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ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Indiana University, Associate Professor with tenure (2018-present; Assistant Professor, 2011-2018), Department of Religious Studies

Director, Olamot Center for Scholarly and Cultural Exchange with Israel (2018–present)

Core Faculty, Borns Jewish Studies Program

Adjunct Professor in Central Eurasian Studies, History, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Ancient Studies, and Islamic Studies

EDUCATION

University of California, Los Angeles

Ph.D., Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (Late Antique Judaism), 2011

University of California, Los Angeles

M.A., Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (Ancient Iranian Studies), 2007

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Research Fellow in Talmud and Iranian Studies, 2006

University of Chicago Divinity School

M.A., History of Judaism, 2004

University of Chicago

B.A./A.M., English and Religious Studies, 2001

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Rabbinics, ancient Iranian studies, Talmud in its Sasanian context, comparative religion, ancient Jewish magic and medicine, Aramaic magic bowls, Zoroastrianism, Middle Persian (Pahlavi) literature, Judeo-Persian literature, religious interactions in early Islamic Iran, Jews of Persia

RESEARCH LANGUAGES

Hebrew, Aramaic (Talmud), Old Persian, Middle Persian, Modern Persian, Avestan, Arabic, French, German

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Rabbis, Sorcerers, Kings, and Priests: The Culture of the Talmud in Ancient Iran. Oakland: University of California Press, 2015.

Medicine in the Talmud: Natural and Supernatural Remedies between Magic and Science. Under review.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

“Zoroastrian Polemics against Judaism in the *Škand Gumānīg Wizār (Doubt-Dispelling Exposition).*” *Mizan: Journal for the Study of Muslim Societies and Civilizations* 3 (2018). Online at www.mizanproject.org.

“Excommunication in Jewish Babylonia: Comparing *Bavli Mo‘ed Qaṭan* 14b-17b and the Aramaic Bowl Spells in a Sasanian Context.” *Harvard Theological Review* 108 (2015): 552-578.

“The Boundaries of an Infidel in Zoroastrianism: A Middle Persian Term of Otherness for Jews, Christians, and Muslims.” *Iranian Studies* 48 (2015): 99-115.

“Empire and Authority in Sasanian Babylonia: The Rabbis and King Shapur in Dialogue.” *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 19 (2012): 148-180.

ESSAYS IN EDITED VOLUMES

“The Material Culture of the Jews in Sasanian Mesopotamia.” In *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Jews and Judaism in the Late Ancient Period*, eds. N. Koltun-Fromm and G. Kessler (Blackwell Publishing, 2019) (forthcoming).

“From Exile to Authority: Talmudic Portrayals of the Persians as Others.” In *Routledge Handbook of Jews and Judaism in Late Antiquity*, ed. C. Hezser (forthcoming).

“Clusters of Iranian Loanwords in Talmudic Folklore: The *Chapter of the Pious* (b. Ta’anit 18b-26a) in its Sasanian Context.” In *The Aggada of the Bavli and its Cultural World*, eds. G. Herman and J. Rubenstein (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2018), 125-148.

“Rabbinic Depictions of the Achaemenid King Cyrus the Great: The Babylonian Esther Midrash (bMeg. 10b-17a) in its Iranian Context.” In *The Talmud in its Iranian Context*, eds. C. Bakhos and R. Shayegan (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 112-139.

BOOKS IN PROGRESS

The Aramaic Bowl Spells and Polythetic Definitions of Babylonian Jewish Identity

A History of the Jews of Persia from Cyrus the Great to Ruhollah Khomeini

ARTICLES IN PROGRESS

“The Aramaic Incantation Bowls: Past, Present, and Future”

“Jews and Mandaeans in Sasanian Iran”

“The *Ganj-nāme*, Mishnah *Avot*, and Islamic-Jewish Syncretism in Judeo-Persian Texts”

EDITED VOLUMES

Iranian Studies, special edition of the journal, “Religious Trends in Late Ancient and Early Islamic Iran.” Volume 48, No. 1 (2015): 1-115. Co-edited with David Bennett.

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of Richard J. Bautch and Mark Lackowski, eds., *On Dating Persian Biblical Texts to the Persian Period: Discerning Criteria and Establishing Epochs* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (forthcoming).

Review of Martin Goodman, *A History of Judaism* (Princeton University Press, 2018), *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 87 (2019): 287-90.

Review of Frank F. Furstenberg, *Behind the Academic Curtain: How to Find Success and Happiness with a Ph.D.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), *Teaching Theology and Religion*, March, 2015.

Review of Shai Secunda and Steven Fine, eds., *Shoshannat Yaakov: Jewish and Iranian Studies in Honor of Yaakov Elman* (Boston: Brill, 2012), *Zion* 79 (2014): 438-42 [Hebrew].

Review of Sergey Dolgopolski, *The Open Past: Subjectivity and Remembering in the Talmud* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), *H-Net Reviews*, 2014.

Review of Rivka Ulmer, *Egyptian Cultural Icons in Midrash* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 42 (2011): 437.

MAGAZINE ARTICLES

“Don’t Try this at Home: The Unorthodox History of Medicine in the Talmud.” *Tablet Magazine*, forthcoming.

“Translations of the Talmud in Iran Today,” *Association for Jewish Studies Perspectives: The Translation Issue*, Fall 2015.

PRESENTATIONS

“A New Model for Jewish-Mandaean Relations in Sasanian Iran: The Case of Magic and Medicine.” Association for Jewish Studies, Annual Conference, Dec. 2019 (accepted).

“Rabbis and Others in Talmudic Medicine.” American Academy of Religion, Annual Conference, San Diego, Nov. 2019 (accepted).

Respondent, “Jerusalem Between Bible and Archaeology.” Lecture by Oded Lipschits, Indiana University *Themester* program, Nov. 2019.

“The Persian Context of the Babylonian Talmud.” Etz Chaim Sephardic Congregation, Indianapolis, 2019.

Interview of filmmaker Avi Nesher, Indiana University Cinema series, “Rage and Glory: Films of Israeli Filmmaker Avi Nesher,” 2019.

“Medical Remedies in the Babylonian Talmud: Magic or Medicine?” Congregation Beth Shalom, Bloomington, 2019.

“Charms against Diseases in the Aramaic Bowl Spells.” European Association of Biblical Studies, Annual Conference, Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, Belgium, 2016.

“Interreligious Polemics among Late Sasanian and Early Islamic Religions.” Middle East Studies Association, Annual Conference, 2016.

“Magic and Medicine in the Jewish Aramaic Incantation Bowls.” Association for Jewish Studies, Annual Conference, 2016.

“Zoroastrian Polemics against the Religions of Late Antiquity: A Study of the *Škand Gumānīg Wizār* in its Literary and Historical Context.” Indiana University, Workshop on Holistic Approaches to the Study of Early Islam and the Late Antique World, 2016.

“Talmudic Tales in their Iranian Context.” University of California, Los Angeles, Center for the Study of Religion, 2016.

“Language and Communication in Sasanian Mesopotamia.” New York University Conference, *The Aggada of the Babylonian Talmud and its Cultural World*, 2015.

“The Methods and Sources for the Study of the Talmud in Its Sasanian Context.” Association for Jewish Studies, Annual Conference, 2015.

“The Early Islamic Context of Pahlavi Texts on Jews and Judaism.” Indiana University, Islamic Studies Conference, 2014.

“Disease and Bodily Injury in the Jewish Aramaic Bowls from Sasanian Mesopotamia.” American Academy of Religion, Annual Conference, 2014.

“‘May there be Healing from Heaven’: Magic and the Human Body in the Jewish Aramaic Bowls.” University of Michigan, Midwest Ancient Judaism colloquium, 2014.

Respondent, Indiana University, Jewish Studies Graduate Student Conference, *Genesis to Yesterday: Memory, Representation, and Jewish Identity*, 2014.

“The Talmud in Ancient Iran: The Rabbis and Persian Priests in a Judicial Context.” University of California, Irvine, 2013.

“Excommunication and Rabbinic Authority in Late Sasanian Culture.” Association for Jewish Studies, Annual Conference, 2013.

“The Babylonian Talmud between Persia and Rome: Rabbis, Magians, and Magicians in their Sasanian Context.” Indiana University, Ancient Studies Colloquium, 2013.

“Jewish Culture in Ancient Iran from Ezra the Scribe to the Bavli.” UCLA Fowler Museum Conference, *Light and Shadows: The Story of Iranian Jews*, 2013.

“‘If the haughty cease to exist, the Magian priests cease to exist’: Babylonian Rabbinic Attitudes towards the Persian Empire.” American Academy of Religion, Annual Conference, 2012.

“Pahlavi Representations of the Other and the Rise of Islam.” Indiana University, Islamic Studies Conference, 2012.

“Empire and Authority in Sasanian Babylonia: Sociocultural Ties between the Rabbis and Zoroastrian Priests.” Society of Biblical Literature, Annual Conference, 2011.

“The Two Halves of Divinity: Deut. Rabbah 11, Bavli Sanh. 39a, and the Portrayals of Persia in Midrash.” Society of Biblical Literature, Annual Conference, 2009.

“The Sages and King Shapur in Dialogue.” Princeton University Graduate Student Workshop, *Rabbis and Others in Conversation*, 2009.

“Rabbinic Depictions of the Achaemenid King Cyrus the Great.” UCLA Conference, *The Talmud in its Iranian Context*, 2007.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

All courses taught at Indiana University.

Undergraduate Courses

History of God (new course). Critical approaches course surveying the various ways that modern scholars and ancient religious texts conceptualize and understand God.

Introduction to Old Testament/Hebrew Bible (REL 210). Large lecture course on the academic study of Hebrew Bible, with emphasis on historical and literary approaches.

Sacred Books of the Jews (JS 220/REL 235). Close readings of primary texts from canonical sacred books, including Midrash, kabbalah, liturgy, and Jewish thought.

Introduction to Judaism (REL 230). Thematic introduction to key topics in the history of Judaism, such as Torah, Sabbath, Israel, the holidays, and the life cycle.

Introduction to Jewish History: From the Bible to Spanish Expulsion (JS/HIST 251). Survey of Jewish history over more than three millennia, from the origins of the Israelites to the medieval era.

Magic and Witchcraft in the Ancient World (JS 303/REL 300). Study of magical texts and relics from the ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern world, alongside relevant theories of magic from the fields of anthropology and religious studies.

Jews, Christians, and Others in Late Antiquity (JS/REL 316/REL 511). Examination of Jewish-Christian relations, with a particular focus on the Sasanian Persian context.

Rabbinic Judaism: Literature and Beliefs (JS 320/REL 318). Intensive writing seminar on selected texts in Mishnah, Midrash, and Talmud, alongside secondary literature that introduces key methods in the field.

Jerusalem: The Holy City (JS 325/396). Overview of the status of Jerusalem in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, with emphasis on its archaeological record. Includes a study abroad option at the end of the semester led by the instructor.

Topics in Overseas Study: Jerusalem (Study Abroad) (JS 396). A one-week intensive tour of historical and archaeological sites in Jerusalem led by the instructor.

Readings in Talmud (JS 495). Close reading in Aramaic of selected excerpts from tractates Shabbat or Avodah Zarah in the Babylonian Talmud.

Graduate Courses

Studies in Rabbinic Judaism (REL-R 590). Survey of sources and methods in Rabbinics, with attention paid to intersections between Judaism and other late antique religions.

Readings in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic (REL-R 590). Readings of selected texts from Talmud and/or Targum in Aramaic. Intermediate knowledge of Aramaic is required.

Readings in Middle Persian: Zoroastrian Exegetical Texts (CEUS-R 650, Advanced Readings in Iranian). Readings of texts from the Zoroastrian exegetical corpus in Middle Persian, alongside secondary literature on the subject. Intermediate knowledge of Middle Persian is required.

Readings in Judeo-Persian Language and Literature (CEUS-R 650). Introduction to Judeo-Persian script, dialects, and genres. Intermediate to advanced knowledge of classical/modern Persian is required. Some knowledge of Middle Persian is desirable.

Religious Interaction in the Early Islamic Period (REL-R 590). Study of the intersections and divergences between religions from the seventh to tenth centuries C.E., with a focus on Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Islam.

Jewish Studies Proseminar (JSTU-H 500). Seminar on professional development, with meetings on delivering conference papers, passing exams, writing a dissertation, publishing and peer review, navigating the job market, and the tenure process.

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND GRANTS

Indiana University, *Themester: Remembering and Forgetting*, Co-curricular grant for “Memories of Violence in Jerusalem,” 2019

Indiana University Cinema, Creative Collaboration Award, “Rage and Glory: Films of Israeli Filmmaker Avi Nesher,” 2019

Trustees’ Teaching Award, Indiana University, 2018

Office of International Affairs, Indiana University, Study Abroad Program Development Workshop Grant, 2018

Finalist, National Jewish Book Award in Scholarship, Jewish Book Council 2016, for *Rabbis, Sorcerers, Kings, and Priests*

College of Arts and Humanities Institute Grant, Indiana University, with K. Jaques and J. Schott, “Holistic Approaches to the Study of Early Islam and the Late Antique World,” 2015-16

Foundation for Jewish Culture, Dissertation Fellowship in Jewish Studies, 2010-11

Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, Dissertation Scholarship, 2010-11

Graduate Division, Dissertation Year Fellowship, 2010-11

Center for Jewish Studies, UCLA, Summer Roter Research Fellowship, 2010

Graduate Division, UCLA, Lenart Travel Fellowship, 2009-10

Regents Stipend, UCLA, 2009-10

Lady Davis Graduate Research Fellowship, Hebrew University, 2005-06

Center for Near Eastern Studies, UCLA, Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships (Arabic, Persian, Hebrew), 2004-08

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Jewish Studies Program, Indiana University

Director, Olamot Center for Scholarly and Cultural Exchange with Israel, 2018-present

Program Director, Jerusalem Study Abroad Course, 2019

Member, Committee on Undergraduate Affairs, 2012-14, 2015-16, 2017-present

Chair, Search Committee, Olamot Visiting Scholar, 2019

Coordinator, Biblical Hebrew Program, 2015-18

Member, Search Committee, Visiting Lecturer in Biblical Hebrew, 2015

Member, Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum, 2013-14

Member, Committee on Undergraduate and Graduate Fellowships, 2011-12

Indiana University, Department of Religious Studies

Member, Committee on Undergraduate Studies, 2017-18, 2019-20

Member, Committee on Graduate studies, 2013-15, 2019-20

Member, College Academic Fairness Committee, 2019-20

Member, Search Committee, Rosenfeld Chair in Hebrew Bible, 2019

Member, Salary and Review Committee, 2018-19

Member, Committee on Departmental Vision Statement, 2017

Member, Teaching Excellence Committee, 2015-16

Co-organizer, Late Antiquity Reading Group, 2013

Member, Search Committee, Religion in the Americas, 2012-13

Member, Search Committee, Hebrew Bible, 2012-13

Member, Fulbright Evaluation Committee, 2012-13

UNDERGRADUATE ADVISING

Advisor, B.A. Honors Thesis, K. Riebsomer, "Cosmic Centers and Judgment in the *Book of the Watchers*," 2013

Advisor, B.A. Honors Thesis, K. Marshall, "Noah and the Flood in the Sectarian Texts at Qumran," 2012

GRADUATE ADVISING

Ahmed Hassan – Ph.D. Exam Committee, Religious Studies and NELC, 2019-20

Nicolò Sassi – Ph.D. Exam Committee, Religious Studies, 2019

Steve Kaplin – M.A. Thesis Committee, Jewish Studies, 2018

Brian Hillman – Ph.D. Exam Committee, Religious Studies, 2017

Caroline Kanegson, 2017 – M.A. Thesis Committee, Jewish Studies

Matthew Niemi – Ph.D. Exam Committee, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, 2017

David Maldonado – Ph.D. Dissertation Committee, Religious Studies, 2017

Brian Alt – Ph.D. Dissertation Committee, Religious Studies, 2014

SERVICE TO PROFESSION

Co-editor, IU Press Olamot Series in the Humanities and Social Sciences, 2018-present

Steering Committee, American Academy of Religion unit, “Traditions of Eastern Late Antiquity,” 2014-present

Peer reviewer for University of California Press, Association for Jewish Studies Review, Jewish Quarterly Review, Iranian Studies, Jewish Law Association, Princeton University Press, Yale University Press

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Academy of Religion, Association for Jewish Studies, Middle East Studies Association, European Association of Biblical Studies, Association for Iranian Studies