

HA-KOL

The Newsletter of the Judaic Studies Department at Binghamton University

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NEW TERRITORY

The wall that separated the Judaic Studies offices, in the past, from those to the south of us is gone! The denizens of Boundary 2 have departed, miraculously, for other quarters, and we have been busy creating facts on the ground. Robin Barron, our veteran secretary, now protects our new frontier, in Office FA345A. Along the narrow corridor extending from her office to that of Yedida Stillman in FA347 other members of our department have quickly established settlements which they vow to retain for Judaic Studies for all time to come. Allan Arkush, back from Boston and serving this year as Department co-chair, has created homes in his new office (345B) for more than fifteen hundred books, stemming from all over the world. "Many of these books," Arkush reports, "have spent the past year in cardboard boxes in basements all over Binghamton, and they are not going to move again, whatever happens in Washington." Immediately to the north of Arkush is our new seminar room/xerox center/lunch room. In our haste to secure control of our new territories, we have failed to give it a number! On the other side of this room, in FA345C, Edwin and Yaara Seroussi, visitors from Israel and veteran pioneers themselves, have established their temporary headquarters.

Beyond the Seroussis' office, which is located on the old border, lie those of Yedida Stillman and Michael Taub. Even after having suffered an unprovoked attack, in the course of the summer, by Binghamtonian thieves, these offices are back to normal. Robin Barron's old office is now occupied by Susan Hubal, our Project Coordinator. Shmuel Morell has migrated from the Library Tower in order to rejoin us. Norman Stillman remains, alas, in comfortable exile, in his Office in the Woods. He knows, however, that if disaster ever strikes, there will always be room for him in our quarters.

HIGH ENROLLMENTS

This semester, as usual, we can boast of the extraordinarily large numbers of BU students who have enrolled to take courses in Judaic Studies. Our Hebrew and Yiddish classes are overflowing with students, our core courses each have enrollments between

forty and eighty students, and several other courses have enrollments exceeding what we originally thought would have to be their limits. As is our custom, we now reprint for your edification our coordinated curriculum for this semester.

CORE COURSES

JUST 242/HIST 242	JEWISH HISTORY: 2ND TEMPLE	ARKUSH
JUST 243/HIST 243	MEDIEVAL JEWISH HISTORY	STILLMAN, N
JUST-W 243/HIST-W 243		
JUST 244/HIST 244	MODERN JEWISH HISTORY	ARKUSH

TOPICS COURSES

JUST 262P/PHIL 111A	PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION	GOLDSTEIN
JUST 265/PLSC 265	POLITICS OF ISRAEL	PERETZ
JUSTWE 281/WOMNWE 281	WOMEN IN JEWISH LAW	MORELL
JUST 281C	JEWISH COOKING AROUND THE WORLD	RITTBERG*
JUST 283/MUS 283	JEWISH MUSIC	SEROUSSI*
JUST 391	PRACTICUM IN COLLEGE TEACHING	STAFF
JUST 395	INTERNSHIP	STAFF
JUST 397	INDEPENDENT STUDY	STAFF
JUSTWE 490A/ PLSCWE 486J	THE ARAB ISRAELI CONFLICT	PERETZ
JUST 490F/PHIL 460B	SPINOZA, MARX & FREUD	BAR-ON
JUSTWE 490J/ HISTWE 490G	AMERICAN JUDAISM	SUSSMAN
JUSTWE 490P/ HISTWE 490P	JEWISH HISTORIOGRAPHY	STILLMAN, N
JUST 491	PRACTICUM IN COLLEGE TEACHING	STAFF
JUST 497	INDEPENDENT STUDY	STAFF
JUST 499	SENIOR THESIS	STAFF

LANGUAGE COURSES

YIDD 101	ELEMENTARY YIDDISH I	TAUB
YIDD 391	PRACTICUM IN COLLEGE TEACHING	STAFF
YIDD 397	INDEPENDENT STUDY	STAFF
HEBR 101	ELEMENTARY HEBREW I (3 sections)	MORELL & SEROUSSI, Y
HEBR 203	INTERMEDIATE HEBREW	TAUB
HEBR 203A	INTERMEDIATE HEBREW, ADVANCED	MORELL
HEBR 283/COLI 283	MODERN ISRAELI FICTION/TRANS.	TAUB
HEBR 351	MODERNIZATION & TRADITION IN MHL	MORELL
HEBR 391	PRACTICUM IN COLLEGE TEACHING	STAFF
HEBR 397	INDEPENDENT STUDY	STAFF
HEBR 597	INDEPENDENT STUDY	STAFF
HEBR 707	RESEARCH SKILLS	STAFF

*2 credit mini-courses offered the 2nd half of the semester

BIG GRANTS

Once again Yedida Stillman's tireless and incessant efforts to raise new funds for Judaic Studies have resulted in notable and highly gratifying successes. The one which we are happiest to report, since it is the one which will result most immediately in tangible benefits for our students, is a \$10,000 grant from the DOROT Foundation. The purpose of the grant is to provide travel money for ten BU students (\$1000 per student) to visit Israel during the summer of 1993. According to Joy Ungerleider, president of the foundation, students eligible to receive grants are undergraduates, Jewish or non-Jewish, who wish to study language, history, or archaeology during their stay in Israel. We will be establishing a departmental committee within the next few weeks in order to set up procedures for the selection of the participating students and the distribution of the available funds. When everything is ready we will widely publicize this exciting opportunity and the way in which BU students can take advantage of it.

No less exciting to us is the even larger grant we have received from the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation. Mr. William Lee Frost, president of the foundation, has notified us that the department has been awarded \$15,000 to establish the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation Judaica Book Fund at BU's Bartle Library. With these new funds the Judaic Studies Department plans to purchase current Judaica books from major publishers, to subscribe to important journals, and to fill in gaps in our library's collection. Says Yedida Stillman: "We are honored and happy to be the recipient of such a prestigious award, and we are now able to purchase publications that will enhance the high standards of our department. We are most appreciative and grateful to the Littauer Foundation for this award." She also added that we hope to build up this endowment so that it will generate a substantial annual revenue for much needed book purchases for the Library. Anyone wishing to do so can earmark donations for the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation Judaica Library Book Fund of the Judaic Studies Department.

TWO NEW VISITORS FROM ISRAEL

The customs officer at Kennedy Airport couldn't quite figure them out. "You're from Uruguay," he said to Edwin Seroussi, "and you're from Morocco," he said to Yaara, "but you're both from Israel!" His befuddlement was, of course, unwarranted. Like the country of which this official is one of the gatekeepers, Israel is a melting pot. The Seroussis are living proof of that.

Educated in Uruguay, Israel and the United States (Ph.D., UCLA, 1988), Edwin is a member of the Department of Musicology at Bar Ilan University in Ramat Gan. An ethnomusicologist specializing in Jewish music, he will be teaching a mini-course for us this semester in his principal area of expertise. From his fascinating c.v. we have selected a few of the more striking items, in order to give you a sense of the depth and breadth of his interests. He is, to begin with, the

author of a volume entitled Mizmirat Qodem: The Life and Music of R. Isaac Algazi from Turkey. His numerous articles range in subjects from Hassidic musical terminology to "Politics, Ethnic Identity and Music in the singing of bakkashot among Moroccan Jews." And he has performed with such diverse groups as the Rubin Academy chamber choir in Jerusalem and UCLATINO, a Latin American music ensemble at UCLA.

Born in Morocco, Yaara immigrated as a child to Israel, where she received her education (B.A. in Hebrew Language and Literature and M.A. in Education Administration, Hebrew University). At home, Yaara is Senior Teacher in Hebrew Language and Literature at the Scheiber Comprehensive High School in Beit Shemesh, where she is also Assistant Principal. Yaara is no stranger, however, to American students or, for that matter, Latin American students. She has been a professor of Hebrew at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles and has taught Hebrew in Argentina as well. We are extremely fortunate to have her as a member of our Hebrew program this year.

REVEREND CARL ROEMER RETURNS

The name of Carl Roemer is no doubt a familiar one to regular readers of Ha-Kol. Over the past few years he has participated in our programming as a guest lecturer and as the teacher of a course during our summer session. Now, we are happy to announce, Reverend Roemer will be on campus to teach a full-scale course during the spring semester. The course, which will be entitled "Jesus in Context," will deal with "the first century C.E. Jewish-Palestinian Milieu and the Rise of the Jesus movement." The presentation of this course is being facilitated by a considerable donation from the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Central New York as well as by a number of anonymous donations. We are deeply grateful to these benefactors and are looking forward eagerly to having Dr. Roemer on board once again.

ARKUSH IS BACK TOO

Our onetime and once again editor, Allan Arkush, has returned to Binghamton after having enjoyed a year of research and writing in the Boston area, courtesy of the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation. We were able to interview him shortly after he arrived on campus.

Ha-Kol: How does it feel to be back?

Arkush: I guess I ought to say, first of all, how relieved I am to see that SUNY-Binghamton has undergone the transition into Binghamton University with a minimum of disruption. As far as I can see, it's still basically the same place. But I'm afraid that some things have been overlooked. The library books, for instance- even the newest ones- are still being stamped "Library-State University of New York at Binghamton!" And what will happen if some local mogul decides to

contribute a hundred million dollars to the university provided it be renamed after him? That can happen. Earlier this year someone did just that in New Jersey, and he's already had Glassboro State College named after him. What if one of our local admirers wants to do something like that? Will we be able to reorient ourselves yet again in such a short period of time, or will we be forced to turn down vast amounts of money in order to avoid having to cope once again with an alteration of our identity?

Ha-Kol: Please, get serious. And tell us about your work. Did you accomplish what you set out to do?

Arkush: I am being serious. And, as for your original question, it feels good to be back. With regard to your second question, I am happy to be able to say that I did what I was supposed to do. I finished my manuscript on "Moses Mendelssohn and the Enlightenment" and mailed it off to a publisher. I also wrote some other things. Even before I got to work on my main project I wrote a paper on "Voltaire on Judaism and Christianity." That was kind of a warm-up for me. It helped me focus on the eighteenth century. It's going to be published next year in the AJS Review. And when I finished the Mendelssohn manuscript I wrote something else, a lengthy critique of the latest work of someone who will, for the time being, remain unnamed. I want to see what some friends of mine think of it before I say anything more about it. And then, I...

Ha-Kol: All right, we get the picture. Did you do anything else over the past year besides write?

Arkush: Well, I became briefly involved, in an inconsequential way, in the political process. I attended two rallies for....

Ha-Kol: Excuse me, but I'm sure you remember that Ha-Kol stays completely outside the fray and...

Arkush: Don't give me that. I remember how you "tilted" in favor of war against Iraq, with all that coverage you gave to Laurie Mylroie's visit to campus...

Ha-Kol: You're not being fair. We just reported what was going on here. We didn't advocate any particular policy and we are certainly not going to endorse any particular candidate- not that it would make a difference, anyhow.

Arkush: All right. I won't finish what I was saying. But can I at least say that I wasn't supporting Ross Perot?

Ha-Kol: Okay. But let's change the subject. Did you have any fun in Boston?

Arkush: Now and then. I couldn't help it. But to tell you the truth, and this might sound kind of pathetic, I don't think I've had as much

fun lately as I am having right now, inventing your questions and responding to them.

Ha-Kol: That's it. You've made it impossible now for me to thank you.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We are in such a hurry to get this newsletter out before the holidays that we are not even ready yet to give a preview of some of the events already planned (but not yet fixed) for this semester. We will, for instance, reinstitute our JUST LUNCH program, but we do not yet know where we will do it or who our speakers will be. One thing that is already on the agenda for sure, however, is a program for which we have the Music Department to thank. On Saturday, October 24 at 8:15 p.m., the West End Klezmerim, a widely renowned band, will be appearing in the Anderson Center Concert Theater. With regard to other events, we will keep you posted as our plans solidify.

ALUMNI AFFAIRS

We have been attempting lately, by every means possible to involve our alumni in our affairs. Focusing, naturally, on students who have either been majors in Judaic Studies or who have taken a significant number of courses with us, we have tended to overlook the possibility that there are interested alumni who graduated from our institution even before our program came into existence. We have been reminded that such people exist by the following letter sent to Yedida Stillman by Stuart L. Leeder of Foster City, California:

"I was browsing through one of the bulletins sent to alumni which mentioned 'Beta Israel: A House Divided,' a cultural study of Ethiopian Jewry and a museum show curated by David Becker [SUNY-B, '86, MA '87]. It may be of interest to you to know that an alumnus of Harpur College (1964), namely myself, played an active role in the rescue of these people to Israel through my work in the American Association for Ethiopian Jews. In April of 1983 as part of an AAJE operation I personally smuggled by van the first group of Ethiopian Jews out of Sudanese refugee camps... [Mr. Leeder's letter then proceeds with much interesting information about his efforts, which we do not have the space to print, ed.] If any of this is of interest to you or anyone else in your department, please let me know."

If anyone is interested we will make Mr. Leeder's address available upon request.

ALUMNI MARRIAGES

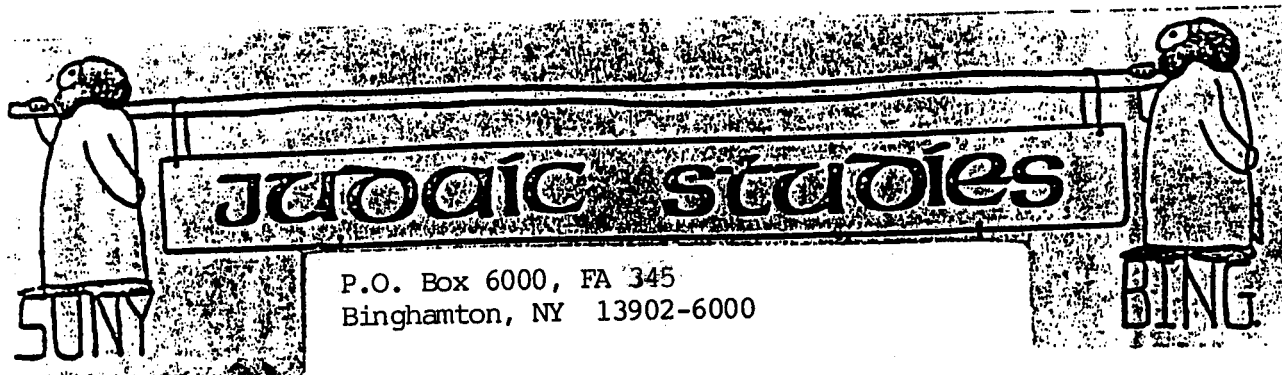
David and Sandra Becker report the birth of another boy, Amichai. Together with his older brother and parents, Amichai will be immigrating next month to the only country in the world where his name will raise no eyebrows. Finally, we should mention a note we received recently from one of our majors back in the '70s. Shelli Kastin reports the birth of a son, Elliot Andrew Wilson on June 14, 1992. Mazel tov. Mazel tov.

THANKS!

Since the appearance of our last newsletter, we have received a number of donations for which we are happy to be able to express our gratitude. The list of donors includes Michael Berman, Ira Cohen, Sophie Cox, Jennie Eber, Mr. and Mrs. David Epstein, Mr. and Mrs. Barry Fischer, Eliot Friedman, Ruth and James Gitlitz, Murray Gruber, Dr. Stuart Kahn, Robert Klass, Suzanne Levine, Jill and Ira Lipson, Lisa Menasse-Palmer, Bess Pierson, Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Rafalaf, Scott Rubin, Suzie and Brian Savitch, Rabbi Elihu and Dorothy Schagrin, Scott Sheflin, Tammy Smiley, Lori Spar, Kerry Stelzer, Norman and Yedida Stillman, Joyce Stillman, Michael Stromberg, Lance Sussman, Mr. and Mrs. William Walter, Dr. Michael Wolff, and Zelda Zeger. Our gratefulness to these people, like our neediness, is boundless. So please, if you can spare a few dollars or a lot of dollars, send them to us. We promise to put them to good use.

In the meantime,

SHANAH TOVAH



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