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# The Schachter-Shalomi Collection Anchors Post-Holocaust American Judaism Archive at University of Colorado

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## INTRODUCTION

Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi (1924–2014) was one of the founders of the Jewish Renewal Movement, a progressive transdenominational approach to Judaism that combines Lubavitch Hasidism and practice with countercultural influences. His journey from Poland and Austria fleeing Nazi oppression to the Hasidic Lubavitch yeshiva in Brooklyn, New York to the founding of the Jewish Renewal movement was the catalyst for a generation of Jewish Americans to rediscover the potential for meaning-making. Reb Zalman—as he was known to his students—built a bridge between tradition and innovation through interreligious dialogue. As Schachter-Shalomi approached his final years, he was still active creating, counseling and writing. As recent as 2014 he completed two books with the help of journalist Sara Davidson and Netanel Miles-Yépez, one of his primary students who was instrumental in the early effort to preserve his materials: *The December Project* (Davidson 2014) and *Foundations of the Fourth Turning of Hasidism: A Manifesto* (Miles-Yépez and Schachter-Shalomi 2014).

In the autumn of 2011, the University of Colorado (CU) Boulder Archives located in the Norlin Library acquired the Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi Collection that was being housed in a warehouse at Naropa University in Boulder. Schachter-Shalomi spent his final years of academic teaching at Naropa University as the World Wisdom Chair after holding positions at the University of Manitoba and Temple University. The acquisition was jointly negotiated by the former Program in Jewish Studies director Dr. David Shneer, who holds the Louis P. Singer Chair in Jewish history and is now head of the Religious Studies department at CU Boulder, and the previous director of the CU archives, Bruce Montgomery. The initial donation included 500 audiocassettes, 500 photographs, 50 VHS tapes, and over 2,000 manuscript pages.

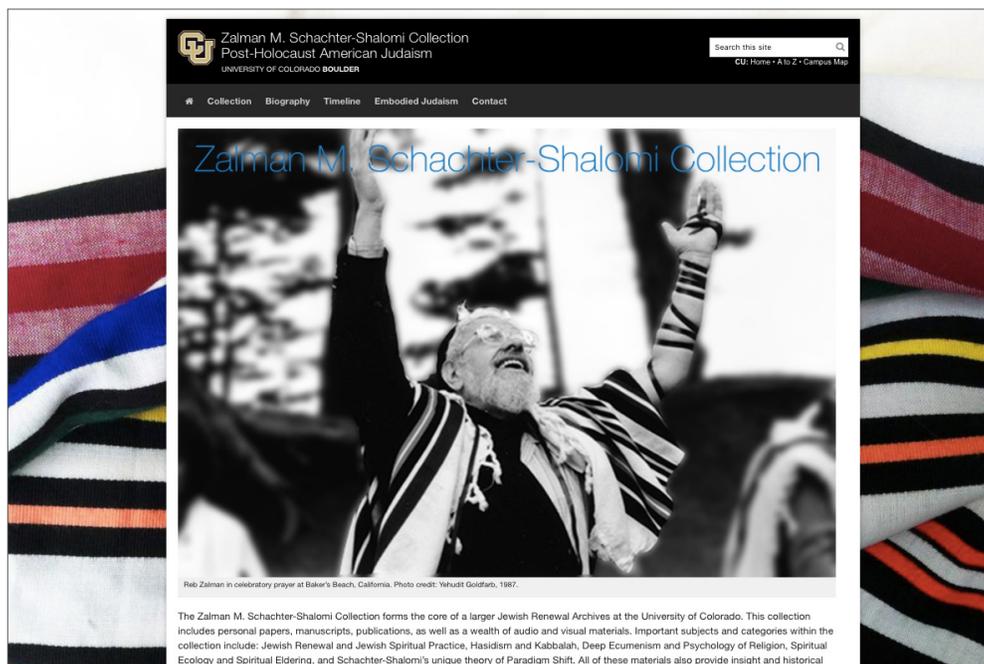
In the spring of 2002, Schachter-Shalomi announced his intention to donate the material of his life's work to create an archive at Naropa University. Supported by donations from the Yesod Foundation and its Reb Zalman Legacy Project, headed by Miles-Yépez,<sup>1</sup> the process of digitizing the collection began in 2005. The initial migration of 500 audiocassettes to MP3 digital format was completed under the supervision of Naropa University archivist Tim Hawkins with training and advice from Ann Blonston at AirShow Mastering studios in Boulder. Miles-Yépez, who still serves as a consultant to the collection, personally scanned and identified many of the first 500 photographs to be digitized.

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<sup>1</sup> The history of Yesod Foundation is available on the organization website: “Inspired by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi’s extraordinary vision, a small group of his friends, supporters, and students in Boulder, Colorado formed a new non-profit Jewish foundation in 1998. Reb Zalman agreed to become its Spiritual Director and suggested a name—the Yesod Foundation (*yesod* meaning ‘foundation’ and being one of the ten divine qualities on the Kabbalistic ‘Tree of Life’).” <http://www.yesodfoundation.org>. Accessed February 12, 2016.

Resources dwindled after that initial digitization effort and Miles-Yépez became concerned that the project would be neglected and underutilized. Knowing that this was only the first donation of materials, with many more to come, in 2011 he approached David Shneer, director of CU-Boulder’s Program in Jewish Studies, with a request to take over support and fundraising for the collection.

In his public announcement, Shneer explained that, “The acquisition of such an important archive makes the University of Colorado a world hub for the study of Jewish Renewal, specifically, and Jewish mysticism more generally. We are excited to be building the university’s resources with the archive of this important religious leader and thinker” (Oster 2011).



**Figure 1.** Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi Collection at the University of Colorado-Boulder: screenshot of the website homepage, at <http://www.colorado.edu/schachter-shalomicollection/>

The Post-Holocaust American Judaism archive, which was initiated in 2011 by a single collection, has morphed into multiple collections ranging from Jewish Renewal leaders to Holocaust materials, engaged various academic and library departments, and provided a training ground for numerous students and interns. This article illustrates the stages of acquiring, assessing, digitizing, and providing access to the Schachter-Shalomi Collection, and describes its place within the larger framework of the Post-Holocaust American Judaism Archive at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

## LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi was born in Zholkiew, Poland in 1924. Raised initially in Vienna, his family was forced to flee the Nazi oppression in 1938. After almost three years without roots, they finally landed in New York City in 1941, settling in Brooklyn, where Schachter-Shalomi enrolled in the yeshiva of the Lubavitch Hasidim. He was ordained as a rabbi in 1947 by Menachem Mendel Schneerson. He later received his Master of Arts degree in Psychology of Religion in 1956 from Boston University and a Doctor of Hebrew Letters degree from Hebrew Union College in 1968.

Schachter-Shalomi taught at the University of Manitoba, Canada, from 1956 to 1975 and was Professor of Jewish Mysticism and Psychology of Religion at Temple University until his early retirement in 1987, when he was named professor emeritus. In 1995, he accepted the World Wisdom Chair at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado, officially retiring from that post in 2004.

During his career as a rabbi and a scholar, Schachter-Shalomi was the founder of both the Jewish Renewal and the Spiritual Eldering movements,<sup>2</sup> an active teacher of Hasidism and Jewish Mysticism, and a participant in ecumenical dialogues throughout the world, including a dialogue with the fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, head of the Tibetan Buddhist Gelugpa lineage, correspondence with Father Thomas Merton,<sup>3</sup> and contacts with Sufi leaders, including initiation into the lineage of Hazrat Inayat-Khan and the Halveti-Jerrahi orders.<sup>4</sup> Among the most well-known of students who received smikha (ordination) from him through Jewish Renewal are Rabbis Daniel Siegel, David Ingber, Saya Isenberg, Rami Shapiro, Marcia Prager, Tirzah Firestone, Ruth Gan Kagan, Leah Novick and Elliot Ginsburg.

The term Jewish Renewal was developed by Schachter-Shalomi around 1993 when P'nai Or Religious Fellowship merged with The Shalom Center.<sup>5</sup> Not wanting to confuse the movement's

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<sup>2</sup> Schachter-Shalomi founded the Spiritual Eldering Institute in 1995 and passed the baton for teacher trainings, certifications and seminars to Sage-ing International in 2005. More complete information is available on the Sage-ing website (under About Us tab) at <http://sage-ing.org>. Accessed February 12, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Catholic contemplative Father Thomas Merton spent twenty-seven years at the Trappist Our Lady of Gethsemani Abbey in Kentucky, authored *The Seven Storey Mountain* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1948) and numerous other books and engaged with Schachter-Shalomi and many others in interfaith dialogue. For more on his life see the website of the Thomas Merton Center at Bellarmine University: <http://merton.org>. Accessed February 12, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Schachter-Shalomi was friends with and had a close collegial relationship with various Sufi masters, including Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, Sheikh Muzzafer Ozak al-Jerrahi, and others. He was initiated into three different Sufi lineages, and was made a sheikh by his friend, Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, in the Universalist Sufi lineage of Hazrat Inayat Khan. In 2004, with his student Netanel Miles-Yepey, he co-founded the Sufi-Hasidic, Inayati-Maimuni lineage with the blessing of Pir Vilayat's son and successor, Pir Zia Inayat-Khan.

<sup>5</sup> The original name of the Jewish Renewal organization was B'nai Or ('sons of light') however Schachter-Shalomi changed the name in 1986 to P'nai Or ("faces of light") to show respect for women. In 1993, The Shalom Center merged with the P'nai Or Religious Fellowship to create ALEPH (Alliance for Jewish Renewal), intending to unify the spiritual and tikun 'olam concerns. See more at the Shalom Center website ("The Shalom Center: A Brief History, 1983–2008"): <https://theshalomcenter.org/node/1196>. Accessed February 13, 2016.

objectives with the “reform” or “reconstruction” of the Jewish tradition (also the name of two Jewish denominations), Schachter-Shalomi decided that “renewal” best described them. Thus he proposed a new organizational name, ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal. According to correspondence received in 2011,<sup>6</sup> ALEPH describes Jewish Renewal as a worldwide, trans-denominational movement grounded in Judaism’s prophetic and mystical traditions. It seeks to bring creativity, relevance, and joy to sacred practice as a means of fostering spiritual healing and wholeness. Jewish Renewal also seeks to include all Jews and to respect all peoples, promoting freedom, justice, and concern for all life on the planet. According to Benaim and Bronstein (2016), “Aleph currently lists 47 communities across the United States and beyond, including Romemu in Manhattan, Nava Tehila in Jerusalem and Or Shalom in Vancouver.”

Schachter-Shalomi retained copies of printouts for talks, various stages of drafts of published works and notes to himself that demonstrate how his approach to Jewish Renewal shifted over the years. In a talk that appears to have been presented around the time of Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach’s death in 1994, Schachter-Shalomi named some of the essential characteristics of the movement:

It seeks first hand experiential verification and validation. It is psycho-halakhic, it honors the wisdom of the past and cherishes tradition as the ground from which it grows and that gives it strength and balance. Eco-kosher is integral to its Halakhah. It is inclusive of eco-feminist truths. It is universalistic, it has jettisoned Jewish triumphalism. It is dedicated to be socially, environmentally responsible and active. It is based on the grids of the Kabbalah as updated by us. So the 10 Sefirot and the Four Worlds are its co-ordinates. (“Tikkun of Jewish Renewal,” Accession 1, Box 61, Folder 4)

Critics frequently label Jewish Renewal as part of the New Age movement, but Marie-Josée Posen (2006) defended the use of disparate elements:

The resonance between the New Age and Jewish Renewal conceptions of God and redemption indicates that Schachter-Shalomi, in effect, refracts certain elements of New Age thought back through the older Jewish lens of Hasidism and Kabbalah to produce a distinctly contemporary Jewish approach. That lens allows him to focus vague and sometimes contradictory New Age concepts into classic Jewish themes.

In her book *Reb Zalman Gathers Figs*, Dana Densmore (2013, xi–10) points out that Schachter-Shalomi’s re-reading of the Torah is as old as the tradition itself:

The guardians of tradition and orthodoxy must worry that any revision or re-visioning of the received interpretations may destroy Judaism.... Without this continual re-visioning,

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<sup>6</sup> Correspondence is voluminous in this collection. Letters and emails comprise approximately 20 percent of the materials. (Accession 2, Boxes 1, 8, 9, 10, 39, 56, 68, 74, 75).

Judaism would have died out long ago.... Even though Schachter-Shalomi goes back to Tanakh for teachings for current times, he does see Judaism as a religion evolving from the earlier form presented Biblically. This evolution follows not only changes in the world and the position of Jews in the world, but also follows our own understanding and moral sense, a larger richer spiritual vision emerging today. Judaism has never been static, and Jews have defined, and will continue to define, what it means.

Although he was both criticized and embraced for his countercultural sensibilities, Schachter-Shalomi contributed a progressive stance for American Jews who were inclined to look beyond their heritage for spiritual answers. Based on the work of Thomas Kuhn, Schachter-Shalomi adopted “reality maps” (Magid 2013, 67–69) to project the role of future religions and expounded on the concept of paradigm shift.

Whereas Reform, Conservative and Reconstructionist Judaism had emerged as a response to modernity’s rationalist and scientific challenge to religious belief, Schachter-Shalomi’s search for a paradigm shift was not a reaction to the sway of reason, but to the demands of a new social and spiritual awareness that grasped all of humanity and the earth itself as a single entity with a single fate. The alternative to more Hiroshimas or to an ecological holocaust was the development of a new kind of global spirituality that respected even revered religious tradition, but recognized that its elements would have to be experimented with and rearranged in order to create new religious forms that could speak to humanity’s current crisis (Odenheimer 2005).

Shaul Magid, professor of Religious Studies and the Jay and Jeannie Schottenstein Chair of Jewish Studies in Modern Judaism at Indiana University, has begun to examine Schachter-Shalomi’s theology and worldview. Recognizing that Schachter-Shalomi was a forerunner of the amalgamations that create post-ethnic Judaisms [sic], he noted (2012, 72):

Schachter-Shalomi argues that Renewal is the fourth turning of Hasidism as it enters its ‘post-triumphalist stage.’ That is, given the global consciousness of human civilization we can more readily adopt the truths of another religion for our own spiritual practice. In effect, this suggests a deep metaphysical pluralism, a rejection of the exclusivist notion of election and a sincere celebration of others’ theological claims as true and not merely tolerated in the spirit of camaraderie.

One of the more radical shifts Magid points to is the minimizing of hierarchy and verticality in the rebbe-student relationship in Jewish Renewal (2012, 285): “For Schachter-Shalomi the function of the rebbe is to perform a collective soul (*neshama kelalit*). This manufactured collective soul is not embedded in one person.” Schachter-Shalomi was interested in a more equitable distribution of power and leadership and encouraged his congregants to develop a personal relationship with God.

Schachter-Shalomi developed his own updated definition of Halakhah based on his study of paradigm shift. The Psycho-Halakhic process refers to a way of approaching legal decisions within Judaism that is more holistic, taking the needs of the time, the place, and the people into consideration. Looking at the original function of the law or commandment and the original context, one tries to see how it would best apply today, to achieve similar ends. One of the areas for which he recommended reforms was the updating of the dietary laws:

Kashrut is in need of *tikkun*. We have not paid enough attention to *shmirat haguf*, the protection of the body from harmful substances. We need to expand Kashrut thinking to ask such questions as, “Is electricity from a nuclear reactor kosher?” Or, “Is something that is bottled in a one-way bottle more or less kosher than something bottled in a recyclable one? (Schachter-Shalomi 1993, 268).

Feeling unusually tired and lacking in inspiration as he approached his sixtieth birthday, Schachter-Shalomi went on a forty-day retreat at the Lama Foundation in New Mexico to examine his life. He recognized the need to adopt new goals and ways of being as he became an elder. He asked himself how other people suffering from a similar dilemma could become re-valored in terms of the positive function “eldering” has had for human beings throughout human history. This critical insight of spiritual elderying sparked a period of new creativity in Schachter-Shalomi’s personal life and led to his founding the Spiritual Eldering Institute in Philadelphia, resulting in co-authoring *From Age-ing to Sage-ing* with Ronald Miller (1995). The first accession in the archive contains materials that document the founding of the Spiritual Eldering Institute and numerous events, workshops, and strategic plans that describe the origins of this work.

Schachter-Shalomi passed away peacefully at his Boulder home on July 3, 2014 at the age of 89.

## CONTROVERSIAL BREAK WITH TRADITION

In the mid-1960s, Schachter-Shalomi’s engagement with other religions and countercultural values began to strain his relationship with the Chabad-Lubavitch organizational structure. A break appears to have occurred around 1966, after Trude Weiss-Rosmarin wrote an article for the *Jewish Spectator* discussing Schachter-Shalomi’s recent public talks on “The Kabbalah and LSD.” In preparing her article, according to a later report by Schachter-Shalomi, she called “Chabad headquarters” and asked whether the contemporary Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902–1994), had given Schachter-Shalomi permission to take LSD. According to Schachter-Shalomi, this “spooked” the officials she had reached, who then disavowed him, saying that the Rebbe had not given permission and that Schachter-Shalomi did not have a real *semikhah* (ordination) from Lubavitch as a rabbi. When this information was published, it caused Schachter-Shalomi significant complications with his doctoral committee and a great deal of personal anguish that led to detachment from Chabad-Lubavitch. This distancing has sometimes been characterized as a break with the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Nevertheless, Schachter-Shalomi continued to speak of the Lubavitcher Rebbe with the utmost respect, both publicly and private-

ly, and is known to have written and visited him on more than once in the years that followed, though with much less frequency (Miles-Yépez 2015).

A black ring binder filled with article clips, reprints, and notes documents the 1960s period when Schachter-Shalomi experimented with LSD. Among the contents are a 1962 article by psychologist Abraham Maslow, “Lessons From Peak-Experiences,”<sup>7</sup> a lecture entitled “The Religious Experience: Its Production and Interpretation,” delivered by Timothy Leary in 1963 to a group of Lutheran psychologists in conjunction with the American Psychological Association conference, and a typed manuscript of the Tibetan Manual for Ego-Transcendent Experience Using Psychedelic Substances adapted from the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* published by the International Foundation for Internal Freedom (IFIF) in 1963.<sup>8</sup> There are typed notes for a “Session Program For Z.S.” (August 5, 1964) and a letter from Timothy Leary (Figure 2). A copy of Schachter-Shalomi’s response to critics published in the periodical *The Jewish Spectator* (Schachter-Shalomi (1967) explains that psychedelic substances had been integral to culture for millennia and that as a Jew, he felt such experiences should be brought into the service of God: “For all the insights gained during a trip, the real moral and spiritual work has to be done afterwards. What has to be internalized into one’s religious and ethical structure still cannot be done instantly.”

Schachter-Shalomi navigated a precarious balance between tradition and innovation as he sought to bring Judaism into the twenty-first century. After the Holocaust, many Jews became secular and the young seekers turned to esoteric religions to find a spiritual relationship based on direct experience, or in Schachter-Shalomi’s words (2003, xxv): “By the 1960s, more and more young Jews had become involved in personal growth experiences, par-

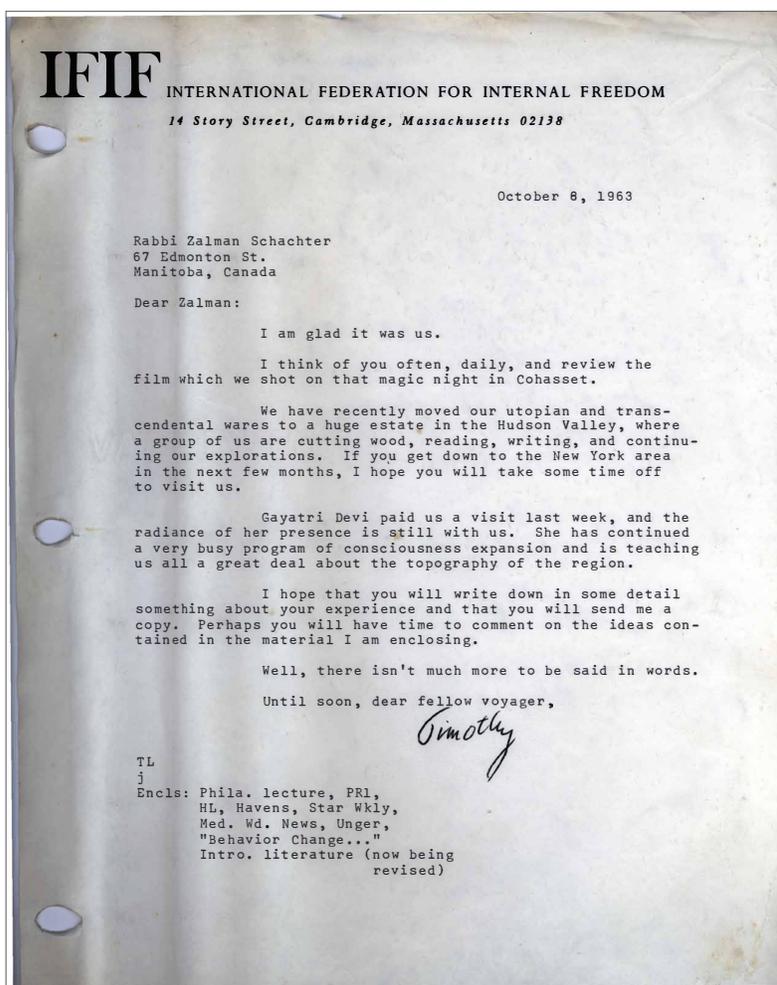


Figure 2. Timothy Leary’s letter to Schachter-Shalomi, October 8, 1965. Accession 2, Box 77, Folder 10, Item 28

<sup>7</sup> Reprinted from the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 2 (1962), 9–18.

<sup>8</sup> The IFIF was an organization started by Timothy Leary and Richard Alpert to promote consciousness expansion.

ticularly those rooted in Asia.... Many Jews who had participated in some of these experiences and wanted to approach and practice Judaism in light of their new awareness, felt there was no place for them to turn.” The archive holds many of the sequentially published writings that demonstrate the expansion and embodiment that Schachter-Shalomi brought to Jewish Renewal.

## SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION

The Naropa University materials that comprised the first donation (2011) included 500 audio-cassettes and CD copies of all files, 500 original photographs and digital scans at 800 dpi in JPEG format, about 5,000 pages of documents, 50 VHS tapes, and 25 posters. Several accessions of additional materials from Schachter-Shalomi’s home followed, including a complete set of books he authored, translations from Yiddish to English of Abraham Joshua Heschel’s poetry, and hundreds of audiocassettes documenting numerous talks and events that featured Schachter-Shalomi. Some of the materials arrived after Schachter-Shalomi’s residence in South Boulder was threatened first by wildfires and then by a severe flood that left his basement office standing in a foot of water and required removal of all materials to allow access for renovations.

**Table 1.** Collection accessions

Accession	Initial Donation Date	Additions	Number of Boxes	Donor	Relation to Timeline
Schachter-Shalomi Accession 1	12/01/2010	2/16/2011 5/11/2011 6/25/2011 6/1/2013	75	Naropa University Schachter-Shalomi	Spiritual Eldering materials, 1989–2004  Naropa University materials, 1995–2004
Temple Collection	8/1/2011		9	Temple University	University of Manitoba papers, 1956–1969  Temple University papers, 1975–1987
Schachter-Shalomi Accession 2		11/30/2011 6/27/2011 6/11/2012 5/16/2012 4/12/2012 8/22/2011 9/21/2011 7/4/2013 10/1/2013 9/20/2013 10/12/2013 10/20/2013 1/7/2014 7/8/2014 10/11/2013 7/10/2015	78	Schachter-Shalomi	Boston University papers, 1955  University of Manitoba papers, 1956–1969  Timothy Leary and LSD papers, 1962–1967  Hebrew Union College Dissertation, 1969
Schachter-Shalomi Born Digital	3/5/2014		19 hard drives, 3.63 TB	Schachter-Shalomi	

One of the characteristics of Schachter-Shalomi's progressive path was his early adoption of technology. He was an avid Skyper and used a digital recorder to document nearly every meeting and interview he conducted. It is fitting that his collection is helping break new ground in work with digital collections at CU-Boulder. One of the most challenging aspects of the collection is the born-digital material that includes JPG and MP3 files, emails and personal voice recordings of telephone conversations from two computer towers and nineteen external hard drives totaling 3.63 TB of material to de-dupe, inventory, and organize. This amount of digital data poses a challenge to the one dedicated digital archivist on staff, who is consistently struggling to obtain additional storage.

Inventory of the majority of the collection has been completed with item level records to facilitate in searching all the accessions. Although the library has not yet installed ArchiveSpace as planned, the records were helpful with the visit of the first research fellow in December 2014, Moshe-David HaCohen of the University Haifa in Israel. HaCohen, whose interests include the intersection of counterculture practices and spiritual inquiry prevalent in the 1960s, is writing his doctoral dissertation on Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, an early colleague of Schachter-Shalomi. Both Schachter-Shalomi and Carlebach acted as emissaries for Chabad under the direction of the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, and therefore recordings and documentation of their collaborations are housed in the collection.

Items related to Schachter-Shalomi's early forays into psychology of religion and his initial exposure to the counterculture movement are also available at the archive. Following the initial donations, additional material began arriving in rapid succession. About ten linear feet, received from Temple University, requires preservation and digitization expertise from outside the library. This accession contains documents from the late 1960s through the early 1980s that indicate early interdisciplinary influences on Schachter-Shalomi's work from Howard Thurman to Gerald Heard and show the development of his Jewish Renewal thought, as well as very fragile reel-to-reel tape recordings including Eli Wiesel (April 1986) and Dr. Richard Alpert (a public talk at the University of Winnipeg, 1964). Funding for digitizing fragile 3/4 inch audiotapes is limited, but there are several reels that may prove to be valuable, including a talk at Marquette University from 1971 titled "The Transcendental Experience", a talk recorded in 1967 entitled "The Jewish Mystical Experience and LSD", a talk from 1976 titled "Kabbalah: The New Liturgy", and recordings of Ram Dass and Abraham Joshua Heschel, respectively. Several boxes of journal articles and manuscripts from the 1960s and 1970s will be invaluable for researchers attempting to trace the influences on Schachter-Shalomi's intellectual evolutionary process or to conduct historical research into the period. Authors range from Art Green and Gershom Scholem to Father Thomas Merton and from Daniel Berrigan to Fritz Perls.

Rabbi Arthur Waskow, best known for his social activism including the 1969 Freedom Seder that spawned dozens of reinterpretations (Cooper 2012), donated about twenty linear feet of correspondence, publications, and ephemera related to his work and the Shalom Center in Philadelphia, as well as papers from the Shefa Fund. He also donated a copy of his computer hard drive, containing born-digital materials such as e-mail correspondence, articles, and miscellaneous documents.

One of the first female rabbis ordained by Schachter-Shalomi, Leah Novick, contributed her papers, books, videos, and material on her interpretation of the *Shekinah*, the feminine manifestation of the Divine. Prior to her ordination in 1987, Novick worked as chief aide for Bella Abzug (1970s) and was involved in public policy advocacy. Materials include her book *On the Wings of Shekhinah: Rediscovering Judaism's Divine Feminine* (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 2008) and the manuscript of the performance piece *The Peaceful Maccabee*<sup>9</sup> about groundbreaking Jewish women involved in spirituality.

Steven Maimes, former editor of the *Holy Beggar's Gazette: A Journal of Chassidic Judaism*, donated a complete set of this San Francisco periodical (1972–1977). The journal was published by the House of Love and Prayer founded by Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach and featured Hassidic Jewish wisdom expressed in stories.

Rabbi Michael Lerner contributed a full set of his *Tikkun* magazine, a bimonthly Jewish and interfaith critique of politics, culture, and society, and committed to donate his archives to the Jewish Renewal Archive. He is rabbi of the Bay Area congregation Beyt Tikkun and author of numerous books including *Jewish Renewal: A Path to Healing and Transformation* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1994), *The Politics of Meaning: Restoring Hope and Possibility in an Age of Cynicism* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1996), and *The Left Hand of God: Taking Back Our Country from the Religious Right* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006). This collection contains a complete set of *Tikkun* magazine from its inception through 2012, copies of his published books, and two *Tikkun* anthologies.

Dr. Justin Jaron Lewis of the University of Manitoba has just completed an oral history project interviewing many of Schachter-Shalomi's friends and colleagues from Winnipeg, Canada and will be donating the interviews to the archive. Audio files of the interviews will be posted on CU's digital library site.

Another upcoming donation to arrive in 2016 are the papers of Rodger Kamenetz, author of *The Jew and the Lotus: A Poet's Rediscovery of Jewish Identity in Buddhist India* (San Francisco, Calif.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), that tells the story of the 1990 pilgrimage by Rabbi Schachter-Shalomi and a group of rabbis to dialogue with Tibetan spiritual leader, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, in Dharamsala, India. A prolific author and scholar, Kamenetz won the National Jewish Book Award for Jewish Thought for his work *Stalking Elijah: Adventures with Today's Jewish Mystical Masters* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997). Included in his donation will be an unpublished manuscript of a Schachter-Shalomi biography.

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<sup>9</sup>A performance piece created by Novick depicting the story of Shlom Zion and eight other remarkable Jewish women as a ritual to be enacted on Hanukkah. A summary of the honored women is available at <http://www.ritualwell.org/ritual/peaceful-maccabee>. Accessed February 12, 2016.

The Post-Holocaust American Judaism archive is pursuing additional sources to create a complete documentation of Jewish Renewal in the twentieth century. Since 2012, the archive made good progress with limited funding and many enthusiastic and energetic volunteers, interns, students, consultants, and generous contributions from numerous departments within CU Libraries. With the acquisition of the Mazal Holocaust collection in 2014, one of the most significant U.S. collections outside of the Holocaust museums in New York and Washington D.C., the scope of the archive expanded and was renamed the Post-Holocaust American Judaism Archive to reflect the more substantial vision. The Mazal Collection is comprised of more than 20,000 books and 500,000 documents, pamphlets, photographs, and other materials, including original transcripts of the Nuremberg trials. In particular, Harry Mazal, a businessman from San Antonio, Texas who procured these materials, studied Holocaust Denial and documented many of the persons and organizations attempting to refute the existence of the Holocaust. He provided support materials for the David Irving v. Deborah Lipstadt trial. The focus of the reframed archive is on materials examining Judaism and the Jewish experience through the lens of religious, cultural, and social movements in America, as well as various philosophies of Judaism and Jewish organizations, originating from the late 1940s to the present. With Mazal anchoring the growing collections, Jewish Renewal is viewed as a development that brought American Jews back to their tradition following a secularization of Jewish identity after World War II.

## CREATING A DIGITAL AUDIO WEBSITE

Judah M. Cohen, associate professor of Musicology at Indiana University in Bloomington recently reviewed Natan Ophir's new book, *Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach: Life, Mission, and Legacy*. Comparisons between Carlebach and Schachter-Shalomi are inevitable, not just due to their shared missions as Lubavitch emissaries sent to college campuses, but for their engagement with music, ritual and performative speaking. As Cohen (2015, 73) noted,

Scholarship today must reckon more than ever with nonwritten sources. Commercial sound, image, and video repositories such as YouTube stand alongside nonprofit efforts such as the Internet Archive ([archive.org](http://archive.org)), institutional portals at museums and research centers, digital archives at national and university libraries, and massive and growing personal media archives in home collections. Charismatic leaders still often present their ideas through written texts; but the immediacy of audio/visual sources, coupled with expanded options for their creation, dissemination, and preservation—whether on cassettes or the internet—can now match or exceed the significance of their textual output.

With 500 scanned photographs and 500 audio MP3 files transferred from the Naropa University Archives, the CU-Boulder Archives team led by Yuhas proposed a strategy for creating an addition to the CU Digital Library. This involved identifying files to be uploaded, developing a metadata schema, and creating the templates for a landing page and additional pages to document the collection. With hundreds of hours of rare and fragile audiocassettes dating back to the 1970s and 1980s needing attention, the Program in Jewish Studies recognized the immediacy of the

situation and raised the funding needed to purchase equipment for a basic audio digitization lab and hire student labor to staff it. The external consultant Sue Salinger, who has media experience and knowledge of Jewish Renewal, supervised the lab.

Salinger assisted in purchasing a digital preservation station that includes an Apple iMac 27-inch monitor with a 3.4 GHz quad-core Intel core i7 with 16gig ram and 1 TB hard drive, a Tascam 122 cassette deck, an Avid MBox audio interface loaded with Pro Tools audio editing software, Isotope noise reduction software and an MP3/4 sound converter. Since all purchases were driven by need and the ability to fundraise from external sources, the best practice of purchasing a SQL relational database was impossible. Instead, all data was recorded in an Excel spreadsheet that could be converted to CSV files and eventually cross-walked into ArchivesSpace, a descriptive archival software package, when that becomes available. In order to facilitate transfer of materials and preservation of files in triplicate as dictated by best practices, Salinger purchased several GTech external drives that are multi-platform based and are highly rated by Mac users.

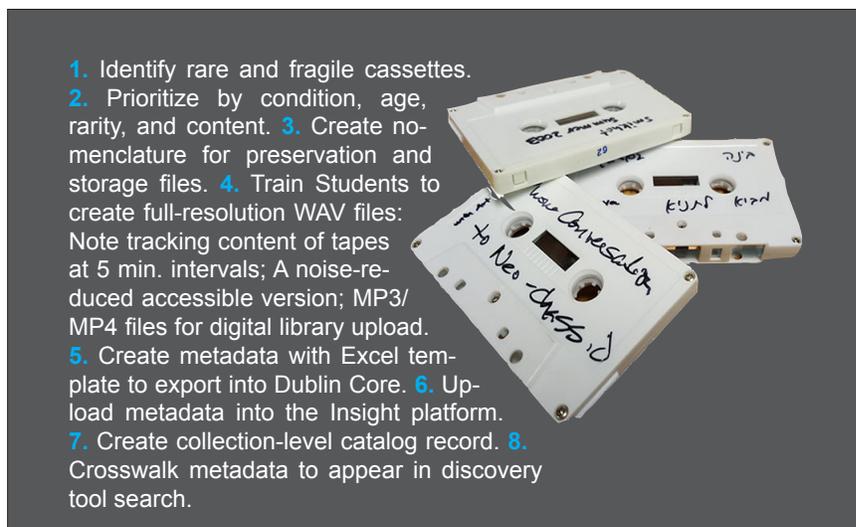
Four work-study students were hired to work under Salinger's supervision to begin the process of digitizing the vast number of audiocassettes in the collection. The materials have been evaluated and a priority digitization list was created based on tape condition, age, rarity, and content not represented in the audio files that came from Naropa. The process of audio digitization requires about three hours of work for one hour of content; it includes creating a full resolution WAV file that preserves the original recording, a noise-reduced version to eliminate hiss, pops, background noise and other elements that detract from the speaker, and an MP3 version for the digital library upload. Students also take detailed metadata notes that track the subject matter generally covered in every five minutes of audio, so that researchers can more easily locate the subjects that interest them.

Digital Initiatives librarian Holley Long and Metadata librarian Michael Dulock guided the next steps to creating appropriate metadata and uploading files to the Insight platform developed by Luna Imaging. Insight is a software system designed to ingest, store, manage, and display centralized collections of digital objects such as images, video, and sound files. Insight's benefits to collection managers include its cross-platform operability, its scalability from small to large collections, and its support of audio, video, 3D images, and multi-page documents. Records in Insight comply with metadata standards and are harvested into the library catalog. They are also discoverable by search engines like Google. The vast majority of users find records in institutional repositories via search engines and links from outside websites that made this software the most functional for the application.

Librarian Holley Long also provided design and creative input to build the landing page for the digital website and associated pages. One of her most inspired contributions was a visual timeline for Schachter-Shalomi's biography, based on review of more advanced and better-funded collection sites across the country.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The visual timeline is available on the collection website, at <http://www.colorado.edu/schachter-shalomicollection/timeline>.

A team was assembled to address next steps for the collection and discuss standards, formats, and workflow (Figure 3). They reviewed the CU Digital Library conventions for audio, text, and images, and noted that using Dublin Core standards could allow for the formats of the diverse materials associated with this collection to be searchable by keywords, dates, and other terms. Metadata could then be cross-walked easily to allow for harvesting through Encore, the Discovery tool that most of CU patrons use to search the library catalog. Catalog records would exist at the collection level for broader access to external communities.



**Figure 3.** Digitization workflow for the Schachter-Shalomi audiocassettes

Metadata librarians Michael Dulock and Andrew Johnson created an Excel template to harvest the specific information for each item that could be easily exported to Dublin Core and ingested into the CU Digital Library, currently running on the Luna Insight platform. The digitization of the Schachter-Shalomi Collection pushed the library to create standards and workflows that could be applied to future projects. Among the fields that required input were a rights statement that reflected the donor agreement and copyright of materials, creator (which might be the photographer or speaker, respectively), coverage spatial that indicates the geographic origin of the object and requires search for the correct controlled vocabulary term in Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) or Thesaurus of Geographic Names (TGN). Keywords that can be tagged to the digital object allow for sorting in the search functionality. For example, if the term *nigunim* is searched, all related objects will appear on screen.

A core group of librarians met to determine nomenclature protocols for individual digital objects that would allow tracking each item through the process and through best practices of storage. For example, an item might be named JRRZ0003S0001N0014; the letters at the beginning represent Jewish Renewal Reb Zalman, the next four digit number represents the upload sequence, so this indicates the third batch of material added to the digital collection. The next part of the number (S0001) indicates that this is part of a series, that may include a number of related tapes

transferred to a digital format. This number represents the sequence of series in the upload. Perhaps there were 12 or 15 tapes in the series and each had an A and a B side. The last part of the number (N0014) is a marker for the actual number of MP3 files in that series. In this case, there were thirty files and this represents the fourteenth in the sequence. The volume of digital materials from this and other collections created a demand for server space that has propelled the library to reconsider the allocation of funds to provide for the expansion of electronic record preservation, while maintaining books, serials and databases.<sup>11</sup> The digital audio collection, currently featuring over 1,200 items available for embedding and downloading, is accessible via <http://www.colorado.edu/schachter-shalomcollection/audio>.

## ILLUMINATING COLLECTION ITEMS

Hidden treasures without description or dates lurk within the boxes and folders of this collection. The following item (Figure 4) in Hebrew and English provides a glimpse of Schachter-Shalomi's whimsical creative side. The following document is in a folder with items on dot matrix computer paper which gives a sense of its age.

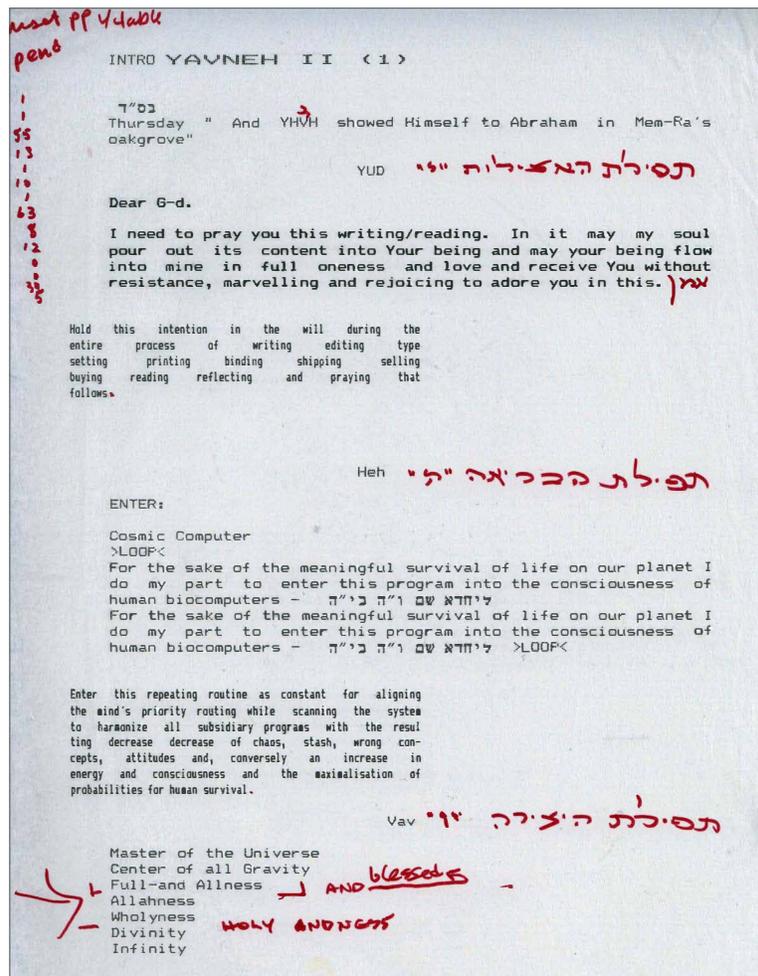


Figure 4. "Intro Yavneh II (1)," undated document. Accession 1, Box 54, Folder 1, Item 49

<sup>11</sup> A similar initiative to digitize reel-to-reel tapes was recently launched in Israel, see DANTEC 2015.

The following image comes from a bound book that appears to be teaching materials that Schachter-Shalomi used during his time at Temple University. The binder is entitled *Translations from the Sources of Hassidism* and includes, among other items, a chart of the *sefirot* with hand-drawn images (Figure 5) and Schachter-Shalomi’s draft translation from Yiddish of Nahman of Bratslav (“The Torah of the Void: a Teaching”).

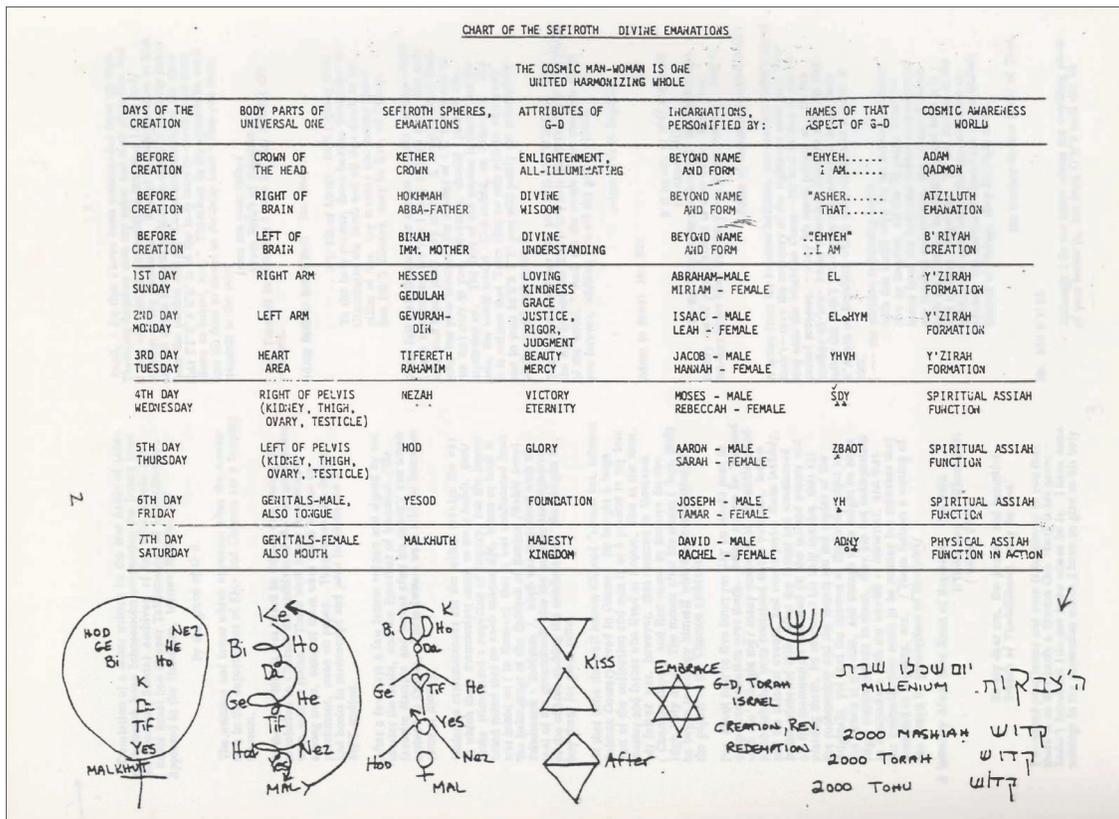


Figure 5. “Chart of the *Sefiroth*, Divine Emanations: The Cosmic Man-Woman Is One United Harmonizing Whole,” Accession 1, Box 62, Folder 6, Item 31

There are several significant areas that are developed within the collection. The following examples may provide a sense of the depth of the materials. A term coined by Schachter-Shalomi and adopted by the Jewish Renewal Movement, *davvenology* refers to the study and practice of *davvenen* (in Yiddish: deeply experienced prayer, possibly derived from the Latin *divinum*, “the divine work”). The term *davvenology* is used inclusively by Schachter-Shalomi to discuss all aspects of worship and Jewish liturgical life, from prayer and meditation techniques to adjuncts of prayer (such as the *talit* and *tefilin*), to the location of prayer and the prayer service in Judaism. Among the innovations that Schachter-Shalomi introduced was a rainbow *talit* (Figure 6).

He explained the significance of this garb in an interview conducted in 2011:

The other thing is that everybody wore either a black and white *tallis* or they wore sort of a pale blue and white *tallis*, but I felt it was time to put some color in. I had gone to manufacturers and asked them for remnants with stripes. We rented a sewing machine and the kids made their own *tallitot* and put *tzitzit* in. It was wonderful and that's how it spread all over. I designed a particular *tallis*, which is called the B'nai Or *tallis*, which is the “children of light,” meaning from the Dead Sea Scrolls. This *tallis* has the colors of the rainbow in different stripes. (“Conversation with CU Archivers,” transcript of personal interview conducted by David Shneer and students, Sept. 19, 2011)



**Figure 6.** Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi at a High Holidays service in Los Angeles, CA late 1990s. A scanned image, digital library site, [identifier RZ1-P-277](#)

Coined by Father Matthew Fox and adopted by Schachter-Shalomi, “deep ecumenism” (from the Greek *oikoumenikos*: “from the whole world”), that originally referred to cooperative efforts between different parts of the Christian Church, might be viewed as the predecessor to interfaith dialogue. According to Schachter-Shalomi, the practice of Deep Ecumenism is an opportunity to learn about oneself through full engagement with another tradition. One might even choose to participate in the practices of another religious tradition, to engage in experiential learning or “participatory epistemology,” as Schachter-Shalomi liked to say.

Schachter-Shalomi had a broad knowledge of traditional Jewish music and its forms. He was a gifted singer and composer of *nigunim*, or Hasidic melodies, often wordless, used to create a particular atmosphere for prayer, study, or communal spiritual practice. Some of his *nigunim* were collected and published ([Figures 7, 8](#)) and recordings are available on the digital audio site.

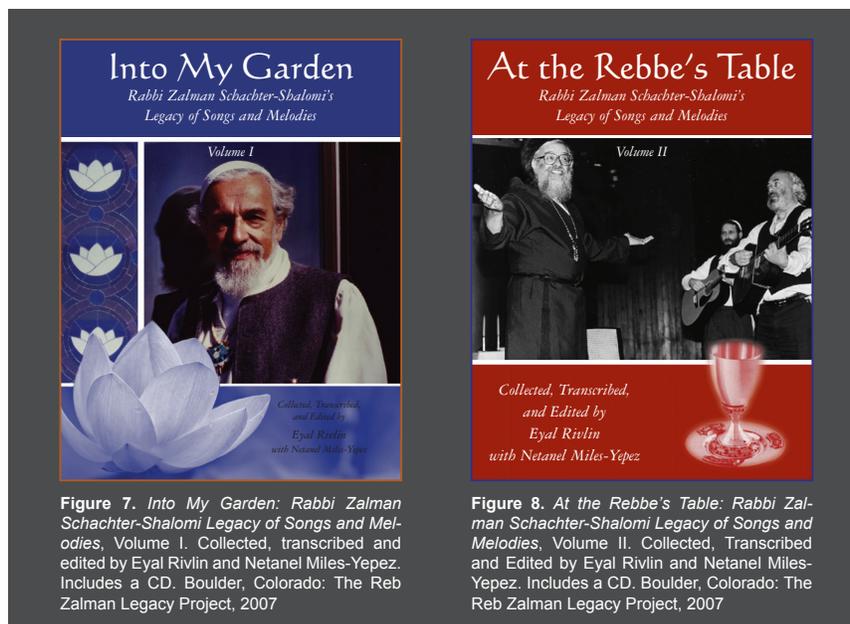


Figure 7. *Into My Garden: Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi Legacy of Songs and Melodies, Volume I.* Collected, transcribed and edited by Eyal Rivlin and Netanel Miles-Yepez. Includes a CD. Boulder, Colorado: The Reb Zalman Legacy Project, 2007

Figure 8. *At the Rebbe's Table: Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi Legacy of Songs and Melodies, Volume II.* Collected, Transcribed and Edited by Eyal Rivlin and Netanel Miles-Yepez. Includes a CD. Boulder, Colorado: The Reb Zalman Legacy Project, 2007

## POST-HOLOCAUST AMERICAN JUDAISM

Courses are being developed to highlight the contents of the archive. This spring a course entitled Post-Holocaust American Judaism gives students an opportunity to view and work with materials from several collections, among them the Mazal Holocaust Collection, the Leah Novick Collection, the Arthur Waskow Collection, and the Schachter-Shalomi Collection. Assignments to investigate primary sources provide impetus for students to gain familiarity with archival research and potentially generate articles based on holdings in the collections.

The History Lab at CU, established in 2011, provides a training environment for students in advanced Jewish Studies courses and aids them in developing primary source research skills and appreciation for historic archival material. The program provides opportunities for internships working with the archives staff to assist in processing collections and learn the inner workings of a library archives. Religious Studies major Meghan Zibby was the inaugural intern in the program, assisting in collaborative activities with the Jewish Studies program and the Norlin Library Archives. In 2016, four doctoral students, two master's students, and three undergraduate students are learning a variety of skills including audio digitization, preservation, processing, and contributing to web exhibits.

In October 2013, a visual depiction of the life story and major thematic areas in the work of Schachter-Shalomi was presented on twenty-six posters displayed in the second floor research area of Norlin library. The posters from this exhibit, entitled "Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi and the Origins of Post-Holocaust American Judaism," are available for view at <http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/archives/zalman/zalman.pdf>. Two cases complemented the wall display with

Schachter-Shalomi's most significant books and artifacts, including a rainbow *talit* (see [Figure 6](#)) and a poster promoting a *Farbrengen* event, a term that Schachter-Shalomi borrowed this Yiddish term used in Chabad-Lubavitch to describe an inspirational gathering (the poster is featured on this issue's [cover](#)).

The exhibition was mounted to coincide with The Sound of Ecstasy symposium co-sponsored by CU's Program in Jewish Studies and the CU Libraries. The symposium was the first of a biennial series that celebrates Judaism through music, the arts, dance, and activism, emphasizing rich Jewish traditions related to the body. The Embodied Judaism series will use materials housed in the Post-Holocaust American Judaism Archive to trace the importance of the body and soul to contemporary Jewish practice by examining new movements of Judaism, sparked by the thinking and practices of Rabbi Schachter-Shalomi.

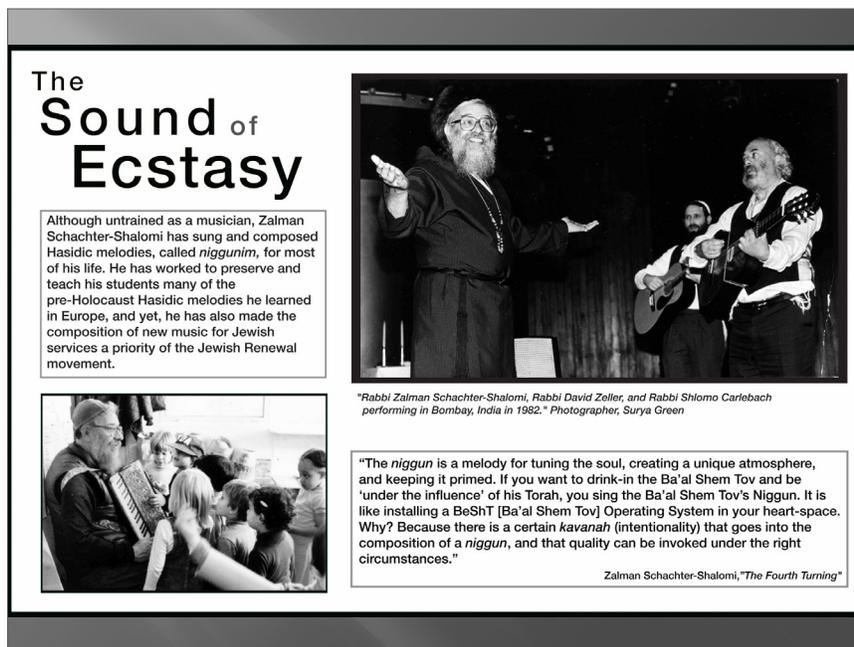


Figure 9. A slide of a poster in the Schachter-Shalomi exhibit, on display through 2016 in the Norlin Library, 3rd floor, Boulder, CO

The Sound of Ecstasy, the first in the Embodied Judaism series (October 17, 2013), focused on the importance of using music to awaken the spiritual. Unlike a traditional academic gathering, the symposium brought together scholars, musicians, and religious practitioners to highlight the role music plays in Judaism. The program featured Tufts University's Rabbi and Professor Jeffrey Summit and CU College of Music Professor Yonatan Malin, who presented their scholarly work together with their diverse expertise in the area of Jewish music. Musician and CU-Boulder lecturer in Hebrew, Eyal Rivlin was joined by Cantor Michelle Wolf and Joe Lukasik of Nevei Kodesh, Jewish Renewal Community of Boulder to accompany the presenters. Rabbi Schachter-Shalomi and his wife, Eve Ilsen, opened the event. The symposium was videotaped and broadcast on the CU Libraries YouTube channel.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> This recording is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6ThOS49ZmU>.

In *Davening: A Guide to Meaningful Jewish Prayer*, a book co-authored with Joel Segel (2012), Schachter-Shalomi explains that, “The holy spirits rests only upon a person in a state of joy and music was key to reigniting that joy.” The symposium explored the roots of the ecstatic tradition in Judaism and highlighted the role music plays in modern Jewish understandings of identity and spirituality. One of Rabbi Schachter-Shalomi’s contributions to the continuity of Jewish tradition is the preservation of music that dates back to medieval times in Eastern Europe and the adaptation of melodies for the modern Western ear. A *nigun* is a wordless melody often composed spontaneously and then recalled as an oral memory that connects aspiration and Jewish identity in a form that lasts for generations. It is a mode of nonverbal communication that reaches beyond the discursive thinking that occupies the rational part of our brain. Song was one avenue of getting closer to the divine, a way of expressing heartfelt longing and repentance that proved more powerful than speech alone. The songs are passed down like stories through the lineage of teachers and students. These timeless melodies are used to assist in raising the consciousness of a community and connecting with ancient knowledge. The Schachter-Shalomi Collection contains numerous recordings of *nigunim* that are currently being digitized for public access.<sup>13</sup>

Freedom Seder: American Judaism and Social Justice, a symposium at UC-Boulder in November 2015 included panelists Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, Riv-Ellen Prell, Adam Bradley, and Rabbi Arthur Waskow. The symposium explored a landmark event in American religious life: the 1969 creative, interfaith interpretation of the traditional Passover ritual. This reimagined performance of an ancient celebration used as its guiding text Arthur Waskow’s civil rights haggadah (*The Freedom Seder: A New Haggadah for Passover*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1970), a rewritten version of the book traditionally associated with this ritual. The original 1969 Freedom Seder took place in a turbulent historical context—on the anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.—and served as an important precursor to what has become a common American Jewish practice, rewriting the Passover text to emphasize the connections between Judaism and social justice.

As the Schachter-Shalomi Collection continues to attract researchers and scholars from across the globe (see for example the recent story in *Tablet Magazine*; Benaim and Bronstein 2016), the Program in Jewish Studies will offer an annual fellowship for a scholar to research in the Post-Holocaust American Judaism Archive and present a faculty and graduate student colloquium during a ten-day residency. Scholars and researchers interested in how progressive Judaism has transformed after the Holocaust will find a vast array of materials to peruse in the Schachter-Shalomi Collection and the adjunct materials that comprise the Jewish Renewal collections.

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