

2024 — 2025



ELIE WIESEL CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES
2024 — 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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Dear Friends,

This past academic year, like the one before, has been full of challenges and successes. As the Israel/Hamas war saw its first anniversary, with further attacks on Israel, hostages still held, and tremendous loss of life in Gaza, we focused on programming that would give us more grounding, more strength in our identities as Jews who care deeply about our larger community. For us, *tikkun olam*, repairing the world, is not only a guiding principle but an imperative. It has been a difficult year, but it's been a successful one in fulfilling our mission to educate and to carry forward the great humanitarian legacy of Elie Wiesel.

Our campus was relatively peaceful, and many faculty from different departments and political perspectives made strong efforts to get to know one another in order to strengthen our Jewish culture on campus. The EWCJS co-hosted events that were geared towards civil discourse and peacemaking, including **Prof. Andre De Quadros's** presentation in October on the importance of arts and storytelling as tools for connection and peace-building, and a panel discussion on antisemitism, tracing through history to the ways it manifests today. Our endeavors to confront rapidly growing global antisemitism and improve our already rich Jewish life at BU are fully supported by the BU administration.

The Center held an astounding eight events on Israel during the year to showcase the new Israel Studies minor that began Fall 2024 and includes classes on Israel's history, politics, culture and the varied identities of Israeli people. These events included the first Israel Studies event series, which aimed to promote student interest in Israel studies and marked Israel's rich and diverse cultures through talks on Israeli poetry, religious history, ecology and the environment, and archeology. **Prof. Abby Gillman** has been essential in organizing events and bringing Israel Studies forward at the university. Our deep thanks to Abby!

We partnered with AJC New England and the Consulate General of Israel to New England for this year's annual International Holocaust Remembrance Day program. **Dr. Charles Gallagher, S.J.**, of Boston College gave a remarkable talk entitled "How Antisemitism Grows: Lessons from Boston's 1930's Nazi Movement," based both on his groundbreaking book, *The Nazis of Copley Square*, and on his new research.

The year was bookended by two internationally famous scholars: in December, **Ilan Troen** spoke on his important new book, *Whose Promised Land?*, and in April, **Stuart Eizenstat** gave a fascinating Rabin Memorial lecture on his new book, *The Art of Diplomacy*.

This past semester, we announced a groundbreaking initiative: **Elie Wiesel Internships** were created in conjunction with the Special Collections Wiesel Archive at Mugar Library and with the help of **Dr. Alan Rosen** of the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity. Three of the graduating seniors in our Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights major were the first interns in this new program. They benefited enormously from learning archival techniques, working with the papers, and simultaneously taking a directed

study class about Wiesel's major works. We plan to continue the internship, as students and faculty felt it was a resounding success. This year was also a landmark year in that the first graduating class of five students in the Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights program received their degrees in our new major.

Dr. Matthew Creighton began his new position this past year as Lecturer in Jewish Studies and Holocaust Studies. He also held the role of Interim Associate Director of the Center while **Dr. Ingrid Anderson** was on a Fulbright. Matt is a talented and effective teacher and scholar, and we are very lucky to have him in this role. We hired an excellent part-time lecturer, **Dr. Dotan Greenvald**, who holds a PhD in Jewish studies and history. Dotan taught our new "Antisemitism After the Holocaust" course, as well as sections of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict course to excellent student reviews. **Mark Ludwig**, director of the world acclaimed Terezin Foundation, offered a well-received new course, "Music and the Holocaust," that included live performances.

Our course offerings continue to grow. Due to the generous endowment of **Al Tapper** (Questrom'64), we were able to develop new courses in Jewish history this year, including "The History of Israeli Settlements," "Introduction to Jewish History," "History of the Jews in the Americas," and "Sephardic Jews." These courses will be offered next year and beyond, and more are planned. Thanks to the **Lynn and Gloria Johnson Family Foundation** gift, deep training on contemporary antisemitism studies is available for faculty and new curricula is now under development. We have a new donor, **David Weinstein, Esq.** (CAS'72, DGE'70), who has generously given the College of Art and Sciences and the Elie Wiesel Center funding to develop a new course on antisemitism.

Our Israel Institute Fellow, **Dr. Tamara Lotner-Lev**, finished her two-year stay with us and returned to Israel to continue her career as an environmental lawyer. Her courses on the Israeli and Mediterranean environment and on Israeli history and culture were a tremendous gift to our students and colleagues, as were her public lectures during her stay. Our postdoc, **Roi Sabar**, also finished his two years with us and has gone on to a prestigious fellowship at Hebrew University's Mandel Scholion Research Center. They will be sorely missed.

It has been a landmark year for the Center, and it is important for all of us to embrace our accomplishments in these challenging and painful times. Your gifts to the Center are appreciated, and we put them to good use! For more information on all the programs we held this year, please check the "2024-25 Events" section of this report.

Our best wishes for a peaceful future,

Nancy Harrowitz

Director, Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies
Professor of Italian and Jewish Studies
Boston University



BEIT SHLOMO V'SARAH WIESEL
AT THE MAIN ENTRANCE ON SILBER WAY.

The Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies (EWCJS) is a vibrant hub within Boston University's College of Arts and Sciences, dedicated to exploring the rich and diverse dimensions of Jewish history, religion, and culture as well as Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies and Israel Studies. As an interdisciplinary academic program, the Center brings together scholars and students through a wide array of courses, public lectures, and cultural events that engage both the university community and the broader public.

Our interdisciplinary approach is supported by twelve core faculty members and twenty-seven affiliated members. Beyond the classroom, the Center is committed to supporting our community through research grants, travel awards, scholarships, fellowships, and merit-based awards.

Named in honor of Elie Wiesel, the 1986 Nobel Peace Laureate and long-time BU faculty member, our Center embodies his commitment to education, scholarship, and meaningful public engagement. Our events offer a platform for intellectual exchange and the celebration of contemporary Jewish thought and artistic expression.

Housed at 147 Bay State Road—a historical building once home to BU President John Silber—the Center was rededicated in 2005 as Beit Shlomo in memory of Elie Wiesel's parents, Shlomo and Sarah Wiesel. Thanks to the generous support of Ira and Ingeborg Rennert, who endowed the Center, it continues to be a welcoming environment for scholars, students, and visitors alike.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-2025

Books published: 3

Articles/chapters published: 31

Presentations/lectures given: 42

Awards, fellowships, and grants received: 5

Workshops Organized: 9

Boston University Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies
147 Bay State Road, Boston, Massachusetts 02215
Phone: 617.353.8096, Email: ewcjs@bu.edu

CORE FACULTY

Kimberly Arkin, Associate Professor of Anthropology;
Director of Graduate Studies

Andrea Berlin, Professor of Archaeology and Religion;
James R. Wiseman Chair in Classical Archaeology

Alejandro Botta, Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible

Katheryn Darr, Harrell F. Beck Professor of Hebrew
Scripture

David Frankfurter, Professor of Religion; Aurelio
Professor of the Appreciation of Scripture, Ancient
Mediterranean Religions, Jewish and Christian
Literature

Abigail Gillman, Professor of Hebrew, German, and
Comparative Literature; Department Chair of World
Languages and Literatures

Nancy Harrowitz, Professor of Italian and Jewish Studies;
Director of the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies;
Coordinator of Holocaust, Genocide, and Human
Rights Studies Programs

Steven T. Katz, Professor of Religion; Alvin J. Slater and
Shirley Slater Chair in Jewish Holocaust Studies;
Founding Director of the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish
Studies

Jonathan Klawans, Professor of Religion and Judaic
Studies; Director of Graduate Studies

Deeana Klepper, Professor of History and Religion;
Department Chair of Religion

Diana Lobel, Associate Professor of Religion

Michael Zank, Professor of Religion, Jewish Studies, and
Medieval Studies

AFFILIATE FACULTY

Ingrid Anderson, Senior Lecturer, CAS Writing Program

Miriam Angrist, Master Lecturer in Hebrew; Coordinator
of Hebrew Language Program; CAS Language Liaison

Alicia Borinsky, Professor of Spanish and Latin American
Studies

Jennifer Cazenave, Associate Professor of French

Matthew Creighton, Interim Associate Director and
Lecturer at the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies

André de Quadros, Professor of Music Education,
College of Fine Arts

Dotan Greenvald, Part-Time Lecturer, Elie Wiesel Center

Aaron Garrett, Professor of Philosophy

Nahum Karlinsky (Ben-Gurion University), Visiting
Professor

Irit Kleiman, Associate Professor of Romance Studies

Tamara Lotner Lev, Israel Institute Postdoctoral Teaching
Fellow

Yair Lior, Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies

Margaret Litvin, Associate Professor of Arabic and
Comparative Literature; Convener of Arabic and
Russian

Mark Ludwig, Part-Time Lecturer, Elie Wiesel Center

Michael Prince, Associate Professor of English

Roi Sabar, Post-Doctoral Fellow

Adam Seligman, Professor of Religion; Research
Associate at the Institute for the Study of Economic
Culture

Merav Shohet, Assistant Professor of Anthropology;
Director of Undergraduate Studies

Jeremy Yudkin, Professor of Music; Co-Director of the
Center for Beethoven Studies

Michael Zell, Professor of Baroque and 18th-Century Art

HGHRS FACULTY

Odile Cazenave, Professor of French

Jennifer Cazenave, Associate Professor of French

Linda Heywood, Professor of African American & Black
Diaspora Studies and History

Timothy P. Longman, Professor of International Relations
and Political Science; Director of the Institute on
Culture, Religion, and World Affairs

Simon Payaslian, Kenosian Chair of Modern Armenian
History and Literature

Robert D. Sloane, Professor of Law; R. Gordon Butler
Scholar in International Law

EMERITUS FACULTY

John Bernstein, Professor Emeritus of Film

Susan Bernstein, Professor Emerita of English

Charles Dellheim, Professor Emeritus of History

Paula Fredriksen, Professor Emerita of Religion; Aurelio
Chair Emerita of the Appreciation of Scripture

Thomas Glick, Professor Emeritus of History

Michael Grodin z"l Professor Emeritus of Health Law,
Bioethics, and Human Rights; Professor Emeritus of
Family Medicine and Psychiatry

Petra Hesse, Professor Emerita, Wheelock College

Pnina Lahav, Professor Emerita of Law

Hillel Levine, Professor Emeritus of Religion

Jeffrey Mehlman, Professor Emeritus of French

Elie Wiesel z"l Andrew W. Mellon Professor Emeritus in
the Humanities; Professor of Philosophy and Religion



MIRA ANGRIST

This past year, **Miriam Angrist** presented at the National Association of Professors of Hebrew in Seattle, where she gave a lecture called “Designing Innovative Teaching and Learning Material on CANVA”. She also presented two papers at the Northeast Council for Teaching Foreign Languages: “Process-Oriented Learning with AI” and “Promoting Global Awareness and Change in a Food Culture Class.”

Additionally, Miriam Angrist participated in an ACTFL Mentoring Program, which is meant to help early career language educators, where she mentored a Spanish teacher and helped him design a thematic unit for teaching intermediate students. She designed and led an international online course for Hebrew teachers on “The Israeli Story through Music.”

For the past year, she has also been a member of the AI Collaborative Team of the Geddes Language Center, which met periodically to discuss effective use of AI in teaching languages and culture. Her other main project this year was the writing and filming of a 20-part video series on the Archaeology of Israel in the Second Temple Period, entitled “*From Artifact to History*.” The plan was to complete the series this summer – but ongoing political turmoil kept them from filming two episodes in Jericho. She hopes to make a quick visit back to Israel in early January for that filming.



ALEJANDRO BOTTA

During the 2023-2024 academic year, **Prof. Alejandro Botta** taught a range of courses, including “Cultural Background of the Hebrew Bible,” “The Book of Psalms,” “Current Issues in Biblical Interpretation,” “The Prophetic Tradition,” and a Doctor of Ministry-directed study. He continued his active role as doctoral advisor to his students: Togu Sihite, who completed his comprehensive examinations in Hebrew Bible, and Nataly Romero, who completed her PhD course requirements at the School of Theology. His ongoing publication projects include a *Namebook of Aramaic Names from Ancient Egypt* (with Bezalel Porten z”l) and the edition of two introductory volumes to the Hebrew Bible in Spanish.

During the summer, he continued his research and writing at his alma mater, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and participated in the Workshop of The Israel Science Foundation Research “Indomitable Optimism: Isaiah 40-66 and the Return to Zion in their Ancient Near Eastern Context,” at Bar-Ilan University (July 9-12) where he delivered the lecture “Re-reading and Actualization in Deutero Isaiah: A Rhetorical Analysis,” focusing on the redactional actualizations (continuity with Isaianic texts adjusted to new circumstances) and re-readings (additions that might radically change the original Isaianic message).

He also had the privilege of volunteering through Sar-El at the IDF 559 base Mishmar Ha-Negev and visiting the communities attacked during the terrorist attack of October 7.

Prof. Botta also served on the following editorial boards: Harvard Semitic Museum, Teología y Cultura. Revista de teología de UCEL, Antiguo Oriente. Universidad Católica Argentina, Centro de Estudios de Historia del Antiguo Oriente and Revista del Instituto de Historia Antigua Oriental Nueva Serie. Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina. He also served as Biblical Studies Coordinator for the Red Iberoamericana sobre el Próximo Oriente Antiguo (RIPOA).



MATTHEW CREIGHTON

During the 2024-2025 academic year, **Dr. Matthew Creighton** served as the Interim Associate Director of the Elie Wiesel Center, assisting the director with all aspects of programming, curriculum, and course development. He taught 2 sections of "Representations of The Holocaust" (JS 261), 2 sections of "World Cultures of the Jews" (JS 100), and 1 section of "Holocaust Film" (JS 367). He published 3 entries ("Parousia"; "Patricide"; "Parents/Parenting") with *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, and his review of Brian Britt's *Religion Around Walter Benjamin* appeared in the January issue of The Journal of Religion. In July, he participated in The Institute For The Study of Global Antisemitism & Policy's summer institute for curriculum development in Contemporary Antisemitism Studies, hosted at St. Catherine's College at Oxford University.



JENNIFER CAZENAVE

This year, **Prof. Jennifer Cazenave** received a contract for her second book, *Lessons In Seeing: Disability in the Media Archive*, from Columbia University Press, and published a book review of Deirdre Boyle's *Ferryman of Memories: The Films of Rithy Panh* in *H-France Review*. In the fall of 2024, she received two grants: a Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Small Grant & a Publication Production Award from the Center for the Humanities, which helped to defray the costs of translating her first book, *An Archive of the Catastrophe: The Unused Footage of Claude Lanzmann's Shoah*, into French. Prof. Cazenave also began working as a consulting producer on the Holocaust documentary *Light in the Dark* by Gabrielle Lubtchansky. She was promoted to associate professor in Spring 2025.



ANDRÉ DE QUADROS

Dr. André de Quadros deepened his commitment to peacebuilding and social justice through a range of significant scholarly, artistic, and community-based engagements in 2024. In August, he directed a transformative residency of Common Ground Voices in Sweden, a dialogue project that brought together Israeli and Palestinian participants through collaborative arts-making and intercultural exchange. As part of his longstanding leadership in the Race, Prison, Justice Arts project, he oversaw the release of a groundbreaking book that features collaborative artistic works created by Boston University students and incarcerated men, offering a compelling testimony to the power of the arts in fostering human connection and challenging systems of oppression. In recognition of his global contributions to music, education, and human rights, Dr. de Quadros was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Melbourne in December 2024. Further underscoring his influence in the field, he signed three new contracts for co-edited volumes focused on music, equity, abolition, and transformative practice. He also delivered the opening keynote address at the World Conference of the International Society for Music Education, in Finland, where he addressed the urgent need for inclusive, justice-centered approaches in global music education.



DAVID FRANKFURTER

In 2024, **Prof. David Frankfurter** published a research article in the Harvard Theological Review that argued that the New Testament's Book of Revelation was constructed as a kind of "counter-letter" to those circulating from the apostle Paul, and furthermore that Revelation opposed Paul's teachings as polluting the holy community of saints that the author believed would triumph in heaven. This is part of a larger argument that a number of scholars are developing: that Revelation, for all its images of Christ in heaven, is actually a Jewish text through and through.

He also published a review of the spectacular show "Africa and Byzantium" at New York's Metropolitan Museum and gave several papers at conferences. He will return from sabbatical leave to teach courses on the earliest stages of the Christian movement: "From Jesus to Christ" in Fall 2025 and "Varieties of Early Christianity" in Spring 2026.



ABIGAIL GILLMAN

Prof. Abigail Gillman completed her first year as Chair of the Department of World Languages and Literatures, a department which is home to ten language programs, the comparative literature major, and an MFA program in Literary Translation. At the Wiesel Center, she organized a series of talks on Israel Studies on topics including environmentalism, archaeology, Mizrahi Jewish identity, and the poetry of Yehuda Amichai.

In November, she co-organized “Revisiting Jewish Feminism: A Conference on the 120th Anniversary of the Founding of the Jüdischer Frauenbund (German Jewish Women’s League),” held at the Jewish Museum Frankfurt. Her paper dealt with one of the founders of the Frauenbund, Bertha Pappenheim, and her debate with Martin Buber about the commandment of Neighbor-Love (Lev. 19:18). She also participated in a Conference on “Exile in Jewish Modernity” held at Towson University, February 23-25, 2025. Her paper, “Translating Exile: Heinrich Heine’s Hebrew *Heimkehr*,” discussed the rich history of translating of Heine’s lyric poetry from German into Hebrew in the 19th-20th centuries. She published two articles, “Parables (in Medieval Judaism and Modern Judaism)” in the *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*, Volume 23.



DOTAN GREENVALD

“This past year, my first at Boston University, has been profoundly enriching. At the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies, I taught two impactful courses. In “Antisemitism After the Holocaust,” we explored the historical evolution of Antisemitism from its modern conceptual inception through contemporary manifestations, critically examining its intersections with Emancipation and Zionism. Inspired by David Engel, we interrogated whether Antisemitism obscures more than it clarifies our understanding of Jewish history. In the spring, my course on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict engaged students in understanding multiple, intertwined narratives with humility and empathy, culminating in an interactive book fair. Alongside teaching, I received an Excellence in Advising award at Harvard University, underscoring my belief that teaching and mentorship are essential. Additionally, through a grant from Harvard’s Intellectual Vitality Initiative, I facilitated crucial dialogues on Judaism and Zionism amidst the intensifying conflict in Israel and Gaza.

“In research, my ongoing scholarly collaboration with Nir Gonen of Princeton University culminated in research on legal culture, soon to be published as “Public Mock Trials in Mandatory Palestine and Early Israel.” This research was presented at various venues, including the Israel-Palestine Research Forum at Harvard and the annual Association for Israel Studies conference in Haifa. As a fellow at the Advanced Institute for Israel Studies at Brandeis University’s Schusterman Center, I contributed to pioneering discussions on Digital Humanities in Israel Studies. My research there centers on employing artificial intelligence and digital methodologies in the study and research of historical and cultural developments in Zionist, Israeli, and Palestinian contexts, a project that continues to expand.”

— Dr. Dotan Greenvald



STEVEN KATZ

Prof. Steven Katz is currently lecturer and expert consultant on two interesting projects: the Two Museums Project and the Presidents Mission to Holocaust sites. Both are organized by March of the Living, with the hope that each program will encourage empathy and help to control and prevent antisemitism on the participants' campuses. In the former, the students take a class for credit and then visit the Holocaust Museum and African American History Museum in Washington, DC. This year, the program was active on 5 university campuses. Prof. Katz gave lectures in Washington, accompanied the students around the museums, and led a debriefing session. The Presidents Mission brings college presidents to tour the Holocaust sites in Poland and participate in the Ceremony of Remembrance held at Auschwitz on Yom HaShoah. During the 5-day program, Prof. Katz lectured on topics such as the rise of Nazism, life in the ghettos, the selection and work system at Auschwitz, and Jewish resistance. The first year, seven presidents participated; this year the number rose to eleven and included the heads of three organizations, representing more than a hundred colleges.

Prof. Katz's research continues to move forward. He recently submitted the next volume in his project on the Holocaust and comparative history to Cambridge University Press. He continues to work as editor of the 3-volume *Cambridge History of Antisemitism*, the largest publication project ever undertaken on this subject. To date, 110 articles have been delivered, and the three volumes should be submitted to CUP in September 2025. Prof. Katz also edits the journal *Modern Judaism*.

Outside of the university, Prof. Katz continues his extensive pro-bono work with several Jewish organizations and represents the US on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Last year, IHRA was chaired by the UK, with meetings held in Glasgow and London. This year Israel is the chair, and the meetings will be in Jerusalem (in June) and Haifa (in November).



NANCY HARROWITZ

Prof. Nancy Harrowitz visited Turin in May 2025 to further research her new project on Jewish memoirs about Fascism and Italian Jewish intellectuals' emigration to the Boston area during that time. As part of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, she gave a talk on Elie Wiesel and Primo Levi to the Berkshire Academy, and published a review essay. As Director of the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies, she co-organized a new internship on the Elie Wiesel Archives at Mugar Library, and taught a directed study based on the works of Elie Wiesel to the first class of graduating seniors in the Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights major. Together with AJC New England, she planned and introduced the International Holocaust Remembrance Day annual event, "How Antisemitism Grows: Lessons from Boston's 1930's Nazi Movement." She also worked with the development office to secure a major donation to the Center in order to develop new courses on antisemitism.



NAHUM KARLINSKY

Over this past year, **Prof. Nahum Karlinsky** has published two books: *The Palestinian Arab Citrus Industry from Ottoman Rule to the Nakba, 1850-1950* in Hebrew, with Mustafa Kabha, through Resling, and *The Modern Israeli and Palestinian Diasporas: A Comparative Approach*, which he edited, through The University of Texas Press. Within this book, he published an article entitled "Exile, diaspora, transnationalism: Israeli, Palestinian, and other diasporas in comparative perspective" with Amal Jamal.

In January 2025, he held an event with Prof. Kabha in Jaffa, Israel to launch *The Palestinian Arab Citrus Industry*, which included two experts on Arab-Jewish relations in Palestine/Israel and Israel's so-called "mixed cities". It was a well-attended event, with about half of the audience composed of Arab residents of Jaffa and half Jewish. In April 2025, he organized a book launch for *The Modern Israeli and Palestinian Diasporas*, hosted by Boston University's Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs. This event featured two prominent guest speakers: Prof. Omer Bartov from Brown University, and writer Sayed Kashua from Emerson College.

This past year, Prof. Karlinsky has taught courses on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and has focused on providing a learning environment inside the classroom for the conflict outside.



JONATHAN KLAWANS

Prof. Jonathan Klawans spent the 2024-25 academic year on Sabbatical, supported by a Jeffrey Henderson Senior Fellowship, through Boston University's Center for the Humanities. Klawans's main focus this year was drafting a book manuscript tentatively entitled *Seductive Discoveries: The Academic Authentication of Biblical Fakes and Forgeries*. He also published two book reviews: a review of *Purity and Identity in Ancient Judaism: From the Temple to the Mishnah*, by Yair Furstenberg in *AJS Review*, and a review of *The No-State Solution: A Jewish Manifesto*, by Daniel Boyarin in the *Review of Rabbinic Judaism*.

On June 3, 2024, Klawans delivered a paper entitled "Contra-Scriptural Halakhot and Classical Jewish Hermeneutics" at the David Weiss Halivni Memorial Conference at New York University.

In Spring 2025, Klawans delivered a number of public lectures:

- "Truth and Falsehood in the Bible and Beyond." Scholar-in-Residence Lecture Series, Temple Reyim of Newton, MA, May 2-4 2025
- "Between Genuine and Fake: Grading Suspicious Objects on an Authenticity Scale." Spring Bible and Archaeology Fest, Biblical Archaeology Society (virtual), April 6, 2025
- "Josephus's Masada Story: Martyrs, Murders, and Myths." Biblical Archaeology Forum and Haberman Institute, Rockville MD, March 30, 2025



DIANA LOBEL

This past year, **Prof. Diana Lobel** published a review of Omer Michaelis' *Interiority and Law: Bahya ibn Paquda and the Concept of Inner Commandments*, in the *Association for Jewish Studies Review*, volume 48(2)



TAMARA LOTNER LEV

Over the spring of 2025, **Dr. Tamara Lotner Lev** has given five lectures. She gave an online lecture "Together for the Climate" at a seminar for nature protection for youth from the Middle East, as well as being part of the experts panel at "Tu B'Shvat through the lenses of Jewish tradition: ecological responsibility" at BU Hillel. She spoke on "Introduction to Environmental Protection in Israel - Are Climate, Nature Conservation Policy Still Relevant?" at Congregation Adat Shalom in Washington DC and "Policy and Ecology: Israel's role in Global Climate Crisis" at IPF Atid Boston. She also conducted a webinar on "Saving the Red Sea: A Race Against Time" for members of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel.

Dr. Lotner Lev also published "Protecting open spaces as a strategy for dealing with the climate crisis" in *Ecology and the Environment*, as well as two op-eds: "The Climate Law - Weak Legislation That Will Not Help Us Deal with the Crisis" in September and "Why won't we make it to the UN Climate Conference (COP) this year?" in October, both in YNET.

She has also joined two research groups, with which she will continue working in the coming year. She is part of the Dead Sea Research Group headed by Ben Gurion University, which will focus on Dead Sea and River Jordan rehabilitation, as well as the research group "Quantifying and Leveraging the Ecological Role of Restored Bird Stopover Sites for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Using Nature-Based Solutions".



TIMOTHY LONGMAN

Prof. Timothy Longman continues to serve as the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the Pardee School. He had works published in *Political Science Quarterly* and the *Journal of Human Rights*, and he had a book chapter published in *The State, Ethnicity, and Gender*, from University of Wisconsin Press. He also wrote the foreword for *I Lived to Tell the World: Stories from the Survivors of Holocaust, Genocide, and the Atrocities of War* from Oregon State University Press.

He continues to serve as the treasurer of the African Studies Association.



MARK LUDWIG

Over the past year, **Mark Ludwig** has produced several programs. In August 2024, he gave a two-part lecture series *Memory, Trauma and the Transcendent in Music* at the Tanglewood Music Festival Learning Center. In September, he produced *Silenced Voices: Music from Terezín* in Providence, RI for the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center. He organized the concert *In the Joyous Light* at Symphony Hall, Boston, which took place in October. It featured the music of Terezín composers Gideon Klein and Viktor Ullmann, with the premiere of a new work he commissioned for pianist Jonathan Biss. He also facilitated a program on researching the archives and providing organizational support to the Swakopmund Genocide Museum in Namibia.

Prof. Ludwig gave a series of master classes at the National Music Conservatory in Amman, Jordan, in September 2024, as well as two concert lectures at Fairfield University in November 2024 and May 2025.



SIMON PAYASLIAN

This past year, **Prof. Simon Payaslian** taught courses on the History of Genocide and The Byzantine Empire in the fall, before his Spring sabbatical. He published two articles in scholarly journals: "The Origins of Armenian Lobbying in the United States: A Geopolitical Conceptualization of Restorative Justice," in *Studies on National Movements*, and an updated edition of "20th Century Genocides," edited by Patrick James, in the 2025 issue of *Oxford Bibliographies in International Relations*. Prof. Payaslian's current research interests include ethnicity, the Armenian diaspora and US Foreign Policy and the Armenian Question; comparative study of diaspora communities; memory, post-memory, and the construction of identity; literary imagination and the poetics of home; and nationalism and diaspora-homeland relations.



ROI SABAR

In the 2024-2025 academic year, **Dr. Roi Sabar** continued to lead the *From Rebels to Rulers: The Hasmoneans and their Kingdom* hybrid discussion series at the EWCJS, with a focus on archaeological evidence for two key conflicts involving the Hasmoneans. He co-chaired a session at the ASOR annual meeting, and co-organized *Echoes and Reflections: Ancient and Modern State Building in the Land of Israel*, a day-long conference supported by the BU Jewish Cultural Endowment, Archaeology Program and Department of Religion.

Dr. Sabar also presented his research at multiple venues, including the Israel Studies Talk Series at the EWCJS, Harvard University's History and Archaeology of Ancient Near Eastern Societies Workshop, a public lecture at NYU's ISAW, and the Archaeological Institute of America's annual meeting. His work this year also included the publication of a peer-reviewed article in the *American Journal of Numismatics*. In the coming years (2025-2028), Dr. Sabar will be based at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem as a Mandel-Scholion Fellow.



JEREMY YUDKIN

Prof. Jeremy Yudkin was on medical leave for the academic year. In May, however, he was invited to teach at the Dipartimento di Musicologia of the University of Pavia, which is situated in Cremona, the historic city of the great violin makers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He was appointed Professore Invitato. He also gave a presentation at the Accademia Stauffer, the academic academy of the Fondazione Stauffer, whose mission is to preserve and promote the rich musical traditions of Cremona, with a particular focus on classical violin making, high education of string musicians, music history and musicology.



MERAV SHOHEIT

Prof. Merav Shohet's summer began with an international workshop on the "Anthropology of Care at the End of Life" at Leiden University in the Netherlands, which she co-organized and where she presented a draft paper, "Narratives and Silences of Care Near the End of Life at a Border Kibbutz." She was also on a public-facing roundtable on anthropological perspectives on silence and care at the end of life.

Prof. Shohet then completed fieldwork in Israel and presented a paper at the European Association for Social Anthropology (EASA) conference based on the latest fieldwork, entitled "Fragile Rhythms: Rituals and Routines of Care towards the End of Life." As a CURA Fellow at Boston University, she presented a further draft paper in December, based on this summer work.

In the fall, she presented another paper, "Fragments of Displacement and Care through Narrative Repetition," at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting in Florida, where she co-organized the session, "Narrative Repetition as Political Praxis? Uncertainty and Emerging Reconfigurations of Care." She also organized and secured funding for the November event "Palestinian and Israeli Stories of Collective Liberation: A Conversation with Activists Osama Iliwat and Rotem Levin." Prof. Shohet co-organized another panel, "Sideshadowing Death: Living Along with Foreclosed Futures" for the Society for Psychological Anthropology Biannual Meeting in April 2025. There, she presented the paper, "'Everywhere I go, there's war': Narrating and Nearing the End of Life at a Border Kibbutz." She also lectured at Harvard on "Silence and Sacrifice in Troubled Times: Reflections on Narrative, Care, and Community," and held a data workshop at Boston College on "Narrative and Interactional Dimensions of Reminiscing."

Additionally, a transposed edition of "Everyday Sacrifice, the Power of Respect, and Language Socialization in Vietnam" is now available as part of the Demystifying Language Project website/book, which introduces key works in linguistic anthropology to high school students.



MICHAEL ZANK

Michael Zank, Professor of Religion, Jewish Studies, and Medieval Studies, started the year with a lecture on “Jerusalem: The City as a Symbol” for a workshop on the “Story of Israel: ‘A Nation that Dwells Alone’” at O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat, Haryana/India. As a Spring 2024 Jeffrey Henderson Senior Fellow (BUCH), he revised an essay on “Literary Aspects of Philosophical Writing: the case of Maimonides’ Guide of the Perplexed” that later appeared in print in *Philosophy and Jewish Thought: Theoretical Intersections*, a volume edited by Beniamino Fortis, Ellen Rinner, and Lars Tittmar.

Other publications included a reference article on Martin Buber for “Neue Deutsche Biographie-online” and a review of Dana Hollander, *Ethics Out of Law: Herman Cohen and the “Neighbor”* in *Journal of Religion*. Throughout the year, Prof. Zank continued to serve on the editorial board of *Studia Judaica* (Walter de Gruyter) and lectured on a wide range of topics in Hamburg, Berlin, Rome, and Leipzig, and – remotely – in Jerusalem and at Yale University. In the fall semester, in addition to teaching his lecture course on the Bible and a seminar in the philosophy of religion, Prof. Zank served as interim director of the Graduate Program in Religion.



MICHAEL ZELL

Prof. Michael Zell published “Against the Mirror: Indeterminacy and the Poetics of Painting in Rembrandt’s *Woman Bathing in a Stream*” in the *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art*. His essay “Painterly Caresses: The Groom, the Mistress, and The Horse in Ter Borch’s *Horse Stable*,” will appear in the volume *Affective and Hermeneutic Functions of the Mindful Picture, 1550-1700*, which he is co-editing this summer with Walter Melion for publication by Brill later this year or early 2026. In Spring 2025 Professor Zell co-caught a curatorial seminar with Simona Di Nepi, *Judaica* curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in connection with an exhibition they are co-curating, entitled “Real and Imagined: Rembrandt and the Jews of the 17th-Century Dutch Republic.” A collaboration between the MFA’s Center for Netherlandish Art and Boston University, the exhibition showcases the interaction of Amsterdam’s Jews with the vibrant artistic culture of 17th-century Holland – and Rembrandt’s works in particular – as patrons, collectors, and subjects of art. On view at the MFA from December 10, 2025 through December 2026, the exhibition draws mainly from the museum’s exceptional collection of Dutch art and of *Judaica* ranging from paintings and prints by Rembrandt and his school to the oldest known 17th-century Dutch silver Torah finials (*rimonim*). It thus gives compelling visual and material form to the visibility and agency of Amsterdam’s Jews and to the interplay between Rembrandt’s artistic imagination and the realities of Dutch-Jewish life.

Abigail Gillman



ABIGAIL GILLMAN

Prof. Abigail Gillman is the Chair of the Department of World Languages and Literatures, in addition to being a core faculty member at the Elie Wiesel Center and affiliated faculty for the Graduate Program in Religion. She teaches and researches literature, with a particular focus on parables as a form of story-sharing, teaching, and thought-provoking.

As chair, Prof. Gillman has been working this past year to help WLL faculty with reappointments and promotions and oversee the curriculum alongside her associate chair. She says that being in an administrative role gives her the opportunity to “think big about department changes, events and new programs,” such as setting up a Yiddish Language program at Boston University. She’s also grateful to have “excellent administrators” and “collegial relationships with other faculty members,” in an environment with shared values and mutual respect.

In addition to her administrative duties, Prof. Gillman teaches courses on Hebrew and German literature, Israeli film, and Religion and Literature. She lectures in the Core Curriculum and has also taught in the CAS Writing Program, and she praises both programs because “nothing is more valuable than helping students improve their writing, even if it’s time-consuming and individualized.” She particularly enjoys teaching students new parables, such as the Akedah, or binding of Isaac, which is a “bottomless well of meaning.” Students often see pieces of themselves in parables, such as *A Report To An Academy* by Franz Kafka, which is a story about the “hybrid identity of an ape who has become humans, but in many ways will always be an ape”. Prof. Gillman says that students write “unbelievable responses and personal connections” about belonging and assimilation when she teaches this story. She enjoys promoting lesser-known parables, because parables are often deceptively simple in language, but are “endlessly provocative” since they don’t wrap up with a neat moral lesson and demand audience engagement.

Prof. Gillman’s research also focuses on parables, which she calls a “fascinating and ancient genre going back to the Bible and stretching forward through contemporary literature.” Parables have been used by many figures throughout history to communicate wisdom – including Jesus, Hasidic rabbis, Zhuangzi, Kafka, and even Octavia Butler. Prof. Gillman spent years researching how Kafka absorbed Czech, Yiddish, German, and biblical literature to become a “nexus of different storytelling traditions,” and how though his stories seem absurdist and shocking, through the lens of a parable, they can be read as wisdom texts. Currently,

her main project is a book about the mashalim, or Jewish parables. She is also co-editing a journal on Henrich Heine’s poetry and translation. Heine, she says, is “a Jewish writer for our moment in his brutal honesty and inventing a new literary style, being German but also an outsider.”

Prof. Gillman’s interests and expertise are wide-ranging, and she would love to have an opportunity to dive more deeply into specific subsections of literature, particularly Jewish and Israeli literature, in future courses. For example, she says, “a course on the aftermath of the Shoah, or Israeli women’s writing, or Israeli documentary film” would allow for a deeper exploration into a specific and underexplored area.

In order to broaden knowledge of Israel Studies, Prof. Gillman was instrumental in planning and implementing the first Israel Studies Events Series this past year. The series aimed to “introduce Israel Studies to students with a range of topics,” including poetry, history, the natural environment, and archaeology. Prof. Gillman wanted the events to “broaden the understanding of Israel past the things that are in the news – that Israel right now is filled with trauma and challenges but there’s also a greater and bigger history there.” Along with Prof. Merav Shohet, Prof. Gillman is working on next year’s event series, and says that it’s crucial for the Center to continue messaging that “Israel is not a monolithic entity, and to be Israeli is not just to be one thing.” The new series will study social structures and different groups within Israeli society, and hopefully bring scholars, including young Israeli scholars, to share their work and educate the community.

One of Prof. Gillman’s favorite courses is Jewish Diasporic Literature, due to the students’ personal projects, which stay with her for a long time. The challenging, but sometimes healing process of learning about family history is a “universal experience,” Prof. Gillman says, and gives students an opportunity to reflect on how the past has shaped their identity in the present. In our current times, teaching students to think critically about their own values, history, and identity is crucial to fostering their growth as people and engaged citizens of the world.

Tamara Lotner Lev



TAMARA LOTNER LEV AT THE ELIE WIESEL CENTER'S END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

Dr. Tamara Lotner Lev has spent two years at the Elie Wiesel Center as the Israel Institute Teaching Fellow. Over this time, she has become a well-known and well-loved teacher, with popular courses on Israel's natural world and environmental policy. Dr. Lotner Lev has also given several lectures on her research and has supported other faculty members at their events, becoming an important member of the community. As her time at the Elie Wiesel Center ends, we would like to share more about her research, as well as her classes at BU.

Dr. Lotner Lev works on climate policy and environmental policy in Israel, both “academically and practically”. Over the past few years, she has particularly focused on nature-based solutions to climate change mitigation. She submitted a report to the Ministry of Environmental Protection about this issue and started exploring case studies. Last year, she joined a research group that would work with Ben Gurion University to examine “aquatic habitat restoration in Israel for the migratory birds ecosystem”.

Additionally, Dr. Lotner Lev has been working for a few years on policy to restore the eastern boulevard of Israel – the River Jordan to the Dead Sea. She shares that while at Boston University, she prepared “a plan for collaboration between several organizations to strengthen each other by sharing ecologic, hydrologic, political, and policy knowledge to promote the best policy for the region.” She has also joined several groups working with EcoFuture, a project funded by the European Union’s PPIMA program which aims to develop climate-change adaptation strategies that will improve the socio-economic welfare of people in the Mediterranean region.

Dr. Lotner Lev’s third major field is analysis and response to the Israeli Climate Bill, a “very weak bill” which was presented to the parliament but not approved, as well as other climate-related policy.

In addition to research, Dr. Lotner Lev teaches courses on environmental law and Israel. In the 2023-24 academic year, she taught “Israel: History, Politics, Culture, Identity” and “Environmental Law in Israel and the Mediterranean.” In 2024-25, she taught both courses again, due to popular demand, while also teaching a course on Israel and the environment. Dr. Lotner Lev says that she particularly enjoyed the students, who were “curious and showed great interest in the courses,” and the opportunity to hold engaging class activities where students could “negotiate environmental agreement in the Middle East” or “practice the creation of a government in Israel.” She also found it “extremely rewarding to teach about Israel in such difficult times,” from her arrival, though

the attack on October 7, and throughout the painful war in Gaza. She felt that the classes provided “an important safe space to discuss sensitive topics and to ask tough questions.”

Additionally, Dr. Lotner Lev took her two years at the Center as an opportunity, through developing courses and processing the intense events that took place, to “broaden [her] interest in the connection between environmental protection policy and democracy.” As she returns to Israel, she has updated her syllabus and is excited about these new additions to her classes.

Dr. Lotner Lev appreciates that her time at the Center was filled with “great people” with whom she could “discuss and consult,” and that being slightly removed and remote allowed her to look at her work from a new perspective, which is a “very important experience.”

Next year, Dr. Lotner Lev will return to Israel to continue both her teaching and her environmental policy work. She is particularly excited to execute the collaboration for the Dead Sea and Jordan River rehabilitation, as well as continuing to work on case studies for nature-based climate solutions in Israel.

Khadija El Karfi Joss



KHADIJA KARFI-JOSS

Dr. Khadija El Karfi Joss is a PhD student who recently defended her dissertation in Francophone Literature. During the past five years, she has served as the Center's Communications Manager, where her diligence and organizational skills have been instrumental in outreach for our programs, including lectures, performances, and classes. She has also been the driving force behind our comprehensive Annual Reports, and as she transitions out of Boston University, we want to take this opportunity to highlight her work, both within and outside of the Elie Wiesel Center.

What work do you do at the Elie Wiesel Center?

— I served as the Communications Manager at the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies, where I've been working since August 2020. In this role, I helped manage internal and external communications, including newsletters, event promotions, fundraising campaigns, and annual reports, and collaborated with faculty and staff to elevate the Center's visibility and engagement across campus and beyond.

What academic work are you doing for your PhD?

— I recently defended my PhD in Francophone Literature at Boston University. My research explores anti-Black racism, migration, and gender in North Africa, particularly Morocco, through contemporary literature and film. My dissertation, titled "Excavating the Silenced History of Slavery and Race in Morocco," examines how cultural works illuminate the structural violence faced by Black African migrants and Black Moroccans, while also highlighting their resistance and resilience.

Who did you work with during your research?

— I worked closely with Professor Odile Cazenave, Professor Jennifer Cazenave and Professor Dorothy Kelly at BU, as well as with the International Human Rights Clinic at the School of Law, where I contributed to research and translation on statelessness in the MENA region.

What new discoveries did you make during your research?

— One of the most powerful discoveries was how rarely the legacies of the trans-Saharan slave trade are addressed in public discourse in Morocco, and how artists and filmmakers are filling that silence. I was struck by the nuanced ways in which these artists challenge the state's narratives and offer new imaginaries of Black identity and belonging.

How does your research connect to current issues in the world?

— My research speaks directly to ongoing conversations around migration, racial equity, and the role of art in activism. As migration flows increase and anti-Black racism persists globally, especially in border regions, literature and film become vital tools for fostering understanding and resistance. I believe my work offers insights not just for scholars but for policymakers, educators, and advocates.

How did working at the Elie Wiesel Center impact your academic experience?

— The Elie Wiesel Center offered me a unique space to bridge scholarship and community engagement. Coordinating events that addressed memory, trauma, and identity gave me new ways of thinking about my own research and allowed me to see how deeply people connect with cultural storytelling. It also taught me how to translate academic work for broader audiences.

What are your future plans?

— Professionally, I plan to continue working at the intersection of research, communications, and program strategy. I'm particularly interested in expanding my work in migration and racial equity through nonprofit or academic spaces. I would love to eventually turn parts of my dissertation into a book and continue collaborating with North African-based researchers and artists.

What's your favorite memory from the Elie Wiesel Center?

— It's hard to choose just one favorite memory at the Elie Wiesel Center because I have so many special moments from my time there. Some of the most meaningful experiences for me have included helping plan events and engaging in conversations with students, faculty, and members of the BU community. The Center has always been a place where I've felt welcomed and part of a community that truly cares.

— If I had to pick one specific memory, it would be the lunch I shared at the Center last month with the Center's staff: Dr. Theresa Cooney, Dr. Nancy Harrowitz, Eike Wintzer, Jenna Riedl, and Dr. Matthew Creighton, all of whom I've had the privilege of working with over the past few years. That moment captured the warmth and camaraderie that define the Elie Wiesel Center. From the time I was first hired by Dr. Michael Zank, I've always felt at home at the Center.

— Over the past 5 years, I've built lasting friendships, what I like to think of as lifelong connections, including with Jeremy Solomons, the former Communications Coordinator, with whom I worked closely and learned so much from. While I'll miss being part of the day-to-day work at the Center, I know I'll always remain connected and look forward to supporting the Center's mission in any way I can in the future.

Outside of work/the PhD, what do you enjoy doing?

— I love walking my dog, Luffy, around the North End where we currently live. I'm also a big fan of graphic novels, indie films, and cooking traditional Moroccan meals on weekends. And I'll never say no to a strong cup of mint tea.

Israel Studies

ISRAEL STUDIES MINOR

The Israel Studies Minor provides a multidisciplinary approach to understanding Israel's history, politics, culture, and environment. Areas of study include politics, international relations, languages, archaeology, and the Mediterranean environment. Students will also examine topics such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the diverse communities of Ottoman and British Palestine.

The minor requires 2 courses, including the gateway course HI 392/JS 285/LH 284: Israel History, Politics, Culture, and one course related to the Middle East. Four electives are also required, with options including Israeli culture through film, archaeology, and environmental law in Israel. Proficiency in Hebrew is a prerequisite or corequisite, with two semesters of language instruction needed.



STUDENTS IN THE ELIE WIESEL CENTER LIBRARY

For more information on these programs, contact Prof. Nancy Harrowitz at nharrow@bu.edu

Jewish Studies

JEWISH STUDIES MINOR CONCENTRATION

Undergraduate students from across Boston University have the opportunity to minor in Jewish Studies, which offers a rich exploration of Jewish history, culture, and religion.

The minor is open to students of all backgrounds and requires the completion of six courses (24 credits), including the foundational course JS 100 **World Cultures of the Jews**.

Students must take courses from at least three of the following areas:

**SACRED TEXTS
AND COMPARATIVE TRADITIONS
JEWISH LITERATURE AND THOUGHT
HISTORY AND HOLOCAUST STUDIES
CONTEMPORARY JEWISH SOCIETIES AND
CULTURES, INCLUDING ISRAEL STUDIES**

Students may also count up to two Hebrew courses toward their Jewish Studies minor, with JS or LH courses taught in Hebrew eligible. Students are encouraged to study Hebrew language and literature and to consider study abroad opportunities in Israel.

GRADUATE JEWISH STUDIES

The Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies partners with the Graduate Program in Religion (GPR) to offer a Ph.D. specialization in Jewish Studies. Admitted students benefit from a fully-funded graduate fellowship for five years, providing financial support and academic resources to pursue advanced research in Jewish history, culture, law, religion, and society.

The Center also encourages graduate students from other humanities and social sciences departments to affiliate if their research intersects with Jewish Studies. Affiliated students can apply for scholarships and research funding offered through the Center, further enhancing their academic and professional development.

The Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies (HGHRS) program at Boston University offers an interdisciplinary curriculum that prepares students for graduate studies and careers in fields related to human rights, law, policy, and advocacy. Through the major and minor in HGHRS, students explore the historical and contemporary dimensions of genocides, human rights violations, and the mechanisms for preventing such atrocities.

HGHRS MINOR

The HGHRS minor requires six four-credit courses (24 total credits).

This includes three required courses:

CAS RN 384 **History of the Holocaust**,

CAS HI 384 **History of Genocide**,

and one Human Rights core course.

Students must also complete three elective courses in genocide, Holocaust, or human rights studies.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN HGHRS

In partnership with the Pardee School of Global Studies and the Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs (CURA), the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies offers a Graduate Certificate in Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies (HGHRS). This certificate program is designed to complement graduate studies in fields such as history, political science, law, literature, and religion, providing valuable preparation for careers in social and governmental service.

Graduate students pursuing a master's or doctoral degree work with an advisor to select four cross-disciplinary courses that advance their understanding of Holocaust history, ethics, law, public health, comparative genocides, and human rights. To earn the certificate, students must also conduct advanced research in Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies, which may be demonstrated through academic papers, a thesis, or dissertation work.

To qualify for the HGHRS certificate, students must complete at least 16 credits (four standard courses) with a significant focus on human rights, comparative genocide, or Holocaust studies. The coursework must include at least one course in Human Rights and one in Holocaust and Genocide Studies. This program is available to students who are already enrolled in a graduate degree program at Boston University.

Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies

HGHRs MAJOR

The HGHRs major provides a comprehensive examination of the moral, ethical, and legal aspects of genocide and human rights issues. Students investigate the evolution of human rights discourse, the relationship between governments and citizens, and the role of individuals and organizations in promoting and protecting human rights. The program also covers the causes and consequences of genocide, including the Holocaust, and the impact of human rights law in preventing violence. Additionally, students explore government-sponsored human rights abuses, crimes against humanity, nationalism, and the role of media in shaping racism and prejudice.

The HGHRs major provides a comprehensive examination of the moral, ethical, and legal aspects of genocide and human rights violations. Students investigate the evolution of human rights discourse, the relationship between governments and citizens, and the role of individuals and organizations in promoting and protecting human rights. The program also covers the causes and consequences of genocide, including the Holocaust, and the impact of human rights law in preventing violence. Additionally, students explore government-sponsored human rights abuses, crimes against humanity, extreme nationalism, and the role of media in shaping racism and prejudice.

Students are introduced to the institutions and organizations working to prevent genocide and other crimes against humanity, equipping them with the analytical tools to critically assess genocidal regimes and repressive governments. Graduates are well-prepared for advanced studies in disciplines such as history, political science, law, literature, and religion, as well as careers in social and governmental services focused on human rights advocacy.

To complete the HGHRs major, students must take ten four-credit courses (40 total credits), including three required courses:

CAS RN 384 **History of the Holocaust,**

CAS HI 384 **History of Genocide,**

and one Human Rights core course.

Six additional electives are selected in consultation with an academic advisor. The major also includes a senior thesis seminar or an internship for four credits.

For more information, contact Prof. Nancy Harrowitz at nharrow@bu.edu or Dr. Matthew Creighton at mcreight@bu.edu.

2024-2025 HGHS COURSES (INTERDISCIPLINARY)

HOLOCAUST STUDIES ELECTIVES

- CAS JS 261 **Representations of the Holocaust in Literature and Film** (Fall and Spring)
- CAS JS 366 **Fascism and the Holocaust in Italy** (Spring)
- CAS RN 460 **Holocaust Seminar** (Spring)
- CAS HI 271 **The Nazis** (Fall)

GENOCIDE STUDIES ELECTIVES

- SCAS HI 310 **Social and Cultural History of Modern Italy** (Spring)
- CAS PO 346 **Gender, Armed Conflict, and Political Violence** (Spring)
- CAS PO 508 **The Judiciary and Civil Liberties** (Spring)
- CAS RN 249 **Islamophobia and Antisemitism** (Spring)
- CAS HI 384 **History of Genocide** (Fall)
- CAS HI 489 **The African Diaspora in the Americas** (Fall)
- CAS IR 453 **Forced Migration and Human Trafficking in Europe** (Fall)

For complete program and contact information, see
[www.bu.edu/jewishstudies/academics/undergraduate/
holocaust-genocide-and-human-rights-studies-major](http://www.bu.edu/jewishstudies/academics/undergraduate/holocaust-genocide-and-human-rights-studies-major)

2024-2025 JEWISH STUDIES COURSES

INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES

CAS JS 100 **World Cultures of the Jews** (Fall and Spring)

JEWISH LITERATURE AND THOUGHT

CAS JS 246 **Jewish Mysticism** (Spring)

CAS JS 348 **Philosophy and Mysticism: Jewish and Islamic Perspectives** (Fall)

CAS RN 420/PH 409 **Maimonides** (Spring)

SACRED TEXTS AND COMPARATIVE TRADITIONS

CAS JS 120 **The Bible** (Fall)

CAS JS 211 **From Jesus to Christ** (Fall)

CAS JS 255 **Modern Judaism** (Fall)

HISTORY AND HOLOCAUST

CAS JS 252 **Survey History of Judaism** (Spring)

CAS JS 257 **Antisemitism After the Holocaust** (Fall)

CAS JS 260 **The Holocaust** (Fall)

CAS JS 261 **Representations of the Holocaust in Literature and Film** (Fall and Spring)

CAS JS 365 **Music of the Holocaust** (Spring)

CAS JS 366 **Fascism and the Holocaust in Italy** (Spring)

CAS JS 367 **The Holocaust Through Film** (2 sections, Fall)

CAS JS 460 **Seminar on the Holocaust** (Spring)

CONTEMPORARY JEWISH SOCIETIES AND CULTURES, INCLUDING ISRAEL STUDIES

CAS JS 280 **Israeli Popular Music** (Spring)

CAS JS 281 **Advanced Modern Hebrew: Voices in Israeli Society** (Fall)

CAS JS 283 **Israeli Culture Through Film** (in English Translation) (Spring)

CAS JS 285 **Israel: History, Politics, Culture** (Fall and Spring)

CAS JS 286 **Israeli-Palestinian Conflict** (3 Sections, Fall and Spring)

CAS JS 379 **Islamophobia and Antisemitism** (Spring)

CAS JS 385 **Israel and the Environment** (Fall)

CAS JS 387 **Environmental Law in Israel and the Mediterranean** (Spring)

For complete program and contact information, see
bu.edu/jewishstudies/academics/undergraduate/minor-in-jewish-studies

Student Awards

The Brooks Family Scholarship for Excellence in Jewish Studies

Dora Betts, Eliana Bloom

The Levine, Martin Family Scholarship for Excellence in Jewish Studies and Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Studies

Alessandro Altavilla, Natalie Jasper, Noah Lenkin,
Senthil Meyyappan, Meckenzie Sarage

Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Hebrew

Phoebe Coplin, Livia Prince

THE BROOKS FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE IN JEWISH STUDIES

The Brooks Family Scholarship recognizes exceptional students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in Jewish Studies at Boston University. This award is available to sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have declared a minor in Jewish Studies and have completed at least three courses counting toward the minor, including up to two courses in Hebrew Language.



DORA BETTS

Dora Betts graduated this past year from the Pardee School of Global Studies with a B.A. in International Relations and a Jewish Studies minor. Over the past four years, she has been an involved member of the community at the Elie Wiesel Center, the Center on Forced Displacement, and the Global Development Policy Center. In the future, she hopes to work in Jewish organizing full-time. You can read more about Dora's research and her future plans in our Student Feature.

THE LEVINE, MARTIN FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE IN JEWISH STUDIES AND HOLOCAUST, GENOCIDE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES

This award recognizes students who have demonstrated exceptional academic achievement and commitment to the study of Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights.



NATALIE JASPER

Natalie Jasper graduated from Boston University with a degree in Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies. As the first solely-HGHRS major, she says that it was “really rewarding” to be part of the first graduating class, because “we got to be the guinea pigs of a new major and [the Elie Wiesel archives] internship,” and that allowed students an opportunity to explore and try out different classes and ways of completing the degree with research that felt most meaningful to them. She plans to attend graduate school in the near future.



ALESSANDRO ALTAVILLA

Alessandro Altavilla studied International Relations and Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies at Boston University.

“The Holocaust Genocide and Human Rights Major became a pillar of my studies here at BU, and I appreciated the talented educators and flexibility that allowed my courses to span many disciplines. As an International Relations student, when I was introduced to the major it completely changed my perception and understanding – not just reframing what I had learned in my specific field but also providing context for many of my classes outside my major. Additionally, my fellow HGHRS students were some of the most helpful and supportive classmates I met. It was a regular occurrence to have entire classes talk to one another and work together both in and out the classroom, which offered a really great community.”

– Alessandro Altavilla



MECKENZIE SARAGE

After working at the Elie Wiesel Center during her freshman year, **Meckenzie Sarage** remained involved and active with the Jewish Studies community.

2024 - 2025 AWARD & SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

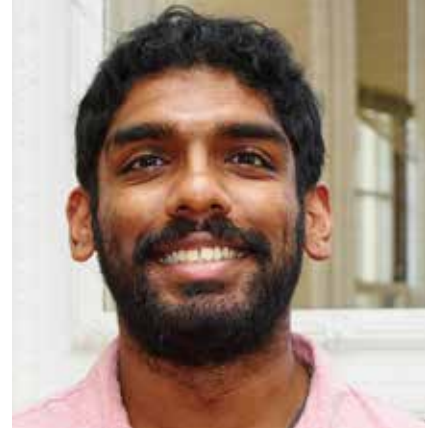


NOAH LENKIN

Noah Lenkin majored in Political Science and Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies during his undergraduate career. He is from Rockville, Maryland. Throughout his time on campus, Noah was heavily involved with BU Hillel through various fellowships and internships and served on the board of BU Students for Israel. In his free time at BU, Noah enjoyed catching a hockey game at Agganis Arena or going to Fenway Park to watch the Sox. He likes to read a good book or catch up on his favorite television shows. In his next chapter, Noah will serve as the Springboard Fellow at Binghamton University. He's very thankful for his time at Boston University and will treasure his four years spent as a Terrier.

"My favorite HRGHS class was Holocaust Literature and Film with Professor Harrowitz. I really enjoyed having the ability to read authors such as Primo Levi and Elie Wiesel. It was also interesting to watch films such as The Pianist and Night and Fog, which offered different lenses through which to experience the Holocaust visually. Class discussions were also quite invigorating, as there were a variety of different opinions on the topics we discussed. The value of my HGRHS education to me is that I learned to be aware of atrocities that do not garner as much attention as they should. For example, I am thankful I had the opportunity to learn about the Herero and Nama tribes in Africa, and the genocide they endured at the hands of the Germans, as well as Stalin's killing of Ukrainians in the Holodomor. I also learned how fragile human rights can be, and how there are so many different definitions of it, as well as the fact that the international legal system, while flawed, can be well-intentioned. My classes at the Center will continue to remind me that everyone deserves human rights, and that it is important to learn our past so it does not become our future."

– Noah Lenkin



SENTHIL MEYYAPPAN

Senthil Meyyappan is a recent graduate from the College of Arts & Sciences and Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University, majoring in Political Science, International Relations, and Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies with minors in Philosophy and Core Studies. Born in Madurai, India, Senthil grew up mostly in Virginia, which he calls home to this day. At BU, Senthil took many classes relating to international geopolitics and legal systems and participated in activities such as Model UN and the International Relations Review to broaden his understanding of international law. Senthil is an incoming JD candidate at Georgetown University Law Center in the Class of 2028 and has special interests in international law, human rights law, and private mediation. Outside of school, Senthil loves watching sports, traveling, cooking, and spending time with his friends!

"Throughout my time in the HGHRHS program, I have thoroughly expanded my knowledge of important global issues. In contemporary politics, conversations around human rights violations are becoming increasingly prevalent, and the lessons taught in the HGHRHS program give students a crucial background to being able to contribute to these conversations in a meaningful manner. I hope to use what I have learned in- and outside the classroom of the HGHRHS department to do my due diligence in protecting groups facing prejudice in the future as I attend and graduate law school."

– Senthil Meyyappan

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR EXCELLENCE IN HEBREW

This certificate recognizes students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in Hebrew language studies at Boston University.



PHOEBE COPLIN

Phoebe Coplin recently graduated from Boston University with a B.A. in Economics. She transferred to BU at the start of junior year, shortly after returning from the Onward Israel program. The Onward Israel experience reignited her connection to Judaism and inspired her to deepen that connection through language. She saw the Hebrew offerings at BU as both a language course and, more importantly, a chance to continue exploring her Jewish identity. After graduation, she will be starting a job as Development Coordinator & Executive Assistant for The Vilna Shul in Boston, and is excited to continue studying Hebrew in her free time.

"Although I didn't grow up deeply connected to my Judaism, my time in Boston and Israel helped me rediscover and strengthen that part of my identity. I ended up taking four semesters of Hebrew alongside my economics classes, and it was one of the most meaningful academic choices I made. Professor Angrist not only strengthened my understanding of the language, but also challenged and supported me as a student.

Learning a language as an adult is both challenging and incredibly rewarding. At Boston University, students in the College of Arts and Sciences are required to take four semesters of a language, and this became one of the most enriching parts of my education. Studying Hebrew not only strengthened my connection to Judaism and to Israel, but also allowed me to engage in learning that felt personal and meaningful. It offered a refreshing change of pace beyond the formulas and problem sets of my economics major."

– Phoebe Coplin

2024 - 2025 AWARD & SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



LIVIA PRINCE

Livia Prince is currently an incoming senior at BU, double-majoring in Political Science and Religion with a Hebrew minor. Prior to attending BU, she completed a gap year in Israel and took courses in international politics, traveled to Poland and Morocco, and worked at ANU - The Museum of the Jewish People, the largest Jewish museum in the world. Her coursework has expanded upon her interests of Middle East politics and diplomacy, Jewish studies, Hebrew and Israeli language, culture, and media, and global religions. She has also become deeply involved at BU Hillel in various leadership positions. This past May, she helped lead an interfaith trip of Jews and non-Jews to Israel, and is "so grateful for all of the events and courses that the Center holds to educate its students on Judaism, Israel, and global politics," which she often used during her trip.

"I am able to excel in my research and studies due to the Elie Wiesel Center and the incredible courses BU has to offer.

Overall, I believe that learning Hebrew is the single best way to maintain my connection to Israel and to my Judaism. Words cannot describe how grateful I am for the incredible courses Professor Miriam Angrist teaches. While it is difficult to pick a favorite course, I have to choose the last course I took this past semester to complete my Hebrew minor, which was Israeli Popular Music. This course spanned from the years before the Holocaust until modern day, and went into depth into how Israeli music has shaped society and has evolved over the years. We deeply analyzed the implications of each era of music and the lyrics of the music itself, such as Hebrew music from Eurovision competitions, eras of war or economic instability, and music from various backgrounds such as Mizrahi or Ashkenazi. We also learned about how individual singers such as Idan Raichel bridge gaps of language and ethnic differences within the country and around the world. This past semester, I was prized the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Hebrew, which I am so grateful for. In the future, I plan on working in international diplomacy and Jewish advocacy and to keep improving my Hebrew skills!" – Livia Prince

Growth of the Center

Over the past few years, the Center has expanded our work in several significant directions. Generous donations have given us the opportunity to increase programming and classes for students, develop new courses, fund research, and organize more events for the community. Here are a few important updates on the growth of the Elie Wiesel Center.

Thanks to the support of **Al Tapper** (QST'64), the Center has developed four new courses in Jewish History: Introduction to Jewish History, Jews in the Americas, Sephardic History in Spain, and Israeli Settlements. These classes will give students the opportunity to explore specific aspects of Jewish history and foster a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Judaism.

The Center is also developing new courses on antisemitism, thanks to a donation from the **Lynn and Gloria Johnson Family Foundation**. In summer 2025, **Prof. Nancy Harrowitz** and **Prof. Matthew Creighton** attended an intensive summer program in contemporary antisemitism studies at The Institute For The Study of Global Antisemitism & Policy summer seminar in Oxford, which will help to guide effective new course development.

David Weinstein, Esq. (CAS'72, DGE'70), has given the College of Art and Sciences and the Elie Wiesel Center funding to develop a new course on antisemitism. In current times of increased antisemitism, these courses will provide students with the language and tools to recognize, analyze, and counter antisemitism and other forms of bigotry, and we will provide updates on their further development in the coming year.

This past year, the Center also partnered with the Special Collections Wiesel Archive at Mugar Library and **Dr. Alan Rosen** of the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity to create the Elie Wiesel Archive Internships. Three students in the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human

Rights Studies major had the opportunity to work directly with Elie Wiesel's archival material while taking a directed study taught by **Prof. Nancy Harrowitz** on his published texts. This provided students with a unique and wide-reaching understanding of Elie Wiesel's work while teaching archival research skills, and the program will continue in future years. Please read more about this internship in the Featured Program section.

The Center is now offering a new **Israel Studies minor**, which provides students with multidisciplinary courses about Israel's history, politics, culture, and environment. Courses for the minor include Environmental Law in Israel and the Mediterranean, Advanced Modern Hebrew, Israeli Culture Through Film, Israel: History, Politics, Culture, Identity, and The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, which has expanded its number of sections due to increased student demand. In these courses, students gain an understanding of the diversity of Israeli history and identities. Alongside the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights major, which just celebrated its first graduating class, this minor represents a significant expansion in our offered programs of study.

Although the past few years have been filled with pain and extreme challenges for the Jewish community, this has only underscored the importance of expanding education and community-building efforts. The Center is grateful to the many people who have supported us in honoring Elie Wiesel's legacy through teaching that allows students to become knowledgeable, compassionate, and engaged citizens of the world.

Antisemitism After the Holocaust

This past year, the Elie Wiesel Center was pleased to offer the course Antisemitism After the Holocaust, taught by **Dr. Dotan Greenvald**. This course follows the evolution of antisemitism and explores how it manifests today, including why antisemitism can be difficult to identify. These topics are particularly crucial in current times, and as the Center looks to expand its courses on antisemitism, we took this opportunity to talk with Dr. Greenvald about takeaways from this year's class and hopes for the future.



DOTAN'S CLASS HAVING A LESSON OUTSIDE BY THE CHARLES RIVER

What were the main topics of this course, and what learning goals were you hoping to achieve for the students?

— The main goal of the course was to trace the evolution of antisemitism in modern times, understand how it manifests today, and explore why it is often so difficult to identify. We began with a guiding question posed by Prof. David Engel: Does using the term “antisemitism” help us better understand our history, or does it conceal more than it reveals? This question served as a lens through which we examined each historical period. As the course progressed, students engaged with it from multiple angles, deepening their analytical and critical thinking skills.

What are your favorite memories from this class?

— My favorite moments came from the students themselves. Midway through the semester, each student began an independent investigation into a specific aspect of antisemitism. They developed original research questions, conducted literature reviews, and found evidence to support their arguments. I helped them refine their questions and guided their research process, but the work—and the insight—was their own.

At the end of the course, students presented their findings to the class. These sessions were often eye-opening—not just for their peers, but for me as well. We heard presentations on antisemitism in China, Russia, European folklore, and film, among others. I learned from their work, and watching them challenge and support each other during Q&A was a highlight of the course.

What did you learn from the students, and what lessons will you take when you teach this class, going forward?

— What I learned most from my students wasn’t just the topics they explored, but their approach to learning. I saw how eager they were to challenge assumptions, to engage thoughtfully, and to deepen their understanding through discussion. Our class was built around open

dialogue—exchanging opinions, analyzing readings, and thinking aloud together.

From this, I learned to listen more carefully, to appreciate arguments whether they were polished or still forming, and to value the willingness to reconsider one’s views. I saw how common it is for people to shift perspectives over time—and that this is not a sign of weakness, but of intellectual growth.

Why is this class particularly important in the current moment?

— Antisemitism has become a highly visible and politicized issue, particularly over the past two years. I often hear the term “weaponized” in discussions—whether in politics, social media, or everyday conversation. This course provides students with the opportunity to move beyond slogans and noise, and to engage seriously with the historical roots and evolving dynamics of antisemitism today.

Why is this class valuable for students, including students who are not Jewish Studies/HGHR majors and minors?

— Antisemitism is never an isolated phenomenon. It is always interwoven with broader social, political, cultural, and economic forces. It serves as both a product of and a tool for larger agendas. If students want to critically examine those agendas, understanding the role antisemitism plays is essential.

What is one really interesting or important thing you taught in this course, which you’d like to share?

— The most important thing we built in this course was our classroom community. Through consistent and intentional practice, we created a space of openness and mutual respect that allowed for truly free discussion. That kind of environment is rare—and it’s invaluable. Everything else we accomplished in the course was built on that foundation.

The Elie Wiesel Archives Internship

This past year, the Center was able to introduce the Elie Wiesel Archives Internship, in partnership with Jennifer King and Sean Noel of the Boston University Libraries and Dr. Alan Rosen of the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity. This internship allowed the students in the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights major to work directly with Elie Wiesel's materials. They were able to build a deeper relationship with Elie Wiesel's work, while also providing support for the digitization process of the archives to aid future researchers. Sean Noel, the University Archivist, offered a description and reflection on the internship.



DR. SEAN NOEL GIVING MECKENZIE SARAGE A COMMEMORATIVE GIFT AT THE ELIE WIESEL END OF YEAR CELEBRATION



**A CELEBRATORY LUNCHEON WITH HGHS STUDENTS.
FROM LEFT: DR. MATTHEW CREIGHTON, PROF. TIM LONGMAN, SENTHIL MEYYAPPAN, MECKENZIE SARAGE
(FRONT), NOAH LENKIN (BACK), ALESSANDRO ALTAVILLA, PROF. NANCY HARROWITZ, NATALIE JASPER.**

"The Elie Wiesel Archives Internship is a collaboration between the BU Libraries division of Special Collections and the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies to provide undergraduate students opportunities to explore original archival material while taking a directed study class about Wiesel's major works.

Each intern is assigned a series of dozens of Professor Wiesel's English language notes, manuscripts and scripts of various talks, lectures and speeches. Students read the documents, validate details in their written descriptions, and add important details to make each manuscript more discoverable by online search.

Through this project, students are brought into contact with a variety of Professor Wiesel's writings, from drafts and notes, to polished scripts for major public presentations. The students' thoughtful and careful work provides valuable insights that inform our work and the work of others. They are responsible for thinking like a researcher, reading closely for clues and noting details that will help future researchers identify some valuable idea in the Wiesel Papers that might otherwise be obscured.

Each of the students expressed something of the thrill of discovery in working with original archival documents; each noted that they felt they were making a contribution beyond their own work. In a post-internship reflection, one intern described the experience as "nurturing":

'Professor Harrowitz nurtured my understanding of Elie Wiesel through the assigned readings and discussions. The Howard Gotlieb Centers' staff nurtured my understanding of archival work and its importance for preserving history. Elie Wiesel nurtured me as if I was one of his own students.'

Working with archives can change the way we see the world. Working with BU interns can also change the way we see our work, and we are grateful for this year's rich partnerships. We look forward to hosting next year's Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies interns."

- Dr. Sean Noel

Dora Betts

Dora Betts (Pardee '25) graduated this past year from the Pardee School of Global Studies with a degree in International Relations and a minor in Jewish Studies. Over the past four years, she has been an involved member of the community at the Elie Wiesel Center, the Center on Forced Displacement, and the Global Development Policy Center. She has also been an exemplary student and was one of this year's recipients of the Brooks Family Scholarship for Excellence in Jewish Studies.



DORA BETTS

Dora has taken advantage of the opportunity to get involved in many Boston University programs. She worked as a research assistant for the Global Development Policy Center, where she tracked loans between China and other countries in order to analyze the relationship between global finance and indigenous peoples/the environment. Last year, Dora went to Serbia as part of the Center on Forced Displacement's summer program. For the first week, she took classes at the University of Belgrade, and for the second week, she assisted displaced Ukrainian and Romani families with cultural activities and distributing clothing and hygiene kits. Seeing the Romani settlements was "life-changing" for her, especially because of the disparity between the "really awful" conditions and the "really nice apartment complexes" less than a mile away.

During the fall 2024 semester, Dora took a class with Prof. Noora Lori, where they worked on a website called Urban Refuge, which maps social services for refugees in the greater Boston area. Dora worked in the "careers" section and connected with different organizations in Boston, to let them know about the program so that people seeking work can connect to potential jobs. The Urban Refuge App won an award from the Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs, and it continues to move forward.

In addition to her extracurricular activities, Dora has taken many classes at the Elie Wiesel Center. Among her favorites was the Israel-Palestine Conflict course, as Ingrid Anderson "did a really good job with presenting the class with historical documents and having [the students] make [their] own opinions based on those." She also appreciated Dotan Greenvald's "great lectures" in Antisemitism After the Holocaust, and that he was "open and honest about his identity as an Israeli and how it impacts his viewpoints." Dora particularly

enjoyed the Holocaust Seminar with Steve Katz and the chance "to be connected with Elie Wiesel in that way, since [Prof. Katz] worked closely with him." As Dora's grandmother was a Holocaust survivor, it was a special opportunity to connect with her own history.

Dora's thesis was entitled *A Polarized Diaspora: American Jews and Israel after Oct. 7* and examined how American Jews' relationships to Israel changed after October 7. She focused on three case studies: the American Council of Judaism, Birthright, and Jewish Voice for Peace. Her advisor was Jeremy Menchik, the director of the Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs. Dora says that the thesis was "really personal for both of [them]," especially as Jews who are trying to figure out their Jewish identity while supporting the safety of Palestinians, and so it "affirmed a lot of pieces of [her] identity" that she was questioning before.

As she moves into post-graduation life, Dora hopes to work in Jewish organizing full-time, particularly advocating for collective liberation where both Palestinian and Israeli people can be safe. She's currently taking a class called Don't Kvetch, Organize through the Jewish Organizing Institute and Network. After 3 summer intensive programs in Russian, which were "helpful with studying Jewish diasporic culture," she plans to learn Yiddish to further connect with her Jewish identity. She also spends time junk journaling, scrapbooking, and attending queer events around the city. The courses at the Elie Wiesel Center gave her a "good foundation for learning about [her] Jewish identity," and she hopes that the Center continues to expand programs about the history and critiques of Zionism, the Palestinian perspective, and the history of Jewish diasporic life in the future. She looks forward to applying the Jewish values of justice, compassion, and world-repair to American Jewish organizing.

Maggie Johnson and Yale Johnson

Maggie Johnson and **Yale Johnson** are proud BU alumni and accomplished executives at Johnson Brothers, a leading distributor of wine, beer, and spirits that has been family-owned since 1953. Maggie (CGS'14, COM'16) works as Director of Development, while Yale (CGS'08, COM'10) is President of Sales. Maggie and Yale are also highly involved in the Johnson Family Foundation, named after their grandparents Gloria and Lynn.

For both siblings, their time at Boston University allowed them to explore and feel more comfortable in their Jewish identities, and they are committed to supporting Elie Wiesel's legacy and the long tradition of Jewish community at Boston University.

During Yale's time at BU, he took several Jewish history courses as part of his history minor, which left a "lasting impression." He particularly remembers a class with Prof. Hillel Levine on the Holocaust, which was made up of a diverse class of students from around the world. Yale says that Prof. Levine's message about the importance of educating future generations about the Holocaust was "unforgettable and resonated far beyond the classroom." During a different course on the Jewish Diaspora, the professor invited the entire class to his home for dinner and a thoughtful discussion, which was an "act of generosity and connection" that demonstrated how the personal nature of the subject matter led to deeper interpersonal connections. His classes and the supportive Jewish community at BU allowed Yale to build friendships with Jewish students from around the world.

Yale also had the opportunity to attend lectures by Elie Wiesel, and reflects that this abundant Jewish academic and social life "provided a unique and enriching environment to explore Jewish history and identity." When asked about his hopes for the future of the Center and the university, Yale said:

"I sincerely hope that Jewish students at BU continue to feel safe, supported, and included. The university has long been a beacon of excellence in Jewish studies and a welcoming home for Jewish students—I hope that proud tradition continues for generations to come."

Maggie reflects that her time at BU was the first time she didn't feel like a minority for being Jewish. Being surrounded by friends and classmates who shared that background gave her a "strong sense of belonging" that made her "deeply proud of [her] heritage, faith, and identity." In addition to being part of the Panhellenic Honors Society and Public Relations Society, Maggie attended many Shabbat dinners and Jewish holiday celebrations at BU Hillel. She hopes that today's Jewish students can feel a similar pride, surrounded by "a community that embraces and uplifts them throughout their time in Boston."

When discussing the Foundation's recent donation to the Center, and their hopes for the future of Jewish life and study at Boston University, the Johnsons gave the following poignant quote:

"While our foundation quietly supports many causes, a consistent priority has been giving to Jewish organizations—such as the Johnson Family Hillel Center at the University of Minnesota. In the wake of October 7th and the disturbing rise in antisemitism, especially on college campuses, supporting BU with this donation felt like a meaningful and timely choice. With its global student body and long-standing commitment to Jewish causes, we believe BU is uniquely positioned to educate future leaders about antisemitism and foster a safer, more inclusive environment."

Israel Studies Event Series

This past year, with the much-appreciated support of **Prof. Abigail Gillman**, the Center hosted the first Israel Studies Event Series, with the goal of giving students and community members a broad introduction to a wide array of facets of Israeli life, research, and culture. The series plans to continue in future years, with the 2025-26 series focused on different groups of people who live within Israel.

11/14/24

TRAPPED ON THE BORDERS: MIZRAHI JEWS AS MEDIATORS, SPIES, AND GO-BETWEENS BEFORE AND AFTER 1948



YUVAL EVRI

As part of the Israel Studies event series, the Center hosted **Yuval Evri**, Assistant Professor of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies and the Marash and Ocuin Chair in Ottoman, Mizrahi, and Sephardic Jewish Studies at Brandeis University. His talk explored how Mizrahim navigated conflicting national identities during the British Mandate and the early Israeli state, acting as mediators between Jews and Arabs while facing suspicion for their ties to Arab-Palestinian communities. Dr. Evri broadened the concept of mediation to include translation, spying, and propaganda, highlighting their contributions to Kol Yisrael in Arabic and offering new insights into identity and cooperation amidst regional tensions.

This event was cosponsored by the Hebrew Program and Boston University Diversity & Inclusion.

1/30/25

NOW AND IN OTHER DAYS: A TRIBUTE TO YEHUDA AMICHAÏ

The poet **Yehuda Amichai** revolutionized modern Hebrew poetry and is considered one of the world's greatest poets of the 20th century. To mark the 100th anniversary of his birth, the Center revisited his iconic poems, which blend the personal with the national and merge Jewish sanctity with secular Israeli identity. This event included readings in Hebrew and English, as well as commentary from **Amichai Chasson**, an award-winning Israeli poet, writer, and filmmaker.

NOW AND IN OTHER DAYS: A TRIBUTE TO YEHUDA AMICHAÏ
with Amichai Chasson

at 4th Thursday
January 30th 2025
ELIE WIESEL CENTER LIBRARY, ROOM 202
147 BAY STATE ROAD

The poet **Yehuda Amichai** revolutionized modern Hebrew poetry and is considered one of the world's greatest poets of the 20th century. To mark the 100th anniversary of his birth, we will revisit his iconic poems, which blend the personal with the national and merge Jewish sanctity with secular Israeli identity. The event will include readings in Hebrew and English, as well as a discussion featuring Boston University Professor Abigail Gillman, and Israeli poet Amichai Chasson.

Amichai Chasson
A celebrated author, poet, and filmmaker, Chasson is a leading voice in contemporary Hebrew literature. His work explores the intersection of Jewish tradition and modern Israeli identity. He has published several books of poetry and prose, and his films have been shown internationally.

CO-SPONSORED:
THE HEBREW PROGRAM IN THE DEPARTMENT OF
WORLD LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
THE NEW ISRAEL STUDIES MINOR PROGRAM AT THE ELIE WIESEL CENTER

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CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

Boston University College of Arts and Sciences
Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies
147 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215
617-552-1000, ewcs@bu.edu
www.bu.edu/ewcs

BOSTON
UNIVERSITY

3/29/25

THE FORTRESS(ES) OF QEREN NAFTALI WITH DR. ROI SABAR

Dr. Roi Sabar gave a lecture on investigating the role of military architecture in state formation process in Northern Israel. Focusing on Qeren Naftali (Khirbet el-Harrawi) near the Israeli-Lebanese border, this talk examined two fortresses: one built by the Hasmoneans and the other planned by the Zionists. By juxtaposing these two structures, Dr. Sabar highlighted the strategic significance of the hill, as well as the distinct strategies employed by each political entity in shaping the landscape.

2/13/25

ISRAEL'S NATURAL WORLD AND ITS GLOBAL IMPORTANCE WITH TAMARA LOTNER LEV



Dr. Tamara Lotner Lev, our Israel Institute Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow, gave a talk highlighting Israel's natural resources and biodiversity, the current threats to these important wildlife areas, and the movements that are trying to protect them. Dr. Lotner Lev explained the cross-continental importance of these ecosystems and their potential role in fighting global biodiversity loss and climate change. Her experience working with the Israeli Department of Justice and for the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel allowed her to give unique insights on the different political, economic, and environmental interests that are connected to the land of Israel.



ROI SABAR SPEAKING IN THE
CENTER LIBRARY

9/11/24
OPEN HOUSE



At the beginning of the new semester, we held an Open House for students at the Elie Wiesel Center. Students learned about programs, including our new Israel Studies Minor, connected with each other over refreshments, and listened to a short talk by **Dr. Tamara Lotner Lev** on “Israel Studies Today.”



10/30/24
STRUGGLING FOR PEACE
WITH ANDRE DE QUADROS

The Elie Wiesel Center and the Center on Forced Displacement cosponsored a lecture with **Prof. André de Quadros**, a noted human rights activist, conductor, music educator, and ethnomusicologist. Based on years of work with Israelis and Palestinians, with rival gangs in prison, and in other conflicted settings, his talk *Struggling for Peace* argued for dialogue as a process for developing shared understanding. Dr. de Quadros explored how the arts are uniquely positioned, in that people can build the imaginary, work co-creatively, and find potential pathways for collective forgiveness.



9/23/24
ISRAELI FOLK DANCING NIGHT

The Elie Wiesel Center and Hebrew Program hosted an event celebrating Israeli Folk Dancing, held at BU Hillel House. Students had an opportunity to try out dancing and enjoyed an Israeli dinner afterwards.

11/7/24

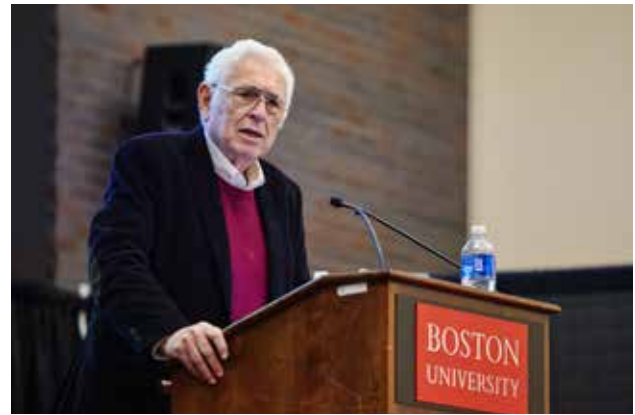
CONTEMPORARY JEWISH STUDIES IN EASTERN EUROPE

Prof. Marcin Wodziński of the University of Wrocław, Poland, came to give a talk at the request of Prof. Nahum Karlinsky. Prof. Wodziński is a professor of Jewish history and literature whose research focuses on Jewish material culture and the social history of Jews in nineteenth-century Eastern Europe. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Jewish studies have flourished in Eastern Europe. Based on a thorough bibliometric analysis of the field and his deep and intimate familiarity with it, Prof. Wodziński discussed the cultural, identity, and structural factors that enabled this scholarly “golden age,” as well as its shortcomings. He addressed the impact of the current Middle East war on the field and academic life in Poland and Eastern Europe.



12/2/24

WHOSE PROMISED LAND? ISRAEL, PALESTINE AND WORLD RELIGIONS WITH PROFESSOR ILAN TROEN



We wrapped up our semester with a lecture from **Ilan Troen**, professor emeritus and founder of the Centers for Israel Studies at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and Brandeis University. Prof. Troen explored the complex intersection of religion and politics in Israel and Palestine, drawing from his new book *Israel/Palestine in World Religions: Whose Promised Land?* His talk presented a nuanced analysis of how Judaism, Christianity, and Islam each approach questions of legitimacy and sovereignty in the Holy Land, while exploring how these theological perspectives continue to shape contemporary debates.



This event was cosponsored by the Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies' Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs (CURA), and the Israel Studies Minor Program at the Elie Wiesel Center.

SPRING 2025 EVENTS

1/26/25

HOW ANTISEMITISM GROWS: LESSONS FROM BOSTON'S 1930'S NAZI MOVEMENT



To mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day, **Dr. Charles Gallagher, S.J.**, gave a lecture entitled "How Antisemitism Grows: Lessons from Boston's 1930's Nazi Movement." Author of the acclaimed book *The Nazis of Copley Square: The Forgotten Story of the Christian Front*, Dr. Gallagher presented his new research on the rise of the Nazi movement in Boston and New York before, during, and after World War II. His talk was followed by a panel discussion with **Rob Leikind** of AJC New England and **Prof. Nancy Harrowitz**, director of the Elie Wiesel Center, which explored connections between this past and antisemitism today.

2/4/25

RECONSIDERING THE CONQUESTS OF JOHN HYRCANUS I

The Maccabees Project hosted a workshop on the conquests of John Hyrcanus I as part of their ongoing series, *From Rebels to Rulers: The Hasmoneans and Their Kingdom*. This hybrid event featured **Prof. Andrea Berlin**, of Boston University; **Prof. Débora Sandhaus**, of Ben Gurion University of the Negev; and **Prof. Avner Ecker**, from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



This event was co-sponsored by the Jewish Cultural Endowment and AJC New England.

2/13/25

ANTISEMITISM: THEN AND NOW



As part of **President Gilliam's** Living Our Values Initiative, the Elie Wiesel Center cosponsored the panel Antisemitism: Then and Now, in collaboration with the Howard Thurman Center and the Pardee School's Institute on Culture, Religion, & World Affairs (CURA). The panel discussion featured **Prof. Jonathan Feingold**, from the BU School of Law; **Dr. Kerice Doten-Snitker**, of the Santa Fe Institute; and Prof. **Ron Hassner**, of the University of California, Berkeley, with Pardee's **Prof. Jeremy Menchik** as moderator. The panelists explored the origins of antisemitism, its connection to other kinds of prejudice, and best practices for combatting antisemitism, particularly related to DEI programs. This panel is part of a wider effort across Boston University to build discourse skills and learn how to discuss divisive topics while remaining respectful, nonviolent, and open to learning about others' perspectives.

2/24/25

ECHOES AND REFLECTION: ANCIENT AND MODERN STATE BUILDING IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL

The Center hosted a workshop exploring the phenomenon of state-building in the land of Israel, co-organized by **Dr. Roi Sabar** and **Dr. Rotem Avneri Meir** and moderated by **Prof. Andrea Berlin**. This event was cosponsored by the Department of Religion and Program in Archaeology.

This interdisciplinary event explored the fascinating phenomenon of state formation in the land of Israel across three key historical moments: the Iron Age Kingdom of Israel, the Hasmonean State of the late Hellenistic period, and the modern State of Israel. By weaving together insights from archaeology, ancient and modern history, the lecturers highlighted both the distinct features and enduring patterns of these socio-political entities.

The program included two sessions followed by a keynote address. The first session, devoted to the Iron Age Kingdom of Israel, featured **Prof. Omer Sergi** (Tel Aviv University) and **Prof. Lauren Monroe** (Cornell University). The second session, on the late Hellenistic Hasmonean state, featured **Dr. Roi Sabar** (Boston University) and **Dr. Rotem Avneri Meir** (University of Helsinki). The last session, on the modern state of Israel, featured **Prof. Derek Penslar** (Harvard University).

ECHOES AND REFLECTIONS:
ANCIENT AND MODERN STATE
BUILDING IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL

Monday, February 24

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
COMPUTING AND DATA SCIENCES
CONFERENCE CENTER
1C0517500

Roi Sabar and Rotem Avneri Meir (CO-ORGANIZERS)

Andrea M. Berlin (MODERATOR)

12:45 - 1:30 GATHERING AND REFRESHMENTS

1:30 - 1:50 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Nancy Harnowitz, Boston University

Andrea M. Berlin, Boston University

1:50 - 3:00 SESSION 1:

THE IRON AGE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

Omer Sergi, Tel Aviv University

The Archaeological Expression of Palace-Coin Relations in

Early Monarchic Israel, with Reflections on Biblical Traditions

in Judges and in Kings

Lauren Monroe, Cornell University

Machir, Manasseh and the Emergence of Kingship

in Iron Age Israel

3:00 - 3:30 COFFEE BREAK

3:30 - 5:00 SESSION 2:

THE LATE HELLENISTIC HASMONEAN STATE

Roi Sabar, Boston University

New Rules, New Topography:

The Hasmoneans' Building Projects

Rotem Avneri Meir, University of Helsinki

Build the Wall: The Confines of the Hasmonean State

5:00 - 5:30 COFFEE BREAK

5:30 - 6:00 KEYNOTE:

THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

Derek Penslar, Harvard University

What Is Jewish About the Jewish State?

6:00 - 7:00 RECEPTION



ABOUT THE LAND OF ISRAEL
The Land of Israel is a land of great historical and cultural significance. It is a land of great beauty and fertility, and it is a land of great spiritual and religious importance. The Land of Israel is a land of great diversity and richness, and it is a land of great hope and promise. The Land of Israel is a land of great challenge and opportunity, and it is a land of great responsibility and duty. The Land of Israel is a land of great love and compassion, and it is a land of great peace and harmony. The Land of Israel is a land of great faith and belief, and it is a land of great hope and promise.

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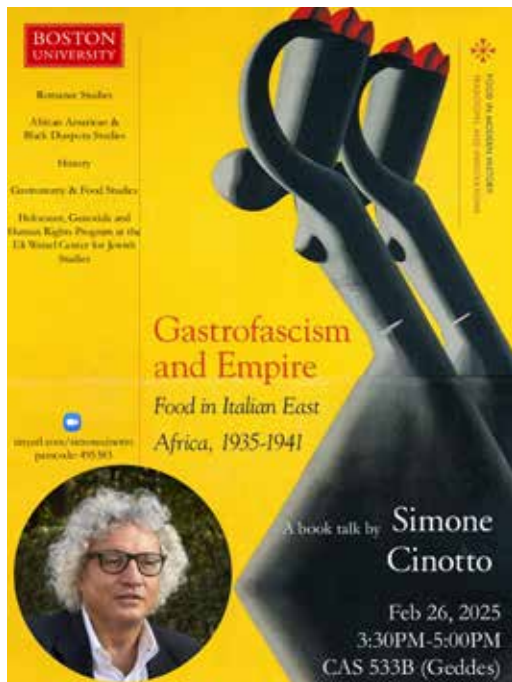


ELIE WIESEL
CENTER FOR
JEWISH STUDIES

Boston University College of Arts and Sciences
Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies
140 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215
617-552-8000, ewcs@bu.edu
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2/26/25
GASTROFASCISM AND EMPIRE
WITH SIMONE CINOTTO



The program for Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies cosponsored a book talk with **Prof. Simone Cinotto** at the end of February. Cinotto, Associate Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Gastronomic Sciences of Pollenzo, Italy, discussed his new book, *Gastrofascism and Empire: Food in Italian East Africa, 1935-1941*. This hybrid event took place at the Geddes Language Center.

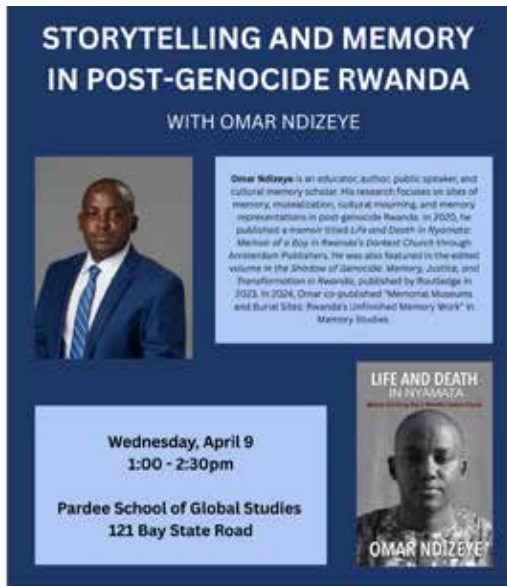
4/2/25
YITZHAK RABIN MEMORIAL LECTURE
WITH STUART EIZENSTAT

This year, the Center marked the 20th anniversary of the Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Lecture series founded by **Jonathan Krivine**, as well as the 30th anniversary of Yitzhak Rabin's murder. The memorial lecture featured **Ambassador Stuart E. Eizenstat**, the noted diplomat and author who has served in six US administrations and has been instrumental in advocating for global attention to Holocaust justice issues. Amb. Eizenstat spoke about his book, *The Art of Diplomacy: How American Negotiators Reached Historic Agreements That Changed the World*. He discussed his analysis of whether, when and how to use American military force to support diplomacy, and related the findings in the book to contemporary challenges in Ukraine and Gaza. The respondent was **Timothy Longman**, professor of political science and international relations and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the Pardee School of Global Studies.



4/9/25

STORYTELLING AND MEMORY IN POST-GENOCIDE RWANDA WITH OMAR NDIZEYE



The program in Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies worked with the African Studies Center to sponsor a talk on storytelling and memory with **Omar Ndizeye**. Omar Ndizeye is an educator, author, public speaker, and cultural memory scholar. In 2020, he published a memoir titled *Life and Death in Nyamata: Memoir of a Boy in Rwanda's Darkest Church* through Amsterdam Publishers. In his talk, he discussed the importance of storytelling as a form of honoring memory and the necessity of paying attention to "gaps" in existing stories about genocide. Ndizeye also highlighted the importance of educating current and future generations, who have not experienced first-hand violence but continue to deal with the aftermath.

4/10/25

CHIUNE SUGIHARA LECTURE WITH PROF. CHIHARU INABA

Prof. Chiharu Inaba came to the Elie Wiesel Center to give a talk on his intensive work as a biographer of Chiune Sugihara, the Japanese consular officer who issued transit visas to over 2,000 Jewish residents of Lithuania to leave Europe during the Holocaust period, thereby saving their lives.



4/30/25

END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

This year, the Center honored students in Jewish Studies; Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies; and Hebrew as part of our end-of-year celebration. We had the special opportunity to acknowledge the first graduating class of HGHRS majors. The night ended with an annual faculty dinner, where we said goodbye to Tamara Lotner Lev and Roi Sabar, who are both returning to Israel after their time at the Center.





THERESA COONEY

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Theresa Cooney (she/her) completed her PhD in Religious Studies in the Graduate Division of Religious Studies at Boston University concentrating in Political Theology in May, 2015. She has a Masters of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School and a B.A. In Theology from Georgetown University. She has worked in various administrative, teaching and research capacities at BU and has been doing administrative work at the EWCJS since January, 2015 while continuing research and writing in her academic field.



KHADIJA EL KARFI JOSS

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Khadija El Karfi Joss (she/her, Ph.D. '25) is a graduate of Boston University, where she recently defended her dissertation on migration and race in North African literature and film. As the Center's Communications Manager, Khadija has helped promote and host a range of academic and cultural programs for the past 6 years. Outside of work, she enjoys long walks with her dog Luffy, experimenting with new recipes, and planning her next travel adventure.

"The past 6 years working at the Elie Wiesel Center have been an incredible experience. The community here has been nothing short of amazing. I will forever cherish the time I spent at the Center, the relationships I built, and the countless opportunities to grow personally and professionally. Being part of this community has been one of the highlights of my journey at Boston University."

- Khadija El Karfi Joss (Ph.D. '25, Francophone Studies)



JENNA RIEDL

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Jenna Riedl (she/her, CFA '23) graduated from Boston University summa cum laude and promptly left civilization to hike the Appalachian Trail for 6 months. She's happy to be back in the land of electricity and serving as the Center's communications coordinator, helping to plan, advertise, and execute events for BU and the wider community. In her free time, she works on her still-unfinished novels with the MetroWest Writer's Guild and annoys every goose along the Charles River during her daily walks. She is excited to spend some time this summer building programming for student-focused events at the Center.

"My time at the Elie Wiesel Center during college was wonderful, but it's even more interesting and fulfilling to be part of the events planning process. I've gained a greater appreciation for the enormous amount of work that goes into every event, and honed the art of the follow-up email. I have deeply appreciated the support of Theresa and Prof. Harowitz throughout my transition from student worker to adult employee, and am grateful to work with people who care about both my professional advancement and personal life. I think that the Center is doing very important work around education in Jewish Studies, civil dialogue, and human rights studies, and I'm excited to watch the courses and programming continue to grow."

- Jenna Riedl (CFA '23, Painting and Statistics)



JOSEPH RAYMOND

STUDENT STAFF

Joseph Raymond (he/him, CAS '26) just finished his junior year at BU and his second year working at the center. He is majoring in history and minoring in Jewish studies at the College of Arts and Sciences. He found out about working at the center last year after taking a class with the center's very own Prof. Harrowitz. Joey just completed his second year at Boston University after transferring from the University of Vermont. He has lived throughout the country but spent most of his childhood in the Boston area, where his family is from. When not working, Joey loves to read — about history or otherwise — play guitar, and is involved with several Jewish organizations on campus.

"It has been another incredible year working at the center alongside staff and faculty whom I admire greatly. The center is a lovely place to work, and I enjoyed attending many of the events that we hosted this year. Outside of work, I've had the pleasure of taking some of the classes offered by the center and found the content insightful and engaging, and the professors extremely knowledgeable and helpful. As I approach my final year as an undergraduate student, I recognize that my time spent at the center has been formative in establishing my identity at BU and greatly look forward to what's to come."

- Joseph Raymond (CAS '26, History)



ZHANDOS ALI BROWN

STUDENT STAFF

Zhandos Ali Brown (he/him, CAS '26) is an Applied Mathematics and Computer Science major at Boston University. Originally from Kazakhstan, he speaks Kazakh, Russian, and English, and has additional skills in Turkish and Arabic. Zhandos began his tech journey through high school robotics and has since completed multiple internships focused on engineering and design. In summer 2025, Zhandos interned as a Software Engineer at Fidelity Investments in Merrimack, NH, working on mobile development.

Since October 2023, Zhandos has worked as an assistant at the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies, where he manages communications and created an automated email system that significantly enhanced operational efficiency. His experience at the EWCJS has deepened his appreciation for Jewish cultural studies and shaped his academic journey. He looks forward to continuing his involvement with the center and contributing to its mission of intellectual and cultural engagement.

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YouTube: You can find the Center's channel by searching for **Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies**

If you would like to be kept informed of upcoming events and hear about the work of the Center, please sign up for our **newsletter**.

DONATE

Your continued support allows us to foster meaningful engagement with Jewish culture, history, and tradition. We invite you to consider making a donation to help us continue our important work. Every contribution, regardless of size, makes a significant impact on our ability to provide enriching experiences for our students and the wider community.

To make a donation or learn more about supporting the Center, please visit bu.edu/jewishstudies/give or contact us at ewcjs@bu.edu

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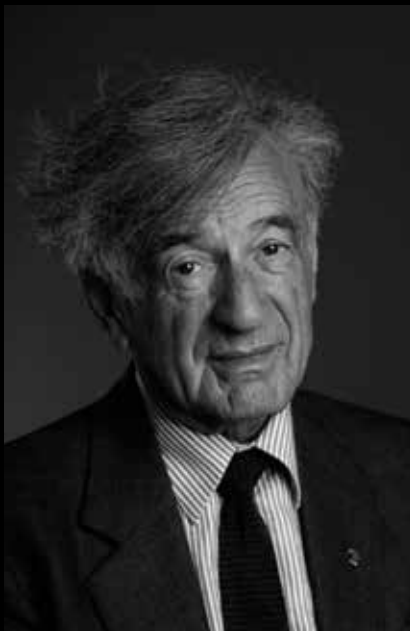
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Written by **Jenna Riedl**,
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ELIE WIESEL

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