

Jewish Studies Program

Fall Semester 2016



Michigan State University

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Notes from the Director

This summer has witnessed particularly dramatic and often painful developments on the national and international stage. Events in the Middle East, Europe and within the U.S. have challenged ideas of peace, security and justice; debates within the U.S. and Europe have challenged seemingly foundational ideas and institutions, reinterpreting the past and reshaping the future; and the unprecedented discourse surrounding the U.S. presidential race has challenged our concepts of immigration, identity and American democracy itself.

Our Jewish Studies faculty are centrally positioned to grapple with the pressing issues of the day, and through their cutting edge research and engaged teaching, to work with students through these crucial challenges. Urgent questions about nationalism, immigration, identity and ethnic conflict are illuminated in courses on anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, and the history of Jewish immigration and identity in the U.S., taught by new faculty like **Amy Simon** and veteran scholars like **Kirsten Fermaglich**. The histories and tensions that sparked renewed violence around the Temple Mount will be explored in courses like visiting Israeli Professor **Yehotal Shapira's** on religion, history and architecture in Jerusalem and **Yuval Ben-Zimán's** and **Marc Bernstein's** on Israeli history and society. Visiting professor **Alon Tal** grapples with global environmental concerns in his course on climate change and public policy. Pressing questions about strategy and ethics of fighting non-state actors using terrorist tactics are discussed in **Yael Aronoff's** course on asymmetric warfare. Across the breadth and depth of courses taught by our Jewish Studies faculty, issues

of diversity, identity, tradition and change are central, and they illuminate these pressing contemporary questions through close examination of the specific experience of Jewish communities both past and present. In short, Jewish Studies has never been more relevant than it is today

I want to highlight several developments that speak to the relevance of our Jewish Studies program to these current challenges. The first is our program's growing strength in Holocaust studies. Our established leadership in Holocaust Studies has been enhanced by the addition of **Amy Simon** as the inaugural appointee to the William and Audrey Farber Chair in Holocaust Studies and European History – the only endowed Chair in Holocaust Studies in the state of Michigan. In addition, a generous donation by **Ed Brill** and his sister **Leslie Van Brandt** (in memory of their brother **Michael Brill**) to the MSU library has made possible MSU faculty and student access to the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive, an exclusive database of 50,000 video testimonies from Holocaust survivors, with support for teaching faculty and graduate students how to best use this resource. Faculty and graduate students from across the university will receive extensive training in September, led by **Ken Waltzer** with **Deborah Margolis**, on how to use these in their research and teaching. We now have more than a half a dozen faculty teaching and researching various aspects of Holocaust Studies across the university, and this will continue to grow and contribute to genocide studies more broadly. We are also well positioned to contribute to Michigan's new legislation mandating the teaching of the Holocaust in

all schools across the state.

We are also expanding our strengths in Israel Studies. The study of Israel focuses on many pressing issues crucial to global events more broadly, including the challenges of democracy and equality in a culturally, religiously and ethnically divided society; the role of religion in a democracy; the challenge of enhancing regional and global connections in the face of threats posed by state and non-state actors and the challenges of peacemaking between long-standing adversaries. This semester our established strengths in Israel Studies has been enhanced by an unprecedented number of visiting Israeli academics and artists. I have already mentioned the courses that will be taught by visiting Israeli scholars like **Shapira**, **Benzimán** and **Alon Tal**, which link Israel Studies to both James Madison College and the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities. Esteemed Israeli artist **Chen Shapira** will be exhibiting his art at the RCAH gallery. In addition, coinciding with MSU's Year of Water, **Alon Tal** has helped organize a Jewish Studies-sponsored symposium on lake management, which will bring over a dozen Israeli and Michigan environmentalists, academics and policy makers together to discuss lake management issues in the Great Lakes and the Kinneret/Sea of Galilee, to which the public is invited.

It will be an exciting fall semester to be part of Jewish Studies at Michigan State University!
—**Yael Aronoff**, Professor and Director

Inaugural Appointee to the William and Audrey Farber Chair in Holocaust Studies and European Jewish History

Amy Simon (Ph.D., Indiana University—Bloomington) is the inaugural appointee to the William and Audrey Farber Chair in Holocaust Studies and European Jewish History, sited in James Madison College and the Department of History. She is a core Jewish Studies faculty member. She has worked as a researcher at the United States Holocaust Museum and has published several articles on Holocaust literature and Holocaust perpetrators. Dr. Simon will be the first professor appointed to an endowed Holocaust Studies chair in Michigan. This fall, she will be teaching MC498 Senior Seminar: *The Holocaust in American Memory*. This course will examine the ever-changing constructions of Holocaust memory in the United States, from the revelations of the horrors of the concentration and death camps in the spring of 1945, through the challenge of Holocaust remembrance in personal testimony, literature, film, and physical memorials in the present day. In spring 2017 she will be teaching HST411 *European Jewish History*, which will examine post-World War II issues including the emergence of new centers of Jewish life in Europe and the Former Soviet Union, as well as Holocaust memory and memorialization in major European centers. She will also be teaching MC387: *Jews and Anti-Semitism*, which will compare the history and sociology of modern Jewish experiences, explore anti-Semitism and intergroup relations and examine the Holocaust and responses to it.



Sustainable Management of Iconic Lakes: Lessons Learned from Lake Michigan and Lake Kinneret (Sea of Galilee) Tuesday, September 14, 2016 — Club Spartan, Case Hall

8:15: Welcome and Meeting Objectives – Professor **Yael Aronoff**, Director of MSU Jewish Studies Program; Professor **Alon Tal**, Ben Gurion University; and Mr. **Jon Allan**, Director, Michigan Office of the Great Lakes

Session I: Lake Kinneret, Past and Present

Moderator: Professor Yael Aronoff

8:30 – 8:45: *Lake Kinneret, a Geographical Introduction* – Professor **Alon Tal**

8:45 – 9:00: *Lake Kinneret: a Limnologic Introduction* – Dr. **Tamar Zohary**, Former Director of Lake Kinneret Laboratory

9:00 – 9:30: *Walking on Water: the Spiritual Dimensions of the Sea of Galilee* – Mr. **Arfan Nagar**, Israel Antiquities Authority

9:30 – 10:00: *The Ecosystem Services of Lake Kinneret: Bridging Across Divergent Interests* – Professor **Avital Gasith**, Porter School of Environmental Studies, Tel Aviv University

10:00 – 10:30: *An Adaptive Management Strategy* – Dr. **Doron Markel**, Director of Lake Kinneret Watershed Management, Israel Water Authority

10:30 – 10:50: Coffee Break

Session II: Lake Michigan, Past and Present

Moderator: Professor Mark Axelrod, Michigan State University

10:50 – 11:15: *Lake Michigan 101* – Mr. **Matt Preisser**, Lake Michigan Coordinator, Michigan Office of the Great Lakes

11:15 – 12:00: *Lake Michigan Spiritual Dimensions* – Mr. **Frank Ettawageshik**, Executive Director, United Tribes of Michigan

12:00 – 12:30: *History of Lake Michigan Restoration Efforts* – Mr. **Jon Allan**

12:30 – 1:45: Lunch Break, complimentary for attendees

Session III: Contrasting Lake and Watershed Management Strategies

Moderator: Mr. Jon Allan

Two person (Israeli/Lake Michigan) panels on specific management challenges:

1:45 – 2:30: *Tourism, Development and Coastal Zone Management* – Israeli panelist: Dr. **Orit Skultesky**, Director of Water Resource Initiatives, The Society for Protection of Nature in Israel; Lake Michigan panelist: Mr. **Dave Lorenz**, Travel Michigan

2:30 – 3:00: *Ensuring Sustainable Fisheries* – Israeli panelist: Dr. **Doron Markel**; Lake Michigan panelist: Dr. **John Dettmers**, Director of Fisheries Management, Great Lakes Fishery Commission

3:00 – 3:30: *Controlling Invasive Species* – Israeli panelist: Dr. **Tamar Zohary**; Lake Michigan panelist: TBA

3:30 – 4:00: *Protecting Water Quality* – Israeli panelist: Dr. **Tamar Zohary**; Lake Michigan panelist: Representative, U.S. EPA, Great Lakes National Program Office (Invited)

4:00 – 4:30: *Adapting to Climate Change* – Israeli panelist: Dr. **Doron Markel**; Lake Michigan panelist: TBA

Session IV: Open Discussion and Concluding Remarks

Moderator: Dr. Alon Tal

4:30 – 5:00: *Open discussion: Looking to the Future, Lessons Learned and Possible Collaboration*

2016 Visiting Israeli Scholars: Yuval Benziman, Yehotal Shapira and Alon Tal

Yuval Benziman (Ph.D., Hebrew University) is a returning Fall 2016 Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar and Israel Institute Scholar and a lecturer on conflict resolution, culture studies and Israel studies. Dr. Benziman will teach two courses at James Madison College: MC399 *Cultural Contexts of Conflicts: the Israeli Case* and MC335 *Israeli Politics, Cultures and Society*. Dr. Benziman teaches in the conflict resolution programs at Tel Aviv University and in the School of Government and the School of Law in the IDC Herzliya. He also teaches MA seminars about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and about the transformation of the Israeli culture throughout the years. He taught at MSU during the 2015-16 academic year. Dr. Benziman researches about Israel's foreign policy for NGOs (Geneva Initiative, Mitvim, Ir Amim), and works on issues regarding conscription and the relations between Israeli society and its military.



Yehotal Shapira (Ph.D., Technion University) is also a Fall 2016 Visiting Israeli Scholar. Her research interests are architecture and the arts within cultural studies. She is our first Visiting Israeli Scholar in the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities. This Fall, she will be teaching RCAH395 *The Mount and the City: Religion, Politics and Architecture in Jerusalem*. The course will examine the place of the Temple Mount/al-Haram al-Sharif in the complex, urban and multicultural Jerusalem environment. It will analyze the modern history and surrounding urban development of the Temple Mount and evaluate it as a focal point for conflict and contested perspectives.



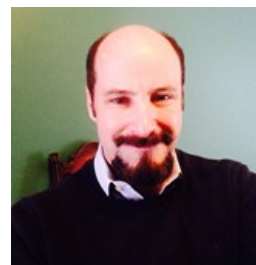
Alon Tal (Ph.D., Harvard School of Public Health; J.D., Hebrew University) is also a Fall 2016 Serling Visiting Israeli Scholar, and he will teach MC399 *Environmentalism in Israel* and MC399 *Climate Change and Public Policy* in Fall 2016 at James



Madison College. From 1990-1997, Dr. Tal was the founding director of the Israeli Union for Environmental Defense, a leading public interest law group. He was chairman of Life and Environment, an umbrella group for eighty environmental organizations in Israel, from 1998-2003. Dr. Tal represents Israel's Foreign Ministry at the UN's Convention to Combat Desertification. He is also co-chair of Israel's Green Party. Dr. Tal is the author of several environmental policy books, including *All the Trees of the Forest: Israel's Woodlands from the Antiquity to the Present* (Yale University Press: 2013) and *The Land is Full: Addressing Overpopulation in Israel* (Yale University Press, 2016).

New Affiliated Faculty Steve Rachman

Steve Rachman (Ph.D., Yale University) is Director of the American Studies Program, Co-Director of the Digital Humanities Literary Cognition Laboratory, and an English Department Associate Professor. This Fall, he will be advising senior honors theses.



For many years, he has directed honors theses on such notable authors as Emma Lazarus, Philip Roth, Abraham Cahan, Mike Gold, and Cynthia Ozick. Dr. Rachman has taught *ENG344 Jewish-American Literature*, in addition to teaching courses on Literature and Medicine, Popular Literature, and Methodologies of Literary History. He has written numerous articles on Edgar Allan Poe, literature and medicine, cities, and popular culture. He is the editor of *The Hasheesh Eater* by Fitz-Hugh Ludlow (Rutgers University Press). He is a co-author of the award-winning *Cholera, Chloroform, and the Science of Medicine: A Life of John Snow* (Oxford University Press) and the co-editor of *The American Face of Edgar Allan Poe* (Johns Hopkins University Press). He is a past president of the Poe Studies Association and currently completing a study of Poe entitled "The Jingle Man: Edgar Allan Poe and the Problems of Culture."

Save the date! The 12th annual MSU
Israeli Film Festival: April 2-3, 2017



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Academic News

Yael Aronoff presented "The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: Public and Elite Perspectives," at a conference on US-Israeli Relations at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and its Center for International Security Studies on May 5-6, 2016. At the Association for Israel Studies Annual Meeting, June 20-22, 2016, Jerusalem, Dr. Aronoff participated in several panel presentations and round-tables, including on U.S.-Israeli relations, on the contemporary challenges of teaching about Israel, and on new archival research on Golda Meir. She participated in the Israel Institute Leadership Summit, presenting on the panel, "20/20 Hindsight - Peace Process Memoirs" at Ma'ale Hachamisha, Israel, June 26-29, 2016. Dr. Aronoff will be participating in AJS Directors' roundtable on "The Role of Israel Studies in Jewish Studies Programs" for the Association of Jewish Studies Conference, December 18-20, 2016 in San Diego. Dr. Aronoff is working on her book project *The Dilemmas of Asymmetric Conflicts: Navigating Deterrence and Democratic Constraints*.

Marc Bernstein chaired a session at the Society for Judaeo-Arabic Studies at Vanderbilt University in August, 2016. In June, he participated in the "Shared Society" conference on "Implications of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict on Common Citizenship for Jews and Arabs in Israel" at Givat Haviva. While on a research leave for winter 201. He worked as Special Adviser to the Executive Director, developing programs for students from abroad. Dr. Bernstein worked as an advisor to Member of Knesset Issawi Frej. He is currently working on a new project to publish a collection of photographs and primary source materials from Kletsk, a shtetl in present-day Belarus. During his research leave, Dr. Bernstein worked with researchers at the Hebrew University, the Mordechai Anielewicz Memorial Holocaust Studies and Research Center at Givat Haviva, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.

Kirsten Fermaglich completed a draft of her book manuscript, *A Rosenberg By Any Other Name: Jews, Name Changing, and Race in New York City*, under contract with NYU Press. Dr. Fermaglich chaired a panel on "Jewish Families and Migration," at the Biennial Scholars Conference on American Jewish History in June. She was also appointed co-editor of the flagship journal in her field, *American Jewish History* along with Adam Mendelsohn and Daniel Soyer.

Michael Koppisch edited with Audrey Brunetaux a special issue of the *Journal of Women in French Studies* entitled "Seeing Charlotte Delbo/Seeing the Shoah." It is the first edition of essays in English on the work of Delbo (1913-1985), who was active in the French Resistance, survived Auschwitz, and, after writing about her experience, became an important literary figure. Dr. Koppisch's essay contribution is entitled "Charlotte Delbo: Writing (Against) Death,"

Steven Gold recently published: "Patterns of Adaptation among Contemporary Jewish Immigrants to the US" in the *American Jewish Yearbook*; "Russian Speaking Jews and Israeli Emigrants in the US: A Comparison of Migrant Populations" in *The New Jewish Diaspora: Russian-Speaking Immigrants in the United States, Israeli and Germany* (Rutgers University Press); "Ethnic Economies" in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism*; "Race and Ethnic Consciousness" (with Paula Miller) in the *Wiley/Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology, Second Edition*; "Israeli Immigrants' Involvement in the High Technology Sector" and "New Immigrant Labor Market Niches" with the Russell Sage Foundation, June 3, 2016; and "The Sociology of Migration and Understanding Recent Transformations in US Anti-Immigrant Sentiment" in *Footnotes.asanet.org*.

Deborah Margolis presented "The Potential of the Past: Walking Through the Creation of an Open Access Collection of Faculty-Produced Holocaust Site Photographs" (with Aaron Collie, Robin Dean, & Devin Higgins) at HASTAC (Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory), Arizona State University in Tempe, May 2016.

Anna Norris presented a paper at the Future of Holocaust Testimonies Conference at Western Galilee College, Akko, Israel in March entitled "Marceline-Loridan-Ivens, a French Auschwitz- Birkenau Survivor Interprets the Present Through the Past: From 'Old' Anti-Semitism to 'New' Anti-Semitism." Her article "Beyond the Shoah. Charlotte Delbo Confronts the Algerian War" will appear in Brunetaux and Koppisch, "Seeing Charlotte Delbo/ Seeing the Shoah," *Women in French Studies*. Her article "Visual testimonies from the Mémorial de la Shoah, France: Giving Voice to Women" will appear this fall in a special issue of *The International Journal of Conflict and Reconciliation*.

Ken Waltzer's essay, "Moving Together, Moving Alone: The Story of Boys on a Transport from Auschwitz to Buchenwald," will appear in Claire Zalc and Tal Bruttman, eds., *Microhistories of the Holocaust*, with Berghan Books. Another essay, "History and Memory: Tales of Two Children in the Nazi Camps," is forthcoming in an edited collection. Dr. Waltzer spoke in a plenary session at the Association of Israel Studies conference in Jerusalem in July 2016 on the subject of "BDS and the American Campus." He is executive director of the Academic Engagement Network, which opposes the BDS movement and supports academic freedom and free speech on U.S. campuses.

Steve Weiland presented a paper In April 2016 at the Midwest Regional Conference of the American Academy of Religion: "Narrative Apologetics and Jewish Observance: The Sabbath, Once More." He will also present "Jewish-American Autobiography and Transformative Learning: Questions of Identity" in October 2016 at the bi-annual International Conference on Transformative Learning.