

AJS PERSPECTIVES

The Newsletter of the Association for Jewish Studies

Fall/Winter 2003



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

We look forward to announcing awards and positions in Jewish studies.

Please forward these announcements to ajsperspectives@brandeis.edu.

AJS Perspectives encourages submissions of articles, announcements and brief letters to the editor related to the interests of our members. Materials submitted will be published at the discretion of the editors. *AJS Perspectives* reserves the right to reject articles, announcements, letters, advertisements and other items not consonant with the goals and purposes of the organization. Copy may be condensed or rejected because of length or style. *AJS Perspectives* disclaims responsibility for statements made by contributors.

***AJS Perspectives: The Newsletter
of the Association for Jewish Studies***

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AJS Perspectives is published
bi-annually by the Association
for Jewish Studies.

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ISSN 1529-6423

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Colleagues,

The fall issue of *Perspectives* continues to change in response to new ideas and suggestions of its readers. Our thematic feature for this issue is interdisciplinarity, a theme that seems especially appropriate in light of the annual conference in December. David Biale and Arnold Eisen, two distinguished interdisciplinary scholars, reflect on the limits and necessity of this vision of research and scholarship for Jewish studies as a field.

We are pleased to reintroduce a regular column on technology in teaching and research. It will be written by Heidi Lerner, who is the Hebrew and Judaic cataloguer at Stanford University. In this issue she describes the digitization of the Jewish press and historic periodicals. In future issues she will write about technology and teaching as well as research. Let us know the areas you

would like to read more about in technology.

Our teaching feature nicely combines the development of Jewish studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and the creation of a curriculum for the anthropology of Jews and Judaism. Matti Bunzl not only provides ideas for a curriculum and how to teach ethnography, but also urges us to consider how anthropology challenges certain assumptions about the field of Jewish studies.

We invited David Myers, a long-time director of graduate studies to offer new Ph.D.'s good advice on how to think about finding an academic job. This article is part of the ongoing feature in *Perspectives* directed to graduate students. Finally, film and popular culture feature in MacDonald Moore's review of a recent exhibition at the Jewish Museum of New York and an article

about the work of the National Center for Jewish Film.

Perspectives also includes articles by our president, Larry Schiffman, and vice president, Judith Baskin, which update our membership on a number of changes at the Association for Jewish Studies.

Thanks again to all of those involved in putting *Perspectives* out into the world, especially our Managing Editor Miranda Winer. Thanks also to Seth Jerchow of the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies for expeditiously aiding us with images and captions.

I have appreciated hearing from some of our readers and invite you again to contact me at prell001@umn.edu with ideas and questions.

Riv-Ellen Prell
University of Minnesota

**Is your AJS membership up to date?
Are you registered for the
December Conference?**

**Renew your membership, register for the conference,
and make hotel reservations online at**

www.brandeis.edu/ajs

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Colleagues,

As I near the end of my term as president of AJS, and soon fade into collective historical memory with all past presidents, I have started to reflect on some of the developments in our organization over the past few years. We have essentially faced two kinds of challenges: one caused by “natural growth” and the other caused by basic changes in the academic atmosphere in which we function. In both of these areas we have reacted cautiously and judiciously, but with sufficient wisdom and planning to insure our organization’s continued role in fostering Judaic studies in North America and beyond.

Recent years have seen a mushrooming of the number of papers and sessions at our annual conference, and we have accordingly redesigned our entire system for planning and organizing the program, involving large numbers of members in the process. Most importantly, our program has strengthened the classical disciplines of the field while opening itself up to new methodologies and subjects, thus keeping abreast of major changes in the substantive nature of our field. The size of our conference, the maturity of our organization, and our geographic diversity has led us to truly rotate our conference venues, a process that has now become the norm in our organization.

We have also made major transitions regarding our journal, *AJS Review*. First, we have recently seen the

appointment of a new team of editors, Hillel Kieval and Martin Jaffee, and we want to express our thanks at this time to Jay Harris for his important contributions as editor. Further, the recent transfer of the publication of our journal to Cambridge University Press has streamlined the publication process and will make the journal more widely available. They have already made it available on the Web, a requisite for any modern academic journal.

The stability of *Perspectives*, which was started a few years ago to replace our no-longer-published Newsletter, can now be said to be an accomplished fact, since we have seen a transition from Steve Fine’s editorship to that of Riv-Ellen Prell. We hope that you will see *Perspectives* as a place to publish your views on topics related to our field and we are sure that it will help us all to stay aware of all kinds of developments in the field.

Various developments in the way we do business have resulted in a need to revise our bylaws. A committee has drafted a new set of bylaws and these have been discussed in great detail by the board of directors at its June meeting. We are hoping that the new bylaws will be passed at the upcoming membership meeting and that this legalistic aspect of AJS’s work will be updated as well.

Finally, we are engaged in transferring our offices to a new

location at the Center for Jewish History in New York. This new location offers many advantages to us, and we are certain that you will find it convenient and pleasant. We are extremely appreciative of the Center’s welcoming us to their beautiful facility and to the family of organizations that are also housed there (see www.cjh.org).

None of this could have been accomplished without the leadership of our Executive Director Dr. Aaron Katchen. Aaron has helped in so many ways to reshape and develop AJS that it is difficult to speak of any of these developments without recognizing his role in them. In all this he has been assisted ably by Miranda Rich Winer. As you all know, Aaron is retiring from AJS and we are welcoming a new Executive Director, Dr. Rona Sheramy. She comes to us with administrative experience, vision, and enthusiasm, and is already hard at work organizing the new office and our transition. Here again, we are deeply indebted to Aaron for his help in the transition period. I hope you will all join us in paying tribute to him at our upcoming conference.

I want to close by thanking the officers who served with me, Judith Baskin, Deborah Moore, Steve Zipperstein and Fran Malino. I am looking forward to rejoining all of you at the various sessions of our annual conference.

Lawrence H. Schiffman
New York University

AJS ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

Dear Colleagues,

As of September 2003, the Association for Jewish Studies began to implement several significant administrative changes. These include appointing a new executive director and moving our offices from the campus of Brandeis University to New York City.

After nine years of devoted service to our organization, Dr. Aaron Katchen will be retiring as executive director. Dr. Katchen has been an accessible and innovative administrator of our internal functions and an outstanding representative and advocate for AJS to our colleagues abroad, to fellow members of the American Council of Learned Societies, and to all who sought help from AJS in forming Jewish studies programs and filling positions. I invite all of you to join the AJS Executive Committee and Board of Directors in honoring Aaron at our Sunday evening banquet in Boston this December.

During this past spring and summer a Transition Committee appointed by AJS President Dr. Lawrence Schiffman has worked to fill the post of executive director. I am delighted to announce that Dr. Rona Sheramy has accepted our offer to serve as the new chief administrative officer of our organization. Dr. Sheramy, a graduate of the University of



Dr. Aaron Katchen with Dr. Rona Sheramy

Michigan, received her Ph.D. from the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University in 2001, with a dissertation entitled, "Defining Lessons: The Holocaust in American Jewish Education." While at Brandeis, Dr. Sheramy founded and coordinated the Brandeis-in-Cracow program and also was the founding coordinator of the Student-Scholar Partnership. Between 2001 and 2003, Dr. Sheramy served as director of the Jewish studies program at Bard College. Our search committee was extremely impressed with Dr. Sheramy, and we believe she will bring enormous energy, creativity, and administrative talent to the AJS. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Transition Committee who worked with the AJS Executive Committee on this crucial task: Ross Brann, David Engel, Sara R. Horowitz, Paula E. Hyman, Jonathan D. Sarna, and James E. Young.

This month the Association for Jewish Studies will be moving to

the Center for Jewish History, located at 15 West 16th Street in New York City. The Center leadership is enthusiastic about our move and has generously offered us spacious offices and access to their variety of facilities. The AJS continues to enjoy a most cordial relationship with Brandeis University and gratefully acknowledges the generous support we have received over the years. However, the Executive Committee and Board believe that our growing administrative needs and organizational goals will be best served by this move to the Center for Jewish History. As of now, new telephone numbers and e-mail addresses have not yet been established. All members should continue to contact our Brandeis offices with any AJS queries or concerns until further notice.

Judith R. Baskin
University of Oregon
AJS Vice President,
Chair of Transition Committee

CHARLES LIEBMAN 1934-2003

Charles Liebman, one of the most distinguished scholars of contemporary Jewish life, died suddenly on September 3, 2003 from a massive heart attack. For almost forty years, his writings—fourteen books and over a hundred articles—shaped studies of Judaism in the United States and Israel.

Liebman did not train in the field of Jewish studies. He majored in economics at the University of Miami, went on to study political economy at Johns Hopkins, and received both his M.A. and his Ph.D. in political science at the University of Illinois. His first scholarly publications dealt with suburban politics. But by the time he came to teach at Yeshiva University in 1963, his interests had shifted to religion. In 1964, he published “A Sociological Analysis of Contemporary Orthodoxy” in *Judaism*, and “Orthodoxy in Nineteenth Century America”—a memorable critique of Moshe Davis’s *The Emergence of Conservative Judaism*—in *Tradition*. On the strength of the former, Milton Himmelfarb commissioned Liebman to write a full-scale survey of Orthodoxy for the *American Jewish Year Book*.

“Orthodoxy in American Jewish Life,” spread over seventy pages of the 1965 *American Jewish Year Book*, established Liebman’s reputation and became one of the most widely read and influential articles in contemporary Jewish scholarship. Overturning a generation of wisdom concerning Orthodoxy and its future, Liebman exuded optimism concerning American Orthodoxy’s

vitality and pronounced Orthodoxy to be “on the upsurge.” In pages filled with provocative insights drawn from the sociological study of religion, he described the full spectrum of Orthodox Jews, from the “uncommitted” to the “sectarians” as well as a wide range of Orthodox institutions. All subsequent scholarship on American Orthodoxy builds upon the foundations that he laid down.



Liebman’s article displayed many of the characteristics of his subsequent work: wide reading and research, an incisive mind, graceful writing, an unwavering commitment to truth as he saw it, and a strong contrarian streak. He went on to publish three subsequent highly influential *Year Book* articles: “The Training of American Rabbis,” “Reconstructionism in American Jewish Life,” and “Leadership and Decision-making in a Jewish Federation.” He also published, in 1973, a perceptive, if pessimistic, assessment of American Jewry entitled *The Ambivalent American Jew*, concluding that American Jews were torn between

two incompatible sets of values: “those of integration and acceptance into American society and those of Jewish group survival.”

In 1969, Liebman made *aliyah*, and from then onward he made his academic home at Bar-Ilan University, where he founded the Department of Political Studies and also served as the director of the Argov Center for the Study of Israel and the Jewish People. At Bar-Ilan, he produced a series of influential studies of Israeli society including *The Civil Religion of Israel* (1983) with Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Religion and Politics in Israel* (1984), *Two Worlds of Judaism: The Jewish Experience in Israel and the United States*, with Steven M. Cohen (1990), and *The Jewishness of Israelis*, with Elihu Katz (1997). He never abandoned his interest in American Jewry, however, and continued to write and lecture in the field, never fearing to risk controversy and often conveying messages that his audiences shuddered to hear. A series of distinguished stints as visiting professor—at the Jewish Theological Seminary, Brown, Yale, Trinity, the University of Washington, the University of Michigan, New York University, and the University of Chicago—kept him in close touch with developments on the American Jewish scene.

“FOR HIS ENTIRE CAREER LIEBMAN WAS BOTH SCHOLAR AND ACTIVIST. HE NOT ONLY CONSULTED VIRTUALLY EVERY MAJOR JEWISH ORGANIZATION BUT WORKED TO SHAPE POLICY IN BOTH ISRAEL AND FOR AMERICAN JEWRY..”

For his entire career Liebman was both scholar and activist. He not only consulted virtually every major Jewish organization but worked to shape policy

in both Israel and for American Jewry. He taught, befriended, advised, and encouraged many younger scholars in the field, reviewed and criticized their work, and sometimes collaborated with them on books and articles. In 2003 he was awarded Israel's highest honor in his field, the Israel Prize in political science.

In a revealing autobiographical essay, published in *American Jewish History* in summer 1991 in response to a wide-ranging symposium dealing with his

life's work, Liebman characterized himself as "something of a misanthrope." He theorized that "this misanthropy, this lack of ease or lack of at-homeness, wherever I am," underlay his research agenda. In fact, as Lawrence Grossman observed at the time, the connection between the man and his work was even deeper, for Liebman personally embodied many of the communal tensions that he wrote about: universalism versus particularism, scientific objectivity versus passionate commitment, and halakic discipline versus private conscience.

At the time of his death he was collaborating with Yaacov Yadgar on studies of "traditionalists," ethnicity, and nationalism in Israel, as well as secular Jewish identity and secular Judaism in Israel.

He will be sorely missed.

*Jonathan D. Sarna is the
Joseph H. & Belle R. Braun
Professor of American Jewish History
at Brandeis University*

AJS 35

**December 21–23, 2003
The Sheraton Boston Hotel
Boston, Massachusetts**

**For complete details including online hotel reservations,
please see the AJS website www.brandeis.edu/ajs.**

JEWISH STUDIES AS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT

Interdisciplinarity is one of the key intellectual challenges of a field like Jewish studies which seeks to understand widely disparate cultural, geographic, chronological, and religious phenomenon. The richness of the enterprise is potentially threatened by eclecticism. Genuine comparison can give way to sweeping generalizations. The intellectual project will always raise important debates about sources and subjects of study. Two Jewish studies scholars comment on these issues through the lens of their own research.

INSIDE, OUTSIDE: BETWEEN THE DISCIPLINES

Arnold Eisen

If memory serves, my first exposure to the attractions of interdisciplinary scholarship came as an undergraduate in the early seventies. My teachers and mentors included a pioneering sociologist of medicine; a professor of “Am Civ” whose work combined political, economic, and cultural history; a social theorist who was as likely to analyze a painting by Cezanne as a passage from Weber or Freud; a scholar of modern Protestantism whose major book included history and philosophy as much as theology and New Testament studies; and a university president bent on new linkages among humanities, sciences, and professional schools. Research of this sort was a heady prospect for a student considering a career in the academy but worried that it would prove irrelevant or dull. Moving beyond and between existing

disciplines seemed to guarantee intellectual excitement and to preclude the boredom of what Thomas S. Kuhn called “routine science.” Interdisciplinary scholarship combined the promise of the new with the sheer pleasure of the transgression of crossing the line with the full blessing of teachers who had done so with exemplary results.

Thirty years and a dozen advisees later, my enthusiasm for intellectual boundary-violation remains, particularly if—as was the case with my role models—disciplines are crossed while pursuing answers to riddles that can be solved in no other way. Some of the most exciting scholarship I read, inside and outside of Jewish studies, flows from work of this sort, for example in the burgeoning literature on science and religion. Religious studies is by definition what one

colleague calls a “field-encompassing field,” pursuing its object with the help of insights and data garnered from the fields of anthropology, history, and psychology, among others. Think of the influence of anthropology on Jacob Milgrom’s Biblical scholarship, or consult the bibliography in Moshe Idel’s *Messianic Mystics*. On the other hand, it seems foolish to dismiss scholarship which is more discipline-bound just because it works squarely inside one field or methodology, however traditional. I am resolutely pragmatic when it comes to the issue of method. Show me the results, either way.

Then too, I have gained over the years a greater appreciation of the costs sometimes involved in interdisciplinary scholarship. There is, for one thing, the ever-present

danger of dilettantism. It is hard enough to get anything right when it comes to knowledge of an event or a social interaction. Books which

set. Indeed, even when interdisciplinarity is explicitly sought, multidisciplinary scholarship is generally what is really wanted.



Al'bom evreiskoi khudozhestvennoi stariny Semena An-skogo (= The Jewish Artistic Heritage Album by Semyon An-sky). ed. A. Kantsedikas, I. Serheyeva. Moskva : Mosty kul'tury, 2001. Plate 32

Courtesy of the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies Library, University of Pennsylvania.

skim the surface and miss what lies just below it, or sacrifice mastery of the basics because time and attention have been diverted too quickly to broader matters, fail to satisfy. As a teacher, I have found that the normal insecurity of graduate students—"Do I really know anything? Who am I to write about this?"—is best assuaged when they can point to a discrete body of material and skills which they have mastered, and on which their insight can usefully be brought to bear. Building up knowledge of texts, languages, historical developments, social groups, and theoretical literature, is an excruciatingly slow process, one that is hard enough without worrying about acquiring similar competence inside a second field—or even on its border.

The academy's professed interest in interdisciplinary research is rarely evident when job descriptions are

fields do occasionally arise as a result of disciplinary combinations, but for the most part existing fields are stretched rather than recombined into new ones. Departments do not die willingly. The onus always lies on the scholar who challenges the disciplinary status quo to prove that the challenge is necessary or even worthwhile.

True interdisciplinary work may have become both more and less common of late, for the simple

TRUE INTERDISCIPLINARY WORK MAY HAVE BECOME BOTH MORE AND LESS COMMON OF LATE, FOR THE SIMPLE REASON THAT THE PARAMETERS AND PARADIGMS OF "NORMAL" SCHOLARSHIP HAVE LOOSENED SIGNIFICANTLY.

reason that the parameters and paradigms of "normal" scholarship have loosened significantly. Attention to theoretical issues, for example, is an expected feature of work inside many disciplines. What theory of translation underlies

Applicants are first asked to demonstrate mastery of a recognized body of knowledge or skills. Competence in a second discipline, through which one can usefully push against or past the borders of what a given field currently studies and how the field studies it, is seen as a bonus. New

a work of consummate translation, and why was it selected over others? Why was this particular set of superbly annotated texts chosen while other texts were omitted, and what notion of "text" guided the work? Challenges to disciplinary definition are rife, which means that disciplinary boundaries are blurred and border-crossings harder to identify. Cultural studies, by challenging the very notion of disciplinary mastery, and thereby the notion of interdisciplinary study, may well have raised the bar on quality of insight for everyone. If one is going to abandon the notion of mastery and invoke a competing standard, one's work had better be exceptionally smart and extremely interesting.

Graduate students who want to know how much knowledge and insight is enough to have their work count as excellent in a given field may learn that there are few fixed rules anymore; it all depends on what they are trying to accomplish. The definition of a project more often than not carries with it its own set of boundaries and standards—aesthetic, if you will—by which the project's completion or lack thereof can be judged.

As a Ph.D. student seeking a handle on the intellectual history of Judaism in twentieth-century America, I settled upon the topic of

Jewish chosenness, which was admittedly congenial to me because I had ruminated about it since childhood, and my earlier research was

related to Puritan thought, which was obsessed with it. I made that choice only when (1) a preliminary survey of elite and popular Jewish thought from the period I wished to study indicated that Jews argued more about this issue than any

CHALLENGING THE BOUNDARIES

David Biale

At one time, the field of Jewish studies could be subsumed under the title of “Leo Schwarz’s Great Ages and Ideas of the Jewish People.” The canon moved from the Bible, seen as a largely monovocal text, to the Talmud, medieval philosophy and codes, and finally, the emergence of modern Jewish thought. To be sure, Gershom Scholem overturned some of these verities by introducing the irrational, in the form of Jewish mysticism, into the equation, but once these mystics had been sufficiently domesticated, they, too, could take their place among the “great men” and their works among the “great texts.” While literary scholars might join historians and philosophers, what we mean today by interdisciplinarity—namely, the examination of a culture in all its registers with the use of a wide range of disciplinary techniques—was virtually unheard of.

I want to use the example of *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, a work that I edited recently for Schocken Books, to illustrate a different approach to Jewish culture, one that draws from contemporary cultural studies. This volume includes contributions by historians, an archaeologist, art historians, folklorists, and several literary scholars. Among the historians, some study intellectual history, others

cultural or social. This is, in short, a diverse crowd, deliberately selected for that purpose based on the assumption that a subject as broad as Jewish culture requires approaches from a whole variety of disciplinary angles. High culture does not exhaust the subject; one must look as well at folk traditions. Literary culture needs to be

evaluated together with the visual and the quotidian. The history of women, material culture, folklore, and popular practices takes its place at the table together with men, texts, and ideas. In general, no single scholar can

accomplish this Herculean task. To be sure, each of these scholars approached his or her subject from a particular disciplinary vantage point, but the aggregate, rather than the individual parts, may be said to subject Jewish culture to a much broader definition than those of earlier synoptic works.

Beyond the array of disciplines, several common features characterize this project as an interdisciplinary work. First, Jewish culture emerges as at once unified and fragmented. Each geographical and temporal culture has its own unique characteristics, often determined by interaction with its surroundings, but such centrifugal forces exist in dynamic interaction with the centripetal. Thus, the power of local custom competed with a relatively universal legal tradition. But this rather unsurprising proposition about the unifying effect of elite

rabbinic culture takes on an unexpected dimension with popular culture. As Shalom Sabar demonstrates in his essay on childbirth customs, far flung Jewish communities—from Yemen to Poland—made use of the same magical texts and practices, even as they painted them with their own local colors. Thus, on the level of folklore, Jewish culture had its unifying elements as well.

Second, every Jewish culture evolved in dynamic interaction with the surrounding cultures of the majorities among whom the Jews lived, a process Gerson D. Cohen provocatively defined a generation ago as “the blessings of assimilation.” If Jewish culture is not merely the result of an internal, autochthonous process, then scholarship in the field must venture beyond its limited—one is tempted to say “ghettoized”—boundaries, and the scholar of Jewish studies must necessarily develop an expertise in the larger historical framework in which his or her subject resides. And disciplines like anthropology, which have pioneered in comparative methods, become especially relevant in trying to understand the particularities of Jewish culture in light of universal categories.

In addition, cultural interaction can be found on all levels of Jewish culture. Several scholars who have written on Jewish culture in the Muslim Mediterranean remind us how thoroughly Arabized this culture was, so that practices we assume to be particular to Jews—such as the *genizah*—have their analogues among the Arabs. Those pillars of Jewish history such as Saadia and Maimonides developed their philosophies of Jewish particularity in what was a universal intellectual idiom. In a similar way, popular practices such as pilgrimages to the graves of saints in Morocco were rituals of Jewish identity virtually identical to those of Muslims.



Yingli tsingl khvat, by Mani Leib.Varshe : Kultur lige, 1918. p.1, illustration by El Lissitzky

Courtesy of the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies Library, University of Pennsylvania.

This concept of cultural interaction departs from Louis Finkelstein's "Jewish contributions to civilization," because it assumes much more multidirectional trajectories of influence. Indeed, the very word "influence" may be misplaced since no culture is merely a sponge that absorbs what surrounds it. On the contrary,

histories told little of the stories of Jews of North Africa, the Middle East, and Ethiopia, we now understand that Jewish culture has no single geographical center.

Moreover, the emergence in Israel of political and cultural movements of Middle Eastern Jews (of which the Shas Party is only the most visible) has

understanding Israeli society as a whole requires an examination of popular culture together with the "high" culture of the Zionist revival of Hebrew.

Bringing to bear a variety of non-traditional disciplines and questions onto the field of Jewish studies has uncovered the extraordinary diversity that comes from interaction with the non-Jewish world and from the different registers of Jewish culture. I would argue that it is precisely this diversity of Jewish expressions—from the religious to the secular, from the autonomous to the borrowed, from the "sublime" to the disreputable—that constitutes the vitality of our subject. And, indeed, the contemporary academic debate over these questions is yet one more proof that such creative struggle remains as alive in the world of Jewish scholarship as it does outside it.

David Biale is the Emanuel Ringelblum Professor of Jewish History and Director of Jewish Studies at University of California, Davis.

WHERE EARLIER HISTORIES TOLD LITTLE OF THE STORIES OF JEWS OF NORTH AFRICA, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND ETHIOPIA, WE NOW UNDERSTAND THAT JEWISH CULTURE HAS NO SINGLE GEOGRAPHICAL CENTER.

Jewish culture, like all minority cultures, must be understood as part of a larger cultural system, an organ within a larger body rather than an independent organism. The issue is not influence but interaction.

One rereading of the cultural system leads us to understand the encounter in the State of Israel between Jews from all parts of the world as revealing that Jews are not only products of Western culture. Where earlier

brought to our consciousness a whole folk culture that many Western Jews thought had disappeared with modernity. The use of amulets in Israel elections has aroused a fear of the "primitive," a return of the culturally repressed. But as Eli Yassif shows in his essay on folk cultures in the State of Israel, it is not only the Jews of Middle Eastern origin who construct the world according to such folk beliefs and practices;

JSIJ, a New Online Journal of Jewish Studies

The Faculty of Jewish Studies of Bar-Ilan University is pleased to announce the establishment of a new internet journal of Jewish Studies, *JSIJ Jewish Studies, an Internet Journal.*

JSIJ is distributed free over the internet, at <http://www.biu.ac.il/JS/JSIJ>.

JSIJ publishes articles in both Hebrew and English in all fields of Jewish Studies. While official issues of JSIJ are currently scheduled to appear twice a year, electronic publication enables us to post versions of approved articles immediately.

JSIJ seeks to maintain the highest academic standards; all articles are peer reviewed.

We invite you to join our readers and authors. Articles may be submitted electronically (preferably in Word) to our email address JSIJ@mail.biu.ac.il or in hard copy, preferably accompanied by a diskette containing an electronic version of the article, to the following address:

JSIJ, Faculty of Jewish Studies, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel, 52900.

Please visit us online to view the two issues that have appeared to date.

CENTER FOR JEWISH HISTORY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM FOR 2004

The Center for Jewish History (CJH) fellowships, that represent each of the five constituents (American Jewish Historical Society; American Sephardi Federation; Leo Baeck Institute; Yeshiva University Museum; YIVO Institute for Jewish Research), are intended for academic candidates as well as museum, curatorial, and library science candidates. The awards support original research in the field of Jewish Studies, as it pertains to one or more of the constituent organizations' missions, in which preference may be given to those candidates who will draw on the resources of more than one collection. Each fellowship* carries a stipend of a minimum of \$10,000 for a period of one academic year, with one earmarked for genealogical themes, i.e. focus on a specific family whose history sheds light on broader themes in Jewish history, or which examines the history of Jewish family life. It is expected that applicants will have completed all requirements for the doctoral degree save the dissertation (a.b.d.).

It is required that each fellow chosen for the award,

- **Conduct research or cultivate curatorial skills using the Center archival and library resources for the duration of the stipend;**
- **Participate in a Center for Jewish History Seminar and deliver a minimum of one lecture (during or beyond the grant period) based on research at the Center and the collections used; or participate in exhibition planning (for curatorial fellows only).**

Eligibility:

Open to qualified doctoral candidates in accredited institutions.

Requirements for Application:

- **Curriculum Vitae**
- **Area of interest and knowledge of relevant languages**
- **Official graduate school transcript**
- **Specific research/curatorial proposal**
- **Three letters of recommendation**

For Complete Details, see www.cjh.org/academic/Fellowship/summary.html

The Deadline for Application is February 1, 2004

- **Applications are to be mailed to the attention of Diane Spielmann, Director of Public Services at the Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011; (e-mail contact: Dspielmann@cjh.org)**

**We anticipate up to seven awards for 2004.*

TRAVELS IN JEWISH ANTHROPOLOGY

Matti Bunzl

It was the fall of 1997, and I can still recall my surprise and delight. I was perusing the positions advertised on the Web page of the American Anthropological Association when I came upon a listing from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. They were looking for an “anthropologist of Jews and Judaism.”

The advertisement was a genuine novelty. Never before had an anthropology department explicitly searched for a scholar with expertise in Jewish culture and society. As I soon found out, the position was the result of an initiative by Michael Shapiro and Gary Porton, the leaders of the local Jewish studies program. They had secured a significant pledge for the extension of the program. Three junior positions were to be created, two of them in the traditional fields of Jewish history and Yiddish, and one, out of a sense of innovation and intellectual adventure, in anthropology. These positions would be housed in the respective departments, and after some discussion of the merits of an ethnographer of Jewish culture, the department of anthropology agreed to accept the faculty line.

When I saw the ad I didn't know that I was an “anthropologist of Jews and Judaism.” Simply put, the category didn't exist, certainly not in the context of my graduate

education. Within the discipline of anthropology, the ethnography of Jewry was not a recognized subfield. To be sure, there were a handful of pioneers—scholars like Barbara Myerhoff, Riv-Ellen Prell, and Jack Kugelmass—whose work I greatly admired. But in the logic of the august graduate program at the

EVERY JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM NEEDS AN ANTHROPOLOGIST.

University of Chicago, my ethnographic work on Austrian Jews did not make me a “Jewish anthropologist.” Rather, I was an “anthropologist of Europe” who happened to work, among other things, on Jews.

This was certainly how I thought about myself. As soon as I saw the listing for the Illinois position, I started to rethink my work in its light. Having undertaken research on German- and Austrian-Jewish history as well as contemporary Austrian-Jewish culture, I decided to throw my hat into the ring.

Throughout the interview process, I made it clear that while my work did fit the gloss of “anthropology of Jews and Judaism,” I had no formal training in Jewish studies. Illinois, however, was looking for exactly that—a professional anthropologist who worked on Jews.

In the spring of 1998 I was offered the position and I accepted without hesitation. Ultimately I understood that I needed to design an undergraduate curriculum in Jewish anthropology. I embarked on that project over the next few years.

To date, my efforts have resulted in the creation of four permanent courses: “Jewish Cultures of the World,” “American Jewish Culture,” “German-Jewish Culture and History,” and “The Holocaust and Its Meanings.” “Jewish Cultures of the World” is the most explicitly anthropological course. It sets out to cast as wide a net as possible on the arc of Jewish experience. In particular, I am interested in exploring Jewish life-

ways in the non-Western world (both past and present), introducing students to Jewish communities in North Africa and the Middle East, South Asia, and Latin America.

“American Jewish Culture” aims much closer to home. Using a number of ethnographies and cultural histories, as well as artifacts of popular culture, I seek to introduce my students (both Jewish and non-Jewish) to the historical complexity and cultural richness of American Jewish existence. An extended unit on synagogue life commences the course, which then moves on to a unit on immigration and acculturation. I close the course with the roles of Israel and the Holocaust in American Jewish experience.

I hope to augment the curriculum I have developed by introducing classes on Judaism and gender and the ethnography of Israel/Palestine. But even at the current level, it has become clear to me that I can make a number of important contributions to our Jewish studies

program. More generally, I have come to believe that anthropologists are uniquely positioned to enhance Jewish studies pedagogy. In particular, I see three domains where anthropological expertise can make a real difference: comparison, ethnography, and a focus on the present.

(1) Much of Jewish history, even the new social and cultural history, is organized along national or geographical domains. This is certainly true of research (German-Jewish history, Russian-Jewish history, etc.). But it also characterizes much of the teaching Jewish historians

do. Even if courses do reach beyond national boundaries, they are still taught through a concept of contiguity where various eras and areas are characterized through continuity and similarity.

Anthropologists tend to approach Jewish culture comparatively. Most of us still write dissertations and books on particular communities, and we often do so with particular attention to time depth, a practice that brings Jewish anthropologists into close conversation with Jewish historians.

But in our teaching, many of us reach back to a classic anthropological agenda of global comparison. Traditionally, this agenda turns on such big questions as “what unites us” and “what divides us.” Our real contribution as anthropologists of Jews and Judaism may lie in our concomitant attention to the differences and specificities that characterize the world’s Jewish communities.

This classically anthropological agenda is at the heart of such courses as my “Jewish Cultures of the World,” and it could similarly be mobilized in comparative courses on Jewish ritual or Jewish art. In all these cases, the pedagogical effect can be quite dramatic. Like the best anthropology, it can contribute to making the strange familiar and the familiar strange. Especially for an audience of American Jews, such a recognition of Jewish difference can be an eye-opening experience. The centrality of Simchat Torah in Indian-Jewish life versus the prominence of Hanukkah in American life (both a function of

THE CENTRALITY OF SIMCHAT TORAH IN INDIAN-JEWISH LIFE
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SIMPLY IS SELF-EVIDENTLY IMPORTANT.

communities’ adaptations to dominant religious/cultural contexts) is a good example for a comparative instance that never fails to astound my students for whom Hanukkah simply is self-evidently important.

(2) Ethnography is at the heart of anthropology. It is both the preferred mode of data collection and the principal means of that data’s presentation. It is also notoriously difficult to define. Much like its near twin—fieldwork—it has almost mythic status in the discipline. Ethnography, for its part, can be undertaken to capture the past (historical ethnography) or, more commonly, the present. In either case, however, it focuses our attention on certain aspects of

human existence, particularly the sheer banalities of everyday life. On closer inspection, those turn out not to be so banal at all, incorporating such salient markers of identity as dress, food, kinship relations, and the realities of social structure. All these domains of life are highly routinized, and it takes genuine effort to render them from an analytically meaningful perspective. This emphasis on what Jews actually do complicates our understanding of Jewish life in at least two ways.

For one, it helps us recognize that the overwhelming number of Jews spend most of their time in activities

that have very little to do with Judaism as a religion. This is not to say that religion doesn’t matter or that it has no ramifications and echoes in peoples’ existence. But its salience tends to be overstated, if only implicitly, by a discipline that

trains so much of its conceptual framework on religion. In that context, all other aspects of Jewish life appear all too easily as subordinate, a bias readily corrected by an ethnographic approach.

For another, ethnography facilitates the realization that Jewish culture is rather messy at its edges. It is often difficult to decide where Jewish culture ends and, say, German culture starts. Many Jewish historians avoid this problem by holding the Jewish variable constant in the source material. As a result, they produce neatly demarcated German-Jewish histories, and while those have considerable merit, they tend to underestimate (and sometimes even misrecognize) the blurring that takes place. By contrast, such blurring is often what

anthropologists find most fascinating, not least because it raises the seminal question about how Jewish boundaries are made and remade and whether that process is a function of internal or external forces. While such analyses put pressure on the very concept of Jewish culture, they afford new and important insights into Jewish lives, past and present.

(3) The overwhelming majority of scholars in Jewish studies work on and teach about the Jewish past. The statement is so self-evident, it barely seems worth remarking upon. So much of what seems worthy of our attention existed in the sometimes very deep past: Biblical history, post-exilic thought, medieval philosophy, Jewish emancipation, etc. No one would argue, of course, that these vital subjects should not be taught. But they can create a sense that recent history and contemporary Jewish life are less worthy of attention. Compared to the glorious Jewish pasts, the present can seem outright inauthentic, and altogether less interesting. The neglect of the present, however, has real pedagogical consequences.

Minimally, it creates Judaism as an entity of the past, and the anthropological commitment to fieldwork and the here and now can serve as a potent corrective.

Contemporary articulations of Jewish culture are accessible to anthropologists. But they can also be gauged, and quite readily at that, by our students. This, finally, might be the greatest asset associated with the inclusion of anthropology in Jewish studies programs. As anthropologists, we can convey a distinct perspective on Jewish culture to our students. Even more importantly, we can embolden them to become ethnographers themselves.

In my “American Jewish Culture” course, for example, I require all of my students to complete an ethnographic project. I give them careful instruction on the basic tools of fieldwork and discuss with them individually any ethical questions and cultural concerns raised by their projects. On the whole, the experience has been marvelous. My students have undertaken remarkably inventive projects that showcased to themselves and the

class the richness, variety, and complexity of contemporary Jewish culture. Among my favorite projects have been a study of Jewish speed dating and an investigation of the concept of “Jewish geography.” Once, a (non-Jewish) student presented a rather brilliant ethnography of the class itself as his first systematic encounter with Jewish culture.

Other anthropologists of Jews and Judaism bring related qualities to their research and pedagogy. And as a group, we could easily formulate sets of contributions beyond the comparison, ethnography, and present I stressed. But I hope my point is made. Just in case, though, let me put it a bit more bluntly. EVERY JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM NEEDS AN ANTHROPOLOGIST.

Matti Bunzl is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he also directs the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities

2004-2005 FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR JEWISH STUDIES SCHOLARS

Application Deadline: November 28, 2003

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies announces its fellowship opportunities for 2004-2005. The Center awards fellowships to support research and writing about the Holocaust, its impact, and significance. Awards are granted on a competitive basis to Ph.D. candidates, postdoctoral researchers, senior scholars, and professionals holding degrees from and currently affiliated with accredited academic and research institutions worldwide. The Center welcomes approaches by scholars in Jewish studies, history, political science, literature, philosophy, sociology, and other disciplines.

Visiting Scholars spend anywhere from three consecutive months to an academic year in residence at the Museum. During this time, fellows have access to the Museum's research library and more than 20 million pages of Holocaust-related documentation. As part of the Museum's Jewish Source Study Initiative, the Center encourages proposals that make use of archival and other research resources created by Jewish organizations, shadow organizations, communities and individuals in the period immediately preceding, during, and following the Holocaust. The Museum has recently acquired major collections of Jewish provenance from the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, the World Jewish Congress, and other international, state, and local Jewish rescue and relief organizations as well as Jewish communal records from across Europe. Fellows also have access to the Museum's extensive library of Yizkor books, survivor testimony, and Holocaust-related music, film, and photographs.

In addition to fellowships established earlier for which Jewish studies scholars are eligible, the Museum announces for 2004-2005 a new program of Sosland Foundation Fellowships for the Jewish Source Study Initiative. This program is specifically designed to respond to the needs and interests of scholars with training in Jewish studies.

The postmark deadline for all fellowship applications is November 28, 2003. Decisions will be announced in April 2004. Fellowships may begin as early as June 2004 and must be completed by September 2005. All applications must be in English and consist of:

- A completed application form
- A project proposal not to exceed five single-spaced pages (see application form for guidelines)
- A curriculum vitae
- Three letters of recommendation that speak to the applicant's ability to carry out the proposed project

For information on the Center and its fellowships program, the Museum's library catalogue and archival guide, which provides brief descriptions of the Museum's holdings, and to obtain a fellowship application online, please refer to the Museum's website at www.ushmm.org/research/center/.

Please direct any inquiries to:

Visiting Scholars Program

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies

100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington, DC 20024-2126

Phone: (202) 314-0378 Email: wlower@ushmm.org

APPLYING FOR AN ACADEMIC POSITION

David N. Myers

It always struck me that one of the great indignities of graduate school—an otherwise blissful experience, as we all know—was the final stage. After all the wide reading, deep thinking, and torturous writing, you now had to go out and get a job. Shouldn't labor of this depth and commitment simply assure graduates of gainful employment? Perhaps yes, but, alas, the reality is quite different. The good news is that there are jobs available, and that good and qualified people get them. The bad news is that our field appears, based on a highly unscientific

observation, to be descending from the peak of institutional growth seen in the 1980s and 1990s—a period in which every major research university and many smaller colleges saw fit to establish a center, chair, or position in Jewish studies.

The academic job market in general is likely to be very tight over the next three to five years, as academic institutions contend with smaller endowments and reduced state subsidies. On one hand, this means that graduates should really regard the job search process as a two to three year proposition. On the other hand, it is imperative for graduate students to prepare themselves in the best and most thorough manner for the often capricious market that awaits them. And the preparation must begin in the first years of graduate school, indeed, upon point of entry. This doesn't mean that you must plot every move in graduate

school for the purely instrumental reason of getting a job; there is a grander intellectual calling that animates many of us. Nevertheless, you must be mindful of the realities of the market and prepare accordingly. Below are a few principles to bear in mind as you begin this work.

Teaching

It is axiomatic that applicants must have teaching experience, preferably broad experience, when entering the job market. Few institutions will consider your application seriously without it. So

you should make all efforts to work as a teaching assistant at some point during your graduate school career; even better is to have the opportunity to teach a course of your own design. It is possible that you'll be asked to TA for a course in your area of Jewish studies; it's also possible that you'll be asked to TA for a course with no, or limited, connection to Jewish studies. This is not to be avoided. The broader your teaching portfolio, the more appealing you are as a candidate. In fact, when applying for a job, make sure to indicate not only those courses that you've taught, but those which you're capable of teaching based on your training (divided according to the categories of lower division undergraduate lectures, upper division

lectures, and seminars—depending on whether the institution in question is a research university or a teaching college). You should also think of producing syllabi for the core courses that you'll be expected to teach. In addition, you'll want to think about how you'll teach key courses, what themes you'll cover in them, and which books you'll use, because these are questions that will likely arise during an interview. In sum, take teaching seriously. Even though your main mission in graduate school is to produce a serious piece of original research, you will be hired, at least in part, based on your experience and potential as a teacher.

Visibility

One of the great virtues of graduate school, which will become readily apparent when the manifold demands of an assistant professorship descend upon you, is that you are called upon to develop scholarly expertise largely in the confines of your own study. At many points in your training, it is just you and

your dissertation, without much extraneous activity or input. The challenge of the graduate student is to marshal this precious time, and yet also to become a known and

visible presence among your professional colleagues. This means following and joining online scholarly debates, attending conferences (including the AJS), giving papers where possible, and attempting to publish your work in refereed journals. Increasingly, that which distinguishes two qualified candidates for a job, even those still in graduate school, is their respective publication record. This is not a call to rush into print an undeveloped seminar paper. But it is a reminder that search committees increasingly choose candidates who have some publications to their name, as an indication of their scholarly promise and productivity.

In a related vein, it is very important that while delving deeper into your unique

WHATEVER THE OUTCOME, YOU MUST REMEMBER THAT
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research topic, you always think of how this topic relates to the key questions and problematics of your wider discipline (e.g., history, literature, religious studies) and that you develop the ability to render the topic understandable and interesting to non-specialists. For when you receive an on-campus interview, it is likely that the search committee and many of the prospective colleagues whom you'll meet will not be from the field of Jewish studies. The ability to explain to them what the payoff of your study is for the broader discipline is important, and not merely for tactical reasons. It is a matter of utmost intellectual concern, for you too will want and need to know how your project relates to a larger corpus of knowledge of which it is a new building block.

Job Market Checklist

In the spring of the year in which you will begin sending out applications for jobs, you should begin to put together the template for your job packet. Thus, you should draft a concise but informative curriculum vitae and begin to formulate a two-page letter of application. This letter will vary depending on where you're applying. A letter to a large research university should spend more time on your research accomplishments; a letter to a small teaching college should focus on

your teaching skills. But this is a matter of proportion. In both cases, you will want to do the following: introduce yourself and your academic background, describe your dissertation research (and its significance to the field), and discuss your teaching experience and offerings. You should also set up a dossier at your institution's career service center to which letters of recommendation from advisors can be sent and from which these letters will be sent as a package to institutions to which you apply for employment. You should also assemble a list of potential courses to teach, as well syllabi from courses you have taught or plan to teach—again, calibrated to the kind of department and institution to which you're applying.

In the fall of the year in which you're applying, you should make sure to peruse the usual sources for information about job openings. You should also ask your advisors and readers to update old letters of recommendation based on your most recent work. And you should begin to think about the contours of a job talk, usually drawn from the dissertation, in the event that you'll be invited for a campus interview in the winter. In preparation, plan on giving a talk at the AJS in December.

If you are fortunate enough to get a campus interview, make sure to find out all you can about your schedule, expectations (e.g., length and nature of job talk), and those whom you'll be meeting. While perhaps most of the process is beyond your control, there is 10 to 20 percent of it that you can control. Come to your interview prepared—prepared to speak intelligently and concisely about your work, prepared to speak to others whose work overlaps with yours, and prepared to be treated as a colleague. Indeed, the campus interview signals the decisive moment of transition from your student years to your professional career. Whatever the outcome, you must remember that the process of finding a job may take a few years and your own self-worth should never hinge on the vagaries of an often arbitrary market. In the sometimes difficult transition years spent searching for a position, continue your research and publishing; it will be an important source of satisfaction.

David N. Myers is Professor of Jewish History and Vice Chair in the University of California Los Angeles History Department

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR JEWISH FILM: THE ALBUM OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE

Sharon Rivo

Tucked in the basement of the Lown Judaic Center at Brandeis University, a small cadre of dedicated people oversee a treasure trove from the last century of moving images of Jewish life in the Diaspora. The materials—film, video, and still photographs—have been ingathered from the four corners of the earth.

The phone rings constantly and e-mail messages to jewishfilm@brandeis.edu bring inquiries from professors, researchers, curators, programmers and the public. “Do you have any images of Mendel Beilis?” asks Yohanan Petrovsky-Stern who is teaching history at Northwestern University. “What film would you recommend to provide an overview of the Holocaust for an introductory course on World War II?” A researcher from Germany calls to ask if there is any film of Herschel Grynspan for a new documentary. The Fritz Bauer Institute in Frankfurt, Germany, requests all the films of Paul Falkenberg be transferred to video and sent for a research

project about this German émigré filmmaker. Yiddiskayt LA calls to book *The Dybbuk*, the classic 1937 Yiddish feature film about star-crossed lovers, for an event at the Hollywood Forever Cemetery to



Tevye, USA, 1939 starring Maurice Schwartz
The first non-English language film to be included in the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress. (Courtesy of the NCJF)

attract young people to glimpse the world of Yiddish culture.

The National Center for Jewish Film is an independent and non-profit institution.

Created twenty-seven years ago at the invitation of President Marver Bernstein and the founding President Dr. Abram Sachar with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to assist the preservation of six Yiddish films, the Center has become the largest archive of Jewish content film and video material in the world outside the state of Israel. With over 12,000 reels of film—dating from 1903 to 2003—it houses a multifaceted collection of Jewish images. Initially best known for the collection of Yiddish films acquired in 1976—the Rutenberg and Everett Yiddish film library—the Center quickly added key collections from The Joint Distribution Committee, ORT, United Jewish Appeal, the Omaha Bureau of Jewish Education, NY Federation, dozens of national and regional Jewish organizations, and collections of filmmakers Paul Falkenberg, Arthur Zegart, Bernard Timberg, and Lazar Dinnar.

The films provide a glimpse into the diverse worlds of a people dispersed around the globe. Some of the most important images are simple scenes of daily

life in far off places such as the robust soccer players and cyclists in Novogradok, Poland (1930); Roman Vishniac’s images of ultrareligious farmers in the Carpathian Mountains (1936); Cantor Yossee Rosenblatt in Palestine (1934); color home movies taken by Bill Bernstein aboard the ship Exodus in 1945 (before he was killed by the British); a speech by President Harry Truman on February 16, 1957, at an Israel Bonds dinner honoring Eddie Cantor; barefoot children playing in Berdichev Russia in 1925; the only known film performance of the famous Yiddish actress Esther Rokhl Kaminska; chicken farmers in New Jersey in 1930s; merchants in the

Kasbah in Morocco; wealthy Berlin Jews in their gardens in 1933; street peddlers on the Lower East Side of New York in 1903; Nazi propaganda film from Theresienstadt; Jewish orphans in France in 1945; and

guests playing tennis at Grossinger's Catskill resort in the 1920s.

Due to the limited space, the Center cannot accommodate researchers, educators, and filmmakers on site; instead users

provide a detailed list of their requests and time-coded video cassettes are sent. To date only about 25 percent of the collection has been transferred to tape.

Mimi Krant, the cofounder in charge of the distribution of more than 250 titles, works with researchers, educators, and programmers from Hong Kong to Fairbanks, Alaska. Richard Pontius, the technical director, has supervised the restoration of dozens of Yiddish feature films and archival projects. He also runs the "stock footage" library, which provides film to museum installations, and new documentary film productions.

John Quackenbush, the director of the Center's Web site (www.jewishfilm.org), oversees the cataloging and manages publicity for the annual Spring Jewish Film Festival held on the Brandeis University campus. Sharon Pucker Rivo, the cofounder and executive director, is

involved in acquiring new collections. For the past twelve years, she has developed and taught courses on "Film and the

Holocaust" and "Jews on Screen" at Brandeis and other institutions.

One of the most rewarding activities is helping 108 independent filmmakers find markets for their films. The Center carefully selects historically accurate films to augment courses and provide resources for Jewish educators and programmers. Some of the center's new titles include *The Power of Good*, an award-winning Czech documentary about Nicholas Winton, a man who saved 669 children in 1939;



Power of Good, Czechoslovakia, 2002
Nicholas Winton

The film documents Winton's rescue of 669 children in 1939.
(Courtesy of the NCJF)

ONE OF THE MOST REWARDING ACTIVITIES IS HELPING 108 INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS FIND MARKETS FOR THEIR FILMS.

Love Inventory, an award-winning Israeli documentary about family; *Back to Gombin*, a documentary about the return to a Polish village by survivors and their families where a new generation find avenues of reconciliation with

young Poles; and *Rutenberg*, an Israeli feature film about the difficulties of the early *yishuv*. The Web site provides complete details of over 250 titles available for rental or purchase. The playdate calendar lists films which are being screened at venues worldwide and provides links to those institutions.

The Center's collection has become increasingly valuable as visual images have become the predominant language of the twenty-first century. The Center is committed to preserving these visual records on film in order guarantee future generations access to this movie album of the Jewish people.

Sharon Rivo is the founder and Executive Director of National Center for Jewish Film and an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies Department at Brandeis University

EXHIBITION REVIEW

IN PLAIN SIGHT: ENTERTAINMENT AND ITS MALCONTENTS

MacDonald Moore

Entertaining America: Jews, Movies, and Broadcasting, an exhibition exploring “connections between American Jews and the nation’s entertainment media,” was on view at The Jewish Museum in New York from

February 2003

to September

14. It will

travel to The

Jewish

Museum of Maryland in October

2003. The accompanying catalogue

was published in association with

Princeton University Press. As befits

its topic, the whole enterprise is

enthusiastically diverse in themes

and resources; its ambition benefits

from the strengths of J. Hoberman

and Jeffrey Shandler, the co-guest

curators, editors, and authors.

Shandler teaches at Rutgers

University; his books include *While*

America Watches: Televising the

Holocaust. Hoberman, senior film

critic for *The Village Voice*, teaches

at New York University and Cooper

Union; his books include *Bridge of*

Light: Yiddish Film Between Two

Worlds.

The catalogue and exhibition

complement one another.

Exhibition text panels draw on

written material common to the

book. Many photographs are

shared. The book includes pictures of objects shown in the exhibition, such as handbills, cartoons, posters, and celebrity items, as well as extra frame and publicity stills, stand-ins for video clips shown in the exhibition. The exhibition features

SEINFELD UPDATED US ON THE SYNTAX OF OUR NEO-CONVERSO

CULTURE, WHERE PASSING IS NOT QUITE ASSIMILATING.

artist projects (such as the “Star Shrine,” an homage, send-up, fantasy, commentary) by Ben Katchor, Aline Kominsky-Crumb, Rhonda Lieberman, and Mark Rappaport, while the book highlights primary source materials: excerpts from Henry Ford’s *Dearborn Independent*; Samuel Raphaelson on the genesis of *The Jazz Singer*; a tutorial on Yiddish dialect for actors, directors, and writers; Father Coughlin’s response to *Kristallnacht*, a primer on the politics of “tolerance”; and, from the November 1956 *Modern Screen*, “Marilyn [Monroe] Enters a Jewish Family.” Time lines are used to good effect. One runs under the endnotes. Another documents the extraordinarily enduring popularity of *The Jazz Singer*. This book has range; it is literate, beautifully illustrated and designed, ready for coffee table and classroom.

The exhibition entrance evokes the lobby of an old movie emporium. Inside, recorded scraps of conversation fade and blend as if overheard. Overall, the museum floor is organized to let visitors explore a semi-structured arcade-like progression of spaces. “Nickelodeon Nation” features movie pioneer Sigmund Lublin’s sympathetic portrayal, *Yiddisher Boy* (1909). On the way out one passes material on the distinctly unsympathetic movie *Cohen’s Fire Sale* (1907). Next, an appropriately large space is devoted to *The Jazz Singer*. Between slow motion projections of scenes from the original 1927 production, clips from remakes and spoofs are shown in narrative sequence, connected with intertitles from the original movie. The exhibition includes material on Al Jolson’s use of blackface.

Smaller areas are devoted to Yiddish film and radio.

There are kiosks featuring Star Shrines for Jews both “real” and “virtual,” including Fanny Brice, Groucho Marx, Betty Boop, Marilyn Monroe, Sammy Davis Jr., and my favorite, Marc Rappaport’s montage of John Garfield clips. The blacklist is memorialized as litany, naming names once again.

The legacy of *Your Show of Shows* includes Mel Brooks’s Y’Indian chief clip from *Blazing Saddles*, hard to hear and curiously cut; but isn’t it always. In a separate bare room, media treatments of the Holocaust are sequenced from newsreels, movies, and television shows. In one excruciating television sequence, a camp survivor’s ordeal was featured on *This is Your Life* (1953). On the occasion of Spielberg’s Academy Award for *Schindler’s List*, he seemed to lament that six million victims could

not be present to share his award. The final display recalls the restaurant set of the *Seinfeld* sitcom; show clips alternate with commentaries. *Seinfeld* updated us on the syntax of our neo-converso culture, where passing is not quite assimilating. American Jewish performances are frequently twice reflexive; characters from Al Jolson as Jack Robin to Paul Newman as

without motion video, handles this big story better than the exhibition does. And so it is with the larger themes that interest Hoberman and Shandler.

“Moguldom,” the second of the book’s five sections, contains a long essay co-authored by Shandler and Hoberman: “‘Hollywood’s Jewish Question,’” which as “the central

essay includes a backhanded defense of Neil Gabler’s book, *An Empire of Their Own*, against charges that it legitimates “anti-Semitic accusations of a Jewish conspiracy of international control.” (74)

Shandler and Hoberman note that Gabler sees the “pathos” of Jewish executives victimized by “their own embrace of the false god of assimilation.” But anti-Jewish critics

who portray Hollywood as a “mogul” controlled industry tend to see Jewish assimilationism as “rootless” social climbing and point to Gabler’s text for support. “Tastefulness, after all, was the object,” writes Gabler, “even if it became inflated in a contest of being more tasteful than anyone else.” (240) By 1996 the ultimate rejoinder would appear on the cover of *Moment* magazine. “Jews Run Hollywood. So What?” Yet inside, Hoberman and Shandler note, Michael Medved replayed stock demands for “more responsible filmmaking.” (75)

Anyone who dares to discuss a sprawling topic like this has to gerrymander like mad. I would probably carve things up much as Shandler and Hoberman

have. Nevertheless, let’s look at some tradeoffs. “Moguldom” follows the section called “Nickelodian Nation.” This is consistent in the sense that many Hollywood studio heads entered the new industry as exhibitors. But perhaps the essay that discusses the “invasion” of the nascent industry by “alien ex-buttonhole makers,” as Jewish entrepreneurs were stereotyped, should have been called “Moguldom,” and the larger section called “Hollywood’s Jewish Question.” As it is, the subsequent essays on *The Jazz Singer* fit uneasily under the umbrella of “Moguldom.”

“An American at Home, A Jew on the Air,” the title of the third



Cantor Rabinowitz (Warner Oland) walks in on Jack Robin (Al Jolson) serenading his mother (Eugenie Besserer), *The Jazz Singer*, 1927. Photo courtesy of the American Museum of the Moving Image.

Ari Ben Canaan (“there’s something in my eye”) make a show of hiding in plain sight. A converso act works when punch lines hit Jews from somewhere else.

The large living room set devoted to Molly Goldberg seems to suffer from the perfectly logical decision to show broadcast clips on an old home television set. The private scale feels at odds with the public space. Unfortunately the extraordinary story of Goldberg’s multifaceted, long-term success cannot be manifested through a display of promotional photographs and mementos. The book, even

essay in this volume—chronicles shifting notions of Jewish distinctiveness and visibility in America and, more generally, of identity politics in the public sphere.” (13) In their analysis of Hollywood’s reputation as the “empire” of Jewish “moguls,” the authors clarify the contextual importance of nativism and anti-Bolshevism as manifested in conflicts over the production code and anti-Nazism, and ultimately in the postwar blacklist. The arc of their analytical narrative parallels the standard industrial history model of Hollywood as the town built by “moguls.” Unsurprisingly, then, the

section, implicitly frames one of the book's larger issues: Does the performative relationship of American Jews to mass media represent an inversion of assimilationist responses to Emancipation as promoted among nineteenth-century Jews? Shandler and Hoberman mount an interesting response to the challenge of their title. An essay and chronology on the Goldbergs sit between essays on American Yiddish radio and film and the *Eternal Light*. Hoberman and Shandler's essay on "Our Show of Shows" concludes the section. "The program's creator, Max Liebman, found inspiration for *Your Show of Shows* in theatrical revues that he and other producers had presented both on Broadway and at resort hotels on the outskirts of New York." (144) This essay's frustrating brevity may, in effect, reflect the need to steer the book past even relevant temptations. Because *Entertaining America* cannot also cover Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, and Catskill shows, unavoidably we lose threads that would give us a more thorough portrayal of issues germane to both the movie and broadcast media.

It's difficult to track Yiddish culture through a book focused on mainstream media. In any case, following the lineage of Yiddish performance culture is a "reconstructionist" activity, even if one is of the decline-and-fall school. Long before the Klezmer "revival," in fact even as American Yiddish culture seems to have flourished, attitudes toward *Yiddishkeit* influenced American Jews' ongoing struggle to fashion a usable heritage from shtetl and ghetto remnants. When they cast the character Jack Robin for *The Jazz Singer*, the

Warners ended up with the more assimilated Al Jolson rather than George Jessel, who they may have considered "too Jewish." (Gabler, 141) Forty years later it was widely assumed that Zero Mostel, the reigning Broadway star of *Fiddler on the Roof*, would reprise his performance on film. But Norman

renegotiated their identity through the process of re-imagining Israel and pre-Holocaust Europe.

To the extent that American *Yiddishkeit* lives as a performative tradition, it may remain fantastic, even in the appearance of rootedness. I encountered the mediated

relocations and re-locutions of American Yiddish culture in 1965 during my first visit to Boiberik, a Yiddishist camp near Rhinebeck, New York. On my way to find the guest bungalows, I noticed a wiry little man sitting astride the "tea room" ridgepole. While hammering, he whistled the theme from *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Works Cited:

Hoberman, J., and Jeffrey Shandler. *Entertaining America: Jews, Movies, and Broadcasting*. Princeton, NJ and New York, NY: Princeton University Press and The Jewish Museum, New York, 2003. Gabler, Neal. *An Empire of Their Own: How Jews Invented Hollywood*. New York: Crown, 1988.

MacDonald Moore an historian, teaches at Vassar College.



One of the most durable icons of the 1930s, Betty Boop was the star of the Fleischer Brothers animation studio. Their cartoons are replete with references to Jewish culture, ethnic humor, and in the case of the 1931 *Minnie the Moocher*, a plot involving a conflict between Betty's East European parents and Betty herself, a thoroughly American flapper.

Betty Boop. Created in New York City by Max Fleischer, 1930. Photo courtesy of The Museum of Modern Art/Film Stills Archive.

Jewison chose the "realism" of Israeli actor Topol over Mostel, who was "too Seventh Avenue." Jewison wanted *Anatevka* to feel rooted, not fantastic. Having included in *Entertaining America* an essay on the movie *Exodus* as an American western, it could have been useful to look at these two movies as vehicles through which American Jews a generation removed from World War II

Request for Grant Proposals for Courses in the Study of Secular Judaism

\$50,000 Awards annually for up to three years

The Center for Cultural Judaism invites applications for Posen Foundation Grants for the Study of Secular Judaism (Judaism as a Culture). These grants are intended to encourage the study of secular Judaism within already well-established university programs and departments of Judaic Studies, Humanities, Arts or the Social Sciences.

Grants will be awarded to support curricular development and teaching of two to four courses per year in the history, texts, philosophy and literature of secular Judaism.

Grants of up to \$50,000 each per year will be awarded for the 2004-2005 academic year, or as early as the Spring 2004 semester. Upon review, these grants are renewable for up to two years.

Background

According to the American Jewish Identity Survey (AJIS 2001), conducted under the auspices of The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, nearly one-half of America's adult Jews identify themselves as secular or somewhat secular. Vast numbers of Americans who regard themselves as Jewish do not identify with Judaism as a religion, but strongly identify with Judaism as a culture and heritage. The full AJIS report is available at <http://www.culturaljudaism.org/ccj/news/4>.

The Posen Foundation and the Center for Cultural Judaism believe that the secularization of Judaism is a vital and irrefutable part of modern Jewish life, and requires study and understanding with respect to its history, texts and philosophers.

Deadline: November 21, 2003.

Background, Guidelines, Application, and Sample Syllabi are available at www.culturaljudaism.org

or by contacting

Myrna Baron

Executive Director

The Center for Cultural Judaism

212-564-6711 x301

myrna@culturaljudaism.org



PERSPECTIVES ON TECHNOLOGY

HISTORIC JEWISH PERIODICALS/ NEWSPAPERS AND THE WEB

Heidi Lerner

Scholars in all areas of Jewish studies depend on historic periodicals and newspapers to conduct their research. We are all too familiar with the many difficulties in accessing and using these materials: individual titles and collections are dispersed across continents; copies, due to the high acid content of the paper on which they were printed, are fragile, hard to handle, and difficult or prohibitively expensive to maintain. While formats such as microfiche or microfilms solve the problem of deterioration, they do nothing to facilitate access, nor do they lend themselves to easy browsing or searching.

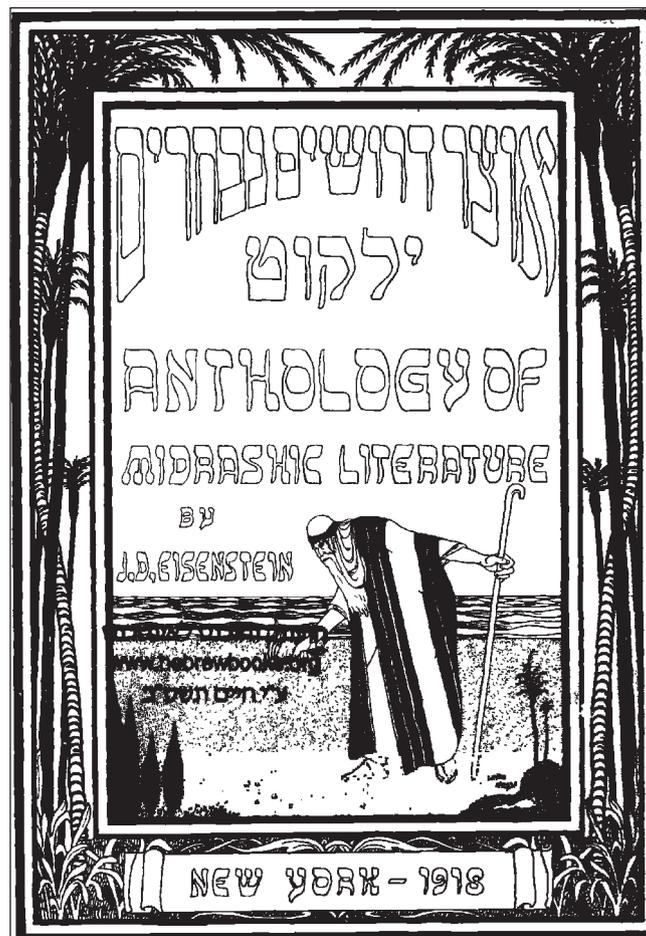
Information technology offers solutions to many of these problems. Digitization and Web access can make these texts more widely available, less subject to deterioration from handling of the physical artifacts (although there is the issue of media obsolescence to be concerned about), and more easily searched and browsed. Printed, manuscript, and pictorial information is converted into digital image files for use in computer-based applications. This is done in several ways: most commonly, a

viewed on a computer screen. Sometimes a digital camera is used to create computer records of images instead of recording them on film. Ideally, the image files will provide faithful replications of the original documents. The integrity of the original document needs to be retained, and different processes and standards are developed for creating both high-resolution archival and smaller deliverable image files.

The drawback of simply using a scanner or digital camera to reproduce text is that these only produce images of the page. The text can be read, but not searched. To solve this problem, text can be rekeyed, a process that is time-consuming and costly, ideally involving not only someone to input the text, but also an editor and/or proofreader. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software enables the computer to recognize characters as it scans the text line by line, by attempting to match character images into

predefined patterns and lexical contexts, then to represent each with the appropriate character code. The advantage of using OCR software is that text can then be searched. Complex programming, however, is required to plot formal varieties of characters, as well as to integrate some sort of lexical database (such as automated spelling or grammar checkers) to increase the accuracy of simple shape recognition. In the case of Hebrew, functional OCR software would be able to recognize and distinguish the variety of printed typefaces that can simultaneously exist on a single page (such as the common juxtaposition of square and semicursive “Rashi” characters) and, when necessary, support vocalization and diacritics. Unfortunately, no commercial or public program that satisfies these criteria is available. Even more problematic are multilingual texts (lack of adequate computational linguistic support) and manuscript documents.

In recent years, an increasing number of institutions, both public and private, as well as individuals are recognizing the benefits of easier access and enhanced protection that digitization offers to their



Otzar Drushim Nivcharim by Rabbi J.D. Eisenstein. New York, NY, 1918.
Courtesy of www.hebrewbooks.org.

scanner is used to create an electronic image of a document much like a photocopy machine does, except that the image is

collections. They are initiating efforts to preserve historic Jewish publications and offer them electronically via the Internet to the public.

The Compact Memory project (<http://www.compactmemory.rwth-aachen.de/cm2/html/>),* based at institutions in Aachen, Frankfurt, and Cologne, provides free, full text access to some of the major nineteenth- and early twentieth-century German-language, Jewish periodicals. The images include illustrations and small advertisements, as well as the text of the articles. These periodicals cover the religious, social, political, and cultural aspects of Jewish life in German-speaking Western and Central Europe. Access to these periodicals has been extremely limited due to the vast and systematic destruction during the Nazi period, which has resulted in surviving paper copy being scattered in just a few libraries.

The project, initiated in 2000, is scheduled for completion in 2006. Text searching of those titles is not yet available, but all the issues of the following periodicals have been scanned as images: *Allgemeine jüdische Wochenzeitung*, *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, *Altneuland*, *CV-Zeitung*, *Der Jude*, *Der Morgen*, *Der Orient*, *Die Freistadt*, *Die Welt*, *Esra*, *Im deutschen Reich*, *Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, *Jeschurun*, *Menorah*, *Mitteilungen des Gesamtarchivs der deutschen Juden*, *Neue jüdische Monatshefte*, *Ost und West*, *Palästina*, *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für jüdische Technologie*, *Zeitschrift für Demographie und Statistik*, and *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland*.

The Laura Schwarz-Kipp Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities at Tel Aviv University, under the direction of

Dr. Ronald Z. Zweig, has brought to the Web the entire run of the *Palestine Post* (1932–1950). This amounts to over 40,000 pages of broadsheet newsprint (<http://kipp.tau.ac.il/Archive/skins/Palestine/navigator.asp>). The technology developed for the project enables full-text searching and provides high-resolution images.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF HEBREW BOOKS HAS BROUGHT MORE THAN 360 AMERICAN JEWISH JOURNALS ONLINE (WWW.HEBREWBOOKS.ORG).

The Society for the Preservation of Hebrew Books has brought more than 360 American Jewish journals online (www.hebrewbooks.org). Among the scanned Hebrew journals available for reading and browsing, printing and downloading are: *ha-Pardes*, *ha-Mesiloh*, *ha-Tevunah*, *ha-Yehudi*, *Kol Yerushalayim*, *ha-Keri'ah vaha-Kedushah*, *ha-Kokhav*, *Kerem asifat hakhamim*, *Bet Yits'hak*, *Degel Yisra'el*, *Idno*, *Ohel Yosef*, *Or ha-Me'ir*, *Or ha-mizrach*, *Talpiot*, *ha-Mitspeh*, *Kol Ya'akov*, and *Kol Yerushalayim*.

Some humanities online databases are offering retrospective full-text access to journals relevant to Jewish studies. From within American Theological Library Association Serials (ATLAS), selections currently include the *Hebrew Union College Annual* (1949–1996), *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* (1976–2001), and *Biblical Archaeologist* (1949–1997). JSTOR offers among its titles, the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* (1942–1997), *American Journal of Semitic Languages* (1894–1941), and *Hebraica* (1884–1895). Periodical Contents Index (PCI), while still in the early stages of introducing full-text access, offers

full retrospective indexing of fifty-seven periodicals in Jewish studies, including *Jewish Quarterly Review*, *American Jewish History*, *Estudios sefardies*, *Historica Judaica*, and *Jewish Historical Studies*, etc. Access to these databases is by subscription only (site-license, IP-recognition basis).

Hopefully, this brief overview of digitization and the historic Jewish press will stimulate an interest in further explorations of how computers and electronic information can impact our own research and scholarly output. The editors invite you to comment, contribute, or suggest other topics for this newsletter relating information technology to our field of Jewish Studies by contacting Heidi Lerner at lerner@stanford.edu.

Resources:

1. *Guides to Quality in Visual Resource Imaging* (from the Research Libraries Group: <http://www.rlg.org/visguides/>)
 2. *RLG DigiNews* (From the Research Libraries Group: <http://www.rlg.org/preserv/diginews>)
 3. Digital Library Federation homepage (<http://www.diglib.org/publications.htm>)
 4. Zweig, Ronald W. "Lessons from the Palestine Post Project," *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 13: 2 (1998): 89–95.
- * Links provided were valid as of August 2003. Due to the volatility of the Web, they may no longer work.

Heidi Lerner is the Hebraica/Judaica Cataloger at Stanford University

JEWISH CULTURE



ISBN 0-06-008778-1 • hardcover • \$100.00 (\$150.00 Can.) • 508pp.

Since 1978, French photographer Frédéric Brenner has chronicled the Jewish Diaspora by producing visual social histories of Jewish communities. Here is a photographic record of his 25-year journey to 40 countries, capturing the scope and dynamism of one of the world's oldest, most diverse communities, and challenging the stereotypes held by Jews and non-Jews alike.

Volume I:

A collection of 264 of Brenner's more than 80,000 photographs, the most extensive and diverse visual record of Jewish life ever created. A four-page color insert includes two full-color photographs.

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Diaspora: Homelands in Exile

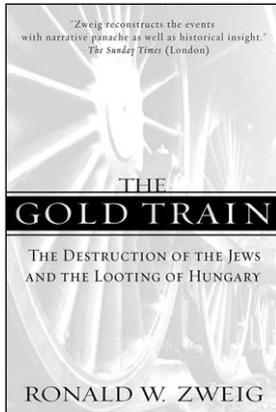
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www.harperacademic.com

www.diasporathebook.com

JEWISH HISTORY



The Gold Train

The Destruction of the Jews and the Looting of Hungary
Ronald W. Zweig

Drawing on a decades worth of research, here is the full story of the Gold Train—carriage after carriage of valuables confiscated from Hungary's Jews in one of the century's most terrible crimes.

"Zweig does an admirable job of untangling a complicated story and sorting fact from fiction in this fascinating subplot in the vast, tragic narrative of WWII."
—*Publishers Weekly*

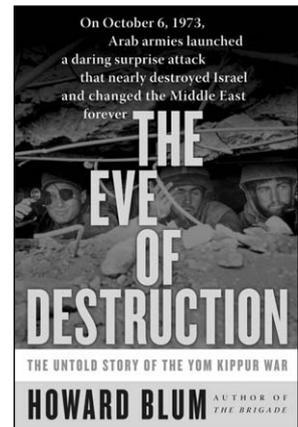
ISBN 0-06-093512-X paperback • \$13.95 (\$21.95 Can.) • 352pp.

The Eve of Destruction

The Untold Story of the Yom Kippur War
Howard Blum

Howard Blum, the highly praised, bestselling author of *The Brigade* and a two-time Pulitzer Prize nominee, brings forth a riveting account of the Yom Kippur war of October 1973—a war that took Israel by surprise and nearly destroyed the Jewish state for good, were it not for the courage and sacrifice of the Israeli people.

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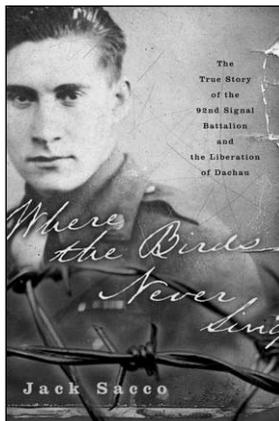


Where the Birds Never Sing

The True Story of the 92nd Signal Battalion and the Liberation of Dachau
Jack Sacco

A true story of the author's father, Joe Sacco, an all American farm boy from the south who began his part in WWII as part of the 92nd Signal Battalion landing on the beaches of Normandy in June of 1944. Fighting in some of the most historic battles of the twentieth century, it is Joe's ultimate destiny to take part in the liberation of the infamous Nazi concentration camp Dachau, and bear witness to horror on level he and his comrades had never imagined.

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JEWISH FUTURE

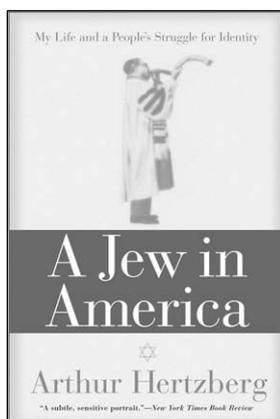
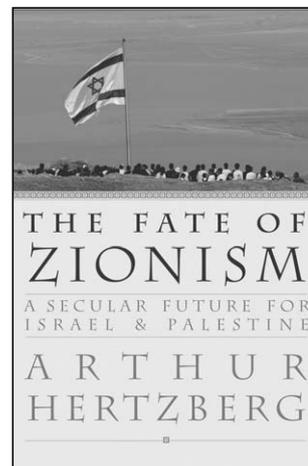
The Fate of Zionism

A Secular Future for Israel & Palestine

Arthur Hertzberg

Both a supporter of Israel's right to exist as well as a critic of some of its policies, world-renowned rabbi Arthur Hertzberg offers a secular framework for peacemaking between Israel and Palestine.

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A Jew in America

My Life and a People's Struggle for Identity

Arthur Hertzberg

"[Arthur Hertzberg] had a seat at the table during every major Jewish development of the 20th century, and finally he has put down his recollections in pointed, witty, and compelling prose. He is a walking paradox—an iconoclast and traditionalist rolled into one—and he is, in a word, indispensable." —Stephen J. Dubner, author of *Turbulent Souls: A Catholic Son's Return to His Jewish Family*

ISBN 0-06251712-0 paperback / \$15.95 (\$24.95 Can.) / 496 pages

Never Again?

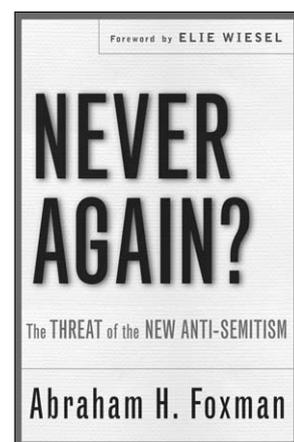
The Threat of the New Anti-Semitism

Abraham H. Foxman

Foreword by Elie Wiesel

Director of the Anti-Defamation League, Foxman offers a timely and much-needed discussion of the current rise of anti-Semitism in the United States and around the world. Filled with a combination of startling statistics, age-old histories, and behind-closed-door discussion, as well as a moving forward from Elie Wiesel.

ISBN 0-06-054246-2 hardcover • \$24.95 (\$38.95 Can.) • 304 pages



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conferences in Jewish Studies 2004

Institutions are urged to send short notifications of conferences to AJSPerspectives@brandeis.edu

December 2003

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik: Orthodoxy and Modernity An Interdisciplinary Conference Commemorating the Centenary of his Birth

December 29–30, 2003

The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute

The conference will focus on Rabbi Soloveitchik's social and educational influence vis-à-vis the Jewish world in general, and Modern Orthodoxy in particular, both in Israel and in the Diaspora. For more information, please contact Dafna Schreiber: dafnas@vanleer.org.il

January

Council of American Jewish Museums (CAJM) Conference 2004
January 25–27, 2004
New York City

"Jewishness/ Judaism: Definitions, Boundaries, and Perceptions"

The conference program will focus on the ways in which Jewish museums are actively engaged in defining Jewish art, ethnicity, and history, Jewish society and its diversity, and the nature of religious interpretation. For more information, please call (212) 629-0500 ext. 212 or email dschneider@jewishculture.org.

February

Australian Association of Jewish Studies - 16th Annual Conference

"Israel and the Diaspora"

February 15–16, 2004

Caulfield Campus, Monash University, Melbourne

This is an interdisciplinary conference relating to history, literature, the arts and political science.

For more information, please contact Professor Andrew Markus, andrew.markus@arts.monash.edu.au or Miriam Munz, miriam.munz@education.monash.edu.au

March

Western Jewish Studies Association 10th Annual Conference

San Diego, California

March 28–29, 2004

Hilton Gaslamp Hotel

For more information, please contact Professor Lawrence Baron
Department of History, San Diego State University, 5500 Campanile Drive,
San Diego, CA 92182-8148.
lbaron@mail.sdsu.edu

May

The Frankfurt Jewish Ghetto in Early Modernity

May 16–18, 2004

Frankfurt, Germany

For further information please contact:
Dr. Gisela Engel, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universitaet, Zentrum zur Erforschung der Fruhen Neuzeit, Robert Mayer - Str. 1, D - 60054 Frankfurt am Main Deutschland
Email: g.engel@em.uni-frankfurt.de
or visit www.le.ac.uk/urbanhist/urbanconf/ghetto.html

The International Annual Conference of the Simon Dubnow Institute for Jewish History and Culture at Leipzig University
May 22–24, 2004
From Pre-Modern Corporation to Post-Modern Pluralism: Diasporic Cultures and Institutions of the Jews between Empires and Nation States
The conference language will be English. For more information, please visit www.dubnow.de.

June

2004 Biennial Scholars' Conference on American Jewish History
June 6–8, 2004.

Washington, DC, at American University and at the Library of Congress Commemorating 350 Years of American Jewish History

For more information, please contact Prof. Pamela S. Nadell,
2004 Scholars' Conference on American Jewish History,
Jewish Studies Program, American University, 4400 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, DC 20016-8042
Email: pnadell@american.edu

The Association of Jewish Libraries 39th Annual Conference

The Jewish American Experience: 350 Years

June 20–23, 2004

New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge

For more information, please visit <http://aleph.lib.ohio-state.edu/www/ajl.html>

July

British Association for Jewish Studies (BAJS)

Conference 2004: Midrash

July 12–14, 2004

Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, Yarnton Manor

Please note that these are only provisional arrangements. For more information, please visit www.bajsbulletin.org/.

additional 2004 Conferences

American Academy of Religion

Spring Regional Conferences

Please visit

www.aarweb.org/Default.asp

Society of Biblical Literature

Spring Regional Conferences

Please visit www.sbl-site.org

call 2004 For Papers

American Institute for Maghrebi Studies (AIMS). Annual AIMS Conference, 2004

*Rethinking Jewish Culture and
Society in the Maghrib*

AIMS announces a call for papers for the 2004 annual conference to be held in Tangier, June 22–25 on the theme of rethinking Jewish culture and society in the Maghrib. The subject of numerous studies, publications, and conferences over the last 25 years, scholarly inquiry into the experience of North African Jewry and its relationship to the surrounding Muslim environment has emerged as an important sub-field of both Jewish and Middle Eastern Studies. It has received the attention of historians, anthropologists, political scientists, linguists, and scholars in a range of other disciplines.

Conference organizers invite all papers related to the theme of Jewish culture and society in the Maghrib, though those treating the following topics, around which specific workshops will be organized, are particularly welcome: Historiography and Ethnography; Urban and Rural Communities;

Muslim-Jewish Relations; Linguistic, Literary, and Artistic Expression.

For more information, and to submit an abstract (in Arabic, French or English) write to emilyrg@uclink.berkeley.edu and djschroe@uci.edu. (1-page abstracts are due by **December 1, 2003**)

*The Protocols of The Elders Of Zion
An International Conference
Tel Aviv University*

Between 1903 and 1907 the first editions of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion were published in Russia. Since then The Protocols, claiming a Jewish world conspiracy, has become the most widespread antisemitic tool, having been translated into numerous languages and published throughout the world.

To mark 100 years of the appearance of The Protocols, the Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism at Tel Aviv University, in cooperation with the Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung, Technische Universität Berlin is planning to hold an international conference, entitled "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion:100 years".

The conference, which will take place on the university campus on October 24- 27, 2004, will address the following topics:

1. The origins of the notion of a Jewish conspiracy in the medieval Christian world and its impact on Jewish-Christian relations.
2. The genesis of The Protocols in response to Jewish integration in Europe.
3. The Protocols in the service of Nazi Germany.
4. The notion of a Jewish conspiracy and the dissemination of The Protocols in the US.
5. The notion of a Jewish conspiracy as a political tool in communist countries.
6. The Protocols in South America.
7. The Protocols in the Arab world.

8. Legislation and legal cases against dissemination of The Protocols, verdicts and enforcement.
9. Holocaust denial as a variant of The Protocols.

The proposed title of your paper should relate to one of the topics above. Please e-mail an abstract, together with a short curriculum vitae, to Dr. Roni Stauber: Stauber@post.tau.ac.il. The deadline for submission of abstracts is **January 1, 2004**

Modern Fiction Studies invites submissions for a special issue on "Modernism's Jews / Jewish Modernisms" guest edited by Maren Linett. We seek essays focusing on the period 1890 - 1939 that analyze inscriptions of Jewish "difference" in fiction, film, and other forms of narrative or examine the ways Jewish writers and critics negotiated literary and social terrains. Essays might, for example, trace the aesthetic or political work accomplished by representations of Jewishness in particular texts; map intersections among disparate cultural and linguistic contexts; consider what it means to read prewar texts from our post-Shoah vantage point; or ask how responses to Jewish difference animated-or indeed helped produce-modernism's varied self-conceptions.

Essays should be full-length (6000-9000 words) and use MLA-style citations.

Please submit two copies of your essay to The Editors, *Modern Fiction Studies*, Department of English, Purdue University, 500 Oval Dr., West Lafayette, IN 47907-2038. The deadline is **September 1, 2004**. Queries should be directed to Maren Linett (mclinett@purdue.edu).

MUSEUM **Exhibitions**

This calendar of exhibitions will be a continuing feature of *AJS Perspectives*. Museums are invited to supply exhibition information and images for possible reproduction to our editorial office.

Brooklyn Museum of Art

200 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11238
(718) 638-5000

*The Jewish Journey: Frédéric Brenner's
Photographic Odyssey*

October 3, 2003–January 11, 2004

From Rome to New York, from India to Yemen, from Buenos Aires to Bukhara, from Morocco to Ethiopia and from Sarajevo to Vilna, French photographer/social anthropologist Frédéric Brenner has been chronicling the Jewish Diaspora in over forty-five countries on five continents since 1978. This exhibition will present works selected from approximately 80,000 of Brenner's images—the most extensive and diverse record of Jewish life ever created by a single individual. Brenner's work chronicles the evolution of Jewish civilization by producing visual histories of Jewish communities. He has captured communities on the edge of disappearing as well as others that are now emerging. The photographs, which engage the disciplines of anthropology, philosophy and history, are the points of entry. Along with Brenner's records, the reaction of the subjects, the insights of scholars and critics, these works can be used to address such issues as culture-specific portraiture, the role of image making in the Jewish tradition, photography in Jewish life and the nature of ethnographic photography.
www.brooklynmuseum.org

Skirball Cultural Center

2701 North Sepulveda Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90049
310 440-4500
www.skirball.org

Ruby Gallery

*Girl Culture:
Photographs by Lauren Greenfield
September 4, 2003–January 4, 2004*

Girl Culture: Photographs by Lauren Greenfield
September 4, 2003– January 4, 2004
Comprised of both photographs and text, Girl Culture captures with vivid color images and contemporary clarity the crisis of confidence among girls and the impact of cultural attitudes on their own self image. The exhibition of 35 photographs takes an unwavering gaze at such “body projects” as grooming, make-up, fashion, and eating disorders, and provides an intimate glimpse into the social lives and subcultures of modern girls and women. Lauren Greenfield, the author of the critically acclaimed, award-winning book *Fast Forward: Growing Up in the Shadow of Hollywood* (Knopf), is the recipient of numerous major awards and grants. She was selected as one of American Photo Magazine's 100 most influential people in photography. Her book *Girl Culture* (Chronicle Books, 2002) accompanies the exhibition.

Organized by the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona.

Milken Gallery

*The Photograph and The American
Dream, 1840-1940*

October 18, 2003–January 4, 2004

This major exhibition presents a sweeping survey of a century of American photography, featuring more than 150 photographs by little-known and famous photographers, including Walker Evans, Lewis Hine, Carleton Watkins, Margaret Bourke-White, and Eadweard Muybridge. On view for the first time in the United States, the exhibition, organized by the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, and drawn from the holdings of Stephen White, a Los Angeles collector, dealer, and cultural historian, examines the promise and reality of America in the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries.

The exhibition reveals different facets of the American Dream in the decisive years between 1840 to 1940, chronicling immigration to America, the struggle for freedom and equality, the industrial revolution, the expansion and move west, the rise of the middle class, and the hope—and despair—of the American metropolis.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue, featuring essays by Stephen White and Andreas Blühm, Head of Exhibitions and Display, Van Gogh Museum, and a foreword by former President Bill Clinton.

*Jewish Life in Ancient Egypt: A Family
Archive from the Nile Valley*

April 30–July 18, 2004

In its only West Coast appearance, this exhibition, organized by the Brooklyn Museum of Art, presents eight papyrus scrolls written in Aramaic that were discovered on Elephantine Island in the Nile River near Aswan in 1893. The papyri constitute the oldest existing evidence that Jews lived in Egypt in ancient times and are contextualized in the exhibition by a broad range of over 40 contemporaneous

Museum A

Exhibitions Continued

objects, both Egyptian and Persian, including life-size statues, reliefs, bronze statuettes, silver vessels, and gold jewelry. The papyri provide historical information about ancient marriage, labor conditions, real estate, religion, and burial, and consequently the interconnection of different ethnic communities inhabiting the island. The pluralistic society that existed on Elephantine Island during the fifth century BCE is a remarkable example of the integration of diverse ethnic and religious communities during this period of history. Jews, Persians, and Egyptians lived side by side in relative peace, leading productive lives and worshipping their gods, free from religious persecution. The papyri, miraculously preserved, concern one particular Jewish family providing specific information about the daily lives of a Jewish temple official, Ananiah, his wife, Tamut, an Egyptian slave, and their children, over the course of 45 years. Although Ananiah practiced a form of Judaism that would be difficult to recognize by many modern eyes, he was, in fact, a Jew. In ancient times, the term "Jew" referred to people from the territory of Judah as opposed to today's usage of the term as a religious or ethnic designation. This exhibition reinforces the notion of a changing, dynamic Judaism.

Yeshiva University
15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011
212-294-8330
www.yu.edu/museum

Homelands: Baghdad-Jerusalem-New York Sculpture Of Oded Halahmy, A Retrospective

August 25, 2003–January 15, 2004

For the last 30 years, this Iraqi-born sculptor has maintained studios in New York City and Jaffa, Israel. Halahmy's work bridges East and West, America and the Middle East with a confluence of cultures and styles. The wood and bronze sculpture in this retrospective exhibit show the influence of Halahmy's teacher, British sculptor Anthony Caro, and Henry Moore, and their symbols reflect the artist's Jewish heritage, incorporating ancient symbols like the pomegranate, the palm tree, and the menorah, to produce monumental works in the minimalist tradition. A catalogue will be available.

*Jerusalem Above All My Joys
A Fifteenth Century Torah Crown
From Arles, France*

August 11, 2003–January 30, 2004

In 1439 the heads of the synagogue in Arles, France asked the Christian silversmith Robin Asard to create a Torah Crown for them. The piece created by Asard as well as the original Latin contract defining Asard's tasks have since been lost. What remains is a French version of the original contract. Five centuries later, Bernard Bernstein, a Jewish silversmith from New York, came across the French contract and was immediately fascinated by the work it described. After years of research, he

has created a replica which introduces us to the unique beauty of a Torah Crown designed in medieval France.

*Remembrance: Russian
Post-Modern Nostalgia*

September 10, 2003 –February 1, 2004

Sponsored by the International Foundation of Russian and Eastern-European Art, this group of paintings, sculptures, and photographs, expresses the reverence and longing for the old culture in the Russian tradition by post-modernist painters Grisha Bruskin, Eric Bulatov, Genia Cheff, Rimma Gerlovina and Valeriy Gerlovin, Ilya Kabakov, Naum Kazhdan, Komar & Melamid, Igor Kopystiansky, Svetlana Kopystiansky, Boris Mikhailov, Natalya Nesterova, Michalel Odnoralov, Oscar Rabin, Mikhail Roginsky, Leonid Sokov, Vladimir Telepnev-Clavijo, Slava Tsukerman, Oleg Vassiliev, and Vladimir Yankilevsky. These world-class artists, all born in Russia, who now live in Moscow, Paris, Prague, and New York, have participated in Germany's Documenta in Kassel and the Venice Biennale. An accompanying program of cultural offerings includes concerts, a symposium, and audio visual presentations. A catalogue will be available.

*Silver Linings: Cloisonné Enamel
Judaica By Marian Slepian*

September 7, 2003–February 1, 2004

Wine, wedding and Miriam cups, Hannukah lamps, spice containers, Sabbath candlesticks, and other ritual objects by this acknowledged master of the centuries-old art of cloisonné enameling. A rare and difficult art medium, enamels of this caliber, imagery, and scale are seldom seen because most enamel work is done on jewelry.

Juxtaposing shapes of cool silver with the brilliant colors of cloisonné enamel, this New Jersey-based artist unites the rich heritage of traditional decorative arts with today's contemporary design

idiom. Trained at the Fashion Institute of Technology, the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts and the Worcester Art Museum School, Marian Slepian has participated in numerous exhibitions and her work can be found in many public and private collections.

The Jewish Museum

1109 Fifth Avenue at 92nd Street
New York, NY 10128
212-423-3200
www.thejewishmuseum.org

Signs from Berlin: A Project by Stih and Schnock

September 5, 2003–January 4, 2004

Places of Remembrance was the winning entry in a contest to design a memorial for the Bayerisches Viertel in Berlin, a neighborhood that had a thriving Jewish population before the Nazis expelled the residents to concentration camps.

Installed throughout the Bayerisches Viertel neighborhood in 1993 the project consists of eighty signs that hang from lampposts. Each sign displays a Nazi ordinance passed between 1933-1945 restricting the rights of Jews on one side and a simple color pictogram designed by the artists that corresponds to the restriction on the other side. The signs make visible the process by which German Jews were systematically robbed of their basic rights and forced from daily life.

The presentation of this project at The Jewish Museum will evoke the experience of encountering the memorial around the Bayerisches Viertel neighborhood. Video projections will portray the signs as they appear on the streets, while light boxes will display posters that appear on billboards in the neighborhood, showing all eighty signs and their locations.

Museum of Jewish Heritage

36 Battery Place
New York NY 10280
212.968.1800
www.mjhnyc.org

Ours to Fight For: American Jews in the Second World War

October 21, 2003–October 2004

The inaugural exhibition of the Robert M. Morgenthau Wing will explore the role of Jewish men and women who were part of the American war effort in Europe, the Pacific, and at home. *Ours to Fight For* honors World War II veterans who tell their stories through video testimony, artifacts, personal quotes, letters, and photographs. In addition, an interactive gallery will present the experiences of other ethnic groups who contributed to the Allies' fight to preserve democracy.

Jewish Museum of Maryland

15 Lloyd Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
410.732.6400
www.jhsm.org

Entertaining America: Jews, Movies and Broadcasting

October 26, 2003–January 2004

This exhibition will offer new insights into a topic that has provoked one of the most extensive public discussions of identity and culture in America: the relationship between American Jews and the nation's entertainment media.

Entertaining America specifically addresses film and broadcasting, as these are the "new" mass media of the past century in which the discussion of American Jews figures most prominently. Taking a selective approach to a vast subject, the exhibition focuses on a key group of works, figures, institutions, and events that offer critical and illuminating perspectives on the relationship between American Jews and national

media culture. *Entertaining America* will encourage visitors to look in new ways at familiar and pervasive media, and analyze notions about the entertainment industry as a cultural phenomenon. Visitors to the exhibition will discover that film, radio and television are more than diversions from everyday life: they are a complex archive of the creativity, contradictions, drive and intellect that manifests the notion of being an American. As a complement to its national scope, *Entertaining America* is envisioned as a touring exhibition and the show will travel to two or three venues across the United States over a three year period.

AMERICAN ACADEMY FOR JEWISH RESEARCH
ASSOCIATION FOR JEWISH STUDIES
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSORS OF HEBREW

Statement on North American Undergraduate Study in Israeli Universities

Over the past three years, the sharp decline in the number of North American undergraduate students in “study abroad” programs at Israeli universities has had a severe and deleterious impact on academic Jewish Studies Programs in the United States and Canada. Students in such programs have been shown to benefit greatly from the language study and other subject specialization opportunities that can be found only at Israeli universities.

As presidents of the three major academic organizations of Jewish Studies faculty in North America, we wish to express our alarm at the policies of North American universities that serve to dissuade, discourage, prevent or even prohibit students who decide to study in Israel from doing so.

We recognize legitimate concerns for safety and the cautionary advice given by the State Department about travel in Israel. But we believe that, rather than cancel programs or prohibit study, universities should base the decision to award university credit for academic work done elsewhere solely on academic criteria and that no penalty should be imposed on students who have chosen freely and of their own volition to participate in such programs.

We call upon the administrations of American universities to review their policies on study in Israel in order to remove obstacles created by administrative decisions that are not germane to academic standards, so as to allow students to pursue their legitimate academic goals.

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(Cover Photo)

The Dybbuk, Poland, 1937

Leah, the bride, in the dance with death
(Judith Berg) and the poor at her
wedding. (Courtesy of the NCJF)

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