTUAL HISTORY**
- **RELIGION AND PUBLIC LIFE**

OUTLINE OF COURSES

GRADUATE COURSES

History

History 119-120—Ancient Jewish history and literature. 3 points each session. Professor S. BARON.

Tu. and Th. at 2:10. 410 Fayerweather.

This course will embrace a survey of the geographical position of Palestine, its early history, the origin of Israel, the political, economic and social history in the period of the Kings, the Exile and the Second Commonwealth, the condition of the Jews under the Hellenistic, Roman and Persian Empires, Old Testament literature and religion, Apocrypha, Hellenistic literature, Jewish sects, Jewish background of Christianity, Mishnah and Talmud. Students who have not completed *History 119* are admitted to *120*.

[History 129-130—Medieval and modern Jewish history and literature. 3 points each session. Professor S. BARON.

Not given in 1930-1931.]

History 167-168—Social and political history of the Jews during the nineteenth century. 3 points each session. Professor S. BARON.

Tu. and Th. at 3:10. 410 Fayerweather.

An analysis of the principal social, economic and political movements and events in the history of the Jews in Europe and America from the

6

American and French Revolutions to the end of the nineteenth century: population problems and migrations; economic transformations; Jews and modern capitalism; Jews and socialism; the struggle for emancipation; anti-Semitism, assimilation and Jewish nationalism; origins of Zionism; some international attempts to solve the Jewish question. Students who have not completed *History 167* are admitted to *168*.

History 329-330 — Seminar in Jewish history. 3 points each session. Professor S. BARON.

Hours to be arranged.

In 1930-1931 chief attention will be paid to the Hebrew literature in the European Middle Ages, but the course will be open also to students doing research work in other fields of Jewish history, literature, or institutions. Students admitted only with instructor's permission.

Religion

Religion 271-272—Jewish religious institutions (community and family). 3 points each session. Professor S. BARON.

Hours to be arranged.

This course will treat of the origins, the historical developments, and the present-day conditions in different countries of the Jewish communal organizations, the synagogue and other communal institutions; of the history of Jewish marriage and of the position of women and children in Jewish law and social life from biblical times to our own day.

[Religion 273-274 — Jewish religious institutions (school and religious cus-

7



GETTING TO KNOW... SHIMSHON M. DICKER

Columbia College, Major in Psychology and Special Concentration in Jewish Studies, Class of 2021

01

How did you get involved with Israel and Jewish Studies?

At first, I avoided the classes from the IIJS. After attending day school my whole life, and then spending two years studying in Israel, I thought that I already knew a lot about Israel and Jewish Studies. But I was terribly mistaken. In the fall of my sophomore year, I took *Intro to Judaism*, and I was instantly hooked. In my next semester, I took *Medieval Jewish Cultures*, as well as *Modern Jewish Intellectual History*, and I have taken at least one IIJS course per semester ever since.

02

How has Israel and Jewish Studies impacted your college career?

My college experience has been a time of serious introspection and intellectual development. What is unique about IIJS courses is that they enable me to do both. As a Jewish student, navigating my role on campus and in the world at large, I have been deeply impacted by the close study of both the Jews and Judaism of the past and present. This knowledge continually informs me as I perpetually attempt to understand both my Judaism and the world today.

03

Can you share a highlight from your classes with IIJS?

When I think of the impact of IIJS courses on my time in college, a few highlights come to mind. One IIJS course, *Jewish Music in New York*, took me on an adventure to the Breuer's community. The community is named after Rabbi Joseph Breuer, the grandson of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, who continued the German-Jewish traditions of his grandfather's synagogue when he established Kahal Adath Jeshurun synagogue in Upper Manhattan. In order to write a paper on the choir, unique *nusach* (prayer melodies, customs, and texts), and music of the Breuer's community, I attended services at the Breuer's synagogue in Washington Heights, befriended a choir member, interviewed Rabbi Breuer's grandson, and was even asked to join the choir.

Another highlight was my first tour (of many) of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library with Michelle Margolis Chesner, the Norman E. Alexander Jewish Studies Librarian. The tour was part of my *Medieval Jewish Cultures* class, and I had the opportunity to get up close and personal with an 8th-century Talmud fragment. I was amazed that I could touch and read something so old, that has not only profoundly impacted my life, but the lives of Jews for thousands of years.

04

What are your post-college plans?

After college, I plan on making Aliyah to Israel with my wife, Zoe. I hope to join the IDF in a non-combat role, in order to fulfill my duty to the State, as well as aid my integration into Israeli society.

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

ANRUO BAO

Anruo Bao is a sixth year doctoral candidate in Yiddish Studies and comparative literature. She is currently working on her dissertation, which focuses on the literary image of Sabbatai Zevi, the 17th-century Jewish messiah, in Hebrew, Yiddish, and American Jewish literatures. Recent publications include "From Yoshe the Loon to Gimpel the Fool: Wandering Writers' Allegories of the Brothers Singer," in *Yingmei wenxue yanjiu luncong (English and American Literary Studies* [in Chinese]) and "The State of Yiddish Studies in China," co-authored with Dr. Yitzhak Lewis with a separate translation of "A Survey of New Jewish Literature" (translated from Chinese to English) in *In Geveb: A Journal for Yiddish Studies*. She also presented a paper, "To Answer Peretz's Questions: On the Canonization of Dovid Bergelson through Language and Nationalism" at the conference of Zukunft der Sprache, *Zukunft der Nation?: Debatten um jüdische Sprache und Literatur in Kontext von Mehrsprachigkeit und Nationbuilding* at Universität Augsburg in Germany in September 2019. Bao received two fellowships from IJIS over the academic year of 2019-2020. The first fellowship allowed her to attend the conference in Germany. The second fellowship was awarded by IJIS to cover living expenses during the COVID-19 epidemic.

SANDRA CHIRITESCU

Sandra Chiritescu is a seventh year doctoral candidate in Yiddish Studies working on a dissertation tentatively titled *Yiddish Traces in American-Jewish Feminism? English and Yiddish Life-Writing 1970-present*. This year she was a Teaching Scholar Fellow and will be teaching a seminar "Do you read Jewish?": *From Yiddish, to Yinglish, to Yiddler in the US* this spring. She also began serving as the Pedagogy Editor for *In Geveb: A Journal for Yiddish Studies*. The continuous and reliable support of IJIS has been invaluable for her this year when so many other plans and opportunities were upended.

YAKOV ELLENBOGEN

Yakov Ellenbogen is a third year Ph.D. student in Jewish History, with a focus on Jewish cultural history in the medieval period. He is particularly interested in the history of disability in medieval Jewish society, and hopes to conduct further research in that area, framing the experience of disabled people within the communal and intellectual frameworks of the medieval world. In 2020, Yakov received his M.A. from Columbia, after completing a thesis on the responsa of R. Benjamin Slonik, a 16th century Polish scholar who became blind later in life.

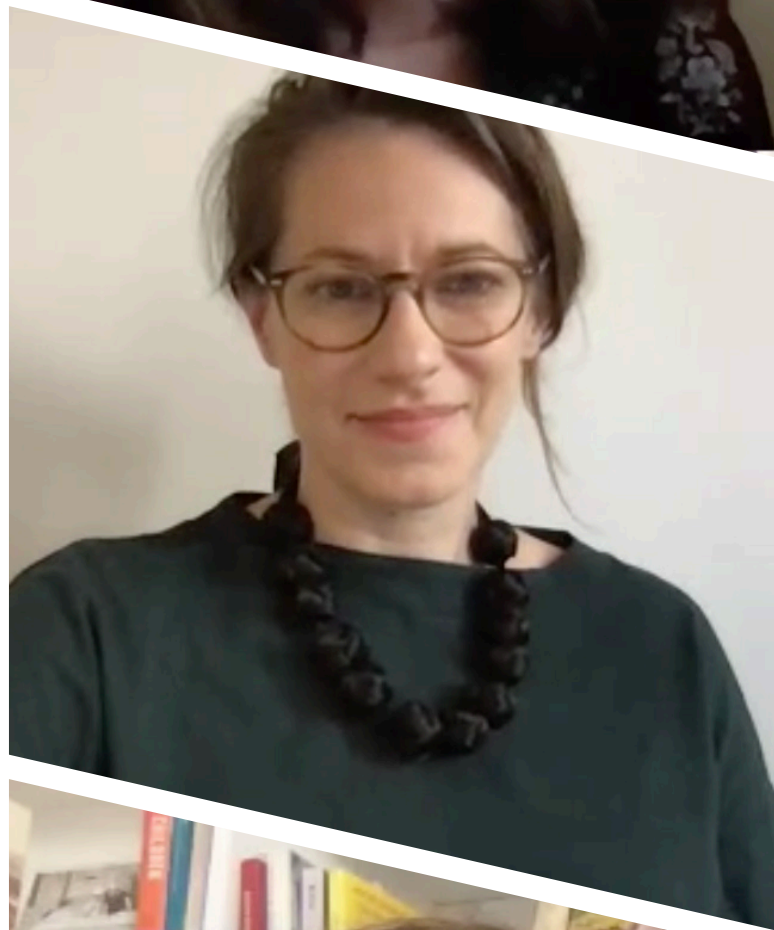
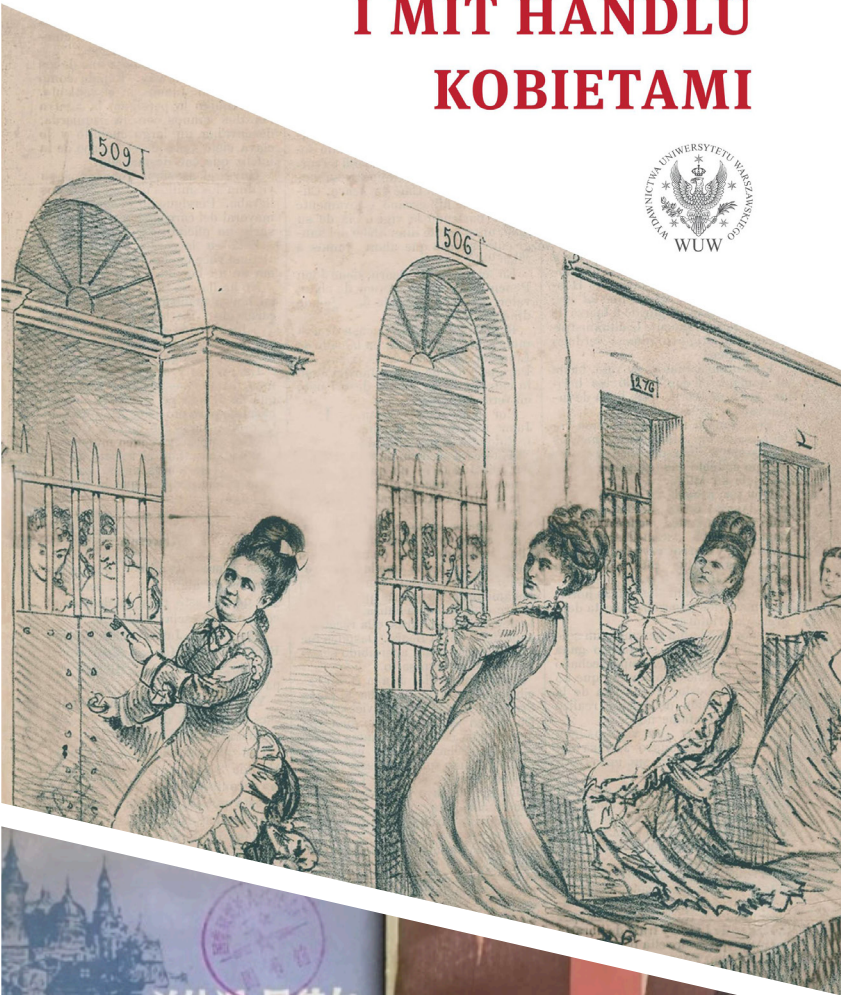
EREZ DEGOLAN

Erez DeGolan is a fifth year doctoral candidate in Religion, focusing on classical rabbinic literature and late antique Mediterranean history. In the past year, Erez has continued to research and write his dissertation, which explores the nexus of joy and power as means for reclaiming "lived experience" as a point of entry into the history, culture, and religion of the ancient rabbis of Roman Palestine (second to fourth centuries CE). In December 2020, Erez presented insights of two chapters of his dissertation at the Society of Biblical Literature and the Association for Jewish Studies' annual conferences. In March 2020, DeGolan, along with Dov Kahane of Jewish Theological Seminary, disseminated the finalized schedule of the annual Ancient Judaism Regional Seminar, which they co-organized. Due to COVID-19 the event was canceled. The 2020 Seminar was awarded the Cross-Institutional Cooperative grant from the American Academy for Jewish Research (AAJR), which will be utilized for the organization of the 2021 Ancient Judaism Regional Seminar. This coming Spring, while continuing to work on his research, DeGolan will be teaching *Introduction to the Talmud I* at JTS as an adjunct professor.

Clockwise from top left: Cover of *Poles, Jews, and the Myth of Trafficking of Women* by Aleksandra Jakubczak; Aleksandra Jakubczak, Prof. Małgorzata Mazurek, and Prof. Rebecca Kobrin discussing this book on Zoom; A collection of Shalom Aleichem's books in Chinese translation, courtesy of Song Lihong.

Aleksandra Jakubczak

POLACY, ŻYDZI I MIT HANDLU Kobietami



GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

RENATE EVERS

Renate Evers is a student in the M.A. Program in Jewish Studies. Her article "The Jewry Oath (More Judaico), Nuremberg, 1484" was published in *The Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* (Oxford University Press) this fall. The idea for this study was developed in fall 2018, during the graduate seminar *The Jewish Book in the Early Modern World*, which was held in the Rare Book Room at Columbia University with Professor Elisheva Carlebach and Michelle Margolis Chesner, the Norman E. Alexander Librarian for Jewish Studies.

JAMIE NADEL

Jamie Nadel is a third year Ph.D. student in the History Department, focused on Russian Jewish history. Last year, he presented at the conference for the Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies, and at the Formation of New Jewish Communities Workshop at Brandeis University on two papers about Russian Jews that migrated to Baku, Azerbaijan at the turn of the century.

ALEKSANDRA JAKUBCZAK

Aleksandra Jakubczak is a fourth year Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History. In 2019-2020, she completed the manuscript of her first monograph – *Poles, Jews and the Myth of Trafficking of Women* – published in Polish by Warsaw Academic Presses in April 2020. This book has been the outcome of several years of archival research and her intellectual work at Columbia University. The monograph has been received with a lot of interest and has already been reviewed by Polish press including *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Jewish monthly *Chidusz*, and on the Polish radio. In addition, she is working on two related projects. She is translating texts from Yiddish, Hebrew, and Russian to Polish that revolve around an infamous Pimp Pogrom in Warsaw in 1905 but touch upon many interesting issues, such as prostitution, the Jewish labor movement/Bund, working-class culture, and Polish-Jewish relations in revolutionary Poland. The sourcebook should appear in print in mid-2021. She is also participating in a research project, "Polish Jews in Latin America," based at Warsaw University. Jakubczak is contributing two articles about Polish-Jewish women migrating to Argentina and interwar Polish authorities' attitude toward the Jewish diaspora in Argentina. She will also be teaching a course on Jews in Eastern Europe at YIVO in the Spring 2021.

ISHAI MISHORY

Ishai Mishory is a fourth year doctoral candidate in the Department of Religion. He has successfully defended his Ph.D. dissertation prospectus on books printed by 15th century Italian-Jewish printer Gershom Soncino, and is intensifying his dissertation research. He is simultaneously working on a bibliographical digital humanities project to be devoted to the printer's work, with guidance from Columbia's Digital Scholarship Division. He was the recipient, over the summer, of the Columbia Institute for Religion and Public Life's Summer Research Fellowship, and the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies' Excellence Award. He is currently quarantining in his apartment in New York City.

EVAN PARKS

Evan Parks is a seventh year doctoral candidate in the department of Germanic Languages. His dissertation *Missed Encounter: Paul Celan at the Edge of Philosophy* examines the reception of Romanian-Jewish German-language postwar poet Paul Celan by three of the 20th century's most prominent thinkers, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Theodor W. Adorno, and Jacques Derrida. The project shows how Celan's poetry informs and pushes back against these thinkers' ideas; it illuminates echoes of Hebrew and Yiddish in Celan's poetry that are variously neglected by the philosophers. Evan is a preceptor for Literature Humanities in the Core Curriculum and a 2020-21 fellow with the Leo Baeck Institute London.

ALEX PEKOV

Alex Pektiv is a fifth year doctoral candidate in Slavic Languages and Comparative Literature. This academic year, he was awarded the Institute's Fromer Fellowship. This fall, he has focused on revising and editing the two finished chapters of his dissertation, *Toward a Transmediterranean Genealogy: Matrilineal Legacies in Sephardi Women Writers from the Former Yugoslavia and the Maghreb*. In his thesis, he studies the contemporary autofictional family novels, crafted in French and Serbian by the women writers of Sephardi origin, born in the French-ruled Maghreb and ex-Yugoslavia, respectively. In December 2020, he presented a thesis chapter at the 52nd Annual Conference of the Association for Jewish Studies. In 2019-2020, he finished his Teaching Fellow/Teaching Assistant duties with Columbia's Department of Slavic Languages. Pektiv is currently the CTL Lead Teaching Fellow in his home department and a Graduate Fellow at the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality (IRWGS). In June 2020, he taught intensive *Intermediate Russian I* course—four hours a day, four days a week via Zoom.

KAT RAICHLEN

Kat Raichlen is a sixth year doctoral candidate in French and Comparative Literature. She is working on her dissertation, *National and Local Belonging: Representations of Twentieth-Century Jewish Migration to France*, which draws on history, literature and film to consider the intersection of national and local belonging in narratives of Jewish immigration. At the 2019 Association for Jewish Studies annual conference, she presented on migration and assimilation in Sarah Kofman's memoir of her childhood during the Nazi Occupation of France. This year she has also developed an undergraduate course on French and Jewish identity and is currently teaching in the Core Curriculum as a preceptor for Literature Humanities.

NOA TSAUSHU

Noa Tsaushu is a fourth year Ph.D. student in Yiddish Studies in the Department of Germanics. After returning from parental leave in Spring 2020, Noa managed to successfully navigate the shift from in-person to online teaching in the Yiddish Program. Her course *Elementary Yiddish I* offered innovative pedagogical methodologies that led students through the material in an intimate and supportive environment. In addition, Tsaushu started to work on her M.Phil. exams, deepening her proficiency in the Yiddish avant-garde and its intersection with Ukrainian and Soviet visual culture. Noa is expected to complete her M.Phil. by Summer 2021 and start working on her dissertation on the Art Section of the Kiev-based organization the Kultur-lige.

MIRIAM SCHULTZ

Miriam Schultz is a seventh year doctoral candidate in Columbia's Yiddish Program and an Association for Jewish Studies Dissertation Completion Fellow. She concluded a very productive three-month Junior Fellowship at the Center of Holocaust Studies of the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich. She is due to complete and defend her dissertation entitled *Keyner iz nit fargesn: Soviet Yiddish Culture and the Holocaust in the Jewish Cold War*. She provides a comprehensive picture of how Soviet Jews reckoned with the Holocaust and the "Great Patriotic War" as interrelated phenomena in Yiddish. She also co-manages the Digital Humanities project, *We Refugees: Digital Archive on Refugeeedom, Past and Present*, which she co-founded in 2019. *We Refugees Archive* focuses on individual micro-histories and the city as a microcosm of refuge and new beginnings in a transhistorical framework. The project grew out of her monograph *Der Beginn des Untergangs* (Berlin, 2016) which studies one of the very first Jewish historical commissions that documented Nazi crimes in occupied Poland between November 1939 and June 1940-1. The commission's work was entirely based on the work and knowledge of Polish Jewish refugees who fled the Nazi invasion of Poland to the Lithuanian capital Vilnius. Her article "The Deepest Self Denies the Face: Polish Jewish Intellectuals and the Birth of the Soviet Marrano" is forthcoming in Summer 2021 in a collected volume on the *History and Memory of Polish Jews in the USSR* with Academic Studies Press.



GETTING TO KNOW... SOLOMON MENGESHA

M.A. Candidate in Jewish Studies

01

How did you get involved with Jewish Studies?

While working with the formerly incarcerated, I decided to continue my education and enrolled in graduate school, where I earned a M.A. in public administration (M.P.A.). After that, I went to work for various private and non-profit organizations. However, in the back of my mind, I remembered two things about my late father. He used to call me Dr. Solomon for as long as I can remember and expected that I, one day, become a Doctor, which did not happen in his lifetime as he died in 2001. Second, I used to see my father, whom we called *Abbe* which is Amharic for father, listening to the AM/FM radio for information about Israel. I did not know why then, but before he died in 2001, I realized how much Israel and the Jewish people meant to him. He never got to see Israel but left me with his passion for Israel and the Jewish people. Now I'm seeking to do the things he wanted to do for himself but could not do in his lifetime. This is what led me to enroll in the Jewish Studies M.A. program at Columbia and research the Beta Israel, in particular. In this regard, Dr. Isabelle Levy (M.A. Program Director), has been a great mentor and superb guide who is gentle yet challenged me to do better throughout my studies on Ethiopian Jews. I was also lucky to have studied with Dr. Debra Glasberg Gail last Spring in the *Jews, Magic, and Science* course, where I fell in love with the work of Isaac Luria, a leading rabbi and Jewish mystic of the 16th century. This course exposed me to Jewish poets, physicians, astronomers, rabbis, and thought leaders in Jewish history, including Maimonides.

02

What are you currently researching and working on?

As part of my M.A., I am currently researching Beta Israel (Ethiopian Jews) material culture. As an outgrowth of my studies, I incorporated a non-profit organization named *Our Story* (Yegna Tariq in Amharic), which seeks to build bridges to share information in real-time through relevant data mining and evaluation, education, cultural interchange, and technology sharing. It aims to help create a local Beta Israel Material Culture Center that houses books, oral tradition, customs, and music. The information will be centered around and embedded within language, faith, education, contact with other communities, and the pursuit survival and development of its unique Jewish identity. *Our Story* aims to bring policy changes in Israel via public opinion, shaped by data-driven information gained when local communities create space, access resources, and allow other stakeholders to be directly or indirectly involved. I am also co-authoring a book about the Beta Israel with the help, guidance, and support of Prof. Yehoshua Frenkel of University of Haifa.

03

What books are you reading now?

My Promised Land by Ari Shavit; *Jews of Arab Lands in Modern Times* by Norman A. Stillman; and *The Accidental Empire* by Gershom Gorenberg*.

04

What are you most looking forward to this spring?

I am looking forward to traveling to California to see my daughter.

05

You're hosting a dinner party – who would you invite from any point in history? And what would you serve?

Rabbi Isaac Luria and Maimonides. I would serve them their favorite meal based on the shopping lists they made back then. Last winter, I took a course on Jewish Material Culture at Bard's Graduate Center with Prof. Miriam Frenkel, a visiting professor from Hebrew University, where she shared these shopping lists.

*Gershom Gorenberg is the Knapp Adjunct Senior Research Scholar and Adjunct Professor of Journalism.

PUBLIC PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Annual Naomi Prawer Kadar Memorial Lecture with Miriam Udel

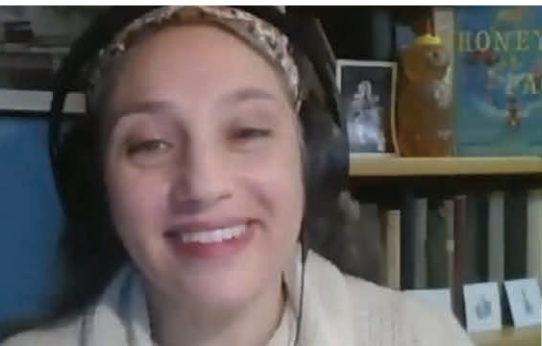
In November 2020, the Institute commemorated the legacy of Naomi Prawer Kadar with a lecture by **Prof. Miriam Udel**, titled *The Storm Within: Yiddish Children's Literature and the "Invention of Childhood,"* followed by a Q&A moderated by **Prof. Jeremy Dauber**. Thank you to the Kadar Family and the Naomi Foundation for their continued partnership in bringing Yiddish language, literature, and culture to our students and the larger community.

Book Talk with Nancy Sinkoff

Columbia alumna **Prof. Nancy Sinkoff** gave a book talk on her latest publication, *From Left to Right: Lucy S. Dawidowicz, the New York Intellectuals, and the Politics of Jewish History*, followed by a discussion with **Prof. Michael Stanislawski**. The book was a winner of the National Jewish Book Award for 2020 in the biography category.

Film@IIJS

While we couldn't be together to screen films, the Institute provided a unique experience to our community, with at-home streaming arranged in advance of virtual Q&A sessions. This semester, Film@IIJS brought *Mossad!* and *Sublet*, two films that have not yet had theatrical releases, followed by Q&A with *Mossad!*'s writer/director **Alon Gur Arye** and actor **Tsahi Halevi** and *Sublet* writer/director **Eytan Fox**. A silver lining is that through Zoom we were able to get a peek into the working environments of the filmmakers.



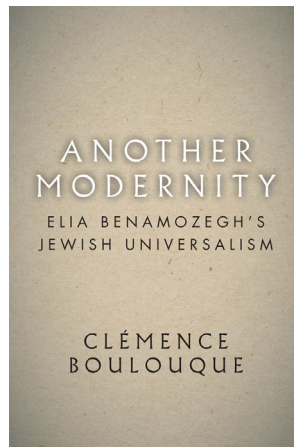
FACULTY NEWS

BETH BERKOWITZ

Beth Berkowitz continues her research at the intersection of Jewish Studies and critical animal studies. As part of her new project on the “animal family” laws of the Torah—do not cook a kid in his mother’s milk; do not slaughter an animal and their child on the same day, etc.—Berkowitz has written “A Species-Inclusive Genealogy of the Jewish Family,” under review in the latest *Jewish Law Annual Volume*; “Interpretation in the Anthropocene: Reading the Animal Family Laws of the Pentateuch,” submitted to the *Annual of the History of Biblical Interpretation*; and “Birds as Dads, Babysitters, and Hats: An ‘Indistinction’ Approach to the Mother Bird Mitzvah” submitted to a special issue of the journal *Worldviews*. Berkowitz will be appearing in two sessions of this year’s Association of Jewish Studies Conference, once as chair of a session on canonical texts in non-canonical contexts, and as a contributor to a session on Talmudic ethics. She will also be participating in a roundtable on Jewish Studies and Critical Animal Studies at this year’s American Academy of Religion meeting, as well as in a conference on the Mishnah hosted at Harvard Law School. She is pleased to be collaborating with Prof. Rebecca Kobrin to fund and supervise Rennert Fund remote student internships for Barnard students at the Jewish Women’s Archive, and to be giving a talk at the Virtual Beit Midrash in Arizona.

CLEMENCE BOULOUQUE

Clemence Boulouque’s newest book, *Another Modernity: Elia Benamozegh’s Jewish Universalism* was published by Stanford University Press in September 2020.



ELISHEVA CARLEBACH

Elisheva Carlebach presented her recently published volume *Confronting Modernity, 1750-1880*, in several webinars, including one with the Center for Jewish History and another with Case Western Reserve University. The volume is the sixth in the Posen Library series; its contents and related programming are available online at www.posenlibrary.com. Her article on the early modern period in Jewish scholarship appeared in the Centennial volume of the American Academy for Jewish Research, and she has reviews forthcoming in *Speculum* and *The Journal of Modern History*. She is working on several projects including a book on the scribal culture of early modern Jews.

REBECCA KOBRIK

Rebecca Kobrin moderated a panel titled “Teaching about Antisemitism” at the annual Association for Jewish Studies conference. She presented a lecture to school educators titled “United States, Refugee Policy, And Antisemitism, 1924-1954”, as part of the Museum of Jewish Heritage: A Living Memorial to the Holocaust’s professional development program for teachers. Her articles on anti-Semitism and immigration were published in *The Washington Post*. In addition, along with Prof. Beth Berkowitz, she is supervising Rennert Fund remote student internships for Barnard students at the Jewish Women’s Archive.

AGNIESZKA LEGUTKO

Agnieszka Legutko created the website *Dybbuk Afterlives*, an online archive in celebration of the centennial of *The Dybbuk, Or Between Two Worlds*, by S. An-sky. In addition, Legutko contributed to a podcast on *Tablet Magazine*.

Top row: Prof. Miriam Udel, Nadav Kadar from the Naomi Foundation, and Prof. Jeremy Dauber; Middle row: Prof. Michael Stanislawski, book cover of *From Left to Right: Lucy S. Dawidowicz, the New York Intellectuals, and the Politics of Jewish History*, Prof. Nancy Sinkoff; Bottom row: Film Series Coordinator Stuart Weinstock, director Alon Gur Arye sharing his home film collection, actor Tsahi Halevi.

GETTING TO KNOW... NAAMA HAREL

Naama Harel is the Hebrew Language Program Coordinator and a Senior Lecturer in Hebrew Studies. She specializes in Modern Hebrew literature, Modern Jewish literature, and Israeli culture, as well as Human/Animal Studies, ecocriticism, and posthumanism. She holds a Ph.D. in Hebrew and Comparative Literature from the University of Haifa (2010). Her book *Kafka's Zoopoetics: Beyond the Human/Animal Barrier* was published by the University of Michigan Press (2020). She has published various scholarly articles on related themes, including compassion for animals (*Tza'ar ba'alei chayim*) in the Hebrew revival literature, metamorphosis narratives, animal fables, anthropomorphism, de-allegorization, humanimal hybridity and liminality, post-speciesist utopias, and species fluidity.



01

How did you get involved with Jewish Studies/Hebrew instruction?

My academic interest has been always focused on human-animal relations. As a graduate student in comparative literature, I looked for relevant Modern literature, and while I haven't particularly looked for Jewish literary works, I kept finding them...Strikingly, it turned out that the human-animal literary canon is largely Jewish, and so many prominent Jewish authors have dealt with questions of human-animal relations. At first, I viewed the body of work I analyze, selected based on its animalistic component, as "incidentally Jewish." But gradually I have delved into this correlation, contextualizing religious notions and socio-historical conditions.

02

What are you currently researching?

My current book project is entitled *The Jew, the Beauty and the Beast*, and it explores the entanglements between Jewishness, gender, and animality in Modernist Hebrew fiction. The concept of the effeminate Jew in Hebrew Modernism has been thoroughly debated, but the prevalent motifs of the animalized Jew and the animalized woman in this canon have been largely overlooked. In this book I seek to fill this lacuna with interdiscursive analysis (including Jewish Studies, Hebrew literature, Gender Studies, and Human-Animal Studies) and close-reading of literary works by seminal authors (such as Shmuel Yosef Agnon, Devorah Baron, Micha Josef Berdyczewski, Yosef Haim Brenner, Uri Nissan Gnessin, and David Vogel).

03

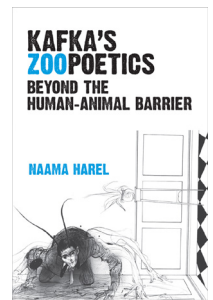
What book are you reading now?

The global pandemic and climate crisis have brought me back to Bernard Malamud's final novel, *God's Grace* (1982). In this dystopian fantasy, Calvin Cohn—a rabbi's son and the sole human survivor of an apocalyptic flood—attempts to rekindle civilization with several apes... It's currently classified as "pleasure reading," but I hope, at some point, to write about this wonderful work.

04

Your latest book Kafka's Zoopoetics: Beyond the Human-Animal Barrier was published last spring. Is there a "humanimality" in Kafka's work that might surprise people?

Kafka's animal stories are typically, and often automatically, read as allegories, and the animals on the literal level are excluded from the interpretive level. The fact that Kafka's animal figures are largely anthropomorphized seems to support the allegorical interpretation. But anthropomorphism doesn't necessarily indicate anthropocentrism. Kafka's humanized animals, alongside his animalized humans, create a "humanimal" space that explores the very human-animal threshold. The fact that the protagonist of Virginia Woolf's novel *Orlando*, for example, abruptly transforms from male to female with no explanation, clearly doesn't mark gender issues as irrelevant to the novel. Similarly, species issues are essential when discussing Gregor Samsa's interspecies transformation in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, regardless of the non-realistic nature of this transformative event.



05

What are you most looking forward to this academic year?

I am particularly looking forward to participate in the forthcoming Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, that will be held virtually this year. I will take part there in a pioneering roundtable on 'Critical Animal Studies and Jewish Studies,' which so closely matches my academic interests. This session will bring together Jewish Studies scholars from various disciplines, who are engaged in human-animal questions, to discuss this topic within a Jewish Studies prism.

06

You're hosting a dinner party – who would you invite from any point in history? And what would you serve?

I would love to invite several prominent vegetarian Jewish authors—including Franz Kafka, Isaac Bashevis Singer, S. Y. Agnon, Devorah Baron, Mordechai Ze'ev Feirerberg, Micha Josef Berdyczewski, and Yosef Haim Brenner—for a vegetarian feast.



GETTING TO KNOW... ALON TAM

Alon Tam is a social and cultural historian of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times, and of that region's Jewish communities. His research interests broadly include urban history, social relations and identities, historical anthropology, culture and politics. Tam received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 2018 with an award-winning dissertation about Cairo's coffeehouses, while his current research focuses on Jewish social identities in twentieth century Cairo. A recent fellow at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies in Philadelphia, Tam presently holds the Rabin-Shvidler Postdoctoral Fellowship in Jewish Studies at Columbia and Fordham Universities.

01

How did you get involved with Jewish Studies?

It was not a straightforward journey – which I am grateful for – but rather coming full circle, and in a sense, a homecoming. My father's family is Jewish-Egyptian, and I grew up with that strong heritage. That was enough to get me interested in Middle East history and culture, and the Jewish community in Egypt. I wrote a high school thesis about its history. But when I got to university, I was taught that good scholars do not research anything remotely close to their personal background, in order to keep their objectivity. So I studied the history and culture of the Islamic Middle East and North Africa as a whole. How times have changed: nowadays one can affirm a strong personal connection to one's field of research. So I have come full circle to study, first Egypt, and then its Jews. Today, I find myself contemplating whether, and how, to bring my own family history into my scholarly research and grappling with my own position as a scholar working on this subject. In any case, I am very excited to be part of a burgeoning scholarly interest in the Jewish communities of that region, one that studies them as part of the societies in which they lived, and not in isolation.

02

You taught a class this fall called “History of Jews in the Islamic World in Modern Times.” Is there a fact or something surprising that people may not know about this topic?

In this class, we took advantage of the many recent and cutting-edge studies that keep coming out about the social history of those Jewish communities, from the ongoing – and increasingly digitized – research on the Cairo Genizah, to new translations of incredible 19th and 20th century original texts. We looked at film, literature, music, photographs, nonfiction, and opinion pieces. We developed the deep understanding that the Jews of the Islamic World were not a monolithic community, and that their experiences varied and changed according to time and place. Above all, we understood how historical events and developments that shaped Islamic societies – “Islamic” here being an umbrella term – also shaped the Jewish communities living within them, and how Jews were, in turn, active agents in those societies. A surprising recent phenomenon is the budding, grass-root fascination of young people in some Islamic countries with the “Jewish part” of their past, and with those ancient Jewish communities that are now all but gone.

03

What are you currently researching?

I wrote my Ph.D. dissertation on the urban institution of Cairo’s coffeehouses, which led me to study the urban history of Cairo’s Jews. What opportunities did urban institutions, such as coffeehouses, or other public spaces, open for the many Jews who lived in that city? How did their use of the urban space, and their concerns as a community, shape the city? How involved were Jews in city politics? How did urban politics, and urban life in general, shape the Jewish community? How did they shape its cultural expression, its practice of Judaism, or its everyday life? These are some of the questions that I am interested in these days.

04

What are you most looking forward to teaching in your spring course?

I am very excited to offer a brand new seminar on *Jews and the City in the Islamic Middle East* – my current field of research. It will be primary-source-driven, and we will base our discussions on all kinds of texts (in translation) written or produced by Jews from different cities in that region. We will also look at films, photographs, and oral testimonies. The course will focus on the post-1800 period through today, and we will discuss the questions I mentioned above, among others. We will also discuss these issues in a comparative light, looking and comparing several cities across the Middle East and North Africa. The course has been approved under the College’s comparative and multidisciplinary ‘Global Core’ curriculum which fulfills a graduation requirement. The seminar will be open to all, no prior background required. I’m excited to have a diverse group of students from multiple backgrounds join.

05

You’re hosting a dinner party – who would you invite from any point in history?

Family that I dearly miss, or that I have barely known. “Ordinary people” with minimal claim to conventional historical “fame.” These are their voices, their everyday lives, that I try to recover in my work. They are my historical heroines and heroes, whose stories I want to hear over dinner.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

JACQUELINE ROSAY

Jacqueline Rosay's story is a tale of languages. Her amazing ability to be fluent in six different tongues helped her: avoid the Nazis as a young girl by living in Switzerland; emigrate from France to the United States at the age of 12 knowing no English; earn a master's degree in French and Romance Philology from Columbia University; and, from Columbia's Teachers College, a master's in applied linguistics and TESOL (Teaching English as a Second Language); and teach languages at the college level for more than 30 years. Now retired for two decades, she is giving back to Columbia through a meaningful gift of retirement funds.

Escaping danger in 1940s France

Jackie was born in Paris in 1938, just as Hitler was beginning his attempted world conquest. French and Yiddish were spoken in her home, and she quickly became fluent in both. By 1943, with France under Nazi control, her family had been in hiding for two years. Her parents knew they had to flee and on the second attempt, the family crossed the border into Switzerland. Her father Ezekiel got work in a hat factory, but 4-year-old Jackie and her mother Tyla were placed in a refugee camp where she picked up Italian. Jackie was to be moved to a children's camp when she turned 5, but her mother convinced the Red Cross to find her a family placement instead—and Jackie went to live with a French-speaking Swiss couple whose adult children were out of the home. She learned German while in school in Switzerland, though her new "mom and dad" would not allow German to be spoken in their house. It would be more than three years before Jackie was reunited with her parents back in France after the war ended—after spending three months in an orphanage when she accidentally got caught up in a crowd of parentless kids when the train she was riding from Switzerland arrived in Paris.

After several years in war-devastated France, her parents were determined to move to the United States—where her uncles sponsored them to come to New York. Jackie was 12 and knew not a word of English, though at this point she spoke four other languages. Many of her junior high classmates in Brooklyn spoke Yiddish, and they helped her learn English quickly.

"They put me in charge of the French teacher, and he improved his French as much as I did my English," Jackie observes.

The cousin with whom they were living saw how bright Jackie was and urged her parents to send her to a top high school. They selected Forest Hills High School in Queens. There she began learning Spanish—her sixth

language. She continued studying Spanish—along with literature and political science—at Queens College and then spent a year at the University of Mexico City to become fluent.

A love of learning and language leads to a career

Back in New York, she had several jobs where she could use her language skills—including translator and airlines reservation agent.

“I wanted to be a doctor, but my mother put the brakes on that idea, giving me three reasons: I was female, I was Jewish, and we didn’t have any money for my education,” Jackie recalls. “With the discrimination back then my options were kind of limited.”

She was determined to go back to school to find her career and was attracted to Columbia’s stellar reputation.

“I just loved school and particularly loved Columbia, and I kept going because of all the scholarships,” Jackie says. “One scholarship required me to teach a French class. It was for adults who were going to school after work. I had a wonderful time, and I decided I wanted to be a teacher.”

With two Columbia M.A. degrees, she taught at several colleges and then took a job at Westchester Community College where she spent 31 years teaching French, Spanish, and English as a Second Language, quickly rising to Chair of the Modern Languages Department.

Reciprocating through retirement

“When I was admitted to grad school at Columbia, I had no money; I borrowed from my parents to pay for my first semester,” recalls Jackie. “Thereafter, the University gave me scholarships. Because of those scholarships, I was able to get two master’s degrees and finish all the coursework for a doctorate with superb courses and instruction. Now I want to reciprocate.”

Jacqueline designated Columbia as a primary beneficiary of her 403(b) plans. Her future gift will provide general support to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences as well as to the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, in memory of her parents who were proud Yiddishists.

She still lives in Westchester County, and has fond memories of the University and even of her somewhat chaotic childhood.

“I was a smart cookie as a child and very resilient,” Jackie says. “I decided at a young age that I had better adapt to the situation, whatever it was. That and my education have served me very, very well.”

If you are interested in making a bequest or other planned giving opportunities, please email iijs@columbia.edu.

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IIJS@Home

Please join us through the semester for fascinating conversations and film screenings. While we can't join in person, we can still bring a slice of Columbia to your home. Visit iijs.columbia.edu to register and for more information.

JANUARY

19 **TUESDAY @ 12:00 PM** **ON TURNING LOCAL SITES INTO GLOBAL SIGHTS: WHEN ZIONIST POLITICS MET PHOTOGRAPHY**

Baron New Voices in Jewish Studies Award

REBEKKA GROSSMANN

In partnership with Fordham University's Center for Jewish Studies

MARCH

15 **MONDAY @ 4:00 PM** **FAMILY AND OTHER FICTIONS IN LATE ANCIENT JEWISH SOCIETY**

Baron New Voices in Jewish Studies Award

PRATIMA GOPALAKRISHNAN

In partnership with Fordham University's Center for Jewish Studies

FEBRUARY

01 **MONDAY @ 12:00 PM** **TRANSCENDING DYSTOPIA: MUSIC, MOBILITY, AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN GERMANY, 1945-1989**

TINA FRÜHAUF

APRIL

05 **MONDAY @ 12:00 PM** **REPORT FROM THE INSIDE OUT: ULTRA-ORTHODOX JOURNALISTS IN A TIME OF COVID**

Conversation with **Avital Chizhik-Goldschmidt, Tali**

Farkash, Jacob Kornbluh and moderated by **Jane Eisner**

In partnership with Columbia University's School of Journalism

17 **WEDNESDAY @ 1:00 PM** **FILM@IIJS: HERE WE ARE**

Q&A with director **Nir Bergman**

and lead actor **Shai Avivi**

20 **TUESDAY @ 1:00 PM** **FILM@IIJS: THE ELECTRIFIERS**

Q&A with writer/lead actor **Zvika Nathan**

and director **Boaz Armoni**

24 **WEDNESDAY @ 4:00 PM** **MULTIPLE IDENTITY POLITICS: THE PASSING NARRATIVES OF DAHN BEN-AMOTZ**

Baron New Voices in Jewish Studies Award

ROY HOLLER

In partnership with Fordham University's Center for Jewish Studies

MAY

11 **TUESDAY @ 12:00 PM** **WAR OF SHADOWS: CODEBREAKERS, SPIES, AND THE SECRET STRUGGLE TO DRIVE THE NAZIS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST**

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