LEARN. EXPLORE. IMMERSE YOURSELF IN ISRAEL & JEWISH STUDIES.

The Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies is Columbia University’s center for the academic study and discussion of Jewish life, history, and culture. Explore the length, breadth, and diversity of the Jewish experience with IIJS.

Visit iijs.columbia.edu for more information.
P: 212-854-2581 | E: iijs@columbia.edu
Dear Friends,

I am pleased to report that the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies at Columbia University is flourishing on many fronts. IIJS is brimming with activity, from lunchtime lectures featuring notable scholars, to lively debate among our faculty, and students joining us for intimate dialogue with renowned experts in their field. If you haven’t visited, come see our beautiful space at the top of Kent Hall. We thank artist Mark Podwal for adding color and warmth to our space by graciously arranging for a selection of his prints to be displayed on our walls. Beyond our physical space, IIJS’ impact can be felt around the Morningside campus.

The role of an Institute within a University is to foster intellectual conversation that transcends departmental and disciplinary lines. This is precisely the aim of all our activities. Large and diverse institutions, with all their intellectual resources, can often feel alienating or cold. Our goals are to foster intellectual community, first and foremost for our students and faculty, to build bridges to other entities on and beyond our campus, and to embrace the larger community around us. At IIJS, we do this by focusing on our students and their scholarship.

• Our undergraduate students flock to classes to study Hebrew and Yiddish language and literatures, Jewish History, Religious Studies, the Middle East, and Jewish Thought, in courses that range from antiquity to contemporary issues.

• Some two dozen graduate students in various departments convene for mutual support and intellectual community under the guidance of Yiddish Dr. Agi Legutko. The M.A. in Jewish Studies program, started in 2014, has been attracting students of high caliber from many corners of the US and the around the world, due in no small part to the caring oversight of Dr. Yitzhak Lewis.

Our Institute is also very fortunate to benefit from the Judaiaca collection at Columbia, the second largest collection of Hebrew and Jewish language manuscripts in the Americas. Our ever knowledgeable Norman E. Alexander Librarian of Jewish Studies, Michelle Chesner, supports the work of students, faculty, and researchers the world over. This past semester I had the pleasure of co-teaching a graduate seminar on the history of the Jewish book, with Michelle, in the Rare Book and Manuscripts division of Butler Library. The riches that we discover in each session are beyond compare. One student told our colleague—"I wish this course would never end.”

Please continue to show that you care about a flourishing Jewish intellectual life at Columbia: attend our events, drop us a line, and support our students and the Institute as generously as possible.

Sincerely,

Elisheva Carlebach
Director, Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies
Salo Wittmayer Baron Professor of Jewish History, Culture and Society
Looking Back on Summer 2018

This past summer, undergraduates and graduate students explored the depth and breadth of Jewish culture, literature, and history with support from the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies.

Thanks to the generous funding from the Naomi Foundation, the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies, together with the Department of Germanic Languages, ran a successful second year of the Naomi Fellowship, offered to Columbia University and Barnard College Yiddish students in the summer of 2018. The five Naomi Fellows completed the first part of the program, the Naomi Prawer Kadar International Yiddish Summer Program at Tel Aviv University, and arrived in Poland for the second part of the program: a week-long study trip—“Exploring Yiddishland”—led by Prof. Agi Lugutko. (Read more about Agi on page 16.)

The “Exploring Yiddishland” study trip focused on some of the key sites of Yiddishland, the borderless space once centered in Poland, where Yiddish culture flourished for centuries: Krakow, Lublin, Zamość, Chelm, and Warsaw. The experience involved learning about the Yiddish history of each place but also on connecting with the Yiddish present. In each of the cities, students encountered the contemporary Yiddish scene—meeting with Polish Yiddishists and researchers who engage in Yiddish scholarship. The essay below is one student’s reflection on this experience.

ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER IN LUBLIN

By Pamela Brenner

When our journey first began in Krakow, Prof. Agi Lugutko bought a copy of Bashevis’s The Magician of Lublin in the Galicia Museum. Asking us who wants to read it first, I immediately responded, eager to finish as much as I could before our arrival in Lublin. Growing up, Bashevis was a household name, as he lived a few blocks from where my mother grew up, and my grandparents traveled with him to Sweden to accept the Nobel Prize in 1978. But while our bookshelves were stocked with his short stories and novels, the only story I could remember reading was Mayer Tsihevis (A Tale from Tsihevis) for a college course. And thus, I began to read Bashevis in Krakow. By the time we arrived in Lublin, I had only gotten through 30 pages, but was already hooked. Immersed in the world of nineteenth-century Poland, I could envision the interactions between Yasha Mazur, the tightrope-walking Jewish protagonist, and his Jewish and non-Jewish friends and lovers. For Yasha, each home provided a new opportunity for love, adventure and escape. While he was torn between his Jewish identity and the opportunities available if he abandoned his faith, Yasha’s tension arose because of the multicultural context in which he found himself. The Magician of Lublin paints a picture of a world that was written after it was already destroyed.

Even though the Jewish Lublin exists no longer, remnants of its Jewish past are being brought to life in innovative ways. Walking into the town square, the first thing that caught my eye was a tightrope walker on a statue of a tightrope walker walking over the buildings. But while that statue bears a strong resemblance to Yasha Mazur, right next to the statue was a real tightrope walker! We had come just in time to catch the end of the Carnival of Magicians in Lublin, an exciting time for the town. Overpopulated with visitors, each nook and cranny was filled with magicians, performers, and spectators. After oohing and aahing at some of the performances, we met with Witek Dobrowolski, director of the Retracing I.B. Singer Festival. Inspired by Bashevis’ stories that take place in 30 towns across Poland, Witek established the Festival Śladami Singera, as it’s known in Polish, to return some of the magic to the settings of those stories. The festival provides an opportunity for Poles to learn about the history of their towns, explore the world of pre-Holocaust Jewish Poland, and enjoy performances by world-class artists. Witek is not alone in his mission; he works for the Brama Grodzka (Grodzka Gate) Project, a cultural center in Lublin tasked with preserving the memory of the town’s 45,000 Jewish residents prior to World War II. Under the auspices of Tomasz Pietrasiewicz, the Project is located on the site of the historic gate that divided the Christian and Jewish quarters of the city, representing a multicultural meeting point. In addition to documenting the history of Jewish Lublin and its demise, the group, also known as the NN Theatre, puts on performances of Jewish stories in Polish. Entirely run by Poles, the Brama Grodzka represents the fact that there are no Jews left in Lublin to tell their own stories. Tomasz and Witek, inspired by Singer’s portrayal of a multicultural Poland, are doing wonders to restore, in whatever ways possible, the memory of a community in which Jews and Poles lived side-by-side. Bashevis, who was adamant about writing solely in Yiddish, and sharply focused on depicting Jewish Poland, could not have imagined the impact that his works would have on Poles who see his tales as part of their own national history. Now a symbol of the possibility of multicultural unity, Yasha Mazur and the worlds in which he lived provides an opening for Jews and Poles to connect with each other and rebuild with love a world that was destroyed through hate. As long as people like Tomasz and Witek continue working to interweave Jewish and Polish history and culture, I can hope for a brighter future.

Pamela Brenner, a Manhattan native, is a Yiddish Studies major at Barnard College. She is a YIVO Research Fellow and serves as president of the Yiddish Club of Columbia/Barnard Hillel. In addition to her academic interests, Pamela is involved in various Torah study initiatives. She is an alumna of the Migdal Oz Beit Midrash for Women.

The Magician of Lublin

The Magician of Lublin paints a picture of a world that was written after it was already destroyed.

Isaac Bashevis Singer

Agnieszka and Witek Dobrowolski, director of the Retracing I.B. Singer Festival, explain the importance of the festival and its mission to students on a study trip to Lublin.

The Festiwal Śladami Singera (Festival of Memories) in Lublin, Poland, is inspired by Bashevis’ stories that take place in 30 towns across Poland.
UNDERGRADUATE ISRAEL FELLOWSHIP

In the Summer of 2018, 29 students took part in the IIJS Undergraduate Israel Fellowship. As part of the Fellowship, students take part in pre-professional and academic programs and learning opportunities coordinated by the Institute in Israel and return to campus and take part in informal learning opportunities that range from film screenings to close encounters with renowned scholars. In addition, students create a community of learners engaged in Israel Studies.

WHERE THEY WERE BASED

- Jerusalem: 34.6%
- Tel Aviv: 26.9%
- Other: 26.9%

WHAT THEY DID

- Research: 38.5%
- Study: 11.5%
- Internships: 26.9%
- Educational Programs: 24.9%

Institutional/Financial Facts

- Educational Programs in Israel

Educational Programs

- Gershon Gorenberg on Israeli settlements
- Screening of In Her Footsteps with Director Rana Abu-Fraiha
- Asaf Zamir on local Tel Aviv municipality
- African Refugee Development Center Tel Aviv walking tour
- Rabbi Aaron Leibowitz on “Hashgacha Pratit” (Alternative Kosher Supervision Project)
- Jerusalem Graffiti Tour

I interned and conducted research for the Abba Eban Institute for International Diplomacy headed by Ambassador Ron Prosor.

I gained a better understanding of the Israeli startup ecosystem and entrepreneurship in Israel.

Internship with Itach Maakei Women Lawyers for Social Justice... I worked on comparative research projects about Gender Mainstreaming and Sexual Assault in the healthcare system.

I was a student at Hebrew University’s Rothschild Summer Program, where I took the Intensive Arabic Course.

I worked as an Analyst at Cukierman & Co. Investment House and Yafa Capital, where I conducted research of the Israeli AI Industry.

I interned at a startup called GoWith, based in the startup accelerator in the Ariel College of Engineering.

As a result of the fellowship…

- 65% of 2018 Fellows plan to read a book related to Israel and Jewish Studies
- 73% of 2018 Fellows plan to attend a cultural event related to Israel and Jewish Studies
- 85% of 2018 Fellows plan to attend an IIJS public program
- 100% of 2018 participants would recommend the fellowship to a friend

Thank you from the Fellows

I'm really glad this fellowship exists and I'm so glad I got to take part in it! Thank you!

I really had a great summer! Thank you for helping to make it possible.
Dr. Daniel Herskowitz is joining IIJS for the 2018-19 academic year as the Rabin-Shvidler Postdoctoral Fellow. Herskowitz recently graduated from the Department of Theology and Religion at the University of Oxford in 2018 and completed his dissertation, titled Which God will Save Us? Jewish Receptions of Martin Heidegger’s Philosophy. His articles have been published or accepted for publication in various peer-reviewed journals, including Modern Theology, Journal of Religion, New German Critique, Jewish Quarterly Review, International Journal for Philosophy of Religion, AJS Review, and Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy.

How did you get involved with Jewish Studies?
I guess I was always interested in ‘Jewish studies’, from Tanakh and Talmud to Jewish history, philosophy, and literature. It took me a while to get into ‘Jewish studies’ academically, though. My BA and MA degrees were in history and philosophy, but my master’s thesis, while written in the philosophy department, was finally dedicated to a ‘Jewish’ topic. My dissertation, written in the department of Theology and Religion at the University of Oxford, was on Jewish receptions of Martin Heidegger’s philosophy.

You taught a class this Fall called “Heidegger and the Jews”. Is there a fact or something surprising that people may not know about this topic?
I think that often, what people may know about the German philosopher Martin Heidegger is that he was a Nazi. That is of course – sadly – true. But I think it is interesting that one can make a good case for the claim that he was also the single most influential philosophical figure on 20th century European Jewish thought. It’s pretty striking how so many central Jewish thinkers thought that this philosopher, who is not only challenging philosophically, but also morally, had to be confronted and grappled with in a serious manner. Maybe another surprising thing that people may not know is that Heidegger studied Hebrew when he was a young student. I actually discovered the letter where he admits that he used to know the language but has forgotten it since.

What are you currently researching?
I’m currently writing a little more on Heidegger and Jewish thought and then will start looking into my next research project: the philosophical, theological, and political horizons of a number of modern appropriations of Maimonides. I want to explore how the Rambam was portrayed and utilized in modern contexts, despite structural differences between Aristotelian and post-Kantian thinking.

What are you most looking forward to teaching in your Spring course?
I’m looking forward to teaching an introductory seminar on modern Jewish thought, from Spinoza to Levinas and feminist theology. It’ll be great to read all these classical texts again and try to think about them in a fresh way.

You’re hosting a dinner party – who would you invite from any point in history?
Well, probably my great-grandchildren or something like that.
NOA TSAUSHU
Second Year Ph.D. Student, Germanics

“I wanted to put in writing how wonderful of an experience it was to have Chana Kronfeld here for both a lecture and a workshop. I’ve been following her work for years and I am always amazed by her sharp analytic skills, original ideas and passion for Jewish literature. Her visit provided an intimate insight to all these and more and allowed us to connect in an informal and friendly manner... During the workshop we got a taste of her new book (in progress) and I am grateful for the IIJS for allowing us to keep up with the forefront of scholarship in the field of Jewish Studies.”
**Erez Degolan**

Erez Degolan is a third year Ph.D. student in Religion, with a concentration in classical rabbinic literature and late antique Mediterranean history. He was recently named the Morton Smith Fellow for 2018-19 through Columbia University’s History Department. With support from IJS, Degolan presented a paper at the Oxford Symposium for Religious Studies and was selected to present work at the 2018 American Academy for Jewish Research’s Graduate Student Seminar. Degolan recently published a book review and an essay on the Ancient Jew Review website.

**Aleksandra Jakubczak**

Aleksandra Jakubczak is a second year Ph.D. student of Jewish History based in the History Department. With support from IJS, she participated in a May 2018 workshop for young scholars of Eastern European and Russian Jewry at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Jakubczak presented a paper “Protecting the Jewish Daughters: Moral Panic and the Jewish Anti-Trafficking Campaign, 1880-1914.” In June 2018, she attended another workshop for young scholars of the history and culture of Polish Jewry organized by the Historical Society of Israel in Zichron Yaakov, Israel. Her IJS summer fellowship allowed her to conduct research in the National Library of Israel and the Central Archives for the History of Jewish People in Jerusalem. Currently, as an IJS Bloom Fellow, she is working on her master’s thesis “Protecting the Jewish Daughters: Migration, Trafficking, and the Fears of Polish Jews in the 1920’s.”

**Sandra Chiritescu**

Sandra Chiritescu is a fifth year Ph.D. candidate in Yiddish Studies. She is currently a Fellow in Academic Administration at Columbia University in the Department of Slavic, Russian, and East European Languages and Literatures. In addition, she is the recipient of the 2017 Scholarship Award for Ph.D. Students by the Moshe Mirskyash Center for Research on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, Yad Vashem. Chiritescu recently published a book review on Friedrich Gorenstein’s Redemption (Columbia University Press, 2018) in the Forverts. In addition, Chiritescu published translations of children’s stories in The Land of Happy Tears (Penguin Random House, 2018). This past summer with the support of IJS, Chiritescu presented papers at various workshops including “Women’s Chairs and Liberation: Sonya, the agone, and Phylis, the divorcee, in Blume Lempel’s Ballad of a Dream” at the Oxford Summer Institute in Modern and Contemporary Judaism and “Third-generation Graphic Witnessing in Amy Katzweil’s Flying Couch and Julia Alexeeva’s Soviet Daughter” at the Leo Baeck Summer University on Jewish Studies and Gender Studies.

**Miriam Schulz**

Miriam Schulz is a fifth year Ph.D. Candidate in Yiddish Studies. Schulz was awarded the 2018-2019 Harriman PepsiCo Fellowship and the 2017 Scholarships Award for Ph.D. Students by the Moshe Mirskyash Center for Research on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, Yad Vashem. Her article “Before the box that was drawn”: The Vilnius Komitet and its documentation of the destruction of Polish Jewry, 1939–1940” was published in In geveb. A Journal of Yiddish Studies. In addition, Schulz presented the paper “4 a mare... Hofsteyn är a maron...”, Polish Jewish Refugee Intellectuals and the Birth of Soviet Marranos at the international workshop “Deported, Exiled, Saved: History and Memory of Polish Jews in the Soviet Union (1940-1959)” at POLIN Museum in Warsaw; her paper “Bind Up (and Digitalize) the Message: Polish Jewish Refugees and the Vilna Committee, 1929-1940” at the workshop “Exploring Refugee Data” organized by EHR/Massryk Institute Workshop in Prague, and “The Holocaust and ‘Yiddish’” at the Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism, Brooklyn, University of London.

**ISHAI MISHORY**

Ishai Mishory is a second year Ph.D. student and Teaching Fellow in the Department of Religion with a focus on Jewish Studies. In 2018, Mishory received a Summer Research Grant from IJS that allowed him to conduct research in Venice. In addition, he is the recipient of the 2018 Summer Research Grant from IJS.

**Noa Tsaushu**

Noa Tsaushu is a second year Ph.D. student in Yiddish Studies in the Department of Germanic Languages. Her areas of study include Eastern-European Yiddish avant-garde groups, visual and material culture of the Yiddish avant-garde, and Yiddish modernism in Ukraine in the 1920’s. Tsaushu recently presented a paper “Protecting the Jewish Daughters: Migration, Trafficking, and the Fears of Polish Jews in the 1920’s” at the international workshop “Deported, Exiled, Saved: History and Memory of Polish Jews in the Soviet Union (1940-1959)” at POLIN Museum in Warsaw; her paper “Bind Up (and Digitalize) the Message: Polish Jewish Refugees and the Vilna Committee, 1929-1940” at the workshop “Exploring Refugee Data” organized by EHR/Massryk Institute Workshop in Prague, and “The Holocaust and ‘Yiddish’” at the Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism, Brooklyn, University of London.

**What are you most looking forward to this Spring?**

I'm looking forward to completing an entire draft of my dissertation. Hopefully that will happen!

**What books are you reading now?**

Pogrom: Killtown and the Tit of History by Steven Zipperstein, Lake Success by Gary Shteyngart, and countless articles and books on early modern medical culture. I just finished Hen Kimelman’s The Three Escapes of Hannah Arendt: A Tyranny of Truth, which is a graphic biography of Hannah Arendt. So good and so beautifully drawn.

**How did you get involved with Jewish Studies?**

I attended Columbia as an undergraduate and took a class with Professor Carlebach. I fell in love with Jewish history, and it was an easy decision to come back to Columbia for graduate school.

**What are you currently researching?**

I’m currently researching Jewish midwives in early modern Europe. That’s what my dissertation is about.

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

Gilt of Hanukkah: I would love to interview her about her life. And I would serve her medlars (an apple-like fruit). She mentions these in her autobiography.

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Columbia has been collecting Judaica since its founding in 1754. Hebrew was taught at Columbia as one of the classical languages (along with Greek and Latin), and so even in its early days, Hebrew books were part of collecting priorities. The Columbia University Archives contains a copy of the Psalms in Hebrew and Latin that had been owned by Columbia founder, Samuel Johnson, and includes the Greek formula that Johnson would use for the Columbia Convocation in the 18th century.

Hebrew’s prominence at Columbia during the early years is also evidenced by its ownership of the first book printed with Hebrew movable type in the Americas: a Hebrew grammar printed by Judah Monis in Cambridge, MA, in 1735. A professor of Hebrew in the late 18th century at Columbia could not or would not use the book for his class; instead, Johann Kunze created his own grammar, and students created their own copies from his manuscript edition.

Of all of the colleges in the fledgling American colonies, King’s College (renamed Columbia after the American Revolution to remove any vestige of the monarchy that had just been overthrown) was the only institution to subscribe to the important critical edition of the Hebrew Bible produced by Benjamin Kennicott of England. The only subscribers from the Western Hemisphere (all included under the larger heading for England) were the College itself and two fellows of “Kings College, New York.” However, Columbia was involved in more than just purchasing the monumental volume. As is clear from a letter from Kennicott to then-president Myles Cooper, Columbia was also instrumental in bringing to England an important manuscript for Kennicott’s use. The manuscript was owned by the Simson family, whose son Samson gave a Hebrew address at Columbia’s Commencement in the year 1800, and they loaned the manuscript to Kennicott for his research. The courier was none other than Myles Cooper himself.

Jewish Studies flourished in many ways at Columbia in the following centuries, and the library continued to collect diverse materials relating to the Jewish experience. The rare Judaica collections presently span from the 10th to the 20th centuries, and globally from India to the Caribbean. The collections continue to grow thanks to the generosity of the Norman E. Alexander Foundation and other donors. Students are encouraged to utilize the materials in their research, and the books in the collection have been featured in many of the IIJS’ courses. This semester, a graduate seminar meets weekly in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library to discuss the history of the Jewish Book while turning the pages of centuries’ old Jewish books. The library is very proud of its long history of Judaica collection and research support, and is dedicated to continuing this fine work well into the future.

Michelle Chesner is the Norman E. Alexander Librarian for Jewish Studies.
How did you get involved with Yiddish Studies?

It's a long story but I’ll make it short. I wanted to read Isaac Bashevis Singer in the original. I first read his works in the Polish translation and was captivated by his writing. I started learning Yiddish at the university – my family stopped speaking Yiddish before the First World War – and I was surprised to realize that Yiddish contained many Polish words. I began to translate his works into English, and later I decided to continue with my Yiddish studies. I consider myself very lucky, not only was I able to get my Ph.D. at Columbia University – where I teaches Yiddish language and literature – but I am now also the head of the Yiddish Language Program here at Columbia, where I teach Yiddish language and literature.

What are some highlights from the recent semesters?

Our student participation in the Naomi Prawer Kadar International Yiddish Summer Program at Tel Aviv University, followed by a week-long study trip to Eastern Europe. It was a wonderful opportunity for our students to immerse themselves in the Yiddish language and culture. We also have had several reading groups and discussion sessions, which have been very productive.

What books are you reading now?

I’m actually rereading Bashevis in the original Yiddish now. I’m teaching an Advanced Yiddish II class this semester, and it’s a dream come true to read Bashevis together with a group of my passionate students dedicated to Yiddish. My shelf is filled up with many wonderful recently published studies, such as Vivi Lachs’ Whitechapel/Naive: Jewish Immigrant Life in Yiddish Song and Verse, London 1974-1914, Suzanne Schneider’s Mandatory Separation: Religion, Education, and Mandate Politics in Palestine, and Shoshana Fishler’s A Rich Brew: How Cafes Created Modern Jewish Culture. Suzanne and Vivi recently gave fantastic book talks for the Columbia community and it’s great to continue the conversation by reading their works.

What are some highlights from the recent semesters?

I am currently completing my first academic book, which explores the motif of the dybbuk possession (a wandering soul that possesses a living body) in modern Jewish cultures. I was fascinated by the ongoing obsession with a Yiddish play by S. An-sky, The Dybbuk, which has been performed and restaged for decades. There has been over a hundred (and counting) Dybbuk-related theater and film productions and adaptations created since the play’s world premiere in 1920. The Dybbuk, which is set in a haunted Jewish home, is an instance of a proto-modern, irrational motif that speaks to so many in the age of postmodernism and secularization. I’m working on a book called The Dybbuk in Modern Jewish Cultural Imaginaries, which will examine the dybbuk phenomenon in different contexts, including in theater and film productions created in Yiddish, English, Hebrew, French, and Polish, using gender, trauma, memory, and performance as analytical categories. I am currently completing my first academic book, which explores the motif of the dybbuk possession (a wandering soul that possesses a living body) in modern Jewish cultures. I was fascinated by the ongoing obsession with a Yiddish play by S. An-sky, The Dybbuk, which has been performed and restaged for decades. There has been over a hundred (and counting) Dybbuk-related theater and film productions and adaptations created since the play’s world premiere in 1920. The Dybbuk, which is set in a haunted Jewish home, is an instance of a proto-modern, irrational motif that speaks to so many in the age of postmodernism and secularization.

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JEWISH STUDIES
CLASSES SAMPLER

- INTRODUCTION TO MODERN JEWISH THOUGHT
- JOURNALIST AS A HISTORIAN
- MAGIC AND MONSTERS IN YIDDISH LITERATURE
- MEDIEVAL JEWISH CULTURES
- MODERN JEWISH INTELLECTUAL HISTORY
- MODERNISM, NATIONALISM, REVIVAL: READINGS IN MODERN HEBREW LITERATURE
- TOPICS IN ISRAELI CINEMA
- MODERN JEWISH INTELLECTUAL HISTORY
- MEDIEVAL JEWISH CULTURES
- MAGIC AND MONSTERS IN YIDDISH LITERATURE
- JOURNALIST AS A HISTORIAN
- INTRODUCTION TO MODERN JEWISH THOUGHT

SPRING 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

SPRING 2019 PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies Columbia University

Programs Relating to Anti-Semitism

IIJS is partnering with various campus constituents to host a series of public programs, conferences, and courses that explore the history, literature, and language of anti-Semitism.

- A panel discussion with Teacher’s College entitled Anti-Semitism Today: Why Are Hate Crimes On The Rise In The US?
- A lecture on Heidegger & the Jews with Daniel Herskowitz
- A Book Talk with David Fishman on Book Smugglers: Partisans, Poets, and the Race to Save Jewish Treasures from the Nazis
- An Anti-Semitism in the Americas conference
- A panel discussion with Columbia’s Graduate School of Journalism entitled Don’t Panic, Don’t Ignore: How to Report on Hate

For more details, visit iijs.columbia.edu.

FEBRUARY

06
WEDNESDAY @ 12:00 PM
BOOK TALK + LUNCH
PRINCE OF THE PRESS: HOW ONE COLLECTOR BUILT HISTORY’S MOST ENDURING AND REMARKABLE JEWISH LIBRARY WITH JOSHUA TEPHTERSKY

13
WEDNESDAY @ 12:00 PM
LECTURE + LUNCH
HEIDEGGER AND THE JEWISH WRTIERS MATTY WITH DANIEL HERSKOWITZ

18
MONDAY @ 6:00 PM
ISRAELI AUTHOR SERIES
THE DIAMOND SETTER WITH MOHIE SAKAL

20
WEDNESDAY @ 7:00 PM
FILM@IIJS
OUTDOORS

21
THURSDAY @ 6:00 PM
PANEL DISCUSSION
POLISH-JEWISH RELATIONS DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR WITH SAMUEL KASSOW AND PIOTR WRÓBEL
Co-sponsored by IIJS (Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies) Jewish History program and IIJS

31
THURSDAY @ 6:00 PM
BOOK TALK + LUNCH
Who Will Write Our History with SAMUEL KASSOW

MARCH

04
MONDAY @ 12:00 PM
LECTURE + LUNCH
LAW, SELFNESS, AND KINSHIP IN MEDIEVAL KARASIM WITH JOSEPH E. DAVID

07
THURSDAY @ 6:00 PM
SALO BARON NEW VOICES IN JEWISH STUDIES LECTURE
DESIGNING WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS: THE FIRST YEARS WITH NOAM SHOKED

11
MONDAY @ 7:00 PM
FILM@IIJS
REDEMPTION

25
MONDAY @ 12:00 PM
PERFORMANCE + BOOK TALK + LUNCH
EXPERIENCING JEWISH MUSIC IN AMERICA: A LISTENER’S COMPANION WITH TINA FRÜHAUF

APRIL

03
WEDNESDAY @ 6:00 PM LIGHT RECEPTION: 7:00 PM LECTURE
THE NAOMI PRAWER KADAR ANNUAL MEMORIAL LECTURE
THE FIRST AMERICAN JEWISH WOMAN NOVELIST: UNCOVERING THE STORY OF CORA WILBURN AND HER JEWISH SPIRITUALITY NOVEL, COSELLA WAYNE (1860) WITH JONATHAN D. SARNA

09
TUESDAY @ 7:00 PM
BOOK TALK
THE BOOK SMUGGLERS: PARTISANS, POETS, AND THE RACE TO SAVE JEWISH TREASURES FROM THE NAZIS WITH DAVID E. FISHMAN

11
THURSDAY @ 6:00 PM
FACULTY AUTHOR SERIES
ANIMALS & ANIMALITY IN THE BARTLEMY-TALMUDIC WORLD WITH BETH BORKOWITZ

15
MONDAY @ 12:00 PM
LECTURE + LUNCH
SCOPES, MANUSCRIPTS, AND CREATURES IN LATE ANTIQUITY WITH RACHEL RAFAEL NEIS

16
TUESDAY @ 12:00 PM
BOOK TALK + LUNCH
MR. STRAIGHT ARROW: THE CAREER OF JOHN HERSEY WITH JEREMY TREGLOWN

29
MONDAY @ 6:00 PM
FILM@IIJS
WHO WILL WRITE OUR HISTORY WITH SAMUEL KASSOW

MAY

02
THURSDAY @ 6:00 PM
COMICS@columbia
COMICS, AMERICA, AND THE HOLOCAUST

06
THURSDAY @ 6:00 PM
LECTURE
ANTI-SEMITISM, POPULISM AND MIGRATION IN LATIN AMERICAN HISTORY WITH FEDERICO FINCHELSTEIN

07
TUESDAY @ 6:00 PM
LECTURE
FOREIGN POLICY BOOK TALK
SPIES OF NO COUNTRY: SECRET LIVES AT THE BIRTH OF ISRAEL WITH MATT FRIEDMAN

23
THURSDAY @ 6:00 PM
BOOK TALK + LUNCH
THE DIAMOND SETTER WITH MOHIE SAKAL

All events are free to the public & advanced registration is required.

Please visit iijs.columbia.edu for the most up to date event information.
The Naomi Prawer Kadar Annual Memorial Lecture

The First American Jewish Woman Novelist:
Uncovering the Story of Cora Wilburn and Her Jewish-Spiritualist Novel, CoSELLA Wayne (1860)

Who’s ever heard of Cora Wilburn, the first Jewish novelist in America? At nineteen, she’d traveled the world and disdained its corruption. Clawing her way out of poverty as the Civil War divided the United States, she traded her needle for a pen, fighting for women’s rights, abolition, and her own freedom to rejoin the Jewish people. Hear from Jonathan D. Sarna as he shares the life and literature of this extraordinary woman, whose newly-discovered diary contains some poignant words in Yiddish.

Jonathan D. Sarna is University Professor and the Joseph H. & Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University, where he directs the Schusterman Center for Israel Studies. He is also the Chief Historian of the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia and chair of the Academic Advisory and Editorial Board of the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati. His many books include American Judaism: A History, soon to appear in a second edition.
DAVID P. STONE  
Columbia College ’67  
“I contribute annually to the IIJS because I find that, even in New York City, the work that it does and the programs that it presents to the public are unique and extremely important. The intellectual level of the Institute’s work and programs is on par with that of the rest of Columbia University, which is, of course, top notch. The Institute researches and presents programs about subjects that no other institution addresses—whether in the fields of literature, cinema, history or current events and so much more—and it does so without political, denominational or other bias. The IIJS is a precious gem that requires and deserves all of the support that the community (whether in NYC or elsewhere) can contribute and I enthusiastically invite others to join me in helping to provide such assistance.”

DEBORAH SACHARE  
Barnard College ’12  
“The Undergraduate Israel Fellowship allowed me the opportunity to forge a bond with a place that I previously had little connection to. Happy to report that I am currently back in Israel on a one-year fellowship with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Feels great to be back in a place that now feels like home, and I’m thrilled to be able to support the IIJS that made that possible to begin with.”

Thank you to all our donors for supporting Columbia University’s center for the academic study and discussion of Jewish life, history, and culture.

Your support allows students to explore their interests in Jewish Studies, encourages dialogue and discourse at our events, and allows faculty to conduct research that further nourishes scholarship.