

# Jewish Studies Program

Fall Semester 2005

## Michigan State University

College of Arts & Letters  
301 Linton Hall  
East Lansing, MI 48824-1044  
Telephone: 517-432-3493  
Fax: 517-355-4507  
Web: www.jsp.msu.edu  
E-mail: jewishst@msu.edu

Kenneth Waltzer, Director  
Michael Serling, Chair, Advisory Board

### Note from the Director

We look forward to an exciting year in Jewish Studies (JS) to be marked by searches for new faculty positions in Israel Studies in James Madison College and possibly (interim) in Jewish Thought in Religious Studies, new initiatives in course development, renewal of formal Study Abroad in Israel, and continuing faculty publications. We will continue to host visiting scholars from the U.S. and abroad, we'll inaugurate our new **Stanley and Selma Hollander Endowed Fund for Jewish Arts and Music**, and we will commence and ask our friends to join with us in fund-raising for a position in Jewish Religious and Philosophical Thought.

The phones in our offices have rung off the hook this summer. Reporters have been calling with questions about the legacy of World War II and the Holocaust sixty years later. They have also inquired about the status of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, the meaning of the Gaza withdrawal, and the likelihood of normalcy for Jews and for visitors and students who travel to Israel. The calls remind me that Jewish life continues at the center of momentous world events and serves as a special prism for thinking about and assessing world conditions.

This summer I was privileged to participate in the Brandeis Summer Institute for Israel Studies—two weeks of graduate school camp in Waltham followed by a remarkable nine-day tour in Israel. In Israel, we were at the centers of power and culture—with deputy directors in the foreign ministry, at the new Yad Vashem, and at the Israel

Museum. We were also on the peripheries of power and culture: at Ofra, a religious settlement in the West Bank; in Sderot, a development town astride Gaza; and in Rahat, a Bedouin town in the Negev. We heard lectures and presentations about Israel's strategic strengths and capacity; we heard worries about demographic realities and the battle of narratives in the global media. We spoke with orange protestors and members of the settlers' movement, who defy Israeli laws and policy. We met with up-and-coming Israeli writer Etgar Keret.

What was especially important about the seminar was less the brushes with contemporaneous goings-on and personalities, however, than Director **Ilan Troen's** steady insistence that we understand Israel as a living, growing, changing society and culture, not merely as a reflection of contemporary policy issues or caricature of the Middle East conflict. This was the seminar's purpose: to promote study of Israel in American universities and

**continued, see page 3**



### The Power of Good

Nicholas Winton kept his activities quiet for a half century. He didn't tell his wife. He didn't tell anyone. Then, in 1998, while cleaning the attic, his wife discovered an old scrap book with names and photographs of children. They were children whom the 29-year old stock exchange clerk, who visited Nazi-occupied Prague in 1939, had helped save. Between March and August 1939, Winton and others brought out 669 children to Great Britain and Sweden.

The story behind the scrapbook is told in "The Power of Good: Nicholas Winton," a documentary film by Matej Minac. **Charles and Rita Gelman** of Michigan saw the film in the Czech Republic and the Charles and Rita Gelman Educational Foundation helped bring it to the big screen. Mr. Gelman will show the film at MSU on

**Thursday, September 22**, at 7:00 pm in 147 Communication Arts and Sciences Building. A discussion will follow.

This film has won the International Emmy award (2002) and the Trilobit Prize from the Czech Republic. Shortly after it appeared, in 2004, Nicholas Winton was knighted by Queen Elizabeth.



### Sir Martin Gilbert to Present

#### "In Search of Jewish History on Five Continents"

MSU Jewish Studies and the Wayne State University Cohn-Haddow Judaic Studies Center have joined with the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan and the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit to sponsor a lecture by Sir Martin Gilbert, biographer of Winston Churchill and noted historian on Jewish subjects.

Sir Martin Gilbert will speak "*In Search of Jewish History on Five Continents: One Historian's Journey*," at Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Southfield on **Sunday, September 25, 2005**, 1:00–3:00 pm. A discussion will follow. The admission fee is \$7.50 and advance reservations are required. Phone 248-432-5600. Guests should arrive by 12:45 pm.

Sir Martin Gilbert is the author of 75 books, including *The Holocaust: The History of Jews During the Second World War; Auschwitz and the Allies; The Boys: Triumph Over Adversity; Holocaust Journey; The Righteous: Unsung Heroes of the Holocaust; Israel: A History*; and *From The Ends of the Earth: The Jews in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. Born in London in 1936, evacuated to Canada, but returned to Britain before D-Day, Sir Martin Gilbert has long been fascinated by World War II. He studied history at Magdalen College and later St. Antony's College at Oxford University where he was a fellow of Merton College. He has taught at universities in the U.S., Israel, and in Britain. He has written extensively on the Holocaust, the birth of Israel, the plight of Russian Jewry, and Jewish life on several continents.

## Coming Soon! Israeli Films

In cooperation with the Department of Linguistics and Languages, Jewish Studies will sponsor two Israeli films this semester. The films are in Hebrew with English subtitles and will be introduced by **Ellen Rothfeld**, MSU Lecturer in Hebrew.



**Walk on Water** (*Lalechet Al Ha-Mayim*), which will be shown **Wednesday, September 14**, at 7:00 pm in 1345 Engineering Building, focuses on the story of Eyal, a Mossad agent assigned as a personal tour guide for two Germans, grandchildren of an ex-Nazi rumored to be hiding in Argentina. This film premiered at the Berlin Film Festival in 2004 and was nominated for six Israeli Academy Awards.



**Bonjour Monsieur Shlomi** (*Ha Kochavim Shel Shlomi*), to be shown **Thursday, November 17**, in 147 Communication Arts and Sciences Bldg. at 7:00 pm, focuses on Shlomo, a high school student in Tel Aviv who is overburdened with family obligations and is failing in school. This movie was a hit in Israel and was nominated for 12 Israeli academy awards.

## Wanted High School Juniors & Seniors

Jewish Studies will participate with MSU's Admissions Office and the Lester J. Morris Hillel Jewish Student Center in a special program to attract high school students in southeast Michigan to MSU. The Kirschner Youth Outreach Initiative is for juniors and seniors and their parents to learn about MSU admissions, Jewish Studies, the renaissance of Jewish life on campus, courses, study abroad opportunities, scholarships, and more. The event will be Tuesday, **September 27**, 7:30–9:00 pm in the West Bloomfield Jewish Community Center at 6600 West Maple Road. Light refreshments will be served. To reserve seating, please visit <http://admissions.msu.edu/jewishstudies.asp>

The Kirschner Initiative honors the memory of Gerald Kirschner, a late member of the Advisory Board.

### Teach-In and Panel Discussions on Darfur

Friday, September 30  
1–4:00 pm  
International Center Library

**Lawrence Baron**, Nasatir Professor of Modern Jewish History and director of the Lipinsky Institute for Judaic Studies at San Diego State University, will offer a Brown Bag Seminar on **Thursday, October 27, 12:00–1:30 pm** in 321 Linton Hall. He will speak on "*Projecting Prejudice: Cinematic Depictions of American Anti-Semitism in the Postwar*." Baron will also deliver the **Kessler Lecture on Jewish Film and Media** at **7:00 pm** in the 4th floor West Conference Room in the MSU Library. There he will present "*Serious Humor: The Holocaust in Film Comedies*," with film clips. Professor Baron's book, *Projecting the Holocaust into the Present: The Changing Focus of Contemporary Holocaust Cinema*, will be published this year.

**Bill Niven**, Professor of Contemporary German Studies at Nottingham Trent University in Great Britain, will visit MSU to lead a seminar and give a public lecture on **Wednesday, September 28**. Niven is author of *Facing the Nazi Past* (2002).

Professor Niven will lead a seminar in 321 Linton Hall, **12:00–1:30 pm**, on "Germans as Victims," focusing on the preoccupation in contemporary post-reunification German culture with the suffering of German exiles after World War II. At **7:00 pm** that evening in the MSU Union Green Room, he will lecture on a fascinating study he is completing titled "The Buchenwald Child." Niven traces the uses and abuses of memory of the anti-Nazi resistance, specifically the saving of a young Polish-Jewish child, Stefan Jerzy Zweig, at Buchenwald, in postwar German history and culture. Dr. Niven's visit is supported by the Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, African, and Asian Languages, the Museum Studies Program and the MSU Museum, and Jewish Studies.



## Speakers...

Israeli author **Yehudith Rotem** will speak **November 9** at 7:00 pm on "*Discovering My Voice*," about her journey from the Orthodox world to becoming one of Israel's most acclaimed novelists. Rotem was born in Budapest, Hungary and was rescued from Bergen Belsen by being placed on the Kastzner train to Switzerland. In 1945, she came to Israel. She married an ultra-Orthodox student and supported their family of seven children as a teacher. In 1983, she divorced and left ultra-Orthodox society and made a career as a writer. In 2002, Ms. Rotem was awarded the Prime Minister's Prize and the Book Publishers' Association Golden Book Prize for her bestseller, *Craving*. Ms. Rotem has also published *Distant Sister: The Women I Left Behind* (1992), *Mourning* (1996), *I Loved So Much* (2000), and *A Footstool in Paradise* (2005). Her appearance is made possible with support from the Consulate General of Israel.



## Jewish Arts & Music

**Joel Berkowitz**, associate professor of Judaic Studies at the State University of New York at Albany, editor of *Yiddish Theatre: New Approaches* (2003), a finalist for a National Jewish Book Award (2004) and author of the forthcoming *Landmark Yiddish Plays* (2006), will give two presentations on **Monday, November 14**:

### Brown Bag Seminar

12:00–1:15 pm, 321 Linton Hall  
"Yiddish Theater Studies Today: *New Approaches*"

### Yiddish Language and Culture Lecture Series

7:00–8:30 pm, Green Room, MSU Union.  
"Here Isn't Europe You Know: Tradition vs. Modernity in American Yiddish Drama."

The **Stanley and Selma Hollander Endowed Fund for Jewish Arts and Music**, will support its first lecture on **Thursday, February 9, 2006**. **Steven Nadler**, the Max and Frieda Weinstein-Bascom Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and author of *Rembrandt's Jews*, will discuss the book that was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in the non-fiction category in 2004. It tells the story of Amsterdam's Jews in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and Rembrandt's relationships with them. Rembrandt lived in Vlooienburg, on Jodenbreestraat—Jew's Broad Street—in the heart of Amsterdam's Jewish world where he included them as subjects in his painting.

## Save the Day!

Jewish Studies  
& Hadassah  
Fall Brunch

Sunday, October 30  
10:00 am–12:00 pm  
University Club  
3435 Forest Road, Lansing

Details available at  
[www.jsp.msu.edu](http://www.jsp.msu.edu)  
Click on "Fall Brunch"



# Search for Israel Studies Faculty

Supported by the **Michael and Elaine Serling Endowment for Israel Studies**, James Madison College (JMC) will search this year for a faculty member in Israel Studies for 2006–07. Jewish Studies and JMC Dean **Sherman Garnett** have worked out a bridging plan to permit the hire at the same time as pledges for the \$ 1.5 million fund are being redeemed.

The plan for Jewish Studies has envisioned four core faculty positions: two provided by MSU and two by endowments. Core positions were created in American Jewish History and Culture and in Hebrew Language and Literature. The Israel Studies position in JMC will be the first of the two endowed positions.

JMC is eagerly embracing the position, which will sustain its tradition of teaching about Jewish life, immigration, the Israeli-Arab conflict, Jews and Anti-Semitism, and the Holocaust. Israel Studies is a multidisciplinary field which uses history, political science, sociology, anthropology, economics, literature, language, and cultural studies to study the development of Israel as a society and culture. It includes the study of state and society, national development, social divisions and stratification, ethnic, race, and religious relations, gender and tradition, regional conflict and cooperation, cultural formation, memory and its uses, and so forth. JMC's tradition of integrating these approaches make it a perfect "home" for the position.

The position will be posted and recruited—probably at the junior level. Israel Studies positions have increased in recent years at American and other universities. The **Serling and Friends Endowed Israel Studies** position is the sixth such position in the U.S., after Brandeis, Emory, Indiana, NYU, and Wisconsin. Jewish life today cannot be studied appropriately or in a global perspective without serious study of Israel.

## Jewish Studies Petitions to Reopen Hebrew University Summer Program

Jewish Studies has petitioned MSU's Security and Risk Assessment Committee, Study Abroad, and the Provost Office to reopen the Jewish Studies Summer Program at Hebrew University's Rothberg School, suspended since 2001. The university resumed financial and scholarship aid to students studying independently in Israel this year but has not yet reopened faculty-led MSU programs in Israel.

In June, **Bruce Magid**, Chair of the Risk Committee, visited Israel and did on-site checks at each of the three universities with which MSU sustains relations—Hebrew, Tel Aviv, and Ben Gurion. At Hebrew University, he was provided a behind-the-scenes tour of safety measures by security. His report concluded that MSU should formally reinstate MSU study abroad activities effective 2005–06 and summer, 2006.

The MSU Jewish Studies summer program at Hebrew University works cooperatively with the Rothberg International School and is sponsored by several colleges, including Arts and Letters; James Madison College, and the College of Social Science. **Ken Waltzer**, Director of Jewish Studies, will lead the program in summer 2006.

### Note from the Director – continued from page 1

colleges that treats Israel like other societies. During the past century, Jewish global life has been recast into two new centers in the U.S. and in Israel. In one, Jews live as a minority and voluntary community in a liberal, multicultural society. In the other, Jews live as a majority and sovereign community in a Jewish state. In the perspective of Jewish history, this is unprecedented. Above all, Jewish Studies at MSU seeks to explore this transformation and help people understand Jewish civilization and life better, especially as it is lived in these two centers.

# Experience Experience Israel

## Nine MSU students studied independently at Tel Aviv and Hebrew Universities this summer; eight were supported by Jewish Studies Program scholarships. They reported . . .

"I took two courses, one on Islam, the other on the Israeli–Arab conflict. I learned about the evolution of Islam and I studied the Iranian revolution . . . I also learned about the ongoing conflict that Israel has faced. I also learned from studying in Israel that one cannot simply go on Birthright, as I did, or vacation in Israel. To fully understand Israel, one has to live there, know the culture, meet the people and experience the way of life."  
**Jordan Scheinfeld**, Int'l. Relations Senior

"My trip to Israel was a fantastic experience...I was in Tel Aviv. I watched some of the Maccabiah Games and experienced the tension of the disengagement. One of the courses I took was about the Arab–Israeli conflict. The second class was about Islam, with emphasis on radical Islam. I learned more in just a few weeks there than I could in a whole year in the U.S."  
**David Schwartz**, General Business Admin./Pre-law Senior

"I spent nearly six weeks in Jerusalem, studying in Ulpan, an intensive Hebrew language class. Each day I awoke to the sounds of the city: cars honking, roosters crowing, people chattering in Hebrew, the Muslim call to prayer resonating from a nearby mosque. As I walked to the university I could stop and look out over the Old City. Every day I spent five and a half hours in class speaking, reading, and writing Hebrew, with two excellent Israeli teachers and students from all over the world."  
**Emma Hummel**, Biosystems Engineering Sophomore

"I lived with three other guys, all from the States, all Jewish. Of the three, one was "secular,"...[and] two were "religious." I learned much about Judaism from my roommate, whose brother was becoming a rabbi and lived in Israel. I enjoyed experiencing Judaism—especially at the *kotel* on Shabbat . . . My experience in Israel opened my eyes to Jewish culture and to those who practiced Judaism in an Orthodox way . . . I was amazed, and a bit shocked, at how segregated people lived . . . I could see the giant, 30 foot concrete wall being erected...between

"My trip to Israel was unexpectedly life changing and eye-opening. For five and a half weeks, Jerusalem was my home and I felt welcomed. I was raised Jewish and brought up...in a reform family and congregation. What I experienced in Israel, however, surpassed my earlier schooling."  
**Doren Belfor**, Spanish Junior

"My time spent in Israel was exceptional because of the sweeping changes taking place there. The disengagement of Israeli settlers from the Gaza strip was unprecedented and fascinating for a scholar of International Relations. The academic environment of the Rothberg Intl. School was phenomenal. In the same way that James Madison College presents a liberal arts education on public policy, Rothberg had many similarities."  
**Ryan Farrell**, Int'l. Relations Senior

Palestinian and Jewish settlements... I also observed division among Jews. Orange became a symbol for Jews against the disengagement in Gaza, while blue was the color for pro-disengagement. . . I made tremendous progress learning Hebrew. I gained a better understanding of the geography and history of Israel. My understanding of Israel as a nation, of the Israeli people, and the conflicts among them is much clearer."  
**Nick Setterington**, Civil Engineering Senior



Doren Belfor, Nick Setterington, & Emma Hummel



Non Profit Org  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
East Lansing, MI  
Permit #21

College of Arts & Letters  
301 Linton Hall  
East Lansing, MI 48824-1044

Phone: 517-432-3493  
Fax: 517-355-4507  
Email: [jewishst@msu.edu](mailto:jewishst@msu.edu)  
Web: [www.jsp.msu.edu](http://www.jsp.msu.edu)

MSU is an affirmative-action,  
equal-opportunity institution.

## Academic News

**Marc Bernstein** was on leave in Israel in 2004–05. His article, “The Child as Collective Subconscious: The Holocaust in Works by David Grossman and Yehudit Katzir,” appeared in *Shofar* 25 (Winter, 2005). He delivered a paper on “The Story of Master Moses” at the Society for Judaeo-Arabic Studies at Haifa University in August 2005.

**Kirsten Fermaglich’s** book *American Dreams and Nazi Nightmares: Early Holocaust Consciousness, Jewish Social Scientists and Liberal America, 1957-1965*, will be published in spring 2006. The book was awarded a subvention by the Koret Foundation Jewish Studies Publication Program “designed to help launch the academic careers of the most promising young scholars in Jewish Studies.”

**Steve Gold** presented a paper (with Rona Hart), “Transnational Ties during a Time of Crisis: The Israeli Diaspora Since Fall 2000,” at the Middle Eastern Diasporas: Invisible Minorities Conference at Yale University in March. He also spoke on Richard Alba and Victor Nee, *Remaking the American Mainstream* at the American Sociological Association Meeting in August.

**Mary Juzwik** was awarded a Kussy Fellowship for Study of the Holocaust for “Representing the Holocaust in Middle and Secondary Classrooms: A Guide for English Educators.” Her project asks how and why language arts teachers should approach teaching Holocaust texts and materials, and what they should know about the discourse of the classroom as well as the texts in teaching the subject.

**Michael Koppisch** is working on *Occupation, Vichy, Holocaust: French Writers Remember* supported by an MSU intramural research grant. He is in France this semester.

**George Peters** is presenting “Beyond the Holocaust? Teaching About Jews in German Class,” at the German Studies Association meeting in Milwaukee this month and “The Status of Immigrant Jews in Germany

Today” at the American Association of Teachers of German in Baltimore in November.

**Keely Stauter-Halsted** directed MSU’s “East European Jewry” Study Abroad program in July at Jagiellonian University in Cracow and researched on anti-Semitism and white slavery before World War II in Poland. Her article on the 1898 pogroms in Galician Poland appeared in *Anti-Semitism and Its Responses in Modern Poland*, edited by Robert Blobaum (2005).

**Ken Waltzer** presented papers on “The Rescue of Jewish Children at Buchenwald” in Detroit in May and at the Society for History of Children and Youth in Milwaukee in August. He will present on “American Responses to the Holocaust: Liberation and After” at the Association for Jewish Studies meeting in Washington, DC in December.

**Steve Weiland** will present “Let Every Sadness Speak: Voices of Mourning in Jewish-American Autobiography” at the Midwestern Jewish Studies Association meeting in Madison this month and “The Lives of Ronald Sanders and the Generations of Jewish-American Intellectuals” at the Association for Jewish Studies conference in Washington.

### Jewish Studies Advisory Board

Michael Serling, Chair

Sy Adler	Nevin Kanner	Stuart Morrison
Samuel I. Bernstein	Alan J. Kaufman	Jason Rosenfeld
Dennis Deutsch	Jeffrey Kirschner	Glenn Saltzman
Steven Dines	Jon Koenigsberg	Michael Sherman
Irwin Elson	Art Langer	Marc Shulman
Michael Hirsch	Jeffrey Leib	Sandy Soifer
Cindy Hughey	Rabbi Harold Loss	Steven Weiland
Andrew Israel	David Mittleman	Wendy K. Wilkins

Ken Waltzer and Bets Caldwell, Newsletter Co-editors