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# yediAut



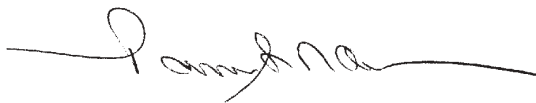

**Pamela Nadell,**  
Director, Jewish  
Studies Program



**Howard Wachtel,**  
Director, Center for  
Israeli Studies

## From the Directors

**Y***ediAut*, the newsletter of the Jewish Studies Program and the Center for Israeli Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences at American University, is dedicated to building bridges between countries, among disciplines, and across time. The key links in our bridges are the many programs, courses, and events we sponsor. In future issues, our news and feature articles and profiles will address a wide range of issues in Jewish and Israeli studies. We welcome your ideas as we nurture *YediAut*, and our programs, from strength to strength. ■

The center establishes a bridge from Israel to the United States . . .

## AU Launches the Center for Israeli Studies

by Howard Wachtel, Director

In the fall of 1998, the Cora and John H. Davis Foundation presented American University with a generous grant to mark the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the state of Israel. Several AU faculty and a representative



AU President Benjamin Ladner and Shimon Peres, former prime minister of Israel, just before Peres received an honorary doctorate from American University to mark the founding of the Center for Israeli Studies

designated by President Benjamin Ladner decided that the university could best commemorate Israel's creation by establishing a permanent center dedicated to the scholarly and intellectual exploration of Israeli society and culture.

The Center for Israeli Studies has become a unique university-based institution in Washington, D.C.,

designed to become a national and international hub for the creation and dissemination of knowledge about Israel, including its performing and visual arts, literature and letters, economy, environment, law, and society. The center's two inaugural events—a reception for the Batsheva Dance Company and the awarding of an honorary degree to former Prime Minister Shimon Peres at the 1998 commencement of the College of Arts and Sciences—as well as 14 other recent programs, indicate this breadth of interest. The center sponsors three primary initiatives: conferences of interest to Americans and Israelis both inside and outside the academy; in-residence Israeli scholars, writers, policy makers, and artists, who teach university classes and participate in public programs for the wider community; and AU's World Capitals study abroad program in Israel. In January 1999, the Association for Israel Studies moved its headquarters to American University and is now housed in the center. We are excited about this bridge to the association.

The Center for Israeli Studies is a new venture, which former Ambassador Ben-Elissar characterized as *courageous*. I take his statement seriously and add my own description of *ambitious*. The center establishes a bridge from Israel to the United States, introduces the many contributions of Israeli society—its life and culture—to the public and university communities, and offers a perspective that, in the best tradition of a university, provides an open forum where many ideas and people can be showcased. Our task in the year ahead is to develop the resources appropriate to the center's courageous and wide-ranging ambitions. ■

### Courses in Jewish Studies at AU



During 1998–1999, in addition to our rich internship opportunities, students chose from more than 16 Jewish studies courses: ancient and modern Jewish

history, Hebrew language and Hebrew Bible, Profile of Israel (taught in Jerusalem) and History of Israel, and Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. Bialik Prize-winning poet Moshe Dor, best known to American audiences as writer of the song “Erev Shel Shoshanim,” taught undergraduates the General Education course Voices of Modern Jewish Literature. In a

1998 summer model institute, African American–Jewish Relations in the United States, students joined with Prof. Russell Adams, chairman of Howard University's Department of Afro-American Studies, and Prof. Pamela Nadell in an exploration of the history and current state of African American–Jewish relations. ■

## The Arts and Literature in Jewish and Israeli Studies at AU

In the first year of the Center for Israeli Studies, artist in residence Nahum Tevet installed his exhibition *Arrangement for Six Units* in AU's Watkins Art Gallery. Israeli author and writer in residence David Grossman gave a public reading from his work and discussed writing with graduate students in the Department of Literature's Creative Writing Program (cosponsored by the center, Jewish Studies Program, and Visiting Writers Series). Two choreographers in residence from the Batsheva Dance Company of Israel taught AU dance students a scene from *Anaphase*, which the students then performed publicly in December 1998 and again during the annual meeting of the Association for Israel Studies the following May.

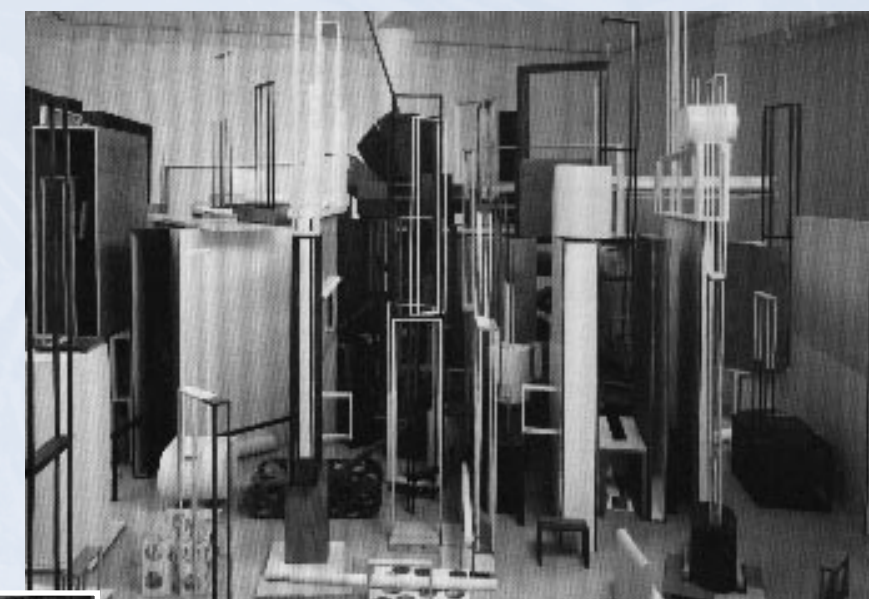
In addition to these activities, the center mounted an exhibit of historic posters, *Zionism and Israel*, in the Bender Library and accepted from Eliahu Ben-Elissar, the former Israeli ambassador, a collection of books and videos for the library. ■



Writer in residence David Grossman.



Israeli ambassador Eliahu Ben-Elissar presented a collection of documents and other materials to the Bender Library. From left to right, Ambassador Ben-Elissar, Patricia Wand, university librarian, and Howard Wachtel, director of the Center for Israeli Studies.



Arrangement of Six Units by artist in residence Nahum Tevet



An exhibit of historic posters, *Zionism and Israel*, in Bender Library, cosponsored by the Jewish Studies Program and Center for Israeli Studies





Yakir Plessner, 1999-2000  
Center for Israeli Studies  
scholar in residence

## Spotlight on Our Visiting Faculty at AU

In its inaugural year, the Center for Israeli Studies launched a program of in-residence Israeli scholars and artists. Designed to build bridges, the extended visits of the scholars in residence allow them to share their cultural, artistic, and scientific achievements with students and faculty and our wider community. In 1998-1999, environmental scientist in residence and Ben Gurion University professor Pedro Berliner shared his research on agroforestry systems in arid zones

with the AU community. In 1999-2000 the Center for Israeli Studies is delighted to host Hebrew University professor Yakir Plessner for the academic year. Plessner is associate professor and chair of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Management at Hebrew University and fellow and secretary of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. He was formerly deputy governor of the Bank of Israel and economic advisor to the minister of finance of Israel. ■

## AU's World Capitals Program in Jerusalem

By Dani Schydrowsky, Professor of Economics

In spring 1999, the Center for Israeli Studies inaugurated AU's World Capitals Program in Jerusalem. Housed at the Hebrew University's Rothberg International School, the semester provides participants with access to Israel's premier

university's English-language academic offerings in the historic heart of Israel. To ensure an effective start to the program, Daniel Schydrowsky, professor of economics and Center for Israeli Studies faculty associate, was on site for the semester as program director. He also offered a special Jewish Studies Program seminar, Profile of Israel.

Participating students took courses in Hebrew language and modern Arabic, plus Halacha and the Modern World, the Defense of Israel, Archeology of Jerusalem, and Politics of International Terrorism. They also traveled extensively. Throughout their stay they explored Israel's daily life, its national politics and an election, religious and secular demonstrations against and for the Israeli Supreme Court, the intricacies of Christian observance in Israel, and through such simple tasks as collecting their mail and getting telephones installed, the mundane aspects of living in a foreign culture.

By the end of their stay, the participants had become experts at managing in the Mt. Scopus dorms, buying their own food and cooking it, as well as navigating Israeli culture in elementary Hebrew and English. Now they have returned home to American University as ambassadors to the next class of students headed in spring 2000 for AU's World Capitals Program in Jerusalem. ■



Top: Prof. Daniel Schydrowsky, Dept. of Economics

Bottom: Heidi Jones, Nicole Samuel, Nicole Ruskin, Sarab Capper, and Alexis Bock spent spring semester 1999 at Hebrew University as the inaugural class of AU's World Capitals Program in Jerusalem. To mark AU's inaugural Jerusalem class, the B'nai B'rith World Center recognized Sarab Capper and Nicole Samuel for outstanding work in the Jewish studies course Profile of Israel.

## News from the Affiliated Faculty of the Jewish Studies Program

**Mohammed Abu-Nimer**, School of International Service, has just had published *Dialogue, Conflict Resolution, and Change: Arab-Jewish Encounters in Israel* (SUNY Press, 1999).

**Leila Gal Berner**, Department of Philosophy and Religion, has a forthcoming book, *A Mediterranean Jewish Community*.

**Richard Breitman**, Department of History, authored *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew* (Hill and Wang, 1998), a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award in Holocaust Studies and just published in paperback. Breitman also serves as editor in chief of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*.

**Gershon Greenberg**, Department of Philosophy and Religion, has a new book out, *Faith and Holocaust as Issues of Jewish Religious Thought in the USA, 1938-1948: An Annotated Listing of Articles and Books*, (Bar Ilan University, 1999). Greenberg also published "Wartime American Mizrahi and Agudat Yisrael Religious Responses to the Holocaust" in *Mikba'el*, in 1999.

**Gregg Ivers**, Department of Government, is the author of *To Build a Wall: American Jews and the Separation of Church and State*.

**Alan Kraut**, Department of History, served as historical consultant to *Sitting Shiva with the Rogarshevskys: Lower East Side Immigrants Confront Death and Dying*, a Lower East Side Tenement House Museum exhibit. He received an award for creative and innovative excellence from the National Association for Summer Sessions for his summer institute, Ethnicity and the City, Three Neighborhoods: Harlem, Spanish Harlem, and the Lower East Side.

**Yehuda Lukacs**, School of International Service, has revised *Israel, Jordan, and the Peace Process*, which is forthcoming from Syracuse University Press.

**Arnost Lustig**, Department of Literature, reissued in paperback his book *The Unloved: (From the Diary of Perla S.)*.

**Pamela Nadell**, Department of History and director of the Jewish Studies Program, authored *Women Who Would Be Rabbis: A History of Women's Ordination, 1889-1985* (Beacon Press,

1998), a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award in Women's Studies and just published in paperback. Nadell also serves as book review editor for *American Jewish History*.

**Amos Perlmutter**, Department of Government, published *Making the World Safe for Democracy: A Century of Wilsonianism and Its Totalitarian Challengers*.

**David Rosenbloom**, Department of Government, coedited *Classic Readings in American Politics* with Pierto S. Nivola. He has coauthored several articles on public management reform in Israel in English and in Hebrew. In winter 1999-2000 Rosenbloom will teach the New Public Management and Administrative Reform course at Hebrew University.

**Daniel Schydrowsky**, Department of Economics, spent spring semester 1999 in Jerusalem launching AU's first World Capitals semester in Jerusalem at Hebrew University.

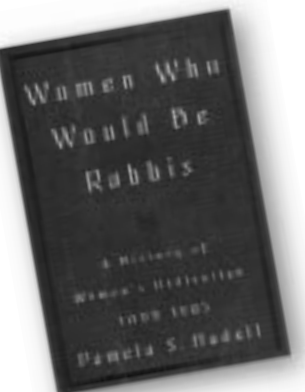
**Simona Sharoni**, Washington Semester Program, is the author of *Gender and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Politics of Women's Resistance*.

**Rita Simon**, Department of Justice, Law and Society, is editor of *Gender Issues and Controversial Issues of Public Policy*. She is also the author of *In the Golden Land: A Century of Russian and Soviet Jewish Immigration in America* (Praeger, 1997).

**Myra Sklarew**, Department of Literature and codirector of its Masters in Fine Arts Program, is the author of *Lithuania: New and Selected Poems*.

**Russell Stone**, Department of Sociology, is the editor of *Critical Essays on Israeli Issues and Scholarship*. He also serves as the academic liaison for the Association for Israel Studies.

**Howard Wachtel**, Department of Economics and director of the Center for Israeli Studies, is spending fall semester 1999 as a distinguished visiting scholar at the American Academy in Berlin. During spring 2000 he will be an academic visitor at the Truman Institute, Hebrew University, and visiting scholar in the Public Policy Program, Tel Aviv University. ■



# The Jewish studies program and center for Israeli studies thank the following donors for their generous contributions.

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## “Israel after Oslo”

By Russell A. Stone, Professor of Sociology and AIS Academic Liaison

To celebrate the new link between AU and the Association for Israel Studies (AIS), the university hosted the association's 15th annual meeting on May 23–25,1999. AU's newly renovated conference facility in the Ward Circle Building presented an ideal setting for the meeting, which featured more than 70 papers, talks, and presentations on the theme “Israel after Oslo.” Highlights included addresses by Israeli ambassador Zalman Shoval, former ambassador Itamar Rabinovich of Tel Aviv University, Sen. Joseph Lieberman, assistant secretary of state Martin Indyk, Hebrew University professor and president of the New Israel Fund Yoram Peri, and former cabinet secretary Arye Naor. Various conference events were hosted by AU President Benjamin Ladner, Washington College of Law dean Claudio Grossman, and Center for Israeli Studies director Howard Wachtel. Evening programs included a reception and concert at the embassy of Israel and a dance program and discussion featuring AU's Department of Performing Arts dancers in a



Intellectual exchange at the 1999 Annual Meeting of the Association for Israel Studies in the newly renovated conference facilities of the Ward Circle Building

Highlights included addresses by Israeli ambassador Zalman Shoval, former ambassador Itamar Rabinovich of Tel Aviv University, Sen. Joseph Lieberman, assistant secretary of state Martin Indyk, Hebrew University professor and president of the New Israel Fund Yoram Peri, and former cabinet secretary Arye Naor.

performance of the Batsheva Dance Company's controversial piece “Ehad Mi Yodea” from *Anaphase*.

In the year 2000, the 16th annual conference of AIS will take place in Israel—the first time it has been held outside the United States. This event is tentatively scheduled for June at the Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beersheva, and at the Desert Research Center at Sde Boker. AU and the Center for Israeli Studies look forward to assisting with travel and program arrangements for the large contingent of U.S. association members hoping to participate. ■



Prof. Russell Stone, Association for Israel Studies academic liaison

## Association for Israel Studies Moves to AU

By Russell A. Stone, Professor of Sociology and AIS Academic Liaison

As part of the inaugural activities of the Center for Israeli Studies (CIS), American University has become the administrative base for the Association for Israel Studies (AIS). Founded in 1985, AIS is an international scholarly association of researchers, professors, and graduate students whose interests include contemporary Israeli society, culture, politics, and international relations. AIS has more than 250 members located at universities, research institutes, and public agencies, mainly in the United States and Israel. There are also members in several European, Middle Eastern, and Asian countries. The association publishes the twice-yearly *Israel Studies Bulletin*, hosts an annual meeting, and sponsors publications and Israel-focused sessions at various scholarly meetings, such as the annual gatherings of the Middle East Studies Association, American Political Science Association, and International Studies Association.

By recent agreement between AU provost Cornelius Kerwin and AIS president Pnina Lahav (Boston University, School of Law), CIS is to provide administrative facilities and support for AIS for

a three-year period. AU's College of Arts and Sciences and Jewish Studies Program will assure office, telephone, and logistical support for the association. Internet connections permit the Center for Israeli Studies to provide support to the international board of AIS, linking its current president, Prof. Hanna Herzog, from her home base at Tel

**Founded in 1985, AIS is an international scholarly association of researchers, professors, and graduate students whose interests include contemporary Israeli society, culture, politics, and international relations.**

Aviv University to an executive committee and board scattered across the United States, Europe, and Israel.

Sociology professor Russell Stone is academic liaison for the association and AU. Administrative assistance for 1999–2000 is being provided by sociology graduate student Kate Nangeroni. Visit the AIS Web site <www.AisIsraelStudies.org> or contact the AIS by phone at 202-885-2630 or by e-mail at <ais@american.edu>. ■



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This issue of *YediAUt* is dedicated to “our teachers and their students and the students of their students” down through the generations.

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## Jewish History at AU

The conference “The History of American Jewish Political Conservatism,” cosponsored by AU’s Jewish Studies Program and Department of History and Temple University’s Feinstein Center for the Study of American Jewish History, was a highlight of the past year. Over the course of two days, scholars, journalists, and activists traced the historical development of American Jewish political conservatism from its emergence in the 1930s to the “think tanks” of today. The conference brought together critics at large Midge Decter, Charles Krauthammer, Elliot Abrams, and Paul Berman with scholars Jonathan Sarna, George Nash, Richard Gid Powers, Michael Kazin, and others. Plans to publish these papers are under way.

Other special programs included a symposium, cosponsored by the Department of History, Center for Israeli Studies, and U.S. Holocaust Memorial

Museum, exploring key issues raised by Richard Breitman’s new book, *Official Secrets: What the*

*Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans*

*Knew*, a presentation by

Tel Aviv University

archaeologist Zvi

Lederman showing slides

of the excavations at Bet

Shemesh, an opportunity

for *Lilith* magazine editor

in chief Susan Weidman

Schneider to join stu-

dents in the American

Jewish Women’s History

course for dinner, and a

presentation by Lehigh

University professor

Chava Weissler about her new book, *Voices of the Matriarchs*. ■



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