



# THE MELTON CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
MELTON CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES



# DEAR FRIENDS



What a strange year this has been. Life in the time of COVID-19 has overtaken much of our energy and yours, as we all plot ways to survive and overcome the challenges of a pandemic. We started the past season 2018-2020 with strong programming indeed. Our programs included the two-day Thomas and Diann Mann Symposium on the Feuilleton Project; the 31st Pearl and Troy Feibel lecture featuring Professor James Loeffler; an international dance program with Dege Feder;

the biannual Melton Coalition meetings on "Metaphors of Time in Jewish Life and Thought"; as well as numerous lectures, films, performances and concerts. I have served the center as director for many of these years and have now returned to the directorship for an additional term.

Unfortunately, our spring programs, including the 2020 Feibel lecture, have been postponed. From its inception in 1976, the center has adhered to Sam Melton's vision, namely, to create and nurture a presence for Jewish studies at the university and in the community. These past years have borne

witness to an explosion of research, teaching and service to the community: Our world-recognized faculty and students engage in a variety of programs and research endeavors; we teach over a thousand students a year in all aspects of Jewish Studies; our Judaica library collection is one of the largest in the country; our programs are supported by both the community and university; we regularly co-sponsor programs with other departments and centers at Ohio State.

In short, the Melton Center embodies a vibrant, important and invaluable Jewish studies program. We are truly indebted to our many supporters and donors, who have enabled us to grow our program.

As we prepare for a semester of online teaching and reduced face-to-face programs, what programs can we anticipate for this coming year? With the ever-present threat of COVID-19, the Melton Center will not be bringing speakers to campus in the near future. We are working, however, on featuring virtual programming of different sorts for both the academic and community audience. Virtual programming provides a new set of opportunities, and we're excited to share them with you. Details on these and other programs are forthcoming in the near future.

**T.M. Rudavsky**

Director, Melton Center for Jewish Studies

## ABOUT THE MELTON CENTER

Thanks to the generosity of Samuel M. Melton, the Samuel M. Melton Center for Jewish Studies was established at The Ohio State University in 1976. It was the first center for Jewish studies at a state university in the United States.

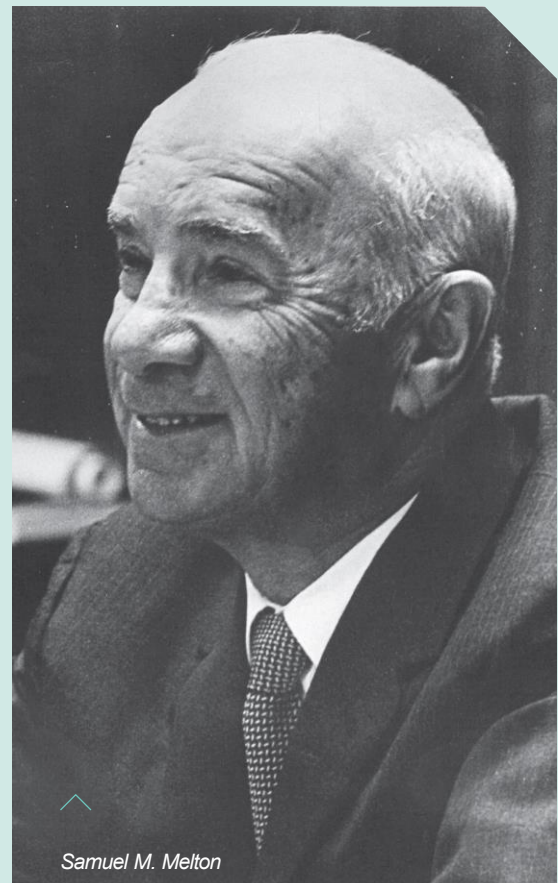
Jewish studies at Ohio State comprises one of the largest and most diverse programs in the country, offering an impressive selection of courses, a multidisciplinary faculty and a wide range of events. Melton faculty are internationally recognized in their respective fields, including history, philosophy, political science, music, English, near Eastern languages and cultures, Germanic languages and literatures, classics, art and education. Ohio State has one of the largest Judaica library collections in the country, with a full-time Judaica librarian and over 300,000 volumes.

The Melton Center for Jewish Studies remains true to its mission statement:

*To develop, promote and support the study, teaching and research of Jewish studies by faculty and students at The Ohio State University;*

*To encourage an interest in the study of all aspects of the Jewish experience within the Central Ohio community, and to sponsor educational programs for the general public service;*

*To seek outside funding to encourage the growth of the Jewish studies programs at Ohio State.*



Samuel M. Melton





# STUDENT AWARDS

The Melton Center for Jewish Studies has been fortunate to have received endowed funds from donors over the years, some of which are earmarked for several types of scholarships, such as education abroad, graduate fellowships and essay contests. The 2019 and 2020 scholarship recipients are listed below.

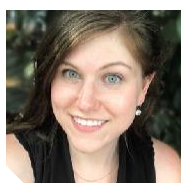
## THE GEORGE M. AND RENÉE K. LEVINE GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP IN JEWISH STUDIES



2019

**Michael Biggerstaff** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures. The focus of his studies is the Hebrew Bible. His academic interests center around how ancient people understood the divine

realm and how the divine is related to them. Michael's dissertation concentrates on ancient views of prophecy as divinely given knowledge.



2020

**Darcy Benson** is in the PhD program in the Department of History. Her research interests focus on themes of migration, racism, nationalism and everyday life in times of war. Her dissertation analyzes the development of community

networks among communist immigrants in France in the 1930s and the ways in which these networks supported resistance during World War II. French and immigrant Jews constituted an integral part of these networks, and Benson's project contributes significantly to recent Jewish and Holocaust studies scholarship.

## THE ELLEN AND VICTOR COHN SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDY AT HEBREW UNIVERSITY

2019

**Jordan Baggs** (l) graduated with a double major in international relations and diplomacy and religious studies with a minor in French. **Eleanor Damm** (c) is a fourth-year student majoring in accounting with minors in Jewish studies and business analytics. **Anna Hershinow** (r) graduated with a major in dance and minor in studio art.



2020

**Brittany Zimmerman** (l) is a third-year undergraduate with a major in Hebrew. **Josiah Zimmerman** (c) is a fourth-year undergraduate with a major in psychology. **Caroline Mallory** (r) is a third-year undergraduate with a double major in international relations and Chinese.



## THE SAMUEL M. MELTON GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP IN JEWISH STUDIES

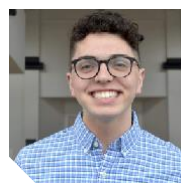


2020

**John Michael Sefel** is a fellow in the PhD program in the Department of Theatre and is pursuing an additional graduate interdisciplinary specialization in disability studies, specifically, disabilities and performance. His

current research interests include disability portrayal, re-thinking theater's artistic and commercial approaches to accessibility, and Yiddish theater in the United States. John Michael is also a playwright and director and holds an MFA in directing from Baylor University.

## THE NORBERT AND GRETEL B. BLOCH SCHOLARSHIP IN JEWISH STUDIES



2020

The Bloch Scholarship provides students with a scholarship and program budget to plan and execute a program with Jewish content. This year's Bloch recipients are **Jakob Bolman** (t) and **Danielle Gershen** (b), who organized a program for students featuring Shachar Pinsker, who spoke on Jewish culture and cafés. The program was held at Freshwater Coffee House near campus. Jakob is a fourth-year student with a major in psychology and minor in Jewish studies. Danielle is a third-year student with a major in sports industry.



## THE MORRIS AND FANNIE SKILKEN SCHOLARSHIP IN YIDDISH AND ASHKENAZI STUDIES



2019

**Yoni Wechsler** is a third-year student with a double major in international studies/security and intelligence and Middle East studies, and a minor in Hebrew.



2020

**Drew Mayerson** is a fourth-year student with a major in finance and a minor in Jewish studies.

# STUDENT AWARDS

## THE GEORGE AND EMILY SEVERINGHAUS BECK SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDY ABROAD



2020

**Hayden Bidinger** and **Michala Stewart** (not pictured) will study German at Dresden University. Hayden is a third-year student and has a major in anthropology and a minor in German. Michala is a fourth-year student with a major in international relations and a minor in German.

## THE REVA AND SANFORD LIPSON STUDENT SUPPORT SCHOLARSHIP



2019

**Madeline Robins** (not pictured) is a second-year student in Ohio State's University Exploration program with a minor in Jewish studies. **Alexandra Zborovsky** is a fourth-year undergraduate with a double major in history and English and a minor in Hebrew.

2020

**Faye Hartman Vaeth** (not pictured) is a third-year student with a double major in Jewish studies and anthropology.

## THE CHARLOTTE SUSAN ROTH MEMORIAL FUND ESSAY CONTEST



2019: GRADUATE LEVEL

1ST PLACE: **Jonathan Branfman** for his essay, "Jewy/Screwy Leading Lady: Crazy Ex-Girlfriend and the Critique of Rom-Com Femininity." Jonathan earned his PhD in 2019 from the Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies.



2ND PLACE: **Miriam Bourgeois** for her essay, "Protest in Sa'id the Pessoptimist – A Look at the Rhetoric of Satire, Irony and Humor." Miriam earned her PhD in 2019 from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures.



2ND PLACE: **Sara Halpern** for her essay, "The Painful Road to Allied Liberation: Collective Emotions and Knowledge." Sara is a PhD candidate in the Department of History.



2019: UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

1ST PLACE: **Nathan Hensley** for his essay, "Miracles, Magic, And Apocalyptic Eschatology: An Analysis of Exorcisms in The Synoptic Gospels." Nathan is a third-year undergraduate with a double major in history and philosophy, and a minor in legal foundations in society.



2020: GRADUATE LEVEL

1ST PLACE: **Dannu Hutwohl** for his essay, "Philo of Byblos and West Levantine Myths of Sacrifice and Rebirth." Dannu is a PhD candidate in the Department of Classics.



2ND PLACE: **Michael Biggerstaff** for his essay, "Greek Baggage: Prophētēs in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near East," and **Tamra Hauser** (not pictured) for "Measured Steps to Inclusion: Jewish Influence in Fifteenth-Century Dance." Michael is a PhD candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, and Tamra is a PhD candidate in the Department of Dance.



2020: UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

1ST PLACE: **Alexandra Zborovsky** for her essay, "Mostly Dead? Mostly Dead Means Slightly Alive: The Jewish Comic Tradition of the 1950s." Alexandra is a fourth-year undergraduate with a double major in history and English with a minor in Hebrew.

## THE LEAH METCHNICK GODOFSKY AND MARTIN R. GODOFSKY SCHOLARSHIP OF JEWISH COLUMBUS IN MEMORY OF CLARA U. AND ABRAHAM MAYER METCHNICK



2019

**Julian Jefko** is a fourth-year student with a major in linguistics.



2020

**Eden Chelouche** is a third-year student with a pre-med major in biology and minor in Jewish studies.





# PROGRAMS

## THE THOMAS AND DIANN MANN SYMPOSIUM SERIES (2018-2020)

### “Below the Line”? The Feuilleton and Modern Jewish Cultures Conference (2018)

The 2018 Mann Symposium, held in Oct. 2018, focused on the feuilletons of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Feuilletons originated in newspapers in France as a supplement to the main news stories. The feuilleton typically included material on subjects such as art, fiction and non-fiction, literature or fashion.

Scholars from the U.S. and Israel participated in the symposium to focus on the Jewishness of the feuilleton by asking participants to contribute specific examples of the feuilleton that engage issues related to Jewish identity or the Jewishness of form.

Feuilletons were a major cultural and political genre

in newspapers across Europe and beyond. By the early twentieth century, the feuilleton was a key site for discussions of national character, portraits of urban life, and cultural and aesthetic innovation and experimentation. It was also increasingly perceived as a Jewish form, by both Jewish and anti-Semitic writers. Feuilletons had been adopted by the Jewish press in Hebrew, Yiddish and Ladino relatively quickly, since their rise to prominence coincided with the rapid expansion of the Jewish press toward the end of the nineteenth century. But the feuilleton also came to be seen as “Jewish” in the non-Jewish press in Germany and throughout Eastern Europe.



Left to right: Professors Brian Horowitz, Tulane University; Matthew Handelman, Michigan State University; Paul Reitter, Ohio State; Martina Steer, University of Vienna



Harry Kashdan spoke to a large audience

### Israeli and Palestinian Cuisine in Diaspora (2019)

The first program in the 2019-2020 Mann series featured **Harry Kashdan**, a postdoctoral researcher at Ohio State, who presented a program to a large audience on how cookbooks can be analyzed as literary objects. In the cookbook, *Jerusalem* by Yotam Ottolenghi, a Jew, and Sami Tamimi, a Palestinian, distinctions between Israeli Jews and Palestinians are repeatedly raised and then dismissed in order to find

common ground between Israel and Palestine. The literary dimensions of their cookbooks attempt to harmonize their fraught personal narratives with the commercial forces at play in cookbook publishing: Peace sells better than conflict, and diasporic nostalgia never goes out of style. The program was co-sponsored by OSU Hillel.

# PROGRAMS

## THE THOMAS AND DIANN MANN SYMPOSIUM SERIES

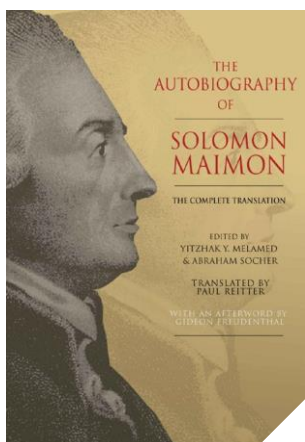


### A Rich Brew: How Cafés Created Modern Jewish Culture (2020)

The second program in the Mann Symposium Series featured **Shachar Pinsker**, Professor of Hebrew Literature and Culture at the University of Michigan, who presented a program to a packed audience on the birth of Jewish modernity in the café and how it was nourished and sent out into the world by way of print, politics, literature, art and theater. What was experienced and created in the space of the coffeehouse touched thousands who read,

saw and imbibed a modern culture that redefined what it meant to be a Jew in the world. This program, which was held at Sweetwaters Coffee & Tea on campus, was supported by the Norbert and Gretel Bloch Scholarship fund.

*The third program in the Mann Symposium series on Jews in the liquor industry, which was originally scheduled for March 29, will be scheduled at a later date.*



### A CONVERSATION ON SOLOMON BEN MAIMON (2018)

In Nov. 2018, the Melton Center and Humanities Institute presented a campus program on Solomon Ben Maimon, an 18th-century Jewish philosopher whose writings were influenced by Maimonides, Spinoza and Kant.

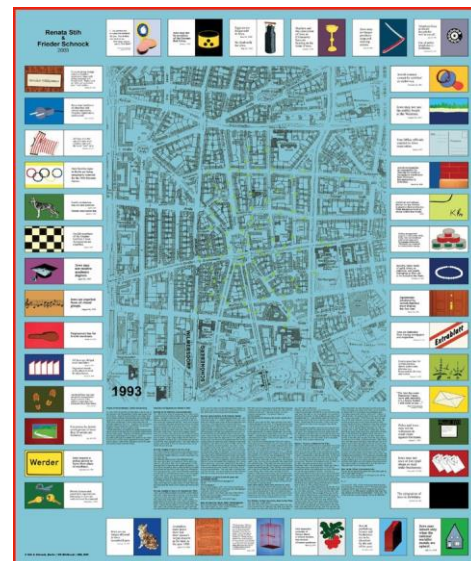
The program featured **Paul Reitter** from the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at Ohio State and **Abe Socher**,

professor emeritus, Oberlin College and editor of *Jewish Review of Books*.

They collaborated on the translation of Solomon Ben Maimon's autobiography, *The Autobiography of Solomon Maimon: The Complete Translation* (Melamed, Yitzhak and Socher, Abraham eds., Princeton University Press, 2019).

Maimon was an important figure in the development of the movement referred to today as German Idealism, which was a reaction against Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and was closely linked with both Romanticism and the revolutionary politics of The Enlightenment.

✓ Map of the Berlin Holocaust Memorial installation



### PLACES OF REMEMBRANCE: A DECENTRALIZED MEMORIAL IN BERLIN (2019)

Last year, the Melton Center, the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures

at Ohio State, the Holocaust Education Council and the Jewish Community Relations Committee of JewishColumbus presented a program on a Holocaust memorial art installation in the Bavarian Quarter of Berlin. Professors **Renata Stih** and **Frieder Schnock** created this unusual and controversial Holocaust memorial, which consists of 80 signs attached to lampposts. Each has one of the many Nazi rules that Jews in Berlin had to follow during the occupation. Stih and Schnock discussed the memorial and its development, along with reactions and responses it continues to elicit.



# PROGRAMS



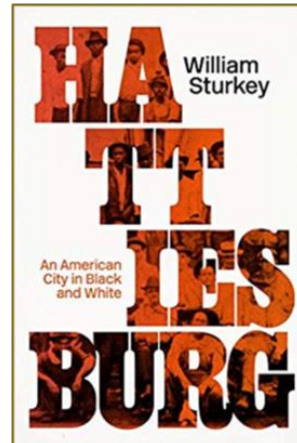
## AUTHOR RUBY NAMDAR (2019)

In 2019, the Melton Center and Jewish Bookfair presented a program featuring acclaimed Israeli author **Ruby Namdar**, whose novels have won numerous Israeli book prizes. He discussed his book, *Ruined House*, his writing process, and offered writing advice to students.

Left to right: Professor Tamar Rudavsky, Ruby Namdar, and Professors Adena Tanenbaum and Joseph Galron

## PALESTINIAN HUMORIST SAYED KASHUA (2019)

On March 11, 2019, the Melton Center, the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at Ohio State and JewishColumbus hosted a lunch program on campus with Palestinian humorist **Sayed Kashua**. Kashua publishes a personal weekly column in Hebrew for *Haaretz* newspaper, and a local Jerusalem weekly, *HaIr*. In a humorous, tongue-in-cheek style, his anecdotal pieces address the problems faced by Arabs in Israel. Kashua is one of Israel's foremost writers and intellectuals and author of four novels: *Dancing Arabs* (2002), *Let It Be Morning* (2006), *Second Person Singular* (2010) and *Track Changes* (2017), all of them translated into English. He is also the creator of some of Israel's most popular sitcoms, *The Arab Labor* and *The Writer*.



## HATTIESBURG, MISSISSIPPI: TWO MINORITIES' EXPERIENCES IN THE DEEP SOUTH (2019)

On Sept. 20, 2019, the Melton Center presented a program featuring two scholars who published books about the black and Jewish experiences in Hattiesburg. Professor **William Sturkey's** (l) book, *Hattiesburg: An American City in Black and White*, is a rich, multigenerational saga of race and family in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, that tells the story of how Jim Crow was built, how it changed, and how the most powerful social movement in American history came together to tear it down. Professor Sturkey is an assistant professor of history at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and earned his PhD from the Department of History at Ohio State.

Professor **Leon Waldoff's** (r) book, *A Story of Jewish Experience in Mississippi*, chronicles the story of his Russian-Jewish parents' arrival and in the Mississippi region. Waldoff's book reveals the experience of the Jewish community in Hattiesburg from the 1920s through the 1960s, as it goes through times of prosperity but also faces the dangers of anti-Semitism. Leon Waldoff is a professor emeritus at the University of Illinois in the Department of English. Professor David Staley, director of Ohio State's Humanities Institute, moderated this fascinating discussion in front of a large audience, as Professors Sturkey and Waldoff described the different challenges that the two minorities each faced in this small southern town.





# PROGRAMS



## DIANE CUMMINS COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND (2019)

The Melton Center runs a series of Jewish learning programs for senior adults in the community. The programs are held at Wexner Heritage Village's Creekside at the Village, an independent residential facility for senior citizens. Some of our best and brightest graduate students in Jewish studies lead sessions on a variety of topics. We are grateful to the Cummins family for their support.



Wexler's Gardening Sukkah (courtesy of the Columbus Museum of Art)



## PIANIST OR YISSACHAR (2019)

On Feb. 25, 2019, the Melton Center and School of Music presented a recital featuring Israeli pianist **Or Yissachar** to a packed house. He performed modern compositions by Israeli composers, as well as a piece by Ohio State's Professor Jan Radzynski.

## ARTIST ALLAN WEXLER, FORM FOLLOWS RITUAL: BUILDING FOR CEREMONY (2019)

On Oct. 17, 2019, the Columbus Museum of Art presented a program with New York artist/architect **Allan Wexler**. He discussed his works, which use architecture, sculpture, photography, painting and drawing to explore relationships between human beings and the built and natural environments. Wexler's *Gardening Sukkah*, which is housed at the museum and was on display, was intended be used as a temporary hut where people gather to eat during Sukkot, the Jewish festival marking the fall harvest, and doubles as a gardening hut during the rest of the year.

The program was presented by Columbus Museum of Art Friends of Jewish Art, the Melton Center for Jewish Studies through the Diane Cummins Community Education Fund, the JCC Jewish Book and Author Series, and is made possible in part through the Lenore Schottenstein and Community Jewish Arts Fund of the Columbus Jewish Foundation, a JewishColumbus partner. Thanks to Professor Suzanne Silver in the Department of Art for coordinating his visit.



# PROGRAMS

## THE MELTON COALITION BIENNIAL CONFERENCE: TIME IN JEWISH THOUGHT AND EDUCATION (2019)

The Melton Coalition for Creative Interaction is a joint project of the Melton Research Center of the Jewish Theological

Seminary, the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and The Melton Center for Jewish Studies at The Ohio State University.

Among other activities, the coalition sponsors a biennial conference on key issues of shared interest to Judaica scholars, scholars of Jewish education and Jewish educational practitioners.

The Melton Center hosted the conference from Feb. 24-26, 2019. The theme was "Time in Jewish Thought and Education." Thirteen scholars in different fields of Jewish studies generated a depth of reflection on ideas about time, including the Jewish holidays and their development and the ways in which they affect the Jewish experience and identity. Scholars of Jewish education provided an analysis of past and current educational practice and the assumptions about Jewish time that this practice embodies.

*Participants in the Coalition Conference:*

**Noga Baror-Bing**, lecturer, Hebrew University, Kerem Teachers Seminary at David Yellin College/Hartman Institute, the Mandel Institute

**Naomi Brenner**, associate professor of Hebrew and Jewish culture, Ohio State

**Yonatan Cohen**, The Bella and Israel Unterberg Professor of Jewish Education at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

**Michael Gillis**, professor of Jewish education and director of the Melton Centre for Jewish Education, the Hebrew University

**Chaya Gorsetman**, clinical associate professor of education, Stern College, Yeshiva University

**Matt Goldish**, professor of history, Ohio State

**Barry Holtz**, The Theodore And Florence Baumritter Professor of Jewish Education, Melton Research Center and William Davidson Graduate School, Jewish Theological Seminary

**Lynn Kaye**, assistant professor of rabbinic literature and thought, Brandeis University

**Hannah Kosstrin**, associate professor of Dance, Ohio State

**Meryll Page**, retired Jewish educator and consultant

**Joseph Reimer**, associate professor of education, Brandeis University

**Avinoam Rosenak**, lecturer, Melton Centre for Jewish Education, Department of Jewish Thought, Hebrew University

**Tamar Rudavsky**, professor of philosophy, Ohio State

**Sarah Tauber**, faculty, Davidson School of Jewish Education, Jewish Theological Seminary

**Tanya Zion Waldoks**, lecturer, Melton Centre for Jewish Education, Hebrew University



Joseph Reimer



Tanya Zion Waldoks

## THE PEARL AND TROY FEIBEL LECTURE ON JUDAISM AND THE LAW Jews and Human Rights in the 20th Century (2019)

The 2019 annual Pearl and Troy Feibel Lecture on Judaism and the Law was delivered by **James Loeffler**, The Jay Berkowitz Professor of Jewish History at the University of Virginia. He spoke about five remarkable Jewish founders of international human rights within the context of the creation of the state of Israel and the creation of the Universal Declaration

of Human Rights in 1947. Both remain tied together in the ongoing debates about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, global antisemitism and American foreign policy.

*Due to the coronavirus, the 2020 Feibel lecture will be rescheduled at a later date.*

Left to right, front row: Professor Tamar Rudavsky, Ron Robins, Barbara Feibel Robins, Babette Feibel, Ronnie Feibel, Don Feibel.  
Back row, left to right: Professors Daniel Frank, Adena Tanenbaum, James Loeffler, Michael Swartz, Suzanne Silver, Robin Judd.





# PROGRAMS

## CHOREOGRAPHER/DANCER DEGE FEDER (2020)



The Ohio State University welcomed choreographer **Dege Feder** to Ohio State for a residency on Feb. 24-25, 2020. Feder is a multidisciplinary artist born in Ethiopia and based in Israel. Feder led workshops in the Department of Dance and performed a piece called “Jalo,” which speaks about her private voyage from her homeland to a new country and the challenges she faced to integrate into a new society and culture while trying to preserve her individual identity and past.

Dege Feder is a choreographer, dancer and musician and recipient of the Israeli Ministry of Culture Prize for Young Dance Creators in 2018. Her residency was co-sponsored by Ohio State's Department of Dance, Melton Center for Jewish Studies and the Migration, Mobility, and Immobility Project of the Global Arts and Humanities Discovery Theme.

## OTHER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

*The Melton Center co-sponsored these programs in 2019 and 2020:*

### A Holocaust Discussion with author Margaret McMullan (2019)

Last October, the Melton Center co-sponsored a program with Gramercy Books featuring author and Fulbright Fellow

Margaret McMullan. **Robin Judd**, associate professor of history at Ohio State, interviewed McMullan about her recent memoir, *Where the Angels Lived*, which documents the relentless determination of a woman picking up the pieces of her family's fragmented history throughout the Hungarian Holocaust.

### Where Harry Met Sally – The Jewish Deli in Pop Culture (2019)

Last fall, the Columbus Jewish Historical Society presented a program featuring **Ted Merwin**, PhD, author of *Pastrami on Rye: An Overstuffed History of the Jewish Delicatessen* (NYU Press, 2015) to 150 people at the Columbus JCC. Merwin explored the heyday of the deli and the representation of Jewish-American delis in music, film and television and the evolution of delis today. The program was co-sponsored with JCC Bookfair and supported by the Diane Cummins Community Education Fund through the Melton Center.

### Columbus Jewish Film Festival (2019)

Last fall, the Melton Center co-sponsored *The Unorthodox*, a film inspired by the formation of the Shas political party, which was the first party to represent the Sephardi Jewish community in Israel.

### When a Woman Gives Birth to a Raven: Gynecology and Zoology according to the Rabbis (2019)

Last December, the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures and the Melton Center presented a program

featuring **Rachel Raphael Neis**, associate professor of history and Judaic studies at University of Michigan. Her talk demonstrated that the rabbis of late antiquity held a rather different approach to the human and the nonhuman. In unrelated texts from the Mishnah together — including those on women's menstrual purity, animal donations to the temple and forbidden mixings of species — we witness a gynecology that was intertwined with zoology.

### Daniella Doron, Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation at Monash University (2020)

**Daniella Doron**, senior lecturer in Jewish history at the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation at Monash University gave two talks last January: “Rebuilding Family and Nation: Trauma, Displacement and Rehabilitation among Postwar French Jews” and “Family Separation: Mobility, Agency and Emotions among Nazi-Era Jewish Refugee Youth.” Doron also spoke to a Holocaust class and met with graduate students and faculty.







## FACULTY NEWS



**Naomi Brenner**, associate professor of Yiddish and Hebrew literature and culture

**Professor Brenner** received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for 2019-2020 to support

collaborative research for the project, "Below the Line: Feuilleton, the Public Sphere and Modern Jewish Cultures." This is a project led by colleagues from Ohio State, the University of Michigan and Michigan State University, and it brings together scholars from across North America, Europe and Israel.



**Helen Fehervary**, professor emerita of German literature

**Professor Fehervary** recently published a book of scholarly articles: *Anna Seghers: The Challenge of History*, Helen Fehervary, Christiane Zehl

Romero, and Amy Kepple Strawser, eds., Series German Monitor, vol. 80 (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2019).



**Joseph Galron**, associate professor, University Libraries, Hebraica and Jewish Studies Collection

**Professor Galron** is the recipient of the prestigious 2019 Middle East and North Africa Fulbright Award to Israel. Galron

was in Israel from September-December to continue his "Modern Hebrew Literature: A Bio-Bibliographic Lexicon" project that began 15 years ago. While in Israel, he utilized the library and historical resources at Ben Gurion University in the Negev, the National Library of Israel in Jerusalem, and the Gnazim Institute in Tel Aviv. He researched and explored Hebrew authors from the 19th century and over 10,000 letters and documents to and from Hebrew writers of the 1960s collected by Getzel Kressel. Galron will add this material to his Modern Hebrew Literature Lexicon. Galron's areas of expertise include Jewish studies, Germanic languages and literatures and Yiddish. He also manages the library collections of Hebraica and Jewish studies and German language and literature.

The Fulbright Scholar Program is administered by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars and is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.



**Lúcia Costigan**, professor of contemporary Brazilian and Latin American literature

**Professor Costigan** received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award to Mexico. Costigan will be researching "The Transformation

of Portuguese New Christians into Heretics during the Union of the Spanish and Portuguese Crowns: 1580-1640" at the Universidad de las Américas Puebla, Biblioteca Franciscana and Biblioteca Palafoxiana from January-June 2021.



**Sonia Gollance**, visiting assistant professor of Yiddish

**Professor Gollance** received a \$1,000 book grant from the Melton Center and an Arts and Humanities Small Grants award to support *It Could Lead to*

*Dancing: Mixed-Sex Dancing and Jewish Modernity*. She also received a translation fellowship from the Yiddish Book Center for the play "Miryaml: dramatischer tsikl in fuftsn bilder" (Miryaml: Dramatic Cycle in 15 Scenes, 1958) by Tea Arciszewska.



**Jane Hathaway**, Distinguished Professor of History

**Professor Hathaway** recently published *The Arab Lands under Ottoman Rule, 1516-1800*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2020), and *The Chief Eunuch of the Ottoman*

*Harem: From African Slave to Power-Broker* (Cambridge, 2018), which was short-listed for the 2019 British-Kuwait Friendship Society Book Prize.



**Robin Judd**, associate professor of history

**Professor Judd** received the Ratner Distinguished Teaching Award, which recognizes faculty who demonstrate creative teaching and extraordinary

records of engaging, motivating and inspiring students. Each Ratner Award winner receives a \$10,000 cash prize, as well as a \$10,000 teaching account to fund future projects.



**Amy Shuman**, professor of English and folklore

**Professor Shuman** received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Folklore Society.



**Tamar Rudavsky**, professor of philosophy, Melton Center director

**Professor Rudavsky** published *Jewish Philosophy in the Middle Ages: Science, Rationalism, and Religion* (The Oxford History of Philosophy, 2020).



**Ori Yehudai**, assistant professor of history, the Saul and Sonia Schottenstein Chair in Israel Studies

**Professor Yehudai's** first book, *Leaving Zion: Jewish Emigration from Palestine and Israel after World War II*, was

published with Cambridge University Press in May 2020.



# NEW FACULTY



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**Ori Yehudai**, assistant professor of history, the Saul and Sonia Schottenstein Chair in Israel Studies

**Ori Yehudai** joined the faculty of the Department of History at Ohio State last fall. His research focuses on modern Jewish history with a special emphasis on Zionism and the State of Israel, migration and displacement, and relations between Jews and non-Jews after the Holocaust. Yehudai's first book, *Leaving Zion: Jewish Emigration from Palestine and Israel after World War II*, was published with Cambridge University Press in May 2020.

He has taught "Jews and Arabs in Israel/Palestine," an undergraduate lecture course on the history of Zionism and modern Israel, and he will introduce a new course on the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict spring semester 2021.

"Holding an endowed chair in Israel Studies at The Ohio State University offers me a unique opportunity to contribute to research and teaching about Modern Israel in North America, and to integrate the study of Israel into broader academic and public discussions about war and peace, democracy, migration and other fundamental political and social issues," Yehudai said.

His work has been supported by fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research and the Israel Institute in Washington, D.C. Before coming to Ohio State, he held postdoctoral and visiting positions at the Center for Jewish History in New York, New York University, McGill University and the University of Toronto. His PhD is from the University of Chicago.



## SUPPORT YIDDISH AND ASHKENAZI STUDIES AT OHIO STATE

Yiddish contributes to Ohio State's academic excellence as a flagship research institution that is committed to teaching its students about global citizenship, minorities, migration and diversity. Yiddish offers a unique perspective into these issues. However, the future of Yiddish language and culture courses is at stake.

While Ohio State has traditionally had one of the strongest Yiddish programs in the country with two tenured professors, we now have just one dedicated Yiddish faculty person in a visiting position.

Visiting Professor of Yiddish studies **Sonia Gollance** reminds us of the importance of Yiddish to the humanities:



## NEW FACULTY

### < Sonia Gollance, visiting assistant professor of Yiddish, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures

Since joining Ohio State as the director of Yiddish and Ashkenazic Studies last semester, **Sonia Gollance** has re-energized Yiddish at the university, developing a minor program that explores the complexities of the culture with new literature and language courses and building a community of Yiddish learners within the campus and beyond.

Gollance is a scholar of Yiddish and German-Jewish Studies whose work focuses on literature, dance, theater and gender.

"I'm excited about having students coming in who don't know what they are about to learn having their minds blown," Gollance said. "Yiddish has a linguistic diversity that students may find interesting.

It is a Germanic-based language with elements taken from Hebrew and Aramaic as well as from Slavic languages and traces of Romance languages."

Chair of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures Robert Holub said strengthening the Yiddish program has been a top priority for the past two years.

"We need to have a vibrant program in Yiddish language, which is closely related to German, and we need to emphasize the many connections between German and Yiddish culture, and the significance of the problematic German-Jewish symbiosis for understanding the past two centuries," said Holub, who is also a professor in the department.

"Yiddish plays a central role in fostering this understanding. We are delighted that (Gollance) has

made such tremendous progress in such a short period of time, and we welcome and support the Yiddish revolution she has started."

During Gollance's Yiddish culture class last semester, students learned about "broygez tants," a wedding dance in which mothers-in-law would pantomime fighting and making up. She showed students how to perform the dance in class, working with them to express anger (or cope with midterms) through gestures and stomping.

Her first book, *It Could Lead to Dancing: Mixed-Sex Dancing and Jewish Modernity* is forthcoming with Stanford University Press. Gollance earned her PhD from the University of Pennsylvania.

"Between the Middle Ages and the mid-twentieth century, it was the most widely spoken Jewish language, which means that important conversations about gender, class, diversity, citizenship, migration, nationalism and responses to genocide took place in Yiddish. Yiddish literature about the Holocaust takes place in a larger context of Jewish history that is not limited to the period of 1933-45.

It would be virtually impossible to study Jewish history without engaging with Yiddish. At the same time, Yiddish also contributes to many other fields, including migration studies, European history, Germanic linguistics, labor history, global modernism and folklore. At a time when Yiddish is a visible presence in popular culture, such as in the Seth Rogen film *An American Pickle* and the Netflix miniseries *Unorthodox*, a Yiddish presence on campus gives members of the Ohio State community different ways of engaging with this culture."

We are hoping to elevate this single visiting faculty position to a full-time, tenured position in Yiddish studies. With the support of our community, we can work together to achieve this goal.

For more information, contact Arts and Sciences Advancement at [ascadvancement@osu.edu](mailto:ascadvancement@osu.edu) or (614) 292-9200.



Yiddish authors I.L. Peretz and Jacob Dinezon



# FACULTY 2018-2020

**NAOMI BRENNER**, associate professor; PhD, University of California, Berkeley; modern Hebrew literature

**LÚCIA HELENA COSTIGAN**, professor; PhD, University of Pittsburgh; literatures and cultures of Latin America and Portugal

**BERND FISCHER**, professor; PhD, Universität Siegen; contemporary German literature and culture

**DANIEL FRANK**, associate professor; PhD, Harvard University; medieval Jewish history and literature, Judeo-Arabic Karaitica

**JOSEPH GALRON**, associate professor; MLS, Hebrew University; Jewish studies librarian

**STEVEN GLASER**, professor; MM, University of Michigan, BM, Juilliard; piano performance

**MATT GOLDISH**, professor; Samuel M. and Esther Melton Chair in History; PhD, Hebrew University; early modern Jewish history, messianism

**SONIA GOLLANCE**, visiting assistant professor and director of the Yiddish program; PhD, University of Pennsylvania; Yiddish

**J. ALBERT HARRILL**, professor; PhD, University of Chicago; early Judaism, ancient Mediterranean religions

**JANE HATHAWAY**, Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor; PhD, Princeton University; Jews under Islamic rule

**ROBIN JUDD**, associate professor; PhD, University of Michigan; modern Jewish history, gender history and theory

**HANNAH KOSSTRIN**, associate professor; PhD, The Ohio State University; gender and Jewish studies in dance

**STUART LISHAN**, professor; PhD, University of Utah; Jewish American literature

**CAROLINA LÓPEZ-RUIZ**, professor; PhD, University of Chicago; Greek and near eastern cultures

**SAMUEL MEIER**, professor; PhD, Harvard University; Hebrew and comparative semitics

**GABRIELLA MODAN**, professor; PhD, Georgetown University; sociolinguistics and discourse analysis

**JAN RADZYNSKI**, professor; DMA, Yale University; composition, Jewish music

**PAUL REITTER**, professor; PhD, University of California, Berkeley; modern German Jewish literature

**TAMAR RUDAVSKY**, professor; PhD, Brandeis University; medieval Jewish and scholastic philosophy; director, Melton Center for Jewish Studies

**STEWART SHAPIRO**, professor; PhD, SUNY at Buffalo; philosophy of mathematics

**AMY SHUMAN**, professor; PhD, University of Pennsylvania; English, Jewish folklore, cultural studies

**SUZANNE SILVER**, associate professor; MFA, The Ohio State University; painting and drawing, Jewish art

**DAVID STEIN**, associate professor; PhD, University of Michigan; adult education, distance learning

**MICHAEL SWARTZ**, professor; PhD, New York University; rabbinic literature, Jewish mysticism

**ADENA TANENBAUM**, associate professor; PhD, Harvard University; medieval Jewish literature and thought, modern Hebrew literature

**ISAAC WEINER**, associate professor; PhD, University of North Carolina; American religions, material and sensory; cultures of religions

**ORI YEHUDAI**, assistant professor of history and Saul and Sonia Schottenstein Chair in Israel Studies; PhD, University of Chicago; Jewish history, power, culture and the state, race, ethnicity and nation

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# GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Beginning with Samuel M. Melton's investment in the establishment of the Melton Center for Jewish Studies at Ohio State in 1976, private support has been invaluable to our mission to develop and promote the study, teaching and research of Jewish studies. We hope you will make your investment in our students, faculty research and programs today!

- 1 Make your contribution online by going to: **osu.edu/giving**. After entering the amount you wish to contribute, look for this box on the right-hand side:

The screenshot shows a web interface with two tabs: "I want to support" (active) and "Search". Below the tabs is a section titled "Search for an area to support:" with a search input field containing "Search for a fund" and a magnifying glass icon. Below that is a section titled "My gift supports:" with a dropdown menu showing "The Ohio State Fund".

- 2 Enter "Friends of the Melton Center" under "Search for an area to support" and hit the return key. When the "Fund Search Results" screen pops-up, click on the "select" button next to Friends of the Melton Center.

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Our Jewish Studies program is one of the largest and most respected programs in the United States, and our faculty members are internationally recognized scholars in their fields. Every year, more students choose our Jewish Studies program over others in the Midwest for the variety of courses, the many events, and the vibrant Jewish life at Ohio State and in Columbus.

See for yourself at [go.osu.edu/jewish-studies](http://go.osu.edu/jewish-studies)

