ISIS has been defeated on the battlefield, reinventing itself in terror cells across the globe. Hezbollah continues to dominate southern Lebanon and remains engaged in the battles within Syria. The government of Bashir al-Assad maintains, almost inexplicably, its hold on power in Syria, and continues to regain large portions of the country from rebel forces. The Iranian government acts as the power pulling the strings through its funding of Assad and Hezbollah, who in turn have become the means for Iran to accomplish its goal of regional hegemony. What will these proxies do now that the focus in Syria is no longer fixed on ISIS? What can Israel do to prepare for what seems to many experts an inevitable conflict with Iran’s proxies. David Makovsky will address these and other vexing issues facing Israel and the rest of the Middle East.
Dearest Friends:

The last event of the fall semester is commencement when we celebrate our students accomplishments. I want to introduce you to one of those graduates, Tucson native Daniela Tascarella, who as a freshman became a student worker in our Center. A quiet and dedicated student with a passion for Israel, Daniela enrolled in Hebrew and explored other Judaic Studies courses before declaring a major in Judaic Studies. She learned of the regional dynamics of the Middle East, so she enrolled in the UofA's Arabic program. After spending summers in language study in Israel, she became largely fluent in Hebrew and Arabic. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in Judaic Studies, Daniela enrolled in the UofA's graduate program in Middle Eastern and North African Studies. Last year she served as an intern in Washington, DC, where she put to good use her skills in Hebrew and Arabic. With her Master's degree now in hand, Daniela is pursuing a career in public service, where she will undoubtedly excel.

I cite Daniela’s story as an example of education’s impact. In short, our Center’s business is to enlighten minds and change lives. The possibilities available to Daniela and many graduates like her are unlimited. That quiet freshman has become a mature graduate with a Master's degree. She acquired and honed skills that few possess and that she can now use to engage with her passion, Israel. Every faculty member associated with the Center is pleased to serve our students, and the reward we get is watching these young people thrive.

The Center cannot take all the credit for our students’ achievements. Thanks to your financial support, you, too, are one of the important factors enabling their success. Your financial support enables the Center to serve these students in a wide variety of ways. Students frequently need financial help to complete a special project, attend a seminar or conference in their field, or participate in summer study abroad programs. We assist students in all these and myriad other ways thanks to your support. As you read this newsletter, please remember that everything you see here is made possible by your support. I very much hope that you will continue your generous support, and if you haven’t become a supporting member of our community, I hope you will join our team at this time. Your support truly enables us to enlighten minds and change lives.

With my best wishes for a bright 2018,

Ed Wright, Director
Since 1997 the Pozez families’ generosity has made the Shaol and Louis Pozez Memorial Lecture Series one of the intellectual and social staples of the Tucson Jewish community. Through the years, the series has gained a national and international reputation for its long history of distinguished lecturers covering many topics related to Jewish history, culture, religion, literature, and language. To mark this achievement, this year’s series is themed, “Israel: 20th Century Ideal to 21st Century Reality.”

The ideal of a restored homeland has been a strong force among Jews since the Roman expulsion of 70 CE. The Balfour Declaration of 1917 rekindled hope, and the declaration of statehood in 1948 was the final realization of the long-delayed dream. Struggling through threat of destruction in the early years, Israel became a successful modern state. It is a stable democracy that has absorbed Jewish immigrants from diverse communities around the world, built a strong military, made peace with some of its neighbors, and established itself as a global hub of information and technology development.

However, not all sectors of Israel’s society have benefited from its economic success. There remain deep social and political divides. Israel’s educational system and standards are uneven and beginning to wane, the demands of leadership in an era of new political and cultural factionalism and uncertainty have increased, questions persists as to whether or not Israel can remain both a democratic and Jewish state while continuing the occupation of the West Bank, and the conflict with the Palestinians in many ways appears no nearer a resolution than it did after independence in 1948.

In celebration of its twentieth season, the Shaol and Louis Pozez Memorial Lecture Series is focusing on the vexing issues facing Israel today, and what they may portend for tomorrow. Join us for a special series that will challenge, inform, and inspire you. ♦️

Spring Schedule
All events are Free and Open to the Public

Pozez Fine Arts Symposium
Pianist Carolyn Enger,
The Mischlinge Exposé
Thurs.*, Jan. 18 • 7:30 p.m.
UA Crowder Hall

A Year into the Trump Presidency:
The U.S. & the Middle East
Mon., Jan. 29 • 7pm • Tucson JCC
Prof. Shai Feldman
Brandeis University

Israel as a Jewish & Democratic State
Mon., Feb. 19 • 7pm • Tucson JCC
Dr. Rachel Fish
Brandeis University

1948: Three Votes That Made Israel
Mon., Feb. 26 • 7pm • Tucson JCC
Prof. Martin Kramer
Founding President,
Shalem College, Jerusalem

Rabin’s Assassination:
A Turning Point in Israel’s History
Tues.*, Mar. 13 • 7pm • Tucson JCC
Amb. Itamar Rabinovich
The Israel Institute, Tel Aviv University

* Please note that these events (Thursday, 1-18-18 and Tuesday 3-13-18) will not be on Mondays.
The Arizona Center for Judaic Studies is pleased to announce a gift of $2 million from Bettina B. and Kenneth A. Plevan to endow a Chair in Israel Studies in memory of their son Jeffrey B. Plevan. Jeff, a UA alum and student of Judaic Studies, passed away at the young age of 36. He is fondly remembered by those who knew him as a remarkable person who combined his love of Judaism, Israel, and the University of Arizona with an infectious and upbeat personality and an inner drive to overcome life’s obstacles. The Plevan family had already endowed the annual Jeffrey B. Plevan Memorial Lecture in Modern Israel Studies, which seeks to shed new light on aspects of Israel’s history, culture, and politics.

The appointment of the Jeffrey B. Plevan Endowed Chair in Modern Israel Studies will be made by J.P. Jones, Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Ed Wright, Director of The Arizona Center for Judaic Studies after an international search. The Plevan’s $2 million gift qualifies for matching funds from the University’s “Eminent Scholars Program,” a program created by UA Provost Andrew Comrie and UA Foundation President JP Roczniak. Eminent Scholars funding will enable The Arizona Center for Judaic Studies to begin a search for an internationally recognized scholar immediately. This is the first endowed chair in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences to qualify for funding from the Eminent Scholar Program.

The person who holds the Jeffrey B. Plevan Chair in Israel Studies will lead an initiative focusing on scholarly research and educational programs related to Modern Israel.

Wright noted that “everyone here loved Jeff, and we are deeply honored that the Plevan family has chosen to honor his memory through the lectureship, and now the endowed chair that bear his name. Jeff’s memory will forever be a blessing here, across the country, and around the world.”

The Arizona Center for Judaic Studies  |  Spring 2018 5
Shaol & Louis Pozez Memorial Lectureship Series

Pozez Fine Arts Symposium: The Mischlinge Exposé
Thurs*, Jan. 18 • 7:30 pm
Crowder Hall

Pianist Carolyn Enger

A Year into the Trump Presidency: The U.S. & the Middle East
Mon., Jan. 29 • 7pm • Tucson JCC

Prof. Shai Feldman
Brandeis University

Israel as a Jewish & Democratic State: Tensions between Particularism & Universalism
Mon., Feb. 19 • 7pm • Tucson JCC

Dr. Rachel Fish
Brandeis University

Co-sponsored by The Arizona Center for Judaic Studies and the Fred Fox School of Music

The Mischlinge Exposé is a many-layered multimedia performance centering around pianist Carolyn Enger’s family history and personal experience with Judaism. The performance interweaves the music, art, and thoughts of prominent converts with testimony of Enger’s father’s (Horace J. Enger) and godmother’s (Rosemarie Steinfeld) experiences in Germany. Performances of works by Felix Mendelssohn, Fanny Mendelssohn, Alexander Zemlinsky, Gustav Mahler, Arnold Schoenberg, Hans Eisler and Paul Ben-Haim illustrate the personal situations described by Rachel Varnhagen and Heinrich Heine. Through the lens of historical context and the artistic and poetic testimony of prominent converts, Enger’s performance traces her family’s story of conversion from Judaism to Christianity and back to Judaism.

Pianist Carolyn Enger has gained critical acclaim for her lyrical and dynamic playing, her deeply felt interpretations of works from Beethoven and Schubert to contemporary music, and her warm personal approach. In addition to an active performance schedule, Ms. Enger has enjoyed remarkable success as a recording artist, particularly with her 2013 release of piano music by Ned Rorem on Naxos Records.

In just one year, and most notably with one proposal, President Trump and his administration have had an impact on the Middle East generally and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. His proposal to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem overturned decades of US policy and drew international criticism. So far, the predicted outrage in the Arab and Islamic world failed to materialize in any lasting way. President Trump’s declaration pleased his base at home and drew applause from Israel’s political right, that today seems even more emboldened in its agenda vis-à-vis the Palestinians. Many political pundits and policy advisors around the world are now predicting the end of the two-state solution.

Prof. Feldman will address these and other issues facing Israel, the Palestinians, and American foreign policy in the region in light of the developments during President Trump’s first year in office. He will also explore possible short and long-term complications that may arise from the Trump administration’s different approach to foreign policy in the Middle East.

Professor Shai Feldman is the Judith and Sidney Swartz Director of the Crown Center for Middle East Studies and Professor of Politics at Brandeis University.

Dr. Fish will explore the challenges of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state in the 21st century. Israel must contend with domestic concerns including the Jewish character of the State, the Palestinian Arab citizens of the state of Israel, and the two-state paradigm. Understanding Israel’s Jewish character and its democratic principles, and how these influence one another provides a more complete context for deeper analysis about Israel in the 21st century.

Rachel Fish is associate director of the Schusterman Center. She completed her doctoral degree in the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies department at Brandeis University in 2013. Her dissertation, "Configurations of Bi-nationalism: The Transformation of Bi-nationalism in Palestine/Israel 1920’s-Present," examines the history of the idea of bi-nationalism and alternative visions for constructing the State of Israel. She has worked as an educator and consultant in various capacities in the Jewish community and higher education, teaching about Zionism and Israeli history at Brandeis University, Harvard University, and UMASS Amherst.

*Please note: Shaol and Louis Pozez Memorial Lectureship Series events are typically held on Monday afternoons. The (Thursday) 1/18/18 and (Tuesday) 3/13/18 lectures are exceptions to this rule and are denoted with an asterisk.
Events

Shaol & Louis Pozez Memorial Lectureship Series

1948: Three Votes That Made Israel
Mon., Feb. 26 • 7pm • Tucson JCC

Prof. Martin Kramer
Founding President, Shalem College, Jerusalem

Israel’s 70th anniversary is an opportunity to revisit three crucial decisions, taken by vote by Israel’s leaders, that determined the fundamental character of the Jewish state. The first, the May 1948 vote in the proto-cabinet to declare independence; the second, the September 1948 cabinet vote not to occupy the West Bank; and the third, the December 1949 cabinet vote to make Jerusalem Israel’s capital. None of these votes was unanimous, all of them were highly contested, and two were very close. In this lecture, Martin Kramer will examine the debate around each decision, the drama of the votes, and their far-reaching consequences for Israel.

Martin Kramer is the founding president emeritus of Shalem College in Jerusalem, and the Koret visiting fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Rabin’s Assassination: A Turning Point in Israel’s History
Tues.*, Mar. 13 • 7pm • Tucson JCC

Amb. Itamar Rabinovich
The Israel Institute, Washington, DC
Tel Aviv University

Twenty-three years later, Yitzhak Rabin’s assassination on November 4th, 1995 continues to resonate in Israel and across the Middle East. Rabin’s assassination truly shocked the world. Tragically, it has had a lasting adverse effect on both the Israeli-Arab peace process of the 1990’s and on Israel’s domestic politics. Ambassador Rabinovich, the author of Rabin’s authorized biography Yitzhak Rabin: Soldier, Leader, Statesman (Yale University Press, 2017), will assess the impact and significance of Rabin’s life and career that were so heartbreakingly cut short by the assassination.

Itamar Rabinovich, President of the Israel Institute (Washington and Jerusalem), served as Israel’s ambassador to the United States and as chief negotiator with Syria from 1992 to 1996. He holds distinguished positions on the boards of several international foundations and on the faculty of leading academic institutions. He is Professor Emeritus of Middle Eastern History at Tel Aviv University, Distinguished Global Professor at NYU, and a Distinguished Fellow at the Brookings Institution. He was president of Tel-Aviv University from 1999-2007.

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About The Shaol & Louis Pozez Memorial Lectureship Series

The Shaol and Louis Pozez Memorial Lectureship Series is made possible by the generous support of the Pozez Families & The Pozez Family Fund at the Community Foundation of Southern Arizona.

Since 1997 the Pozez families’ generosity has made this series one of the intellectual and social staples of the Tucson Jewish community.

Sadly, Shaol passed away in 1999 and Evie in 2011. We lost Louis Pozez in 2008, but thankfully Ruthann is still with us. Their work on behalf of the local Jewish community, The University of Arizona, and the city of Tucson has created a distinguished legacy, and their children are continuing that legacy in many ways. The series has gained a national and international reputation for its long history of distinguished lecturers.

The Shaol and Louis Pozez Memorial series began as The Arizona Center for Judaic Studies’ Distinguished Lecture Series, and was later renamed in honor of Shaol, and later Shaol & Louis. May their memories always be a blessing!
This presentation will explore the ways that genre labels (systems of classification) impact the reception of testimonials written by individuals who experienced persecution during the Holocaust. In particular, Davis will address the gap that often emerges between the intent of the survivor’s testimony and how the public receives or understands that testimony. He will discuss the ongoing debates about stylized testimonials (novels, poems, etc.) and their impact on the important issues of authenticity, identity, and the truth, particularly when the assigned genre is associated with work of fiction.

Bryan Davis is Executive Director of the Jewish History Museum & Holocaust History Center in Tucson, AZ. He is an Adjunct Faculty in The Arizona Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Arizona and a member of the national board of the Council of American Jewish Museums. Bryan is a PhD candidate (ABD) in the Language, Reading & Culture Program at the University of Arizona. Prior to his work at the Jewish History Museum, Bryan was the director of the Jewish Community Relations Council at the Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona. He currently co-chairs the Southern Arizona Hate Crimes Task Force.

Prof. Benjamin’s lecture, “Land Rights of Women in Ancient Israel” is based on his recent book Social World of Deuteronomy: A New Feminist Commentary. Biblical tradition stipulates that elite males designate heirs to their land, but to exercise their land rights, these heirs were required to marry women whom god and their tribes recognized as holding legal title to those land rights. A better understanding of these rights contributes to a better understanding of the roles of the women in Deuteronomy on honoring both father and mother (Deut 5:7-21), on female prisoners of war (Deut 21:10-14), on terminating heirs (Deut 21:18-21), on re-marriage (Deut 24:1-4), and perhaps the significance of divorce and re-marriage policies imposed on Israel and Judah by Assyria, Babylon and Ezra-Nehemiah.


Baylor University Press recently published a revolutionary new textbook, The Old Testament in Archaeology and History, edited by UofA professors Ed Wright and Mark Elliott. This textbook for the first time assembles a team of experts in ancient Near Eastern texts with experts in Near Eastern archaeology to explore how the intersection of texts and archaeology can help us assess the historicity of biblical texts and traditions.

The four editors, as well as several of the authors of various chapters in this book, are part of the “Arizona School” led by William G. Dever for decades. Wright will explain how to utilize both ancient texts and archaeological artifacts to assess the historicity of biblical texts and traditions. He will also discuss the more than five-year-long process of bringing together scholars from the US, Europe, and Israel to create what has already been hailed as “the text that should be used to educate the next generation of students.”

Prof. Wright is the immediate past-president of the W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeology Research in Jerusalem.
How were traditions passed on in biblical times? What kind of “education” took place in ancient Israel? The inscriptions from the excavations at Kuntillet ‘Ajrud provide the first complete, though fragmentary, set of elementary scribal exercises from Ancient Israel. Together with comparable texts and archaeological evidence, we can reconstruct the educational curriculum of the scribes who wrote the Bible. And, we can see more clearly how this education shaped the writing of the Bible itself.

William Schniedewind is a Professor of Biblical Studies at UCLA. He has been the Chair of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at UCLA and the Kershaw Endowed Term Chair of Ancient Eastern Mediterranean Studies.

About Raphael Patai
Prof. Raphael Patai wrote dozens of books and hundreds of scholarly articles. He was in many respects a model of scholarly productivity. This was combined with his encyclopedic knowledge and learned creativity. Upon his death in July 1996, Patai was memorialized in the Jerusalem Report as a “prolific cultural anthropologist and Jewish and Mideast Studies scholar.” The subjects of his books ranged widely from Jewish history, Biblical Studies, family life in the ancient and modern Middle East, and Jewish alchemy.
A Hebrew Student’s Tribute to the Victims of the Las Vegas Shooting

Student engagement in national and global crises is not unusual in the Modern Hebrew Language Program at The Arizona Center for Judaic Studies. In fact, the trend is facilitated by the program’s director Uri Maimon, who says “it is important that after major events happen, the students are encouraged to process their feelings and project responses.” Last Spring the students hosted an impromptu day long bake-sale and the proceeds, more than $800, went to organizations that helped children impacted by the Syrian Civil War. Uri was inspired by two Israelis that raised over ₪400,000 (Shekels) and thought “If they can do something, why can’t we?” This Fall students hosted another bake-sale that raised nearly $600 to help the people in Houston impacted by Hurricane Harvey.

So when 3rd year Hebrew student Shira Schwartz was asked to give a presentation in Hebrew on her response to the tragedy dubbed “The Las Vegas Concert Massacre”, it was not unusual. The course focuses primarily on news from Israel, and students do their research and presentations in Hebrew. However, “the events in Las Vegas demanded some attention”, said Uri. Students were asked to give a presentation of any kind using a form of media. Shira chose to make a video, a hobby she has developed since taking a course as part of her Art-Media-Entertainment major here at the university.

Shira said that she had not taken the time to process the event in Las Vegas, but primarily felt angry and afraid. While making the video, however, she was able to sort out her emotions and decided that “living afraid or allowing these kinds of things to take away from you living your life is not what the victims would want.” She resolved to “live her life on behalf of those who would not be able to, and not let tragedy stop her.” This is what her video is all about, her tribute to the lives of those victims. She did not mention the name of the shooter, because she did not want to contribute to his fame in any way.

Recently, Shira went to a concert and found herself looking around. Reminded of her project, she decided to stop and enjoy her time.

The students in the Hebrew program continue to inspire us and many in the community. Great credit is due to Uri for his guidance and leadership. Check out Shira’s video at youtu.be/C0CdPQB1LX4, and if you like, please add a comment to let her know your thoughts on her presentation.

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Chelsea Andrews will graduate in May of this year with a Baccalaureate degree in History and Judaic Studies and she already has plans for the immediate future. In September, she will travel to Israel for nine months as a recently selected Yahel Social Change Fellow. Yahel Social Change is a nonprofit that sends recent graduates to Israel, specifically Lod and Rishon Lizion, to help with under-served populations and working to increase literacy in English, tutoring, bringing community service, population mapping, and connecting community.

Chelsea sees this program as the first step to achieving her long-term goals of teaching and working on issues of social justice in the U.S. and abroad. When Chelsea returns, she hopes to get her Masters in education to help her achieve her goals.

Chelsea credits her passion for Israel and social justice to her experiences with faculty from the Center. During her time as a student she took three years of Modern Hebrew under Uri Maimon, a year of Biblical Hebrew under Prof. Beth Nakhai, and several other courses in Judaic Studies, such as Prof. Leonard Hammer’s Human Rights course, where she developed a curiosity in the region and Israel specifically. “Uri, Beth, and Ed Wright inspired a real interest in Israel for me.”

Good luck Chelsea. We are proud to be part of your journey.

Amanda Bauer received the Florence Kaiserman Memorial Scholarship for the academic year 2016-17. She used the funds to participate in the Huqoq archaeological excavations in Israel and to attend the American Schools of Oriental Research international conference. Amanda’s dream is to become a professor of biblical and Near Eastern archaeology. Attending the conference gave her a wonderful opportunity for hands-on learning and meeting with experts in the field.

Remembering Jimmain Middleton

One of our students, Jimmain B. Middleton, passed away on Monday October 2nd. Jimmain was a student in a few Judaic Studies classes, and his instructors and classmates all had only admiration for his dedication to his studies and his lovely, warm, and engaging spirit. He took Prof. Beth Alpert Nakhai’s course on the History and Religion of Ancient Israel last year. Prof. Nakhai was deeply saddened by this news of his death, and noted “that he was an amazing student and a really wonderful person, that he worked really hard, juggling his responsibilities for his children with his academic commitments, that he consistently raised the level of discussion in the class, that he served as a Teaching Teams preceptor and took on a leadership role in the class, and that he radiated good humor and a love of learning.”

Jimmain will indeed be sorely missed by all who knew him and whose lives were touched by him. Everyone associated with The Arizona Center for Judaic Studies sends their condolences and support to his wife Melissa Pablo-Middleton, their daughters Zarria and Emmani, Jimmain’s parents Christine Holloway and James Middleton, and Jimmain’s sister Keanna Curtis. May the memory of Jimmain Middleton always be a blessing.

Florence Kaiserman Memorial Scholarship

Amanda Bauer received the Florence Kaiserman Memorial Scholarship for the academic year 2016-17. She used the funds to participate in the Huqoq archaeological excavations in Israel and to attend the American Schools of Oriental Research international conference. Amanda’s dream is to become a professor of biblical and Near Eastern archaeology. Attending the conference gave her a wonderful opportunity for hands-on learning and meeting with experts in the field.
Recent Works by Prof. Gil Ribak

Professor Gil Ribak has been busy researching and writing. He published two articles during the fall semester.

“The Negros Must Not Be Likened to Jews”: The Attitudes of Eastern European Jewish Immigrants toward African Americans in a Transnational Perspective was published in Modern Judaism 37 in October.

“For Peace, Not Socialism”: The 1917 Mayoralty Campaign in New York City and Immigrant Jews in a Global Perspective was published in the Fall edition of American Jewish History 101.

Currently Prof. Ribak is working on Helpless Refugees or the Seed of Amalek: A Cautionary Note about the Use of Judaism as a Means to justify Various Political Agendas, which is slated for a special issue of CrossCurrents titled Strangers or Neighbors? Jewish, Muslim and Christian Perspectives on Refugees.

Ribak was also recently awarded the Fordham-NYPL research fellowship in Jewish Studies. The fellowship is a partnership of Fordham University and the New York Public Library. He will be in residence there in May 2018.

The Harvey Weinstein in Your Industry

Professor Beth Alpert Nakhai featured on Game Plan with Francesca Levy & Rebecca Greenfield on Bloomberg News

The scandal that unfolded after dozens of women accused Harvey Weinstein of sexual assault and harassment over decades has brought renewed attention to sexual misconduct and discrimination in the workplace. After the first wave of allegations against the producer and former studio head, some focused on how Hollywood tends to promote and protect abuses by powerful men. But singling out one industry is a mistake.

In recent years, scandals, inequities, and patterns of abuse and mistreatment have been uncovered in nearly every field. There are common patterns across all of these, and yet each industry requires its own unique solutions. On the October 25 episode of Game Plan, Rebecca Levy and Francesca Greenfield zeroed in on one you haven't heard much about: archaeology. They talked to Beth Alpert Nakhai, an archaeologist and professor who's working to make digs safer for women.

Visit judaic.arizona.edu/news/harvey-weinstein-your-industry to listen to The Harvey Weinstein in Your Industry where Professor Beth Alpert Nakhai spoke about sexual harassment scandals across a wide variety of fields.

Professor Beth Alpert Nakhai has also covered this topic during her Gender in Archaeology Today lecture in September 2016 as part of the Sally and Ralph Duchin Campus Lecture Series.
An Update from Abel Beth Maacah

The Arizona Center for Judaic Studies is a partner on the excavations at Abel Beth Maacah, led by Prof. Robert A. Mullins of Azusa Pacific University.

Tel Abel Beth Maacah is located in the “finger of Galilee” on the present-day border between Israel and Lebanon. In biblical times, Abel Beth Maacah was also a border site between Israel, Phoenicia, and Aram/Syria. It was a strategic guardian of Israel’s northern approaches.

Three passages in the Bible illustrate the site’s importance. 2 Samuel 20:14-22 mentions Abel Beth Maacah as the place where Sheba son of Bichri fled after calling for revolt against King David. 1 Kings 15:20 tells how Ben-Hadad, the king of Damascus, invaded Israel by way of Abel Beth Maacah, and 2 Kings 15:29 describes how the Assyrian ruler Tiglath-Pileser III conquered two-thirds of the northern kingdom after taking Abel Beth Maacah and other sites in the region.

Professor Mullins announced an exciting find. “We found this bearded male figurine head of faience (a glazed ceramic). We are unsure about his ethnicity. He does not appear to be Israelite, Phoenician, or Egyptian, though we need to study the figurine further to be sure. One possibility we are looking into is Aramean, which would go along with some verses in the Bible that suggest that our site might have been Aramean. Much work still needs to be done in order to find parallels and build a case for the figurine’s identity, but if the Aramean hypothesis holds, then according to this scenario, the city was conquered and incorporated into the United Monarchy by David, but the population was never replaced and remained Aramean. Joshua 13:13 admits as much when it states, “But the Israelites did not drive out the people of Geshur and Maacah, so they continue to live among the Israelites to this day.” If correct, this figurine head is also mute testimony to the diverse cultural and ethnic make-up of the ancient Israel. In this same room, we also found traces of metal working, including a complete tuyere (a clay fitting that is part of a furnace).”

With the support of the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies, the excavations at the biblical city of Abel Beth Maacah in the Upper Galilee of Israel provides students with a unique opportunity to learn about the history and lives of the ancient people who once lived on the borderlands of Israel, Lebanon, and Syria.

University of Arizona students are welcome to take part on the excavations, along with students and volunteers from all over the world, in exposing more of this exciting site and enriching our knowledge of the history of the Land of the Bible.

The 2018 dates are June 24-July 20, 2018.

Contact Beth Alpert Nakhai to participate.

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*(of blessed memory)*
Israel, Iran & Iranian Proxies in Syria in the aftermath of ISIS

Jeffrey Plevan Memorial Lecture
Monday, April 9
6pm Reception 7pm Lecture