

# FRANKELY SPEAKING



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## Inside

Saving Regina Jonas	2
Devi Mays: Ashkenazi Scholar of Sephardic Jewry	3
Spotlight on American Jewish Studies	4
Exploring the Diversity of Detroit	6
Max Brod's Suitcase, Kafka's Patrimony <i>by Scott Spector</i>	8
Haya Bar-Itzhak: Tell Me a Story	9
What's New at the Frankel Center?	10
Mazel Tov!	11
Save the Date	12

COVER PHOTO: "Chene Street" by Marian Krzyzowski

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# Saving Regina Jonas

By Deborah Dash Moore, Director of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies and Frederick G. L. Huetwell Professor of History

**S**aving who...and in what sense?

Regina Jonas was the first woman ordained a rabbi in Berlin, over the Christmas school holiday, in 1935. Jonas studied at the liberal Berlin Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums with such other distinguished students as Abraham Joshua Heschel. She worked together with acclaimed psychologist Viktor Frankl in Theresienstadt from 1942 to 1944 until she was deported to Auschwitz and murdered, leaving behind no family. Regina Jonas, who was known to Sally Priesand, the first woman ordained a rabbi at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1972, would not seem to be in need of saving. Her extraordinary life is the subject of a recent biography and documentary; nevertheless, Jonas has largely eluded both Jewish memory and history. A delegation of 30 American Jewish academics, rabbis, and leaders set out this July to rescue her from the oblivion of the Holocaust and to claim her as their own.

The trip began after Gary P. Zola, executive director of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA), proposed Jonas to the United States Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad as worthy of recognition. When the Commission agreed, Zola invited the Jewish Women's Archives to join AJA in sponsoring a delegation to honor Jonas' memory. The delegation, in which I participated, followed the

course of her life. We traced her footsteps in Berlin, where she was born in 1902, visiting remains of synagogues and schools. After Jonas' ordination, she continued to teach schoolchildren, give occasional sermons, and write for the Jewish press. She also served as a hospital chaplain and as a rabbi for elderly Jews in old-age homes and remnant communities outside Berlin in the late 1930s and early 1940s. As increasing numbers of male rabbis left Germany, her decision to remain in Berlin, in part to care for her aging mother, meant that she encountered more opportunities to serve in a rabbinic role.

## The many women rabbis participating in the delegation embraced Jonas as foremother.

The delegation then traveled to Theresienstadt, the Czech garrison town transformed into a ghetto-concentration camp by the Nazis. Assigned to greet arriving inmates, Jonas tried to sustain their spirits. She gave lectures—some 23 titles survive—and retained an abiding faith in Judaism's universal vision for humanity. Before unveiling the plaque recognizing Jonas as part of America's heritage abroad, four rabbis who were the first women to be ordained by the four major movements in American Judaism—Priesand for Reform, Sandy Sasso for Reconstructionist, Amy Eilberg for



Photo by Jean-Pierre Jans

Conservative, and Sara Hurwitz for Modern Orthodox—participated in a service honoring Jonas. Each one selected texts from Jonas' writings. Hearing her words spoken, albeit in English translation, conveyed a sense of her power.

In many ways the plaque represented merely an external affirmation of the trip's dramatic impact. The many women rabbis participating in the delegation embraced Jonas as foremother. "I am Her Kaddish," wrote Rabbi Myra Soifer in a poem. "Could she have imagined me? Did her rabbinate lead, somehow, to mine? Probably not. Yet the sermons she preached, and classes she taught, could have been mine. And so, as if inevitably...I am Her Kaddish." These connective strands transformed Jonas and us by introducing us to her all-too-brief life extinguished in Auschwitz, recovering fragments of memories and texts, and binding her life to the history of American Jews.

Jewish women rabbis, once thought to be an American innovation, products of a revolutionary Jewish feminist movement, now had an older, European history, tied to the central Jewish tragedy of the 20th century. ■

DEVI MAYS:

# Ashkenazi Scholar of Sephardic Jewry

When 17-year-old Devi Mays visited Turkey one summer with her mother, a silk store owner inquired as to whether they were Jewish. Her mother was a non-practicing Jew, and said so.

“We’re Jewish also,” replied the man, “and you’re part of our family. We’re Sephardic, and you’re Ashkenazi, but we’re all part of the same family.”

The Frankel Center may owe a debt of gratitude to that friendly shopkeeper, for that conversation sparked a long friendship that planted the seeds for Mays’ future research at the University of Michigan.

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**“I want to try to put the Sephardic story back into the story of modern Jewish history.”**

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Mays is now the new assistant professor of Judaic studies at the Frankel Center, and her journey to Ann Arbor is nothing short of remarkable. Her mother’s family lived for generations on the West Coast after moving to San Francisco during the Gold Rush, where they helped establish Congregation Emanu-El, the area’s first Reform synagogue. But Mays’ parents embraced the Transcendental Meditation movement and moved to Iowa, where she grew up learning Sanskrit, practicing meditation, and living worlds away from Judaic studies of any kind. Even her name, Devi (pronounced Day-vee), is the name of a Hindu goddess.

“By my mother’s generation,” Mays explains, “there was no Jewish

practice or tradition. They were a very secular, assimilated family. So Judaic studies is also a way for me to explore my heritage.”

That exploration began in earnest when she took a year off to return to Istanbul after graduating from Vancouver’s University of British Columbia. There, she became interested in the Turkish Jewish community and Ottoman Jewish history, and began to pursue that track for graduate school at Indiana University, where she received her PhD. She traveled to five different countries to research her dissertation on the migrations of Sephardic Jews to Mexico, an experience she likens to “putting together a puzzle where I had to find the pieces before I could put the pieces together.”

Mays joined the Frankel Center after serving as the inaugural postdoctoral fellow in modern Jewish studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Today, her research interests focus on transnational Jewish networks and the modern Sephardic world. As one of this year’s Frankel Institute fellows, she is studying how Constantinople served as a central meeting place for Jews of many nationalities.

The research is important because, Mays says, “so much of Jewish history and culture has been [seen] through an Ashkenazi perspective. I think that looking at Sephardic history and culture nuances Jewish history... and enriches what we think it is to be Jewish, what it was to be Jewish in the past, and what it is to be Jewish today as well.

“I want to try to put the Sephardic story back into the story of modern



Photo by Sarah Nesbitt

Jewish history, and to not think of Sephardic Jews as somehow peripheral, but really integral to the development of modern Jewish history.”

Mays also places a high priority on having dialogue with departments outside Jewish studies, to make scholars in fields such as Latin American studies, migration studies, and Middle Eastern history aware of the importance of Jews to the regions they study.

At Michigan, she is looking forward to teaching a course on the history of the Jews of Spain, as well as one about Jewish experiences in the Mediterranean region.

But most of all, she says, “I’m really looking forward to being part of such a great institution. When I was in graduate school, people would ask, ‘Where would you choose to go if you could go anywhere?’ I would say, ‘I want to end up somewhere like the University of Michigan.’

“I never thought it would be possible to do that. And here I am.” ■

# SPOTLIGHT ON American Jewish Studies

The land of the free is also the home of many Jews, and the Frankel Center's strong focus on American Jewish Studies attests to that. Students can absorb the breadth of American Jewish history, religion, sociology, and literature under the guidance of faculty members such as Sara Blair, Mikhail Krutikov, Deborah Dash Moore, Regina Morantz-Sanchez, Anita Norich, and others.

Here is a sampling of some of the cutting-edge research being done by our prestigious faculty and graduate students.

Photos by D. C. Goings



**JONATHAN FREEDMAN** is the Marvin Felheim Collegiate Professor and teaches English and American studies. His courses focus on Jewish-American literature and the relation between Jews and “Others” in the United States, such as Asian Americans, Latinos, and African Americans. This popular course provided a foundation for his most recent book, *Klezmer America: Jewishness, Ethnicity, Modernity*. Freedman's other two books (*Professions of Taste: Henry James, British Aestheticism and Commodity Culture*; and *The Temple of Culture: Assimilation, Anti-Semitism and Literary Anglo America*) look at British as well as American literature. Currently he is working on a book about Jews and decadence in the late 19th century. ■



**KARLA GOLDMAN** is the Sol Drachler Professor of Social Work and director of the university's Jewish Communal Leadership Program. Her classes focus on American Jewish communal experience and the history of Jewish involvement in American social justice movements. Her current research concentrates on the history of Jews at the University of Michigan, the subject of a course she taught last year; the Jewish experience of Hurricane Katrina, which formed the basis of a series of fascinating oral histories conducted in its aftermath; and the history of the Jewish community of Cincinnati across two centuries. She previously taught American Jewish history at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and served as Historian in Residence at the Jewish Women's Archive. She is the author of *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery: Finding a Place for Women in American Judaism*. ■

## What Is Your Dissertation About?



**JULIAN LEVINSON** is the Samuel Shetzer Associate Professor of American Jewish Studies. His research focuses on American Jewish culture and Yiddish literature and the effects of the Holocaust on the American Jewish imagination. Levinson has worked as a translator of Yiddish poetry into English, publishing

selected verse by Moyshe Leib Halpern. He is the author of the award-winning *Exiles on Main Street: Jewish American Writers and American Literary Culture*, and is currently completing a manuscript on transformations of Jewish religious identity in the context of American Protestantism and its intense bibliocentrism. Recently he has taken these themes into his classes, teaching *The Bible as Literature* and *The Book of Genesis and its Interpretations*, in addition to *American Jewish Literature After the Holocaust*. ■



**DAVID SCHOEM** is the founding Director of the Michigan Community Scholars Program, which brings together students and faculty committed to community service, diversity, and academic excellence. He has served as LSA Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Education and Assistant Vice President for

Academic and Student Affairs. As a first-generation college student himself, Schoem understands the challenges facing those students today who are the first in their family to attend college. He also brings a sociological lens to courses on the American Jewish community, intergroup relations, and education. He is co-editor of the forthcoming book *Integrative Pedagogy: Teaching the Whole Student with Heart, Mind and Spirit*. Some of his other books include *College Knowledge for the Jewish Student* and *Intergroup Dialogue: Deliberative Democracy in School, College, Community and Workplace*. ■

**MORGAN CARLTON:** I would like to look at “passing for white” among Jewish and African American women during the early 20th century, and, more specifically, the cultural alterations both groups were required to live through when becoming truly “American.”

**JOSH FRIEDMAN:** I explore contemporary Yiddish institutions and activists, their relationship to the culture of American Jewish youth programming, and the broader institutional and philanthropic networks to which those programs are linked. This project is based on over 20 months of field research at the Yiddish Book Center, with Yiddishists in New York City, and at a new nonprofit called Yiddish Farm.

**MOSHE KORNFELD:** My dissertation, “The Chosen Universalists: Jewish Philanthropy and Youth Activism in Post-Katrina New Orleans,” contextualizes a variety of Jewish community responses to the storm—some focused internally on helping the Jewish community and others focused externally on the broader project of post-disaster recovery—in relation to the history of Jewish philanthropy in New Orleans.

**BEN POLLAK:** I study the emergence of a secular Jewish American literary tradition in interwar representations of the historically Jewish neighborhoods of Manhattan and Brooklyn. This tradition, I discovered, was grounded in the popular genre of the working-class tenement narrative and facilitated by the intimate worlds of New York’s literary, social, and political institutions.

**KATIE ROSENBLATT:** My dissertation, “Cooperative Battlegrounds: Farmers, Laborers, and the Search for Economic Alternatives,” offers the history of a counter-capitalist social movement through which laborers and farmers sought to redress the inequalities of capitalism through the organization of consumer and producer cooperatives, credit unions, and cooperative health, housing, and insurance programs.

**LOGAN WALL:** I consider the works of four writers: Louis Zukofsky, Charles Reznikoff, Lola Ridge, and James Weldon Johnson. Zukofsky and Reznikoff, born into Yiddish-speaking immigrant households; Ridge, an Irish immigrant; and Johnson, a leader of the Harlem Renaissance, show how it was possible to claim Americanness while remaining unsatisfied with the nation’s treatment of cultural, ethnic, religious, and political outsiders.

# Exploring the Diversity of



**By focusing on a single area in Detroit, Chene Street, this course provided a lens into Detroit's complex racial, religious, and ethnic conflict, competition, and cooperation during the 20th century.**

The class poses in front of the Diego Rivera mural at the Detroit Institute of Arts. L to R: Kristen Anderson, Chris White, Deborah Dash Moore, Vishnu Venugopal, Marian Krzyzowski, Justin Rhee, Kelly Onickel, Brendan Rand, Emily Zussman, Grace Judge, Jordan Smith, Ben Schechter.

On a Tuesday afternoon at Mason Hall, you just might enter a classroom in time to see a video of Martha Reeves and the Vandellas singing “Dancing in the Streets”—and Deborah Dash Moore, director of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, dancing along to the music.

Suffice it to say that “Detroit: Race, Religion, and Ethnicity in the 20th Century” is clearly not your average Judaic Studies course. Offered jointly last fall by the Frankel Center and the Department of History, it was taught by Dash Moore and Marian Krzyzowski, director of the Institute for Research on Labor, Employment, and the Economy. By focusing on a single area in Detroit, Chene Street, the course provided a lens into Detroit's complex racial, religious, and ethnic conflict, competition, and cooperation during the 20th century.

“What's exciting is the entire experiential learning aspect of the course,” said Krzyzowski. “The

trips into Detroit, particularly into less-known and -visited neighborhoods; the interaction between the students and a wide range—ethnically, racially, and religiously—of Detroiters who directly experienced and contributed to the history of the city; and the access we provide to the city's culture and music, that allows for a more intimate and personal experience of Detroit.”

The day that “Dancing in the Streets” was playing was one such example. The class was discussing how Motown affected the cultural politics of Detroit as well as the world's image of America, and the music introduced students to the Motown sound. On another day, students were treated to guest speaker Tommy Stephens, owner of the Raven Lounge, Michigan's oldest blues bar.

“For many of the students, this is their first real engagement with the city and its history,” Krzyzowski

noted. In addition to reading diverse texts in the history and politics of Detroit, and seeing films, “we want to give students a sense of what it felt like to live in the city during this time period.”

The course itself is a living lesson in diversity and cooperation: between the two departments who jointly offer it, between the two instructors who jointly teach it, and in the range of students who participate in it.

“I hope that the class contributes to the development of students' critical thinking skills to allow them to work with existing narratives of Detroit and assess them from their own personal and direct experience of the city,” said Krzyzowski. “The hope is that they then will take away this experience and apply it to other situations and narratives that they confront in their lives.” ■

Photos courtesy of Marian Krzyzowski



## Belin Lecturer to Speak on Detroit



On March 12, Lila Corwin Berman will deliver the 25th David W. Belin Lecture in American Jewish Affairs on “The Jewish Romance with the Modern City: Loving, Leaving, and Reforming.” Corwin Berman is associate professor of history at Temple University, as well as the Murray Friedman Chair of American Jewish History and director of the Feinstein Center for American Jewish History.

“I’d like people to puzzle with me over the entanglement of 20th-century American Jewish life with urbanism, on one hand, and de-urbanization—or suburbanization—on the other,” she said. “Detroit’s history provides a rich and complicated view into these two impulses: loving the city and leaving it. In my research, I’ve explored how Jews and Jewish institutions made sense of their move away from Detroit within a liberal framework. I’ll draw our attention to narratives of return to the city and ask in what ways these stories of Detroit rising or being revitalized reflect liberal sensibilities, and in what ways they are evidence of a very different political and economic approach to urban life characterized by increasing privatization.” ■



The class with Rev. Kenneth Davis of Detroit’s New Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, the former site of B’nai David Synagogue.

## From Our Students

“The use of archives, media, and visits to the city make it one of the most engaging classes I’ve ever taken!”

– **Grace Judge, politics, philosophy, and economics junior**

“I have felt a certain heartbreak about Detroit because of the decay of the city with all the burnt down and abandoned buildings, as well as the high poverty rate. I wanted to have a deeper understanding of how this city came to be.”

– **Jordan Smith, history minor**

“I hope to gain a more holistic understanding of why and how Detroit has developed the way it has, as well as how the city can continue rising into a thriving city once again.”

– **Vishnu Venugopal, economics and history senior**

“We have been able to access the city in many different ways through tours, trips to the DIA, and guest speakers. I really enjoy the diverse curriculum of the course.”

– **Emily Zussman, first-year MSW student in the Jewish Communal Leadership Program**

# Max Brod's Suitcase, Kafka's Patrimony

By Scott Spector, Professor of History, German, and Judaic Studies

Max Brod was for a time the best known of his generation of German-speaking Jewish writers from Prague. Without doubt, though, he is mostly remembered today as the person who supported, promoted, and ultimately rescued from destruction the work of another member of that cohort, his friend Franz Kafka. On the eve of the occupation of Prague by German troops in 1939, Brod packed a suitcase full of Kafka's and his own unpublished work, including those of Kafka's writings that are now considered hallmarks of the modernist literary legacy, and fled to Palestine.

Recently, this man and this friendship have been in the news due to a protracted court case regarding the proper home of Brod's literary remains, containing some writing in Kafka's own hand. The legacy was inherited by Brod's secretary and companion, who sold some of the manuscripts and passed the remainder in turn to her daughters, whose right to sell them to a German archive came into question. As the case languished in the Tel Aviv courts, and the package of papers in a Swiss vault, voices from all over the world chimed in on the question of which archive ought to house the contents of this last box (which, incidentally, were unknown). In the end, it came down to a choice between two institutions that I know quite well, having



Photo by D.C. Goings

conducted substantial research in each: the National Library of Israel in Jerusalem, or the German Literary Archive in Marbach, Germany.

## What are the relationships among author, editor, writing, homeland, and cultural legacy?

The decision to grant the papers to the Jerusalem archive was a matter of inheritance gift law tried in family court, and it revolved around a decided ambiguity in Brod's last will and testament. Neither the *national* right of the State of Israel nor of the Federal Republic of Germany to house the materials was at issue in the various versions of the will or in

the legal decision. Yet the incredible symbolism of housing this legacy in institutions appointing themselves as repositories of Jewish and German cultural heritage, respectively, enflamed commentators on both sides. Celebrated British author Will Self declared: "Brod himself was intent on canonising Kafka as a Zionist saint, and the Israeli state holding the papers ensures that this falsification will continue." A less-than-cautious statement from the Marbach library pointed out that Brod was "an unusual figure on the Eretz Israel landscape of the time, always dressed in suits and maintaining his European appearance." An article in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* sharply retorted that Brod and others of his generation were certainly out of place in "this strange, hot land across the sea," adding: "Does the German Literature Archive need to be reminded about which state was responsible for this?"

These pronouncements all shed more heat than light on a question that concerned both Brod and Kafka in very different — almost opposite, but kin — ways: what are the relationships among author, editor, writing, homeland, and cultural legacy? In a longer essay, I am trying to draw out how these issues are worked through in the writings of Kafka and Brod themselves, including in their respective testaments. ■

# Haya Bar-Itzhak: Tell Me a Story

A conversation with Haya Bar-Itzhak is like curling up on a sofa with several thousand storybooks. That's because this year's Schusterman Professor in Israeli Studies also serves as academic director of the Israel Folktale Archives, where she has studied countless Jewish folk tales.

**FRANKELY SPEAKING:** How did you become interested in Jewish folk literature?

**BAR-ITZHAK:** As a little girl, I listened to and read myths, legends, and fairy tales. After I was drafted by the Israeli army, I decided to study physics at the Technion, but was told that I could never hope to complete that degree while serving

**"These stories express what I call the existential truth of the storytelling society."**

in the military. Instead, I decided to study literature at the University of Haifa. There I met my teacher and mentor, Professor Dov Noy, who introduced Folklore Studies to Israeli academia, and established the Israel Folktale Archives.

**FS:** Can you tell us more about the Israel Folktale Archives?

**BAR-ITZHAK:** I call it the treasure trove of the Jewish imagination, and scholars from all over the world come to us in Haifa to work on folk narratives. Today we have 24,000 folk narratives recorded in Israel from all the Jewish ethnic groups and from non-Jewish ethnic groups. Last year, the Israel Folktale Archives was named a national research infrastructure by the Council of

Higher Education. Today the archive is digitized, and we are working on many projects. Recently, for example, we started to collect folk narratives told in Israel by Jewish women from Ethiopia. We also conducted a huge research project in Beit She'an, where we collected some 300 folk narratives from Moroccan, Persian, Iraqi, Kurdistan, and Eastern European Jews.

**FS:** What makes a "Jewish story" Jewish?

**BAR-ITZHAK:** There are many criteria, but first of all, of course, it's told by Jews. It has a specific flavor of a Jewish tale. Jews borrowed from other people, and in each place where Jews used to live, they listened to songs and tales, and the culture of the other influenced Jewish culture. Also, what is special about Jewish folk literature is that we can perform an in-depth historical study of these narratives because they were also preserved in written sources, including the Bible, rabbinic literature, and Middle Ages compilations.

**FS:** Do you have a favorite story?

**BAR-ITZHAK:** I like a lot of stories, and usually what happens is that whatever story I am dealing with at a specific moment is the one I love the most. At this moment I'm writing a book about portrayals of women in Jewish legends from Eastern Europe. In this book I deal with legends about women like Mirale of Brahilov, the Golden Rose, the maiden of Ludmir, Adil Kikinish of Drochobycz, and many more.

**FS:** What can we learn from folklore?

## Fast Facts



Photo by Sarah Nesbitt

**Name:** Haya Bar-Itzhak

**Title:** Head of Folklore Studies and Academic Director of Israel Folktale Archives at the University of Haifa.

**Education:** PhD in Jewish folk literature, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

**Courses Taught:** Jewish Folk Literature, Women and Femininity in Jewish Folk Narratives, Israeli Folk Narratives, Year Cycle and Life Cycle in Jewish Folklore.

**Publications:** Author and editor of 11 books, including *Jewish Poland – Legends of Origin* (2001); *Pioneers of Jewish Ethnography and Folkloristics* (2011); *Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions* (2013); *Folklore and Ideology* (2014).

**BAR-ITZHAK:** For me, these stories express what I call the existential truth of the storytelling society. Sometimes it is maybe a different truth than historians seek, but it's an existential truth, because you learn what was really important to the society, what they fought for, and what they believed in. This opens a window that I think only folk narratives can open. ■

# What's New at the Frankel Center?

## CIC Conference in Judaic Studies

On October 20, the Frankel Center convened 13 Judaic Studies department representatives from institutions of higher learning represented in the Committee of Institutional Cooperation (CIC).

“The CIC gathering represented a landmark event, bringing together heads of Jewish studies programs in the CIC for the first time,” remarked Deborah Dash Moore, director of the Frankel Center. The meeting, which took place at U-M, explored the value of forming a Judaic Studies CIC peer group that would share ideas and best practices. Topics covered included Israel, outreach, graduate programs, and curriculum.

Based in the Midwest, the CIC is a consortium of the Big Ten member universities plus the University of Chicago. Recently, the University of Maryland and Rutgers University joined the group. For over five decades, CIC institutions have shared expertise, leveraged campus resources, and collaborated on innovative programs.

“It was especially rewarding to discuss shared concerns as directors of Jewish studies programs and centers and to get to know colleagues,” said Dash Moore. “We face similar challenges and could offer advice based on what worked—and what did not.” ■



**Participants at the CIC Conference.** Standing, L to R: Riv-Ellen Prell (Minnesota), Jeffrey Shandler (Rutgers), Yael Aronoff (Michigan State), Ben Schreier (Pennsylvania State), Simone Schweber (Wisconsin-Madison), Barry Wimpeier (Northwestern), Bruce Rosenstock (Illinois), Daniel Frank (Purdue), Deborah Dash Moore (Michigan), Sarah Imhoff (Indiana). Seated, L to R: Ken Walzer (Michigan State), Jean Cahan (Nebraska-Lincoln), Charles Manekin (Maryland).

## AJS Workshop for New Chairs of Judaic Studies

This month, the Association for Jewish Studies will team up with the Frankel Center to sponsor a New Chairs Workshop, which will support the work of chairs of Jewish Studies programs and centers. The workshop will meet on December 16–17 in Baltimore, Maryland, immediately following the AJS Annual Meeting. This is the first time that such a workshop will be held, and from the enthusiastic response of new chairs, it has tapped into a real need.

The workshop will aim to connect current or soon-to-be program/department chairs with seasoned administrators to discuss major issues in the work of chairs, as well as to develop a network of mentors and colleagues to serve as resources beyond the workshop. The workshop faculty will include Judith Baskin (University of Oregon), Hartley Lachter (Lehigh University), Pamela Nadell (American University), and Noam Pianko (University of Washington). ■

## Partnership with the Museum of the History of Polish Jews

The Frankel Center has partnered with the Copernicus Program in Polish Studies in signing an official affiliation with Polin, the newly opened Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw. The agreement will facilitate collaboration on research exchanges for faculty and pedagogic activities for University of Michigan students.

The new museum was built on what was once the center of the Warsaw Ghetto, and focuses on the rich Polish Jewish culture that was destroyed in the Holocaust.

“We are the first and only institution to date to have an agreement with the museum,” said Genevieve Zubrzycki, director of Copernicus and the Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. “They chose us not only because of our scholarly expertise, but also because of our experience with building collaborative projects. I hope the agreement will help situate U-M as the premier institution in North America for Polish-Jewish studies.” ■

# MAZEL TOV!

## Undergraduate Students

**Kaitlin Schuler** wrote several articles for *Groundcover News*. She recently became editor in chief for the *Michiganensian*, the U-M's yearbook.

## Graduate Students

**Beth Dwoskin** recently presented her paper, "Dem Lied Funim Hemd—a Yiddish Translation of a Classic Victorian Poem" at the Midwest Jewish Studies Association Annual Conference at Kent State University in Ohio.

**Shira Schwartz** was granted seed funding for her research proposal from the Global Midwest initiative of Humanities Without Walls.

## Past Fellows

We mourn the passing of our 2013–14 fellow, **Rivka Bliboim**. Her last articles included "Juxtaposition and Construct States in Contemporary Hebrew" in *Leshonenu* (June); "Huwiya/Zehut: Identity and Language in the Israeli Bilingual Sitcom 'Arab Labor'" in *Israel Studies in Language and Society*; and "In the Beginning There Was the Language by Uzi Ornan" in *Hed Haulpan* (summer). Her book, *Naming the State: the Cultural, Ideological and Linguistic Process Involved*, will soon be published by Yad Ben Zvi.

**Richard Kalmin's** new book is *Migrating Tales: The Talmud's Narratives and Their Historical Context* (2014). His recent articles include "Zechariah and the Bubbling Blood: An Ancient Tradition in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Literature," which appeared in *Jews and Christians in Sasanian Babylonia*; and "Targum in the Babylonian Talmud" in *Envisioning Judaism: Studies in Honor of Peter Schaefer on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*.

**Alona Nitzan-Shifan** received a 2014 Graham Foundation Publication Grant from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts. She recently became president of the European Architectural History Network (EAHN).

**Laurence Roth** co-edited *The Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Jewish Cultures* (2014). He also contributed a chapter on "Networks" to the volume, which he completed when he was a Frankel fellow.

**Dan Shapira's** recent articles include "We Are a Very Ancient People': The 'Antiquity Discourse' Among the Jews of Northeastern Caucasus, Georgia, and Central Asia," published in *Studies in Caucasian, Georgian, and Bukharan Jewry: Historical, Sociological, and Cultural Aspects* (2014); and "On the Relative Value of Armenian Sources for the Khazar Studies: The Case of the Siege of Tbilisi" in *Garnik Asatrian Festschrift* (2014).

**Herb Weisberg's** article, "Tradition! Tradition? Jewish Voting in the 2012 Election," appeared in the July issue of *PS: Political Science & Politics*.

## Faculty

**Deborah Dash Moore's** new book is *Urban Origins of American Judaism* (2014).

**Karla Goldman** spoke on "President Little and the Jews: Inclusion and Exclusion at the University of Michigan in the Era of Admissions Quotas" at the Scholars Conference on American Jewish History in June at Emory University.

**Devi Mays** was awarded a summer fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Her article, "'I Killed Her Because I Loved Her Too Much': Gender and Violence in the 20th Century

Sephardi Diaspora," appeared in *Mashriq and Mahjar: Journal of Middle East Migration Studies*. Her numerous translations from Ladino, Spanish, and French are included in *Sephardi Lives: A Documentary History, 1700–1950* (2014). Mays recently presented papers at both the Latin American Jewish Studies Association and the Latin American Studies Association.

**Anita Norich** spent the summer delivering lectures on Yiddish topics in Melbourne, Australia at Limmud Oz, Monash University, the Kadimah Center, and Yiddish Sof Vokh.

**Ryan Szpiech** published several articles: "The Aura of an Alphabet: Interpreting the Hebrew Gospels in Ramon Marti's *Dagger of Faith* (1278)" in *Numen*; and "Cracking the Code: Reflections on Manuscripts in the Age of Digital Books" in *Digital Philology*. *Tablet Magazine* reprinted the latter as "The Dagger of Faith in the Digital Age" in September.

**Jeff Veidlinger** co-led the Silberman Seminar for University Faculty on "Teaching about the Holocaust in the Soviet Union" at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and was appointed to the Academic Committee of the museum's Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies.

Our faculty member, **Rachel Neis**, won the American Academy for Jewish Research's Salo Baron Prize for the best first book in Jewish studies published in 2013 for *The Sense of Sight in Rabbinic Culture: Jewish Ways of Seeing in Late Antiquity*.

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## Save the Date!

- **February 5, 12, 19, and 26:** Frankel Institute Detroit lecture series on  
**Jews and Empires**

7 pm at the Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit,  
6600 W. Maple Rd., West Bloomfield.

- **February 9:** Frankel Institute Symposium on  
**“Jews and the Roman Empire: Beyond Resistance/  
Accommodation Paradigm”**

2–6 pm at Kelsey Museum, Newberry Building, Room 125.

- **February 17:** Author Alan Rosen will speak on  
**“Killing Time, Saving Time: Calendars and the Holocaust”**

4 pm at 202 S. Thayer St., Room 2022.

*For more information about our events, visit [www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic)  
or like us on Facebook (UM Judaic Studies)*

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