



Tzipori, 5<sup>th</sup> century CE. Mosaic of the Holy of Holies and worship instrument at the Temple. Photo by Itamar Grinberg. © IsraelTourism

## **NEW UNDERGRADUATE COURSE for spring 2013!**

**JST 3505 RVC: Introduction to Jewish Cultures**

**Fully Online (class number 20109)**

***Fulfills core course requirement for Jewish Studies Certificate***

The wide range of Jews' religious, literary, and political expression, throughout their history and all over the world, provide lenses through which students will examine Jewish cultural pluralism, on its own and as a foundation for further Jewish studies within a global, multicultural context. According to David Biale, in the preface to his edited collection, *Cultures of the Jews*, culture itself can be defined as "the manifold expressions—written or oral, visual or textual, material or spiritual—with which human beings represent their lived experiences in order to give them meaning." But culture goes beyond these "products" of a society, Biale argues, to include "what people do, what they say about what they do, and, finally, how they understand both of these activities" (p. xvii). Jewish cultures, then, include not only the products of Jewish societies throughout history but also the practices and discourses surrounding those cultural productions and the self-understanding that accompanies those activities.

The course proceeds in rough chronological fashion, from the biblical origins of Jewish cultures through their 20<sup>th</sup> century manifestations in Europe, Israel, and America, emphasizing both coherence and contradictions, and focusing throughout on Jewish historical pluralism.

