

Eli Sperling, PhD
Israel Institute Teaching Fellow
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Education

Ph.D. (September 2019), The Ben-Gurion Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, Israel

Dissertation title: “Singing the Land: The Parallel Development of Hebrew Musical Culture during the British Mandate of Palestine in the United States and Palestine”

Committee Members: Arieh Saposnik, Edwin Seroussi, Ofer Schiff and Gideon Katz

M.A. in Middle Eastern history (August 2010), Tel Aviv University, Ramat Aviv, Israel
Thesis title: “Tourism, Internet, and Economic Development: Cultural Changes Amongst M'zeini Bedouin Youth in Dahab” (based on extensive fieldwork in the Sinai Peninsula)
Honors: Magna Cum Laude, Thesis 95

B.A. in Middle Eastern studies & political economy (June 2006), The Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA
Senior thesis title: “The Political Economy of Nasser’s High Dam”

Languages

English: native
Hebrew: fluent
Arabic: reading knowledge of Modern Standard Arabic

Current Position

- Israel Institute Teaching Fellow, University of Georgia, Department of International Affairs (August 2022-present)

Publications

- *Singing the Land: Hebrew Music and Early Zionism in America*, The University of Michigan Press (2024)
- Charlotte G. Huck, Nicolle Martin, Eli Sperling. “Proposing Unique and Effective Policy Recommendations for Achieving a Lasting Two-State Solution,” *Journal of Strategic Security*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (2023), pp. 180-206.
- (ed.) Kenneth W. Stein, Jacob T. Zack, and Eli Sperling. *Egyptian-Israeli Negotiations’ Documents Reader: 1973–1979*, Center for Israel Education (2019).

Publications in Process:

- “Teaching Sensitive Topics in International Affairs: AI and Middle Eastern Politics”
- “From the Arab Peace Initiative to the Abraham Accords,” with Josh Goodman (Air War College)
- *Saudi Arabia and the Arab-Israeli Peace Process* with Josh Goodman (Air War

College)

- “Is the Fear of Brain Drain Justified? Elite Israeli Jazz”
- “Popular Music and Cultural Diplomacy in the Abraham Accords”

Academic Conference Papers

- July 3, 2024, “Teaching the Arab-Israeli Conflict with AI-Based Pedagogy,” Association for Israel Studies Annual Meeting, Prague, Czech Republic
- October 2023, “From the Arab Peace Initiative to the Abraham Accords,” International Studies Association International Security Studies Section and American Political Science Association of America International Studies Section, Colorado Springs, CO
- October 2023, “Teaching Sensitive Topics in International Affairs: AI and Middle Eastern Politics,” International Studies Association, Atlanta, GA
- June 2023, “Cultural Diplomacy, Novel Political Behavior and the Abraham Accords,” Association for Israel Studies Annual Meeting, New York, NY
- December 3, 2022, “From the Arab Peace Initiative to the Abraham Accords,” Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Denver, CO
- June 30, 2022, “A ‘Warm Peace?’ Popular Music and Cultural Diplomacy in the Abraham Accords,” Association for Israel Studies Annual Conference, Bar Ilan University, Israel
- February 22, 2022, “Zionist Notions of Jewish Indigeneity to Palestine in American Hebrew Musical Culture: 1920-1948,” American Historical Association Annual Meeting (digital program)
- September 2021, “Zionism and the Zionization of American Jewry through Music,” Armenian Studies and Israel Studies: New Scholarship, Shared Themes, Mutual Lesson, a Workshop hosted by the Azrieli Center for Israel Studies at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, Israel
- June 8, 2021, “Is the Fear of Brain Drain Justified? Elite Israeli Jazz” Association for Israel Studies Annual Conference
- December 15, 2020, “Conservative Judaism, American Zionism and Hebrew Folks Songs in the First Half of the 20th Century,” Association for Jewish Studies Annual Conference
- June 30, 2020, “The Jewish National Fund: Land Purchases in Palestine, Fundraising in America, and Hebrew Music During a Period of Zionist Growth,” Association for Israel Studies Annual Conference
- June 11, 2020, “American Zionism’s Musical Roots: A Look at the Past to Understand the Present and Future of US-Israel Relations,” American Jewish Historical Society’s 2020 Biennial Conference

Research and Teaching Experience

Postdoctoral Associate, Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and Center for Jewish Studies, Duke University, Durham, NC

July 2020–June 2022

- Teach undergraduate courses as part of Duke’s Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
 - (Fall 2020) “Introduction to Israeli Culture”

- (Spring 2021) “Modern Israeli Music”
- (Spring 2021, 2022) “The History of Zionism”
- Participate in and administer public scholarship events and student programs on Duke’s campus
- Participate in Duke’s “Teaching Writing in the Disciplines” certification program
- Prepare book manuscript for submission to R1 press, work on other publications
- Participate in interdisciplinary scholarly workgroups that meet regularly

Senior Academic Research Coordinator, Institute for the Study of Modern Israel (ISMI), Emory University, Atlanta, GA

November 2012–July 2020

- Managed ISMI’s undergraduate academic research internship program—including recruiting, hiring, training, supervising and mentoring student interns, typically with little experience in academic research and writing
- Collected, edited, and maintained ISMI’s extensive collection of primary source documents about the history, politics and diplomacy of the Zionist movement and modern Israel
- Edited three editions of *History, Politics and Diplomacy of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Source Documents Reader*
- Edited and co-authored, *Egyptian-Israeli Negotiations' Documents Reader: 1973-1979*
- Contributed to development work—including attending and/or speaking about modern Israel at events with Emory donors, helping to plan fundraising programs for ISMI in coordination with the development and Dean’s office and helping to plan research grant application materials
- Coordinated and sustained community partnerships and gave lectures about Israeli politics, diplomacy and culture for community partners
- Helped coordinate and contribute content to lectures, seminars, conferences, and other public scholarship events hosted by ISMI

Visiting Professor, Tam Institute for Jewish Studies, Emory University, Atlanta, GA

January 2019–December 2019

- Taught (Spring, Fall 2019) “Israeli Culture and Society: 1880–Present”
- Senior Honors Thesis Advisory Committee Member, chaired by Dr. Meredith Schweig, Emory University, “*Chasing the Andalusian Ideal: Nostalgia and Sephardic Self-Image in Andalusian Music in Israel*,” Xavier Sayed

Teaching Assistant, Emory University, Atlanta, GA

Fall 2013, Fall 2016

- “The History, Politics, and Diplomacy of the Arab-Israeli Conflict” taught by Professor Ken Stein
- Lectured on certain topics, led study sections, prepared course materials, corresponded with disability office administration and graded exams

Research Assistant to Professor Yosi Kostiner, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel

2008–2010

- Researched, edited and contributed writing to four published academic articles and book chapters, and two articles published in the Moshe Dayan Center’s “Tel Aviv Notes” series
- Researched, edited and contributed writing to one book manuscript about the historic complexities of Saudi-Israeli diplomacy

Invited Lectures

- November 16, 2023, “The Gaza War in Context,” The University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA
- October 23, 2023, “The Gaza War: Political and Social Context,” Georgia Gwinnett College, Gwinnett, GA
- January 11, 2023, “Zionist Culture in Words, Art and Music: An Expert Panel of Scholars in Conversations with Professor Emeritus Ken Stein,” Center for Israel Education and Institute for the Study of Modern Israel at Emory University, Atlanta, GA
- November 1, 2022, “Israeli National Elections, American Midterms and the US-Israel Relationship,” University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA
- January 23, 2022, “The Jewish National Fund: Land Purchases in Palestine and America Hebrew Musical Culture,” North Carolina Jewish Studies Seminar, a collaborative partnership between Duke University, North Carolina State University, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and Wake Forest University, Durham, NC
- October 1, 2020, “Hebrew Music and the Development of Transnational Zionism Amongst American Jewry: 1920s–1940s,” Sonoma State University—a joint lecture as part of Sonoma State’s Jewish Music Series and Lecture Series on Israel Studies, Rohnert Park, CA
- April 28, 2020, “Israel, Zionism and Progressive Judaism in America,” American Jewish University, Los Angeles, CA
- March 3, 2020, “From Sadat’s Visit to Jerusalem–Today: Challenges and Opportunities in Arab-Israeli Multi-Lateral Negotiations,” St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY
- June 25, 2019, “The Formation and Evolution of Israeli National Culture,” Emory University Institute for the Study of Modern Israel and Center for Israel Education Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA
- November 27, 2018, "Hebrew Music and the Proliferation of American Zionism: 1920–1948," Agnes Scott College, Decatur, GA

Professional Associations

- Association for Israel Studies (Board Member)
- International Studies Association
- Middle East Studies Association