

Contact: Darcy Maher, 732-729-9877; Email: [dbmbildner@comcast.net](mailto:dbmbildner@comcast.net)

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**The Role of Jewish Scholars in the Development of Islamic Studies in Europe  
Public Lecture at Rutgers on March 28**

NEW BRUNSWICK/PISCATAWAY, N.J. – From the 1830s to the 1930s, Jewish scholars played a key role in the development of the young field of Islamic Studies in Europe. They painted a broad canvas, describing Islam in highly positive terms as the religion closest to Judaism, according to Dr. Susannah Heschel, the Eli Black Professor of Jewish Studies at Dartmouth College. Currently a Guggenheim Fellow, Heschel will present research from her current book project: “The Jewish Fascination with Islam: The History of Jewish Scholarship on Islam and its Impact on Modern Jewish Self-Understanding.”

The talk, “Jewish Scholars and the Study of Islam,” will be held on Monday, March 28, at 7:30 p.m. at the Douglass Campus Center, 100 George Street, New Brunswick. The lecture is free and open to the public. It is cosponsored by the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life, the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, and the Institute for Women’s Leadership. The talk is the annual Toby and Herbert Stolzer Endowed Program. Free parking is available behind the Campus Center. (For GPS search, use “57 Lipman Drive”) Advance registration is requested by emailing [csjlrsvp@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:csjlrsvp@rci.rutgers.edu) or calling 848-932-2033. For more information, visit the website [BildnerCenter.rutgers.edu](http://BildnerCenter.rutgers.edu).

Susannah Heschel is a prominent scholar who is an expert on Jewish-Christian relations in Germany, antisemitism, and the history of biblical scholarship. Her publications include *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, which won a National Jewish Book Award, and *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany*. The daughter of the prominent scholar and civil rights leader Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, she has followed his example in her commitment to social activism and commitment to civil rights.

The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life connects the university with the community through public lectures, symposia, Jewish communal initiatives, cultural events, and teacher training.