

# Jewish Studies

## at the University of Pennsylvania

NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM, THE HERBERT D. KATZ CENTER FOR ADVANCED JUDAIC STUDIES, AND THE JUDAICA COLLECTIONS AT THE PENN LIBRARIES



Rare Hebrew and Judeo-Persian manuscript from Herat, Afghanistan, 1941-42, arranged according to the order of study of the Mishnah (Seder Zera'im, masekhet ma'aser sheni), with hand colored Persianate decoration. Acquired thanks to the Elis and Ruth Douer Endowment for Sephardic Studies

### JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM

The Jewish Studies Program (JSP) is an interdisciplinary academic group with over twenty faculty members drawn from nine departments that coordinates all courses relating to Jewish Studies in the University. Through this design, the JSP integrates the riches of Jewish culture and history into the humanities and social sciences. Faculty members associated with the Program teach an average of 400 undergraduate students per year. Undergraduates may declare a major or a minor in Jewish Studies. Graduate students in different departments and schools at Penn convene conferences and reading groups within the Jewish Studies Program. Numerous events per year are open to the broader community.

### PENN LIBRARIES

The Penn Libraries is home to a world-class collection of Judaica resources, including manuscripts, rare printed books, the classics, digital content, and cutting-edge scholarship for research and study by Penn faculty, students, visiting scholars, and the public.

### KATZ CENTER

This post-doctoral research institute in the heart of historic Philadelphia enables eighteen to thirty selected scholars, at different stages in their careers and working in a variety of disciplines, to join in intellectual community, united by an annual theme. The highly competitive selection process attracts gifted applicants from North America, Israel, Europe, and Latin America. The weekly seminars in which Katz Center Fellows present their research are also attended by Penn faculty members and graduate students. By presenting their research within the colloquia and lecture series of various Penn departments, Katz Center Fellows broaden awareness of Jewish culture's integral place in the Liberal Arts curriculum.

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# Greetings from the Director, JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM

As I write in December 2022, I ponder the fact that we have all endured the pandemic for almost three years, even as it has waned this fall. We faculty were collectively happy to teach and lead our academic lives fully in person, starting in Fall 2021, and things have felt almost back to the old “normal” again. We conclude the Fall 2022 semester having met our classes and colleagues in person, and look forward to continuing in-person classes and events in Spring 2023. Here, I will recap the highlights of Penn’s Jewish Studies Program in 2021–2022.

Because of University pandemic restrictions, the two annual endowed Jewish Studies lectures of 2021–2022 occurred on Zoom, rather than in person. In November 2021, when international travel restrictions were still in place, Dr. Susan Neiman, Director of the Einstein Forum in Berlin, delivered the 36th annual Alexander Colloquium lecture, “What I Learned After Writing *Learning from the Germans*.” This online event, sponsored by the Joseph Alexander Foundation and the Mackler Family, drew a large audience from all over the United States. Additionally, the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures contributed to this event, which also served as our annual joint Kristallnacht commemoration. In February 2022, Julian E. Zelizer (Princeton University), delivered the 26th annual Silvers Visiting Scholar lecture on “Abraham Joshua Heschel and the Religious Roots of Progressive Politics.”

The Kutchin Seminars in Jewish Studies brought an array of some nine fascinating co-sponsored programs, including three programs on Israel and the Middle East — “Sustainability Practices in the Middle East: Past, Present, and Future,” with the Middle East Center; “Israel After Netanyahu: How Much Will Change? A Panel Discussion,” with participants from Israel and faculty and a graduate student from Penn—Professor Ian Lustick and PhD candidate in Political Science, Nathaniel Shils; and a film screening of *Upheaval, The Journey of Menachem Begin* on November 17, 2021, cosponsored with Cinema Studies and Penn Law Israel Society. The Kutchin Seminars also co-sponsored a graduate student conference, “Online Workshop: Jews, Gender, and Economics in History,” organized by a Penn doctoral candidate in History, then researching at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. In January, 2022, Harry Eli Kashdan, a scholar of food culture and migration in the contemporary Mediterranean, spoke on “How to Read a Cookbook: Cuisine and the Nation in Ottolenghi’s London,” co-sponsored with the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. A highlight for Jewish Studies was co-sponsoring the Katz Center Meyerhoff Lecture by Elisheva Baumgarten: “Legal Knowledge and Everyday Practice in Medieval Ashkenaz,” in March 2022. Three events in March and April 2022, co-sponsored by Jewish Studies and the Department of Russian and East European Studies, as well as others, featured issues brought up by the start of the Russian war in Ukraine: “Yellow Star, Red Star: Holocaust Remembrance after Communism,” with Jelena Subotic; “Poems & Stories by the Cheburashka Collective,” organized by Julia Dasbach, Ph.D. in the Program of Comparative Literature and Theory; and “Discussion of Winter/Spring 2022 ‘Soviet Issue,’ of *Jewish Currents*,” hosted by Penn’s Julia Alekseyeva, a guest editor.

I am grateful to continue working with our colleagues at the Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies and at the Penn Libraries on our shared endeavors.

With best wishes for Spring 2023,

**KATHRYN HELLERSTEIN**

Ruth Meltzer Director, Jewish Studies Program  
Professor of Germanic Studies (Yiddish),  
Department of Francophone, Italian, and Germanic Studies



# Greetings from the Director, KATZ CENTER FOR ADVANCED JUDAIC STUDIES

This last year, the Katz Center was able to bring its fellows back to the center for an in-person experience of seminars and other forms of intellectual exchange. I want to begin by expressing my heart-felt thanks to associate director Natalie Dohrmann for leading the fellowship program while I was away on a research leave, and to the other members of the Katz Center staff for doing such an extraordinary job in making the Katz Center an intellectual home for the fellows after two years of disruption.

2021-22 saw Part 1 of a two-year cycle devoted to the study of Jews and legal culture, a year devoted to the pre-modern period. One of the main goals of the year was to explore law as an important contact zone between Jews and their neighbors, a focus that entailed bringing together scholars from different specializations that would not normally have been in conversation with each other—biblical scholars, rabbinicists, medievalists and scholars of early modern Jewish history. The fellows came together for seminars, conferences, presentations by scholars from other fields and in other ways, and the research they accomplished together will eventually yield a volume to be published by the University of Pennsylvania Press.

The year was an excellent one by any measure, but we will always remember it as well as the year that helped restore intellectual vitality to the center even in the face of a pandemic that refuses to fully relax its grip. If you wish to get a sense of some of what transpired over the year please check out the center's website which now features the recordings of several relevant public programs and series, including fantastic programs that bear on the history of Jewish law and legal codes.

There was too much going on this last year for me to be able to summarize things adequately, but I do want to note one highlight. Thanks to support from the new Roberta and Stanley Bogen visiting scholar program, together with a grant from the Israel Institute, we were able to arrange for one of the fellows, Menachem Ben-Sasson, chancellor of the Hebrew University, to teach a course on creating a constitution in Israel through SAS and the Law School. The course drew on Professor Ben-Sasson's knowledge and unique experience as a Knesset member in charge of the committee appointed to draft a yet to be approved constitution for Israel.

Part 2 of this cycle in 2022-23 carries this venture forward into modern and contemporary times. We are excited to be welcoming a diverse cohort that includes historians, anthropologists, literary scholars, legal scholars, and philosophers, and we are envisioning a year that will contribute to the burgeoning field of Jewish legal studies while also cross-fertilizing between legal studies and the humanities. We are especially delighted that the cohort will include two Penn faculty members, Marc Flandreau and Sigal Ben Porath, whose participation was made possible through support from Penn's School of Arts and Sciences and Education School.

In addition to our fellowship program, the Katz Center was able to move forward with several other programs. Our summer school for graduate students in Jewish Studies begins again in the summer of 2022, now as a partnership with both the Hebrew University (through Professor Elisheva Baumgarten) and the University of Antwerp (through Professor Vivian Liska). This last year, in partnership with Lila Corwin Berman of Temple University, we began an on-line seminar in the study of Jewish philanthropy, and thanks to the center's Klatt Family Director of Public Programs, Dr. Anne Albert, we also continued a treasured partnership with CLAL that allows us to bring rabbis and other Jewish educators and community leaders to learn from our fellows about new developments in academic Jewish Studies.

This last year, we lost a dear member of the Katz Center's advisory board Howard Reiter. In the spring of 2023, thanks to the generosity of Howard's family members and the center's board members, we begin a program in Howard's memory aimed at sharing the riches of Israeli scholarship with the broader university community. Our first speaker will be Barak Medina, rector of the Hebrew University who is widely recognized as a leading scholar of Israeli constitutional law and human rights law. We are extremely grateful that those who loved Howard have chosen to honor his memory, his inexhaustible sense of intellectual curiosity, and his love of Israel in this way. Please see our website for updated details.

As is true every year, we are indebted in everything we do to many people—the donors and supporters of the Katz Center who make the center's activities possible, the center's outstanding staff, the scholars on our advisory board, our partners in Penn's Jewish Studies program and other organizations within and beyond Penn, and an extremely supportive administration in the School of Arts and Sciences.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven Weitzman'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**STEVEN WEITZMAN**

## FALL 2022

Jewish Studies 0100 Elementary Modern Hebrew I  
Jewish Studies 0130 Studies in Ladino  
Jewish Studies 0150 Elementary Biblical Hebrew I  
Jewish Studies 0160 Beginning Yiddish I  
Jewish Studies 0200 Elementary Modern Hebrew II  
Jewish Studies 0300 Intermediate Modern Hebrew III  
Jewish Studies 0303 Introduction to the Bible: The Old Testament  
Jewish Studies 0305 Great Books of Judaism: The Medieval Bookshelf  
Jewish Studies 0320 Modern Hebrew Literature and Culture in Translation  
Jewish Studies 0350 Intermediate Biblical Hebrew I  
Jewish Studies 0360 Intermediate Yiddish I  
Jewish Studies 0400 Intermediate Modern Hebrew IV  
Jewish Studies 1100 Women in Jewish Literature  
Jewish Studies 1130 How to Read the Bible  
Jewish Studies 1310 Introduction to Modern Hebrew Literature: Short Story Reinvented  
Jewish Studies 1610 Medieval and Early Modern Jewry  
Jewish Studies 1710 Jews in the Modern World  
Jewish Studies 2605 The Jewish Book from Scroll to Screen  
Jewish Studies 4305 Spirit and Law  
Jewish Studies 5810 Forms and Purposes of Italian "Autobiographies" in the 20th Century

## SPRING 2023

Jewish Studies 0020 Religions of the West  
Jewish Studies 0100 Elementary Modern Hebrew I  
Jewish Studies 0130 Studies in Ladino  
Jewish Studies 0200 Elementary Modern Hebrew II  
Jewish Studies 0260 Beginning Yiddish II  
Jewish Studies 0300 Intermediate Modern Hebrew III  
Jewish Studies 0320 Modern Hebrew Literature and Culture in Translation  
Jewish Studies 0325 Jewish Mysticism  
Jewish Studies 0330 Jewish Political Thought & Action  
Jewish Studies 0335 Jewish Humor  
Jewish Studies 0400 Intermediate Modern Hebrew IV  
Jewish Studies 0450 Intermediate Biblical Hebrew II  
Jewish Studies 0460 Intermediate Yiddish II  
Jewish Studies 1000 Contemporary Israeli Culture  
Jewish Studies 1110 Jewish American Literature  
Jewish Studies 1120 Translating Cultures: Literature on and in Translation  
Jewish Studies 1200 The Bible in Translation: Exodus  
Jewish Studies 1272 Israel: Law, Religion, and State  
Jewish Studies 1300 Jewish Folklore  
Jewish Studies 1320 The History of God  
Jewish Studies 1610 Medieval & Early Modern Jewry  
Jewish Studies 2225 Religious Conflict and Coexistence in Early Modern Europe  
Jewish Studies 4300 Seminar in Modern Hebrew Literature: The Holocaust in Israeli Film & Literature  
Jewish Studies 5810 Modern/Contemporary Italian Culture

## LANGUAGES

The **Modern Hebrew Language Program** (MHLP) offers five semesters of coursework in Hebrew, stressing cultural and communicative competence. Our language sequence covers four levels, followed by a fifth-semester content course taught in Hebrew. Program faculty have been pioneers in developing web-based instructional materials, which are used for Hebrew instruction at a growing number of institutions throughout North America as well as in Latin America, Europe, and even Israel. Our classes, website, and social-media presence all serve as a portal to contemporary Israeli society and culture. In addition to our general curriculum, students interested in business, economics, medicine, and engineering have the opportunity to acquire specialized knowledge in their field of study, tailored to their respective language level. Our Modern Hebrew courses are dynamic, interactive, fun, and are deeply rooted in Israeli culture and society.

The **Yiddish Language Program** offers four semesters of coursework in Yiddish language to develop students' skills in communication, comprehension, reading, and expression, both oral and written. Kathryn Hellerstein and Alexander Botwinik integrate cultural materials, including songs, literature, journalism, film, theater, and digital resources into the curriculum. A fifth semester course, taught in Yiddish, lets students apply and hone their skills by reading, writing, listening, and speaking about Yiddish literature and culture. Yiddish language study is supplemented by courses that include Yiddish literature and culture in translation.

Penn offers a four-semester sequence of **Biblical Hebrew**. Elementary Biblical Hebrew 1 and 2 guide students through a textbook that teaches the fundamentals. Intermediate Biblical Hebrew 1 and 2 change the focus to literature; students learn grammatical skills by immersion in biblical prose and poetry.

The Jewish Studies Program offers a course in **Ladino**, also known as **Judeo-Spanish**. Taught by visiting lecturer Daisy Braverman, this course broadens Penn's instruction in Jewish languages and links our Program to Penn's Language Center.

# Celebrating JSP Students

## STUDENT RESEARCH AWARDS

### Brenner Family Fund

**Rudy Gerson** (MFA) for research of sites of Jewish farming, land-based ancestral practices, and Jewish environmental stewardship.

**Shachar Levanon** (NELC, PhD Candidate) for research in archives and libraries in NYC  
**Isaac Tanner, (C'24)** for his presentation with Dr. David Weiss (Department of Psychology) at the 4th Annual Medicine and Ethics Conference

### Goldfein Scholarship Fund

**Reut Yarnitsky** (School of Design, PhD Candidate) for research on the meaning and experience of place in Jewish traditions

**Benjamin Notis** (NELC, PhD Candidate) for research in Israel on Medieval Hebrew Complaint Poetry in 11th and 12th centuries in Islamic Spain

**Hilah Kohen** (COML, PhD Candidate) for research in Turkey on Choosing Jewish Mother Tongues in the 20th Century

### Louis Schwartz and Elaine Friedman Schwartz Memorial Award

**Itay Blumenzweig** (COML, PhD Candidate) for his presentation at the World Congress of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem on Rabbi Joseph Karo.

**Miriam Shah, (C'23)** for History department thesis research in France with Remi Brague on the concept of "intention" in Islamic medieval Christian, and primarily Judaic Law, and its relationship to myth and nationalism

**Adam Sax** (COML, PhD Candidate) for archival research

**Reut Yarnitsky** (School of Design, PhD Candidate) for research on translation of cultures

## UNDERGRADUATE SENIOR RESEARCH

Three seniors, **Elyakim Engelmann-Suissa, C'22**; **Ayelet Rubenstein, C'22**; and **Samuel Strickberger, C'22**, presented their research to faculty, family, and friends in an online event on April 27, 2022, to celebrate undergraduate research projects in Jewish studies.

## PRIZES AND HONORS

Congratulations to our Class of 2022 students:

### The Samuel and Esther Goldin Endowment Award:

First Prize: **Elyakim Engelmann-Suissa**

Second Prize: **Ayelet Rubenstein**

Honorable Mention: **Samuel Strickberger**

**The Moshe Greenberg Prize for Excellence in Hebrew:** **Joseph Steinberg**

**The Workmen's Circle/Arbeiter Ring Prize in Yiddish Studies:** **Micah Weitzman**

**The Charlotte Yiddish Institute Book Prizes:** **Amy J. Kaplan, Sam Mendelsohn, Adam Rose, Jonathan Zisblatt, Tyler Kliem, Judah Nouriyelian, Mathias Salmon, and Micah Weitzman**

**The Judah Goldin Memorial Prize for Excellence in Advanced Hebrew Studies:** **Elyakim Engelmann-Suissa**

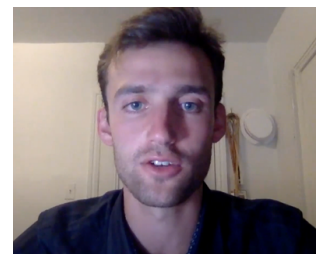
The Jewish Studies Program encourages undergraduate and graduate research by offering research grants and fellowships through the Philip E. Goldfein Scholarship Fund, supported by the generosity of **Phillip Goldfein, Robert Goldfein, and Doris Goldfein Cohen**; the Raymond and Ruth Brenner Awards in Jewish Studies, supported by the generosity of **Raymond and Ruth Brenner**, their sons, **Adam Brenner, W'01; Gregory Brenner, W'99;** and **Jason Brenner, W'05;** and the Louis Schwartz and Elaine Friedman Schwartz Memorial Fund, supported by the generosity of **James E. Schwartz, C'78, and Susan L. Cohen**. These funds are available for either travel or research subsidies. Application cycles take place both semesters, usually at the same time as the application for CURF funds and other undergraduate research competitions.



Elyakim Engelmann-Suissa, C'22



Ayelet Rubenstein, C'22



Samuel Strickberger, C'22

# Undergraduates

## INTERNS

The Jewish Studies Meltzer Internship Program enables students to explore the intellectual dimensions of Jewish studies outside the classroom. During the semester, interns develop and organize an event for students. Programs might include a discussion with a scholar, a panel discussion, a performance, or any other event that raises issues relevant to Jewish studies. The Meltzer Faculty Advisor and Grad Coordinator will assist with conceptualization and with clarification of financial and technical needs. Each intern has a programming budget for the Meltzer event, and each receives a research stipend.

PENN'S MELTZER PROGRAM IN JEWISH STUDIES PRESENTS

### ANTISEMITISM ANTI-ZIONISM & THE MEDIA

WITH PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER  
OPINION & EDITORIAL WRITER

## ABRAHAM GUTMAN

WEDNESDAY APRIL 27TH  
7PM  
PENN LGBT CENTER  
3907 SPRUCE ST  
GOODHAND ROOM  
DINNER PROVIDED

Register at:  
[bit.ly/Penn-Gutman](https://bit.ly/Penn-Gutman).  
live stream available.  
all are welcome.



LECTURE WITH RABBI  
DR. EDWARD REICHMAN

### From Ancestry DNA to Pig Heart Transplants: Jewish Medical Ethics Update 2022

Rabbi Dr. Edward Reichman, MD, is a Professor of Emergency Medicine as well as a Professor in the Division of Education and Bioethics at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He received his rabbinic ordination from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University and writes and lectures internationally in the field of Jewish medical ethics. A graduate of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Rabbi Dr. Reichman is an Attending Physician in Montefiore Medical Center's Emergency Medicine Department.

APRIL 26TH @ 8:30 PM

PIZZA WILL BE SERVED



PRESENTED BY THE MELTZER INTERNSHIP  
PROGRAM IN JEWISH STUDIES

Under the direction of Faculty Advisor, **Joseph Benatov**, and Graduate Student Coordinator, **Alexandra (Sasha) Zborovskiy** (HIST), in 2021-2022, two students chose to initiate, organize, and produce academic events as Jewish Studies Meltzer Interns:

**Isaac Tanner, C'24**, organized an event with **Rabbi Dr. Edward Reichman** (Einstein College of Medicine), entitled, "From Ancestry DNA to Pig Heart Transplants: Jewish Medical Ethics Update Spring 2022," on April 26, 2022.

**Benjamin Moss-Horwitz, C'23**, organized a talk with **Abraham Gutman** (*Philadelphia Inquirer*) entitled, "Antisemitism, Anti-Zionism and the Media," on April 27, 2022.



Isaac Tanner's event with Rabbi Dr. Edward Reichman.



Benjamin Moss-Horwitz's event with Abraham Gutman.

# Graduate Students

## FALK FELLOWSHIP

The Jewish Studies Program administers the Margaret Schoenfeld Falk Fellowship, the only graduate fellowship awarded directly by the Jewish Studies Program. Because the cost of graduate school has risen sharply, fellowship support has become virtually indispensable, both for supporting graduate students once they enter a program, and for recruiting the very best candidates. The Falk Fellowship was endowed by **Edward Falk, W'66**, in memory of his mother, Margaret Schoenfeld Falk, to support graduate students in the School of Arts & Sciences who work specifically in an area of Jewish Studies. The Falk Fellowship is one of the most valuable elements of the Jewish Studies Program at Penn. Because of Ed's foresight in establishing the Fellowship, Penn is able to ensure the future of Jewish Studies in America and to educate and produce the scholars and teachers of tomorrow.

Continuing Falk Fellows in the Jewish Studies Program are: (2022-2023)

*Fifth-year students:* **Itay Blumenzweig** (COML), **Laura Eckstein** (HIST), **Shachar Levanon** (NELC), **Noa Nikolsky** (ENGL), and **Ben Notis** (NELC)

*Fourth-year student:* **Jeremy Steinberg** (RELS)

*Third-year student:* **Hilah Kohen** (COML)

*Second-year students:* **Oded Even-Or** (COML) and **Alexandra (Sasha) Zborovsky** (HIST)

*First-year students:* **Asaf Roth** (COML) and **Kendra Berry** [*deferred*] (FIGS)

We welcome first-year student Asaf Roth to Penn.

Originally from Ashdod, Israel, **Asaf Roth** holds a BA and MA in comparative literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As a PhD candidate at UPenn's Comparative Literature Program, he hopes to investigate queer notions of (anti)sociality across Israeli, French and American cultures and literatures.



Asaf Roth, Falk Fellow

## GRADUATE STUDENT COLLOQUIUM



Josef Nothmann (Penn)

Dr. **Rebecca Kobrin** (Russell and Bettina Knapp Associate Professor of American Jewish History; Director, Institute for Jewish Studies) delivered the keynote address at a conference, October 4-5, 2021, on the topic, "Jews, Gender and Economies in History." The virtual event was hosted by the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies and co-sponsored by the Jewish Studies Program at the University of Pennsylvania, and organized by **Josef Nothmann** (History, PhD candidate) and **Angelina Palmén** (Faculty of Oriental Studies (Hebrew and Jewish Studies), University of Oxford).

# Graduate Students

## GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS 2021-2022

**Laura Newman Eckstein** is a Ph.D. candidate in History. She was a Price Lab Mellon mid-doctoral fellow during 2021-2022. Her studies focus on Jews in the Atlantic world (17th-19th c.) with specific interests in trade networks, material culture, book history, gender, race and digital humanities methodologies. Eckstein also consults for Judaica digital humanities projects including the Posen Library. Prior to her doctoral studies, she worked as the Judaica Digital Humanities Coordinator at the University of Pennsylvania Libraries. Eckstein is also the recipient of a John B. Hurford Arts and Humanities Center Summer Research Fellowship. This past summer she worked on forthcoming publications and made progress on her dissertation.

**Hilah Kohen's** research asks how language choice in literature became a matter of globally interconnected discussion in the 20th c. She follows literary circuits whose legacies still shape linguistic hegemony and resistance to it—from language-building as nation-building in Modern Hebrew, Modern Turkish, and modernized Soviet languages to decolonial language choices in the Afro-Asian Writers Association. During her second year as a PhD student in Comparative Literature, she worked with David Kurkovskiy (UC Berkeley) to organize the International Task Force for Displaced Scholars and open emergency academic positions amid Russia's escalating invasion of Ukraine. In collaboration with Valeriya Nakshun, she also led classes for heritage speakers of the Kavkazi Jewish language Juhuri. Kohen's presentations included a lecture at the University of Arizona on audience participation in marginalized Post-Soviet media. Her literary translations appeared in *Gulf Coast*, *SLICE*, and *Words Without Borders*.

During the Summer and Fall of 2021, **Shachar Levanon** prepared for the candidacy exams in the Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations department and wrote a dissertation proposal. The exams and the proposal helped him with conceptualizing his dissertation project, which explores urbanism, multilingualism and cultural identity in American literature written in Hebrew, Yiddish, and English. In 2021-2022, Levanon visited archives and libraries in New York City and obtained valuable materials. He also participated in a graduate seminar about modern Jewish history led by historians Beth Wenger and Benjamin Nathans. Levanon's current focus is writing about Jewish poets in New York City during the interbellum period.

**Ben Notis** began the season taking his qualifying exams and writing his proposal. With generous help from the Jewish Studies Goldfein Research Award, he traveled to Israel to begin dissertation work at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and continue his education in medieval Hebrew poetry with his host professor. At the summer school for Jewish Studies sponsored by the Katz Center at Penn, the Hebrew University, and the University of Antwerp, he joined other students in reflecting on crisis, change, and creativity in the Jewish experience.

**Noa Nikolsky** is a Ph.D. Student in the Department of English. During the 2021-2022, academic year she continued work on her dissertation project on late medieval European preventative medicine. She presented a paper on medicine and physiognomy at the 2022 Medieval Colloquium at Sewanee, University of the South. She spent the summer of 2022 doing research in libraries in Europe thanks to a Dissertation Research Award from the School of Arts and Sciences.

**Adam Sax** is a PhD Candidate in Comparative Literature and Literary Theory, working on a dissertation called, "‘ungewisse’: investigating time in Paul Celan's elegy 'Epitaph for François,' an extended reading." The project is a single author, single poem study of the elegy as a genre-form after the Shoah. Sax's research engages with late-19th and 20th century poetry & the (multi-lingual) poetics of loss through practices of Jewish intellectual history, modern and contemporary aesthetics, psychoanalytic theory, queer theory, (dis)ability studies, genre theory, and translation theory. He is also a joint-PhD candidate at the University of Antwerp in Belgium, where he has spent the past academic year in-residence, with a Fulbright research grant, and as a Fellow at the Institute for Jewish Studies, under the supervision of Professor Vivian Liska.

In 2021-22, **Jeremy Steinberg** was a third-year student in the Religious Studies department and the recipient of the Sidney Ellis Fellowship. He presented a paper entitled, "Cultural Liminality and Legitimate Historiography According to Josephus and Plutarch," at Penn's Center for Ancient Studies conference and was a discussant on the roundtable "The Talmud's Leaky Pipeline: A Roundtable on Gender Equity in the Field of Rabbinics" at the Association for Jewish Studies conference. He also chaired the "Material Culture" panel at the Ancient Judaism Regional Seminar. Steinberg completed the Certificate in College and University Teaching through Penn's Center for Teaching and Learning. His paper, "Translation Across Literary Cultures in 2nd c. BCE Alexandria," was awarded Penn's Merle Saunders Schaff Memorial Prize and won an Honorable Mention toward the Society for Classical Studies' Erich Gruen Prize.

**Alexandra (Sasha) Zborovsky** completed the second-year of her PhD program in History. She dedicated a vast portion of her year to teaching undergraduates and completing a plethora of seminars on both Russian and Jewish history. She served as the History department's graduate student representative, organizing networking events, professional workshops, and lectures. She was also the graduate student supervisor for the Jewish Studies Program's Meltzer Internship, which invites undergraduates to invite speakers involved in Jewish learning to speak at the University. In March of 2022, Sasha had the opportunity to publish a piece in *The Washington Post*, which elaborated on the history of the current war in Ukraine. This summer, Zborovsky finally returned to the archives, as she traveled to Bremen, Germany to help gather sources for her dissertation prospectus.



## GRADUATE STUDENT ALUMNI NEWS

**Sonia Gollance** (PhD, Germanic Languages and Literatures, 2017) is Lecturer (Assistant Professor) in Yiddish at University College London in the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies. Her first book, *It Could Lead to Dancing: Mixed-Sex Dancing and Jewish Modernity* (Stanford University Press 2021), was a National Jewish Book Award Finalist in Modern Jewish Thought and Experience. She has given invited presentations on her book at Brandeis University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Lund University (Sweden), the University of Chicago, and the University of Minnesota, as well as conference presentations on her project in development about women who wrote plays in Yiddish at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute and the University of Texas-Austin. As part of this project, she is currently translating Tea Arciszewska's modernist play about the Holocaust, *Miryeml* (1958).

In Fall of 2022, **Marc Herman** (PhD, RELS, 2016) joined the faculty of York University, in Toronto, as an Assistant Professor. During the previous academic year, Herman was a fellow at the Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies. He coedited a volume, with Jeremy Brown, entitled, *Accounting for the Commandments in Medieval Judaism* (Brill).

**Alon Tam** (PhD, NELC, 2018) has been the 2021-22 Postdoctoral Fellow at the Y&S Nazarian Center for Israel Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. During the year, he has promoted new research on the social and political history of Egyptian Jews in Israel post-1948, as well as about the close ties of that community to the Yishuv in Israel/Palestine before 1948. [Research in brief here: <https://www.international.ucla.edu/israel/currents/article/254302>]. Tam has also continued his major work on the social, cultural, and urban history of the Jewish community in Cairo: he wrote two forthcoming articles on those topics; participated in innovative collaborative research projects on Jews of the modern Middle East; and lectured on the subject in high-profile academic conferences in the US and Germany.

In Fall 2021, **Julia Kolchinsky Dasbach** (PhD, Comparative Literature & Literary Theory, 2021) [[www.juliakolchinskydasbach.com](http://www.juliakolchinskydasbach.com)] began her position as the Murphy Visiting Fellow in Creative Writing-Poetry at Hendrix College. In response to the war against Ukraine, she co-organized the *Voices for Ukraine*, a reading of Ukrainian poets alongside their translators and American poet allies which drew more than 800 attendees, featuring more than twenty voices, as well as seven poets reading live from across a Ukraine-under siege. Through audience donations, the event raised more than \$4.5K for UNICEF and through privately solicited donations, an additional \$4K in honorarium for poets in Ukraine. The event was written about in *The New York Times*, *The Forward*, and *PBS*, among others. She also wrote the model poem for "Dear Ukraine": *A Global Community Poem*. Her poems were published in *POETRY Magazine*, *Ploughshares*, *AGNI*, and *American Poetry Review*.

**Tom Tearney** (PhD, Germanic Languages and Literatures, 2020) has continued to work as a researcher assistant with History of Art at Penn. In May 2022, he began a new job as indexer with the USC Shoah Foundation. He recently completed a translation of a speech by Zacharias Frankel which will appear in *Modern Jewish Theology* in 2023.

**Kerry Wallach** (PhD, Germanic Languages and Literatures, 2011) is Associate Professor of German Studies and an affiliate of the Jewish Studies Program at Gettysburg College. In 2022, she published the chapter "Buy Me a Mink: Jews, Fur, and Conspicuous Consumption" in *Jewish Consumer Cultures in Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century Europe and North America*. Her co-edited volume (with Aya Elyada), *German-Jewish Studies: Next Generations*, will be published in October 2022 by Berghahn Books, and her second monograph, a biography of Jewish artist Rahel Szalit, is forthcoming with Penn State University Press.

**Ari M. Gordon** (PhD, NELC, 2018) continued in his role as Director of Muslim-Jewish Relations for American Jewish Committee (AJC). At the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace in December, he presented Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah with a *Tzedakah* Box on behalf of the Jewish delegation as a sign of commitment to the Forum's theme of "Building Inclusive Citizenship." In May, Gordon led a group of Moroccan Muslims along with Israeli and American Jews on a mission to Morocco and Israel to promote stronger ties. Throughout the year Gordon worked with the Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council to launch the *Tackle! Upstander Training* project, helping civic leaders across the country build prevention frameworks against hate-based violence. He helped develop and teach a unit on Judaism for 2,400 k-12 Indonesian madrasa teachers as part of a certificate program in cross-cultural religious literacy offered by the Leimina Institute. In July, he co-led a 10-day mission to Indonesia to promote inter-religious understanding with some of the country's leading institutions.

**David Zvi Kalman** (PhD, NELC, 2019) is Scholar in Residence and Director of New Media at the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America. His article, "Artificial Intelligence in Jewish Thought," will appear in the *Cambridge Companion to Religion and Artificial Intelligence*, forthcoming in 2023; another article, "Halakhic Responses to Modernity: New Technologies," is also forthcoming for 2023 in the *Oxford Companion of Jewish Law*. This past year his scholarship on the relationship between Jewish and technological history has appeared in several popular publications, including *Slate*, the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, and the *Forward*. He also published "The Natural Disaster Theology Dilemma," an article that appeared in *Torah in a Time of Plague* (Ben Yehuda Press, 2021), which was the recipient of an award from the Jewish Book Council. He is currently researching Judah Leib Levin (d. 1926), a Detroit rabbi and engineering hobbyist.

## FACULTY NEWS

**Dan Ben-Amos**, Professor of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations and Folklore, had the pleasure and honor to pay tribute to his friend, Professor Peninnah Schram, a folklorist, a storyteller, and a teacher, by writing the foreword to her biography, *Peninnah's World: A Jewish Life in Stories*, by Caren Schnur Neile (Lanham: Hamilton Books, 2021). His other publication was an homage to his teacher, the late Professor Dov Noy. The folklorists in Israel published an issue of the Israeli folklore journal *Yeda-Am*, commemorating Noy's 101st birthday. In his brief essay, Ben-Amos recalled a biographical episode in which Professor Noy told him about an incident of mishearing that changed the course of Jewish folklore scholarship ("Be-yad ha-lashon" [In the power of the tongue]. *Yeda-Am* vol. 47, 2021).

**Joseph Benatov** is the Director of the Modern Hebrew Language Program and Associate Program Director of Jewish Studies. He teaches Hebrew courses at the intermediate and advanced levels. Dr. Benatov served as faculty advisor for Penn's undergraduate journal *Kedma*. He was the invited speaker for the International Holocaust Remembrance Day program organized by the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia. He also gave a three-part lecture series on the topic of Sephardic Balkan History for the Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood Foundation. He delivered public lectures for the American Jewish University, Dona Gracia Hadassah, Temple Beth Am (Los Angeles), the Kivunim gap-year program, and Congregation Etz Hayim. Benatov's ongoing research focuses on the history and culture of the Sephardic Jewish communities of the Balkans.

**Alexander (Sender) Botwinik** is a Yiddish lecturer. He also teaches Hebrew language at Har Zion Temple. He continues to work on a second CD of his late father David Botwinik's music, this time devoted to Yiddish children's songs.

**Daisy Sadaka Braverman** was born and raised in Turkey where she acquired Judeo-Spanish as a native language. She came to the U.S. as an adult in order to pursue her university education. She holds an M.Phil in Linguistics from Columbia University. For the past twelve years she has taught Judeo-Spanish at the University of Pennsylvania, where she also teaches a course on the structure of Turkish. Prior to her work at Penn, she had taught many courses in New York, primarily at The Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue and at the Museum of Jewish Heritage. Alongside her academic career, Braverman was active in a theatrical group called *The Ladino Players*, where she edited plays in Judeo-Spanish, and acted, sang, and directed. She also translated a Moliere play and directed it. A classically trained singer, Braverman has performed Judeo-Spanish songs in the United States and abroad. She was one of the featured singers at the Quincentennial Celebration in Istanbul in 1992. She sang and acted in Elizabeth Swados's oratorio "Jerusalem," in the United States, and in Italy. Braverman was selected to represent native speakers of Judeo-Spanish in a group of academics called *Shadarim* four years ago. She is currently working on a Judeo-Spanish dictionary as a member of the group, and has participated in the group's meetings in Israel twice.

**Michael Carasik** taught Biblical Hebrew (2000-2022). He continued to contribute to the *Koren Tanakh of the Land of Israel* for their Leviticus, Numbers, and Genesis volumes, and to translate Israeli scholarly work from Hebrew to English. He also taught a Hebrew course and a course on Jewish biblical interpretation at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. His "Torah Talk" podcast is coming to an end after 14 years as he prepares to move to Jerusalem. He is working on online versions of his courses, "Aramaic on One Foot," and "How to Read Biblical Poetry," and is developing a new Bible discussion series for the Substack platform.



Pair of Portraits:  
Moses Michael Hays  
and Rachel Myer  
Hays. Gift of Arnold  
and Deanne Kaplan.  
Arnold and Deanne  
Kaplan Collection of  
Early American  
Judaica.

## FACULTY NEWS

**Natalie B. Dohrmann** is Associate Director of the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, coeditor of the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, and an area editor for the *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*. Her edited volume, *Legal Engagement: The Reception of Roman Tribunals and Law by Jews and Other Provincials of the Roman Empire (Le droit et les tribunaux romains vus par les Juifs et les autres habitants de l'Empire)*, edited with Katell Berthelot and Capucine Nemo-Pekelman, came out with *École Française de Rome*, in 2021. She gave three talks—"Pax Tannaitica," as part of the Legal Theory and Jewish History Symposium at the Harvard Law School (January 2022); "Roman War, Rabbinic Law, and Provincial Sovereignism," as part of the séminaire de recherche: Gouverner et administrer les Juifs (Ve-XIXe s.): des régimes d'exception? Sorbonne Université, CNRS, Centre Roland Mousnier (May 2022); and "Rabbinic Authorship, Authority, and Canon Making," for the colloquium Authorial Fictions and Attributions in the Ancient Mediterranean of The Bible and Religions of the Ancient Near East Collective, the North American Society for the Study of Christian Apocryphal Literature (October 2021).

In the summer of 2021, **Talya Fishman**, Associate Professor of Medieval and Early Modern Intellectual and Cultural History in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, gave two lectures in international conferences. Her Hebrew presentation, "Factors in the Non-Talmudocentric Approach to Jewish Law: Structural and Ideational Antecedents of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*," was delivered at a conference of the Shazar Institute in Jerusalem. At an international conference on Pre-Modern Comparative Literary Practice in the Multilingual Islamic World(s), Fishman lectured on "Tenth Century Rabbanite Views of the Formation of Judaism's Foundational Corpora, the Medieval Islamicate World and the Perspective of the *Longue Durée*." In October 2021, she opened the Katz Center's annual seminar series, Premodern Jewish Legal Cultures, with a talk on "Frontiers of Research in the Academic Study of Premodern Jewish Law." In November 2021, Fishman spoke about "Antagonism, Imitation, Dialogue: Premodern Jews and Their Christian and Muslim Neighbors," at a Haverford College symposium on Difference and Disagreement: Engaging the Other. She presented a paper, "Hellenistic Reverberations in the Compositional Cultures of Ancient and Medieval Jews: Regional Proclivities Over the *Longue Durée*," in April at Penn's Katz Center for Advanced Jewish Studies. Fishman's article, "Confessionalisation in Jewish Culture? Creedal Moments from the Middle Ages Through the Late Eighteenth Century," appeared in *Through Your Eyes: Religious Alterity and the Early Modern Western Imagination*, (Leiden: Brill, 2021), and an article on "Premodern Uses of Scripture's Paratextual and Masoretic Data and Their Distinctive Deployments in Medieval Ashkenazic Culture," is in the publication pipeline. This past Spring, Fishman trialed a new course, *The Medieval Jewish Bookshelf*, which she will teach again in Fall 2022.

**Nili Gold** is Professor of Modern Hebrew Literature in NELC. In 2018, she published *Haifa My Love*, the Hebrew version of her *Haifa: City of Steps*. In 2019, she lectured internationally on the book and on Haifa itself. Also in 2019, the Hebrew translation of her 2008 literary biography, *Yehuda Amichai: The Making of Israel's National Poet*, was published. After a long hiatus from her research on Amichai, she returned to the poet during her Fall 2021 sabbatical and directed her scholarly effort to a comprehensive article on previously unknown biographical materials relating to his parting poems (forthcoming 2023). Also, while on sabbatical, a book chapter she authored on Dahlia Ravikovitch was published. A piece she completed—on Benyamin Shvili, a relatively unknown Hebrew writer with ties to Sufism and mysticism—was published in February 2022. During her sabbatical, she extensively updated her course on marginalized voices in Israeli culture to include poems by members of emerging and avant-garde groups of the 21st century like the religious Mashiv Haruach and the Mizrahi Ars Poetica. Gold co-founded Penn's Middle East Film Festival in 2010, and continues to serve on its committee.

**Kathryn Hellerstein** is Professor of Germanic Studies (Yiddish) in the Department of Francophone, Italian, and Germanic Studies, and the Ruth Meltzer Director of the Jewish Studies Program. In 2021-2022, her book, co-edited with Lihong Song, *China and Ashkenazic Jewry: Transcultural Exchange*, was published by De Gruyter. It included her introduction and a chapter, "Yiddish Translations of Chinese Poetry and Theater in 1920s New York." Her co-edited special issue of the online journal, *In geveb*, on a Ukrainian Yiddish modernist, "Walking with Vogel: New perspectives on Debora Vogel through poetry, visual art, translation, and scholarship," appeared in Fall 2021 <https://ingeveb.org/issues/walking-with-vogel>. She published two personal essays: "Unfinished Business: Translating Women Yiddish Poets," in *Beyond the Textual: Practices of Translation and Adaptation*, and "Walking on Shabbes," in *Slow Going: Reflections on Walking*. She spoke at the Maltz Museum, in Beachwood, Ohio on "The Rosewaters and the Colmans: Becoming American, 1840 and 1854," and organized and chaired a panel on Soviet-Born Jewish Writers in the Americas, at the Modern Language Association Convention in 2022.

**Arthur Kiron** is the Schottenstein-Jesselson Curator of Judaica Collections, head of the Library at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, and Adjunct Assistant Professor of History. He delivered the Rosalie and Myer Feinstein Memorial Lecture on the topic, "Who Owns Jewish Cultural Heritage?" at the 2022 annual international conference of the Association of Jewish Libraries held in Philadelphia. He was invited to serve on an international working group to draft a "White Paper" of best practices to handle Judaica provenance questions. He was a co-founder of "Judaica 3D," an initiative to create a digital repository of three-dimensional Jewish cultural objects to be used for teacher training and research. He served on multiple internal Penn Libraries working groups and faculty committees and continues to serve on the editorial board of *Judaica Librarianship*. He also serves on numerous other professional, academic, and communal advisory boards.

## FACULTY NEWS

**Yael Landman**, a graduate of the Jewish Studies Program (C'09) and former affiliated fellow at the Katz Center (2019-20), was delighted to join the faculty in 2021-22, as Lecturer in Biblical Studies. Landman presented papers about her ongoing research projects featuring aspects of biblical, ancient Near Eastern, and rabbinic law, and the intersection of law and literature, at annual meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature and the Association for Jewish Studies, as well as the Julius-Rabinowitz Program on Jewish and Israeli Law at Harvard Law School. In 2022, Landman published *Legal Writing, Legal Practice: The Biblical Bailment Law and Divine Justice* (Brown Judaic Studies). Her forthcoming publications include an article about the use of an adoption metaphor in Nathan's Parable (2 Samuel 12:1-4) and an article about biblical law for the *Elgar Concise Encyclopedia of Law and Literature*. In July 2022, Landman joined the faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary as Assistant Professor of Bible.

**Ibrahim Miari** is Lecturer in Foreign Languages in the Modern Hebrew Language Program in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, where he teaches beginner and intermediate Modern Hebrew courses. Miari continues to serve as a committee member for Penn's Middle East Film Festival, a position he has held since 2013. In Spring 2022, he attended the annual Language Educator Symposium, "Collaboration for Change," hosted by the Penn Language Center and Educational Linguistics at Penn (Graduate School of Education). He was a guest speaker in Professor Nili Gold's Voices of Israel class, where he discussed with students the process of creating and performing his autobiographical one man show, *In Between*. Miari performed *In Between* in Summer 2022, at an international theater festival in Bitola, North Macedonia. He also taught Hebrew in Summer 2022 at the Middlebury School of Hebrew and gave three theater workshops in Hebrew for the master's program in Hebrew language education at Middlebury College.

**Benjamin Nathans'** (Associate Professor of History) co-edited volume *From Europe's East to the Middle East: Israel's Russian and Polish Lineages* came out with Penn Press in December 2021, including his chapter "Refuseniks and Rights Defenders: Jews and the Soviet Dissident Movement." He also published articles in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Review of Books*. Interviews with Nathans on Russian affairs, the war against Ukraine, and the impact on local Jewish communities were broadcast on *The World* (with Marco Werman), *Then & Now* (David Myers), *Radio Südtirol* (Stefan Kreuzberger), *New Books Network* (Marshall Poe), the *Program on New Approaches to Research and Security in Eurasia* (Masha Lipman), and other platforms. Nathans was also interviewed by *La Repubblica* (Italy) and *Penn Today*. He spent the spring 2022 semester at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies, in Germany, working on *The Book of Life*, the first English-language edition of the memoirs of the Russian-Jewish historian Simon Dubnov, and in his spare time, cycling on the scenic bike routes of the Black Forest region.

**Larry Silver** (Art History, emeritus) has been involved with an exhibition and accompanying book called *Rembrandt through Jewish Eyes*, scheduled to open in October 2022 in Moscow's Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center. Organized by two early modern scholars based in Amsterdam, one of them at the Joods Museum, the exhibition involves scholars from Russia, Netherlands, and the US. Obviously, with war in Ukraine, the physical exhibition will not take place, but the companion volume with essays will be produced in 2022 by Amsterdam University Press. Silver's essay, "Modern Jewish Artists Discover Rembrandt," spans the period from the late 19th century to Pop Art and features painters and printmakers from Austria-Hungary/Ukraine, Netherlands, France, Germany, Britain, and America. While chiefly addressed to art historians, the book should have wider cultural implications and appeal for Jewish audiences. Silver's other book, out in 2022, is about early modern cultural globalism from a European perspective: *Europe Views the World, 1500-1700* (London, Lund Humphries).

In July 2021, **Heather Sharkey**, Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, became Chair of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. She continued the online series of "Bite-Sized Talks: Food and Foodways of the Middle East throughout History," by hosting Wolf Humanities Center postdoctoral scholar Harry Eli Kashdan in January 2022 for his talk entitled, "How to Read a Cookbook: Cuisine and the Nation in Ottolenghi's London," which the Jewish Studies Program co-sponsored. Following an online conference in May 2021, on "Narratives of Being Jewish in the Middle East," hosted by the Institute for Iranian Studies at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna, organizer Dr. Ariane Sadjed interviewed Sharkey on the topic of her paper. This interview will appear in the *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, as "The Display of Religious Identity: Towards a Theory of Indistinguishability among Jews, Muslims, and Christians in the Modern Middle East." In March 2022, Sharkey led thirty students in the Lauder Institute's MBA/MA program in International Business to Israel for a program entitled, "Israel: Consumption, Innovation, and Diversity on the World Stage."

The University of Graz, Austria, honored **Liliane Weissberg**, Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor in Arts and Science, for her work; she became the University's first woman to be awarded an honorary doctorate in philosophy. In the Fall, Weissberg published the anthology *Psychoanalysis, Fatherhood, and the Modern Family*, and the German edition of Hannah Arendt's *Rahel Varnhagen* (2021), to which she added an extensive afterword, went into second printing. Weissberg published essays on Freud, Rosenzweig, Horkheimer, Bendavid, Dreyfus, Arendt, and Kafka. She contributed to exhibitions on the documenta Kassel, National Socialist artists after WWII, Richard Wagner, and on the history of Jewish Museums. Weissberg lectured widely in the US and Europe, and presented keynote

## FACULTY NEWS

addresses at conferences in Aachen, Munich, and the cultural festival in Lisbon. She also delivered the inaugural Lisa and Heinrich Arnhold Lecture at the Art Museum (Gemäldesammlungen) Dresden and presented a recorded public lectures and conversations for the Literaturhaus Munich, the German Literary Archive in Marbach, and the German Historical Museum in Berlin. Penn featured Weissberg's recent book, *Benjamin Veitel Ephraim: Kaufmann, Schriftsteller, Geheimagent*, in *Research at Penn*, and her new graduate course "Inside the Archive" in *Penn Today*; she was also featured in the *Journal of the Jewish Museum Berlin*. She continued to serve on the boards of the Moses Mendelssohn Center in Potsdam, the Center for Jewish Studies in Graz, the Leo Baeck Institute London/ Studienstiftung Programme, the Research Center for Enlightenment Studies Sanssouci Potsdam, the Center for the Study of the Book Munich, and the German Historical Museum (DHM). She was appointed to the board of the new Berlin Center for Intellectual Diaspora. Weissberg was named 2023 Senior Fellow at the Center for Cultural Research (IfK) in Vienna.

A research leave in 2021-22, allowed **Steve Weitzman**, Abraham M. Ellis Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages and Literatures Ella Darivoff; Director of the Katz Center of Advanced Judaic Studies, to refocus on his scholarship, and his efforts included drafting a book project provisionally entitled, *A History of Signs and Wonders: The Ten Plagues Then, Now, and at the End of the World*. The book is an exploration of the roles that the biblical Ten Plagues story has played in how people interpret, imagine, and respond to disasters, including the pandemic and the apocalyptic threat of climate change. Weitzman also published an essay on the role of the biblical scholar William Foxwell Albright in the post-war struggle against antisemitism and a survey of gender-centered approaches to the origin of the Jews, and is moving forward with two larger projects, *The Princeton Companion to Jewish Studies*, coedited with Leora Batnitzky and Eve Krakowski; and with Eliane James, a special issue of the journal *Prooftexts* focused on the reception history of biblical poetry. In his role as the Katz Center director, Weitzman turned to associate director Natalie Dohrmann to lead the fellowship program, which she did superbly, but his administrative efforts continued in other ways, including inaugurating an online seminar on the study of Jewish philanthropy in partnership with Lila Corwin Berman, working to sustain the *Jewish Culture and Contexts* monograph series from Penn Press after the retirement of long-time editor Jerry Singerman; and restarting a summer school for Jewish Studies graduate students in partnership with Elisheva Baumgarten of the Hebrew University and Vivian Liska of the University of Antwerp, an interdisciplinary program that hosted 25 graduate students in Jerusalem this July/August. In 2022-23, a Katz Center fellowship year focused on Jews and modern legal culture, Weitzman is looking forward to many special programs, including the inauguration of a lecture series in memory of Katz Center board member, Howard Reiter, meant to share the insights of contemporary Israeli scholarship and culture with the Penn community that will feature in its first year the renowned scholar of Israeli constitutional and human rights law, Barak Medina.



The Meir Rothchild Hospital in Jerusalem, Late 19th Century, Garabed Krikorian. Rare Judaica Acquisitions Fund.

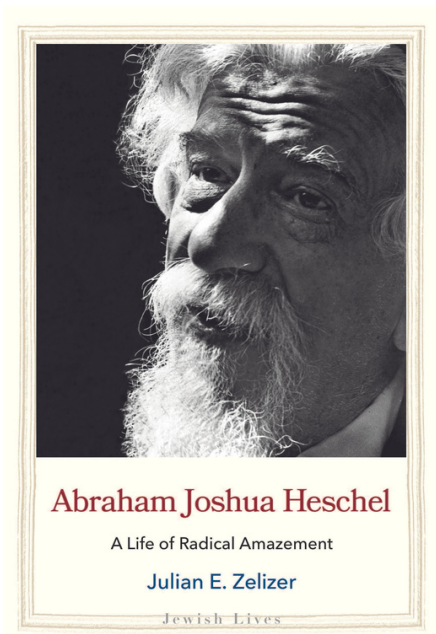
**Beth S. Wenger**, Moritz and Josephine Berg Professor of History, is Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the School of Arts and Sciences. Wenger received the 2022 Lee Max Friedman Award Medal from the American Jewish Historical Society for distinguished service, scholarship and leadership within the field of American Jewish History. Her essay, "The Search for Usable Jewish Pasts," will appear in a forthcoming Princeton University Press anthology titled *American Jews in the Gilded Age*. She is also contributing a piece on "secularism" in the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of American Jewish History*. Wenger recorded an audio tour for the exhibition by artist Jonathan Horowitz, "The Future Will Follow the Past," which opened in May of 2022, at the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History. Wenger serves as Academic Director of the Jewish Counterculture Oral History Project, which documents the experiences of founding members of the *Havurah* movement. The oral histories, two films, and other documents are now available to the public at [https://repository.upenn.edu/jcchp\\_oralhistories/34/](https://repository.upenn.edu/jcchp_oralhistories/34/). A founding historian of the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia, Wenger continues her role as consultant to the Museum.

**Julia Wilker** is Associate Professor in the Department of Classical Studies and serves as Chair of the Graduate Group in Ancient History. In 2021-2022, she taught an introductory class on Ancient Mediterranean Empires, a seminar on Power and Peril: The Paradox of Monarchy among Ancient Greek, Romans, and Jews together with Natalie Dohrmann, and a graduate seminar on Biographical Approaches to Antiquity. Wilker's main area of research is the eastern Mediterranean in Hellenistic and Roman imperial times with a focus on Judean and Jewish history. Her forthcoming publications include chapters on women and the institution of Roman client kingship and on the integration of Eastern dynasties into the Roman imperial elite. Last year, Wilker also co-organized an in-person conference in honor of Ernst Baltrusch in Berlin and presented on Hasmonean concepts of power at the conference "The Same but Different? Monarchical Representation in the Hellenistic World between Assimilation and Differentiation." She is currently working on a biography of Queen Julia Berenice.

# Cultural Programming

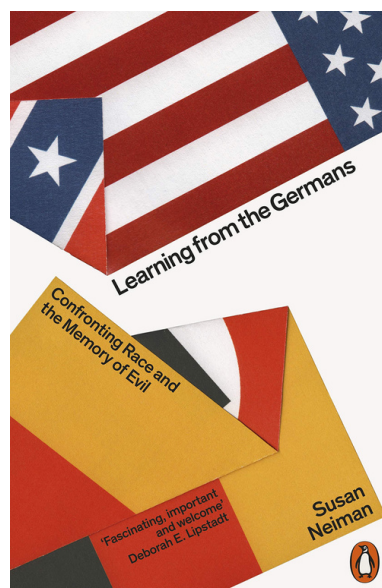
## ENDOWED ANNUAL LECTURES

The Twenty Sixth Annual Silvers Visiting Scholar Program was a talk entitled, "Abraham Joshua Heschel and the Religious Roots of Progressive Politics," with **Julian E. Zelizer** (Princeton University). The event on February 22, 2022, was endowed by **David, C'71, and Patricia, CW'72, Silvers**.



Julian E. Zelizer

The Thirty-Sixth Annual Alexander Colloquium was a talk entitled, "What I Learned After Writing 'Learning From the Germans,'" with **Susan Neiman** (Director of the Einstein Forum in Berlin). The event on November 10, 2021, was sponsored by the **Joseph Alexander Foundation** and the **Mackler Family**. Additional support came from the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, because this was also the annual *Kristallnacht* commemoration with the Jewish Studies Program.



Susan Neiman

# Cultural Programming

## KUTCHIN SEMINAR SERIES

The Kutchin Seminars are supported by the generosity of the late Mel, C'50, and Mitzi Kutchin.

"Online Workshop: Jews, Gender, and Economies in History," a graduate student conference organized by **Josepf Nothmann** (History, PhD candidate), cosponsored by the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies on October 4-5, 2021.

"Israel After Netanyahu: How Much Will Change? A Panel Discussion," with **Shira Efron** (Senior Research Fellow, Institute for National Security Studies in Tel Aviv); **Dana El Kurd** (University of Richmond); **Ian Lustick** (University of Pennsylvania); **Yofi Tirosh** (Academic College School of Law in Negev); **Nathaniel Shils** (PhD candidate, Department of Political Science), cosponsored by the Middle East Center and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Department on October 5, 2021.

Film Screening of *Upheaval: The Journey of Menachem Begin*, cosponsored with Cinema Studies and Penn Law Israel Society on November 17, 2021.



**MEC** MIDDLE EAST CENTER  
University of Pennsylvania  
Co-Sponsors: Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Department and Jewish Studies Program

**ISRAEL AFTER NETANYAHU**  
**HOW MUCH WILL CHANGE?**

SHIRA EFRON, DANA EL KURD,  
IAN LUSTICK, AND YOFI TIROSH  
MODERATED BY NATHANIEL SHILS

OCTOBER 5, 2021 | 5:30 PM  
HOUSTON HALL 218  
BEN FRANKLIN MEETING ROOM



[first row, l to r]:  
Shira Efron, Nathaniel Shils  
[second row, l to r]:  
Dana El Kurd, Yofi Tirosh  
[third row]: Ian Lustick



# Cultural Programming

## KUTCHIN SEMINAR SERIES

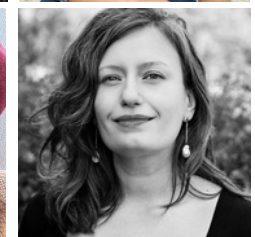
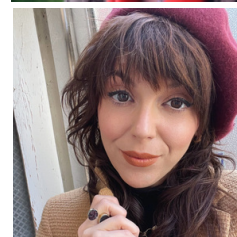
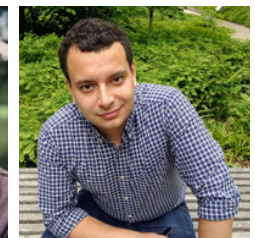
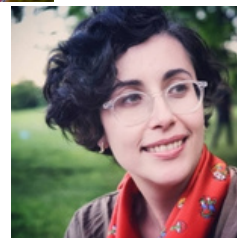
"How to Read a Cookbook: Cuisine and the Nation in Ottolenghi's London" with **Harry Eli Kashdan** (scholar of food culture and migration in the contemporary Mediterranean), cosponsored by the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations on January 31, 2022.

Katz Center Meyerhoff Lecture: "Legal Knowledge and Everyday Practice in Medieval Ashkenaz," with **Elisheva Baumgarten** (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), cosponsored by the Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies on March 1, 2022.

"Yellow Star, Red Star: Holocaust Remembrance after Communism," with **Jelena Subotic** (Georgia State University), cosponsored with Department in Russian and East European Studies on March 18, 2022.

"Poems & Stories by the Cheburashka Collective," with various readers, organized by **Julia Dasbach** (PhD, COML, 2021), cosponsored with Comparative Literature and Literary Theory, Russian and East European Studies, and the Slought Foundation on March 24, 2022.

"Discussion of Winter/Spring 2022 'Soviet Issue,'" featuring guest editor **Julia Alekseyeva** (University of Pennsylvania) and contributors **Greg Afinogenov** (Georgetown University), **Alina Pleskova** (poet/editor), and **Egina Manachova** (writer), cosponsored with Jewish Currents, and the Departments of Religious Studies and Russian and Eastern European Studies on April 5, 2022.



[top row l to r]: Ottolenghi's bakery, Harry Eli Kashdan, Elisheva Baumgarten.  
[bottom row l to r]: Jelena Subotic, Julia Dasbach.

[upper left]: Julia Alekseyeva, [upper right]: Greg Afinogenov.  
[bottom left]: Alina Pleskova, [bottom right]: Egina Manachova.



The Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania is a global leader in the study of Jewish civilization, opening new vistas in the humanities and social sciences. With a prestigious fellowship program, a vast Judaica library, and a leading scholarly journal, the Katz Center links scholars to scholars, researchers to resources, and ideas to the wider world.

## HERBERT D. KATZ CENTER FOR ADVANCED JUDAIC STUDIES

University of Pennsylvania

### The Annual Fellowship Program: The Core of the Katz Center's Mission

The Katz Center's international post-doctoral fellowship program has served as a model for similar institutions since its inception. Intellectual camaraderie is the essence of the experience for fellows at all stages of their academic careers. During the course of the year the fellows work on their individual projects alongside scholars with diverse but focused interests, draw on our deep library collections and the expertise of our librarians, and meet to discuss their ongoing research.

Penn faculty and graduate students are always welcome at the weekly Ruth Meltzer seminars, which take place at the Katz Center, and fellows have ample opportunity to get involved with the academic life on Penn's campus. The Center's Meyerhoff Lecture brings a notable speaker to campus in partnership with the History Department and the Jewish Studies Program each year. Fellows and other invited scholars present the findings of the year's research and open new avenues of inquiry at two colloquia: a Fall Colloquium and a Spring Colloquium, both open to the wider academic community. Editors chosen from among the fellows edit a volume that is published by Penn Press as part of the Jewish Culture and Contexts series.

### 2022–2023: Jews and Modern Legal Culture

During the 2022–2023 fellowship year, the Katz Center turns its attention to the study of law between the 18th and 21st centuries, an age of transition from a world of empires to the modern age of the nation-state and international law. This year's fellowship aims to encourage new research in the study of Jews and the law across disciplinary perspectives, a focus that includes Jewish law as it has developed in modern contexts as well as the role of Jews within other legal cultures.

#### 2022–2023 Fellows

**Itamar Ben Ami** | Humboldt University of Berlin

**Sigal Ben-Porath** | Graduate School of Education, Penn

**Leora Bilsky** | Tel Aviv University

**Emmanuel Bloch** | UC Berkeley School of Law

**Yonatan Y. Brafman** | Tufts University

**Julie Cooper** | Tel Aviv University

**Carolyn J. Dean** | Yale University

**Noémie Duhaut** | Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz

**Ayala Fader** | Fordham University

**Marc Flandreau** | Department of History, Penn

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**Sarah Zager** | St. Olaf College



### Looking Ahead: The Sound and Music of Jewish Life

During the 2023–2024 fellowship year, the Katz Center will focus on the study of sound, music, and aurality in Jewish life, past and present. The year has two interrelated goals: to promote new research into the study of the various musical cultures that have developed in Jewish contexts and to encourage explorations of the role of sound in Jewish life and culture.

## Highlights from 2021–2022, Rethinking Premodern Jewish Legal Cultures

During the 2021-2022 fellowship year, the Katz Center treated law in theory and practice, as created by and imposed on Jews. It focused on the broad contexts in which Jewish (and Israelite) law was developed by and for Jews, and in which it operated, treating law as a necessary component for understanding the broader dynamics of culture, history, governance, and economics of each place and period. Seeing law as constituted by and embedded within wider dynamics, the fellows saw law's impact on various historical, religious, intellectual, artistic, and political moments, for a wide variety of actors: Jews and non-Jews, men and women, the empowered and the marginal.



### 2021-2022 Fellows

**Menahem Ben-Sasson** | The Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
**Guy Darshan** | Tel Aviv University  
**Alyssa M. Gray** | Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion  
**Simcha Gross** | University of Pennsylvania  
**Chaya T. Halberstam** | King's University College at the University of Western Ontario  
**Louise Hecht** | University of Potsdam, Germany  
**Marc Herman** | York University  
**Tirza Y. Kelman** | Ben Gurion University of the Negev  
**Ada Kuskowski** | University of Pennsylvania  
**Hayim Lapin** | University of Maryland  
**Bernard M. Levinson** | University of Minnesota  
**Paul Mandel** | Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies  
**Hanan Mazeh** | Ben Gurion University of the Negev  
**Tamar Menashe** | Columbia University  
**Vered Noam** | Tel Aviv University  
**Evelyne Oliel-Grausz** | Sorbonne Université Paris 1 Panthéon  
**Micha J. Perry** | University of Haifa  
**Zvi Stampfer** | Orot Israel College  
**Daniel Strum** | University of São Paulo  
**Yael Wilfand** | Bar-Ilan University  
**Hamza M. Zafer** | University of Washington

In addition, we welcomed associate scholars: **Noga Ayali-Darshan**, **Jay Berkovitz**, **Beth Berkowitz**, **Arye Edrei**, **Rachel Furst**, **Yair Furstenberg**, **Ayelet Hoffmann Libson**, **Ephraim Kanarfogel**, **Eve Krakowski**, **Ephraim Shoham-Steiner**, and **Mira Wasserman**.

## Fall Colloquium: Ancient Laws Ancient Contexts: Situating Israelites and Jews in Normative Discourses

The fellows constructed a vibrant two-day virtual conference on the study of law in a range of ancient contexts, with panels organized by region and chronology. Fellows laid out historiographical framing, setting the stage for an international cohort of invited speakers: Ancient Israel (**Sara Milstein**, University of British Columbia; **Konrad Schmid**, University of Zurich; **Jeffrey Stackert**, University of Chicago); Roman-era Palestine (**Merav Haklai**, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; **Tzvi Novick**, University of Notre Dame; **Yair Furstenberg**, Hebrew University of Jerusalem); Sasanian Babylonia (**Shai Secunda**, Bard College; **Avigail Manekin-Bamberger**, Hebrew University of Jerusalem); **Jae Han**, Brown University); and the Early Islamic era (**Lena Salaymeh**, Oxford University; **Joseph E. Lowry**, University of Pennsylvania; **Holger M. Zellentin**, University of Tübingen).

## 25th Annual Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Lecture in Judaic Studies: Legal Knowledge and Everyday Practice in Medieval Ashkenaz

Professor **Elisheva Baumgarten** (Yitzhak Becker Professor of Jewish Studies in the Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry Department and the History Department at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem) asked in this lecture how law permeated the lives and knowledge of everyday people in the Middle Ages. She looked at a range of sources, from documents to literature and art, focusing in part on marriage law to see how legal ideas, ideals, and details were used in Jewish daily life, and how that knowledge mapped onto elite knowledge such as that found in court records, law books, and halakhah.

**ANCIENT LAWS ANCIENT CONTEXTS**  
Situating Israelites and Jews in Normative Discourses  
FALL COLLOQUIUM: DECEMBER 15–16, 2021

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FOR ADVANCED JUDAIC STUDIES  
University of Pennsylvania



## Jews and Law in the Middle Ages and Early Modernity

SPRING COLLOQUIUM  
APRIL 25–26, 2022

@katzcenterupenn

HERBERT D.  
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University of Pennsylvania

## Spring Colloquium: Jews and Law in the Middle Ages and Early Modernity

Echoing the fall conference, the end-of-year program moved the conversation forward into the medieval and early modern eras, when legal texts were augmented increasingly by documents and actual court cases, leaving a more robust evidence set for analysis. Once again the fellows invited scholars to expand the fellowship conversation over two days of online gathering. In addition to research by fellows, several visiting scholars delivered original papers: **Marina Rustow** (Princeton University), **Moshe Yagur** (Tel Aviv University), **Elisha Russ-Fishbane** (New York University), **Sarah Ifft Decker** (Rhodes College), **Verena Kasper-Marienberg** (North Carolina State University), **Gregor Schwarb** (Freie Universität Berlin), **Martin Borýsek** (University of Potsdam), **François Guesnet** (University College London), and **Rena Lauer** (Oregon State University). The volume for the year will be edited by **Natalie Dohrmann**, **Marc Herman**, and **Micha Perry**.

## 2020–2021 America's Jewish Questions

### Creative Disruptions: Reimagining American Jewish Studies

Having had their full fellowship online, the 2020–2021 fellows finally convened in person in June 2022 for a three-day retreat in Philadelphia, where they engaged in a series of workshops in intensive conversation on topics relevant to American Jewish history, ranging from race to globalism to the challenges of museum curation and narration. The volume for the year will be edited by **Lila Corwin Berman**, **Deborah Dash Moore**, and **Beth Wenger**.

### Public Programs

Each year, the Katz Center offers a range of programs for learners beyond the academy. The 2021–2022 public events were all held online, allowing us to connect scholars and audiences across the globe. We offered two ongoing thematic series of talks as well as mini-courses, individual programs, and a seminar for rabbis. Most public programs were recorded and are available to view on the Katz Center's YouTube channel.

### Canon in Context

The first series offered a bird's-eye view of major works of the Jewish legal canon through a set of seven lectures addressing the historical context of halakhic compilations and codes. Centuries of tradition treat the Mishnah, Talmud, and other texts as settled law and as contributions to rabbinic thought. But in their own eras, each one diverged in form and content from the Jewish writings of their time and place. Featured speakers included **Mira Balberg** (UC San Diego), **Simcha Gross** (Penn), **Shai Secunda** (Bard College), **Eve Krakowski** (Princeton University), **Alyssa M. Gray** (Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion), **Edward Fram** (Ben Gurion University of the Negev), and **Joshua Teplitsky** (Stony Brook University).



### Critical Race Studies

In this series, scholars of three distinct periods of Jewish history explored the complex trajectories of ideas about race and the cultural systems that support and enact them, in relation to the pressing questions of race studies today. The critical study of race burst into American politics in recent years, leaving many people seeking thoughtful and informed examinations of the issues. As an approach to understanding systemic inequality in the legal system, "critical race theory" has a specific purview, but it is connected to a wider attempt to decode the ways that race has been constructed and deployed in social, religious, and legal contexts across history. Scholars in Jewish studies have long queried the role of race in Jewish history, with recent work connecting ever more deeply to the critical study of race more broadly. Looking at the premodern world (**Dorothy Kim**, Brandeis University), the early modern Atlantic (**Aviva Ben-Ur**, University of Massachusetts Amherst), and this century in the U.S. (**Sarah Imhoff**, Indiana University Bloomington), the speakers asked two central questions: How is race a helpful lens for understanding the Jewish historical experience? And how does thinking about Jewish history inform large-scale questions about racial thinking and systemic racism?

## Single Lectures and Panels

The Katz Center had the pleasure of presenting a public lecture by **Menahem Ben-Sasson**, a Katz Center fellow and Chancellor of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He spoke about Israel's Declaration of Independence, its relationship to the founding and current laws of the State of Israel, and efforts to create a constitution, to which Ben-Sasson himself has contributed.

We also hosted a discussion among four distinguished scholars on the implications of the seemingly simple terms "community" and "continuity" in theory and practice. These two concepts have come to define Jewish belonging and influence institution-building, and have also shaped aspects of the field of Jewish studies. How do the notions of "community" and "continuity" include and exclude certain people and activities? How have they been influenced by and deployed in academic study, whether in terms of sociology, history, philosophy, ethnic studies, or gender? This panel featured **Gilah Kletenik** (Boston University), **Shaul Magid** (Dartmouth College), **Samira Mehta** (University of Colorado Boulder), and **Benjamin Schreier** (Pennsylvania State University).

## Mini-Courses

The Katz Center's online mini-courses examine special topics in Jewish studies in a setting comparable to a college seminar, taught by international faculty to small groups of adult learners. During the 2021-2022 fellowship year, we offered two such courses. Israel Prize-winner and past fellow **Edwin Seroussi** (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) offered a four-week tutorial on Judeo-Spanish (Ladino) songs; **Hamza M. Zafer** (University of Washington) taught about Arabian Judaism in the time of the rise of Islam.

## LEAP

The LEAP program is the fruit of a longstanding collaboration between the Katz Center and Clal, the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, serving to amplify Jewish studies research beyond the academy and provide professional development for religious leaders. Rabbinic participants drawn from diverse American Jewish communities gather three times over the course of each year to learn from scholars affiliated with the Katz Center. During the 2021-2022 academic year, participants explored premodern Jewish law and legal contexts with current fellows and staff, including **Marc Herman**, **Tirza Kelman**, **Natalie Dohrmann**, and **Steven Weitzman**, as well as guests such as past fellow **Andrew Berns** (University of South Carolina). We gratefully acknowledge the support for our public programs provided by the **Klatt family** and the **Harry Stern Family Foundation**.

## Summer School for Graduate Students

The Katz Center is engaged in an ongoing collaborative partnership with the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the University of Antwerp to offer a weeklong intensive course—a "summer school"—for graduate students in Jewish studies. After three summers in which the school was unfortunately cancelled due to Covid-19, it resumes in the summer of 2022 for a program in Jerusalem focused on the theme of "Crises, Change, and Creativity in Jewish Experience." Under the direction of **Elisheva Baumgarten** (Hebrew University), **Vivian Liska** (University of Antwerp), and Katz Center director **Steven Weitzman**, this summer's faculty include **Avraham Faust** (Bar-Ilan University), **Hadar Feldman Samet** (Tel Aviv University), **Keren Peleg Friedman** (College of Management), **Anna Hajklova** (Warwick University), **Tsafi Sebba-Elran** (University of Haifa), **Giddon Tickotsky** (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), and **Jeffrey Veidlinger** (University of Michigan).

We thank **Dr. Garry Rayant** and **Dr. Kathy Fields-Rayant** for their generous support of the summer school.

## The Jewish Quarterly Review

Established in America by Israel Abrahams and Claude Montefiore in 1889, the *Jewish Quarterly Review* is the oldest English-language journal in the field of Jewish studies. Today's *JQR*, housed at the Katz Center, is a leading publication in the field. It preserves the attention to textual detail so characteristic of the journal's early years while encouraging scholarship in a wide range of fields and time periods. In each quarterly issue the ancient stands alongside the modern, the historical alongside the literary, the textual alongside the contextual.

Recent issues have included forums on the state of Eastern European Jewish studies, the genre of the list as a historical source, and Jewish Latin America. We have published essays on topics ranging from the narrative art of the Babylonian Talmud (**Moshe Simon-Shoshan**) to the origins of the term "genocide" (**James Loeffler**), and including **Pinchas Roth** on Jewish knowledge and communal memory in late medieval Provence, **Sarah Abrevaya Stein** on the Ottoman Jewish diaspora, **Amit Gvaryahu** on tannaitic prescriptions for use and abuse of Roman coins, and **Allison Schachter** on images of women in the Yiddish writings of Sholem Aleichem and Abraham Cahan.

While most of *JQR*'s content is accessible only with a subscription [see [jqr.pennpress.org](http://jqr.pennpress.org)], the journal is also working to expand readership in multiple ways. Each issue features one essay that is completely open access for the first six months; see the Katz Center's blog for announcements about these essays and how to find them. The blog also features current content and commentary by the journal's editors and contributors, including a multi-part online forum on the current moment in Haredi culture and a discussion of the Russian war on Ukraine through the lens of Jewish history.

## Jewish Quarterly Review

## LIBRARY NEWS

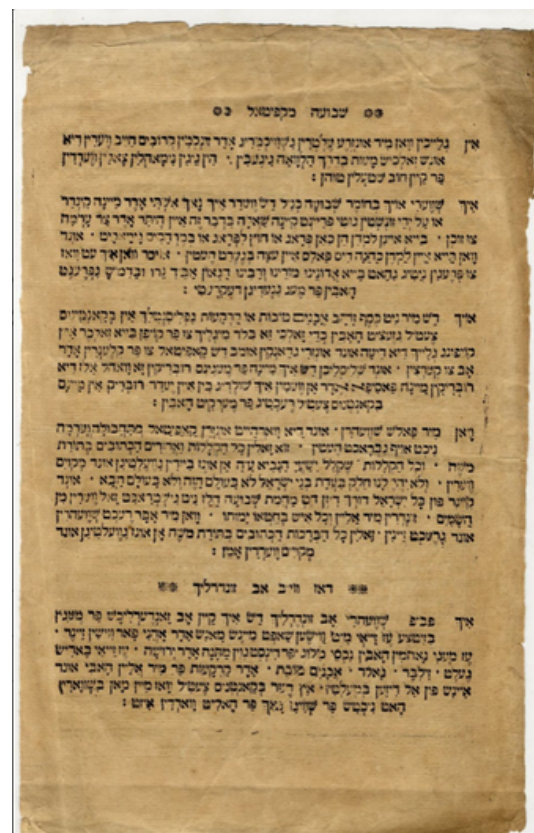
### JUDAICA AT THE PENN LIBRARIES

The Judaica collections at Penn—located at the Van Pelt–Dietrich Library Center, at the Library at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, at the Fisher Fine Arts Library, and at the University Museum—continued to grow as an integrated unit within the Penn Libraries system under the management of **Arthur Kiron, Schottenstein-Jesselson Curator of Judaica Collections**. The full-time staff of the Library at the Katz Center are **Dr. Bruce Nielsen**, Judaica Public Services Librarian and Archivist; and **Josef Gulka G70**, who manage circulation services at the Library at the Katz Center. **Smadar Shtuhl**, who diligently managed our Hebraica acquisitions remotely during COVID, has now taken another position in the Penn Libraries. Our part-time staff member, **Lido Giovacchini**, provided much needed staffing support, help with barcoding and expediting new acquisitions. The Center's staff responded to 468 public service contacts received by email, regular post, and by phone, paged and shelved more than 850 circulating volumes delivered to Van Pelt for loaning by mail, filled 183 scan requests, administered the consultation of 381 special collections requests for digitization, and filled hundreds of Faculty Express, Inter-Campus, Borrow-Direct and Inter-Library Loan (ILL) transactions.

### NEW JUDAICA COLLECTION GIFTS AND ACQUISITIONS

#### Special Acquisitions (selected highlights):

In partnership with Penn's Fine Arts Library, Penn's Judaica Collections successfully bid on works of dozens of 20th century Jewish and Israeli art books and exhibition catalogs from the library of the renowned Israeli poet Natan Zach. Our collection of research materials about the Land of Israel were enhanced by the purchase at auction, thanks to a generous gift by Library Board of Advisors member **Stephan Loewentheil**, of hundreds of photographs from Mandate Jewish Palestine. Our State of Israel holding also grew as we acquired through private sale an important collection of Israel Human Rights publications and received a related collection of faculty papers about Israeli politics and culture. We purchased numerous works of rare Judaica manuscripts and printed books. Among them was a handwritten diary kept by a Chicago Jewish immigrant, Abraham Anscher, who led an expedition to explore Southern Africa in 1883-1884. Our rare Middle Eastern Judaica collections grew, thanks to the **Elis and Ruth Douer Fund for Sephardic Studies**, with the successful acquisition of numerous unique Hebrew manuscripts treating halakhic, liturgical, and communal topics, including an amulet to protect against epidemic in support of an incoming faculty member's research interests. We purchased at auction the archive of Alberto Hemsí, the composer and choir conductor of the Eliyahu ha-Navi synagogue in Alexandria, Egypt. Our European Ashkenazic holdings were enhanced by several important acquisitions, including an extremely rare Hebrew oath printed in Prague in ca. 1740 that has already garnered scholarly attention. We acquired through private sale an extremely rare Russian atlas containing 55 large graphs and maps focused on the economic and 'moral' condition of the 19th century Jewish populations of the Russian Empire. **Benjamin Nathans**, the **Alan Kors Term Associate Professor** in the History department, described the data in this atlas as "among the richest anywhere - published or unpublished - for the topic and time period. It's an absolute treasure...this is really a bibliographic gem...getting [the Atlas] (is) a genuine coup." Yet another important historical acquisition was the bound, mimeographed typescripts of eight publications by the Polish-born Jewish lawyer Nehemiah Robinson, prepared between 1945-1950, concerning compensation and restitution of Jewish property after the Holocaust. Other significant acquisitions at auction include a rare Hebrew version of the oath sworn by Jews in gentile courts, printed in Prague in the mid-18th century and an early 20th century Jewish communal ledger book (*pinkas*) from Fall River, Massachusetts.

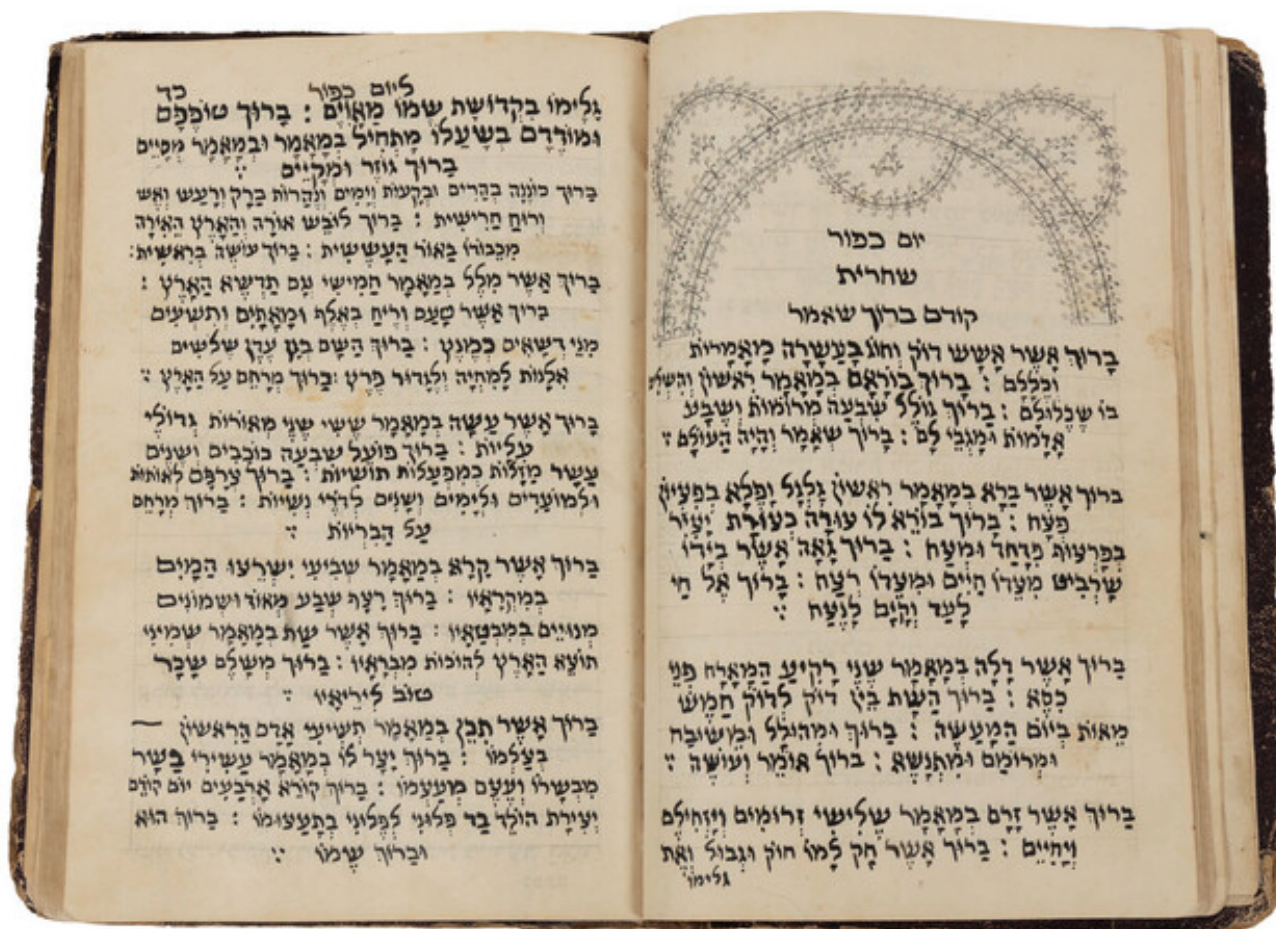


18th cent. Rare printed Hebrew version of the oath sworn by Jews in gentile courts. Barney and Eleanor Frommer Memorial Fund.

## LIBRARY NEWS

### BREAKING NEWS!!

We are delighted to announce the acquisition of a special collection of exhibition-quality, visually compelling and historically significant primary sources related to the history of Jews and Medicine. The collection comprises over 100 books, pamphlets and catalogs and over 1,000 items of ephemera. The earliest item in the collection dates from 1721 with the bulk of the collection dating from the mid-19th-early 20th centuries. It covers the first (*aliyah*) generation of Zionist immigrant physicians and the publication of their works. It also documents the scientific knowledge and cultural transfer that occurred through the establishment of medical organizations and distribution of printed information to Jews in *Eretz Yisra'el* regarding various illnesses and their prevention. This collection, which has been exhibited at the London Jewish Museum, formerly belonged to **Dr. Simon Cohen**, of London. Its private sale was facilitated by **Meron Eran** and the Kedem Auction House in Jerusalem. We are deeply grateful to **Dr. Aron Wahrman**, the Section Chief of Plastic Surgery at the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Philadelphia and Wilmington Veterans Administration Medical Centers, Associate Professor of Surgery in the Division of Plastic Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine and a Fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics at Penn, **Peggy Wahrman**, a career counselor and adjunct professor at the Community College of Philadelphia and Rosemont College, and their children for their generous support of this acquisition. The Wahrman Family has established the **Naomi and Henry Wahrman Judaica Collection**, in honor and memory of Dr. Wahrman's late father, a distinguished cantor and scholar who survived the Holocaust and his mother, who graduated from the Shulamith School and was a cherished wife, mother, and nanny. This acquisition of material about Jews and medicine forms a foundational part of the Wahrman Judaica Collection.



Hand-written Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur Machzor According to the Catalanian Custom. Elis and Ruth Douer Endowment for Sephardic Studies.

## LIBRARY NEWS

The Meir Rothchild Hospital in Jerusalem – Jerusalem, Late 19th Century – Garabed Krikorian. Rare Judaica Acquisitions Fund.



### Special Projects:

#### Conservation and Preservation:

As part of the Penn Libraries' Strategic Plan, the Preservation Team's Conservation Working Group (CWG) was charged with identifying needs and opportunities for strengthening the Libraries' conservation program and the care of physical collections in all formats and across all the Libraries' collections. **Arthur Kiron**, the Schottenstein-Jesselson Curator was invited by **Sarah Reidell**, the **Margy E. Meyerson Head of Conservation** to serve on this distinguished working group, whose report was developed within the framework of the Penn Libraries vision, mission, and strategic priorities. The members of the working group had expertise in conservation, exhibits, specialized librarianship, operations, and collections management from circulating, distinctive, and special collections.

#### Library at the Katz Center Stacks Management Project

A major project to address the near-capacity of items in the reading room and rare book room stacks of the Library at the Katz Center was accomplished over the summer of 2022. More than 10,000 volumes, including half of the contents of the Katz Center Rare Book Room were shifted to make room for new acquisitions.

## LIBRARY NEWS

### Special Projects: continued

#### SIMS-Katz Fellowship:

<https://schoenberginstitute.org/sims-herbert-d-katz-center-distinguished-fellow-in-jewish-manuscript-studies/>

**The SIMS / Herbert D. Katz Center Distinguished Fellowship in Jewish Manuscript Studies**, funded in part by the **David Ruderman Distinguished Scholar fund**, pairs a prominent scholar in any field of Jewish studies with a manuscript in one of our rare Judaica collections. The goal of the program is to bring distinguished scholars to the Penn Libraries to research the university's rich holdings in Judaic manuscript material. Fellows share their discoveries and expertise at a public lecture sponsored by the Jewish Studies Program at Penn. Working with **Lynn Ransom**, SIMS Curator, and **Natalie Dohrmann**, Associate Director of the Katz Center, **Arthur Kiron**, the Schottenstein-Jesselson Curator, helped to coordinate the fifth SIMS-Katz manuscript research fellowship, in partnership with **Steven Weitzman**, Director of the Katz Center, **Sean Quimby**, Director of the Kislak Center, and **Kathryn Hellerstein**, the Director of Penn's Jewish Studies Program.



Shalom Sabar

After numerous postponements due to COVID, this past year's lecture was finally held in the Fall 2022. **Shalom Sabar**, emeritus professor of Jewish art and folklore at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem who spoke about the subject "Jewish Art in the Muslim Realm: The Efflorescence of Ketubah Illustration in Iran and Afghanistan as Mirror to Jewish-Muslim Socio-Cultural Relationships," <https://www.library.upenn.edu/event/jewish-art-muslim-realm>. The presentation is now available on Youtube via this link: <https://youtu.be/Nnc8DqtOwyg>. Notably, the presentation drew attention to the **Benjamin Zucker Collection of Middle Eastern Ketubot**, examples of which were displayed in the Lea Library at the Kislak Center for public viewing after the lecture. Thanks to the generosity of Benjamin Zucker, who funded the digitization of the **Zucker Family Ketubah Collection**, it is now freely available in its entirety for viewing and downloading on OPenn, the Penn Libraries's open digital repository: <https://openn.library.upenn.edu/html/0051.html>.



KET Z32 Ketubah, 1838, Benjamin Zucker Family Ketubah Collection

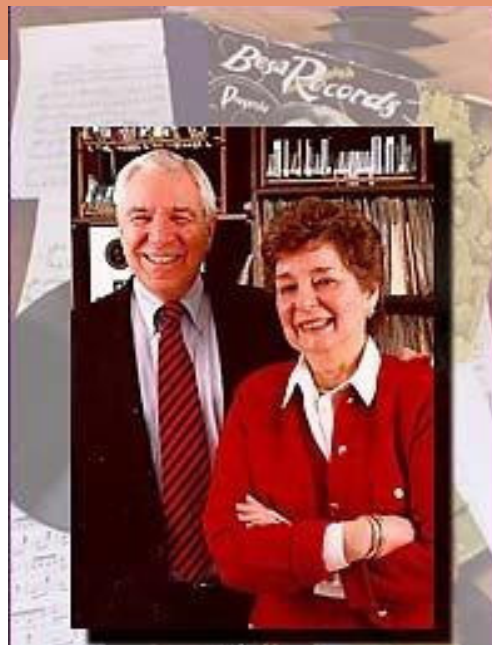


## LIBRARY NEWS

### Thank You!

We are especially happy to acknowledge and thank the following individuals for their gifts and donations during the last academic year [\* indicates the donor is a former Katz Center Fellow]:

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Molly Freedman, z"l, with Robert Freedman

### In Memoriam

Penn's Judaica Collections and the Jewish Studies Program mourn the passing of **Molly Freedman**. Molly was an integral part of our library community for more than two decades. She and her husband **Robert Freedman** served as volunteer curators of the world-famous Robert and Molly Freedman Jewish Sound Archive located in the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts at the Penn Libraries. Molly built the collection in lifelong partnership with her beloved husband Bob. Together they traveled the world in search of treasured Jewish sound recordings. She also helped catalog the Jewish sheet music collection in the Freedman Archive. Molly often would join Bob for countless class and community presentations. Molly was a bright light and joyful presence who brought warmth and kindness to all. We in the libraries are grief stricken by her loss and extend our sympathies and condolences to Bob, the Freedman family, and to all Molly's friends and admirers.

### The Robert and Molly Freedman Jewish Sound Archive

Located in Penn's Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the University of Pennsylvania. The Robert and Molly Freedman Jewish Sound Archive currently contains over 4,000 recordings, primarily in Yiddish and Hebrew.

Over 35,000 entries in the trilingual database catalog include the title of each track or band of the recording, author(s), composer(s) where known, and performers.

[http://sceti.library.upenn.edu/freedman/learn\\_intro.cfm](http://sceti.library.upenn.edu/freedman/learn_intro.cfm)

JULY 1, 2021 - JUNE 30, 2022

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Louise A. Strauss, C'82, *in memory of Mrs. Lone Apfelbaum Strauss*

## JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM PROFESSORS IN *PENN TODAY*:

[Penn Today: January 18, 2022](#)

### **From the archives, a class on different communities of Jews in China**

Kathryn Hellerstein created an opportunity for her first-year seminar students to study archival material from a collection donated to the Penn Libraries by her mentor, Israeli scholar Irene Eber.



[Penn Today: February 25, 2022](#)

### **Russia's attack on Ukraine, through the lens of history**

Historian Benjamin Nathans offers background on Putin's use of history in justifying his war in Ukraine

[Penn Today: April 4, 2022](#)

### **Inspiring the next generation of archive scholars**

Through Inside the Archive, a course taught by Liliane Weissberg of the School of Arts & Sciences, Penn students explore what an archive is, how history gets written, and what is ahead in a digital future.



[Penn Today: September 6, 2022](#)

### **The story the bowls tell**

In an ambitious new project, historian Simcha Gross and Harvard's Rivka Elitzur-Leiman are studying hundreds of ancient incantation bowls housed at the Penn Museum. They hope to better understand the objects and eventually, build a database of all these bowls worldwide.

[Penn Today: December 5, 2022](#)

### **At Penn Museum, a one-man show on Palestinian-Israeli identity**

'In Between' is an award-winning, semi-autobiographical one-man show by Ibrahim Miari that portrays the complexities and contradictions inherent in Palestinian-Israeli identity.





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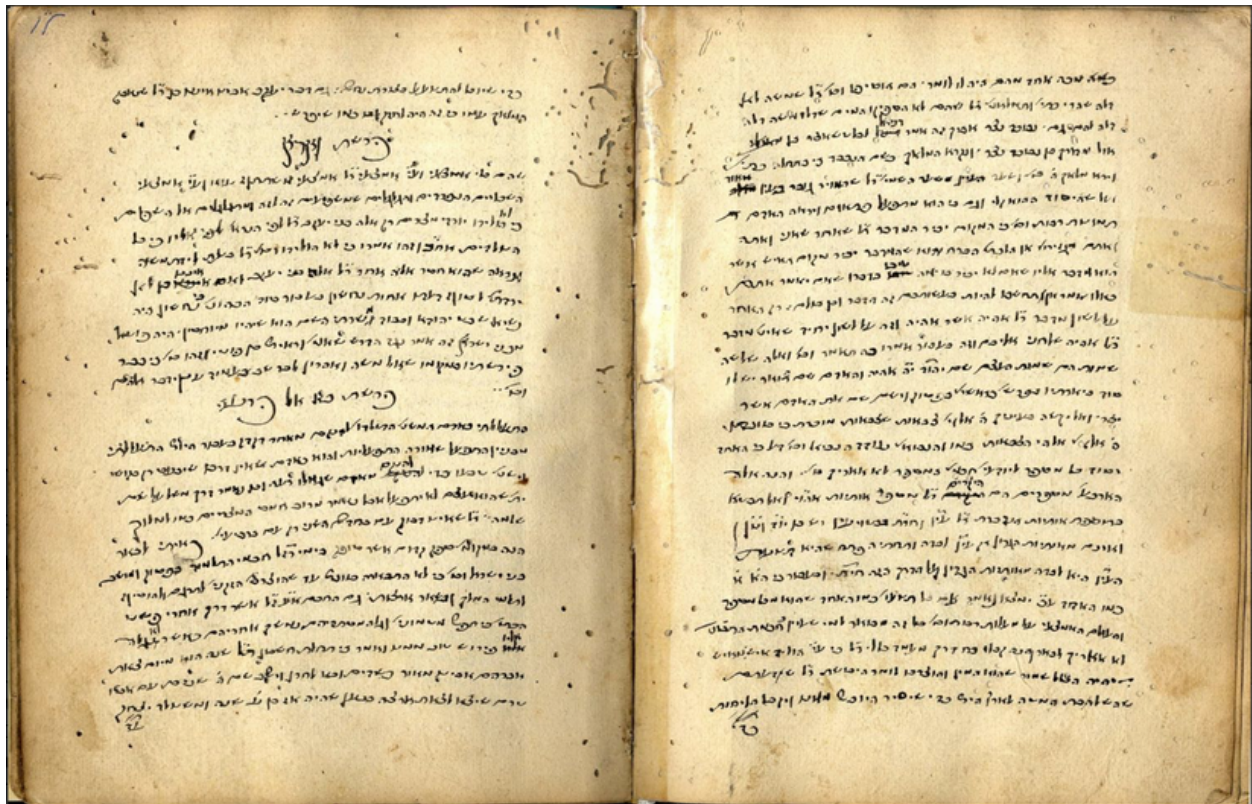
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