

**ELIE  
WIESEL**  
מרכז אליוזל ללימודי יהדות  
**CENTER FOR  
JEWISH STUDIES**

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Dear Colleagues and Friends  
of the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies:

Looking back at this unusual year, I feel gratitude. Gratitude for the hard work of our staff, faculty, and students who made the best of the extraordinary circumstances imposed on us by the pandemic; gratitude for the College of Arts and Sciences and University staff and leadership for their indefatigable work to keep us safe, healthy, and productive; and gratitude for the many friends and colleagues who joined us for remote events that went off without too many glitches and that helped us to stay engaged. I am particularly grateful to the many individuals, named at the end of this report, who gave to the Elie Wiesel Center over the course of this year. Their generosity tells us that our work is important to them.

Among those who connected with us this year were the friends and family of Marty Alpert, who passed away last year. Marty and his late wife Judy were long-time supporters of the Elie Wiesel Center. Their daughter Nancy explained to me that "Judy, who passed away 7 years ago, was a friend of Elie Wiesel's (took many classes with him) and he called her when she was home on hospice care and I was present and he gave her such a lift!" Marty and Judy will be missed. May their family and friends be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem!

This year we welcomed Professor of Music André de Quadros (College of Fine Arts) to the Elie Wiesel Center as affiliated faculty. André is a conductor, ethnomusicologist, music educator, writer, and human rights activist. He uses music to connect people who are otherwise estranged from one another. He fondly remembers how Elie Wiesel engaged people with his warm singing voice. Like other faculty who have affiliated with the Center over the past few years, André's engagement in the Center is entirely voluntary.

As in past years, we were able to co-sponsor events with other units and support the mission of the BU Hillel. We are particularly proud to be involved in the prestigious BU Conversations in the Arts and Ideas, which this year featured author and photographer Teju Cole. During his lecture I received a text message from Postdoctoral Associate Sultan Doughan who told me how moved she was by what Cole had to say.

Speaking of Dr. Doughan: Sultan will be leaving us after three years at Boston University where she forged connections across departments and units as a teacher, researcher, interlocutor, facilitator, but most of all as a human being and a friend. I am grateful that we had her as a colleague and glad to report that she is going on to a Visiting Assistant Professorship at the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University.

Other goodbyes are in order. This year saw the retirement of long-time Jewish Studies Center affiliate faculty members John Bernstein (COM) and Jeffrey Mehlman (CAS). We wish them the best for the coming years and thank them for their many years of service. SPH and MED Professor Michael Grodin retired, as well, but he will continue his work on the Medicine and the Holocaust project. In this report, one of his former students describes the impact that Dr. Grodin had on her education and career path.

A year ago, I had a conversation with long-time friend of the Elie Wiesel Center and CAS alum Jonathan Krivine about what we can do to establish Israel Studies at BU on a more solid footing. In this report you will read about a new initiative that grew from that conversation. We were able to secure a three-year grant from the Israel Institute, D.C., to fund a visiting teaching fellow in Israel Studies and recruited Dr. David Lehrer, long-time director of the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies to teach for us this coming year. His course on the history, politics, culture, and identity of Israel has filled up right away. I am grateful to Jonathan for the support and inspiration he brings to all of us at the Center.

This summer we commemorated the fifth anniversary since Professor Wiesel's passing. It is a privilege to be surrounded by so many colleagues and former students in whose personal memory, work, and teaching the unique personality of Elie Wiesel remains alive and present. We continue to be inspired by Professor Wiesel's presence on campus, his intimate and impactful teaching style, about which we heard from his master-student Ariel Burger in last year's Summer Reading Series.

In a year that brought questions of race, equity, and human rights to everyone's renewed attention, we are reminded of the words of BU alum Martin Luther King Jr., that "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." The focus of the Fall 2021 Elie Wiesel Memorial Lectures will be on the human rights legacies of Elie Wiesel and of Dr. King. Stay tuned for more information about these lectures!

Sincerely,

**Michael Zank**, PhD

Professor of Religion, Jewish Studies, and Medieval Studies

Director, The Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies



BEIT SHLOMOH V'SARAH WIESEL,  
147 BAY STATE ROAD;  
SILBER WAY BALCONY.

## About

The Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies (EWCJS) is an academic unit of the College of Arts Sciences. The Center administers degree programs in Jewish Studies and Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies and offers a wide range of co-curricular events and lectures, many of which are open to the general public.

Named for Elie Wiesel, the 1986 Nobel Laureate for Peace and a member of the BU faculty for nearly forty years, the Center fosters excellence in teaching and scholarship, as well as meaningful public engagement. The Center is located at 147 Bay State Road, the former Weld family mansion that once served as the Offices of University President John Silber. At its rededication in 2005, the building was renamed in honor of Elie Wiesel's parents Shlomo and Sarah Wiesel. It was renovated with the generous support of Ira and Ingeborg Rennert, who provided the founding endowment of the Center.

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Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies  
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## Faculty

### Core Faculty

- Kimberly Arkin**, Associate Professor of Anthropology
- Andrea Berlin**, James R. Wiseman Chair in Classical Archaeology and Professor of Religion
- Alejandro Botta**, Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible
- Katheryn Darr**, Professor of Hebrew Bible and Harrell F. Beck Scholar of Hebrew Scripture
- Charles Dellheim**, Professor of History
- David Frankfurter**, Professor of Religion and Aurelio Chair for the Appreciation of Scripture
- Abigail Gillman**, Professor of Hebrew, German & Comparative Literature
- Michael Grodin**, Professor of Health Law, Bioethics & Human Rights and Professor of Family Medicine and Psychiatry
- Nancy Harrowitz**, Professor of Italian; Head of Italian Section; Director of Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies Minor
- Steven Katz**, Professor of Religion; Alvin J. Slater and Shirley Slater Chair in Jewish Holocaust Studies
- Jonathan Klawans**, Professor of Religion
- Deeana Klepper**, Associate Professor of Religion
- Diana Lobel**, Associate Professor of Religion; Associate Director of Graduate Studies in Religion
- Michael Zank**, Professor of Religion; Director, Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies

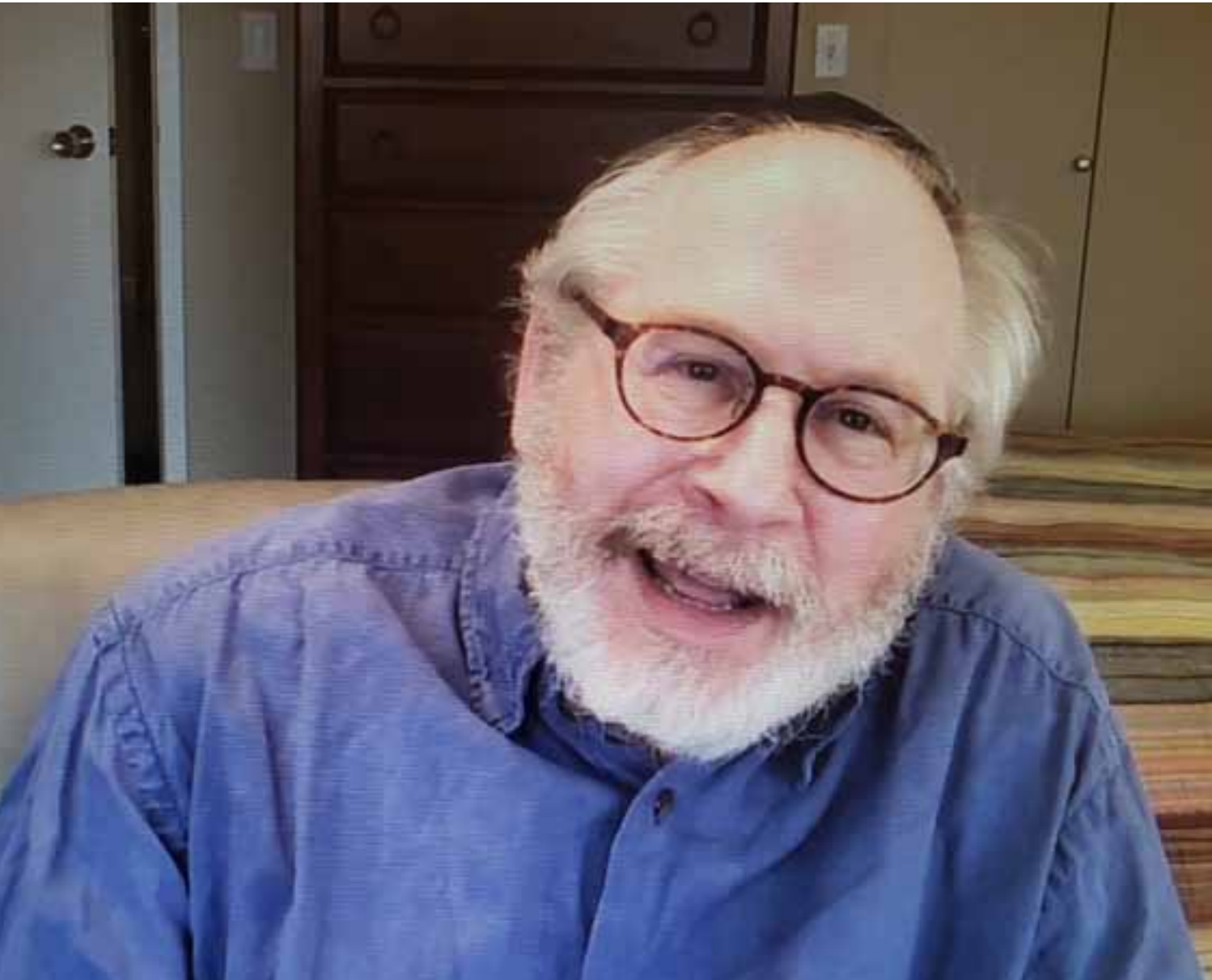
### Emeritus Faculty

- Paula Fredriksen**, Professor Emerita of Religion, William Goodwin Aurelio Chair Emerita
- Pnina Lahav**, Professor of Law Emerita
- Thomas Glick**, Professor Emeritus of History
- Hillel Levine**, Professor Emeritus of Religion
- Elie Wiesel**, Andrew W. Mellon Professor Emeritus in the Humanities and Professor of Philosophy and Religion

### Affiliate Faculty

- Ingrid Anderson**, Senior Lecturer in the Arts and Sciences Writing Program; Associate Director, Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies
- Miriam Angrist**, Lecturer in Hebrew, Head of Hebrew Language Program
- John Bernstein**, Professor of Film
- Susan Bernstein**, Research Professor in the English Department
- Alicia Borinsky**, Professor of Spanish, Latin American Studies, Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, Head of Spanish Section
- Jennifer Cazenave**, Assistant Professor of French, Director of Undergraduate Studies
- André de Quadros**, Professor of Music  
Aaron Garrett, Associate Professor of Philosophy
- Nahum Karlinsky**, (Ben-Gurion University), Visiting Professor of Israel Studies
- Irit Kleiman**, Associate Professor of Romance Studies, Associate Chair of Romance Studies
- Yair Lior**, Lecturer in Religious Studies
- Margaret Litvin**, Associate Professor of Arabic and Comparative Literature; Chair of World Languages & Literatures Department
- Jeffrey Mehlman**, Professor of French
- Michael Prince**, Associate Professor of English
- Adam Seligman**, Professor of Religion; Director, Graduate Program in Religion; Research Associate, Institute for the Study of Economic Culture
- Merav Shohet**, Assistant Professor of Anthropology
- Jeremy Yudkin**, Professor of Music, Musicology, and Ethnomusicology
- Michael Zell**, Associate Professor in the Department of History of Art & Architecture

## Michael Grodin



PROFESSOR GRODIN AT THE CENTER'S END OF YEAR CELEBRATION, HELD VIA ZOOM, IN MAY 2021

Among many achievements in his academic and medical career, Professor Michael Grodin's mentorship of students stands out. Erin Miller (CAS '17, MED '18) first met Professor Grodin in her freshman year. His passion for the study of medicine and the Holocaust

ignited her curiosity, ultimately leading her to earn a Master of Public Health and go on to NYU Long Island School of Medicine where she is pursuing a medical degree. Miller reflects on Professor Grodin's impact on her career choices and his continued mentorship:

*I was a freshman at Boston University when I first met Dr. Grodin (or Dr. G as most of us call him). I came to BU in 2013 because I was interested in Holocaust studies, psychology and medicine. The Elie Wiesel Center drew me in as a place to delve into the history and ethics of Holocaust Studies, but I was entirely unsure of how to combine my seemingly separate interests into a path of study. I first learned of Dr. G's work when he presented his Jewish Bioethics course at a Birthright orientation meeting at Boston University Hillel. I distinctly remember my feeling of excitement as I realized that he had already combined these interests in his own career.*

*It was December when I first took the bus to meet with Dr. G at the School of Public Health. I recall feeling so nervous as I entered his office which could only be described as "organized chaos." He had bookshelves bursting with ancient Jewish texts, health and human rights literature, books on psychiatry, psychotherapy, Chinese medicine, and more. Printed articles and journals were stacked high in the bin on his desk. Lining the walls were photos of famous rabbis, health and human rights activists, and a photo of him with the Dalai Lama. I recall singing bowls, brought to him by patients, scattered across the desk.*

*As I would soon learn, this day would mark the beginning of an education that changed my perspective on human rights and medicine, and, in turn, shaped my future career. I was one of dozens of students who had come to BU only to start their career in that very room with Dr. G. He has mentored countless students over the years. My journey was to echo those who had come before me. He offered me an opportunity to participate on his team and concluded our meeting with both an invitation and a challenge: "We'll see if you can do the work."*

*I had the privilege of working with Dr. G for six years during my time in Boston and was quick to realize that his techniques in mentorship were incredibly rare. I witnessed what a career in medicine and public health looked like outside of our organized research meetings. As opposed to a traditional principal investigator, Dr. Grodin permitted me to observe the full scope of his work by attending ethics committee meetings, helping to organize curricula with the Boston Psychoanalytic Society, shadowing him at the Immigrant and Refugee Health Center, serving as the student representative to the Jewish Cultural Endowment, and assisting with course organization for his many classes at BU. Dr. G welcomed me into his academic circle by inviting me to international conferences*

*to present alongside him. I was lucky enough to meet esteemed leaders in both medicine and Holocaust Studies. He exhibited how interprofessional collaboration can lead to sustained progress through efforts like the Galilee Declaration and the Vienna Protocol.*

*Dr. G challenges his students to look critically at society, especially our behavior and traditions. He encouraged me to challenge the status quo that many assume is immutable. I learned how to ask questions and speak up for what is right, even when doing so is unpopular. We explored the meaning behind some of our traditions in an effort to determine if their significance is just. As a "revolutionary" -- a term he used to describe himself in jest -- Dr. G helped me develop important skills I have carried with me in my ongoing education. He instilled in me confidence which would prepare me for the environment of complacency that awaited me in medicine, ultimately helping me find my voice in advocacy. I would be remiss to leave out his encouragement of "mental health days" (which usually translated to catching a Friday afternoon movie at the Coolidge Corner Theatre) and the frequent reminder to "call your mother" because "she misses you" and "would like to hear from you."*

*While I use my story as an example of the impact Dr. G has had on students over his many years at BU, I also wanted to touch on his contributions to the community at large. One of the many lessons I learned from Dr. G is the importance of giving back through volunteer work. Outside of his many clinical and academic commitments, he eagerly served many roles for the BU Hillel House, the Jewish Cultural Endowment, and the Maimonides Society at the BU School of Medicine. He reiterated to me the importance of community engagement outside of the classroom, even when it meant taking time away from his other endeavors.*

*As Dr. G enters this new chapter as an emeritus faculty, I know his new research endeavors are just gearing up. He'll likely still be found in his office on the first floor of the Elie Wiesel Center continuing his lifelong learning and expanding his portfolio. He'll still be lecturing on campus and volunteering for enrichment endeavors. His fervent passion for Jewish Studies and human rights will still be contagious to all around him. There will be other BU students that enter his office, likely still bursting with books and singing bowls, to tap into the innumerable opportunities that await them -- if they can do the work.*

## Awards and Publications



ADAM SELIGMAN

**Professor Adam Seligman** was awarded the 2020 Dr. Leopold Lucas Prize by the Faculty of Theology of the Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, Germany. It honors outstanding work in history, philosophy or theology that promotes relationship building and tolerance. Professor Seligman is founding director of CEDAR, Communities Engaging with Difference and Religion. He is involved in conflict resolution work on several continents and in hotspots where religion plays into violent conflict. His work revolves around the question of the importance of religion in a pluralistic society. He walks the field between classic religious competencies (in the area of ritual, tradition, and trust) and the need for mutual respect in a multi-religious society.

**Kimberly Arkin** was promoted to Associate Professor of Anthropology, with tenure. In addition, she was awarded one of three Templeton Awards for Excellence in Student Advising and Mentoring by the College of Arts and Sciences. Awardees are nominated through a poll of the senior class. Professor Arkin's "ability to recognize the person inside the student is clearly one of the keys to her success ... [as a nominating student stated] 'Professor Arkin wanted to make sure I was taking care of myself, so I would be able to succeed. She always made sure to support me in all aspects, and in moments that she herself wouldn't have the information, she made sure to connect me with the resources/people who would be able to help.'"

**Dr. Ingrid Anderson**, Associate Director of the Elie Wiesel Center, contributed a chapter on "The Wheel of History: Nihilism as Moral Protest and Destruction of the Present in Leo Strauss and Albert Camus" to *Leo Strauss and Contemporary Thought: Reading Outside the Lines*, edited by Jeffrey Bernstein and Jade Schiff (SUNY, 2021). Her review of Mark Raider, *The Essential Hayim Greenberg: Essays and Addresses on Jewish Culture, Socialism, and Zionism*, (University of Alabama Press, 2016), appeared in the *American Jewish Archives Journal* (2020), and *The Middle East Journal* published her review of Rosemary Hollis' *Surviving the Story: The Narrative Trap in Israel Palestine*. (London: Red Hawk Books, 2019).

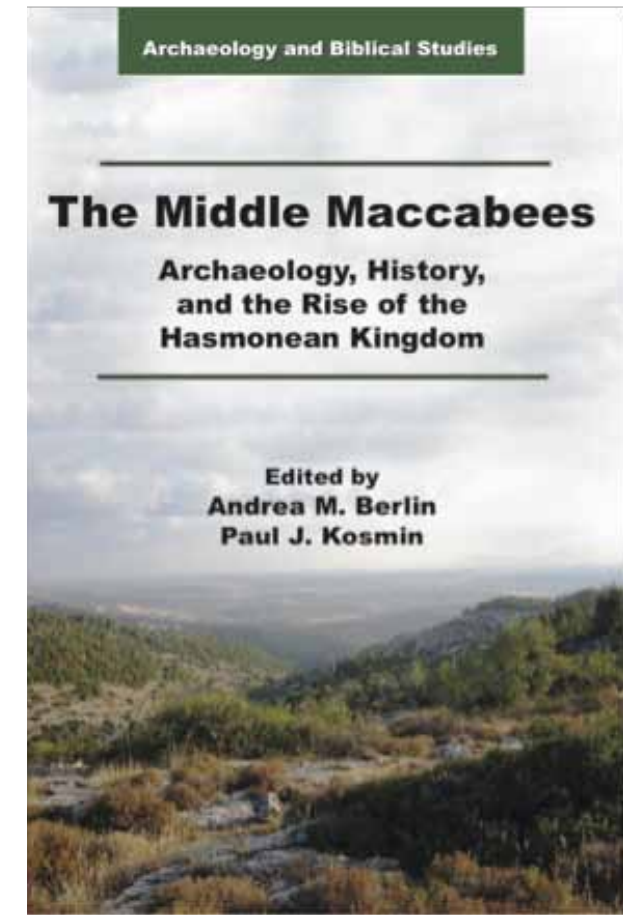


KIMBERLY ARKIN

**Professor Jennifer Cazenave** published "Rithy Panh as Chasseur d'Images" in *Everything Has a Soul: The Cinema of Rithy Panh*, eds. Leslie Barnes and Joseph Mai (Rutgers University Press, 2021). In 2020, she published "Composing with Impossibles: The Jewish Council, the 'Kastner Train,' and the Making of Shoah" in *The Construction of Testimony: Claude Lanzmann's 'Shoah' and its Outtakes* (Wayne State University Press). In addition, she published a translation of an article on the Czech Holocaust film *Distant Journey* (Jan Láníček and Stuart Liebman, "Nouveau regard sur La Longue Route d'Alfréd Radok") in the French film magazine *Trafic*.

The New Testament Book of Revelations as a Jewish text was the topic of **Professor David Frankfurter's** presentation to the Biblical Literature 2020 Annual Meeting and a Spring 2021 course offering, cross-listed in the College of Arts and Sciences and School of Theology. Professor Frankfurter published articles on religious fears in Mediterranean antiquity in the journals *Arethusa*, *History of Religions*, and *Journal of Early Christian History*; and on the magic of domestic craft in *Preternature*.

In November 2020, **Professor Abigail Gillman** lectured on German Jewish Bible Translation at The Franz Rosenzweig Minerva Research Center, and in February 2021, she gave a lecture titled "The Task of Jewish Translation Revisited" in the BU Seminar on Literary Translation. She participated as a discussant of new books on German Jewish thought at the Institute for Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies at UMass Amherst, and at the Bucerius Institute, University of Haifa. Professor Gillman was appointed Chair of the Academic Advisory Board for a 24-year project to digitize Martin Buber's correspondence; the project, led by Christian Wiese at Goethe University of Frankfurt, is funded by the Mainz Academy of Sciences and Literature. At the Center, she organized a series of talks about new scholarship in Jewish and Israel Studies, "Books at the Center." She was awarded a Jeffrey Henderson Senior Fellowship at BU Center for Humanities for Spring 2022, for her project "Parabolic Style Across Jewish Literature."



Professor **Andrea M. Berlin** published *The Middle Maccabees: Archaeology, History, and the Rise of the Hasmonean Kingdom*, co-edited with Paul J. Kosmin (SBL Press, 2021). The book traces the charged, complicated beginnings of the independent Jewish state founded in the second century BCE, using archaeological, epigraphic, numismatic, and textual evidence. She published three articles in this academic year and offered two scholarly lectures, including the Raphael Patai Memorial Lectureship Series, Arizona Center for Judaic Studies, University of Arizona. Professor Berlin spent the first six months of the 2020 academic year in Jerusalem, as part of the Research Group on "Variety and Variability: Mapping the Cultural and Social Diversity of the Southern Levant in the Hellenistic Period," sponsored by the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies.

**Professor Diana Lobel** celebrated the release of her new book, *Moses and Abraham Maimonides: Encountering the Divine* (Academic Studies Press, 2021). Described as an "elegantly written and deeply learned study of a father and son," this text examines the philosophical differences between these Medieval Jewish thinkers.

**Professor Steven Katz** continued his work on a multi-volume project of comparative studies on the Holocaust. Currently, he is working on *The Holocaust and Colonial Spanish America*, comparing the treatment of Jews during the Holocaust to the treatment of the native populations in colonial North and South America. He has edited the *Cambridge Companion to Antisemitism* (forthcoming, late 2021). He continued to edit the journal *Modern Judaism*, published by Oxford University Press, and served in advisory roles to the Conference for Material Claims against Germany and the Kagan Fellowship Committee that awards two year fellowships to graduate students and post-doctoral candidates, as well as to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Via Zoom, he participated in a planning conference organized by the Vatican and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum regarding the opening of the Vatican Archives of Pope Pius XII.

Books published: **10**

Articles/chapters published: **17**

Research presentations given: **19**

Classes/sections offered:

**19** — Jewish Studies,

**10** — Holocaust, Genocide,  
and Human Rights Studies

**Professor Jonathan Klawans** co-edited *The Jewish Annotated Apocrypha*, published this year by Oxford University Press. This project has been underway for almost ten years and is the first English-language edition of the Apocrypha addressed to general readers. It differs from earlier editions of the Apocrypha in that it also includes the all-important book of Jubilees (preserved in the Ethiopian Christian Bibles, but not included in prior editions of the Apocrypha). Professor Klawans authored a number of small pieces within, and co-authored the Introduction with co-editor Larry Wills.

**Professor Emerita Pnina Lahav** taught a College of Arts and Sciences Political Science section, in conjunction with the School of Law, on comparative constitutional law in Israel and the US, in the Spring of 2021.

**Professor Michael Prince's** book *The Shortest Way with Defoe: Robinson Crusoe, Deism, and the Novel* was published by University of Virginia Press. The book examines the eighteenth-century political and religious currents that shaped the literary work of William Defoe, posing questions about theology and intellectual history described by one reviewer as "startlingly original." In addition, Professor Prince co-authored a guide to college writing with the great Jewish-American novelist, Allegra Goodman, *Speaking of Writing: A Brief Rhetoric* (Broadview Press, 2019).

**Professor Jeremy Yudkin** directs the Center for Beethoven research at BU and his new monograph, *From Silence to Sound: Beethoven's Beginnings*, was published by Boydell and Brewer in 2020. By examining the opening moments of nearly 200 compositions, this text offers a new method of analysis. The book undertakes an interdisciplinary exploration of beginnings, weaving concepts from music theory, rhetoric, neuroscience and psychology to show how a beginning is received by the listener. Professor Yudkin was the editor of another new work, *The New Beethoven: Evolution, Analysis, Interpretation* (University of Rochester Press, 2020). He also lectured at Franklin College, the Lenox Library and the Beethoven-Haus in Bonn, Germany.

In 2020-21, **Professor Michael Zank** served as Honorary Starr Fellow at the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University, where he presented on "Approaching the Torah from the Perspective of Bakhtin's Theory of the Novel" and on "Literary Aspects of Philosophical Writing." Zank's monograph *The Idea of Atonement in the Philosophy of Hermann Cohen* appeared in a second, e-book edition, and an essay titled "A Peripheral Field: Meditations on the Status of Jewish Philosophy" was included in a volume on *The Future of the Philosophy of Religion*, edited by M. David Eckel and Troy Dujardin.

## Retirements

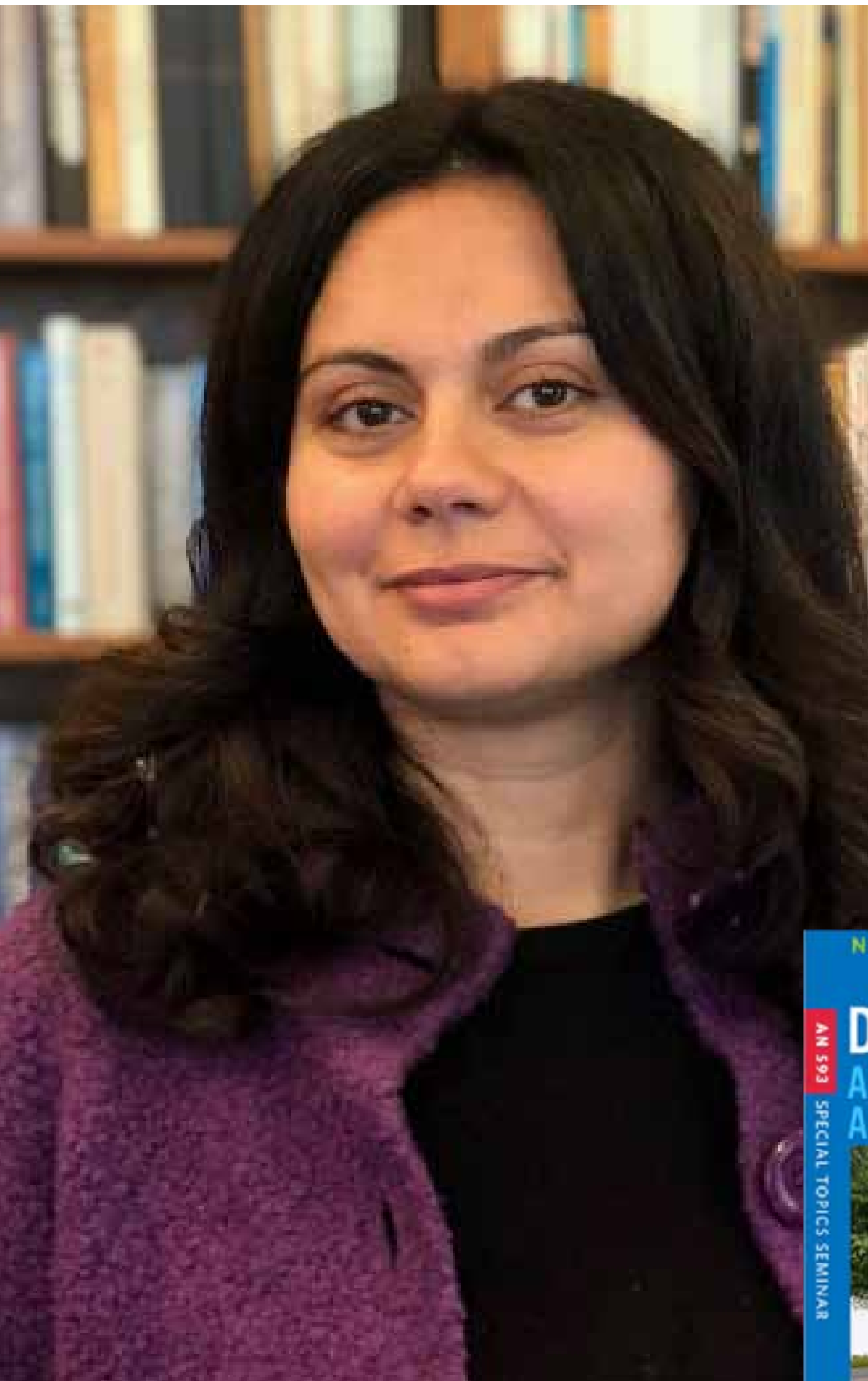


**Professor John Bernstein** was active at the Center as a member of the board of the Jewish Cultural Endowment. During his twenty years as Professor of Film in the College of Communication he served as director of the Screenwriting Program. He taught Jewish Studies courses on the Holocaust in Film and Israeli Cinema alongside his screenwriting classes. After receiving his PhD from the University of Texas at Austin, he taught screenwriting, playwriting, film theory, creative writing, and English at Duke University, Tel Aviv University, and the University of Copenhagen. A number of his plays have won national prizes and have been produced in theaters worldwide.

After 42 years on faculty at Boston University where he taught in the School of Medicine, School of Public Health, School of Theology and the College of Arts and Sciences, **Professor Michael Grodin** will become Professor Emeritus, ending his clinical activities as Director of Medical Ethics and providing clinical care for survivors of torture and refugee trauma. He will remain an active researcher in the International Project on Medicine and the Holocaust, which grew out of his long-term work on Jewish medical ethics. As Professor Emeritus he plans to focus on Rabbinic Responsa in the Ghettos and Concentration Camps during the Holocaust. He will also continue to serve as a consultant to the Chief Rabbi of the Bet Din (Rabbinic Court) of New England. Grodin was recently honored for a lifetime of work as recipient of the Kravitz Humanitarian Award from the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute.



We also say farewell to **Professor Jeffrey Mehlman**, who is now Professor Emeritus of French. The range of his interests in literary criticism and the history of ideas may be gleaned from the titles of his widely noted publications. He is the author of *Legacies of Anti-Semitism in France* (University of Minnesota Press, 1983); *Walter Benjamin for Children: An Essay on His Radio Years* (University of Chicago Press, 1993); *Genealogies of the Text* (Cambridge University Press, 1995); *Emigré New York: French Intellectuals in Wartime Manhattan* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); and, most recently, a memoir, *Adventures in the French Trade: Fragments Toward a Life* (Stanford University Press, 2010). He is also the translator of Bredin's classic history of the Dreyfus Affair, *The Affair* (Braziller, 1986) and Vidal-Naquet's study of Holocaust denial, *Assassins of Memory* (Columbia University Press, 1992).



IN FALL 2020, **SULTAN DOUGHAN** OFFERED DESIRING MEMORIALS: AFTERLIVES OF MASS VIOLENCE AND THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE (CAS AN 593). THIS COURSE EXPLORED KEY DEBATES IN ANTHROPOLOGY ON MASS VIOLENCE, GENOCIDE, MEMORY, HISTORY AND JUSTICE.

## Sultan Doughan

After a successful year as visiting researcher, the faculty of the Elie Wiesel Center selected **Dr. Sultan Doughan** as Postdoctoral Associate, with a focus on Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies, a capacity in which she served for the past two years. Doughan earned her PhD in Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley. Her dissertation, “Teaching Tolerance: Citizenship, Religious Difference, and Race in Germany,” was based on ethnographic work in Berlin/Germany. Located at the intersection of religious difference and racial relations within secularism, Doughan’s work inquires what citizenship can be for religiously differentiated minorities in a secular nation-state, especially after genocide.

In her final year at the Center, Doughan initiated several new projects. She designed and taught a new course in the Department of Anthropology titled “Desiring Memorials: Afterlives of Violence and the Pursuit of Justice.” The cross-disciplinary, mixed-level course centered on the Holocaust, but also drew from other genocides, colonial atrocities, and US slavery. She notes, “when I first designed the course in the Fall of 2019, I had not anticipated how a summer of Black Lives Matter protests would bring urgency to the question of memorials as monuments to power.” The course prompted several speaking invitations, including a September 2020 talk at Brandeis University, titled “Monuments to History: How the US and Germany Document their Past, and Their Impact on Present Day Race Relations.” Doughan also lectured at Boston’s Goethe Institute, in November 2020, on the question of diversity and public representation.

Doughan joined Professor Nancy Harrowitz (Romance Studies), Director of the program in Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Studies, to launch a new series of conversations in HGHS, devoted to the theme of “The Politics of Genocide.” The lectures were open to the campus community and presented research from history, anthropology and religious studies, engaging the aftermath of genocide in various geographic and political contexts.

The primary mission of the Elie Wiesel Center Postdoctoral Associate Program is to boost the research and publication portfolio of early career scholars. Doughan prepared four articles for public venues and academic journals. She also gave a number of presentations related to her emerging book project, *Converting Citizens: German Secularism and the Politics of Tolerance After the Holocaust*, including at the Middle Eastern Studies Association Annual Conference in October 2020, where she presented a paper called “Narrating the Holocaust with the Nakba? On the Limits of Liberal Democracy in Germany.” She also lectured at Dartmouth College, Tufts University, University College London, and the Freie Universität Berlin in the Graduate School for Muslim Cultures and Societies.

Dr. Doughan is leaving Boston University for a Visiting Assistant Professorship at the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University, with these words of farewell:

*“I have found the collaboration with faculty at the Elie Wiesel Center extremely rewarding. I cannot thank you all enough. I want to mention specifically Prof. Nancy Harrowitz, who has offered guidance and support. I am also grateful for the continuous mentorship of Prof. Michael Zank and the professional guidance of Prof. Robert Weller in the Anthropology Department at BU. I look forward to my new assistant professorial role and will remember my BU years fondly.”*

## Gilah Kletenik



Postdoctoral Associate **Dr. Gilah Kletenik** received her PhD in Hebrew and Judaic Studies from New York University (2020). Previously, she was Alan M. Stroock Fellow at the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University. Currently, Kletenik is completing her book manuscript, *Sovereignty Disrupted: Spinoza and the Disparity of Reality*. It reads Spinoza's philosophy as advancing a critique of the mutually reinforcing sovereignties that secure our grasp of reality, the promise of reason, and the status of humans.

## David Lehrer

### **Dr. David Lehrer**

will join the Center as Israel Institute Postdoctoral Teaching Associate in the upcoming academic year. Lehrer is the long-time Director of the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, an academic and research center located in the Arava desert, dedicated to solving environmental challenges and fostering international cooperation. Its curriculum is grounded in the belief that "nature knows no political borders."

Lehrer holds a joint Master of Management Science degree from Boston University and Ben Gurion University. He recently earned a PhD in Geography at Ben-Gurion University. Lehrer has worked as a business consultant for Israeli collective settlements (kibbutzim), small businesses, the Hevel Eilat Regional Council and the United Kibbutz Movement. He has twice served as an emissary for the Jewish Agency for Israel in the United States. Lehrer is a founder of the Green Kibbutz Association, as well as the Alliance for Peace in the Middle East. At Boston University, Lehrer will spearhead a new initiative on Israel and Environmental Studies with academic undergraduate courses on Israel, natural resource management, geopolitics, and international cooperation. His appointment is supported by a multi-year grant from the Israel Institute, D.C.



## Israel Studies Initiative

The Elie Wiesel Center has a long and distinguished history of supporting Israel Studies across the College of Arts and Sciences curriculum. We believe that Israel is an integral part of the study of Jewish history, society, culture, and religion, including Hebrew language and literature. At Boston University, Israel is also an integral part of Middle East & North Africa Studies program, and our courses count toward degrees in International Relations, Political Science, and History.

The Elie Wiesel Center now seeks to expand Israel Studies into the applied sciences, where Israel is a hub of major innovations. The focus on Environmental Studies addresses one of the most important challenges for the long-term future of Israel and the Middle East. Working closely with CAS Department of Earth and Environment, Postdoctoral Teaching Associate David Lehrer will teach courses in sustainable development, post-conflict cross-border cooperation, and water management.

The initiative is partially funded by a three-year grant from the Israel Institute, D.C. The Institute seeks to "enhance knowledge about modern Israel by ensuring that more students, at more universities in the United States and around the world, have access to classes about Israel during their time on campus." As part of the grant, Lehrer will lead several public and/or academic events. This will expand the Center's public and academic activities regarding Israel beyond the Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Lectures, now held every other year.

Lehrer will join resident and visiting faculty in Jewish Studies, World Languages and Literatures, the School of Law, and the Department of Religion who regularly offer courses on Israel. These include:

- **Holy City: Jerusalem in Time, Space, and the Imagination** (Prof. Zank)
- **Israeli-Palestinian Conflict** (Prof. Anderson and Prof. Karlinsky)
- **Comparative US and Israeli Constitutional Law** (Prof. Lahav)
- **Courses in Hebrew Literature and Israel Culture** (Profs. Gillman and Angrist)

Additionally, two new seminar courses will add to the Center's offerings in Israel Studies. Professor Pnina Lahav will offer a Kilachand Honors College first-year seminar on Golda Meir. In Spring 2022, Dr. Lilach Lachman, an Israeli specialist in Comparative Literature, will join the Center as visiting faculty. Lachman received a grant from the Israel Institute to teach a course on "Women Writing in Troubling Times." We believe that these courses will enhance the CAS curriculum through interdisciplinary engagement with the vibrant culture of Israeli society and the complex realities of the Middle East.





**PRIMAL PHILOSOPHY:  
ROUSSEAU WITH LAPLANCHE**

AFTER THE EPOCH OF THE “END OF METAPHYSICS” AND THE ATTENDANT DISASTERS OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY POLITICAL VIOLENCE, THIS BOOK INITIATES A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF ROUSSEAU’S THOUGHT ON THE POSSIBILITY OF PHILOSOPHY AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PHILOSOPHER. FAIN TAKES UP JEAN LAPLANCHE’S WORK ON THE FREUDIAN THEORY OF PRIMAL SEDUCTION IN ORDER TO COMPLETE ROUSSEAU’S PHILOSOPHICAL LEGACY-AS-TASK. HE OFFERS A RETHINKING OF “FIRST PHILOSOPHY,” NOT AS THE PRIMORDIAL SCIENCE OF BEING IN THE TRADITIONS OF ARISTOTLE OR DESCARTES, BUT AS “PRIMAL PHILOSOPHY,” THE REFOUNDING OF PHILOSOPHY ITSELF. THIS BOOK POSITIONS ROUSSEAU WITHIN A CONTEMPORARY DEBATE INVOLVING THEODOR ADORNO AND ALAIN BADIOU ON THE FATE OF PHILOSOPHY AFTER HEIDEGGER.

## Lucas Fain

**Lucas Fain** holds a PhD in Philosophy and Psychoanalysis from the University Professors Program at Boston University. Before arriving at the Center, he taught philosophy and social thought at Harvard University, University of California in Santa Cruz, and Suffolk University. This year, Dr. Fain published *Primal Philosophy: Rousseau with Laplanche* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2021), which juxtaposes Jean Laplanche’s work on the Freudian theory of primal seduction with Rousseau’s philosophical legacy-as-task. He offers a rethinking of “first philosophy,” not as the primordial science of being in the traditions of Aristotle or Descartes, but as “primal philosophy,” the refounding of philosophy itself. In fall 2020, Fain gave a well received presentation on “Emmanuel Lévinas and the Escape from Barbarism” to the BU Jewish Studies Research Forum. In spring 2021, he presented “Plato after Marburg: Rethinking Forms and Ideas through the Inspiration of Hermann Cohen” at the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association. He also drafted a forthcoming entry on Jean Laplanche for *Oxford Bibliographies in Literary and Critical Theory*. He will continue as a Visiting Researcher next academic year, with plans to present “The Influence of Maimonides on Lévinas: From the Face of the Other to a New Thinking of Freedom” at the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association. *Primal Philosophy* will also be the topic of an author-meets-critics session at the 2021 Psychology and the Other Conference at Boston College.



## Elly Moseson



**Dr. Elly Moseson** (PhD 2017) returned to the Elie Wiesel Center as a Visiting Researcher. His research interests include early modern Jewish movements and literatures, the cultural and political functions of texts, and the intersection of literature, religion and psychoanalysis. This year, he published an article in *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts* and presented a paper and a seminar at the AJS conference. An article on the earliest report of a Hasidic sermon, for the journal *Zutot*, and papers on the unconscious and magic in Hasidism are among his accomplishments this year. Moseson earned his B.A. at Columbia University where he studied literature and philosophy and completed his M.A. and Ph.D. in Religious Studies at Boston University. He has held postdoctoral positions at the University of Hamburg and Tel Aviv University.

## Jewish Studies

### Jewish Studies Minor Concentration

The minor in Jewish Studies offers students the opportunity to explore Jewish history, culture, and religion in comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives. The minor in Jewish Studies requires six courses totaling 24 credits.

Main curricular areas include

- Sacred Texts and Comparative Traditions
- Jewish Thought and Literature
- History and Holocaust Studies
- Contemporary Jewish Societies and Cultures, including Israel Studies

The study of Hebrew language and literature, as well as study abroad in Israel, are strongly encouraged.

### Graduate Jewish Studies

The Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies partners with the Graduate Program in Religion (GPR) for a Ph.D. specialization in Jewish Studies. Students admitted to the GPR specialization in Jewish Studies benefit from a five-year, fully-funded graduate fellowship.

The Center also encourages affiliation of students pursuing graduate studies in other humanities and social sciences departments if their topics of research significantly relate to Jewish history, culture, law, religion, or society. Affiliated graduate students are eligible to apply for available scholarship and research funding.

### 2020-2021 Jewish Studies Courses

#### INTRODUCTORY COURSES

JS 100 World Cultures of the Jews

JS 110 Judaism

#### SACRED TEXTS AND COMPARATIVE TRADITIONS

JS 120 The Bible

JS 121 Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

JS 416 Biblical Fakes and Forgeries

#### JEWISH LITERATURE AND THOUGHT

JS 136 Jewish Literature

JS 246 Jewish Mysticism

#### HISTORY AND HOLOCAUST

JS 255 Judaism in the Modern Period

JS 260 The Holocaust

JS 366 Fascism and the Holocaust in Italy

JS 250 Holy City: Jerusalem in Time, Space, and Imagination

JS 352 History of Judaism

JS 367 The Holocaust through Film

JS 376 Representations of the Holocaust in Literature and Film

JS 460 Seminar on the Holocaust

#### CONTEMPORARY JEWISH SOCIETIES AND CULTURES, INCLUDING ISRAEL STUDIES

JS 281 Advanced Modern Hebrew: Voices in Israeli Society

JS 286 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

JS 280 Israeli Popular Music

JS 379 Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism

## Student Spotlight

### Tallulah Bark-Huss

**Tallulah Bark-Huss** was selected by the Jewish Studies faculty, by unanimous decision, to receive the Brooks Family Award for excellence in Jewish Studies for Academic Year 2020-2021. The faculty agreed that Tallulah has done exemplary work in the classes for her minor and has gone above and beyond to be an ambassador for the minor at our virtual events. Tallulah was active in Jewish life on campus, and a vital member of the Center staff, contributing excellent ideas and work on social media, graphic design, and event planning. After graduating, Tallulah went on to serve as Executive Assistant at Partizan in Los Angeles, supporting the Film and Management department.



TALLULAH WAS HONORED FOR HER ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE CENTER'S END OF YEAR CELEBRATION IN MAY 2021

## Responding to the Pandemic

By Tallulah Bark-Huss

Originally published on the EWCJS Blog, October 2020

To discover firm standing ground, it is necessary to explore, to stumble, even to fall, certainly to survive the chaotic vibrations of a world that refuses to be.

— Dr. Avivah Zornberg, speaker at 2020 Elie Wiesel Memorial Lectures

*It's times like these when I turn towards sage advice. Contemporary Torah scholar Avivah Zornberg's quote has resonated with me since high school. I had the privilege of meeting Zornberg on a chance encounter during Shabbat in Jerusalem. I don't know many teens who would be starstruck by a Torah scholar, but I definitely was one.*

*"Firm standing ground" doesn't exist in this turbulent world. The "chaotic vibration of the world that refuses to be" constantly pushes, pulls, and knocks us down. It's words like these that I find myself coming back to in times of discomfort or uncertainty. Zornberg's observation of our unsteady world comes from studying Genesis. Adam and Eve commit moral transgressions, yet become closer to God through them. It's a testament to our relationship with God. It suggests that to discover God and ourselves, we must allow ourselves to stumble. Becoming closer to God, or whatever it is that makes you feel whole, is that firm standing ground.*

*Falling is inevitable, and we shouldn't attempt to avoid it. Life is not meant to be smooth sailing no matter how hard we wish it to be. Obstacles will always be thrown our way, but our true selves are shown by how we respond to these obstacles; by how we adapt and turn our challenges into advantages. Your failures are not measured by how many times you didn't succeed. Your failures are only measured by how many times you refused to try. These "falls," as Zornberg puts it, are something that should be embraced, not feared. If you never fall, you'll never know how to get back up, dust off your shoes, and work even harder to achieve your goals. Your losses are a measure of your strength, because, when you get back up and prove to the world that you will not stay down, in Zornberg's terms, you will have "survive[d] the chaotic vibrations of a world that refuses to be."*

*So when the dust settles, where will you find yourself? Will you remain knocked down, or stand and show the world that its punches only made you stronger?*

# Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies

## HGHR Minor Concentration

The minor in HGHR offers students the opportunity to learn about the causes and consequences of past acts of genocide, including the murder of six million Jews across Nazi-occupied Europe during WWII, as well as the role of human rights law as a means of violence prevention.

Students concentrating in HGHR are required to complete six courses, totaling 24 credits. Students complete required and elective courses in Genocide studies, Holocaust studies and Human Rights Studies. Courses that count towards the minor are offered by departments in the College of Arts and Sciences and Pardee School for Global Studies.

## Graduate Certificate in HGHR

A graduate certificate in HGHR complements graduate study in history, political science, law, literature, and religion, and serves as preparation for careers in social and governmental service. Working closely with an advisor, students select four courses, across disciplines, to advanced knowledge of the history, ethics, law, and/or public health analysis of the Holocaust, comparative genocides, and/or human rights. To be awarded the certificate, students also complete advanced research, through papers, thesis or dissertation work, in the field of HGHR.

## 2020-2021 HGHR Courses (interdisciplinary)

The Holocaust

The Nazis

Fascism and the Holocaust in Italy

Representations of the Holocaust in Literature and Film

Genocide in Literature and Film

Seminar on the Holocaust

The African Diaspora in the Americas

International Human Rights:  
Applying Human Rights in Africa

Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism

Health and Human Rights

# Student Spotlight

## An Interview with Marina Pence

(CAS '21)

Major: Political Science

Minor: Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies

Originally published in the EWCJS Student Newsletter

### Why did you decide to declare a Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies minor?

— My interest in these subjects and issues began in high school and learning about the UN. I have always known that I want to help others, and I think this minor is my way to do that.

### What have been your favorite classes so far?

— I found the most interesting class to be the History of Genocide course I took last fall with Professor Payaslian. It really opened my eyes to histories that I was never taught before.

### How does a minor in Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Studies fit in with your post-grad plans?

— I plan on going to law school and focusing on international law. This minor is a really good basis for the history and creation of laws in the international sphere.

### How have your classes for your minor made you think differently about the world?

— I have a better understanding of how we all come together or separate. I think learning about these various histories and stories has made me realize that you can help others in the moment, and it's exceedingly important to realize your privilege and perspective on the world today.



**MARINA PENCE** IS ORIGINALLY FROM DENVER, COLORADO. HER INTERESTS INCLUDE GEOGRAPHY AND MAPPING PROCESSES, AS WELL AS SUSTAINABLE FASHION AND HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINES. MARINA HAS BEEN ACTIVE ON CAMPUS AS A STUDENT COORDINATOR FOR BU VOTES, AN ORGANIZATION RUN BY STUDENTS AND FACULTY THAT HELPS STUDENTS VOTE. SHE ALSO SERVED AS RECRUITMENT DIRECTOR FOR THE PAN-HELLENIC SORORITY, SIGMA DELTA TAU.

## Student Awards



The Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies provides scholarships and other awards to graduate and undergraduate students in Hebrew Language and Literature, Jewish Studies and Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies. This year's awardees were honored during a the End of Year Celebration, held remotely in May.

### EXCELLENCE IN HEBREW STUDIES AWARD

Amanda Levitt (COM '22)  
 Shelli Gorokhovsky (CAS '22)  
 David V. Karney Israel Travel Fund  
 Alexandra Jonas (SAR '26)  
 Brooks Family Scholarship  
 Tallulah Bark-Huss (COM '21)

### EINHORN BOOK AWARD

Sean Beckett (GRS '23)  
 David Malamud (GRS '25)  
 Sara Boston (GRS '26)

### HENRY J. AND CAROLE PINKNEY RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

David Malamud (GRS '25)

## Alumni Spotlight

### Jenn Lindsay

We invited **Jenn Lindsay** (PhD, GRS '18) to reflect on how her experiences in the Graduate Program of Religion and with the Elie Wiesel Center have influenced her career. Lindsay is a filmmaker and Professor of Sociology and Communications at John Cabot University, in Rome, Italy. Her prize-winning film *Quarantined Faith* (2020) chronicles how Christians, Muslims and Jews coped during the COVID-19 quarantine during Easter, Ramadan and Passover. The film's awards include the Special Jury Prize, for the theme of "Migrations and Coexistence" at the Religion Today Film Festival.

*Before I came to Boston University, I worked for about ten years as a musician and film editor in New York City, but I missed the deep study of academia and the benefits of being attached to an institution of learning. In 2011, I chose to pursue my PhD at Boston University because of the excellence of the faculty in the social sciences of religion. Doing a PhD can never be described as "fun," because it involves so many years of hard work, but I'm so satisfied with the connections I made there and how incredibly prepared I felt entering academia and the world of documentary filmmaking.*

*One of my best experiences was working as a Teaching Fellow for Professor Steven Katz's course on *The Holocaust in Historical Context*. In this class, he set the stage for the Shoah by explaining 2,000 years of antisemitism in the Western world and how it made Hitler's Final Solution for the Jews politically and culturally possible. I still keep in touch with some of the students from that class, almost nine years later. It is a challenging and rigorous course; I had to get up to speed quickly and think of creative and accessible ways to connect students to the course material. That class became the basis for so much of what I teach today in Rome about social diversity, intercultural communications, prejudice and stereotyping.*

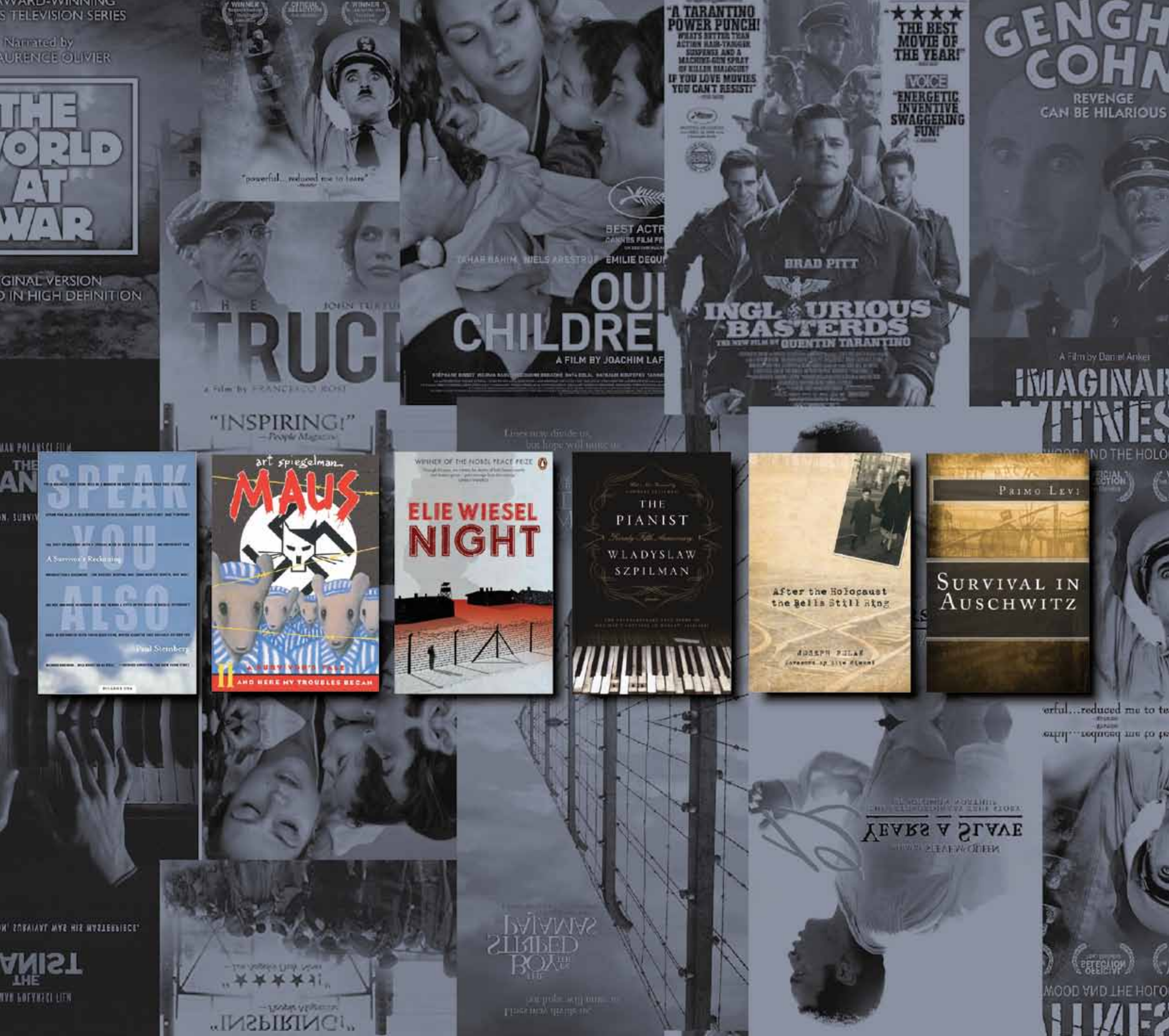
*Being part of the interdisciplinary Elie Wiesel Center enabled me to build lasting relationships with professors outside of my field, such as Michael Zank, a philosopher of religion. Not only did we connect musically, but he patiently listened to me work out some philosophical arguments at the heart of my social sciences dissertation*



*about interreligious dialogue in Rome, always with kindness and humor, as we mutually decoded the vocabulary of our respective fields to each other. After I finished my doctorate, he connected me with LIT Verlag, who will publish my first monograph, *Pluralismo Vivo—Lived Religious Pluralism and Interfaith Dialogue in Rome*, later this year.*

*When students ask me how to strategize their career paths, I always tell them — do the next most interesting thing. Don't worry about prestige or ambition, and don't even worry about what makes perfect sense for you professionally. Looking back, whenever I tried to be strategic and ambitious, my plans rarely worked out the way I wanted. Whenever I invested in opportunities that fueled my passions that I felt connected to personally, they always pushed me in new directions, through doors I didn't even know I wanted to walk through. For instance, while at BU, Professor Wesley Wildman at the BU School of Theology found out that I am a documentary filmmaker. He then hired me to make a documentary about the application of computer modeling and simulation to the scientific study of religion. This documentary project, *Simulating Religious Violence* — and its companion docuseries, *The MRP Series* — have been incredibly formative and brought both of my professional identities together. Today I'm working with a large post-production crew at John Cabot University to finalize the film and prepare to enter the film festival market and commercial distribution. That never would have happened without the interdisciplinary connections facilitated at BU and by the Center.*

*The support and enthusiasm I received at BU and the Center are a big part of my momentum today. My experiences at BU built my confidence to always do the next most interesting thing, trusting that my professional path will tell its own unique story.*



# HGHS Featured Course

## Holocaust in Literature and Film

JS 376

FROM PROFESSOR NANCY HARROWITZ:

"My experience teaching this course remotely was very positive. The class tends to attract motivated students who become involved and passionate about the subject matter, which is what is so compelling about teaching this topic. The class is limited to an enrollment of twenty students, so that students can discuss their reactions and impressions of the testimonies and films that are assigned. This small class size worked well in the remote setting. The learning outcomes include familiarity with the history of the Holocaust, as well as outcomes that reflect their growing understanding of the role of different genres in Holocaust representation, such as documentaries, fictive films, memoirs, and memorials.

The course challenges students to think about their own roles in society, as we discuss bystander complicity and the effects of bigotry. It also challenges them to think about the effects of popular culture when it comes to the representation of major historical events: the role of accuracy and whether what audiences are learning is distorted and in what ways. How the legacy of the Holocaust is passed on and what our responsibilities are to remembering this genocide and others is an ongoing topic of discussion."

## Elie Wiesel Center Summer Reading Series

The **Summer Reading Series** took place weekly during July and August 2020, with the intention to keep Elie Wiesel Center community members connected during the COVID quarantine. The series included sessions with Jewish Studies faculty **Alicia Borinsky**, **Nancy Harrowitz**, and **Pnina Lahav** who generously gave of their time to participate in the series. They were joined by English Professor **Robert Pinsky**, former Elie Wiesel students and BU alums **Sonari Ginton** and **Ariel Burger**, Center-friend and donor **Gunda Trepp**, and **Elisha Wiesel**, son of Elie Wiesel. Each reading included participant Q&A and was moderated by **Michael Zank**, Director of the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies.

These sessions attracted over four hundred registrants. Thanks to Center Communications Coordinator Jeremy Solomons, we mastered the Zoom format and most sessions went off without a hitch. The gatherings helped us forge new connections and remain relevant in these difficult times. Going virtual broadened the Center's reach and attracted many guests who would not otherwise have been able to attend.

### Speakers

July 8 - **Professor Alicia Borinsky** (Romance Studies) reading selections from *Borges*

July 15 - **Professor Robert Pinsky** (English and Creative Writing) reading from *Odessa Tales* by *Issac Babel*

July 22 - **Gunda Trepp** reading from *The Last Rabbi*, a biography of her late husband, *Rabbi Leo Trepp*

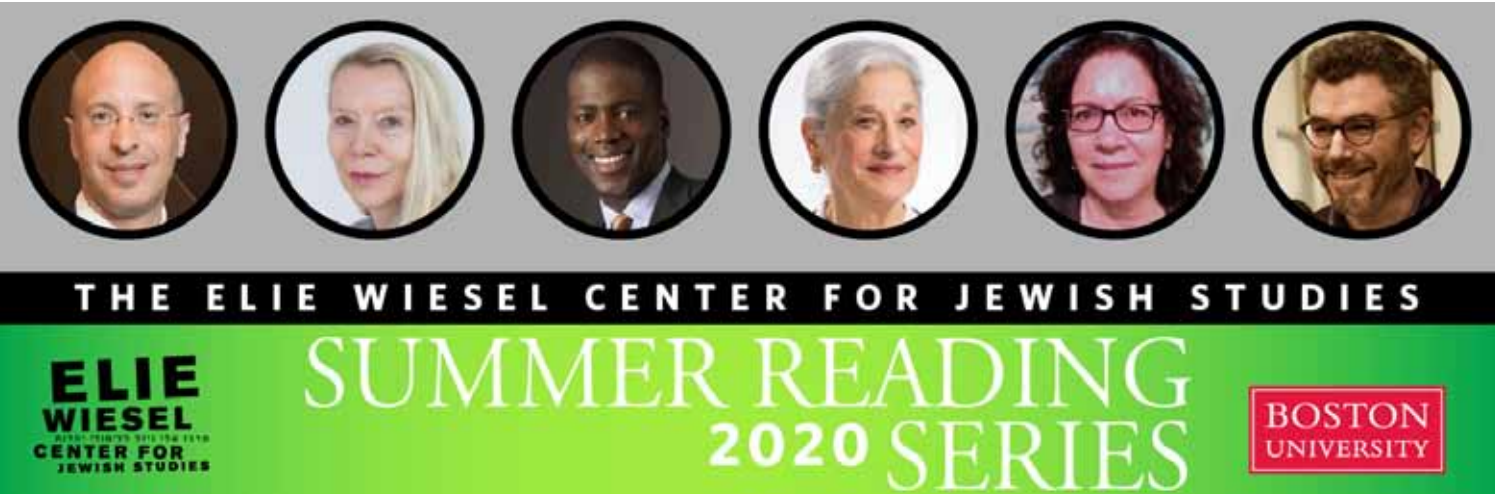
July 29 - **Sonari Ginton** (CAS '96), reading from *Here We Are: American Dreams, American Nightmares* by *Aarti Namdev Shahani*

August 5 - **Elisha Wiesel** reading from a lecture his father gave at Baltimore Hebrew College in 1973

August 12th - **Professor Pnina Lahav** (LAW), reading from her forthcoming biography of Golda Meir

August 19 - **Ariel Burger** (UNI '08), reading from his book *Witness: Lessons from Elie Wiesel's Classroom*

August 26 - **Professor Nancy Harrowitz** (World Languages and Literature), reading from Giorgio Bassani's *The Garden of the Finzi Contini* and *A Plaque in Via Mazzini*



## Fall 2020 Elie Wiesel Memorial Lectures Finding Moses

The Elie Wiesel Memorial Lecture Series was launched in 2018. Now in its third year, the series honors Holocaust survivor, Noble laureate, writer, and long-time Boston University Professor **Elie Wiesel** (1928–2016). The Center strives to bring outstanding speakers to campus to address themes related to the work of Elie Wiesel, whose writings ranged from the Bible to modern Jewish thought and literature, the Holocaust and human rights. Echoing the annual "Encounters with Elie Wiesel" – a long-standing tradition at BU and the greater Boston area – these events provide opportunities to encounter the voices of authentic witnesses and great minds of our own times.



The fall 2020 lectures on Finding Moses engaged with one of the great figures of the biblical tradition, a perennial theme of Professor Wiesel's writing. Hundreds attended online via Zoom for live presentations and Q&A sessions to learn about the many faces and facets of the great biblical prophet and lawgiver, Moses.

Jews, Muslims, and Christians alike revere Moses as a prophet or messenger of God. The Torah of Moses is the foundation of Judaism. The Ten Commandments are a widely acknowledged foundation of western civilization. No other prophet is mentioned more frequently in the Qur'an. And yet, Moses has remained an elusive figure. This elusiveness allowed our traditions to portray Moses in a great variety of ways, reflecting both his greatness and his all-too-human flaws. It is this vexing image of a man who was denied entry to the Promised Land, who died by a kiss of God, and whose tomb was never found that inspired the title of our series: Finding Moses.

Guiding us on this search for Moses were three distinguished speakers, experts in their respective fields. Avivah Zornberg, a widely published author and educator, joined us from Israel to speak on Moses in Midrash. Shari Lowin, a Stonehill College Professor of Religion and Early Islam, asked the audience to consider Moses in the Muslim tradition. Herbert Marbury, a Vanderbilt University Professor of Biblical Studies, spoke about finding Moses in the African American tradition.

## Fall 2020 Elie Wiesel Memorial Lectures: Finding Moses

### The Sense of an Ending: Finding Moses in Midrashic Literature

October 14, 2020

Avivah Zornberg

A Moses who knows that his end is near and that he will be denied entry to the Promised Land was the subject of **Dr. Avivah Zornberg's** lecture. She introduced the Moses of the Hebrew Bible's Book of Deuteronomy, reading the Hebrew text closely and viewing it through a lens sharpened by rabbinic midrash and modern literary scholarship. She offered a psychologically compelling and hermeneutically sophisticated reading of a crucial turning point in the life of Moses, when a man of "uncircumcised lips" speaks to God and the Israelites with eloquence and urgency, knowing that his own life's trajectory will fall short of his hopes and aspirations. As in all her work, Zornberg took us on a journey of psychological depth and literary subtlety. Ultimately, Zornberg found this Moses as someone who hopes against hope that he may yet "cross over."



**AVIVAH GOTTLIEB ZORNBERG** IS AN AUTHOR AND JEWISH EDUCATOR WHO TRAVELS WIDELY, LECTURING IN JEWISH, ACADEMIC AND PSYCHOANALYTIC SETTINGS. SHE HOLDS A BA AND PHD IN ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.



**SHARI LOWIN** IS PROFESSOR OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES AT STONEHILL COLLEGE.

### Moses in the Qur'an and the early Muslim Isrā'īlyyāt

November 2, 2020

Shari Lowin

Professor Shari Lowin introduced us to some of the ways the greatest prophet of the Jewish tradition appears in the Qu'ran and hadith (stories about the prophet and his companions). She compared stories about the birth of Moses and the role of his divinely inspired mother with stories about the birth of Prophet Muhammad and his divinely inspired parents, showing that the hadith casts Muhammad as a new Moses. Moses and Muhammad even meet during the famous "Night Journey" to the "distant sanctuary" (Qur'an, sura 17), that culminates with the Prophet Muhammad's ascent to the divine abode.

To understand why Moses matters so much to the early Muslims one needs to know that 7th-century Arabia was a world of trade and exchange, not just of goods but of stories and ideas. It connected the three ancient continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe, and was alive with debates between Jews, orthodox and heterodox Christians, Gnostics, Zoroastrians, and others. The choices made by the early Muslims and the messages of Prophet Muhammad himself reflect the outsized role of Moses in the political and religious imagination of the time. Professor Lowin's lecture reminded us of the significance of intercultural exegetical practices in this region during late antiquity.

### Moses in the African American Tradition

November 16, 2020

Herbert Marbury

In his talk, Professor Herbert Marbury looked at Moses as a transforming and transformative symbol in African American religious imagination. From the Antebellum period through the era of the Black Power Movement, Black communities summoned the Moses figure both from the Hebrew Bible and from alternative traditions—some older and some newer than the biblical Moses—to point to freedom's next horizon. This lecture discussed the changing ways that African Americans ascribe meaning to the exodus story as a counter-narrative over successive eras of repression.

Focusing on figures such as Absalom Jones, David Walker, Zora Neale Hurston, Frances E. W. Harper, Adam Clayton Powell, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Albert Cleage, Marbury asks, what meanings has the exodus story held for successive African American communities in the U.S. from the Antebellum period through the era of the Black Power Movement? Marbury gave us an American Moses, one divided between White and Black readers of the Bible, and an Exodus story refracted and reshaped by the Harlem Renaissance projection of Black humanity in its full sense.



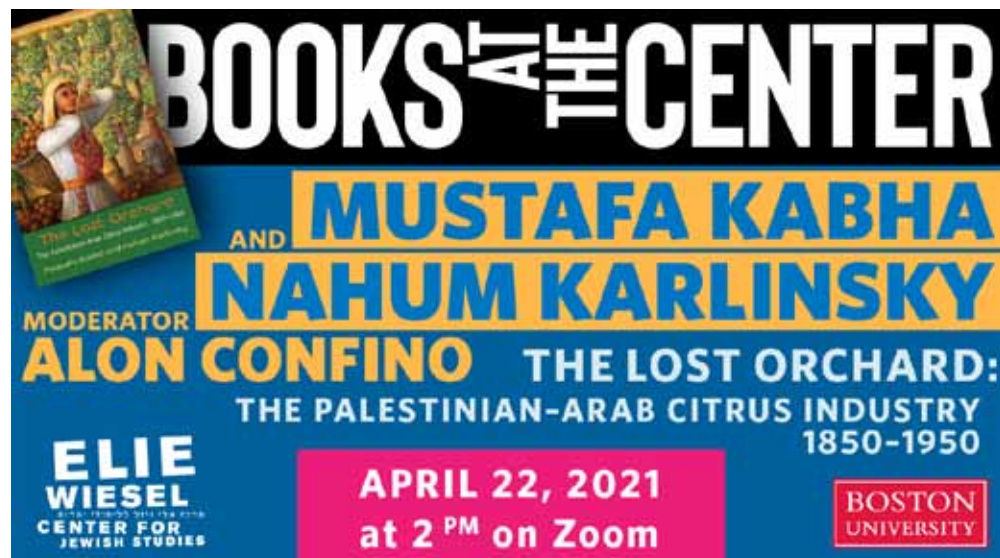
**HERBERT R. MARBURY** IS ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HEBREW BIBLE AT VANDERBILT DIVINITY SCHOOL

### A Student Reflects

An excerpt from a reflection on the lecture from undergraduate student Tiffany Leigh (CAS '21), first published on the Elie Wiesel Center blog, November 2020

*Dr. Zornberg looks at Moses' role as a leader, specifically focusing on the end of his life. She refers to the book The Sense of an Ending to demonstrate how humans must imagine and anticipate the end of a story in order to give significance to one's own life. She mentions how you must imagine the end of your life to help you evaluate its meaning. We know the beginning of our stories, but we have hopes and expectations for the future. Viewing time as a series of events that have not yet occurred helps us to organize our lives by providing a framework for the future. This alludes to the idea of "kairos" which is eventful time, and "chronos" which is undistinguished time. Our desires for the future provide significance to our current life, as seen in the life of Moses.*

## Books at the Center



The Spring 2021 **Books at the Center** series offered live discussions with the authors of widely-acclaimed new works in Jewish and Israel Studies. The sessions, curated by Professor Abigail Gillman, were held remotely and well attended.



**April 22**

**Nahum Karlinsky and Mustafa Kabha**  
**Lost Orchard: The Palestinian-Arab Citrus Industry, 1850-1949** (Syracuse University Press, 2021)

In *The Lost Orchard*, Mustafa Kabha and Nahum Karlinsky tell the story of the Palestinian citrus industry from its inception until 1950, tracing the shifting relationship between Palestinian Arabs and Zionist Jews. Using rich archival and primary sources, as well as a variety of theoretical approaches, Kabha and Karlinsky portray the industry's social fabric and stratification, detail its economic history, and analyze the conditions that enabled the formation of the unique binational organization that managed the country's industry from late 1940 until April 1948.

Mustafa Kabha is associate professor and chair of the Department of History, Philosophy, and Judaic Studies at the Open University of Israel. Nahum Karlinsky is a senior lecturer at the Ben-Gurion Research Institute, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, and a Visiting Professor at Boston University.

**April 6**

**Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler**  
**The Bible With and Without Jesus: How Jews and Christians Read the Same Stories Differently** (HarperCollins, 2020)

In their book, Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler take readers on a guided tour of the most popular Hebrew Bible passages quoted in the New Testament to show what the texts meant in their original contexts and how Jews and Christians understand those same texts. In their talk, they demonstrated the three-part lens they use to look at the original context of the text and the subsequent Jewish and Christian interpretations. They gave an example of their technique using the text, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me," from Psalm 22 and whose words Jesus quotes as he dies on the cross.

Amy-Jill Levine is University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies, Mary Jane Werthan Professor of Jewish Studies, and Professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School. Marc Brettler, is the Bernice and Morton Lerner Professor of Jewish Studies in the Department of Religious Studies at Duke University.



**February 23**

**Eitan Fishbane**  
**The Art of Mystical Narrative: A Poetics of the Zohar** (Oxford University Press, 2018)

Eitan Fishbane's work illuminates the literary dimensions of the Zohar, the Jewish mystical text that has captivated the minds of interpreters for over 700 years, and which continues to entrance readers today. In his talk, Fishbane demonstrated the drama and fictional imagination alive in the text, and explored how these qualities reveal a representation of the reality of its thirteenth-century authors.

Fishbane is Associate Professor of Jewish Thought at The Jewish Theological Seminary, where he teaches courses on Jewish mysticism and spirituality and has served on the faculty since 2006.





## Encounters with Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies

The aim of the new Encounters series is to facilitate conversations across disciplines on the study of the Holocaust, genocide, and human rights. The inaugural series focused on “The Politics of Genocide,” with the goal to broaden the understanding of genocidal and violent events in modern and contemporary politics. The series was curated by Professor Nancy Harrowitz (Romance Studies), Director of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies Minor Program, and Dr. Sultan Doughan, Postdoctoral Associate at the Elie Wiesel Center.

### Patterns of Genocide: California and Beyond

December 2, 2020

Benjamin Madley

**Dr. Benjamin Madley** (UCLA) is author of *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe, 1846-1873* (Yale University Press, 2016). In this talk, he discussed the genocide of Native Americans in California in light of the international UN Genocide Convention and why this genocide has been buried for so long. The discussion extended to the emergence of scholarship on the subject and its relation to the definition of genocide as an actionable crime based on international law. The talk was followed by a response by **Professor Timothy Longman**. Longman is a founding member of the program in Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies at Boston University. His research and teaching centers on the genocide in Rwanda.



### Voicing and Silencing the Memory of Loss: Lullabies and Stories from Armenian Women in Istanbul

March 9, 2021

Melissa Bilal

**Dr. Melissa Bilal** (UCLA) is a historical anthropologist who uses ethnomusicology as her lens. Her talk illustrated the capacity of lullabies sung by Armenian women in Istanbul to produce knowledge, functioning as a survival strategy under the regime of denial following the Armenian Genocide, in 1915. She argued that this knowledge is intimate and affective, bodily and instantaneous. It is a way of knowing “otherwise” that has the potential to form alternative ways of relating to history. **Roberta Micallef**, Professor of World Languages and Literature at Boston University, served as respondent, drawing from her expertise in 19th- and 20th-century Ottoman and Turkish literature and current research into women’s life writing.

### Holocaust Memory and Britain’s Religious-Secular Landscape

March 24, 2021

David Tollerton

**David Tollerton** (University of Exeter) asked the audience to consider the politics regarding the construction in central London of a major new Holocaust memorial and learning center, located next to the Houses of Parliament. His talk illustrated how the memorial is symbolic of the extent to which Holocaust remembrance has come to inhabit an increasingly prominent place in British public life. While it intersects with the experiences of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities, it also points to increasing secularity. With an eye to this last point, Dr. Tollerton highlighted new forms of sacrality that surround state-supported initiatives. This event was moderated by **Abigail Gillman**, Professor of World Languages and Literatures and a member of the Jewish Studies faculty at Boston University.

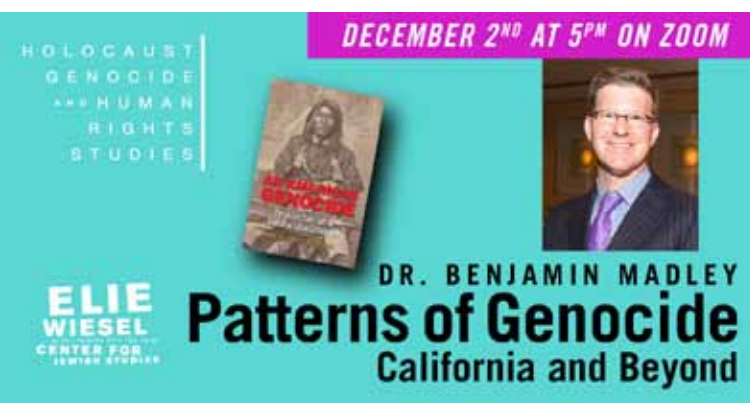


### The New Rwanda’s Ongoing Campaign Against Genocide Ideology

April 14, 2021

Mark Geraghty

**Mark Geraghty** (University College London) examined the contemporary Rwandan government’s use of laws passed in the wake of the Rwandan genocide that prohibit “genocide ideology.” These laws criminalize “thoughts” of ethnic hatred that threaten the recurrence of genocide and have been used by the state as a tool to quell dissenting political voices. Geraghty introduced the audience to narratives of those imprisoned for this crime and their inability to reconcile with this novel instrument of state terror. Serving as respondent was Rwanda expert **Timothy Longman**, Professor of International Relations at the Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University.



## Co-Sponsored Events

Nervous National Identity: Germans and Germany in Dani Levy's Film Joshua with William Collins Donahue  
**November 11, 2020**  
 BU German Program in World Languages and Literatures

Film Screening: Holy Silence followed by a panel discussion  
**January 31, 2021**  
 AJC New England and Consulate General of Israel to New England

An Evening in Conversation with Teju Cole "Known and Strange Things"  
**March 23, 2021**  
 BU Center for the Humanities, Kilachand Honors College, BU Office of the Provost, CAS Dean's Office, BU Arts Initiative, CAS Core Curriculum, BU Alumni Association

Yom HaShoah - Holocaust Remembrance Day  
**April 8, 2021**  
 BU Hillel

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 Howard Thurman Center for Common Ground

This event is sponsored by the BU Center for the Humanities, Kilachand Honors College, Office of the Provost, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies, BU Alumni Association, and Core Curriculum.

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY'S CONVERSATIONS IN THE ARTS AND IDEAS**

**TEJU COLE**  
 KNOWN AND STRANGE THINGS  
*An Evening in Conversation with Teju Cole*

**TUESDAY, MARCH 23**  
**6-7:30PM**  
 Virtual Event via Zoom

The event is free and open to the public. A reservation will insure a spot. Registration opens February 9th at [tejucolebu.eventbrite.com](http://tejucolebu.eventbrite.com) or scan the QR code

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY**

## BU Jewish Studies Research Forum

The Boston University Jewish Studies Research Forum (BUJS Forum) facilitates conversations on advanced research in Jewish Studies and related fields. The Forum is multi-disciplinary and provides opportunities for resident and visiting faculty, postgraduate associates, and graduate students to present their work in progress while simultaneously learning from visiting scholars.

**BUJS Forum**  
**"Emmanuel Lévinas and the Escape from Barbarism"**  
 December 8  
 Lucas Fain

In the years 1934-35, Emmanuel Lévinas linked the political and intellectual rise of Hitler and Heidegger to an "arrogant barbarism established in the heart of Europe." The most needful philosophy was a philosophy capable of thinking in level terms with barbarism. For the young Lévinas, this was conceived as a philosophy of escape. This talk explored the theme of escape as a confrontation with barbarism leading to Lévinas's mature ethics of the "face."

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY JEWISH STUDIES RESEARCH FORUM**

*Dr. Lucas Fain*  
**Emmanuel Lévinas**  
 and the Escape from Barbarism

**DECEMBER 8**  
**2:00 - 3:15 PM**

**REGISTER HERE**  
 TO RECEIVE YOUR LINK FOR THE ZOOM MEETING

**DR. LUCAS FAIN**

**ELIE WIESEL CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES**  
 for more information:  
 Boston University  
 Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies  
 147 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215  
[bu.edu/jewishstudies](http://bu.edu/jewishstudies) 617-353-8096

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY**

DR. LUCAS FAIN IS A VISITING RESEARCHER AT THE ELIE WIESEL CENTER.

## Jewish Cultural Endowment (JCE)

The Jewish Cultural Endowment (JCE) supports Jewish cultural programs on campus, including lectures, academic conferences, literary events, curricular enhancement, artistic performances, and exhibitions. It accepts submissions from all Boston University faculty, staff, and students and operates under the auspices of the Elie Wiesel Center. The Jewish Cultural Endowment's mission is to foster an appreciation of Jewish culture in all of its richness and diversity. In 2020-2021, the JCE financially supported the following projects:

**High Holidays: A Safe and Sweet New Year** (BU Hillel)

**Workshop Series: Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, White Supremacy and US Culture: The Call for Interfaith Upstanding** (BU School of Theology)

Smashing Stereotypes: Dialogue Tools to Address Anti-Semitism with Bob Stains

Presentation of Papers

Understanding Anti-Semitism and Its Impact on Movements for Social Change with **Rabbi David Jaffe & Elder William Dickerson II**

**Jewish Culture and Comedy Night** with Rachel Dratch (BU Hillel)



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### Press Mentions

April 5, 2021: BU Today

"POV: What Went Wrong in Duxbury? And What Can We Do about It?"

[bu.edu/articles/2021/pov-what-went-wrong-in-duxbury-and-what-can-we-do-about-it](https://bu.edu/articles/2021/pov-what-went-wrong-in-duxbury-and-what-can-we-do-about-it)

April 27, 2021: BU Daily Free Press

"Authors reflect on the citrus industry in the Middle East for new book at BU event"

[dailyfreepress.com/2021/04/27/authors-reflect-on-the-citrus-industry-in-the-middle-east-for-new-book-at-bu-event](https://dailyfreepress.com/2021/04/27/authors-reflect-on-the-citrus-industry-in-the-middle-east-for-new-book-at-bu-event)

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**Website** [bu.edu/jewishstudies](https://bu.edu/jewishstudies)

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[instagram.com/ewcjs](https://instagram.com/ewcjs)

find our **YouTube** channel with a search for "Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies"

### Donate

Please consider a donation to the Center to help us continue to engage our students and the public through lectures and events like the Encounters with Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Studies, and Books at the Center series. We want to do our part in building a community around the values of Jewish history and tradition, to engage and challenge ourselves and our students to remember the past, think more deeply about the present, and work toward a shared future for all.

To do this, we need your help. To give to the Elie Wiesel Center, visit: [bu.edu/jewishstudies/support-ewcjs](https://bu.edu/jewishstudies/support-ewcjs)

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to our alumni and community members who supported us this year and helped us sustain and expand the activities of the Center. We extend a special thank you to Mr. **Jonathan Krivine** and **Mrs. Gunda Trepp** for their on-going friendship and support.

We are grateful to the following friends of the Center for their generous donations in the past year:

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