



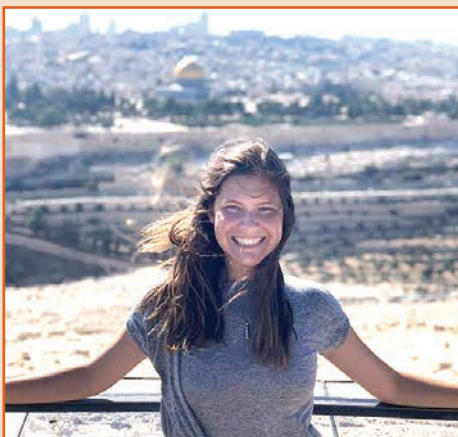
PRINCETON  
UNIVERSITY

**RONALD O. PERELMAN**  
**INSTITUTE FOR JUDAIC STUDIES**



# Program in JUDAIC STUDIES

SPRING 2019



# RONALD O. PERELMAN INSTITUTE FOR JUDAIC STUDIES

*I am delighted to have the opportunity to establish this program, which will shape intellectual concepts in the field, promote interdisciplinary research and scholarship, and perhaps most important, bring Jewish civilization to life for Princeton students—*

Ronald O. Perelman



In 1995 financier and philanthropist Ronald O. Perelman, an innovative leader and generous supporter of many of the nation's most prominent cultural and educational institutions, gave Princeton University a gift of \$4.7 million to create a multidisciplinary institute focusing on Jewish studies. The Ronald O. Perelman Institute for Jewish Studies gives undergraduate students to earn a certificate in Jewish Studies, strengthening Princeton's long tradition of interdisciplinary studies and broad commitment to Jewish culture. The gift from Mr. Perelman, chairman and chief executive officer of MacAndrews and Forbes Inc., also supports a senior faculty position—the Ronald O. Perelman Professor of Jewish Studies—and a wide variety of academic and scholarly activities that bring together leading scholars to examine Jewish history, religion, literature, thought, society, politics and cultures.

## FACULTY

### *Executive Committee*

Leora Batnitzky, *Religion*

Gabriel Citron, *Religion*

Yaacob Dweck, *History*

Jonathan Gribetz, *Near Eastern Studies*

Martha Himmelfarb, *Religion*

William C. Jordan, *History*

Eve Krakowski, *Near Eastern Studies*

Lital Levy, *Comparative Literature*

Laura Quick, *Religion*

Marina Rustow, *Near Eastern Studies*

Esther Schor, *English*

Moulie Vidas, *Religion*

## ASSOCIATED FACULTY

David Bellos, *French and Italian*

Jill S. Dolan, *English*, Dean of the College

Anthony Grafton, *History*

Irena Gross, *Slavic Languages*

Jan T. Gross, *History*

Hendrik Hartog, *History*

Wendy Heller, *Music*

Daniel Heller-Roazen, *Comparative Literature*

Stanley N. Katz, *Woodrow Wilson School*

Daniel Kurtzer, *Woodrow Wilson School*

AnneMarie Luijendijk, *Religion*

Deborah Nord, *English*

Anson G. Rabinbach, *History*

Stacy E. Wolf, *Lewis Center for the Arts*

## SENIOR RESEARCH SCHOLAR

Ra'anan Boustan, *Judaic Studies*

## EMERITUS FACULTY

Mark R. Cohen, *Khedouri A. Zilkha Professor of Jewish Civilization in the Near East, Near Eastern Studies*

Peter Schäfer, *Ronald O. Perelman Professor of Jewish Studies, Religion*

Froma Zeitlin, *Ewing Professor of Greek Language and Literature, Classics and Comparative Literature, Women and Gender, and Judaic Studies*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Director's Message
- 2-3 JDS Courses, Book Group, Hebrew Table
- 4-5 Events, 2018-2019, Postdoctoral Fellows
- 6-10 Undergraduate Summer Funding Reports
- 11-15 Graduate Summer Funding Reports
- 16 Faculty Updates

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

JDS is pleased to welcome **Gabriel Citron**, assistant professor of religion and a new member of our executive committee. Citron's field is religion and philosophy, with a strong interest in Jewish philosophy. The current focus of his work is the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

We are also happy to welcome two postdoctoral fellows. **Brendan Goldman**, our new JDS postdoctoral fellow, earned his PhD at Johns Hopkins University. A historian of the medieval Mediterranean (1000-1300 CE) and its Jewish communities, he specializes in the study of Cairo Geniza documents and recently published an article on Geniza sources in the journal *Crusades*. His current book project explores how ordinary Syrian Jews experienced conquest and regime change during the Crusades and how they helped shape the institutions of the Latin Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem. Israel Institute Fellow **Shayna Zamkane** was previously a fellow at the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan, after earning her PhD at the University of Chicago. Her research explores the impact of dislocation on Middle Eastern Jewish communities in the United States and Israel, and her findings have been published in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *Israel Studies*, and *Jewish Culture and History*. She is currently working on a monograph dealing with the politics of recognition of Jews from Arab countries.

JDS is also happy to cosponsor **Noam Shoked**, fellow, Princeton Mellon Initiative in Architecture, Urbanism and the Humanities. He studies the history and theory of the built environment, with a focus on the relationship between architecture and politics.

In 2018 the program again hosted lectures on a wide of variety of subjects, as well as a week-long visit from a scholar in residence. The range of the topics is a good indication of the breadth of interest of our faculty and students. We are grateful to the generous donors for the several endowed lectures we are able to sponsor and for the visit of the scholar in residence. These events make an important contribution to the intellectual life of JDS and of the campus as a whole. ♦



Martha Himmelfarb



## COURSES

### FALL 2018

*Jerusalem Contested* – Jonathan Gribetz  
*Marriage and Monotheism: Men, Women and God in Near Eastern Judaism, Christianity and Islam* – Eve Krakowski  
*Apocalypse: The End of the World and the Secrets of Heaven in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* – Martha Himmelfarb  
*American Jews and Sexual Freedom* – Josh Lambert  
*Elementary Biblical Hebrew I* – Laura Quick  
*Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Religions: Texts and Contexts* – Laura Quick  
*The World of the Cairo Geniza* – Marina Rustow  
*Talmudic Research* – Moulie Vidas

### SPRING 2019

*Great Books of the Jewish Tradition* – Ra'anan Boustan  
*The Arab-Israeli Conflict* – Jonathan Gribetz  
*Zionism: Jewish Nationalism Before and Since Statehood* – Jonathan Gribetz  
*Introduction to Jewish Cultures* – Lital Levy  
*Who Wrote the Bible?* – Laura Quick  
*Intermediate Biblical Hebrew* – Laura Quick  
*Holocaust Testimony* – Thomas Trezise  
*Elementary Hebrew 2* – Philip Zhakevich  
*Intermediate Hebrew 2* – Philip Zhakevich  
*Themes in Israeli Cinema* – Philip Zhakevich

## HANDS-ON HISTORY: DINING IN MEDIEVAL CAIRO

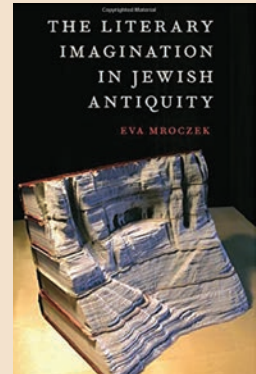
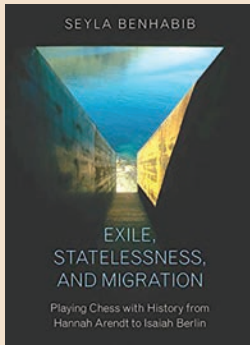
**Marina Rustow**, Khedouri A. Zilkha Professor of Jewish Civilization in the Near East and professor of history, works with the Princeton Geniza Lab, which makes accessible thousands of medieval documents that were found in a Cairo synagogue. For a course in 2018, she organized a banquet as part of a day of experiential learning. She wanted the undergraduates to use the Geniza documents and other sources to explore some of the simplest questions of life — such as food — to understand how people lived in medieval Cairo. Attendees at the feast, held in Chancellor Green, included students and guests, faculty and graduate students.



With support from the Campus Dining culinary team, students prepared (clockwise from top center) pita, *jazar* (carrots with herbs and fried onions), *Akhmimiyya* (Akhmim's sweetmeat), *tsifat tabikh al-mishmish al-yabis* (dried apricots), *lubiya* (cowpea puree with walnuts) and *tsifat 'amal al-samak al-tahiniyya* (fish in tahini sauce).  
(Photos by Tori Repp/Fotobuddy)

## BOOK GROUP PROMOTES INTERDISCIPLINARY EXCHANGE

The Book Club, currently organized by **Judah Isseroff** and **Yitz Landes**, graduate students in the Religion Department, meets a number of times each semester to discuss recent books in Judaic Studies. In fall semester 2018, participants read and discussed Seyla Benhabib's *Exile, Statelessness, and Migration: Playing Chess with History from Hannah Arendt to Isaiah Berlin* (Princeton University Press, 2018) and Eva Mroczek's *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (Oxford University Press, 2017). The Book Club has proven to be an excellent way for graduate students and professors in Judaic Studies to stay current with scholarly trends and has become an important site of interdisciplinary exchange.

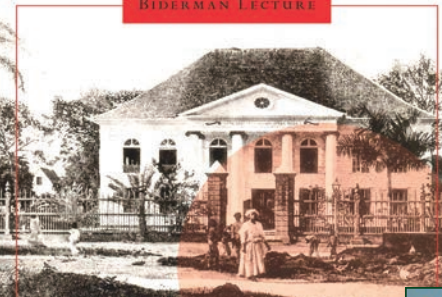


*B'te'avon!* Hebrew Table meets twice a week, once for students at beginning and intermediate levels, once for more advanced speakers. "Students come from a variety of fields, including math, biology, economics and philosophy," says leader Philip Zhakevich, lecturer in Near Eastern Studies. "It's a great place for them to practice speaking Hebrew while enjoying dinner and each other's company." (Photos by Philip Zhakevich)





**BIDERMAN LECTURE**



**Laura Arnold Leibman**  
Reed College

**ONCE WE WERE SLAVES:  
HOW ONE EARLY AMERICAN JEWIS  
FAMILY CHANGED THEIR RACE**

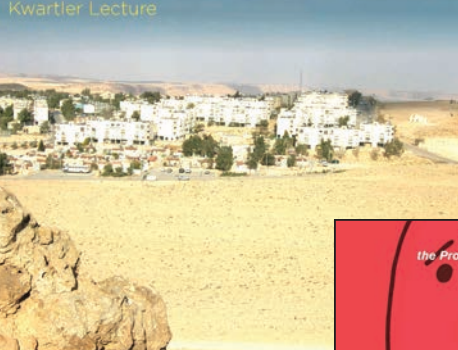
Wednesday, April 25, 2018  
E. Pyne 010 @ 4:30pm

Sponsored by the Program in Judaic Studies,  
Ronald O. Perleman Institute for Judaic Studies

**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY**

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

**Kwartler Lecture**




**DESERT IN THE PROMISED LAND** Yael Zerubavel  
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Yael Zerubavel is Professor of Jewish Studies and Herta and Paul Amirian Professor of Judaic Studies at Princeton University. She is the founding director of the Allen and Joan Bildner Center of Jewish Life. She has published extensively in the area of Jewish history, Israeli culture, war and trauma, and symbols of memory. Her books include the award-winning *Recovered Roots: Colonialism, Bureaucracy, and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* and *Desert Land: The Performance of Antiquity in Israeli Culture*.

**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY**

**RABBI JAMES S. DIAMOND MEMORIAL LECTURE**



**From "A City of the Dead" to "A City in Its Fullness":  
Evolving Depictions of Buczacz in the  
Long Arc of S. Y. Agnon's Writing**

**RABBI JEFFREY SAKS**  
Director of Research, Agnon House, Jerusalem, Director, Academy for Torah Initiatives and Directions

Rabbi Saks is the founding director of The Academy for Torah Initiatives and Directions in Jewish Education and its Web/Yeshiva.org program. He is an Associate Editor of the journal *Truaiten*, Series Editor of The S.Y. Agnon Library at The Yeshiva Press. Rabbi Saks has published widely on Jewish thought, education, and literature.

The Program in American Studies and the Program in Judaic Studies at Princeton University present  
The Lapidus Family Fund Lecture in American Jewish Studies

**7:00 PM**

Princeton University




**'The Right and the Left Yell at Us, So We Must Be Doing Something Well': The Depoliticization of American Jewish Politics and Philanthropy**

**Lila Corwin Berman**  
Temple University

Respondent:  
**Alison Isenberg**  
Princeton University

ams.princ.edu

**The Rose and Isaac Ebel Lecture**



**Ethan Katz**  
University of Cincinnati

**Jews and Anti-Semites:  
The Unlikely Uprising in Algiers Helped the Allies Win the War**

Ethan Katz is the author of *The Barbed Wire of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France*, which has received a number of awards including the J. Russell Major Prize of the American Historical Association, the David H. Pinkney Prize of the Society for French History, and a National Jewish Book Award. He is currently at work on a new book entitled *Freeing the Empire: The Jewish Uprising That Helped the Allies Win the War*.

**Monday, March 5, 2018  
4:30pm  
E. Pyne 010**

Open to the public

Sponsored by the Program in Judaic Studies,  
Ronald O. Perleman Institute for Judaic Studies

**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY**

American Studies  
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

**REBOOTING Jewish Television**

Transparent, Streaming Media, and Foundation-Backed Culture

**Josh Lambert**  
Visiting Lecturer in American Studies  
Academic Director, Yiddish Book Center

McCormick Hall, Room 101

**4:30 p.m.  
Tuesday  
Nov 27**

Fall 2018 Lapidus Lecture in American Jewish Studies  
Cospensated by the Program in Judaic Studies

**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY**


**JEANNETTE KRIEGER AND HERMAN D. MYTELKA MEMORIAL LECTURE**

**Safed and its Historical (In)significance:  
Reflections on Zionism and the  
Question of Jewish Modernity**

**AMNON RAZ-KRAKOTZKIN**  
Department of Jewish History, Ben-Gurion University, and the  
Jerusalem Van Leer Institute

Tuesday, APRIL 10, 2018  
4:30pm • E. Pyne 010

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



Sponsored by the Jeannette Krieger and Herman D. Mytelka Memorial Lectures  
**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY**

## 2018-2019 EVENTS

### LECTURES AND SEMINARS 2018

“Thoughts about the Israeli Mind,” **Yair Assulin**, poet, author and editor

“*Toledot Yeshu*: Texts and Historical Contexts,” **Daniel Barbu**, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, and **Yaacov Deutsch**, David Yellin College

“Jesus as God of the Egyptians and the Pascal Lamb,” **Jonatan Benarroch**, University of California, Berkeley

“Blood on the Floor: Mosaic Art, Violent Imagery and Militant Piety in a Galilean Synagogue,” **Ra’anan Boustan**, Princeton, and **Karen Britt**, Western Carolina University

“Three Frankish Jews Walk into an Egyptian Prison ...’: State Discipline and Transregional Jurisdiction in the Thirteenth-Century Mediterranean,” **Brendan Goldman**, Princeton

“When God Appeared to Humans: In Search of an Ancient Self,” **James Kugel**, Bar Ilan University

“Nationality on Trial: Fixing Identity in the Modern Mediterranean,” **Jessica Marglin**, University of Southern California,

“Design and Contestation in the Jewish Settlement of Hebron,” **Noam Shoked**, Mellon Fellow, Princeton

“Singing in a Foreign Land: Anglo-Jewish Poetry in the First Half of the 19th Century,” **Karen Weisman**, University of Toronto

### SPRING 2019

BIDERMAN Lecture : **Ada Rapoport-Albert**, University College of London

MYTELKA Scholar in Residence : **Sarah Stein**, University of California, Los Angeles

EBEL Lecture: **Leora Bilsky**, Tel Aviv University

Conference: “Legendary Characters: Attribution and Personhood in Ancient Judaism,” **Laura Quick**, Princeton

Conference: “Ultra-Orthodox Women through Social and Legal Lenses,” **Nechumi Yaffe**, Center for Behavioral Science and Public Policy

## CONGRATULATIONS

to our 2018 Certificate Students:

**Miranda Rosen** (History)

**Shana Salomon** (Psychology)

**Gabrielle Agus** (Sociology)

**Carolyn Beard** (Computer Science)

**Matthew Kritz** (Philosophy)



# UNDERGRADUATE SUMMER FUNDING

## SPOTLIGHT ON “THE GLOBAL GHETTO”

### RIKU KURAMA '21

From June 11 to July 20, 2018, I was one of 14 students who participated in the PIIRS (Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies) global seminar in Italy, entitled “The Global Ghetto,” taught by Mitchell Duneier, Princeton professor of sociology, and guest instructors. The first four weeks of the seminar took place in Rome and the last two weeks in Venice. The main components of the seminar were a class about the history of ghetto, Italian language classes, service activities and field trips. There were also opportunities to get involved in less formal activities, such as group dinners, and to be immersed in the life of the cities.

### Classes

The class on “The Global Ghetto” was held normally four days a week in small groups of seven students each. The main objective was to understand how the term “ghetto” has been reinterpreted in different historical contexts, since the creation of the first ghetto in Venice. We studied the Jewish ghettos in Venice and Rome before the revolutionary era, the concentration camps during World War II (which the Nazi deceptively claimed as ghettos) and the introduction of black ghettos in the U.S. Throughout the class, I gained valuable insights. I had never considered the Jewish ghetto in Europe in relation to the racially segregated residential areas in the U.S.,



Participants in the 2018 PIIRS global seminar in Italy included JDS students Riku Kurama '21 (far right), Kauribel Javier '18 (front, second from r) and Rafi Lehmann '20 (front, center).



and I found the evolution of the concept of ghetto intriguing. Also, the role played by the Republic of Venice and the Roman Catholic Church in the early stages of the history of ghetto was a revelation to me. Discussions about the black scholars who developed the idea of black ghetto were helpful for contextualizing recent American policy toward social injustice, particularly of discussions about race and class, and about affirmative actions.

Guest instructors included a historian (Kenneth Stow) and scholars of Africana (Michael Hanchard), English literature (Venetian resident Shaul Bassi) and humanistic studies (Levis Sullam). We also held a mini-conference in which we presented our own papers in front of the audience of student peers and faculty in a style similar to the academic panels of universities. As a whole, this class was intellectually nourishing and unique. I gained insights from each historical moment through thoroughly examining it from the perspective of both history and sociology.

In addition, we had Italian language classes for four weeks in Rome, taught by a local Italian teacher, and we studied conversational-level Italian necessary for living in Italy. Usually the class took place in the classroom, but we also did activities in markets and restaurants, asking locals some questions.



The remains of the Foro Romano reveal the layered history of Rome.



Interior of a synagogue in the ghetto of Venice

## Service

In collaboration with the local Catholic community of Sant'Egidio, we engaged in service activities typically twice a week. We prepared sandwiches, fruits and beverages and then distributed them, asking the locals what they wanted. In addition, we visited a center for the disabled and a gypsy camp and interacted with the people there.

While the effect of our services may be minimal compared to the total scale of social problems such as poverty and social exclusion, contributing to the people in need and the society was still an invaluable experience. The people were all welcoming and willing to talk about themselves and to listen to us.

## Field trips

We visited Naples and Pompeii, the Vatican, the Ghettos of Rome and Venice, the islands of Burano and Murano islands, and Trieste. In Pompeii I learned about how ordinary people lived in the Roman Republic, with snack stands, theaters, paved streets and sewage systems. In Rome, Venice and Trieste, I saw

continued

different ghettos and synagogues and could compare them. It was interesting, for example, that the architecture and decoration of synagogues in Venice are quite similar to those of Christian churches, whereas the symbols and decorations were more distinctively Jewish in the synagogue in Trieste, reflecting the different circumstances of Jewish communities. These field trips complemented our in-class learning through direct interaction with the places we read about and discussed, and I feel this feature is an important part of what distinguishes the seminar from other classes at Princeton.

## Life experience

While I spent a lot of time in official activities of the seminar, I also had time to visit historical sites, to watch World Cup games in bars or to cook with my friends. While many Italians in both Rome and Venice could speak English, I tried to use Italian whenever I could. Also, I spent a lot of time in piazzas, sometimes doing readings for classes, and other times eating dinners and gelati with friends.

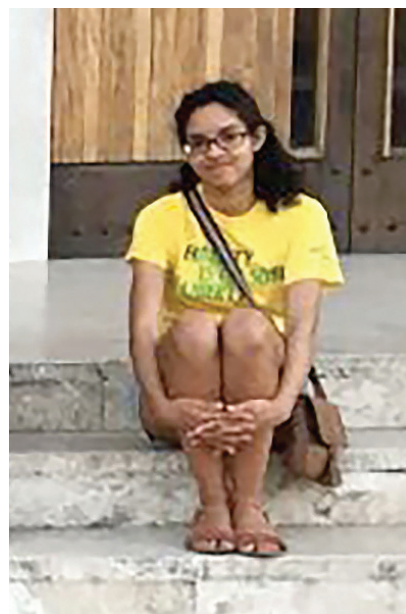
I found visiting the historical sites in Rome and Venice particularly stimulating. In Venice I had chances to visit the Doge’s Palace and the Arsenal, as well as the sites we visited on field trips. I learned how the palace housed different political bodies like the Senate and the Great Council, and about the shipbuilding process that made Venice a major sea power.

I would like to thank Judaic Studies, Religious Life and PIIRS for the funding that made it possible for me to participate in this extraordinary seminar.

## KAURIBEL JAVIER '18

**Over the summer** I had the opportunity to spend six weeks in Italy with fellow Princeton students learning about the origins of the Jewish ghettos in Rome and Venice. The course was an immersive experience, where we often had the opportunity to leave the confines of the classroom and learn about the ghetto by traveling to various sites that continue to preserve its memory. Our evenings were also spent engaging in service activities, as a reminder

that there are still communities in Italy today that continue to be marginalized by society at large and are deserving of our company and assistance. My attendance on this eye-opening trip was made possible through the generous donations provided to me by the Judaic Studies. I want to express my utmost gratitude to the program for allowing me to gain an unforgettable understanding of the presence and contributions of Jews to Italian society.



Kauribel



Rafi with Yiddish certificate

## RAFI LEHMANN '20

**The Program in Judaic Studies** supported my summer research projects in Italy and France. While in Italy, I explored the history of Jewish ghettoization with in Professor Mitchell Duneier’s Global Seminar, “The Global Ghetto.” In Paris, I participated in a three-week intensive Yiddish course at the Bibliothèque Medem, focused on Yiddish language skills and early 20th-century avant-garde literature.



## UNDERGRADUATE SUMMER FUNDING (CONTINUED)

### SAREL ANBAR '21

**This summer I had the tremendous opportunity** of participating in the Tikvah Fund's Summer Fellowship in New York City. I was one of 12 summer fellows who were able to explore the rich tradition of the historical interplay between Western values and Jewish ideals, commonly referred to as "Athens and Jerusalem." The first three weeks consisted of "core seminars" with expert seminar leaders, including Princeton Professor Leora Batnitzky; Abe Socher, editor of the *Jewish Review of Books*; Yuval Levin, editor of *National Affairs* and president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center; and Rabbi Meir Soloveichik.

The next four weeks brought in a wide diversity of participants for the Tikvah Summer Institutes, which featured seminars on Israeli independence, Genesis, *Pirkei Avot* and the Israeli-Arab conflict. During that time, we summer fellows transitioned to scholars-in-residence, working on independent research projects. Mine, "In Search of Lost Light: Learning from Chabad, the Creative Minority," argued for Chabad as a model of how traditional communities can maintain their core values while interacting with the world and promoting their universal values at the same time. Throughout the fellowship, we also had weekly workshops with Tikvah Director Eric Cohen, in which we discussed the best strategies for developing the potential and preserving the future of the Jewish communities in the United States, Israel and around the world.



Sarel with Tikvah Summer Institute faculty Dr. Leon Kass and Harvard Professor Ruth Wisse

### MIKAELA GERWIN '18

**With my Judaic Studies grant,** I spent two weeks in Valencia, Spain researching the Jewish community of Valencia and its destruction in 1391, with a specific focus on the political ramifications (or lack thereof) of the plague cycle beginning in 1348. I was able to draw on local Spanish-language scholarship, combine its information and insights with those gleaned from leading American and Israeli studies in both English and Hebrew, and then go further and dig deeply into the archives of Valencia, for my case study, for which I based my work largely on primary sources from the Archivo Municipal de Valencia, Archivo del Reino de Valencia and Archivo Catedral de Valencia. The funding from JDS enabled to me to develop the paleographic skills to use these original manuscripts, many hitherto unedited, written in the medieval varieties of Castilian and Catalan and preserved in the regional and city archives. This research formed the basis for my Junior Paper in the History Department, titled "Parallel Recountings of Violence: 1391 in the City of Valencia."



Mikaela studying archival material

continued

## GRACE MASBACK '20

**This summer** I had the opportunity to travel to Israel and take a Hebrew Ulpan through Tel Aviv University. This program was incredibly exciting, as it was the first time I studied Hebrew in a formal setting. While in Israel I was able to use my new language skills to explore the country through its food, culture, history, and so on. I spent my weekends in Jerusalem sharing Shabbat meals with local families and exploring the rich history of Jerusalem, as well as the surrounding West Bank. I am looking forward to continuing to study Hebrew now that I have returned to Princeton.



Grace in Jerusalem

## NATHANIEL MOSES '19

**With the support of the Program** in Judaic Studies, I spent the summer interning at Archipelago Books, a nonprofit press that publishes English translations of international literature. This was a wonderful way to explore the world of literary publishing, while continuing to pursue my academic interests in Hebrew and Arabic literature. I spent much of the summer working on “My Name is Adam: Children of the Ghetto,” a forthcoming novel by the Lebanese author Elias Khoury. I also did research for the press on potential future projects involving Hebrew literature. I am very grateful to the Program in Judaic Studies for making these pursuits possible.

## TALI PELTS '20

**Thanks to the generous funding** of JDS, I was able to have the summer of a lifetime. I spent five weeks in Paris, participating in Princeton’s program “Plato in Paris.” Taught by world-class Plato scholar Benjamin Morison, the class involved seminar-style discussion, all centered on Plato’s *Republic*. I had never before been in a class where we focused on one thinker and one text so thoroughly, drawing out all of the philosophical complexities. While ancient ideas are at times difficult for us moderns, Professor Morison and TA Emily Hulme-Kozey did a fantastic job of contextualizing Plato and urging students to read the text as charitably as possible. Thanks to this seminar, I have improved my close reading skills and gained significant knowledge about antiquity and Platonic thought in particular. Study of ancient religion is entirely incomplete without knowledge of Plato, and I am very grateful to JDS for enabling me to lay this framework.



Tali in front of Rodin’s Gates of Hell, Paris

## SIMONE WALLK '21

**With funding from Judaic Studies**, I spent eight weeks studying Talmud and Jewish liturgy at the Hadar Institute in New York City. The program was based on developing textual skills through working in the original languages, consulting parallel sources, and emphasizing intertextuality. Most of my time was spent studying the eighth chapter of the talmudic tractate that concerns the Day of Atonement, defining and imagining concepts of atonement and repentance, while also focusing on the meaning of self-deprivation and who is exempt from self-deprivation on this day. This experience was foundational for my understanding of Aramaic and of the structure of the Talmud, its central voices and its rhythm. ♦



# GRADUATE SUMMER FUNDING

## LORENZO BONDIOLI (HISTORY)

**As health conditions** prevented me from traveling to Lebanon this summer, I was forced to revise my original plans and postpone Arabic tuition to the fall semester. The Program in Judaic Studies' generous decision to allow me to employ my funding to this end allowed me to enroll at the Arabic School of New York. Since September, I have been attending two-hour private tuition sessions weekly, with the goal of preparing me for the task of archival research in Egypt. Thanks to the patience and thoroughness of my tutor Tareq Mahfouz, a relative of the famed Egyptian writer and Nobel-Prize winner Naguib Mahfouz, I have been able to familiarize myself with the main features of Egyptian dialect. This familiarity, however incomplete, might prove key in my upcoming research trip to Egypt.

At the time of my original application, I was waiting for the Egyptian Ministry of Interior to grant me access to the national archives. That authorization was been granted, and I have prepared to depart for Cairo. Obtaining access to the Egyptian National Archives has been challenging in recent years, so I regard myself as truly privileged. But even when access is granted, it is notoriously arduous to navigate the bureaucratic intricacies of the archives, so I am planning to seek a tutor locally to further assist me. As the date of departure approaches, I am ever more grateful for the Program's support in helping me face the challenges that this phase of my doctoral research entails.

## ALYSSA CADY (RELIGION)

**I spent the majority of this summer** in Princeton taking lessons in Java programming, as well as making progress in online courses in HTML and Python. I plan to use these skills in my work on ancient manuscripts, using the basic code literacy gained by learning Java and other languages to segue into projects in Digital Humanities. I intend to apply this literacy to an ongoing transcription project of which I have been a part for the past two years, possibly by using HTML to make the transcription available online and through a user interface, or by furthering my knowledge of languages and software that allow for digital manipulation, such as Matlab or Gimp, in order to recover text and ornamentation on folios that have been lost but have transferred ink onto a surviving, facing folio. This ink transfer may be picked during the process of digital imaging and thus recoverable by the appropriate software. I may also use apply this knowledge to Princeton's extensive collections of material from Ancient Antioch: by creating a digital platform of excavation reports and diaries, for example, we can piece together the social history of the excavation, or create a multilevel, interactive map of a particular building or excavation square, rendering an otherwise confusing series of excavations more understandable and appealing to both researchers and the public.

## JOSH CALVO (COMPARATIVE LITERATURE)

**I spent much of my recent summer** in Cairo, Egypt, the largest and most culturally significant Arabic-speaking metropolis I've ever visited, let alone lived in. I could not have asked for a more revolutionary research/language learning experience. For one, my language skills improved simply from my being there, but in addition, the intensive readings I did with a local PhD student helped build my literacy in modernist Arabic fiction even more than the readings I undertook myself during last year's exams. I also made inroads with what remains of local Jewish communities, and sought rare books and documents related to Egyptian Jewish history and culture

continued

wherever I could — much of which will make an appearance in my dissertation, and some of which even our own library lacks copies of. Perhaps most of all, though, my time in Cairo served as a crucial introduction to the city where I hope to spend my next academic year on a CASA fellowship from 2019-2020. I can't thank Jewish Studies enough for funding my travels so generously and for enabling me to live and learn in yet another Arabic-speaking city.

### **ELENA DUGAN (RELIGION)**

**This summer I had the chance** to immerse myself in study of the language, culture and history of al-Andalus, most especially through intensive Arabic work in Granada. In June I spent three weeks working with a tutor on conversation and research skills in Modern Standard Arabic, alongside close readings and discussions based largely around the Qur'an and issues in Qur'anic Arabic. In addition, I was able to take advantage of the rich and fascinating setting of al-Andalus to further and ultimately complete my own comprehensive exam in Islamic history for the Department of Near Eastern Studies. Time spent traveling the Guadalquivir valley greatly informed my analysis and research into military strategy and history, and the geographic features shaping the rise and fall of states in this contested but fascinating region. Finally, I was also able to capitalize upon my earlier Arabic study for research into early Islamic apocalyptic traditions concerning the resting place of the storied Jerusalem Temple vessels, under the direction of Ra'anan Boustan. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunities afforded me by the generous support of the Program in Judaic Studies, as I have seen new research vistas open up in the afterlives of Jewish texts and traditions in Arabic transmission, the amazing world of Judeo-Arabic texts and communities, and new snapshots of the lives of Jews in Islamic empires. I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to build and activate the Arabic-language skills necessary to pursue these avenues of inquiry, and very much look forward to continuing this work throughout the year.

### **JIANI FAN (COMPARATIVE LITERATURE)**

**This summer, I visited** UC Berkeley for one month, taking James Porter's seminar on "Ethics Without Morals: Nietzsche and Adorno," which discussed Nietzsche's amoral standpoint, beyond good and evil, through reading his *Genealogy of Morals* and also Adorno's *Minima Moralia*, about how to deal with the issues of ethics and morality in destroyed life in the context of modern capitalism. I discussed with the professor, who is trained in classics and comparative literature, my research project on Walter Benjamin and antiquity. In addition, I had the opportunity to discuss with Martin Jay my project on Benjamin and the general picture of Frankfurt School's reception of antiquity, the approach of which is not traditional classical philology, but appropriation of ancient symbols as modern allegories. My paper on this project has been submitted to and under the review of annual conference of the International Walter Benjamin Society. At the same time I am preparing for my general exam, reading Moses Mendelssohn's rewriting of Phädon, Marx's political writings concerning ancient politics as his own political models, and Hannah Arendt's numerous writings on political theories inspired by ancient thought, among other readings. I thank the Judaic Studies Program, which helped me to effectuate the visit to UC Berkeley.

### **DJAIR DIAS FILHO (RELIGION)**

**With generous support** from the Program in Judaic Studies, I was able to spend two and a half months of my summer in Italy. My main purpose was to improve my language skills in Latin, Greek and Italian, and I am happy that I could achieve my goals in a very short time. For eight weeks, I attended a living Latin and Greek summer school at the Accademia Vivarium Novum, housed in a beautiful villa in the Castelli Romani region, near Rome. As a full-immersion course in the humanistic tradition of language learning, the program's number



one rule was active and exclusive use of Latin, without resorting to English or any other modern language. I had not only to read, but also hear, write and speak Latin all day. Even when visiting ancient sites, such as the Forum Romanum, Tusculum or Via Appia, Latin served as our *lingua franca*. This intensive approach allowed me to make considerable progress, more than I experienced in traditional Latin courses. Now I can read and understand Latin much more quickly than before. Another highlight was a pedagogy workshop three times a week, focusing on strategies for teaching Latin more effectively through this method. I also had the chance to improve my ancient Greek using the same approach. (My occasional trips in and around Rome, before, during and after the course, gave me the opportunity to practice and improve my Italian as well.)

The tools I acquired during this Italy trip have strengthened my research in Judaism and Christianity in the Graeco-Roman world, giving more immediate access to a wealth of primary and secondary sources relevant to my interests. I am deeply grateful to the Program in Judaic Studies for making all of this possible.



Jon at Bulla Regia in Tunisia

## **JONATHAN HENRY (RELIGION)**

**Thanks to the generous funding** I received from the Program in Judaic Studies, I was able to perform critical research in Europe and North Africa, which deepened my knowledge of the Christian and Jewish people who contributed to the fabric of the late antique Roman Empire. In the Greek countryside and the national library in Venice, I consulted and transcribed rare manuscripts that have yet to be digitized or published, and which provide some of the basis for a future research project on the transmission of rituals from antiquity into the early-modern era. I was also able to encounter a tremendous body of material culture that enriches my current dissertation research. Across a span of ancient regions such as Aquitania, Lusitania and Carthage, I visited approximately 30 ruined city complexes, villas, temples and archaeology museums, all of which I found to be eye-opening and informative. Besides contributing to my current research, these recent travels will enhance my pedagogical offerings to future students. I am thankful and honored to have these opportunities, from which I will draw for many years to come.

continued

## **DANI ISSLER (COMPARATIVE LITERATURE)**

**Thanks to the generous support** of the Program in Judaic Studies, I was able to attend and present a paper at the 2018 NAPH (National Association of Professors of Hebrew) international conference on Hebrew language. The conference took place at the University of Amsterdam. This proved to be an excellent opportunity to establish contacts with different scholars working in the field of Hebrew literature and Jewish studies.

## **ISAAC (YITZ) LANDES (RELIGION)**

**I spent time this past summer** at the Cambridge University Library, which is home to the single largest collection of manuscript fragments from the Cairo Geniza. (The second largest, the Adler collection of the Jewish Theological Seminary, is currently on loan at Firestone Library here in Princeton.) While mostly medieval, the manuscript fragments in the Cairo Geniza are crucial for any study of late antique Judaism: this Geniza has provided us with some of the earliest manuscript fragments we have of any number of late antique Jewish literary texts. From them, we can not only uncover important early textual traditions of these texts, but also reconstruct the medieval world in which they were received and disseminated.

At Cambridge, for the most part I looked at Geniza fragments of two works: the Mishnah and the Epistle of Rav Sherira Gaon. The Mishnah is the foundational text of rabbinic Judaism and was composed in the Galilee in the third century. In my dissertation I look at the reception and dissemination of the Mishnah in order to better understand the processes through which rabbinic Judaism spread throughout the Mediterranean world and became the standard form of Judaism. One manuscript that I spent time with is Taylor-Schechter (T-S) NS 329.341, which has the earliest dated colophon of any manuscript of rabbinic literature. Another, T-S E 2.35, contains important para-textual information that can help us uncover the manner in which the Mishnah was used in non-scholastic settings. I also spent a number of days looking at manuscript fragments of the 10th-century Epistle of Rav Sherira Gaon, one of the earliest histories of rabbinic Judaism and literature. By looking at these fragments up close, I was able to reunite some of them into single manuscripts and to relatively date them. Further, I concluded that other remains of two of these manuscripts are currently housed at Princeton.

At Cambridge I was also able to meet with Ben Outhwaite, the head of the Geniza Research Unit in the University Library, an unparalleled resource on all things Geniza. In addition to sitting with me and answering many general questions, he also assisted me in deciphering and dating specific manuscript fragments and in using ultra-violet equipment.

My trip to Cambridge this past summer was highly important for my research and for my personal development as a scholar. I am extremely grateful for the ongoing support provided to me by the Program in Judaic Studies.

## **MOLLY O'BRIEN (FRENCH AND ITALIAN)**

**Thanks to the summer research funding** provided by the Program in Judaic Studies, I was able to research various Italian Jewish communities to find out about their past histories and to see what these communities are like today. Questions I had in pursuing this project included the following: How have past historical changes shaped contemporary life for Italian Jews? How are Italian Jews of today keeping the memory of the past alive, while at the same time moving forward and promoting their communities? What is the uniqueness of the different Italian Jewish communities, and how can we use this uniqueness to construct a more complex picture of life for Italian Jews in the past and present?

In Rome I consulted the Archivio Storico Giancarlo Spizzichino and visited the Tempio Maggiore and the Museo Ebraico di Roma, learning more about official decrees that created structural and societal changes that shaped life in the Roman ghetto. In Ferrara I consulted the Centro Studi Bassaniani Ferrara for its focus on the Italian Jewish writer Giorgio Bassani, who wrote about the Ferrarese Jewish community before, during and after the Second World War. In Turin I went to the Centro Internazionale di Studi Primo Levi, known for its dedication to the Holocaust survivor and chemist-turned-writer Primo Levi, and the Museo Diffuso della Resistenza, significant for its discussion of the diverse testimonies from World War II, including testimonies of Torinese Jews. In Trieste I saw the Italian death/concentration/transit camp, the Risiera di San Sabba, as well as the Sinagoga Tempio Israelitico and the Museo della Comunità Ebraica di Trieste Carlo e Vera, all of which explained the specificity of the Fascist response in Trieste to the Final Solution and the Triestin Jewish reality that was put in confrontation with it. Finally, in Venice, I went to the oldest ghetto in the world, where I visited the Museo Ebraico di Venezia and three of the community's synagogues, the Great German Schola, the Italian Schola and the Levantine Schola, which together show the diversity of the Venetian Jews who were made to live in close proximity with one another.

This research trip provided essential information for my studies in Italian Jewishness, in which I look at writers including Primo Levi and Giorgio Bassani, as well as Alberto Moravio and Alessandro Piperno of Rome and Umberto Saba and Italo Svevo of Trieste. I will be able to continue with my research interests with a strong understanding of the communities from which these writers came and the historical realities that they faced and which shaped their literary output.

### **YOAV SCHAEFER (RELIGION)**

**With the generous support** of the Program in Judaic Studies, I was able to spend this past summer studying German at the Goethe Institute in Tel Aviv in preparation for my graduate studies at Princeton, where I hope to focus on modern Jewish thought and modern Jewish intellectual history, with a particular focus on German-Jewish thinkers. My course at the Goethe Institute provided me with a basic knowledge of the German language on which I can build in my future studies. I am deeply grateful to the Program in Judaic Studies for supporting my German language studies in this way.

### **TAYLOR WINFIELD (SOCIOLOGY)**

**Judaic Studies provided funding** for my project entitled “Jew in Green,” which investigates the lives of Jewish American soldiers. This summer I continued my fieldwork at the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School and visited my participants in their hometowns when they were on leave. I attended services both in their hometowns and on the military post. I was able to speak to the Jewish soldiers and their families about their religious practices before they joined the Army, their current religious practice, and the ways in which they find Army values and their Jewish values complementary and/or conflicting. My findings from this summer have helped me delve deeper into how religious practices and beliefs impact Jewish soldier identity.

The funding from JDS will also give me the opportunity to travel to the upcoming Jewish Military Chaplain's conference and Jewish Warrior Weekends, which bring together Jewish students from the military academies and ROTC programs. I would not have been able to conduct this research without Judaic Studies' support and am grateful for the program's continuing dedication to student research. ♦



## FACULTY UPDATES

**Ra'anán Boustan**, who is site historian for the Huqoq Excavation Project in Lower Galilee, has co-authored a series of recent studies about the mosaic floor of the fifth-century synagogue in the Galilean village of Huqoq, including “The Elephant Mosaic Panel in the Synagogue at Huqoq: Official Publication and Initial Interpretations” (*Journal of Roman Archaeology*), “The Huqoq Excavation Project: 2014–2017 Interim Report” (*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*) and “Biblical Narratives in the Mosaic Floor of the Synagogue at Huqoq: Interim Report for the 2011–17 Excavation Seasons” (Hebrew, *Qadmoniot*).

**Gabriel Citron**, who joined the Department of Religion and the Program in Judaic Studies this September, is working on a book about Ludwig Wittgenstein’s attempts to discover and enact a way to live well in the face of our radical fragility.

**Yaacob Dweck**’s new book, “Dissident Rabbi: The Life of Jacob Sasportas,” will be published by Princeton University Press in August 2019.

**William Chester Jordan** has been a Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar while on leave during 2018-19, giving public lectures, leading seminars and meeting informally with students and faculty. Among the topics he has lectured on is the anti-Jewish violence of the First Crusade. He has visited Catholic University of America, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Marquette University, Willamette University and Carleton College. In the spring he will go to Southern Methodist University, William and Mary College, the State University of New York at Albany and the University of California-Riverside.

**Daniel Kurtzer**’s recent publications include “Waiting for Uncle Sam: ‘Ten Commandments’ for a New and More Honest U.S. Leadership in the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process” (*Cairo Review of Global Affairs*); “The U.S.-Israel Security Relationship” in *Routledge Handbook on Israeli Security*, ed. Stuart A. Cohen and Aharon Klieman; and “Choices Facing the United States: Greater Israel or Global Israel” (*Israel Studies*).

**Lital Levy** published an article in *Modernism/modernity* involving comparisons of Yiddish and Ladino literary translation practices in the late 19th century. She delivered the keynote talk for a conference on multilingualism at Wesleyan University and was a panelist for the Meyerhoff Lecture of the Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies (University of Pennsylvania) on the state of modern Sephardi and Mizrahi studies. She also presented work at Duke University, University of Toronto, Franklin and Marshall University, and Ohio State University. She is currently co-editing a volume on emotion, the unconscious and the senses in Jewish thought and culture.

**Marina Rustow** notes that the Princeton Geniza Project has reached a landmark of more than 14,000 document entries, up from about 5,000 in 2015.

On sabbatical in 2018-2019, **Esther Schor** spent a month at the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati on a Bernard and Audre Rapoport Fellowship to research a biography of Horace Kallen. Along with poets Meena Alexander and Rita Dove, she recently published a book of poems in English with Italian translations, called *Poems for Sarra* (Damocle, Venice); the poems reimagine the life and writings of Sarra Copia Sullam (1592-1641).

**Moulie Vidas** became the co-editor, with Michal Bar Asher Siegal, of the online journal *Oqimta: Studies in Talmudic and Rabbinic Literature*, founded by Shamma Friedman. ♦



Program office and seminar room, Scheide-Caldwell Hall, second floor

## CONTACT US

### Program in Judaic Studies

Ronald O. Perelman Institute for Judaic Studies  
Princeton University  
201 Scheide Caldwell House  
Princeton, NJ 08544  
609-258-0394  
judaic@princeton.edu  
www.princeton.edu/judaic

**Martha Himmelfarb**, director  
609-258-4486  
himmelfa@princeton.edu

**Baru Saul**, program manager  
609-258-0394  
baru@princeton.edu

Photo by Baru Saul



## PROGRAM IN JUDAIC STUDIES

201 Scheide Caldwell House  
Princeton University  
Princeton, NJ 08544

