

Paradise Lost and Found:

How a Jewish Kid from Los Angeles Traveled to Wartime Iraq in Search of Roots, Reconciliation and his Father's Improbable Life Story

An Evening with Award-Winning Author & Journalist **Ariel Sabar**

Thursday, February 8, 2018 | 7:00PM - 8:30PM
Old Main Theater | CU Boulder campus

Growing up in materialistic 1980s Los Angeles, **Ariel Sabar's** life seemed a far cry from his father's. Yona Sabar, Ariel's father, had been born in an ancient village of Aramaic-speaking Jews in the mountains of Kurdish Iraq—the oldest corner of the Jewish diaspora - but for Ariel, his father might well have been born on the moon. Then Ariel had his own son, and everything changed.

In his talk, Ariel weaves together the remarkable story of the Kurdish Jews and their Aramaic tongue with the moving tale of how a consummate California kid came to write a book about his family's Kurdish roots. The book, *My Father's Paradise: A Son's Search for his Jewish Past in Kurdish Iraq*, won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Autobiography, one of the highest honors in American letters.



Ariel Sabar is [tab](#)



collectively known in the sources as "mulatto Jews" or "Jewish mulattoes."

In her talk, **Professor Aviva Ben-Ur** will address the emergence of Eurafrikan Jews, their legal status, cultural characteristics, social activism, and their experience of Jewish autonomy in a colony where upwards of 96 percent of the population was unfree.

Aviva Ben-Ur is Professor in the Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and specializes in Atlantic Jewish history and slavery studies.

[Learn more about this event.](#)

RSVP to Jewish Autonomy in a Slave Society