

אגרת

איגוד הפרופסורים לעברית בארצות-הברית

Newsletter of the National Association of Professors of Hebrew

Editor: Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College

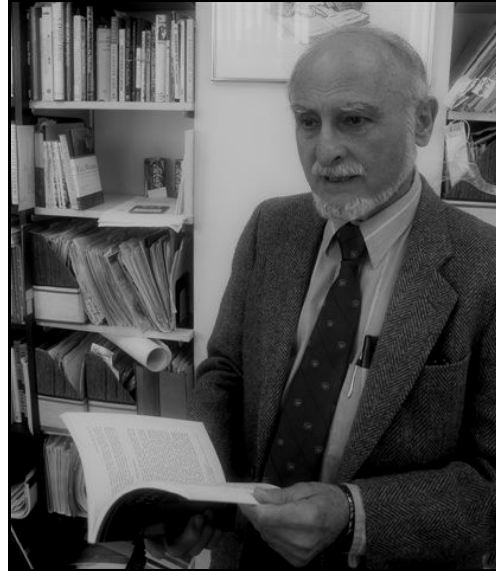
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Presidential Perspective



"דור הולך ודור בא..."

In my last "Presidential Perspective" I related some of my past experiences with NAPH in the 1960s that coincided with its inception and its history. I mentioned the founder of NAPH and some of the past presidents of the association. Among them I cited Prof. Jacob Kabakoff, who passed away a few months later.

"... דור הולך ודור בא ..." is the thought that comes to mind.

As I watched the participants in our last modern Hebrew conference in

London, and noticed the many young scholars who now fill the ranks of NAPH's members, the phrase resonated again.

It is the healthy sign of continuity, of viability, and of the place that NAPH has made for itself within the general frame of Jewish Studies in the USA and abroad.

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The attendance at the conferences by many young scholars is encouraged by NAPH and is facilitated by special funds that were contributed to the association. For this purpose, the family of the late Jacob Kabakoff has established a fund in his memory with NAPH, which will help young scholars attend our conferences, for which we are grateful. For the same purpose, 16 new institutional members joined NAPH, contributing funds toward helping graduate students attend our conferences.

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The recent London conference, still fresh in one's memory, was very exciting — with more participants and more diversified papers presented. London was chosen as a central, convenient venue for our 'world-wide-web' of members.

Continued on next page. . .

For The National Association of Professors of Hebrew in the USA has become an international association. Of its membership of some 400 scholars, one fourth are from countries outside the USA. They include 14 members from Europe (England, Holland, Belgium, Sweden, Finland, Italy), close to 60 from Israel, 16 from Canada, and some others from Mexico, Ukraine, Turkey, Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, South Africa, and Brazil.

That's quite impressive.

London, of course, was very attractive to some of our members for its excellent research facilities: The British Library; Leo Baeck Institute, and nearby: Oxford University and its Bodleian library and the Oxford Centre of Hebrew and Jewish Studies and its library and archives. Not the least is London an attraction for its cultural institutions: its renowned museums and galleries, and theatres.

We are grateful to the University College London, and its Institute of Jewish Studies, for hosting the conference, and to the Conference Chair, Tsila Ratner, for the outstanding work she has done as the local organizer. An excellent work was done by Esther Raizen as the conference coordinator, who was assisted by members of the conference committee.

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This issue of *Iggeret* comes out at a time of economic recession in USA and abroad. This economic situation and some bad investments made by organizations, foundations and individuals threaten the contributions to nonprofit foundations and the viability of some Jewish organizations. Jewish Federations as well as some universities within the Jewish sector are in jeopardy: such as the closure (or merger) of the Baltimore Hebrew University, and some Hebrew schools and JCCs. To a lesser degree, the recession has somewhat affected Jewish Studies and Hebrew programs, for they, too, had to curtail activities and to incur cuts in their budget, as I have learned from an informal inquiry that I have conducted recently among our members.

Let's hope that such effects would be temporary and that recovery will come soon.

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I just came back from the Fifteenth World Congress of Jewish Studies that was held in Jerusalem in the first week of August. It was an impressive conference with over 1,400 papers in some 380 sessions devoted to all disciplines and phases of Jewish Studies. Needless to say that Hebrew language and literature were present in sessions devoted to modern and classical Hebrew as well as to all phases of Hebrew literature. Some of our members were presenting papers and attending the conference. Others are encouraged to join and participate in future congresses (held every four years).

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Cooperation with other organizations and institutions is definitely on the agenda. For example, I met with the artistic director of The Hebrew Writers Association in Israel, Meir Uziel, and its Executive Director, Moshe Mittelman, and discussed several proposals for cooperation with NAPH and its members. Among other things, we discussed visitation of Israeli authors in our universities, membership in "Agudat Hasofrim," and assisting some of their projects: the Genazim Archive, Tschernichowsky's Museum, and its periodical *Moznayim*. I will circulate additional information to our members as it become available.

I wish all our members a very productive academic year.

Moshe Pelli, University of Central Florida, email: pelli@mail.ucf.edu

Notes From Here and There

I. Misunderstood Language

In my article, “Words, Words, Words,” published in *Hebrew Studies* XLVIII (2007), pp. 231-248, I pondered on the power and persuasiveness of words in our language and literature, sacred and profane. I suggested that words in language reflect thoughts on tongue, which at the same time reveal and are revealing. This is spelled out in a paper Bruce Zuckerman (USC) and I presented at the first “Remembering for the Future” conference at Oxford University in July 1988 dealing with the word “Holocaust” as the term of record for the near annihilation of European Jewry. Etymologically, Holocaust is of Greco-Roman origin and means “something wholly burnt.” Indeed, a number of biblical texts and dictionaries translate the Hebrew *’olah* (burnt offerings), as “Holocaust” (e.g., I Sam 7:9).

To employ a religious term for the near genocide of European Jews during World War II makes the Nazi murderers priestly officiants of a divine decree. Moreover, going beyond questions of terminological propriety, there are basic psychological attitudes on the conventional Jewish view of the Shoah. To label the Shoah as “Holocaust” suggests sacrificial sin offering, limited to Jewish victims of the Nazis, and a fulfillment of the Jews’ traditional role of God’s people chosen to suffer for the redemption of humanity. We reject this view, and see the Shoah either as a paradigmatic example of man’s inhumanity to man. We maintain that both murderers and victims are ordinary human beings in an extraordinary situation, an historical event of catastrophic proportion.

At the second “Remembering for the Future” conference meeting in Berlin (March 1994), Zuckerman and I dealt with a perennial issue – the misuse of language and of symbols, especially when religious traditions and values are concerned – within the context of a contemporary controversy, involving the placement of a convent and Christian symbols at the site of the Auschwitz concentration camp. We discuss the dynamics of (often unconscious) cultural and religious bias as the motivation for prejudice. Succinctly stated, bias leads to violently polarizing language and alienation between neighboring cultures, sometimes despite the best intentions of the parties involved.

We postulate that cultural bias is in the eye of the beholder. That is, such a bias is rarely recognized from the inside of a culture; it is only when the outsider observes – especially a sensitive outsider from a distinctly separate culture – that a cultural bias is thrown into sharp relief. And if that bias is perceived by the outsider to be both strong and disparaging, then from his or her viewpoint, it will certainly be perceived in the most negative terms as a prejudice. Yet for the insider the insensitivity may have been missed simply because it was not noticed at all. That is why so frequently individuals express surprise when their statements or actions are pejoratively taken by others to be prejudicial. The bias is not seen nor understood to be harmful from within one’s cultural milieu because it is an unconscious and uncritically examined part of most everyone’s assumptions. And when identified, it is defended by apologetics.

Case in point, German-born Pope Benedict XVI’s abstractions about the Six Million uttered at Auschwitz (see my remarks, “Papal Symbolology,” *Iggeret* 78, pp. 2-3) and his generalities about the Shoah (no mention of Nazi Germany, no personal reminiscence of his reluctant childhood Hitler Youth membership and his Wehrmacht service during World War II, no apology for the Shoah) spoken at the Yad VaShem Holocaust memorial on May 11, 2009. But his defenders argue that Benedict separates Christian verities from Nazi hooliganism and criminality bred in racist ideology and neo-paganism (correctly), denounced in no uncertain terms anti-Semitism on his arrival and departure from Ben

Gurion airport, and *did* express at Yad VaShem that the Jewish victims must never be “denied, belittled or forgotten” and that the Roman Catholic Church feels compassion for the victims of the Shoah and that it is committed to eradicate hatred from the hearts and ways of mankind.

Words uttered by leaders are often scrutinized inside and outside. Whether Pope Benedict’s departure thoughts are seen and heard as political, diplomatic, or religious, I perceive them as reconciliatory and hopeful. On the Shoah: the horrific events must never be forgotten. On his German descent, “We meet as brothers, brothers who at times in our history have had a tense relationship, but now are firmly committed to building bridges of lasting friendship.” *Dayyenu*.

II. Teachable Moment: Truth in Consequences

The late July 2009 controversial house arrest of Professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. by Cambridge police Sergeant James M. Crowley began as a local incident but rapidly escalated into a national debate on race matters set into motion by President Barak Obama’s initial choice of words in condemning the arrest of the well-known Harvard Professor of Afro-American Studies. Later the President regretted his choice of words that malign the Cambridge Police Department and Sgt. Crowley specifically. But he felt that there was an overreaction in pulling Professor Gates out of his residence and that Gates overacted as well (“yo’ mama” talk). Reaction from academe, media, interest groups, and web sites highlighted racial profiling, group association, and the criminal-justice system. The Gates affair mirrors America’s perpetual story of race and class dynamics, whose controversy was somewhat quelled by President Obama invitation for America to engage in a “teachable moment.”

In my opinion, teaching effectively America’s racial disparities in the classroom is an exercise in role playing. Role playing is problem solving. It deals with real life situations and not theoretical abstractions. It enables the student to confront deep philosophical ideas in remarkable simplicity and convincing application. More cognitive avenues of knowledge are relied upon by this method than any other. Students develop sensitivity and learn empathy when they interpret the different roles in conflict one with another, of a problem solving exercise. Finally, values, commitments, aspirations, etc., can be discovered or developed or changed when a student is engaged in ethical decision making and moral development, the twin pillars of a role playing sequence.

The Gates affair is ripe with problem solving activities, from “talk black, white, back” to use and abuse of constitutional civil rights, from learning about the Ying of blacks as problem people to the Yang of police authority in “The People’s Republic of Cambridge,” and with all apologies requested and respectfully rejected. Nothing is more virtuous than truthfulness, and it is disturbingly sad when Truth is conflicted and miffed in Cambridge, Mass., home of Harvard University, of all places. *A zei ‘gates.’*

III. Words of Praise: Briefly Noted and Deeply Appreciated

Colleagues in Jewish Studies and related disciplines paid tribute to Prof. Zev Garber at a luncheon in his honor at the combined Midwest Jewish Studies Association and Western States Jewish Association annual meeting at the University of Denver, April 26, 2009. The tribute luncheon with panel discussion and lecture by the honoree was in recognition of his academic career, professional achievements, and the appearance of *Maven in Blue Jeans: A Festschrift in Honor of Zev Garber* (Purdue University Press, 2009; 513 pages). Additional tributes, lectures, and book signing took place at Purdue University (April 13), Los Angeles Valley College (April 30), and Case Western Reserve University (May 24). Also, the 2010 AAR/WR conference at Arizona State University in Tempe, AZ,

March 13-15, 2010 is sponsoring a three hour book discussion session on the *Maven*. Five tribute essays are published in *Shofar* 28.1 (Fall 2009).

The *Maven* celebrates the academic contributions of Zev Garber (Jewish Studies, Los Angeles Valley College, Valley Glen, California) on the occasion of his 65th birthday. The Festschrift begins with a poem by his wife and concludes with a bibliography of his writings. Editor Steve Jacobs (Religious Studies, U. of Alabama) prefaces this collection of 42 essays by introducing this major figure in post-Holocaust Jewish and Christian thought and relations who "remains the 'quintessential' child of the '60s." Contributors present interpretations of the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and the rabbinic literature; inter-faith dialogues (including Islam); reflections on Judaism as historiosophy, Jewish studies in Germany, and current US public school Holocaust education; and the relationship between Zionism and Hebrew studies. The largest section treats Holocaust theology, antisemitism, and related issues. (Annotation ©2009 Book News Inc. Portland, OR). For an informed descriptive synopsis on the *Maven*, see William H. Krieger, review of Steven Leonard Jacobs, ed., *Maven in Blue Jeans: A Festschrift in Honor of Zev Garber*, *Review of Biblical Literature* (August 2009).

Online: http://bookreviews.org/pdf/7045_7648.pdf.

Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College, zevgarber@juno.com

Meetings and Conferences

Minutes of the 2009 Annual Meeting of NAPH Officers

New Orleans

November 22, 2009

Gilead Morahg presided. Officers present: David Baker, Zev Garber, Edward Goldman, Fred Greenspahn, Cynthia Miller, Pamela Scalise, Marvin Sweeny, Ziony Zevit.

1. **Gilead Morahg**, NAPH Executive Vice President, presented the following report: The Association is continuing to do well. Individual membership showed a slight decline after several years of growth and now stands at 406 members. It was 401 in 2006, 416 in 2007 and 420 in 2008. I assume this is a mere fluctuation, but we are embarking on a new membership drive directed at colleagues who are active in the field but have not joined NAPH. The new category of Institutional Members, which was instituted last year has grown from 8 members to 18. The annual institutional membership fee is \$500. Proceeds from this fee are intended to support the NAPH summer conference and to provide travel grants to graduate students who are presenting papers at the conference. Income from membership dues and *Hebrew Studies* subscriptions keeps NAPH operating in the black. A new grant, provided by the will of the late **Jacob Kabakoff** is intended to support the participation of untenured faculty in the NAPH conferences. A call for applications for the Jacob Kabakoff Memorial Grants has gone out.

Iggeret will come out in December, according to its new schedule. All of the copy, except for the minutes of this meeting, is ready and we continue to be grateful for **Zev Garber's** diligent work on the newsletter and on the program for the NAPH sessions at the SBL meeting. This year also saw the publication of *A Maven in Blue Jeans: A Festschrift in Honor of Zev Garber*. It is a very rich and very thick volume and a true tribute to a man who has done such

wide-ranging work. The 50th anniversary issue of *Hebrew Studies* is at the printers and will also be mailed to the members in early December. It is another wide-ranging, well balanced, high quality volume and a true tribute to the initiative and effectiveness of its editor, **Marvin Sweeney**, its associate editor **Smadar Shiffman** and the fine editorial board they have put together. Marv will present his report soon and I'm sure he'll join me in commending **Rick Painter**, the *Hebrew Studies* veteran production manager who continues to keep the journal on track. Another pillar of the Association is our office manager, **Jared Henson**, who continues to do an outstanding job. **Adina Ofek** has completed the work on the next issue of *Hebrew Higher Education*, which will go into production soon and mailed to members early next year.

Esther Raizen, the NAPH Conference Coordinator, also did an outstanding job in putting together the program for the 2009 summer conference, which was held at University College, London, on July 7-9. She was assisted by the chairs of the conference professional subcommittees, **Shmuel Bolozky**, **Hannah Naveh** and **Renana Schneller**, and their respective committee members who are a bit too numerous to list in this report. The conference was chaired by **Tsila Ratner**, who proved to be a superb organizer and a most gracious host. There were 197 participants in the conference, which made it the largest and richest of the 27 conferences we have held. The schedule for future summer conferences is: 2010: New York, July 6-8, chaired by **Zafrira Lidovsky-Cohen** of Stern College; 2011: Washington, D.C., hosted by the University of Maryland, chaired by **Eric Zakim**; 2012: Tel Aviv University, chaired by **Michael Gluzman**.

2. **Zev Garber** described the process of editing the *Iggeret* newsletter and put out a call for members to contribute columns to it. He is primarily interested in having *Iggeret* serve as a forum for exchange and debate of ideas and invites submissions to this forum.
3. **Marvin Sweeney**, *Hebrew Studies* editor, described the 50th anniversary issue and expressed his satisfaction with it. It is a large issue with a fine balance of articles on Hebrew language and literature from the biblical and modern periods. Work on Volume 51 is proceeding apace. There have already been 12 submissions of pleasingly high quality. Marv acknowledged the strong foundation created by his predecessors, **Michael Fox**, **Fred Greenspahn** and **Ziony Zevit**. He also had high praise for the work of Associate Editor, **Smadar Shiffman**, Production Manager, **Rick Painter** and Book Review Editors **Pamela Barmash** and **Shachar Pinsker**.
4. **David Baker**, Eta Beta Rho Coordinator, reported that a new EBR chapter was established at Colorado Christian College.
5. The **Nominating Committee** presented its nominees for the position of the new NAPH President and Vice President: **Ziony Zevit**, NAPH President; **Cynthia Miller**, to join **Nancy Berg** as NAPH Vice President. **Gilead Morahg** thanked **Moshe Pelli** for his service as President and moved that the new slate of nominees be elected. Motion passed.

Prepared by: **Gilead Morahg**
NAPH Executive Vice President

NAPH 2009 Annual Meeting

The NAPH 2009 Annual Meeting was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of SBL in New Orleans, LA. Sessions of the 2009 NAPH Meeting are below ...

New Orleans, LA --- November 22-23, 2009 Sunday November 22

22-102

National Association of Professors of Hebrew

7:00 AM to 9:00 AM
11/22/2009
Maurepas

Annual Breakfast and Business Meeting

Gilead Morahg, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Presiding

22-131

National Association of Professors of Hebrew

9:00 AM to 11:30 AM
11/22/2009
Gallier AB
Tikkun `Olam: Responding to Natural Evil from Genesis 6 to Katrina and the Aftermath

Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College, Presiding

Steven Leonard Jacobs, University of Alabama

[*Hurricane Katrina through the Lens of Genesis 6-9 \('The Noah Story'\): Towards a Divine/Jewish Theology of Natural and Unnatural Disasters*](#) (25 min)

Shawn Zelig Aster, Yeshiva University

[*Isaiah 19: The "burden of Egypt" and Neo-Assyrian Imperial Policy*](#) (25 min)

Naama Zahavi-Ely, College of William and Mary

[*Drought Liturgy in the Hebrew Bible and in Later Judaism*](#) (25 min)

Deborah Gordon Friedrich, Independent Scholar

[*Making Rain*](#) (25 min)

Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College

[*Tikkun `Olam, Tikkun `Atsmi: "Repairing the World" by "Restoring the Self"*](#) (25 min)

Discussion (25 min)

22-229**National Association of Professors of Hebrew**

1:00 PM to 3:30 PM

11/22/2009

Grand Ballroom A

Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew

Ziony Zevit, American Jewish University, Presiding

Ziony Zevit, American Jewish University

[*The Sufficiency of Fuzzy Dates for Diachronic Studies of Biblical and Ancient Hebrew*](#) (15 min)

B. Elan Dresher, University of Toronto

[*Methodological Issues in the Dating of Linguistic Forms: Considerations from the Perspective of Contemporary Linguistic Theory*](#) (45 min)

Jacobus Naudé, University of the Free State

[*Diachrony and language change in Biblical Hebrew. The case of independent personal pronouns.*](#) (30 min)

Robert D. Holmstedt, University of Toronto

[*The 'New Synthesis' and Biblical Hebrew Word Order*](#) (30 min)

Discussion (30 min)

22-335**National Association of Professors of Hebrew**

4:00 PM to 6:15 PM

11/22/2009

Studio 7

Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew

Cynthia L. Miller, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Presiding

Frank Polak, Tel Aviv University

[*Language Variation, Stylistics and the Status of Biblical Narrative from the Babylonian-Persian Periods*](#) (25 min)

John A. Cook, Asbury Theological Seminary

[*Detecting Development in Biblical Hebrew using Diachronic Typology*](#) (25 min)

A. Dean Forbes, Andersen-Forbes.org

[*Dwelling on Spelling*](#) (25 min)

Shalom M. Paul, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

[*An Intermediate Lexical Link Between Classical And Late Biblical Hebrew*](#) (25 min)

Jan Joosten, Marc Bloch University, Strasbourg, France

[*THE EVOLUTION OF LITERARY HEBREW IN BIBLICAL TIMES: THE EVIDENCE OF "PSEUDO-CLASSICISMS"*](#) (25 min)

Discussion (10 min)

Monday November 23

23-133

National Association of Professors of Hebrew

9:00 AM to 11:15 AM

11/23/2009

Napoleon B3

Poetry and Pedagogy

Pamela J. Scalise, Fuller Theological Seminary, Presiding (5 min)

Elizabeth R. Hayes, Fuller Seminary NW/Oxford

[*A Cognitive Linguistics Approach to Biblical Hebrew Poetry*](#) (30 min)

Discussion (5 min)

John F. Hobbins, United Methodist Church

[*Theoretical Frameworks Useful in the Teaching of Ancient Hebrew Poetry*](#) (30 min)

Discussion (5 min)

Nancy L. deClaissé-Walford, McAfee School of Theology

[*Reading from a New Perspective: the Poetics of Familiar Psalms*](#) (30 min)

Discussion (5 min)

Discussion (25 min)

2010 NAPH Annual Meeting

The 2010 Annual Meeting of NAPH will be held in Atlanta, GA during the annual meetings of AAR-SBL, November 19-23, 2010. Members in good standing are invited to submit titles and abstracts of papers to be read at the meeting. Papers must be in the area of, or have a bearing on, Biblica, Hebraica, or Hebrew teaching methodology. The length of the paper should be 20-25 minutes. If you propose to read a paper, send the title and a summary of 100-150 words after January 1 but no later than March 1, 2010, to: Professor Zev Garber, Program in Jewish Studies, Los Angeles Valley College, 5800 Fulton, Ave., Valley Glenn, CA 91401-4096. Phone, (818) 947-2384; Fax, (818) 947-2620; e-mail, zevgarber@juno.com.

HEBREW LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURE CONFERENCE

2010 Spring Conference on Hebrew Language and Culture

The 2010 NAPH Conference on Hebrew Language, Literature and Culture will be held at Stern College for Women, Yeshiva University, July 6-8. It will be chaired by Zafirra Lidovsky-Cohen. A Call for Papers will be sent to all NAPH members and posted on the NAPH web-site.

REPORT OF THE 2009 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HEBREW LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE

University College London, July 7-July 9, 2009.

NAPH 27th International Conference on Hebrew Language, Literature, and Culture

NAPH's 27th International Conference on Hebrew Language, Literature, and Culture was held at University College London on July 7-9, 2009, hosted by UCL's Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies and Center for Israel Studies. Planned and chaired by Dr. Tsila Ratner, the conference provided three full days of sessions, with opportunities for fine dining, museum tours and entertainment offered by the great city of London. The conference was organized in twelve sessions, with some hundred and forty talks on different topics in pedagogy, language, linguistics, biblical studies, rabbinics, medieval and modern culture, film, drama, and literature. It drew close to 200 participants, and was one of the largest conferences ever held by NAPH. The first day of the conference ended with a festive dinner, during which participants were greeted by Talya Lador-Fresher, Israel's Deputy Ambassador in London; Ada Rapoport-Albert, Head of UCL's Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies; Tsila Ratner, the Conference Chair; NAPH President Moshe Pelli (University of Central Florida); and Executive Vice President Gilead Morahg (University of Wisconsin-Madison). The dinner was followed by a panel that discussed the short Israeli film *Pinchas* (2008), directed by Pini Tavger. Following the screening of the movie and comments by the panelists, Tavger fielded questions from conference participants.

The next two days were packed with lectures, organized in four parallel sessions, a format which was necessitated by the large number of participants, especially in the field of modern Hebrew literature.

Congratulations, Tsila, for a well organized conference, and many thanks for your warm hospitality and resourcefulness! Kudos to your staff.

The conference committee for 2008 included Ruth Adler-Ben Yehuda (Brown University), Emmanuel Allon (Beit Berl College), Nancy Berg (Washington University at St. Louis), Shmuel Bolozky (University of Massachusetts at Amherst), Nancy Ezer (University of California, Los Angeles), Benjamin Hari (Emory University), Gilead Morahg (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Hannah Naveh (Tel Aviv University), Adina Ofek (State University of New York, Binghamton), Miriam Petruck (University of California, Berkeley), Esther Raizen (University of Texas at Austin), Vardit Ringvald (Brendeis University), Renana Schneller (University of Minnesota, Minneapolis), Vered Shemtov (Stanford University), and Eric Zakim (University of Maryland).

The 2010 NAPH Conference will take place between July 6 and 8 at Stern College for Women, Yeshiva University, New York. It will be chaired by Zafirra Lidovsky-Cohen.

Esther Raizen, The University of Texas at Austin, raizen@austin.utexas.edu Conference Organizer

News From Our Members

Recent Publications

Bill T. Arnold, Asbury Theological Seminary: "Genesis," in *The Wesley Study Bible*, edited by Joel B. Green and William H. Willimon (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 1-66; "Reflections on the Composition of Genesis," no pages (cited December 2008), *The Bible and Interpretation*, online: <http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/genesis.shtml>; "Stranger," coauthored with Michael D. Matlock in *The New Interpreter's® Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld (vol. 5; Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 384-85.

Ehud Ben Zvi, University of Alberta: Diana V. Edelman and E. Ben Zvi, eds. *The Production of Prophecy. Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud* (London: Equinox, 2008); ed., *Perspectives in Hebrew Scriptures IV: Comprising the Contents of Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*, vol. 7 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008); ed., *Perspectives in Hebrew Scriptures III: Comprising the Contents of Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*, vol. 6 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008); "The Concept of Prophetic Books and Its Historical Setting," in D. V. Edelman and E. Ben Zvi, eds., *The Production of Prophecy. Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud* (London: Equinox, 2008) 73-95; "Towards and Integrative Study of the Production of Authoritative Books in Ancient Israel," in D. V. Edelman and E. Ben Zvi, eds., *The Production of Prophecy. Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud* (London: Equinox, 2008) 15-28; "The Production of Prophecy: Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud. An Introduction and an Invitation," in D. V. Edelman and E. Ben Zvi, eds., *The Production of Prophecy. Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud* (London: Equinox, 2008) 1-14; "Are There Any Bridges Out There? How Wide Was the Conceptual Gap between the Deuteronomistic History and Chronicles?," in G. N. Knoppers and K. A. Ristau, eds., *Community Identity in Judean Historiography. Biblical and Comparative Perspectives* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009) 59-86; "Jonah 4:11 and the Metaphoric Character of the Book of Jonah," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*, Article 5 (2009) (Part of a set of articles edited by P. Guillaume), available online at <http://www.jhsonline.org>; "Imagining Josiah's Book and the Implications of Imagining it in early Persian Yehud," in R. Schmitt, I. Kottsieper and J. Wöhrle, eds., *Studien zur Sozial- und Religionsgeschichte Israels und seiner Umwelt. Festschrift für Rainer Albertz zu seinem 65. Geburtstag (Alter Orient und Altes Testament, 250; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2008) 193-212.*

Shmuel Bolozky, University of Massachusetts Amherst: "Colloquial Hebrew imperatives revisited," *Language Sciences* 31 (2009) 136-143 (H); "He`ara `al gamar vesiyem ba`ivrit hayisre`elit (A comment on *gamar* and *siyem* in Israeli Hebrew)," *Hador* III (2009) 145-151 (H); "Grammar in the Classroom: The Case of Israeli Hebrew," in A. Feuer, S. Armon-Lotem, B.D. Cooperman, eds., *Issues in the Acquisition and Teaching of Hebrew* (Bethesda, Md., University Press of Maryland, 2009) 67-86.

Oded Borowski, Emory University: "Life and Death at Tel Halif in the Eighth Century BCE," in *Eretz-Israel 29: Ephraim Stern Volume* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society/Hebrew University, 2009) pp. 1*- 10*. Completed directing the third field season of the Lahav Research Project: Phase IV at Tell Halif near Kibbutz Lahav. Results of the second season (2008) were published in *Hadashot Arkheologiyot: Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 120 (October 2008) and in *Israel Exploration Journal* 59.1 (2009): 119-122. Also published several entries in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* Vols. 3 and 4 and the entry "Firstling" in *RGG4* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).

A. Philip Brown II, God's Bible School and College: *Hope Amidst Ruin: A Literary and Theological Analysis of Ezra* (Greenville: Bob Jones University Press, 2009).

Michael Carasik, University of Pennsylvania: *The Commentators' Bible: Leviticus* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2009).

Edith Covensky, Wayne State University: *In the Beginning. (Beresheet)* (Tel-Aviv: Eked, 2009).

The book is in a bi-lingual edition, translated from the Hebrew by Eduard and Susann Codish, and prefaced by Eduard Codish. *In the Beginning*, Edith Covensky's new volume of poetry, contains verse explicitly and implicitly theistic. They demonstrate that the poem works with God in acts of creation as experienced by the poet's imagination. Thus read, we have poetry of phenomenological faith, and a late romantic assertion of the divine power of poetry. The poems in this book, indeed, trace the course of creation parallel to the divinely created world, causing vegetation, people, and words to exist. In this fashion, the poet becomes an intermediary, a catalyst of sorts, making the divine possible by placing it into her fiction.

Giore Etzion, Washington University in St. Louis: *The Routledge Introductory Course in Modern Hebrew/Hebrew in Israel* (Routledge, 2008). The book is an integrated language course designed ideally for classroom-based learners. Adopting an eclectic approach, the course contains 90 lessons combining texts, grammar explanations, and exercises with audiovisual materials to guide and support the student through the key skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

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Current Research in Progress

Bill T. Arnold, Asbury Theological Seminary, "Divination and Magic," in *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, edited by Joel B. Green, Jacqueline Lapsley, Rebekah Miles, Allen Verhey (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, [in press]); "Babylonia and the Bible," in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, edited by Hans-Josef Klauck, Bernard McGinn, Choon-Leong Seow, Hermann Spieckermann, Barry Dov Walfish, Eric Ziolkowski (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, [in press]); "1 & 2 Samuel," in *The [Oxford] Encyclopedia of the Bible*, edited by Michael D. Coogan (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, [under contract]); "Deuteronomy as the *Ipsissima Vox* of Moses," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 4 (2010), forthcoming; "Aramean Origins: The Evidence from Babylonia," *Archiv für Orientforschung* 52 (2007-2008), forthcoming.

Shmuel Bolozky, University of Massachusetts Amherst, is a Subject Editor in E. J. Brill's *Hebrew Encyclopedia* (Chief Editor Geoffrey Khan).

A. Philip Brown II, God's Bible School and College, *A Reader's Hebrew and Greek Bible* forthcoming from Zondervan in 2010.

Shiri Goren, Yale University is co-editing with Lara Rabinovitch and Hannah Pressman an anthology of research in contemporary Yiddish Studies, entitled *Choosing Yiddish* (Wayne State UP).

Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College, is editing a special issue of *Shofar* dealing with Jesus in the context of Judaism. Papers from the Case Western Reserve University Jesus Symposium organized by him (May 24-26) are featured. His well received public plenary lecture on "Imagining the Jewish Jesus" opened a very successful symposium.

Moshe Pelli, University of Central Florida, continues his research on Hebrew Haskalah periodicals: *Bikurei To'elet*, *Bikurei Ha'itim Hahadashim*, *Bikkurei Hashanah*, *Sefer Bikurei Ha'itim*, *Bikurim*, in his series of monographs and annotated indices.

Stephen Katz, Indiana University, Bloomington, "Ambivalent Embraces: American Hebraists' Accommodation with Eretz Israel" (forthcoming) *Jewish Quarterly Review* (forthcoming); "First Cry: Moshe Ben-Meir's Early Holocaust Poetry of the Un-Passover," *Hebrew Studies* (forthcoming).

Ghil'ad Zuckermann, The University of Queensland, Australia, conducts a major research project entitled "Stop, Revive, Survive!: Lessons from the Hebrew Revival in the 'Promised Land' to the Resuscitation – as well as Post-Vernacular Maintenance – of No-Longer Spoken Aboriginal Languages in the 'Lucky Country'".

Recent Promotion or Change in Position

Shiri Goren, Yale University, has been promoted to Senior Lecturer in Modern Hebrew. She continues to offer variety of courses in Modern Hebrew Literature and Culture in the Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Department, and The Program in Judaic Studies.

Stephen Katz, Indiana University, Bloomington, was promoted to Full Professor of Modern Hebrew Language and Literature.

Curriculum Innovations and Awards

Yael Feldman, New York University, is spending the Fall 2009 semester at the *Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, PENN University, Philadelphia* [Topic: "Secularism and Its Discontents"] as a Selma Ruben Fellow.

Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College, was feted by colleagues and friends at scholarly events acknowledging the appearance of *Maven in Blue Jeans: A Festschrift in honor of Zev Garber* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2009). See "Notes from Here and There."

Shiri Goren, Yale University, has been awarded The A. Whitney Griswold Faculty Research Grant in support of her research project of the Yiddish manuscript of David Fogel: "Writing on the Verge of Catastrophe: David Fogel's Last Work of Prose."

Bernard Horn, Framingham State College: *Our Daily Words*, winner of the Old 70 Creek Press 2009 Poetry Prize.

Raymond P. Scheindlin, JTSA, announces that the Shalom Spiegel Institute of Medieval Hebrew Literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary will hold a year-long seminar in 2009-10 devoted to *Meshal haqadmoni*, the thirteenth-century rhymed prose fictional work by Isaac Ibn Sahula. The seminar will bring together some fifteen professors and graduate students from many institutions representing the variety of specialty areas relevant to this complex work, such as Hebrew literature, folklore, philosophy, history of science, qabala, Romance literature, Arabic literature, and art history. It is hoped that these sessions will lead to a fuller understanding of his important but little-studied work and its position in the Hebrew literature of the thirteenth century. Facilitators of the seminar are

Professor Raymond P. Scheindlin and Dr. Maud Kozodoy. For information on this program contact Raymond P. Scheindlin, rascheindlin@gmail.com.

Ghil'ad Zuckermann, The University of Queensland, Australia, organized the first Australian Workshop on Afro-Asiatic Linguistics (AWAAL), held on 11-13 September 2009 at the State Library of Queensland and The University of Queensland. . See <http://www.zuckermann.org>. On 17 June 2009, the compulsory National Israeli Matriculation Exam ('Bagrut') in Hebrew Writing (Bagrut Exam No. 905031) dedicated an entire question (out of 6 in total) to his most recent book, *Israelit safa yafa* (Israeli - A Beautiful Language. Hebrew As Myth) – see <http://herut7.googlepages.com/5.JPG>

In Memory

Jacob Kabakoff Z"l (1918- 2008)

Prof. Jacob Kabakoff, a former President of National Association of Professors of Hebrew in America, passed away December 17, 2008. He earned a diploma from the Teachers Institute of Yeshiva University in 1935, and a B.A. from the same institution in 1938. He was ordained a rabbi, and awarded a M.H.L. from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1944. He earned a D.H.L. there in 1958.

A prolific historian of Hebrew literature and Hebrew culture in American, he wrote several books and numerous articles on the subject (*Halutzei Hasifrut Ha'ivrit Ba'america*, 1966, *Shoharim Vene'emanim*, 1978, *Naphtali Herz Imber 'Ba'al Hatikvah*, 1991). Kabakoff was dean of the Institute of Jewish Studies in Cleveland, taught at Lehman College in New York, and was active in the Hebrew movement in America, Histadruth Ivrit of America, member of the editorial board of *Hadoar*, founder and editor of the journal for young writers, *Niv* (1936), and editor of *Jewish Book Annual*. He is survived by his wife, Dorothy, three sons, and two grandchildren.
Yehi zichro baruch.

Moshe Pelli, University of Central Florida, pelli@mail.ucf.edu

Eta Beta Rho Honor Society

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National Scholastic Honor Society for Students of Hebrew Language and Culture Chapters

(* = inactive or non-responsive)

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7. *Eta* Wheaton College, Illinois
8. *Theta* *Immanuel School of Religion, Milligan College
9. *Iota* *Lehman College Zelda Newman
ZELDA.NEWMAN@lehman.cuny.edu
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17. *Heth* *Sterns College
18. *Chi* Indiana University, Steven Katz katzs@indiana.edu
19. *Tet* *Columbia Bible College and Biblical Seminary
20. *Yod* Bethel Theological Seminary, Paul Ferris
paul-ferris@bethel.edu
21. *Kaph* Ashland Theological Seminary, David Baker
dbaker@ashland.edu
22. *Lamed* University of Utah, Harris Lenowitz kathar7@comcast.net
23. *Mem* *Brigham Young University
24. *Nun* Bluefield College, Timothy Crawford
TCrawford@bluefield.edu
25. *Samekh* *Cumberland College
26. *'Ayin* University of Arizona, J. Edward Wright
edwright@email.arizona.edu
27. *Peh* Brandeis University, Vardit Ringwald
28. *Tsadeh* Washington University, St Louis, Martin Jacobs
mjacobs@wustl.edu
29. *Qoph* University of Minnesota- Twin Cities, Bernard Levinson
levinson@tc.umn.edu
30. *Resh* Asbury Seminary, Bill Arnold
Bill_Arnold@asburyseminary.edu
31. *Shin* University of Mary Hardin– Baylor, Stephen Von Wyrick
swyrick@umhb.edu
32. *Yod-aleph* George Washington University, Yaron Peleg

- ypeleg@gwu.edu
33. *Yod-beth* University of Oklahoma, Ori Kritz okritz@ou.edu
34. *Yod-gimel* City College, New York, Michael Waxman
mwaxman@ccny.cuny.edu
35. *Gimel-dalet-lamed* *Waldorf College
36. *Yod-dalet* University of Kansas, Sari Havis shavis@ku.edu
37. *Tet-vav* Middlebury College, Nathan Devir ndevir@middlebury.edu

Inquiries about the society should be addressed to its national director: Professor David W. Baker, Ashland Theological Seminary, Biblical Studies, 910 Center Street, Ashland, OH 44805; dbaker@ashland.edu.

Notes From the Field

Let My People Know!

ABSTRACT

The Hebrew Bible should be taught like a foreign language, argues Prof. Ghil'ad Zuckermann, endorsing Avraham Ahuvia's recently-launched translation of the Old Testament into what Zuckermann calls high-register "Israeli".

Tanakh RAM fulfills the mission of "red 'el ha'am" not only in its Hebrew meaning (Go down to the people) but also – more importantly – in its Yiddish meaning ("red" meaning "speak!", as opposed to its colorful communist sense). Ahuvia's translation is most useful and dignified. Given its high register, however, I predict that the future promises consequent translations into more colloquial forms of Israeli, a beautifully multi-layered and intricately multi-sourced language, of which to be proud.

In 1996 President Ezer Weizman visited the University of Cambridge to familiarize himself with the famous collection of medieval Jewish manuscripts known as the Cairo Genizah. He was introduced to the Regius Professor of Hebrew, who had been nominated by the Queen of England herself. Hearing "Hebrew," the friendly president clapped the don on the shoulder and asked *má nishmà*, the common Israeli "what's up?" greeting, which is, in fact, a calque – loan translation – of the Yiddish phrase *vos hért zikh*, usually pronounced *vsértsekh* and literally meaning "what's heard?"

To Weizman's astonishment, the distinguished Hebrew professor didn't have the faintest clue whatsoever about what the president "wanted from his life". As an expert of the Old Testament, he wondered whether Weizman was alluding to Deuteronomy 6:4: "Shemá' Yisraél" (Hear, O Israel). Knowing neither Yiddish, Russian (Что слышно *chto slyshno*), Polish (co słychać), nor Romanian (ce se aude) – *a fortiori* Israeli – the Cantabrigian don had no chance whatsoever of guessing the actual meaning of this beautiful, economical expression.

Semiticist Edward Ullendorff has claimed that Isaiah could have easily understood Israeli (personal communication). Compared with Ullendorff I am "ul-yamím" (very young) but I propose that his statement is false – unless of course he referred to Isaiah Leibowitz, yet another prophet. To begin with, Isaiah the Biblical would have found it extremely difficult to even decode the European pronunciation of Israeli speakers. But the more important – and much less hypothetical – question is: **Do Israelis understand Isaiah?**

In the last ten years, I have sadly and most unfortunately acquired many enemies *inter alia* because I insisted that Israelis not only **do not understand** the Bible, but much worse: they **misunderstand it without even realizing it!** By and large, Israeli speakers are the worst students in *advanced* studies of the Bible. Against this background, I was delighted to hear about the project launched by the impressively-experienced Bible teacher Avraham Ahuvia, as well as the insightful publisher Rafi Mozes, acronymized in the biblionym “Tanakh **RAM.**”

Israeli, somewhat misleadingly a.k.a. “Modern Hebrew,” is a fascinating and multifaceted 120 year-old Semito-European hybrid language. It is **mosaic** rather than **Mosaic** *tout court*. Its grammar is based not only on “sleeping beauty” – or “walking dead” – Hebrew, but simultaneously also on Yiddish, the revivalists’ *máme loshn* (mother tongue), as well as on a plethora of other languages spoken by the founders of Israeli, e.g. Polish, Russian, German, Ladino and Arabic. Notwithstanding, Israel’s Education Ministry axiomatically assumes that Israeli is simply an organic evolution of Hebrew and that the Bible is thus written in the very same language – albeit in a higher register, of course – spoken by Israeli pupils at primary and secondary schools. Needless to say, the publishers of Hartom-Cassuto, and other volumes providing numerous glosses to the unfathomable Biblical verses, have benefited a lot from such **purism prism**, which might be somewhat related to self-righteousness, hubris or simply conservatism or blindness on behalf of Israel’s educational system.

The otherwise perspicacious intellectual Avi(ezer) Ravitzky, whom I have great respect for, wrote that “Modern Greek, for example, boasts many similarities to its ancestor, yet a speaker of the current language must struggle to read ancient texts. The modern Hebrew speaker, however, moves smoothly through the Bible” (2000: 13-14). Leaving aside the crucial difference between the **evolution** of Classical into Modern Greek and the qualitatively-unparallelable Israeli **genesis** (rather than evolution), the alleged smoothness is a mere myth. Israelis might understand the most general meaning of *bereshit-bara ’elohim ’et hashamayim we’et ha’arets* (Genesis 1:1: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth) but very few would be able to explain the construct-state *nomen regens* (nismákh) *bereshít-*: in the beginning of what? And how many Israelis could fathom this sentence from the perspective of the temporal sequence of creation: were the heaven and the earth created at the same time? Is it, therefore, possible that the expression ‘the heaven and the earth’ here refers to ‘the world’ in general? And which Israeli-speaker uses a Verb-Subject-Object constituent-order as in ‘created God the heaven and the earth’? Ask Israelis what *’avaním sháhaqú máyim* (Job 14:19) means and they will tell you that the stones eroded the water. On second thought, they might guess that semantically it would make more sense that the water eroded the stones. Yet such an Object-Verb-Subject constituent-order is ungrammatical in Israeli (see Zuckermann 2008, 2009).

How many Israelis can really fathom *tohu wavohu* or *təhom* (Genesis 1:2), the Israeli misleading senses being “mess” and “abyss” respectively? Or *hašvi yisra’el ’al bamotekhañalal* (II Samuel 1:19: The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places)? Most Israelis understand *yéled sha’ashu’ím* (Jeremiah 31:19, King James 20) as “playboy” rather than “pleasant child”. *Bá’u baním ’ad mashbér* (Isaiah 37:3) is interpreted by Israelis as “children arrived at a crisis” rather than as “children arrived at the mouth of the womb, to be born.l” *’Adam lə’amal yullad* (Job 5:7) is taken to mean “man was born to do productive work” rather than “mischief” or “trouble” – this sentence stands as an accusation of the inherent wickedness of mankind.

Since I am writing these words from *Bris bane* (*haBesorim*) – cf. “covenant between (the parts)” (Genesis 15) – let me provide an example from Genesis 15:9: Who knows what *’egla meshulleshet* is?: a triangular heifer? three calves? a third heifer? a cow weighing three weight units? a three-legged heifer?... If you studied the RAM Bible, you would know because its translation into Israeli is as *egla*

bat shalosh (“an heifer of three years old”, see also the King James Version, which is, *obiter dictum*, often more accessible to Israelis than the Hebrew Bible itself). And I have been rebuked being told so many times the red herring that if we correct Israelis’ alleged “grammatical mistakes”, they would be more likely to understand Classical Hebrew. Does an Israeli saying “*asara shkalim* (10 shekels) have more chances to understand ‘*egla meshulleshet*’ than if he stuck to the actually more commonly grammatical “*eser shekel*”? Just as the “Jerusalem artichoke” has to do with neither Jerusalem nor artichoke (even though some Jerusalem restaurants take pride in serving it), what Yossi Sarid – to mention but one linguistic right-winger – calls “mistaken Hebrew” is neither mistaken nor Hebrew: it is grammatical Israeli!

Obviously, one could give thousands other examples, and from post-Biblical Hebrew too: for instance, how many Israelis can follow the meaning of the Passover Haggadah or the Hanukkah hymn *Ma’oz Tsur Yeshu’ati*? So is Hebrew *menabeah* “blaspheming” indeed related, after all, to Israeli *novéakh* “barking”?

Most importantly, however, the available examples are far from being only lexical: Israelis are incapable of recognizing moods and aspects in the Bible. For example, *nappila goralót wened’á* (Jonah 1:7) was thought by some Israelis I have examined to be rhetorical future rather than cohortative, the latter apparent, for example, in Israeli *yeushar hataksiv!* (may the budget be approved!).

Despite 11 years of Biblical training, Israeli-speakers still understand the perfect aspect (e.g. ‘*amar* “said” as in “I will have said...”) as if it were past tense. The imperfect aspect (e.g. *yomar* “would/will say” as in “I thought I would say...”) is misunderstood to be the future tense. In reality, a Biblical verb in the perfect aspect – which Israelis take to be past tense – can refer to a completed action in the future – cf., *mutatis mutandis*, the Israeli colloquial question “*záznu?*” (literally, “have we gone/moved?”), utterable instead of *yala bay*, i.e. “let’s go”. I remember my *tironut* (IDF recruit training) commander ordering us in a *sadaút* session (“fieldcraft”, etymologically unrelated to *sadism*): *od khamésh dakót hayítem kan!* (Within five minutes you will have been here), *hayítem* being in Israeli grammatically past but actually referring in this specific colloquial case to an action in the future. In the Bible, *heyítém* refers **regularly** – not only colloquially – to an action that has been completed, regardless of whether or not it is in the past or future – hence the term “aspect” rather than “tense”. Such Biblical mindset is in harsh contradistinction to the *Weltanschauung* of the *Homo sapiens sapiens israelicus vulgaris* and to the way Israelis read the Bible.

Negating the Diaspora, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda would have been most content had Israelis spoken Biblical Hebrew. Had the Hebrew revival been fully successful, we would indeed have spoken a language closer to ancient Hebrew than Modern English is to Chaucer because we would have bypassed more than 1,750 years of natural development. On the other hand, let us assume for a moment that Hebrew had never died as a spoken language by the second century CE and it continued to be the mother tongue of generations of Jews. They eventually returned to the Only Land, continuing to speak Hebrew. It might *well* be the case that *that* Hebrew would have differed more from Biblical Hebrew than does Israeli, but this fact says nothing about the genetics of actual Israeli.

Given such a magnificent hybridic *yíkhes* (heritage), as well as the omnipresent misunderstandings of the Hebrew Bible by lovely Israelis, Ahuvia’s translation should be cherished and embraced – rather than chastised – by the establishment. Israel’s Education Ministry should revise the way it teaches the Bible and treat it as foreign language classes – just like Latin, employing the most advanced alternative teaching methods of second language teaching, which can be most joyful and memorable. Such a measure has the potential of reducing Israeli pupils’ disdain for Bible lessons, as well as of attracting

more secular Jews to Biblical scholarship. In fact, established and accomplished Biblical scholars would benefit from such a move immensely.

Tanakh RAM fulfills the mission of *red 'el ha'am* not only in its Hebrew meaning (Go down to the people) but also – more importantly – in its Yiddish meaning (“red” meaning “speak!”, as opposed to its colorful communist sense). Ahuvia’s translation is most useful and dignified. Given its high register, however, I predict that the future promises consequent translations into more colloquial forms of Israeli, a beautifully multi-layered and intricately multi-sourced language, of which to be proud.

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Ghil’ad Zuckermann, The University of Queensland, Australia, gz@uq.edu.au

TECHNOLOGY and עברית

In this annual column I would like to review a new and innovative courseware: Sabra Sound. (<http://hebrew-multimedia.huji.ac.il/sabrasound/index1.htm>). This software was developed as part of the larger “Sfat Tarbut “ project of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The authors of this software are:

Ms. Esther Delshad and Ms. Carmia Shoval, Division of Hebrew Language Instruction, Rothberg International School, the Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Professor Asher Laufer, Phonetic Laboratory, Hebrew University

The highly professional courseware was developed in order to improve the accent and pronunciation of spoken by speakers of American English. It can be used also by speakers of other languages, but most the comparisons are between Hebrew and American English. As its name indicates, the goal of the program is to reduce foreign accent and bring the learner’s pronunciation as close as possible to that of native Hebrew speakers (non-oriental Israeli pronunciation).

The courseware has four main units: intonation, constants, vowels and stress. You do not have to follow this order. I would rather start with constants, then vowels, and end with intonation and Stress (the last two are more difficult subjects in my opinion). Each unit is divided into lessons. Each lesson is divided into “Learning” and “Exercises”.

The Learning part has verbal explanations of what happens in our vocal tract when we produce the sound. The explanations are accompanied with sound graphs and audio visual demonstrations. They are

detailed and very clear. When you encounter a professional term you have a pop-up link to the explanation.

The exercises are based on speech therapy principles: First you identify the sound, then you imitate the sound and finally you produce the sound yourself. Therefore, the exercises are marked as “Identifying”, “Imitating” or “Practicing”. There is a big variety of exercises including visual games, drag and drop, matching etc. They provide the student with immediate feedback. In the “Imitating Exercise” and in “Practicing Exercise” the student may evaluate his performance himself. The goal here is to reach a result of “very similar” to the answer, not necessarily identical to it.

The coursework uses acoustic speech analysis software called PRAAT. It provides the students with a visual graph of the voice, called “spectrogram”. Many of the exercises ask you to record your voice, download the voice of the native speaker into the PRAAT system, and then compare the two. . The comparison is done by viewing the two spectrograms. It could be a tedious process but it is worthwhile. Some of the students might find this process very time consuming, so I am glad to see that the authors made the use of the PRAAT system an option which can be skipped. It is a good idea to become familiar with the PRAAT system prior to using the courseware (there is a link to the instructions from the Sabra site). To save time, I also suggest downloading all the example files (from the Zip file) into the PRAAT before beginning each lesson.

The courseware is suitable for students with a basic knowledge of Hebrew vocabulary who are highly motivated to approximate a native Hebrew accent. It requires dedication, time and patience; only if you go through its step-by-step explanation and practice would you benefit from it.

Overall, I was impressed with the level of professionalism in this courseware, its depth of explanations and its interesting various exercises.

Just a final note: I have used the software on Windows XP pc (Service Pack 3) and it ran smoothly with no technical glitches. You should set up your audio and microphone before using it. I did not use the courseware on a pc with Windows Vista or on a Mac platform.

Hadassah Nemovicher, Jewish Theological Seminary of America hanemovicher@jtsa.edu

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Key Addresses

Moshe Pelli
President, NAPH
University of Central Florida
PO Box 161992
Orlando, FL 32816-1992
pelli@mail.ucf.edu

Gilead Morahg
(NAPH Executive Vice President)
University of Wisconsin
1346 Van Hise Hall
1220 Linden Drive
Madison, WI 53706-1558
gmorahg@facstaff.wisc.edu

Marvin Sweeney
(Editor, *Hebrew Studies*)
Claremont School of Theology
1325 N College Ave
Claremont, CA 91711
msweeney@cst.edu

Adina Ofek
(Editor, *Hebrew Higher Education*)
Jewish Theological Seminary
3080 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
adofek@jtsa.edu

Zev Garber
(Editor, *Iggeret*)
Los Angeles Valley College
5800 Fulton Avenue
Valley Glen, CA 91401
zevgarber@juno.com

David W. Baker
(Coordinator, ETA BETA
RHO Honors Society)
Ashland Theological Seminary
Biblical Studies
910 Center Street
Ashland, OH 44805
dbaker@ashland.edu

Esther Raizen
(National Conference Coordinator)
University of Texas at Austin
Department of Middle Eastern
Studies
1 University Station F9400
Austin, TX 78712-0527
raizen@mail.utexas.edu

National Association of Professors of Hebrew
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of Hebrew and Semitic Studies
1346 Van Hise Hall
1220 Linden Drive
Madison, WI 53706-1558

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