

U F RELIGION

NEWSLETTER



NEWS

- **Professor Bron Taylor's** article, "*An Inquiry into Surfing and the Sublime*," has been accepted for publication in **The Routledge Handbook of Religion and Sport**. See the *Publications* section on Page 3 to learn more!
- **Terje Ostebo** has accepted the position as the editor of the journal **Northeast African Studies** published by Michigan State University Press. See the *News* section on Page 2 to learn more!

EVENTS

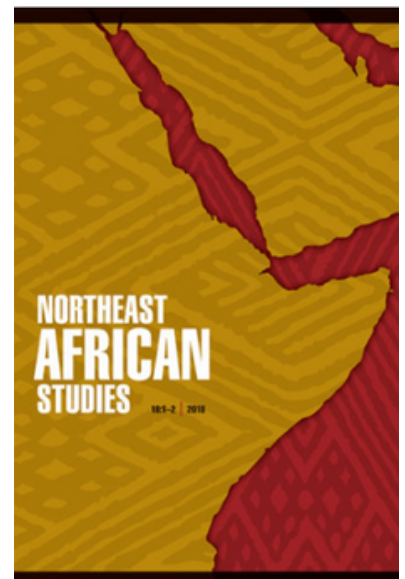
- **Dr. Rachel Gordan** discussed her book "*Postwar Stories: How Books Made Judaism American*" at JCC MetroWest West Orange's Ritzer lecture in New Jersey. See the *Presentations* section on Page 4 to learn more!



- In August 2025, graduate student **Yekatit Tsehayu** completed her dissertation and will be graduating with her Ph.D. this December. **Congratulations!**

NEWS

- **Terje Ostebo** has accepted the position as the [Editor](#) of the **Northeast African Studies (NEAS)** journal. Published by **Michigan State University Press**, it is one of the leading journals in the area of African Studies. The NEAS is a biannual, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary journal that publishes original, high-quality research in the social sciences and humanities focused on the Horn of Africa and its neighboring regions—including [Ethiopia](#), [Eritrea](#), [Sudan](#), [South Sudan](#), [Djibouti](#), and [Somalia/Somaliland](#). Submissions are welcome from a wide range of disciplines, including [history](#), [anthropology](#), [political science](#), [sociology](#), [religious studies](#), [environmental studies](#), [literature](#), and the [arts](#). NEAS seeks contributions that challenge established debates and paradigms, offer comparative insights relevant beyond the region, or draw on new sources and methodologies. Those who work on the journal are especially interested in work that takes transnational, transregional, or comparative approaches, as well as research that frames Northeast Africa in ways that go beyond national boundaries. Studies exploring the region's connections to the Red Sea and Indian Ocean worlds, the Arabian Peninsula, or Trans-Saharan networks—and those engaging with global history—are particularly encouraged. NEAS also publishes scholarly book reviews and, periodically, invites guest editors or solicits proposals for special themed issues.
- **Terje Ostebo** has been awarded a [Visiting Professor Fellowship](#) at the **University of Messina**, Italy, for May 2026. During his residency, Dr. Ostebo will deliver a series of guest lectures and devote the majority of his time to research and work on his forthcoming book.



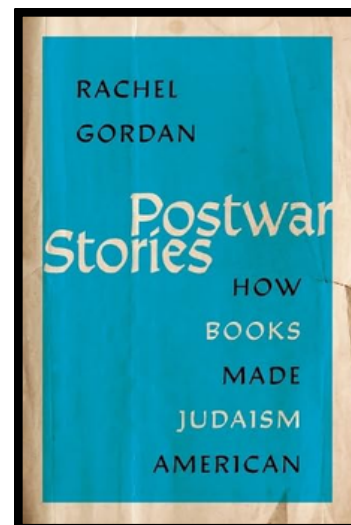
PUBLICATIONS

- Professor **Bron Taylor**'s article, "*An Inquiry into Surfing and the Sublime*," has been accepted for publication in **The Routledge Handbook of Religion and Sport**, eds. Afe Adogame, Rebecca T. Alpert, James Deming. It is slated for publication in early 2026. The practice of surfing oceanic waves is entangled with intense emotions and religious perceptions. Sometimes surfers fuse such perceptions to one of the world's longstanding religions but for many, surfing is independent of them, a kind of 'aquatic nature religion.' The article explores such surfing spirituality arguing that for many, surfing is a source of revelation that evokes feelings of belonging and connection to nature while providing a wellspring of meaning and pro-environmental purpose.



PRESENTATIONS

- Rachel Gordan** hosted a discussion about her first book, *Postwar Stories*, at the Ritzer Lecture at **MetroWest JCC** in West Orange, New Jersey on Wednesday, September 10. She talked about postwar Jewish literature and its connections to her next project, a biography of American-Jewish novelist, Laura Z. Hobson. *Postwar Stories* examines 1940's and 1950's anti-antisemitism and "Introduction to Judaism" literature. It explores the role of middlebrow literature in shaping post-Holocaust American Jewish identity, and addresses the changing categorization of Jews from a marginalized group to members of a respected American religion.



"Postwar Stories: How Books Made Judaism American"
(2024)



Dr. Rachel Gordan



JCC MetroWest has been a cornerstone of the West Orange community for over 130 years, offering educational, cultural, social, and fitness programs across a 400-square-mile area. Reaching approximately 50,000 people annually through classes, theater, camps, and festivals, they bring people together and enrich lives. Their vision is to be the premier Jewish center in MetroWest, inspiring individuals to explore the richness of Judaism in a welcoming, connected community.

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If you have any information that you would like featured in the newsletter, please email **Ashley Tisher (a.tisher@ufl.edu)**.

We can't wait to hear from you!