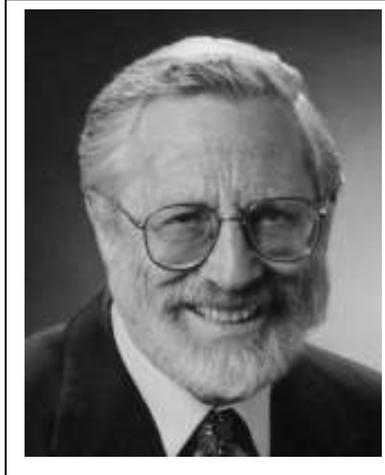


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### PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

#### Biblical Histories Yesterday and Tomorrow

There has been a noticeable decline of interest in studying the history of ancient Israel over the last twenty years. The decline is manifest in the reduced number of sessions dedicated to the topic at scholarly meetings and of publications that are not theologically motivated. It is not that people have not been producing articles, monographs, and books addressing various topics, but it is the case that no *critical* narrative histories covering the whole, from ‘bet’ to ‘lamed’—the first and last letters of the Hebrew

Bible— have been written. Moreover, a type of hysteria about Biblical History (or the History of Ancient Israel) has replaced serious yet civil discussions, debates, and disagreements at scholarly meetings. Over the decade, I have been present at academic sessions concerned with history, archaeology and even linguistics where gathered scholars were treated to displays of name-calling and shouting matches between adults with stakes in particular relevant discussions.

I admit that I found some of these entertaining and rooted for one of the disputants; but sometimes I felt embarrassed for them. In the end, the high tones and public posturing create an atmosphere inimical to the type of public disagreement and creative dissent that can lead to productive brainstorming. The passions expressed in these displays of anger and the decline of interest in Israelite history can be explained. I trace the abovementioned demise to three discouraging factors: methodological, archaeological, and linguistic challenges.

#### Methodology

In the 1990’s the Minimalist debate gained serious traction with American and European Biblicists with Philip Davies’ book *In Search of Ancient Israel* (1992). Applying an extreme form of critical skepticism to descriptions of events in the Bible that many historians had taken at face value, asked questions stemming from *Quellenkritik*: “How do we know it these reports are true?” Who wrote them? When? Why?

Minimalists did not only ask questions, they also answered them. Combining their questions with interpretations of archaeological data bearing on narratives about the exodus, conquest, settlement, and early monarchy narratives of the twelfth-ninth centuries BCE, they concluded (1) that there was little or no

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**Presidential Perspective (Continued) . . .**

value in biblical reports about events in these or earlier periods—hence the sobriquet “Minimalists,” and (2) that the narratives had been concocted during the Persian and/or Hellenistic periods.<sup>1</sup> The only major scholar who engaged minimalists regularly, persistently, and with great gusto on archaeological and historical grounds was William Dever.<sup>2</sup> Some of the other scholars who engaged minimalists vociferously at SBL meetings and attacked their views in print were known to be conservative Protestants. Minimalists never tired of pointing this out and tarring them as “fundamentalists” and “literalists” who ostensibly accept everything as historically valid—hence, all opponents of historical minimalism got stuck with the sobriquet “Maximalists,” an inaccurate moniker (even for most conservative Protestant scholars) that stuck. The mainstream, therefore, tended to fill sessions and watch the debate from the side, preferring not to be tarred as *Maximalists* with its pejorative association of “lacking critical acumen and/or bowing to theological pressure” and the like.

Even though I disagree with almost all of their positions, from my perspective it is clear that Minimalists compelled Biblicists to engage with an approach to doing history that is critical, empiricist, materialistic, and realistic. There was some confusion between their attacks on methodology and their very speculative reconstructions of how, when, and why the rejected narratives were composed in the post-exilic era. The acceptability of the former somehow came to validate the latter. This resulted in a number of Biblicists accepting post-exilic dates for the composition of most Biblical literature.<sup>3</sup>

The Minimalist debate was always about the dating of the final redaction of the sources, the dating of the information that they purported to report, and the reliability of the data themselves. It was a continuation of discussions that started in the seventeenth century, continued through Wellhausen, Gunkel, Alt, Noth, Albright, Mazar and their intellectual descendents. Owing to their agenda, many contemporary researchers are torn over how to treat what is reported in historical narratives about events purported to have occurred from the twelfth through the ninth centuries BCE. They have to concern themselves with what it mean to describe biblical accounts as “literary constructs” and whether or not such a term disqualifies them from consideration as containing authentic information useful in historical analyses.

These are essential, basic, and open questions. The absence of clear answers renders Israelite history as a somewhat gloomy research field. Bright people considering the direction of their careers are correct to resist entering a branch of research in which their efforts might be declared (or proven) worthless from the get-go.

We might have anticipated that Minimalists would write the histories, but Minimalists do not write histories. Hyper-critical in their approach, they either write about why histories cannot be written or, in order to explain whatever data they accept as valid, or they advance largely unsubstantiated suggestions to explain whatever they deem requires historical explanation.

**Archaeology**

Contributing to the present malaise is the state of archaeology, usually considered a ‘handmaid’ of historical research. On its own, archaeology can spin off into art history and the history of architecture. Where no written sources exist, archaeology provides diachronic narratives about ancient habitats, animals, climates, and people: palaeobiology, paleontology, palaeometerology, and pre-history.

Of significance for this discussion, however, is a series of claims advanced by Israel Finkelstein that sever connections between reports of historical events or circumstances purportedly from the twelfth through the ninth centuries BCE in Bible documents and what had come to be considered dated archaeological data bearing on them. Arguing on the basis of his own pottery chronology combined with

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**Presidential Perspective (Continued) . . .**

and reinforced in recent years by Carbon 14 data from botanic finds analyzed statistically, he re-dates levels conventionally assigned to these centuries by a combination of pottery analysis, considerations of architecture, as well as by means of a critical assessment of biblical and extra-biblical historical sources, a century lower. Finkelstein's low chronology assigns data—in the form of villages, fortifications, and walled cities—that traditional archaeologists think should be dated to the tenth century BCE monarchy of David and Solomon to a century *after* Solomon's demise in 922 BCE. This leaves a major hole in the archaeological data from the Iron Age that creates a major archaeological headache and leaves historians lurching.<sup>4</sup>

His low dating not only supports Minimalist claims about the lack of valid historical data in biblical reports about early periods, but also creates a vacuum within the historical record. Finkelstein has repeatedly proposed over a number of years that since the vacuum can be filled only through the critical assessment of archaeological data, a task that only archaeologists can accomplish, the history has had to be written by an archaeologist without recourse to written sources.

Finkelstein's low chronology fomented a debate over his data, his methodology, his argumentation, and his conclusions. Unfortunate for his many opponents, their position became mislabeled the "High Chronology." Actually theirs is a traditional, consensual system of dating that is always self-correcting.

Although the overwhelming majority of Syro-Palestinian archaeologists do not accept the low chronology, and although archaeologists are winding down this discussion, the lingering irresolution of the major issues continues to affect the rudimentary chronological skeleton required for a history of ancient Israel.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, it leaves historians to respond to the charge that Israelite history from the twelfth through the ninth century is best left alone to those who will treat it as a prehistoric period.

**Linguistics**

Finally, there is a relatively young discussion, about which most Biblicists remain unaware, over whether or not linguistic and philological analyses can isolate historical periods in Biblical Hebrew along the lines of Old and Middle English. Distinctions between Archaic Hebrew, Standard (or Classical) Hebrew, Late Biblical (or Post-Exilic Biblical) Hebrew, Qumran Hebrew, and Mishnaic Hebrew have been worked on the final decades of the nineteenth century. During the last decade, two researchers, Ian Young and Robert Rezetko advanced a series of attacks against the validity of the data and methodological assumptions of the language historians who maintain that early can be distinguished from Late Biblical Hebrew. One major contention of Young and Rezetko is that owing to endless recopying, re-editing and to the linguistic updating of ancient manuscripts, early cannot be distinguished from late in Biblical texts. The language was changed randomly just as contents were continuously revised by generations of copyists.<sup>6</sup>

In their remarkable book for which I wrote a positive blurb even though I disagree with their conclusions, they decide that no biblical texts can be dated to any historical period before the exile using linguistic criteria. That means, as Minimalists assert, effectively no documents from the pre-exilic period exist in any reliable form. There is not much for historians of Israel in the pre-exilic period to work with.

**Addressing the issues:**

In my opinion, there is no reason not to re-engage the text of the Bible and to reconsider writing histories of ancient Israel. The discouraging factors described above, though given wide play in *Biblical Archaeology Review* and *Journal for the Study of Old Testament* and at highlighted sessions at the SBL

represent the opinions of very small groups. That means that these scholars have not generated a

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**Presidential Perspective (Continued) . . .**

consensus among their own peers (a fact that does not make them wrong). Much can be learned by distinguishing between the data presented to establish various claims positions and the arguments formulated to draw far-reaching conclusions from them by applying ideas illustrated in Stephen E. Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (updated edition), USA: Cambridge University, 2003.

To facilitate such a critical review, NAPH combined with junior and senior scholars in SBL to create a joint “Historiography” group at the San Francisco meeting in November. The three sessions arranged there focused on attracting new researchers to Israelite history by introducing the current state of archaeological and linguistic discussions in a dispassionate setting with presentations by scholars who have monitored them mainly from the side, by interactions with scholars whose innovative histories of ancient Israel were written mainly before the decline set in, and by new voices reviewing methodological issues. It remains the hope of the organizers—of which I am one—that what was started in San Francisco will continue over the next few years to provide a setting where public disagreement and creative dissent will lead to productive brainstorming and new research in Israelite history.

<sup>1</sup> For a description of the status of the discussion ten years ago, see Z. Zevit, “Three Debates About the Bible and Archaeology,” *Biblica* 83 (2002) 1-27, particularly pp. 10-18 (accessible online).

<sup>2</sup> A distillation of Dever’s views and arguments that were published from the late 1980’s on is to be found in his polemical yet reliable books: *What Did the Biblical Writers Know and When Did They Know It?* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company 2001.

<sup>3</sup> R. F. Person, *The Deuteronomic History and the Book of Chronicles: Scribal Works in an Oral World*, Atlanta, GA: SBL 2010; R. Albertz, “The Recent Discussion on the Formation of the Pentateuch/Hexateuch” (Hebrew), *Beit Mikra* 53 (2010) 5-38.

<sup>4</sup> Zevit, “Three Debates,” provides details.

<sup>5</sup> See, Tomas E. Levy, “The New Pragmatism: Integrating Anthropological, Digital, and Historical Biblical Archaeologies.” Pp. 3-42, in idem, ed., *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism*, London/Oakville: Equinox, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> See, I. Young, R. Rezetko, M. Eherenvärd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Hebrew*, 2 volumes, London: Equinox, 2008. This is the fullest and best exposition of their views.

Ziony Zevit, American Jewish University, [zzevit@ajula.edu](mailto:zzevit@ajula.edu)

## Notes From Here & There

### I. Reflections on the Jewish Jesus

Though many articles, reviews, and books are not of one opinion on the life and times of Jesus, there is a general understanding in the dogma of the Church and in the Quests of the Academy that the incarnate Christ of Christian belief lived and died a faithful Jew. My recently edited book, *The Jewish Jesus: Revelation, Reflection, Reclamation* (Purdue University Press, 2011) addresses Jesus in the context of Judaism and its effect on the meaning of Jesus the Christ and Son of God as taught and followed in

Christianity. With a methodological, pedagogical, and theological thrust, the authors collectively seek the historical Jesus, and reflect critically on his way of Torah as expressed in oral and written narratives and in church history. By emphasizing his Jewishness, they challenge today's Jew to reclaim the Nazarene as a proto Rebel Rabbi and challenge the Church to discover or rediscover its Jewish heritage. In the context of pluralism, in the temper of growing interreligious dialogue, in the spirit of *teshuvah* and reconciliation, encountering Jesus as living history for Christians and Jews is religiously correct and revelatory right.

The essays in this volume cover historical, literary, liturgical, philosophical, religious, theological and contemporary issues related to the Jewish Jesus. Several of them were originally presented at a three-day symposium on "Jesus in the Context of Judaism and the Challenge to the Church," hosted by the Samuel Rosenthal Center for Judaic Studies at Case Western Reserve University, May 24-26, 2009. In the opening plenary address, Professor Zev Garber spoke of the immense changes in Jewish-Christian understanding of anti-Judaism and scriptural anti-Semitism when Jews and Christians engage in continued common scripture study in order to reflect on past and present differences and similarities. Garber's remarks on Marc Chagall's Crucifixion paintings representing the persecution of Jews during the Shoah and juxtaposed by his imagining a Returning Christ with seven concentration camp numbers (four for Tetragrammaton and three for Trinity) on his arm, asking Christian Europe, "What have you done to my people, Israel?" The Cross of Calvary lies in the ashes of Auschwitz. By claiming and reclaiming the Jewish Jesus, this book furthers the bond of friendship, harmony, and respect between the "Body of Christ" and the Jewish People.

My philosophy of why the Jewish Jesus volume was conveyed in an WBAA (NPR affiliate) interview on April 12, 2011 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SAOF-4pFzE>). Later that day the book was launched at a well attended panel discussion at Hicks Undergraduate Library on the campus of Purdue University in West Lafayette, IN. The session was chaired by Charles Watkinson, Director, Purdue University Press, and discussants included Dr. Thomas Ryba, Notre Dame Theologian in Residence, St. Thomas Aquinas Center, and Dr. Stuart D. Robertson, Adjunct Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Continuing Lecturer in Biblical Hebrew at Purdue University, and Pastor Emeritus, Faith Presbyterian Church. They responded appropriately to my presentation on seeking new ways of understanding Jesus in the cultural and religious milieu of Second Temple Judaism. Robertson's views reflected the pastoral and hermeneutical whereas Ryba zeroed in on distinct problems of the historical quest of Jesus by means of traditional research and, what he terms, "the conscionable, dialogical intersubjectivity" of the text. I was delighted to hear his evaluation, "*The Jewish Jesus* does, I think, embody the ideals of sound interreligious dialogue; at the same time, it is intended as an instrument to model and encourage dialogue. The helpful questions at the end of each article are designed to encourage reflection, and – in the right circumstances, dialogue and discussion."<sup>1</sup> For an appreciation of my pioneering role in interfaith Jewish – Christian dialogue, see Harold Kasimow's insightful review of *The Jewish Jesus* for *Shofar* on line, [www.case.edu/artsci/jdst/reviews/Jewish.htm](http://www.case.edu/artsci/jdst/reviews/Jewish.htm).

I should think that the relevance of *The Jewish Jesus* for New Testament and for interfaith dialogue are the reasons for it appearing in mid-June as a feature article and review respectfully on "Bible and Interpretation" (<http://www.bibleinterp.com/index.shtml>) and "Jewish Idea Daily" (<http://www.jewishideasdaily.com/content/module/2011/6/15/main-feature/1/jesus-for-jews>). Trumping my words, reviewer Eve Levavi Feinstein opines that Garber's word "reclamation" approves of the acceptance of the figure of Jesus by practitioners of the faith of Jesus, which, in turn, enhances an interrelationship with those who believe by faith in Jesus. However, she concludes her positive review by stating that Jews ought to understand respectfully Christianity's views on Jesus without claiming him as one of their own.

Readers' response covers the gamut of Jewish and Christian anxiety, fear, and ignorance of self to other. It ranges from the simplistic that Jews will ultimately accept Jesus as their Savior to the obscure

that Jesus was a delusionary reform Jew to the Messiah complex (i.e., *Moshiach* talk is Rabbinic Judaism's antidote to the Christian Jesus curer of the ills of man, nature, and the world; instead live fully God's Torah to guarantee blessings of peace, prosperity, health, and serenity). However, it is the perceived "factual" Jesus (born, preached, and died a Jew) whom Christian scripture and history maintain that Jewish leaders and followers actively participated in his crucifixion that this narrative on the *Jewishness* of Jesus was born. Contra Feinstein's position, claiming Jesus as a Jew is an oxymoron; reclaiming Jesus, however, is a reaffirmation of his identity and loyalty sans articles of Christian faith. And the surest academic weapon against the banality of Christian anti-Judaic supersessionism.

In sum, for all the myriad views of Jesus, there is pretty close consensus that he lived and died a faithful Jew, and theologians and biblical scholars in *The Jewish Jesus* explore the ramifications of that for Jews and Christians then and now. Among the perspectives are the Kabbalah of Rabbi Jesus, the suffering of the Jewish messiah and Jesus, the Jewish and Greek Jesus, Jewish responses to Byzantine polemics from the ninth through the 11th centuries, introducing evangelicals to the Jewish Jesus, Edith Stein's Jewish husband Jesus, and the Jewish Jesus in a dialogue between Jews and Christians.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Ryba, "Remarks for Discussion: *The Jewish Jesus: Revelation, Reflection, Reclamation*, p. 7 (handout)

## II. 90 and 405: A Tale of Clay and Asphalt

It started modestly in 1921. A small group of scholars, index cards in hand, began assembling a dictionary of Akkadian words recorded on clay or stone tablets unearthed from ruins in Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey, and written in a language that hadn't been uttered for more than 2,000 years. Over the decades, scholars from Canada, USA, the European continent and Israel participated in this dictionary project that is linked to the language of the oldest urban civilization. Completed 90 years after its inception, the (University of) Chicago (Oriental Institute) Assyrian Dictionary -- 21 volumes of Akkadian, with several dialects, including Assyrian (10,000 pages and 28,000 words) --- offers a view into the ancient society of Mesopotamia, now modern-day Iraq, through different forms of writing: love letters, recipes, tax records, medical prescriptions, astronomical observations, religious texts, contracts, epics, poems and more. Contemporary life related issues and challenges are expressed in these ancient artifacts, relics, documents, inscriptions, etc., and so the significance of this dictionary. An amazing record in clay completed in our day!

The hype was relentless and seemingly unending. First announcements, then warnings (print, radio, TV, twitter), everywhere (employment, restaurants, school, worship). **Attention: Be Prepared for the Closure of Interstate 405 from July 16-17** *From July 16-17, Interstate 405 between the Interstate 10 and the 101 Freeway will be closed; the I-405 freeway will reopen on Monday, July 18, 2011 at 5 a.m., and all ramps and connectors will be reopened by 6 a.m.* This stretch of I-405, ten minutes from my residence in Sherman Oaks, CA, was closed to enable the demolition of the Mulholland Bridge in the shadow of three Jewish institutions (Skirball Museum, American Jewish University, and Stephen S. Wise Temple) part of the Interstate 405 widening project. Arguably, the most travelled 10 miles of California freeway was to be inoperative for 48 hours and thousands of Los Angelenos who travel the freeway from San Fernando Valley to Los Angeles and back were instructed to take a 48 hour vacation. Anticipating the worst, this ten mile strip and surrounding exits were under full police alert lest drivers defy rules and regulations and "Carmageddon" becomes a 48 Hour Hollywood reality show. Fortunately, the vanity was anticipated psychological fear and on this Shabbat *Pinchas* no vehicle disaster or human massacre occurred. And this Shabbat scene imbued with the sound of silence deafening at ground zero traversed the print and electronic media as the "The Eighth Wonder of the World." Amazing grace.

## Meetings and Conferences

NAPH Annual Meeting in Conjunction with AAR/SBL

Minutes of the 2011 Annual Meeting of NAPH Officers

San Francisco

November 21, 2011

Officers present: Michael Fox, Zev Garber, Fred Greenspahn, Edward Goldman, Cynthia Miller-Naudé, Gilead Morahg, Pamela Scalise, Ziony Zevit.

1. **Ziony Zevit**, NAPH President, opened the meeting, welcomed participants, and noted the association's ongoing successes in its publications, conferences and other activities.
2. **Gilead Morahg**, NAPH Executive Vice President, introduced **Jared Henson**, the NAPH Associate Director, and thanked him for the outstanding job he has been doing in keeping all the Association's operations running so smoothly. Gilead then presented the following report: The Association is continuing to do well. Following the slight decline in individual membership in 2009, we conducted a membership drive directed at colleagues who are active in the field but have not joined NAPH. This resulted in an increase of membership from 406 members in 2009 to 455 members in 2010. Upon review, it was determined that this increase came almost exclusively from colleagues in the areas of Modern Hebrew language and literature. The challenge we faced this year was how to increase the number of members working in Biblical Studies and other pre-modern fields. Following the suggestion of our President, **Ziony Zevit**, we surveyed the programs of the SBL conferences of the past five years in order to identify scholars who presented papers related to the Hebrew Bible. We came up with a list of 500 colleagues and sent them all invitations to join. As a result, we gained 24 new members. This is an increase of close to 5%, which I am told, is a pretty good return. We'll try again next year. The total of 2011 NAPH members now stands at 475, an increase of 17% over the past two years.

Income from membership dues and *Hebrew Studies* subscriptions keeps NAPH operating in the black. *Hebrew Studies* is also supported by a grant from the Littauer Foundation. Last year we shifted to electronic dues notification and collection. There was some concern that this may result in a reduction in the amount of dues paid, so I am pleased to report that there has been no such decrease and the program is working well. Another source of income, modest so far, has been from royalties on *Hebrew Studies* articles that have been digitized and put online by the various electronic subscription agencies with which we contracted last year. To date, we received \$1,982 in royalties, primarily from Gale and EBSCO. Royalties from Project Muse and JSTOR are calculated after the end of the year, so we still don't know what they will be. But I was able to get the figures about how many full text *Hebrew Studies* articles were downloaded through Project Muse between January 1 and October 31, and I was impressed and delighted by this number: 1,360 *Hebrew Studies* articles were downloaded by scholars and students from all over the world.

The 2011 volume of *Hebrew Studies* is still at the printers. Their turnaround time has been much slower this year. We should be getting the new volumes in late December and will start

mailing them out as soon as they arrive. Once again, it is a wide-ranging, high quality volume and a true tribute to the initiative and effectiveness of its editor, **Marvin Sweeney**. Marv is in Korea right now, and Serge Frolov, a member of the editorial board, will present his report soon. From this report you will see that Marv and his outstanding editorial team have been very successful in attaining a balance of scholarly studies on both the early and later periods of Hebrew language, literature and culture. You will also learn that Marv has decided to step down from his position as editor. As some of you know, Marv has had to deal with a very serious health issue. He has been declared fully recovered, but must still watch his workload. This has been an important factor in his decision to step down. His primary reason, however, is that he feels that having served as editor for six years and accomplished his goals of ensuring the scholarly integrity of the journal and ensuring the growth in publications pertaining to Modern Hebrew literature, it is time to bring in someone new. On behalf of all of us, I want to acknowledge our deep appreciation and admiration for Marv's great contribution to our Association and to our profession. I'm sure you all join me in wishing him continued good health and good cheer. We look forward to seeing him back here among us next year.

*Iggeret* will come out in December, as scheduled. As always, **Zev Garber** has done a fine job of putting the newsletter together and, once these minutes are complete, it will be distributed to members electronically, in addition to being posted on the NAPH website. We continue to be grateful for Zev's diligent work on the newsletter and on the program for the NAPH sessions at the SBL meeting.

The **2011 conference** at the University of Maryland was another great success. **Esther Raizen**, did an excellent job in putting together the program, together with the professional subcommittees chaired by **Shmuel Bolozky**, **Nancy Berg**, and **Renana Schneller**. **Eric Zakim**, the conference chair, was a superb host and wonderful organizer. There were 192 participants and the level of presentations and discussions was high, if sometimes spirited. After 9 years as our National Conference Coordinator, Esther has also decided to step down, primarily due to her expanded duties as Associate Dean for Research at the University of Texas. She, too, deserves great credit and profound appreciation for her accomplishments in improving the quality and expanding the scope of our conference. **Zafrira Lidovsky-Cohen**, who chaired our very successful conference at Stern College last year, is being nominated to serve as her replacement. The Nominating Committee will present its slate of nominees at the end of the meeting. The schedule for future summer conferences is: 2012, June 25-27, hosted by UCLA, chaired by **Lev Hakak**; 2013, June 24-26, hosted by the Jewish Theological Seminary, co-chaired by **Alan Mintz** and **Nitza Krohn**.

3. **Marvin Sweeney** submitted the following report: I regret that I am unable to be with you today, but I am currently serving as Underwood Visiting Professor of Divinity at Yonsei University in Seoul. It has been my honor and privilege to serve as Editor of *Hebrew Studies* for the past six years, but it is time for me to step down. I am stepping down for several reasons: first, I have served for six years, which is equivalent to the time I served as Editor of *Review of Biblical Literature*. Second, I suffered a health crisis about a year and a half ago. Although my doctors tell me that I have recovered, my health nevertheless plays a role in this decision. Third, I am satisfied that *Hebrew Studies* is running well, and I have accomplished the task that was asked of me: to improve offerings in Modern Hebrew language and literature.

I would like to express my gratitude to a number of people for their support and hard work

during my tenure as *Hebrew Studies* Editor. First is **Gilead Morahg**, Executive Vice President of NAPH, for his confidence in me, and his unfailing support throughout my time as Editor. Second is **Rick Painter**, Managing Editor of *Hebrew Studies*, for his hard work and dedication to the journal. Third is **Smadar Shiffman**, Associate Editor, for her work in the area of Modern Hebrew literature. Fourth are **Pamela Barmash** and **Shachar Pinsker**, the Book Review Editors of the journal who have given exemplary service. And sixth are the members of the Editorial Board who have provided judicious counsel in their assessments of papers submitted to the journals for publication. I look forward to working with the new editor to facilitate the transition.

4. **Zev Garber** described the process of editing the *Iggeret* newsletter and organizing the NAPH sessions at the SBL conference. He called attention to the unique NAPH session on “the Jewish Jesus.”
5. **Pamela Scalise** reported that methodology sessions on teaching the Biblical Hebrew, which were introduced by NAPH, have increased at the SBL conference. She invited participants to attend the 2011 NAPH session on “Achieving Independence: Teaching Biblical Hebrew Students How to Become Independent Interpreters.”
6. **David Baker**, Eta Beta Rho Coordinator, reported that no new EBR chapters were established in 2011. He explained the benefits of having an EBR chapter and encouraged NAPH members to establish new chapters at their institutions.
7. The NAPH Nominating Committee submitted its slate of nominees for the new NAPH Offices. Gilead Morahg moved that the slate be accepted by the current officers. Zev Garber seconded. The motion passed. The slate of the 2011-2013 NAPH officers is posted below.

#### **NAPH Officers 2011-2013**

**President:** Nancy Berg: Washington University  
**Executive Vice President:** Gilead Morahg, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
**Vice President:** Cynthia Miller-Naudé, University of the Free State of Bloemfontein  
**Vice President:** Esther Raizen, University of Texas at Austin  
**National Conference Coordinator:** Zafriira Lidovsky Cohen, Stern College  
**Editor of *Hebrew Studies*:** Serge Frolov, Southern Methodist University  
**Editor of *Hebrew Higher Education*:** Adina Ofek, Binghamton University  
**Editor of *Iggeret*:** Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College  
**Eta Beta Rho Coordinator:** David Baker, Ashland Theological Seminary

Minutes prepared by  
 Gilead Morahg  
 NAPH Executive Vice President

### **NAPH Advisory Council 2010-2012:**

#### **Pre-Modern Division**

Gary Arbino, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary  
Bill Arnold, Asbury Seminary  
Helene Dallaire, Denver Theological Seminary  
Carl Ehle, Jr., Berkshire Institute of Christian Studies  
Eugene Fisher, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops  
Michael Fox, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Edward Goldman, Hebrew Union College  
Frederick Greenspahn, Florida Atlantic University  
Harris Lenowitz, University of Utah  
Cynthia Miller-Naudé, University of the Free State, SA  
Pamela Scalise, Fuller Theological Seminary  
Bruce Zuckerman, University of Southern California

#### **Modern Division**

Shmuel Bolozky, University of Massachusetts  
Rivka Dori, HUC-JIR (Los Angeles) and University of Southern California  
Nancy Ezer, UCLA  
Chana Kronfeld, University of California, Berkeley  
Zafira Lidovsky Cohen, Yeshiva University/Stern College  
Alan Mintz, Jewish Theological Seminary  
Hannah Naveh, Tel Aviv University  
Esther Raizen, University of Texas at Austin  
Renana Schneller, University of Minnesota  
Yigal Schwartz, Ben-Gurion University  
Vered Shemtov, Stanford University  
Eric Zakim, University of Maryland

#### **Nominating Committee**

Shmuel Bolozky  
Frederick Greenspahn  
Gilead Morahg  
Moshe Pelli  
Ziony Zevit

Minutes prepared by  
Gilead Morahg  
NAPH Executive Vice President

## NAPH 2011 Annual Meeting

The NAPH 2011 Annual Meeting was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of SBL in San Francisco, CA. Sessions of the 2011 NAPH Meeting are below ...

**San Francisco, CA--- November 20-21, 2011**

**Sunday, November 20**

### **P20-100**

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#### **National Association of Professors of Hebrew**

**11/20/2011**

**7:00 AM to 9:00 AM**

**Room:** Golden Gate C3 - Marriott

Theme: *Annual Breakfast and Business Meeting*

Gilead Morahg, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Presiding

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### **S20-232**

#### **National Association of Professors of Hebrew**

**Joint Session With:** National Association of Professors of Hebrew, Current Historiography and Ancient Israel and Judah

**11/20/2011**

**1:00 PM to 3:30 PM**

**Room:** 3020 - Convention Center

Theme: *Historiography of/in Ancient Israel: Creating a Chronological Skeleton Using Archaeology and Language(s)*

Research in the history of ancient Israel has slowed to a standstill for almost two decades as methodological issues and debates in two unrelated disciplines—Iron Age archaeology and Hebrew Historical Linguistics—raised doubts about the relative and absolute dating of archeological events and about the dating of historiographic sources reporting events. The objectives of this session are to clarify the changing issues involved for non-specialists as the debates begin to wind down. Presentations will summarize their history and define the status of the questions through 2011, providing a base for a new chronological skeleton without which no new histories can be written.

Ziony Zevit, American Jewish University, Presiding

Ziony Zevit, American Jewish University

[\*Renewing Historiography and Ending Hysteriography\*](#) (25 min)

William Schniedewind, University of California-Los Angeles

[Anthropological Linguistics, Writing, and the Dating of Biblical Texts](#) (30 min)

Eric H. Cline, George Washington University

["Swing Low, Sweet Chariot": The Low Chronology and Its Impact upon our Understanding of "Solomon's Stables" at Megiddo and Other Related Topics in the History and Archaeology of Ancient Israel](#) (30 min)

J. P. Dessel, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

[Why Chronology Matters: The Highs and Lows of the Iron Age II](#) (30 min)

Discussion (30 min)

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## **P20-330**

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### **National Association of Professors of Hebrew**

**11/20/2011**

**4:00 PM to 6:45 PM**

**Room:** Golden Gate C1 - Marriott

Theme: *Book Discussion: Zev Garber, ed., The Jewish Jesus: Revelation, Reflection, Reclamation* (Purdue University Press, 2011)

Edward Goldman, Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institution of Religion, Presiding

Herbert Basser, Queens University

[Jesus's Demand to Abandon Worldly Possessions to Enter the Everlasting Kingdom](#) (20 min)

Rivka Ulmer, Bucknell University

[Psalm 22 in Pesiqta Rabbati: The Suffering of the Jewish Messiah and Jesus](#) (20 min)

James F. Moore, Valparaiso University

[Who Do We Say Jesus Is?](#) (20 min)

Steven Leonard Jacobs, University of Alabama

[Do Jesus and Paul Truly Matter Judaically?](#) (20 min)

Emily Leah Silverman, Graduate Theological Union

[Edith Stein Jewish Husband Jesus](#) (20 min)

John T. Pawlikowski, Catholic Theological Union

[Is a Jewish Jesus Significant For the Christ of Christian Faith?](#) (20 min)

Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College, Respondent (30 min)

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**P21-135**

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**National Association of Professors of Hebrew**

**11/21/2011**

**9:00 AM to 11:30 AM**

**Room:** Twin Peaks - Intercontinental

Theme: *Achieving Independence: Teaching Biblical Hebrew Students to Become Independent Interpreters*

Pamela Scalise, Fuller Theological Seminary, Presiding

J. P. Kang, Japanese Presbyterian Church of Seattle

[\*The Role of Bible Software in Enabling Independent Interpretation\*](#) (20 min)

Elizabeth R. Hayes, Fuller Theological Seminary

[\*Tech-Aided Hebrew Study: Possibilities and Pitfalls\*](#) (20 min)

Discussion (9 min)

Rahel Halabe, Vancouver, BC

[\*Beyond Vocabulary and Grammar: Comparative Translation, Openness, and Creativity in the Biblical Hebrew Introductory Class\*](#) (20 min)

Kelly Whitcomb, Vanderbilt University

[\*From Memorization to Interpretation: The Benefits of an Interpretation Journal in First Year Biblical Hebrew\*](#) (20 min)

Discussion (9 min)

Christine Thomas Freedberg, Harvard University

[\*A Delight to the Eyes, Desired to Make One Wise: Facilitating Independent Language Acquisition\*](#) (20 min)

Naama Zahavi-Ely, College of William and Mary

[\*Who is Afraid of the Weak Verb?\*](#) (20 min)

Discussion (9 min)

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**P21-230**

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**National Association of Professors of Hebrew**

**11/21/2011**

**1:00 PM to 3:30 PM**

**Room:** 3014 - Convention Center

Theme: *Translating Tanakh: Dilemmas and Decisions*

Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College, Presiding

Frederick E. Greenspahn, Florida Atlantic University

[\*Deuteronomy and Centralization\*](#) (40 min)

Leonard Greenspoon, Creighton University

[\*Exodus 21:22: Two Fighting Men, One Pregnant Woman...\*](#) (40 min)

Nancy L. deClaisse-Walford, McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University

[\*For Translating Tanakh: Dilemmas and Decisions: Translating the Psalms and Qoheleth\*](#) (45 min)

Discussion (20 min)

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**P21-324**

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**National Association of Professors of Hebrew**

**11/21/2011**

**4:00 PM to 6:30 PM**

**Room:** 3014 - Convention Center

Theme: *Synchrony and Diachrony*

Timothy Finlay, Azusa Pacific University, Presiding

Koog P. Hong, Claremont Graduate University

[\*Rethinking Synchrony and Diachrony in Biblical Interpretation\*](#) (20 min)

Timothy D. Finlay, Azusa Pacific University

[\*The Synchronic Case for the Diachronic Development of Biblical Hebrew\*](#) (20 min)

Discussion (9 min)

Shmuel Bolozky, University of Massachusetts Amherst

[\*What the Israeli Hebrew e Tells Us About the shewa in Biblical Hebrew\*](#) (20 min)

A. Dean Forbes, University of the Free State

[\*Diachrony, Synchrony, or Both? Perspectives from Pattern Recognition and Meta-analysis\*](#) (20 min)

Discussion (9 min)

Serge Frolov, Southern Methodist University

[\*Beyond Astruc: Reclaiming the Integrity of the Enneateuch\*](#) (20 min)

Yishai Neuman, University of Massachusetts Amherst

[\*Pharyngeal Sound Distribution in Neo-Aramaic and its Implications for Ancient Hebrew, for Medieval Hebrew Orthoepy and for Israeli Hebrew\*](#) (20 min)

Discussion (7 min)

## 2012 NAPH Annual Meeting

The 2012 Annual Meeting of NAPH will be held in Chicago, IL during the annual meeting of AAR-SBL, November 17-20, 2012. 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, 2012, 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](mailto:zevgarber@juno.com).

## Hebrew Language, Literature and Culture Conference

### 2012 Summer Conference on Hebrew Language and Culture

The 2012 NAPH International Conference on Hebrew Language, Literature and Culture will be hosted by the University of California, Los Angeles. It will be chaired by Lev Hakak. A Call for Papers will be sent to all NAPH members and posted on the NAPH website.

## REPORT OF THE 2011 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HEBREW LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE

University of Maryland, College Park June 28-30, 2011

NAPH's 29<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Hebrew Language, Literature, and Culture was held at the University of Maryland College Park on June 28-30, 2011. Chaired by Eric Zakim and supported by the Meyerhoff Center of Jewish Studies at the University of Maryland, the conference, with about 200 participants, provided three full days of sessions, with some hundred and twenty talks on different topics in pedagogy, language, linguistics, biblical studies, rabbinics, medieval and modern culture, drama, and literature. In addition to the regular session formats with pre-organized panels and panels put together by the conference committee, this conference featured a number of sessions organized in experimental

formats designed to encourage greater continuity and audience participation. In literature we offered two continuous sessions, one on Hebrew Yiddish literary relations (organized by Chana Kronfeld and Allison Schachter) and the other on modern Hebrew literature as a Middle Eastern literature (organized by Karen Grumberg and Lital Levy). We also offered a colloquium on David Grossman's work, organized by Alan Mintz. In pedagogy we experimented with a workshop on teaching to read difficult Hebrew texts (led by Gilead Morahg) and a poster session displaying instructional and programmatic materials. We are likely to incorporate sessions in some of these formats in future conferences—a special thank you to the organizers!

The first day ended with a banquet, followed by a concert of *Pharaoh's Daughter Unplugged*. Basya Schechter, Avi Fox Rosen and Rich Stein entertained the audience with songs in Hebrew, English, Aramaic, Yiddish, and Ladino. Wednesday afternoon featured a plenary session on sustaining Hebrew instruction in institutions of higher learning. The discussion focused on issues of enrollment, funding, curriculum and outreach, and provided ideas for initiatives in the areas of fundraising, teacher training, outreach to k-12 teachers, and monitoring of enrollment trends. The session was dedicated to the memory of our colleague Levana Polate, who passed away in 2010.

Congratulations, Eric, for a flawless and exciting conference, and many thanks for your hospitality and for the low-stress environment. Kudos to Debra Kirsch, Rachel Jablon, and the students who made it all seem so effortless!

The conference committee for 2011 included 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), Avital Feuer (University of Maryland), Karen Grumberg (University of Texas at Austin), Benjamin Hari (Emory University), Nitza Krohn (Jewish Theological Seminary), Zafirra Lidovsky-Cohen (Stern College, Yeshiva University), Gilead Morahg (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Hannah Naveh (Tel Aviv University), Adina Ofek (State University of New York, Binghamton), Esther Raizen (University of Texas at Austin), Renana Schneller (University of Minnesota, Minneapolis), Chaya Shacham (University of Haifa), Vered Shemtov (Stanford University), and Eric Zakim (University of Maryland). Nineteen institutional memberships allowed NAPH to support graduate student travel to the conference—we are grateful to these individuals and institutions and to the Department of Hebrew and Semitic Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Ettinger Family Foundation for making it all come together in yet another great conference .

The 2012 NAPH Conference will take place at the UCLA on June 25-27, hosted by Lev Hakak.

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

Conference Coordinator

## News From Our Members

### Recent Publications

**Ehud Ben Zvi**, University of Alberta: E. Ben Zvi and Christoph Levin, eds. *The Concept of Exile in Ancient Israel and its Historical Contexts* (BZAW, 404; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2010); ed., *Perspectives in Hebrew Scriptures VI: Comprising the Contents of Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*, vol. 9 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2010); "A Contribution to the Intellectual History of Yehud: The Story of Micaiah and its Function within the Discourse of Persian-Period Literati," in P. R. Davies and D. V. Edelman (eds.), *The Historian and the Bible. Essays in Honour of Lester L. Grabbe* (LHBOTS, 530;

London and New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 89-102; “On the Term Deuteronomistic in Relation to Joshua–Kings in the Persian Period,” in K. L. Noll and B. Schramm (eds.), *Raising Up a Faithful Exegete: Essays in Honor of Richard D. Nelson* (Winona Lake, Ind., Eisenbrauns, 2010), 59-69; “Would Ancient Readers of the Books of Hosea or Micah be ‘Competent’ to Read the Book of Jeremiah,” in A. R. Pete Diamond and L. Stulman (eds.), *Jeremiah (Dis)Placed. New Directions in Writing/Reading Jeremiah* (LHBOTS, 529; London and New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 80-98; “Total Exile, Empty Land and the General Intellectual Discourse in Yehud,” in E. Ben Zvi and Christoph Levin (eds.), *The Concept of Exile in Ancient Israel and its Historical Contexts* (BZAW, 404; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2010), 155-68; “The Voice and Role of a Counterfactual Memory in the Construction of Exile and Return: Considering Jeremiah 40: 7–12,” in E. Ben Zvi and Christoph Levin (eds.), *Concept of Exile*, 169-88; “‘The Prophets’ — References to Generic Prophets and their Role in the Construction of the Image of the ‘Prophets of Old’ within the Postmonarchic Readership(s) of the Book of Kings,” in B. Levine and A. Lemaire (eds.), *The Books of Kings. Sources, Composition, Historiography and Reception* (VTSup, 129; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2010), 387-99.

**Shmuel Bolozky**, University of Massachusetts Amherst: “Nitpa`el vehitpa`el ba`ivrit hayisre`elit (Nitpa`el and Hitpa`el in Israeli Hebrew),” E. Hazan and Z. Livnat, eds., *Lešon axamim vehatxumim hanoškim lah: mivxar ma`amarim lexvod šim`on šarvit (Mishnaic Hebrew and related fields: Selected articles in honor of Shim`on Sharvit)*(2010) 277-289 (H); “Hidamut ba`icurim ha`apiyim ba`ivrit hayisre`elit (Assimilation in nasal consonants in Israeli Hebrew),” *Hador* IV (2010) 135-139 (H).

**Leila Leah Bronner**, formerly of Witswatersrand University: *Journey to Heaven: Exploring Jewish Views of the Afterlife* (Jerusalem and New York: Urim Publications, 2011).

**Michael Carasik**, University of Pennsylvania: “Why Did Hannah Ask for ‘Seed of Men’?” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129 (2010): 433-436; *The Commentators' Bible: Numbers* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2011); multiple contributions to *Jewish Ideas Daily* at <http://www.jewishideasdaily.com/authors/detail/michael-carasik>; “Rabbinic Bible,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, ed. Ad Berlin (New York :Oxford University Press, 2011).

**Edith Covensky**, Wayne State University: *Love Embraces Love* (Gvanim, 2011); *On the Existence of Love* (Eked-Gvanim, 2011).

**Stephen L. Cook**, Virginia Theological Seminary: “Isaiah 51:1–6, Exegetical Perspective,” in *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary*, Year A, Volume 3, ed. Barbara Brown Taylor and David L. Bartlett (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 362-67; “Jeremiah 15:15–21, Exegetical Perspective,” and “Ezekiel 33:7–11, Exegetical Perspective,” in *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary*, Year A, Volume 4, ed. Barbara Brown Taylor and David L. Bartlett (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 2–7, 26–31; “An Interpretation of the Death of Isaiah’s Servant” in *The Bible as a Human Witness to Divine Revelation: Hearing the Word of God through Historically Dissimilar Traditions*, ed. R. Heskett and B. Irwin (Gerald Sheppard Festschrift; Library of Hebrew Bible / Old Testament Studies 469; London and New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 108-24; “Deuteronomy” in Oxford Bibliographies Online (published online September 2010), accessible at: <http://www.oxfordbibliographiesonline.com/browse> (DOI: 10.1093/obo/9780195393361-0029); “Interpretation and Hermeneutics” in Oxford Bibliographies Online (published online September 2010), accessible at: <http://www.oxfordbibliographiesonline.com/browse> (DOI: 10.1093/obo/9780195393361-0057); “Afterlife and Immortality” in Oxford Bibliographies Online (published online September 2010), accessible at: <http://www.oxfordbibliographiesonline.com/browse> (DOI: 10.1093/obo/9780195393361-0003); review in *CBQ*

**Yael Feldman**, New York University “Maertyrer oder Krieger? Die Wiedererfindung "Isaaks" als Kriegsheld im jüdischen Palästina,” translated from the English by Claudia Richter, in *Grenzgänger der Religionskulturen. Kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zu Gegenwart und Geschichte der Märtyrer*, Silvia Horsch and Martin Treml (Eds.), Fink Verlag: Muenchen, 2011, 341-356.

**Lee M. Fields**, Mid-Atlantic Christian University: “An Anonymous Dialogue with a Jew, Corpus Christianorum” in Translation 6. Turnout: Brepols, 2011 (forthcoming); Paul Overland, Jennifer Noonan, and Lee M. Fields, “Can Communicative Methods Enhance Classical Language Acquisition?” *Foreign Language Annals* 44:3 (Fall 2011; forthcoming).

**Zev Garber**, Los Angeles Valley College: Editor and contributor, *The Jewish Jesus: Revelation, Reflection, Reclamation* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2011); articles “It is Not in Heaven,” “Perception and Reception,” “Two Popes on Shoah and Jewish-Christian Godwrestling: A View from Scriptures,” and “The Jewish Jesus” for *Bible and Interpretation* at <http://www.bibleinterp.com>; reviews in *CBQ*, *Choice*, and *Hebrew Studies*.

**Mayer Gruber**, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Beersheva, Israel : has just now published a new edition of Grace Aguilar, *The Women of Israel* (first published 1845) with Gruber's extensive introduction and Gruber's running commentary in the form of footnotes. The book has just now been released by Gorgias Press, 954 River Rd., Piscataway, NJ 08854 USA

**Rahel Halabe**, Unaffiliated: *Hinneh – Biblical Hebrew the Practical Way* (self published 2011); “Teaching the Biblical Tenses to Non Hebrew Speakers” Hed Ha-Ulpan 97

**Yael Halevi-Wise**, McGill University: Review of *Ve-hi'tehilatka: Iyyunim bi-yetsirot Shai Agnon, A. B. Yehoshua ve-Amos Oz* by Nitza Ben-Dov, *AJS Review* 35.1 (2011) 208-11.

**Ralph K. Hawkins**, Kentucky Christian University: *The Iron Age I Structure on Mt. Ebal: Excavation and Interpretation* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, forthcoming).

**Chana Kronfeld**, University of California, Berkeley. “*Ha-shir ha-politi ke-omanut lashon*,” in Hamutal Tsamir and Tamar S. Hess, eds., *Kitmey Or: Chamishim shnot bikoret u-mechkar al yetzirata shel Dahlia Ravikovitch* (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibutz ha-Me'uchad, 2011), 514-543; “*Sokhnut Intertextu'alit*,” in Michael Gluzman and Orly Lubin, eds., *Festschrift for Ziva Ben-Porat* (Tel Aviv: Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics; in press); “Murdered Modernisms: Peretz Markish and the Legacy of Soviet Yiddish Poetry,” in Joseph Sherman, Gennady Estraiikh, Jordan Finkin and David Shneer, eds., *A Captive of the Dawn: The Life and Work of Peretz Markish (1895-1952)* (London/Oxford: Legenda, 2011), 186-206; (with Ron Hendel and Ilana Pardes), “Gender and Sexuality,” in Ron Hendel, ed., *Reading Genesis: Ten Methods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 71-91.

**Lily Kahn**, UCL (University College London): *Colloquial Yiddish: The Complete Course for Beginners*, Routledge (2011), 320 pp.

**W. Creighton Marlowe**, ETF (Evangelische Theologische Faculteit), Leuven: “David's I-Thou Discourse: Verbal Chiasmic Patterns in Psalm 23,” *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 25:1 (2011) 105-15; “Angels,” in *Lexham Bible Dictionary*, edited by John D. Barry and Lazarus Wentz (Bellingham, Washington: Logos Bible Software, 2011); “The Sin of Shinar, (Gen 11:4),” *The European Journal of Theology* XX:1 (2011) 29-39.

**Moshe Pelli**, University of Central Florida: ‘*Atarah Leyoshnah*’: *Hama’avak Litzirat Yahadut* (H) Hahaskalah; bibliography, index, English abstract ([Hakibutz Hameuchad, 2011](#)); “Haskalah and Hasidut in *Kerem Chemed*,” *Hador* 4 (2010), 113-124 (H); “Bikkure ha-ttim,” *Enzyklopädie jüdischer Geschichte und Kultur*, I (2011), 335-338 (German).

**Ranen Omer-Sherman**, University of Miami: “Paradoxes of Jewish and Muslim Identities in Israeli Short Stories;” *Peace Review* 22.4 (October-December 2010) 440-452; “Longing to Belong: Levantine Arabs & Jews in the Israeli Cultural Imagination,” *Michigan Quarterly Review* XLIX.2 (Spring 2010) 254-291; reviews in *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, *Journal of Graphic Novels & Comics*, *Miami Herald*, and *Shofar*.

**Nancy Rozenchan**, Universidade de S. Paulo: O holocausto: uma história dos judeus da Europa durante a Segunda Guerra Mundial. Translation with Samuel Feldberg of *The Holocaust – A History of the Jews of Europe during the Second World War* by Martin Gilbert. S. Paulo, Hucitec, 2010. A face de Deus na obra de Dorit Peleg in *Judaísmo e Globalização: Espaços e Temporalidades* (Helena Lewin, editor). Rio de Janeiro, Viveiros de Castro Editora, 2010, 174 – 179. Do estudo aos sabores do Oriente: um ângulo da literatura hebraica contemporânea in *Revista Ângulo Especial – Cultura e Literatura Judaicas*, nº 120. Lorena, *Ângulo Cadernos do Centro Cultural Teresa D’Avila*, 2010, 27 – 37. Representação do marroquino na literatura hebraica contemporânea in *Arquivo Maaravi*, *Revista digital de Estudos Judaicos da UFMG*, nº 06, vol. 1, 2010, <http://www.ufmg.br/nej/maaravi/artigonancy-israel.html>. Lúlek – A História do menino que saiu do campo de concentração para tornar-se o grão-rabino de Israel. Translation of *Al tishlach yadcha el hanaar* by Rabbi Israel Meir Lau. Belo Horizonte, Leitura, 2011.

**Ora R. Schwarzwald**, Bar-Ilan University, Israel: “Biblical and Modern Hebrew: A Comparison,” *Halvrit* (formerly, *LeShonenu La’am*) 58.4 (2010) 203-220; “Trends in Modern Hebrew Studies.” *Leshonenu* 72 (2010), 321-336. (H); “On the Jewish Nature of Medieval Spanish Biblical translations: Linguistic Differences Between Medieval and Post Exilic Spanish Translations,” *Sefarad* 70 (2010), 117-140; “Two Sixteenth Century Ladino Prayer Books for Women.” *European Judaism* 43(2) (2010), 37-51; “Explicit and Implicit Hebrew in Rabbinical Ladino.” *Hikrei Ma’arav U-Mizrah: Studies in Language, Literature and History Presented to Joseph Chetrit*, edited by Yosef Tobi and Dennis Kurzon (Jerusalem: Carmel 2011), 155-179. (H); “Lexical Variations in Two Ladino Prayer Books for Women.” *Lexicología y Lexicografía Judeoespañolas*, edited by Winfried Busse & Michael Studemund-Halévy (Bern: Peter Lang 2011), 53-86.

**Miryam Segal**, Queens College, The City University of New York: *A New Sound in Hebrew Poetry: Poetics, Politics, Accent* (Indiana University Press, April 2010); *Vixens Disturbing Vineyards: The Embarrassment and Embrace of Scriptures* (Academic Studies Press, April 2010), co-editor; “An Embarrassment of Riches, A Pride of Depletion and the Ambiguity of Address,” *Vixens Disturbing Vineyards: The Embarrassment and Embrace of Scriptures*, 2010; Review in *Hebrew Studies*.

**Ziva Shavitsky**, The University of Melbourne: *A Critical Survey of Historical and Archaeological Records Relating to the People of Israel in Exile in Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia up to ca. 300 B.C.E.* (Cambridge Scholars Press, tentative 2011/12); review on RBL online

**Andrew Steinmann**, Concordia University Chicago, River Forest, IL: *From Abraham to Paul: A Biblical Chronology* (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2011); “Night and Day, Evening and Morning,” *The Bible Translator*, 62 (2011) 154-160.

**Marvin A. Sweeney**, Claremont School of Theology and Claremont Graduate University: *Tanak: A Theological and Critical Introduction to the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011); Editor, *Hebrew Studies*

**Wido van Peursen**, Leiden University Institute for Religious Studies: *Text Comparison and Digital Creativity. The Production of Presence and Meaning in Digital Text Scholarship* (Scholarly Communication 1; Leiden: Brill, 2010) (with E.D. Thoutenhoofd and A.H. van der Weel).

### Current Research in Progress

**Yael Halevi-Wise**, McGill University, is putting final touches on a collected volume that will be published by Stanford in 2012: *Sephardism: Spanish Jewish History & the Modern Literary Imagination* explores the importance of politicized representations of Sephardic history in Western literature from the nineteenth century to the present. It includes two chapters on Sephardism in modern Hebrew literature.

**Moshe Pelli**, University of Central Florida, continues his research in preparing monographs and indices on Hebrew Haskalah periodicals: *Pri To'elet*, *Bikurei To'elet*, *Bikurei Ha'itim Hahadashim*, *Bikkurei Hashanah*, *Sefer Bikurei Ha'itim*, *Bikurim*, in his series of monographs and annotated indices of Haskalah periodicals. Also, he is researching the Haskalah 'Library': The Early Periodicals of the Hebrew Haskalah - Inventory, Availability, and Problems in Indexing. Finally, he is working on Anton Edler von Schmid, the publisher of Hebrew books in Vienna, from the end of 18th century to mid-19th century.

**Marvin A. Sweeney**, Claremont School of Theology and Claremont Graduate University, presented a paper, "Synchronic and Diachronic Concerns in Reading the Book of the Twelve," at a conference on the Book of the Twelve Prophets held at Muenster University in Germany (January 2011) He is currently writing a commentary on Ezekiel for the Reading the Old Testament series to be published by Smyth and Helwys publishers.

### Recent Promotions or Change in Position

**Marvin A. Sweeney**, Claremont School of Theology and Claremont Graduate University, will serve as Underwood Professor of Divinity at Yonsei University, Seoul, South Korea, during the Fall 2011 semester.

### Curriculum Innovations and Awards

**Yael Feldman**, New York University, was a Visiting Scholar at Wolfson College, Cambridge UK in Fall 2010; a Lady Davis Fellow at the Hebrew University in Winter 2010-11; and a Research Fellow at Yad Vashem in Spring 2011.

**Zev Garber**, Los Angeles Valley College, was honored at a plenary three hour session at the Western regional meetings of AAR, SBL, and WJSA held at Arizona State University in Tempe, March 14, 2010. The Symposium on his work has recently come out in *Hebrew Studies LI* (2010) 351-383.

**Shiri Goren**, Yale University, has been awarded The A. Whitney Griswold Faculty Research Grant (2010-2012) in support of her research on David Fogel. In addition, she currently develops two new

courses to be offered in Spring 2011: a seminar on Israeli Novels and an advanced Hebrew class “Conversational Hebrew: Israeli Media.”

**Lily Kahn**, UCL (University College London), has been awarded a 3-year British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship in order to conduct a research project entitled ‘The Grammar of the Hasidic Hebrew Tale 1864–1914’.

**Wido van Peursen**, Leiden University, has been awarded an Investment grant from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) for the project *Bridging Data and Tradition. The Hebrew Bible as a Linguistic Corpus and as a Literary Composition* (application together with Prof. E. Talstra); matching funds were provided by the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Leiden University. This concerns a four-year research project on the computational analysis of the Hebrew Bible. He has also been awarded a grant from the Leids Universiteits Fonds (LUF) for the pilot project ‘Digital Text Comparison between Computation and Philology’, which concerned a computational comparative analysis of Judges 4 and 5 in Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac.

## ETA BETA RHO HONOR SOCIETY

Eta Beta Rho, National Scholastic Honor Society for Students of Hebrew Language and Culture, while having no addition to its current thirty-five chapters, has seen the revivication of two. Chapter 'Heh' at Cincinnati Christian University and Seminary, has Sara Fudge as faculty advisor, and chapter 'Lamed' at the University of Utah, is advised by Keren Rubinstein. Advisors are reminded to inform the wider community of new inductees and noteworthy activities by contacting either the National Coordinator (dbaker@ashland.edu) or the Editor of Iggeret (zevgarber@juno.com). Also, if your institution does not as yet have a chapter, please consider forming one (<http://vanhise.lss.wisc.edu/naph/?q=node/2>).

**David W. Baker**, Ashland Theological Seminary, [dbaker@ashland.edu](mailto:dbaker@ashland.edu)

### ETA BETA RHO

National Scholastic Honor Society for Students of Hebrew Language and Culture

#### Chapters

(\* = inactive or non-responsive)

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|-----|--------------------|--|
| 1.  | <i>Alpha</i>       | *Hunter College  |
| 2.  | <i>Beta</i>        | *New York University   |
| 3.  | <i>Gamma</i>       | *Butler University   |
| 4.  | <i>Delta/Dalet</i> | University of Maryland, Nili Levy (nlevy@umd.edu)                                  |
| 5.  | <i>Epsilon</i>     | *Temple University   |
| 6.  | <i>Zeta</i>        | *Rutgers University  |
| 7.  | <i>Eta</i>         | Wheaton College, Illinois, Michael Graves (michael.w.graves@wheaton.edu)           |
| 8.  | <i>Theta</i>       | *Immanuel School of Religion, Milligan College                                     |
| 9.  | <i>Iota</i>        | *Lehman College, Zelda Newman, (ZELDA.NEWMAN@lehman.cuny.edu)                      |
| 10. | <i>Kappa</i>       | *Los Angeles Valley College  |
| 11. | <i>Tav</i>         | *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Bruce Rosenstock, (brsnstck@uiuc.edu) |
| 12. | <i>Mu</i>          | *Western Conservative Baptist Seminary   |
| 13. | <i>Nu</i>          | *University of Wisconsin   |
| 14. | <i>Heh</i>         | Cincinnati Christian University and Seminary, Sara Fudge                           |
| 15. | <i>Vav</i>         | *Yeshiva University  |
| 16. | <i>Zayin</i>       | *Florida Christian College   |
| 17. | <i>Heth</i>        | *Sterns College  |
| 18. | <i>Chi</i>         | Indiana University, Steven Katz (katzs@indiana.edu)                                |
| 19. | <i>Tet</i>         | *Columbia Bible College and Biblical Seminary                                      |
| 20. | <i>Yod</i>         | Bethel Theological Seminary, Paul Ferris (paul-ferris@bethel.edu)                  |
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## Notes From the Field

### Ladino Research

As the number of Judeo-Spanish speakers slowly decreases every year around the world, the number of academic studies enormously increases in universities. There are survey studies on the language and its literature by David M. Bunis, Elena Romero, Paloma Diaz Mas, Michael Molho, among many others, including myself, and there are hundreds of studies on specific issues.

Researchers distinguish between Ladino, the calque type language of liturgical texts, and Judeo-Spanish, the language used for all purposes, though the language users refer to the language in a number of terms, Ladino, Judeo-Spanish, Djudezmo, Djidio, Spaniolit (in Israel), etc. In the following lines I'll try and describe the kind of studies I conduct in Judeo-Spanish and Ladino.

My early studies in Judeo-Spanish concentrated on the Hebrew component in Judeo-Spanish. The Hebrew words absorbed and fused in the language are not necessarily dependent on religion or Jewish customs; words like *afilú* 'even', *ganavear* 'to steal', *dezmalado* 'poor, unlucky', *xenozo* 'tender, well behaved' are just a few of the thousands examples included in Judeo-Spanish.

Most of my studies were focused on Ladino texts: the early ones include the Ladino translations of *Pirke Avot* and the Passover *Haggadot*. In the first study I examined all the known printed versions of *Pirke Avot* (in Hebrew and Latin scripts) and distinguished between the Ladino used by the ex-converso (*Anusim*) communities who settled in Italy, the Netherland and England, and the Ladino used by the expelled Jews in the Ottoman Empire. Clear linguistic features differentiate these two types: the ex-converso Ladino type show more signs of Modern Spanish whereas the Ottoman Empire ones retain Judeo-Spanish features. The Ladino translations of *Haggadot* were examined only in Hebrew script versions, and they clearly show that all of them, even those printed in Italy, are linguistically more similar to the Ottoman Empire ones than *Pirke Avot*. Apparently, the type of text and its familial usage retained the Judeo-Spanish nature of the *Haggadot*, although some differences keep on showing in the Italian *Haggadot*. These two studies were published in books (1989, 2008).

I have just completed a scientific addition of a special Ladino *Siddur* for women written in the middle of the sixteenth century in Thessalonica. The book is entirely written in Ladino in Hebrew letters and it includes Judeo-Spanish detailed instructions for the woman about the way to keep Jewish life.

Ladino is reflected in the translations of all the prayers and blessings for daily prayers, the holidays, etc. The prayers and blessing are shortened according to the *Halakha*, because women do not need to say all of them. The *Siddur* was meant for domestic use and not for synagogue services. My book is in print now and it includes a chapter by Aldina Quintana on the special language revealed in this *Siddur*.

In another study of a *Siddur* for women that was attributed to medieval Spain I discovered through careful philological study that it must have been written in Italy, probably in Venice after the expulsion from Spain. A few of my recent studies examine the relationship between Ladino biblical translations published in the sixteenth century and the Spanish romanticized translation written in medieval Spain. Contrary to the assumption that the medieval translations were the basis for the Ladino translation, I prove that the Ladino translations follow an oral tradition, totally independent of the Spanish medieval translations.

Ora (Rodrigue) Schwarzwald, Bar-Ilan University

## The Commentators' Bible

My *Commentators' Bible* project had its genesis (both small-g and large-G) in the summer of 2000, when my wife was awarded a National Science Foundation grant to spend a month examining an osteology collection at the University of Alabama, in Tuscaloosa. I was not teaching that summer and decided to accompany her. How to spend my time?

Though I am a scholar of Bible and the ancient Near East by training, I had always intended to write for a general audience as well. I had taken a class in translation at the then-Spertus College in Chicago with Warren Bargad ב"ר and at one point actually embarked on a translation of Agnon's *A Simple Story*; I also translated part of Rashi's commentary on Esther for Mayer Gruber, now of Ben-Gurion University. My wife's career had brought us to Philadelphia in 1998, where I'd met Ellen Frankel of the Jewish Publication Society, who was interested in making Jewish texts available in translation. So, all of these factors pushed me toward my summer's choice. I would take one of the Genesis volumes of the *Ha-Keter Miqra'ot Gedolot* from Bar-Ilan University Press and see whether I could create English-language versions of the traditional commentaries on "Lech Lecha," Genesis 12, and on the Genesis 22 story of the Akedah, the "Binding of Isaac"—versions that would look like an old-fashioned *chumash*, with Hebrew text in the center and commentaries all around, but one that would be comprehensible to contemporary readers with little or no Hebrew.

One of the first decisions I made was that the page I wanted to create would have not one but *two* "Targumim"—not Aramaic translations (people that didn't know much Hebrew wouldn't know any Aramaic)—but English ones. There were two reasons for this: First, I intended to use the very readable New Jewish Publication Society translation; but its readability means it is quite free. I needed an additional translation that would be a bit closer to the Hebrew. Second, two English translations would help force my readers to remember that it is the Hebrew text in the middle of the page that is really the Torah, not the English translation.

My original plan was to use Everett Fox's translation as the "pony." I imagined that whenever one of the commentators understood the text in a way that did not fit the NJPS translation, Fox's would be close enough to the literal Hebrew that I could have my commentator translate his way. Instead, I discovered that his translation, though meant to offer an experience of reading English as if it were Hebrew, nonetheless did not match what the commentators needed when they had to disagree with the NJPS. In the end, I used the Old (1917) JPS translation as my second "Targum." It helps the commentators at least sometimes, and in any case it provides an English version that's closer to the original, though harder for 21<sup>st</sup>-century Americans to read.

When I got home I left a copy of my work at JPS and went on with my life. It was some months later that I got a message from Ellen that they wanted to go ahead with the project. Thanks to David Ruderman, head of Penn's Center for Advanced Judaic Studies (now the Katz Center), I had a desk for two years just a couple of floors above one of the finest Judaica libraries in America. Most of the first volume of the project was finished at the Center.

Marc Brettler, my thesis adviser from Brandeis University, made a suggestion that continues to shape my work: start with Exodus. There were two good reasons for this. First, the commentaries on Gen 1:1 are no place to plunge into a project like this! They are long and intimidating and demand a serious acquaintance with the commentators' views on profound issues. Second, Exodus has plenty of the "Bible stories" that ordinary readers are interested in, but it also contains all of the various genres found in the Torah: narrative, poetry, law, and ritual material. My readers would want Exodus almost as much as Genesis; meanwhile, I would solve the major problems of all the genres of writing I would encounter.

Having started with Exodus, I simply continued on through Leviticus, Numbers, and now Deuteronomy. I'm well aware that the Jewish bookshelf has many books that cover Genesis and sometimes Exodus and then stop, because either the author or the publisher couldn't continue with the project. But Leviticus and the rest are as much parts of the Torah and of Jewish tradition as Genesis is. Besides, I was confident that as long as there was some prospect of getting Genesis the other volumes would be published in the meantime. If Genesis had been published first or even second, I'm not sure the others would have been published too.

The major decision I had to make has brought me a fair amount of grief in reviews of the project. How do you translate a Hebrew commentary on a Hebrew text into English for people who don't know any Hebrew, without the translator getting in the way with innumerable footnotes, brackets, and appendices? The key to the solution was my realization that I wasn't translating the commentators for their own sake, but to let them guide 21<sup>st</sup>-century readers through the text of the Torah. That meant that the correct solution was to make not a "translation" but a "version"—a Targum, if you will. My basic understanding of what I'm doing is this: I am rewriting the commentaries of Rashi and the rest as they themselves would if they had written in 21<sup>st</sup>-century American English rather than in Hebrew. As Ibn Ezra's English-language "editor" (for example), I do not let him get away with saying *ידוע* and nothing more—I make him explain, as best I can. The interested reader will find more on this topic in "[Translator, Commentator, Writer](#)," my article in the December 2008 issue of *Sh'ma*.

I realized quite early in the process that this was a task I had been preparing for all my life. It matches my interests and plays to my strengths, and (as enough of my readers have told me) it's a genuine contribution to those whose lack of Hebrew skills are holding them back from spending time—as I have the pleasure of doing every day—with the great interpreters of the Hebrew Bible.

Michael Carasik, Philadelphia, [mcarasik@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:mcarasik@sas.upenn.edu)

## TECHNOLOGY and עברית

### Hebrew and Technology- NAPH 2011

The 2011 International Conference on Hebrew Language, Literature and Culture (Maryland June 28-30, 2011) provided several presentations that focused on the use of popular social media tools in teaching Hebrew.

Social media, by definition, depends on and promotes social interactions. In this broad category we include:

- Forums and discussion boards which build up relationships by sharing knowledge and opinions
- Blogs, which are basically journal style websites in which personal information is frequently uploaded.
- Micro-Blogs, which are similar to blogs but the information is very short and concise, like Twitter
- Social network sites, which focus on building relationships among people with the same interests, such as Facebook, MySpace, Second Life and others

**Edna Lauden** (Tel-Aviv University) presented written production data collected from four classes of advanced level Hebrew language learners at Tel Aviv University, interacting with their classmates in Hebrew via their Facebook accounts. The learners were familiar with the tool, using it frequently and consistently, sometimes several times in a day, in their native language. In their Hebrew language interactions, their messages were short, with many native slang expressions and misspelled words. Very often the students relied on the use of the “Like” button and the emoticons to express their emotions and attitudes. Overall, the communication among them was natural and spontaneous and provided a sociolinguistic measure of these immigrant students’ integration into the local Israeli culture. At the same time, various linguistic errors typical of learner interlanguage (e.g, lack of subject-verb agreement, wrong prepositions) distinguished the written production of these students from that of native speakers.

**Rivka Weiner** (Stern College, Yeshiva University, NYC) talked about the blog as a tool to enhance the learning of writing and to motivate the students to write. Throughout the semester, students of a beginner level class reflected on specific topics that were initiated by the instructor by writing a blog (they used blogger.com). The students enhanced their writing with images. They shared their blog with each other and received feedback. The blog was then sent to the instructor for a final revision. This process resulted at the end of the semester in a digitized portfolio of each student’s written production in Hebrew.

**Adi Raz** and **Miri Shonfeld** (University of Texas, Austin and Kibbutzim College of Education, Israel) demonstrated the use of Second Life in creating virtual interaction between native and non-native speakers. Second Life is an on-line virtual world with people (avatars), virtual properties, virtual stores and virtual services. Its users can explore the virtual world, meet other avatars, socialize and participate in individual and group activities. The presenters showed samples of the interactions between students from the University of Texas (non-native speakers) with students from the Kibbutzim College (native speakers) who “met” once a week in a Second Life virtual museum in Amsterdam and communicated with each other in Hebrew.

**Hadassah Nemovicher** (The Jewish Theological Seminary, NYC) demonstrated the use of the MS-Photostory tool to engage students in active learning by creating short videos in Hebrew. *PhotoStory 3* is a free download from Microsoft for Windows XP operating systems and is fully Hebrew-compatible. It allows the user to combine pictures and music within a narrated short “movie” using digital photos, without need for a video camera.

**Hadassah Nemovicher**, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, [hanemovicher@jtsa.edu](mailto:hanemovicher@jtsa.edu)

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