

FRANKELY SPEAKING



Jean & Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies

• August 2015



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A Time for Reflection, a Time for Action

By Jeffrey Veidlinger, Director of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies
and Joseph Brodsky Collegiate Professor of History and Judaic Studies



Photo by D.C. Goings

It is truly an honor to have been named director of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies. I am grateful to Deborah Dash Moore for a decade of superb leadership and for guiding the Frankel Center to the forefront of Judaic Studies. After only two years at the University of Michigan, I have already come to appreciate what an amazing and talented campus this is.

As I write, I am finishing a year as a fellow at the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies. Each year, the Institute brings together a group of Judaic Studies scholars from around the world to conduct research and write on a common topic while in residency at U-M. I was privileged to be one of the few local faculty members chosen by an international committee to participate in this learning community. I greatly appreciated the opportunity to step away from my teaching and administrative obligations and devote myself to study. I expect my fellowship to make a significant impact on both my scholarship and my teaching.

The experience attested to the benefits of focused study and collaborative group work away from the din of everyday distractions. This is one of the reasons that many American colleges and universities, like U-M, were established outside major metropolitan areas: to

allow students and scholars to form independent and reflective communities. In today's frenetic and hyperconnected world, that idea may seem quaintly outdated, but most of us would agree that we could all benefit from some time away from the daily grind. The residential university has an important role to play in making this possible for scholars and students alike.

We recognize that intercultural outreach and exposure to diverse ideas help develop creativity, civic-mindedness, and innovative thinking. We help our students develop the skills they need to think clearly and act wisely, and to recognize that there is a time for reflection and a time for action.

At the same time, I am also eager to return to my students, my colleagues, and a more active role within the community. Indeed, the Frankel Center not only offers opportunities for concentrated study, it is also — like U-M as a whole — a robust and spirited public space. The idea of a learning community that serves the public has always been at the forefront of Jewish thought as well as American educational policy. Hillel,

the ancient Jewish sage, is quoted in *Pirkei Avot* (Ethics of the Fathers) as rejecting the notion of monastic isolation: “*Al tifrosh min hatzibur*” (Do not distance yourself from the community), he commanded. Medieval rabbinical sages were expected not only to study, but also to serve their communities as judges, teachers, and leaders.

The Frankel Center embraces this model of “engaged learning.” By analyzing issues that matter to Americans — the Holocaust and genocide, Israel and the Middle East, religious faith, cultural pluralism, ethnic identity, and the Bible, to name but a few examples — the Frankel Center encourages students to wrestle with complex challenges, respond to ambiguous questions, and offer responsible and informed opinions. We recognize that intercultural outreach and exposure to diverse ideas help develop creativity, civic-mindedness, and innovative thinking. We help our students develop the skills they need to think clearly and act wisely, and to recognize that there is a time for reflection and a time for action.

I look forward to working with the outstanding students, inspiring faculty and fellows, skillful staff, and dedicated alumni that make the Frankel Center and the University of Michigan great. ■

Sarah Stroumsa: Hebrew Speaker, Arabic Scholar

Hebrew might be her mother tongue, but Sarah Stroumsa brings a distinct Arabic flavor to the Frankel Center this fall, when she will serve as the 2015–16 Louis and Helen Padnos Visiting Professor in Judaic Studies.

FRANKELY SPEAKING: Why did you choose to focus on Arabic and Islamic Studies?

STROUMSA: I started to study Arabic in a summer course before beginning my studies at Hebrew University, and by the end I was hooked: the beauty and richness of the language, the possibilities it opened for me, from medieval texts to contemporary media and everyday conversation, were wholly captivating. I am intrigued by the multi-religious, multi-ethnic medieval Arabic society, and by the exchange and transmission of ideas and knowledge between intellectuals in this society. One could say that it is important to study their ability to share a common culture despite their religious differences, or that it could serve as a model for modern-day conflicts. But this is not what draws me to this field, nor is this the reason why I think it is important. It is important because this field holds the keys to cultural and intellectual treasures. Getting to know them a little better is essential for understanding our own culture.

FS: What is unique about the Arabic language?

STROUMSA: Arabic has several dialects, for each one of which there is not just a different vocabulary and a different grammar, but sometimes

actually a slightly different language. The Arabic of poetry, philosophy, history, and religious texts is slightly different from the language of the media, and both are different from the dialects, both the modern and medieval ones. I found the elasticity of Arabic captivating.

FS: You've been teaching for nearly three decades. How have students changed over the years?

STROUMSA: Easier accessibility of higher education means many more students worldwide, and many more institutions of higher education of varying levels, all competing for these same students. As a result, the student body is more diverse socially and economically than it was half a century ago, but intellectually, these are students who are perhaps more of an elite group than before. Overall, I find many of the students in the last years technically less prepared (a fact related to the general quality of high school education), but often highly intelligent, curious, willing to work hard, and intellectually agile.

FS: What do you want people to learn from your lectures?

STROUMSA: I would like to convey the excitement and pleasure of research in the humanities. I work with sources that present themselves as one-dimensional, undisputed truths, be it the scriptures, later religious literature, historical sources, or philosophical texts. When we bring all these sources—Jewish, Christian, Muslim—together, they gain depth, and instead of a flat picture we begin to see a multi-

Fast Facts



Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin

Name: Sarah Stroumsa

Title: The Alice and Jack Ormut Professor of Arabic Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Notable Position: Served as Hebrew University's first female rector from 2008–2012

Education: BA and PhD, Hebrew University; *Elève Titulaire*, *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes*, Paris

Courses Taught: Jewish Thought in the Medieval Islamic World; Jewish Thinkers in Islamic Spain

dimensional, complex, and more understandable reality. In the study of the medieval world of Islam, the sophisticated picture we gain offers a tribute to the humanistic endeavor.

FS: What are you most looking forward to at U-M?

STROUMSA: I participated two years ago in a conference organized by Ryan Szpiech, which gave me the opportunity to see a vibrant intellectual environment, on a very high academic level, and with warm collegial contacts. I believe that this is what I will find at U-M, and am certainly looking forward to it. ■

Meet the 2015–16 Frankel

This fall, the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies will assemble an accomplished cohort of scholars who will conduct research around the theme of “Secularization/Sacralization.” Led by Scott Spector, U-M professor of history, German, and Judaic Studies, the group will present lectures, symposia, and other events to the public.

“I hope we will get an interdisciplinary, multi-era, and global conversation going that will tie the special concerns of Jewish secularism and holiness to the big questions about the place of faith in life that are being asked broadly today,” said Spector. “The whole idea of ‘secularization’ — that is to say, the assumed historical process of the modern world — is currently being thought about in completely new ways.”

We are delighted to welcome our new fellows.



Jeffrey Abt, Wayne State University

“Religious Ceremonials/Museum Artifacts: Rethinking Jewish Ritual Objects”

A professor in the James Pearson Duffy Department of Art and Art History at Wayne State University, Abt is also an artist whose works are exhibited throughout the United States and abroad. He studied at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Jerusalem and holds a BFA from Drake University. Abt is co-editor of the *Museum History Journal*, and is the author of numerous books, including *American Egyptologist: The Life of James Henry Breasted and the Creation of His Oriental Institute*. ■



Efrat Bloom, Northwestern University

“Walter Benjamin’s Secular Prayer”

Bloom is a visiting assistant professor at the Crown Family Center for Jewish and Israel Studies at Northwestern University. Her research interests include literatures of immigration and displacement, Jewish modernism, and translation theory. She earned her PhD in comparative literature and a graduate certificate in Judaic Studies from U-M. She also holds an MA in Hebrew literature from Columbia, and a BA in psychology and an MA in psychology and literature from the University of Haifa. ■



Marc Caplan, Center for Jewish History

“The Weight of an Epoch: Yiddish Modernism and German Modernity in the Weimar Era”

Caplan is a visiting faculty member at the Center for Jewish History, and has held appointments at Indiana University, the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, and Johns Hopkins University, as well as a visiting fellowship at the Universität Konstanz in Germany. A graduate of Yale and New York University, he is the author of *How Strange the Change: Language, Temporality, and Narrative Form in Peripheral Modernisms*, a comparison of Yiddish and African literatures. ■

Institute Fellows

“My project attempts to offer a new interpretive frame for reading Walter Benjamin’s work on translation by juxtaposing it with religious models of textual engagement. I am looking forward to discussing a somewhat experimental work with scholars from different fields.”

– Efrat Bloom



Jessica Dubow, University of Sheffield

“Thinking Outside the City Walls: Philosophy, Geography, and the Radicalism of Judaic Thought”

Dubow is a cultural geographer who teaches at the University of Sheffield in the UK. A native of South Africa, Dubow was educated at the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of London. Her research focuses on the intersections of spatial, aesthetic, and critical theory with an emphasis on the relationship between 20th-century Jewish European geography and philosophy. She is the author of *Settling the Self: Colonial Space, Colonial Identity and the South African Landscape*, as well as many articles. ■



Kirsten Fermaglich, Michigan State University

“A Rosenberg by Any Other Name”

Fermaglich is associate professor of history and Jewish Studies at Michigan State University. She is the author of *American Dreams and Nazi Nightmares: Early Holocaust Consciousness and Liberal America, 1957–1965*, and co-editor of the Norton Critical Edition of Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique*. She is currently researching the history of name changing in New York City in the 20th century for a book tentatively entitled *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name*. Fermaglich has won fellowships and grants from YIVO, the Posen Foundation, and the Association for Jewish Studies. ■



Shaul Kelner, Vanderbilt University

“Strategic Sacralization in American Jewish Politics: The Contradictions of Cultural Mobilization in the American Soviet Jewry Movement”

Kelner is associate professor of sociology and Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University. His research focuses on the intersection of politics, identity, and culture in contemporary American Jewish communities. Kelner served as director of Vanderbilt’s Program in Jewish Studies and is a member of the board of directors of the Association for Jewish Studies. He was also a fellow of Hebrew University’s Institute for Advanced Studies and a visiting scholar at Tel Aviv University. He is the author of the award-winning *Tours That Bind: Diaspora, Pilgrimage, and Israeli Birthright Tourism*. ■

2015–16 Frankel Institute Fellows (*continued*)



Miriamne Krummel, University of Dayton

“The Medieval Postcolonial Jew: In and Out of Time”

Krummel is associate professor of English at the University of Dayton whose research focuses on the medieval period. She is the author of *Crafting Jewishness in Medieval England: Legally Absent, Virtually Present*, which studies fanciful visions of the Jew in 11th- to 13th-century England. She earned her PhD at Lehigh University, her MA at Hunter College-CUNY, and her BA at the University of Connecticut. At present, she is co-editing a volume, *Teaching Representations of the “Other”: Jews in Medieval England*. ■



Michael Löwy, National Center for Scientific Research

“Secularization/Sacralization in Jewish-German Culture: Kafka, Benjamin, Bloch, Fromm”

Löwy is the emeritus research director at the CNRS (French National Center for Scientific Research), where he received a Silver Medal for lifelong achievement. He is a world-renowned French-Brazilian sociologist and philosopher whose books and articles have been translated into 29 languages. Some of his many published works include *Redemption and Utopia: Jewish Libertarian Thought in Central Europe*, and *Fire Alarm: Reading Walter Benjamin’s Thesis “On the Concept of History.”* His most recent book is *Ecosocialism: A Radical Alternative to Capitalist Catastrophe*. ■



Ariel Evan Mayse, Harvard University

“Expanding the Boundaries of Holiness: Conceptions of the Sacred in Modern Hasidic Spirituality”

Mayse, who recently earned his PhD in Jewish Studies from Harvard, has spent the past four years teaching and studying in Jerusalem. His research deals with expressions of mysticism in the 20th century, the formation of Hasidic literature, and the relationship between spirituality and law. He has published articles on Kabbalah and Hasidism, is co-editor of the two-volume *Speaking Torah: Spiritual Teachings From Around the Maggid’s Table*, and editor of *From the Depth of the Well: An Anthology of Jewish Mysticism*. ■



Eva Mroczek, University of California, Davis

“The Other David: Between the Tanach and the Palmach”

Mroczek, who holds a PhD from the University of Toronto, is assistant professor of premodern Judaism in the Department of Religious Studies at UC Davis. Her work explores early Jewish textual traditions of the Hellenistic and Roman world, with a focus on how the modern study of these sources developed. Her first book, *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (forthcoming in 2016), asks how early Jewish sacred writing was imagined and categorized before the concepts of “Bible” and “book” emerged. ■

“ My project will explore the ways in which modern Hasidic thinkers have conceptualized notions of the sacred, the profane, and the dynamic interface between the two. During my year in Ann Arbor, I hope to deepen—and broaden—my perspective by working closely with scholars from other time periods and disciplines. ”

– Ariel Evan Mayse



Photo by Luna Anna Archey

Scott Spector, University of Michigan

“The ‘Secularization Question’: Germans, Jews, and the Historical Understanding of Modernity”

Spector, this year’s head fellow, is a professor at the Frankel Center and also holds appointments in U-M’s Departments of History and Germanic Languages and Literatures. He is a cultural and intellectual historian of modern central Europe, specializing in Jewish culture. He earned his PhD from Johns Hopkins University, and has held fellowships at numerous prestigious institutions. Spector authored the award-winning *Prague Territories: National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka’s Fin de Siècle*, and co-edited *After the History of Sexuality: German Genealogies With and Beyond Foucault*. His forthcoming book is *Violent Sensations: Sexuality, Crime, and Utopia in Vienna and Berlin, 1860–1914*. ■



Guy Stroumsa, Hebrew University and University of Oxford

“The Secularized Study of the Abrahamic Religions in the 19th Century”

Stroumsa is the Martin Buber Professor Emeritus of Comparative Religion at Hebrew University, and Professor Emeritus of the Study of the Abrahamic Religions at the University of Oxford. His main interest is the religious history of the Mediterranean world and the Near East in late antiquity. He has published 11 books, edited or co-edited 19, and written more than 130 articles. His forthcoming book is *The Making of the Abrahamic Religions in Late Antiquity*. Stroumsa’s work has earned multiple honors, including the Humboldt Research Award and the Médaille d’Or de la Ville de Toulouse. ■



Photo by D.C. Goings

Genevieve Zubrzycki, University of Michigan

“Resurrecting the Jew: Philosemitism, Pluralism, and Secularism in Contemporary Poland”

Zubrzycki is associate professor of sociology; director of the Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies; and director of the Copernicus Program in Polish Studies at U-M. She is also chair-elect of the American Sociological Association’s Sociology of Culture Section. Zubrzycki studies national identity and religion, collective memory and mythology, and the debated place of religious symbols in the public sphere. Her books include the award-winning *The Crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland*, and a forthcoming historical ethnography of the secularization of French Canadian identity in the 20th century. ■

Rewarding Research

Just when we think we know all there is to know about studying Jews, along comes new student research that challenges our assumptions and forces us to rethink conventional beliefs. But rather than hesitating to upset the apple cart, our donors encourage, appreciate, and support such groundbreaking study. This month, we salute two of our student awardees and offer a glimpse of research that is truly at the forefront of Judaic Studies.



Sarah Garibova

*Recipient of the
Marshall Weinberg Prize*

ABOUT HER RESEARCH: “My dissertation project focuses on Jewish mourning practices in the Soviet Union after World War II. During those decades, Soviet Jews confronted the impossible task of mourning the losses of the Holocaust while mourning those who died natural deaths in the postwar era. My research shows how Jewish identities and practices after the war became a question of partial observance, improvised substitutes, hybrid innovations, and misremembered traditions.”

HOW IT'S CONDUCTED: “My work draws on archival documents, material objects such as gravestones and memorials, oral history interviews, and memoirs. By interfacing these sources, I argue that a distinctly Jewish burial culture did persist in the Soviet Union after World War II, albeit one based on fragmentary knowledge of Jewish customs.”

ABOUT STUDYING AT U-M: “When applying to graduate programs, I was immediately drawn to U-M’s reputation as a national hub for Yiddish Studies. I found that the Frankel Center’s faculty was incredibly welcoming and supportive of my interests.”

BOTTOM LINE: “My dissertation illuminates the ways that individuals, families, and communities can respond to traumatic events and changing social realities through ritual innovation and adaptation. It also explores the role of physical objects and the ritual practices surrounding them in shaping the landscape of memory.” ■

The Marshall Weinberg Prize is awarded to an outstanding graduate student with the potential to make a significant contribution to Judaic Studies.



Sam Shuman

*Recipient of the
Stanley Frankel Summer Fellowship*

ABOUT HIS RESEARCH: “My research revolves around one economic node in the global diamond industry: Antwerp. It examines the recent rise in economic power by Gujarati diamond merchants and the concomitant loss of control by Hasidic merchants over the industry. Over the summer, I am traveling to Antwerp to investigate how the local Hasidic community and workforce has been transformed by this economic collapse and the tales that Hasidim tell to narrate the collapse.”

HOW IT'S CONDUCTED: “Ultimately, my dissertation will be comparative in nature—necessitating that I shuttle between the family firms and neighborhoods of Hasidic and Gujarati diamond merchants, trace their respective transnational kinship networks, and chart the networks of trust that have adhered and dissolved into mistrust over time.”

ABOUT STUDYING AT U-M: “I came to U-M because it houses one of the finest anthropology departments and Judaic Studies programs in the world. There are few places in the United States where there are anthropology students researching Jewish communities. Thankfully, U-M is one of them.”

BOTTOM LINE: “I want my work to be legible to both scholars in Jewish studies and in anthropology. Most Jewish Studies academics don’t ask how neoliberalism has affected Jewish labor, and most anthropologists don’t ask how economic precariousness looks different when you’re living in an insular religious community.” ■

The Stanley Frankel Summer Fellowship is for BA and PhD students who wish to pursue research in Judaic Studies during the summer in Europe, Israel, or Latin America.

A Culture of Giving

Is it better to give 1,000 coins to one person, or to give one coin to 1,000 different people?

Maimonides opined that it is far better to give smaller amounts of money 1,000 different times, because by doing so, one can become accustomed to giving on a regular basis. In Judaism, small acts of charity—even just contributing pennies, nickels, and dimes—cultivate generosity and ultimately build a culture of giving.

A new exhibit at the Frankel Center offers a glimpse of this culture by presenting *pushkes*, or *zedakah* (charity) boxes, from around the world. The 40 charity boxes, on display through September 10, are from the Jewish Heritage Collection Dedicated to Mark and Dave Harris, a unique assemblage of books, ephemera, artwork, and objects of everyday and religious significance in Jewish life. Housed in the University Library's Special Collections Library, the Jewish Heritage Collection is the gift of Constance and the late Theodore Harris.

“The significance of Jewish charity,” noted Constance Harris, “is that, unlike in many other cultures, giving is an obligation rather than an act of benevolence.”

According to Elliot H. Gertel, the Irving M. Hermelin Curator of Judaica in the University Library, *pushkes* may date back to the Middle Ages, when such boxes circulated through homes and synagogues. By the 20th century, *pushkes* for every conceivable type of charitable organization could be found in homes, shops, synagogues, schools, offices, and institutions.

Examples of many different versions can be seen at the exhibit, including several of the popular Jewish National Fund “blue box.” Other *pushkes* on display include a South African Jewish War Appeal Relief Supplies box, meant for Jews in displaced persons camps after World War II; a *pushke* fashioned from a shofar; and an elaborate metal and glass *zedakah* box created by artist Gary Rosenthal.

“I hope that visitors to the exhibit will be touched by memories of parents and grandparents who dropped precious dimes and quarters into these modest boxes,” said Harris, “knowing that their small offerings would be translated into caring for their own.” ■



Pushkes included in the exhibit are shaped as a log cabin, New York's Central Synagogue, a shofar, and a twelve-sided figure; and are created from tin, porcelain, and wood.

Resistance in Red

The Nazis had murdered families and destroyed communities — and Jews in the Soviet Union were determined to fight.

Their inspiring story of perseverance will be explored at a Frankel Center symposium slated for October 25. Titled “Resistance in Red: Soviet Jewish Combatants in World War II,” the event will examine the approximately 500,000 Soviet Jews who fought in the Red Army during the war, of whom only 300,000 survived.

“Approximately one-third of the victims of the Holocaust were killed on Soviet soil,” said Jeffrey Veidlinger, director of the Frankel Center and a co-organizer of the event. “These victims were also the first mass casualties of the Holocaust. Yet many Soviet Jews today prefer to remember the war through the perspective of victory rather than victimhood.”

Veidlinger explained that the war experience was unique for Soviet Jews. “They knew what they were fighting for,” he said, “and they understood the consequences of failure.”

The symposium will bring five scholars to campus: Polina Barskova of Hampshire College, Olga Gershenson of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Elana Jakel of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Anna Shternshis of the University of Toronto, and Lenore Weitzman of George Mason University. They will participate in roundtable discussions with Frankel faculty members and symposium co-organizers Zvi Gitelman, Mikhail Krutikov, and Jeffrey Veidlinger

about the Jewish military experience in the Soviet Union during the war, and about the Holocaust in the Soviet Union. U-M professors Ben Paloff and Ron Suny will serve as moderators.

The symposium will conclude with the North American premiere of the newly discovered 1966 Soviet film, *Eastern Corridor*. One of the first films produced about the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, the Soviet government withdrew it from theaters soon after its release for failing to conform to the Party line on the war. The Frankel Center has funded its subtitling and restoration, in collaboration with Gershenson, who discovered the film and will introduce it. U-M’s Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies, International Institute, Institute for the Humanities, and Office of Research are co-sponsoring the symposium.

The event will also kick off a multimedia exhibit about Soviet Jews in the Red Army during World War II that will be on display at the Hatcher Gallery from October 25 to December 15. The exhibit will contain materials from the New York-based Blavatnik Archive, which collects documents, personal letters and diaries, photographs, postcards, periodicals, and oral testimonies pertaining to the Jewish experience in the Soviet military. The Blavatnik Archive is also a co-sponsor of the symposium.

“The Blavatnik exhibition,” said Gitelman, “gives a voice to the Soviet Jewish combatants, and tells a powerful story that people of all generations should see and hear.” ■

SAVE THE DATE

“Resistance in Red: Soviet Jewish Combatants in World War II”

October 25

Symposium: 1:30–5 pm
Hatcher Graduate Library Gallery
913 S. University Ave.

Film: 6–8 pm
UMMA Stern Auditorium
525 S. State St.

Free and open to the public



“For honor, for the motherland, for freedom! Onward to our victory!” Artist M. A. Andreev. Postcard.



Soviet bombardment of oil refineries in Ploiesti [Romania]. Artist V. P. Belkin. Postcard.

MAZEL TOV!

Graduate Students

Beth Dwoskin's "'Dos Lid funem Hemd': A Yiddish Translation of a Classic Victorian Poem," appeared in *Zutot* 12:1.

Joanna Mazurkiewicz wrote and directed "Wooden Wars," a new Yiddish play.

Sam Ujdak received the Simeon Brinberg Outstanding Student Award.

Alumni

Moshe Kornfeld is the 2015–16 Postdoctoral Fellow in the University of Colorado Boulder Program in Jewish Studies.

Ben Pollak will be a language lecturer in NYU's Expository Writing Program this fall.

Ronit Stahl received a 2014 ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award. Her article, "The Fallacy of State-Coerced Marriage Officiants: A Primer from the Military Chaplaincy," appeared in *The Huffington Post*.

Past Fellows

Leora Auslander was named the Arthur and Joann Rasmussen Professor of Western Civilization at the University of Chicago. Her article, "Deploying Material Culture to Write the History of Gender and Sexuality: The Example of Clothing and Textiles," appeared in the Fall 2014 issue of *Clio: Femmes, Histoire, Genre*.

Ben Baader co-organized a conference, "Grammars of Coherence and Difference: Jewish Studies through the Lens of Gender Studies," at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, along with past fellows Chaya Halberstam and Lisa Silverman.

Lila Corwin Berman's new book is *Metropolitan Jews: Politics, Race, and Religion in Postwar Detroit* (2015).

Sara Feldman is now a Hebrew and Yiddish lecturer at the Program in Jewish Culture and Society at the University of Illinois. Her article, "Jewish Simulations of Pushkin's Stylization of Folk Poetry," appeared in *Slavic and East European Journal*.

Richard Kalmin was elected as a fellow of the American Academy of Jewish Research.

Reuven Kiperwasser's latest article is "Irano-Talmudica III: Giant Mythological Creatures in Transition from the Avesta to the Babylonian Talmud," which appeared in *Orality and Textuality in the Iranian World: Patterns of Interaction Across the Centuries* (2015).

Gil Klein's article, "Squaring the City: Between Roman and Rabbinic Urban Geometry," appeared in *Phenomenologies of the City: Studies in the History and Philosophy of Architecture* (2015).

Rachel Kranson's article, "'To Be a Jew on America's Terms is Not to Be a Jew at All': The Jewish Counterculture's Critique of Middle Class Affluence," was published in the *Journal of Jewish Identities* (July), as part of a special issue called "Jewish Youth in the Global 1960s."

Marjorie Lehman's article, "Rabbinic Masculinities: Reading the Ba'al Keri in Tractate Yoma," appeared in *Jewish Studies Quarterly* (22:2).

Ken Wald was named the Shoshana Shier Distinguished Visiting Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto. His latest article is "The Choosing People: Interpreting the Puzzling Politics of American Jewry," in *Politics and Religion* (March).

Beth S. Wenger was elected the new chair of the Center for Jewish History's Academic Advisory Council. She was also named a fellow of the American Academy of Jewish Research.

Hannah Wirth-Nesher was guest editor of a special issue of the academic journal *Poetics Today* on the topic of modern Yiddish studies.

Faculty

In May, **Sara Blair** discussed an Israel Museum exhibition, "Richard Avedon: Family Affairs," on a panel at the National Museum of American Jewish History.

Deborah Dash Moore gave a lecture at Florida International University on "Building Miami Beach with Jewish Flair," as part of Miami Beach's centennial celebration.

Todd Endelman spoke on "Saló Baron on the Transformative Power of Early

Capitalism," at a conference at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland.

Zvi Gitelman's latest article is "Jewish Partisans in Belorussia: Context, Conflict, and Comparison," in *SSSR v vtoroi mirovoi voine: okkupatsiia, kholokost, stalinizm* (2014). He lectured at the Berlin Jewish Museum, Tel Aviv University, University of Pittsburgh, Central European University, and the University of Virginia.

Devi Mays was awarded the 2015 Latin American Jewish Studies Association Dissertation Award.

Rachel Neis participated in the "Grammars of Coherence and Difference: Jewish Studies through the Lens of Gender Studies" conference at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. She also presented a paper on "Rabbinic Makings of the Human" at a conference, "At the Crossroads: New Directions in the Study of Rabbinic Literature," at Northwestern University.

Ryan Szpiech's book, *Conversion and Narrative: Reading and Religious Authority in Medieval Polemic*, received the 2015 La Corónica International Book Award for the best monograph published on Medieval Hispanic Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. His latest book is *Medieval Exegesis and Religious Difference: Commentary, Conflict, and Community in the Premodern Mediterranean* (2015). He also published "The Disputation of Barcelona as a Turning Point" in *Studia Lulliana* 54; and "'Petrus Alfonsi... Erred Greatly': Alfonso of Valladolid's Imitation and Critique of Petrus Alfonsi's Dialogus," in *Petrus Alfonsi and His Dialogus: Background, Context, Reception*.

Jindřich Toman recently lectured on "Why Be a Beggar in Foreign Lands? Local Identity in Bohemian Jewish Literary Sources from the 1830s–1840s" at Prague's Jewish Museum.

Jeffrey Veidlinger was elected associate chair of the Center for Jewish History's Academic Advisory Council.

Esther Shachar-Hill won the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award.

University of Michigan Frankel Center for Judaic Studies

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Save the Date!

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Visiting Professor Sarah Stroumsa will deliver the Ann Arbor Padnos Lecture, **"Passages: Between Acculturation and Conversion in Islamic Spain,"** 4 pm at 202 S. Thayer St., Room 2022.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20

John Efron of UC-Berkeley will speak on **"Sephardic Aesthetics and the Ashkenazic Imagination,"** 4 pm at 202 S. Thayer St., Room 2022.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25



Cadet Avraham Levin, third row from bottom, on left. Brest, Belarus.1940.

"Resistance in Red: Soviet Jewish Combatants in World War II,"
at Hatcher Graduate Library Gallery, 913 S. University Ave.
(see page 10 for details).

For more information about our events, visit lsa.umich.edu/judaic or follow us on Facebook and Twitter (UM Judaic Studies)

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