



Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism

NEWSLETTER • ACADEMIC YEAR 2016–2017

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Inessa Laskova

From the Director...



Maurice Samuels

For the last few years, my reports have tended to focus on Islamist attacks on Jews in Europe, such as the horrific siege of the kosher supermarket in Paris in 2015. This past year, however, has seen a dramatic increase in antisemitism closer to home. According to the Anti-Defamation League, there was a 34 percent increase in the number of antisemitic incidents in the United States in 2016 compared to the prior year, with 30 percent of these incidents occurring after the presidential election in November. Things seem to be getting worse: the first quarter of 2017 saw a staggering increase of 86 percent in such incidents compared to the same period in 2016.

While some of the threats against Jewish community centers last winter turned out to be a hoax, there is no doubt that hate crimes against Jews and other minorities have spiked since Donald Trump took office. The reasons for this rise have yet to be determined. Have latent racists and antisemites simply become emboldened by the populist rhetoric of Trump and his supporters? Was this hatred simply waiting for a “dog-whistle” to emerge into the open? Or is it a new phenomenon?

The White House has been oddly reluctant to condemn these threats. Despite the fact that the president’s son-in-law lost multiple family members in the Holocaust, representatives of the administration did not mention Jews in their statement regarding Holocaust Remembrance Day. When pressed, a spokesman responded that they wanted to call attention to other victims of the Nazis. And as I write this update, I have just learned that the State Department’s office to monitor and combat antisemitism, created in 2004, is unstaffed as of July 1, 2017.

To cast light on this new reality, the Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism will be co-hosting a major international conference on “Racism, Antisemitism, and the Radical Right” on September 10–11, 2017. Funded with a generous gift from the Knapp Family Foundation, and with the support of the MacMillan Center and the Whitney Humanities Center, the conference represents the first collaboration between YPSA and the newly created Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity, and Transnational Migration at Yale. The conference will be free and open to the public, although registration is required. Please see our website for details: <http://ypsa.yale.edu>.

(continues on page 2)

From the Director... (continued)



Kathryn Lofton, Yale University

Over the course of the 2016-17 academic year, YPSA was proud to host eleven lectures on topics relating to both historical and contemporary forms of antisemitism. Shortly before the election, a full auditorium at the Whitney Humanities Center greeted a dazzling lecture by Yale's own Kathryn Lofton entitled “Trumping Reality: Popular Religion in American Democracy.” Professor Lofton helped explain Trump's appeal to Christian Evangelical voters by setting his unorthodox campaign in the context of American religious history.

Other highlights of the year included a lunch seminar by Maud Mandel of Brown University on the Muslim-Jewish conflict in France and a talk by Ken Stern, formerly of the AJC, on the issue of campus speech codes. In conversation with Yale's Marci Shore, the Polish social activist and theater director Krzysztof Czyzewski described his efforts to build bridges between Jews and non-Jews through innovative performance collaborations. Several lecturers spoke about European antisemitism in the pre-War years: Marc Caplan addressed the destruction of Galicia in the writing of S. Ansky while Steven Englund of Technical University of Berlin compared political antisemitism and “ambient anti-Judaism” in Germany, Austria-Hungary, and France on the eve of WWI.

An unusually large number of this year's lecturers dealt with the Holocaust, and more specifically with attempts to come to terms with it in the post-War period. Christophe Boltanski, a journalist and writer in Paris, spoke about his memoir-like

novel *La Cache*, about his grandparents' experience during WWII and its long-lasting effect on his family. Christian Delage (Paris 8, Institut d'histoire du temps présent) spoke about different iterations of Simon Srebnik's survivor testimony. Leo Treitler (CUNY) touched on elements of his personal history in his talk on memorializing Jewish victims in popular music, as did Liliane Weissberg (Penn) in her lecture, “Image, Voice, Text: On Recording Holocaust Victims.” Finally, Ilaria Pavan (Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa) described efforts to restore Jewish property after WWII.

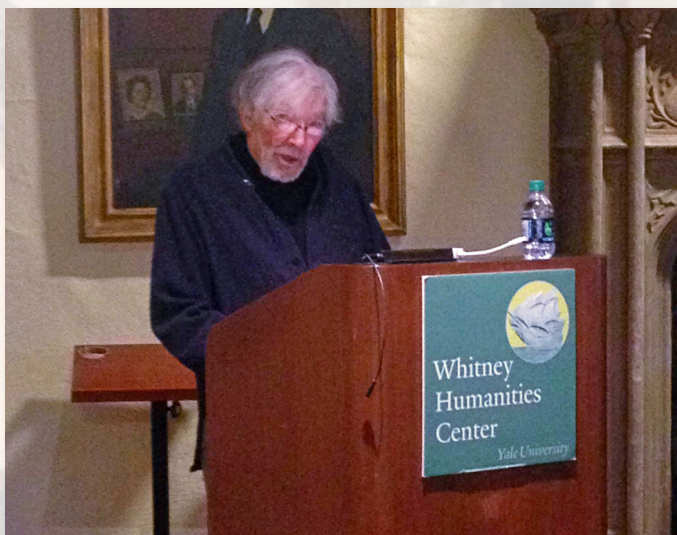
Thanks to the ongoing support of the Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Foundation, YPSA was able to award seven research grants to Yale undergraduate and graduate students for the upcoming year. Topics explored by our student winners include antisemitism in French rural regions; recent American immigration to Israel; cooperation between contemporary Muslim and Jewish activists combatting hatred in Berlin; and the links between anticolonialism and the fight against antisemitism in the inter-War period. Three graduate students at the Yale School of Drama will travel to Poland and Romania to develop a unique theater piece about the experience of antisemitism in those countries. YPSA is also proud to support the research of Professor Francesca Trivellato on the image of Jews in European literature about credit and bills of exchange in the early modern period.



Marc Caplan, Yale University

of Yale's quality studying this topic is critical for us [...] to combat this kind of scourge."

— Ira Forman, Former US State Department Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism



Leo Treitler, CUNY Graduate Center

Finally, I am very pleased to announce that in the 2017-18 academic year, Adam Stern will be joining us as the first YPSA Postdoctoral Associate. Chosen from a large pool of outstanding candidates, Dr. Stern recently completed his Ph.D. in the Study of Religion at Harvard University and has taught previously at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His book project focuses on the issue of "Jewish survival" as theorized by major modern Jewish thinkers including Hannah Arendt, Walter Benjamin, Franz Rosenzweig, and Sigmund Freud. He will develop and teach a one-semester undergraduate course in the Humanities Department in the Spring of 2018 entitled "Analyzing Antisemitism," which will study both the theory and history of antisemitism. It is our hope that this course will become a staple of Yale's curriculum.

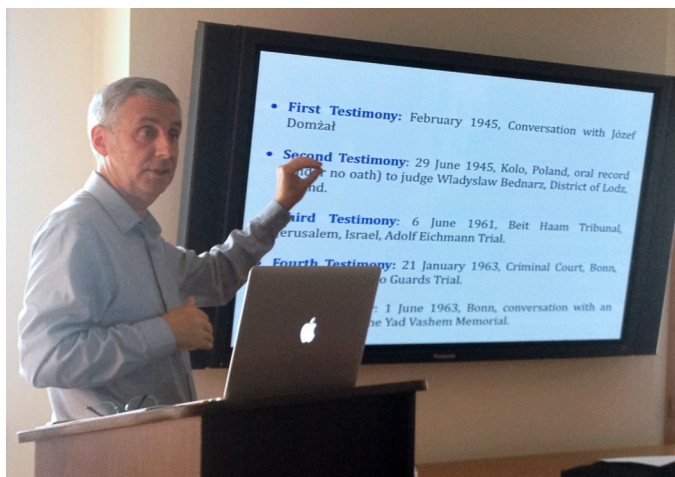
The postdoctoral position was made possible through the generosity of many donors. It has been a privilege to get to know these supporters and to have the opportunity to work with them to build our program. As one of only two programs devoted to the study of antisemitism in the United States, YPSA plays an important role in making sure that attention is brought to bear on the continuing problem of anti-Jewish hatred. At a time when issues of race and religion are increasingly the subject of debate at Yale and other colleges around the country, our presence at the Whitney Humanities Center, at the heart of the university, helps ensure that antisemitism remains part of the discussion.

I owe a huge debt of thanks to my colleagues from across the university who have served on the YPSA Advisory Board, assisted in reading fellowship applications, and attended our various events. Finally, let me thank our exceptional administrator, Inessa Laskova, as well as Gary Tomlinson, Jessica Kasje, and the entire staff of the Whitney Humanities Center for all their help and support over the past year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maurice Samuels".

Maurice Samuels

Director, Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism



Christian Delage, University of Paris 8

Tuesday, September 20

The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series

Christian Delage, University of Paris 8

“Simon Srebnik, Reiterating the Testimony of a Holocaust Survivor (1945–2003)”

Co-sponsored by the Department of French

Tuesday, September 27

Christophe Boltanski, journalist and author of “La Cache” and Laura Marris, translator of the Novel

The author and translator will read passages and discuss this prize-winning novel.

Co-sponsored by the Poynter Fellowship in Journalism,
Department of French



Christophe Boltanski and Laura Marris

Wednesday, October 26

The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series

Kathryn Lofton, Yale University

“Trumping Reality: Popular Religion in American Democracy”



Kathryn Lofton, Yale University

Thursday, December 8

The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series

Seminar by Maud Mandel, Brown University

“Understanding Muslim–Jewish Conflict in France:
A Historical Overview”

Wednesday, January 25

The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series

Leo Treitler, CUNY Graduate Center

“Confronting Germany’s Past: Memorializing Jewish Victims in Popular Music”

Wednesday, February 8

The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series

Liliane Weissberg, University of Pennsylvania

“Image, Voice, Text: On Recording Holocaust Victims”

Wednesday, February 22

**The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker
Lecture Series**

Kenneth S. Stern, Executive Director of the Justus &
Karin Rosenberg Foundation
“Antisemitism and Campus Speech Codes”

Wednesday, March 8

**The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker
Lecture Series**

Krzysztof Czyzewski, social activist, theater director,
essayist, publisher, founder of the Borderland Foundation
in Poland
“Encounters with the Other: The Art of Building Invisible
Bridges”

Wednesday, March 28

**The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker
Lecture Series**

Ilaria Pavan, Scuola Normale Superiore
“Looted Jewish Art in Italy. Evidence and Denial
(1938-2017)”



Ilaria Pavan, Scuola Normale Superiore

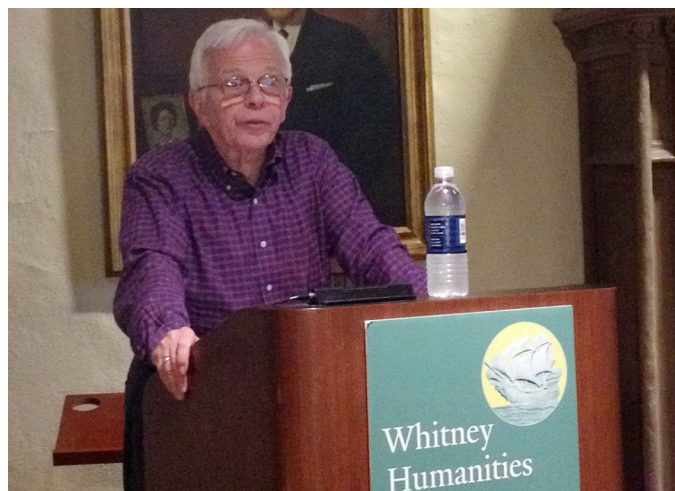


Wednesday, April 5

**The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker
Lecture Series**

Marc Caplan, Yale University

“A Disenchanted Elijah: Travel Writing, Allegory, and the
Dissimulation of Self in S. Ansky’s *Destruction of Galicia*”



Steven Englund, Technical University of Berlin

Tuesday, April 25

**The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker
Lecture Series**

Steven Englund, Technical University of Berlin

“An Assessment of Political Antisemitism and Ambient
Antijudaism in Germany, Austria-Hungary, and France,
on the Eve of World War One”

2017 Recipients of Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Research Grants

Students

Elisabeth Becker, *Yale Graduate Student in Sociology*

My research project examines the experiences of Muslim and Jewish activists in Berlin who cooperate in resisting and responding to antisemitism and anti-Muslim acts, experiences, and discourse. Through participation in Salaam-Shalom events and interviews with its members, I highlight how a neighborhood initiative has blossomed into a model for cross-cultural/cross-religious cooperation and support in populaces often seen at odds with one another, but in fact facing similar experiences of discrimination. I seek to understand the development of this initiative, as well as its implications in and beyond the city of Berlin at a time of increasing divisions in Europe.

Daniella Cohen, *Yale Undergraduate Student*

I am applying to the Baron Student Research Grant to help fund a five-week trip to Paris and Auvillar, France. I hope to explore how the rise of antisemitism affected French Jews in big cities versus rural areas, how non-Jewish French citizens interacted with Jewish neighbors, and the ways in which each location contributed to hiding/protecting Jews during the Holocaust. During my time in Paris, I will interact with the modern Jewish community and visit a number of powerful memorial sites – Paris's Deportation Memorial, the Mémorial de la Shoah in Drancy, and the Museum of Resistance and Deportation of the Cher in Bourges, among others. In Auvillar, I will meet citizens with whom I will discuss the town's rich history, specifically pertaining to relations between Jews and those of Roman Catholic or other ethnic/religious backgrounds. Overall, I intend to reflect on my modern experience of antisemitism in France (or the lack thereof) and seek to understand my personal experience abroad as a Modern Orthodox Jew in a country where antisemitism is on the rise in the context of a larger narrative about the history of antisemitism in France.

Charlotte Kiechel, *Yale Graduate Student in History*

My project, "The Interwar Fight against Racism and Antisemitism: Documenting Nazi and Colonial Atrocities within the 'French Imperial Nation-State,'" examines the practices of atrocity-documentation in interwar and wartime

France. In recent years, historians and literary theorists alike have stressed the interconnections between the histories and memories of Nazi and colonial violence. Rather than viewing the atrocities of National Socialism and colonialism as two historically distinct phenomena, scholars have argued that they are in fact interrelated.

Yet while many scholars have unearthed these "multidirectional" connections in the postwar writings of figures such as Hannah Arendt or Aimé Césaire, few have grounded this insight in the experiences and practices of individuals who witnessed and endured the Nazi persecution of European Jewry – that is, these interconnections have largely been located in postwar reflections, not contemporary accounts.

Taking this oversight into account, my project focuses on anticolonial and humanitarian activists' documentary practices before and during the Second World War. My project addresses these central questions: To what extent did the logic and legacy of colonial rule shape victims' and witnesses' responses to Nazi persecution? How, in seeking to make sense of the ensuing destruction, did Jewish and non-Jewish witnesses draw upon documentary and interpretative strategies first developed in response to colonial violence? And finally, how did the experience of working against colonial forms of persecution inform witnesses' and victims' responses to Nazi persecution?

This summer I will be conducting research in four archives in France. I thank the program for its continued support.

Eve Sneider, *Yale Undergraduate Student*

This summer, I will interview people between the ages of 18 and 30 who have immigrated to Israel from North America, and use these interviews as the basis for a long-form written and/or audio journalism piece exploring young adult immigration from North America to Israel. The experience of making aliyah and the practicalities of immigrating in young adulthood fascinate me. I am eager to hear the people I speak with reflect on their motives, including whether antisemitism plays a role, and how the fantasy of Israel pre-immigration compares to the reality. I am also curious to learn about the connection between political views and the decision to make aliyah. Many people who make aliyah have grown up with deeply entrenched political beliefs about Israel. Does life in Israel reinforce or change those views?

Through the generous support of the Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Foundation, YPSA was able to award eight research grants to Yale students and faculty this year.

Tracking the change or continuity of my subjects' political leanings will elucidate meaningful effects of the overall aliyah experience. When it comes to Israel, hearing someone speak enlivens the discourse and humanizes what too often becomes an abstract conversation. Individually, these narratives will engage us on a personal level. Collectively, they will enrich our understanding of Israel. My goal is to humanize and reevaluate often fraught and highly political conversations about Israel in America, especially among people my own age.

Aneesha Kudtarkar, Emma Weinstein, Jecamiah Ybanez

Yale School of Drama Graduate Students

We, the cohort of first-year MFA Directing students at Yale School of Drama, will attend theater festivals in Romania and Poland and work with drama students to develop a new piece of theater, "Shattered Vessels," that explores the history of antisemitism in both countries. We hope our work will illuminate the resurgence of religious intolerance and xenophobia in Europe and the United States and forge a lasting collaboration across borders.

Faculty

Francesca Trivellato is a historian of early modern Europe and the Mediterranean whose interests revolve around a broad set of questions about the organization and the culture of the market place in the pre-industrial world.

She received her BA from the University of Venice, Italy (1995), a PhD in economic and social history from the Luigi Bocconi University in Milan (1999), and a PhD in history from Brown University (2004). She is a recipient of fellowships from the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Institute for Advanced Study, the American Academy in Berlin, and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

Her *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (Yale University Press, 2009) won the 2010 AHA Leo Gershoy Award for the most outstanding work published in English on any aspect of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European history; was the co-winner of the Jordan Schnitzer Book Award for the best book in Early Modern and Modern Jewish History

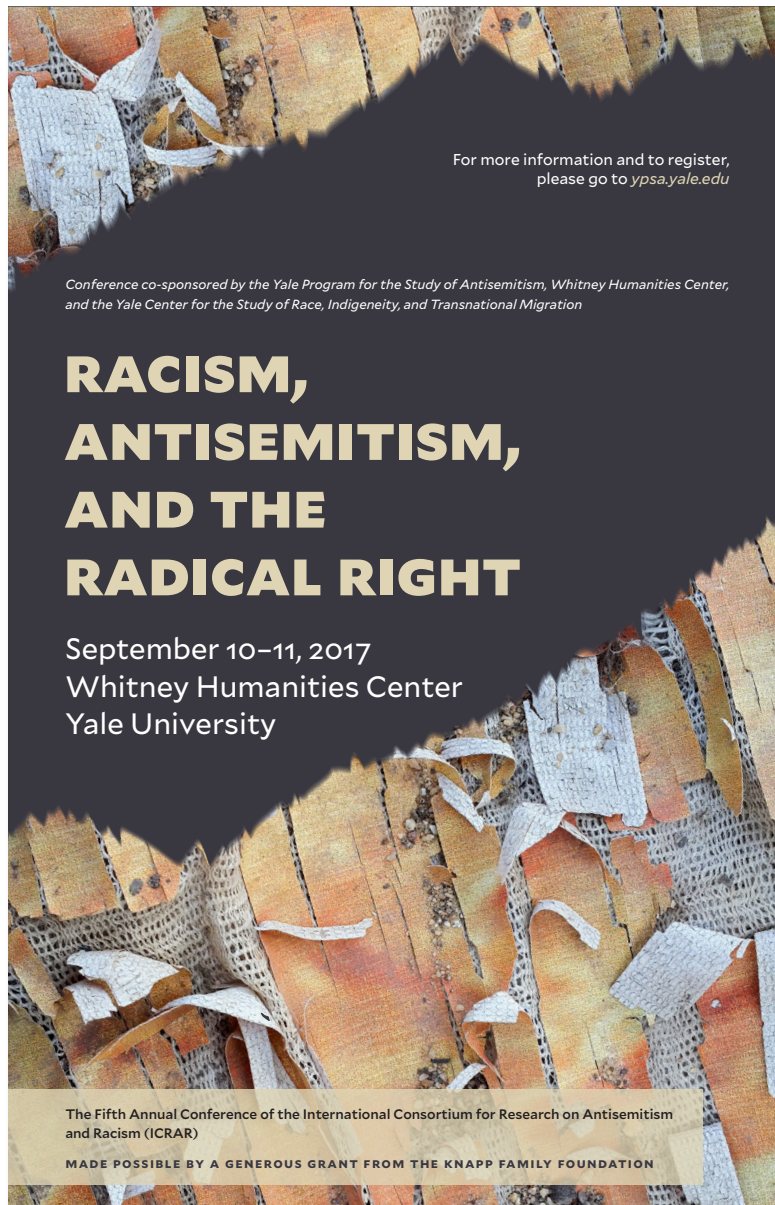
published in English between 2006 and 2010; and was selected for the long list of the 2010 Cundill Prize in History.

An earlier book examined the transformation of Venetian glass manufacturing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with regard to changes in the history of technology, craft guilds, women's labor, and colonial trade: *Fondamenta dei Vetrai: Lavoro, tecnologia e mercato a Venezia tra Sei e Settecento* (Rome: Donzelli, 2000).

Other topics addressed in recent writings include maritime and commercial law, Renaissance Italy and the Muslim Mediterranean, microhistory, and global history.

She is completing a book on the images of Jews in European literature on commerce, tentatively entitled *The Promise and Peril of Credit: A Forgotten Legend About Jews, Finance, and the Making of European Commercial Society*. It examines the surprising twists and turns of a baseless yet influential narrative according to which medieval Jews fleeing France invented marine insurance and bills of exchange, the two key instruments of European commercial credit at the time.

She is also designing a digital platform for the analysis and visualization of the longest and most homogenous series of business contracts from pre-industrial Europe: roughly 5,000 limited partnerships (*accomandite*) registered in Florence from 1445 to 1808.



For more information and to register,
please go to ypsa.yale.edu

*Conference co-sponsored by the Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism, Whitney Humanities Center,
and the Yale Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity, and Transnational Migration*

RACISM, ANTISEMITISM, AND THE RADICAL RIGHT

September 10–11, 2017
Whitney Humanities Center
Yale University

The Fifth Annual Conference of the International Consortium for Research on Antisemitism
and Racism (ICRAR)

MADE POSSIBLE BY A GENEROUS GRANT FROM THE KNAPP FAMILY FOUNDATION



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