



# MANDEL SCHOLION NEWS

MANDEL SCHOLION - INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CENTER  
IN THE HUMANITIES AND JEWISH STUDIES

volume 13 • 2014

## Mandel Fellows' Projects: Three Initiatives



### Jewish and Christian Communal Identities in Antiquity (October 7-8, 2013)

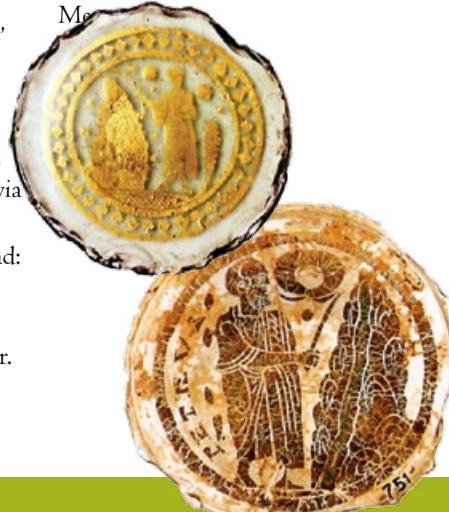
Questions concerning the relative importance of the ancient Greco-Roman context for the development of Judaism (which, after all, had its own eastern roots going back for millennia) and Christianity (which, after all, grew out of Jewish roots), and concerning the extent to which Jews and Christians developed independently or, rather, in tandem with one another and reacting one to another, are legion and often debated. There are many fields in which these questions arise, and, so as not to bite off more than can be chewed in any particular context, scholars frequently find it productive to focus on one particular cluster of topics at a time.

This is the context within which we should view this international symposium, which was organized and convened by Mandel Fellow Dr. Yair Furstenberg at the conclusion of his two years in Scholion and on the eve of leaving it to take up a tenure-track appointment at Ben-Gurion University. The conference was co-sponsored by the Brill publishing house (Leiden). The core of the conference was composed of scholars who are members of the editorial board of the Brill series, *Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*: Prof. Cilliers Breytenbach (Humboldt Univ., Berlin), Dr. Lutz Doering (Durham), Prof. Martin Goodman (Oxford), Prof. Pieter W. van der Horst (Utrecht), Prof. Tal Ilan (Freie Univ., Berlin), Prof. Daniel R. Schwartz (Mandel Scholion), and Prof. Seth Schwartz (Columbia University; unfortunately his flight was canceled and he was limited to participation via Skype). They were joined by several other scholars, from Israel and abroad: Prof. Jörg Frey (Univ. Zürich), Dr. Chrysi Kotsifu (Van Leer Institute), and, from the Hebrew University, Dr. Galit Noga-Banai, Prof. Israel Yuval,

and Prof. Zeev Weiss. The conference was dedicated to the memory of Prof. Friedrich Avemarie of Marburg, a German Judaist who had been a member of the AJEC board until his sudden death in October 2012.

The sessions of the symposium dealt, successively, with the Greco-Roman context of Jewish communal organization, especially in the best-documented centers of the ancient Diaspora—Egypt and Rome; with the reconstruction and characterization of early Christian communities on the basis of New Testament evidence, papyri, and the remains of early Christian art; and with the analysis and comparison of early Jewish and Christian communal institutions, specifically: charity and religious buildings. As the volume of conference papers, to be edited by Dr. Furstenberg, will surely show, a rich variety of methodologies and, accordingly, of evidence, was brought to bear upon the questions addressed, with the constant issue being the relative weight of the Greco-Roman context as opposed to internal trajectories of the respective religious traditions.

Participants in the symposium also visited the impressive Herod exhibition at the Israel Museum, where they had the privilege of being guided by the exhibition's curator, David Meir.



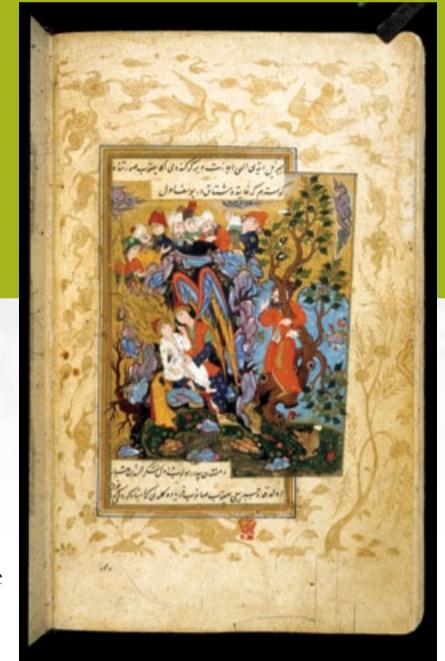
In the wake of the May 2011 "Encounters by the Rivers of Babylon" conference, which two Mandel Fellows organized as a special project, last year the Center began to earmark funds for such projects and to encourage Mandel Fellows to undertake them. This challenge was taken up by three Fellows during 2013/14. Each of them organized an international symposium and brought it off brilliantly with the skilled and devoted support of the Center's administrative staff.

### A Fruitful Bough (January 14, 2014)

This workshop was organized by Mandel Fellow Dr. Joseph Witztum and two of his colleagues: Dr. Aaron Butts of Yale and Dr. Kristian Heal of Brigham Young University. Taking its title from the characterization of Joseph in Genesis 49:22, this workshop followed the development of Joseph traditions from the Bible to Islamic painting, and treated Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions in diverse languages including Hebrew, Jewish Aramaic, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic. The workshop allowed scholars from a variety of academic disciplines,

who work on the Joseph narrative in different eras and cultures, including its representation both in literature and in art, to interact and contribute to each other's work. Apart from the three conveners, papers were also given by Prof. Vered Noam of Tel-Aviv University and by three HUJI scholars: Dr. Baruch J. Schwartz, Prof. Joseph Yahalom, and—from our "Picture Power" group—Prof. Rachel Milstein.

During their stay in Jerusalem, the conveners also devoted time to a related joint project: the study of



a Syriac retelling of the biblical Joseph narrative. This text, falsely attributed to Basil of Caesarea, has survived in Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Latin, and, sharing their skills, they were able to make some progress in unraveling the relations among them.

### Arabic Neoplatonism in al-Andalus among Muslims, Jews, and Christians (June 11, 2014)



This workshop was organized by Mandel Fellow Dr. Ayala Eliyahu together with Martin Buber Fellow Dr. Michael Ebstein, and it is a continuation of a series of lectures in the same field held at the Hebrew University in 2013. The workshop included eight lectures, a lunch and a concluding dinner.

Apart from the co-conveners, speakers at the workshop included: Prof. Godefroid de Callataÿ of the Catholic University of Louvain; Dr. Adam Afterman of Tel-Aviv University; Dr. Ehud Krinis and Dr. Sandra Valabregue of Ben-Gurion University; Prof. Anna Akasoy of Hunter College; Adiel Zimran of the Hebrew University; and Dr. Shalom Sadik of the Van Leer Institute.

Prof. Daniel Schwartz, the academic head of the Mandel Scholion Center, presented greetings at the opening of the workshop, and Dr. Michael Ebstein presented opening remarks. The idea behind this workshop was to examine the development of philosophy and mysticism in Islamic Spain, al-Andalus. Islamic Spain was a meeting point of many cultures, which did not always live in harmony. This meeting, however, allowed an incredibly rich cultural activity: it resulted in the creation of the most important Jewish and Islamic mystical movements, Kabbala and Islamic mysticism, and in the development of rich and diverse Jewish and Islamic philosophical thought.

Nevertheless, scholars in these fields generally specialize in a limited aspect of this scene, such as Jewish philosophy or Islamic philosophy, Islamic mysticism or Jewish mysticism. We therefore decided to convene together experts in these fields, and to encourage a dialogue which would contribute to the enrichment of research. Indeed, the lectures were very interesting and enriching, and stimulated lively debates. Scholars of Kabbala learned about Islamic mysticism and philosophy, and vice versa. Many channels of contacts were explored, such as the influence of Arabic philosophy on Kabbala, and also the influence of Jewish mysticism on Arabic mysticism. It was an opportunity to address methodological questions, such as the definition and scope of Neoplatonism, which served as a bridge between Arabic philosophy and Kabbala. It was concluded that this term had to be used carefully, since it is sometimes overestimated, and sometimes underestimated. Other types of philosophy, such as Aristotelianism, which was prevalent in twelfth-century al-Andalus, were also addressed. In addition, the original philosophy of several Jewish and Muslim philosophers and mystics, and Neoplatonic impact on it, was presented by several speakers.

The participants were enthusiastic about the progress made and hope to reconvene in the not-too-distant future to pursue their common interests.

# Scholion Study Trip

Our trip, on March 21–22, strove to delineate a route configured by stories of changes, passages, and displacements in space and time: stories that evolved from a fracture with the past and a search for new identity and life-meaning, both individual and collective. Frequently, in the new phase, the past was critically evaluated from the present through the various narratives encountered on our trip. All these stories and narratives were rooted in this specific territory, Israel, and though not necessarily connected with its symbolic religious value, many of them established a dialogue with it, quite often a conflictive one. In this respect, the three monotheistic religions—Christianity, Judaism and Islam—were in some way or other present in the various stories we encountered.

Our tour began with a visit to the moshava Bat Shlomo, marking the initiation of the First Aliyah. Here, while we sat in the moshava's café and grocery store, we learnt from the descendants of the first settlers about the love affairs of their parents and the struggles of their encounter with the new land. An enthusiastic local guide showed us around the moshava: while visiting the synagogue and several other emblematic places we were able to reconstruct the story of the place and stories of love, but also of conflict with the religious tradition, with the new concept of education, with the land, and with the aspiration to create a new state. Back in the courtyard of the grocery shop, under the vineyard's trees, Dr. Shimrit Peled lectured about how this new society and its members were represented by its writers, and how

this First Aliyah generation was read and understood (or misunderstood) by the following generations—the Second Aliyah and later.

Our next station was Kibbutz Harduf, a unique kibbutz developing the experience of the anthroposophical vision of education, striving to break with the ties of contemporary materialistic society and its conventions, in order to find a new and independent way of “being in the world” and also to contribute as individuals to a better society, irradiating this spirit to all the fields of life. While learning about the principles of this educational system, we visited their school, community center, and working places, and, during lunch, Miriam Szamet lectured on the German immigrants of the so-called “aliyah Yekit” who held ideas quite similar to those of anthroposophy, and who too attempted to create a new utopian community in the incipient young state of Israel. Though the results of these attempts were only partially successful, they also reflected the constant search for a new and better society.

The first day of our trip ended in Bethlehem-of-Galilee, now a pastoral and beautiful village where there was once a settlement of German Templars — also an experience of a community establishing itself in a new faraway space and trying to create a new society. Here we were again exposed to several stories of love, jealousy, and passion. The Israeli writer, Meir Shalev, spoke to us about his personal family history of the Second Aliyah, a story also of personal and communal



## Organized by the “Eros, Family and Community” Research Group

search and of self-sacrifice, another attempt to create an utopian society, colored by his personal nostalgic interpretation of this attempt. The story is inscribed in one of his books, *Fontanella*, on which he commented; Scholion's participants in the tour had read it in preparation for this meeting. Shalev's writing, paraphrased in his talk, constitutes a recovery of the memory of this period and its actors, notwithstanding melancholy vis-à-vis what was left behind.

After a night in Akko, we began the next morning by contemplating the impressive view of the Mediterranean Sea from the medieval walls of the city, while Moran Benit lectured to us about the life and thought of the writer Jacqueline Kahanoff, as read and understood by the contemporary Israeli writer, Ronit Matalon; both express the need to understand the Levantine as a new local and ambiguous identity. We were now approaching a later aliya, the one from the Arab countries, reinterpreted from the present and from the memory of the contemporary generation, from a female point of view, again trying to

provide meaning to our presence here, in Israel, in this new society with all its ambivalence and ambiguous limits.

Later on, Dr. Galit Noga-Banai reconstructed the memory of the past through the Crusaders, who also configured a story of the abandonment of a place, in order to launch a voyage to the unknown, searching for a religious individual and collective goal. Galit exposed us to current scholarly attempts to comprehend their routes, fears, and desires—all through the archeological decoding of a figurine found near the current Sufi Center in Akko.

Finally, closure was provided by our visit to the last-named Center, where we tried to understand this religious and philosophic approach, which is almost ecumenical. At first, the explanation was provided by a spontaneous but incomparable construction worker in the building, whose candid, simple, and generous explanation, based on his admiration

for the Sufi culture, introduced us in a fascinating palimpsest: a group of Jewish Israeli researchers, trying to understand Sufism in a site of Christian Crusaders' ruins, through the explanation of a Sunnite Muslim worker.

Right afterwards, having the muezzin's Friday prayers as a background melody, Prof. Rachel Milstein lectured on the Sufi philosophy and way of life, a philosophy which is in itself a rupture and a permanent search for a better society, integrated by better individuals, but also an attempt to get closer to the Divine and also to our individual self-consciousness.

The trip constituted a voyage to the lives and dreams of individuals and communities emerging in this land, in many ways, as the Mexican writer Octavio Paz put it, all of them striving to deserve their own dreams.

*Our thanks to Prof. Ruth Fine for this summary of the study trip.*

## The Mandel Scholarship Lecture Marathon

January 2, 2014



Dr. Jonathan Stavsky



Dr. Karin Nisenbaum

As in previous years, the number of candidates for Mandel postdoctoral fellowships again increased, totaling more than 150 by the time the application process closed. Another sign of the growth of the fellowships' international appeal is the fact that this year, for the first time, less than a half of the applicants graduated in Israel. The percentage of women remained around 40%. A change was registered, however, in the distribution of the candidates' fields: as opposed to a third last year, this year more than half were not from Jewish Studies. This change, which means the recent broadening of our purview is being noticed, was matched by a broadening of our academic committee, with the appointment of three new members from around the Faculty of Humanities: Prof. Anna Belfer-Cohen of the Institute of Archaeology and the Ancient Near East, Prof. Carl Posy of the Department of Philosophy, and Prof. Yfaat Weiss of the Department of the History of the Jewish People and Contemporary Jewry. Together with the help of other faculty members, the committee members first narrowed the list down to 35 candidates, and after discussing them thoroughly chose 8 finalists to participate in this year's marathon.

On the eve of the marathon, the eight finalists, from the USA, Europe, and Israel, met each other and the members of the academic committee, along with a representative of Mandel Foundation-Israel, at a reception, which

was enriched by a talk by Mandel Fellow, Dr. Katelyn Mesler, based on her research: “Let God Be the Judge? Cheating the System in Medieval Trials by Combat and Ordeal.” Inspired by her discussion of that timely topic, the next morning the finalists and the committee convened for the marathon, which was held in the presence of a large audience of Scholion scholars and other faculty members and students.

As always, the marathon was a celebration of the humanities at their best. It included thought-provoking lectures in fields such as Assyriology, Ancient Jewish Astronomy, German History and Musicology, German-Jewish Philosophy, English Literature and more. Thursday afternoon was dedicated to interviewing the candidates. The interviews allow the members of the committee to deepen their acquaintance with the candidates and to examine more closely their knowledge, their plans and hopes, as well as their potential to integrate well into the Center's interdisciplinary and multi-aged community. On Friday morning the committee reassembled to choose the two new Mandel Fellows and the new research group. After serious deliberation the committee chose Dr. Karin Nisenbaum and Dr. Jonathan Stavsky.

Dr. Karin Nisenbaum completed her PhD in Philosophy and Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto. Her doctoral dissertation focuses on Franz Rosenzweig's inheritance and critique of post-Kantian idealism, showing the relationship between religious belief and a conception of oneself as a free moral agent. She has proposed two related projects to Mandel Scholion: the first develops a conception of selfhood, and provides an account of moral judgment informed by Kant, Schelling, and Rosenzweig; the second draws on German Idealism, Phenomenology, and Existentialism to offer a response to contemporary Anglophone objections to Kant's method of philosophical argumentation—the method of transcendental argumentation.

Dr. Jonathan Stavsky completed his doctorate at the Department of English at The Hebrew University. His dissertation followed the development and reception of stories of righteous women on trial from late antiquity down to fifteenth-century England. His future research will examine the complex of arguments used by the Church Fathers to define the biblical text and the community of readers it brings together in contrast to pagan or apocryphal “fables” and those who tell them. It will then analyze medieval conceptions of literary and historical writing in light of these categories in order better to understand how authors of various backgrounds related to Scripture.



# “Eros, Family, and Community” – Concluding Conference

On May 19-21 the “Eros, Family, and Community” research group held its concluding conference. The first morning of the conference was dedicated to a tour of the Old City of Jerusalem. The tour focused on archeological and religious issues. This enlightening tour was instructive for both visitors and local participants with regard to controversial questions within the stimulating and sensitive historical space of the Old City.

The first session of the conference was held on Monday evening. Titled *Love and Social Deviance*, it was chaired by Esther Cohen and featured three presentations. Shadi Bartsch-Zimmer of the University of Chicago presented a philological discussion of Amor and Eros in their Greco-Roman context. Unlike the modern usage of these terms, they were used to express distinguishable situations and emotions. The second lecture of the evening was presented by group member Yoav Rinon, who dealt with the representation of rape in ancient comedy, both Greek New Comedy and Roman Comedy. While rape, “love”, happiness, and marriage are given due place as positive phenomena within the context of the comic, their appearance within a frame of reference that constantly questions both the values represented and even the extent to which characterization and comic resolution represent reality enables audiences of the Comedy of Rape to critically reflect on this reality. Guido Ruggiero of the University of Miami concluded the evening with his lecture on prostitution during the Italian Renaissance. Ruggiero’s historical research reveals the existence of different types of prostitution, each with different social and emotional functions for Italian Renaissance men.

The second day of the conference opened with a session titled *Bounded / Unbounded Eros in Early Modern Iberian Cultures*, chaired by Edwin Seroussi. Group member Yosef Kaplan dealt with the role played by Eros in the communities of the early modern western Sephardim. Given the contradiction between the religious morality and strict family and marriage strategies that underlay their new culture and the conception of romantic love and the erotic imagery to which they were exposed, dissimulation and hypocrisy became a central element in the lives of the Western Sephardim. In the shadow of the splendor and outward grandeur that these Jews tried to project on their surroundings, they took part in a secret, forbidden culture, only a tiny part of whose extent and vitality is revealed to us in the records of the Amsterdam police. Ruth Fine, another group member, presented the complex representation of Eros in *conversos’* literature within 17th-century Spanish literature. In the construction of Eros within these stories there are traces of the ambiguous interplay of self and other. The third lecture, by Luce Lopez-Baralt of the University of Puerto Rico, revealed a long forgotten erotic text, which boasts of a literary crossbreeding unheard of in Spanish belles lettres. It was written by an anonymous Morisco banished from Spain in 1609, who wrote from his exile in Tunisia. In this reverential treatise on marriage, the anonymous expatriate describes specific details of sexual intercourse with a guiltless, celebratory, and deeply religious intention.

The next session, chaired by Tzachi Zamir, focused on the relationships between body and soul. Unfortunately the first scheduled presentation, by Elizabeth Harvey of the University of Toronto, titled *Winged Desire: The Erotics of Ensoulment*, had to be canceled due to an accident on her way to Israel. Therefore, this session was opened by a lecture by group member Or Hasson on the presence of literature in medical representations of lovesickness, in a medical treatise written around 1575 by Alfonso de Santa Cruz, *Diagnosis and Treatment of Melancholic Illnesses*. Exploring Santa Cruz’s unique reading of the story and the popular — rather than classical — sources that might have inspired it, Hasson reflected on the indispensability of literary images for medical representations of Eros. Ramie Targoff of Brandeis University continued with an analysis of sonnets by Vittoria Colonna, the first woman to publish a book of poems in Italy. Targoff showed that, as opposed to common academic opinion, even Vittoria Colonna’s early collection of poems is innovative in its perception of Eros relative to the Petrarchan model of posthumous love. Colonna’s collection of poems was ahead of its time in representing the end of the couple’s love as one of the lovers dies, in accordance with later Protestant conceptions. The final session of the second day, chaired by Tamar Hess, dealt with Eros

in modern Jewish texts and contexts. Hebrew University’s Paweł Maciejko opened with an exploration of the sexual imagery of the most notorious work of Sabbatian Kabbalah — Rabbi Jonathan Eibeschuetz’s *Va-Avo ha-Yom el ha-Ayyin*. The work explores aspects of sexuality that mainstream Kabbalah preferred to let alone or to allude to only through the vaguest of hints. Group member Miriam Szamet followed with a presentation on Eros and pedagogy in the new Jewish community in Mandatory Palestine. In the local context of the Jewish *Yishuv*, Eros served as the intersection of Zionism, Socialism, psychoanalysis and progressive education. Nevertheless, using Eros in pedagogical discourse diminished the Platonic ideal until it became only about sexuality. The last presentation of the day was given by group member Shimrit Peled, titled *Love Affairs of the “New Jew” in Early Literature of Modern Eretz-Israel*. Common perception views the Second *Aliyah* literature as denouncing the Old *Yishuv* and its characteristics. However, new local Jewish literature, both canonic and marginal, portrayed intermingled love affairs between characters from the new *Yishuv* and the Old *Yishuv*, connecting old and new Jewish cultures and spaces. Furthermore, it created platforms for fruitful relationships between the two.

On the conference’s last day, we opened with a session on *Politics of Sexuality and Subjectivity*, chaired by Louise Bethlehem. Group member Moran Benit discussed sexual *Bildung* in *The One Facing Us* by Ronit Matalon (1995). It suggests a model deviating from other models formulated in western literary and theoretical writing. The primary characteristics of female *Bildung* are not based on sexual or emotional initiation; rather, they go beyond them into political *Bildung*. This was followed by group member Dana Kaplan’s presentation titled *Recreational Sexuality and Class-Making under Neoliberalism*. Based on in-depth interviews with Israeli men and women, Kaplan has shown that middle-class heterosexuals endorse recreational sexuality as part of their individualization efforts and hence also as a mechanism of class-making. Given that recreational sexuality has become a major technique for human capital accrual, recreational sexuality ought to be understood as class-based individualization practice, typical of the contemporary middle-class’s quest for an ‘authentic self’. The third presentation of the session was given by Rosalind Gill of City University London, who focused on gendered discourses of self-love and emotional capitalism. Gill used examples from current English and American media to present a paradox in the perception of the feminine body and subject. In post-feminist culture women are still compelled to answer to fixed gendered standards about their bodies, and this creates a new regulation of self-perception. In addition, they are also required to incorporate the discourse of loving their bodies.

Wednesday continued with the group’s presentation of its work throughout the three years of joint research. This included the cooperative theoretical work and the group’s collaborative insights regarding Eros, family and community. Other conference speakers participated in this discussion and suggested where these insights interplay with other ideas presented during the conference. One of the main questions which surfaced was how to locate Eros with regard to love, in its cultural, pedagogical and historical contexts.

The very last session was dedicated to a keynote lecture by Giulia Sissa of the University of California, Los Angeles, on *Eros in Kingdom of Ends*. Sissa presented the perception of Eros in modern philosophy as progressing on two different routes. The first starts with Kant, who saw sex as a human downfall, through Marx, who based his theory on Kantian ethics, and Martha Nussbaum. The second route started with Hegel, who regarded the family as a combination of love and sex, through Simone de Beauvoir who relied on Hegel’s writing, and up to Merleau-Ponty. We concluded this enlightening conference with a musical performance by The Ben-Zvi Institute Piyyut Ensemble, set at the heart of the Rabin Building.

The concluding conference of the “Eros, Family, and Community” research group was very successful. Tracing Eros both in theory and in textual praxis has revealed new vistas, enhancing our understanding of the nature of Eros and facilitating a more general rethinking of cultural phenomena and the ways they are manifested, in what seems, at least initially, natural. The three years’ work of the group will culminate in the publication of a collection of essays by the participants in the conference and the group’s members.





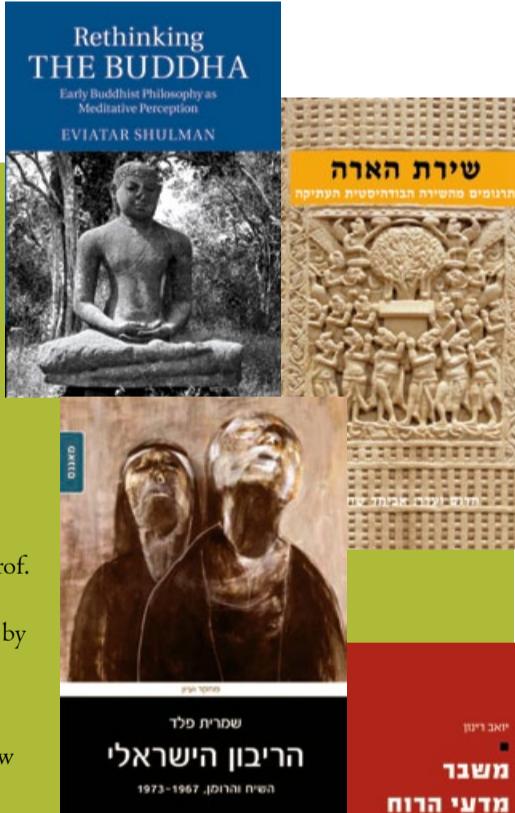
## SCHOLION'S NEW RESEARCH GROUP FOR 2014-2017: "A Question of Identity"

The concept of "identity" influences the way individuals define themselves in relation to their contexts, and affects how people sustain relationships within religious and ethnic groups. The surge of interest in identity in the social sciences and later in the humanities has given birth to new conceptualizations regarding the formation and development of identity. Yet identity has, for the most part, retained its elusive character. Contradictory views persist regarding the means, or even possibility, of measuring and describing it. The "Question of Identity" research group will place identity at the center of its investigation, assuming that identity is not static but dynamic, developing and changing through interactions.

The main goal of the group is to study the influence of a variety of historical, social, and political contexts on identity formation of diverse groups in various settings. As it considers these different cases, the group will focus more specifically on majority-minority relations and their influence on identity formation of both majority and minority group members. The group will also examine how relations between center and periphery, and between motherland and diaspora, affect how identity is expressed in these contexts. More specifically, the research

efforts will focus on the study of the *hows*, *wheres*, and *whens* of identity formation in four different contextual settings: archaeological sites in Classical-Period Galilee; Second Temple Period textual records on Diaspora Judaism; Jews and Christians in Sasanian Persia; and sites of global organization. These four choices are not accidental. Each one may help us understand different patterns of identity formation given the different social, political, and historical circumstances in these settings.

The members of the group are: Benjamin Arubas who is studying "Town Planning and Urban Planning of Beth Shean"; Avihay Berlin who concentrates on group identification, intergroup conflict and reconciliation; Dr. Noah Hacham, a historian of the Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods; Dr. Geoffrey Herman, a historian of the Jews and Christians in Sasanian Persia; Dr. Uzi Leibner, a classical archaeologist specializing in the Galilee; Magdalena Luszczynska, who deals with polemics between the Arians and Jews in 16th-century Poland; Prof. Lilach Sagiv, an organizational psychologist; and Peter Zilberg, who intends to write about communities of deportees and foreigners in the Babylonian and Persian Empires.



### Mandel Scholion Steering Committee, 2013/14

Mr. Morton L. Mandel  
Chairman and CEO, Mandel Foundation  
Mrs. Barbara Mandel  
Chairman of the Board, Mandel Foundation  
Prof. Jehuda Reinhartz  
President, Mandel Foundation  
Mrs. Annette Hochstein  
President Emeritus, Mandel Foundation-Israel  
Dr. Eli Gottlieb  
Vice-President, Mandel Foundation-Israel  
Prof. Mordechai Nisan  
Mandel Foundation-Israel  
Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson  
President of the Hebrew University  
Prof. Asher Cohen  
Rector of the Hebrew University  
Prof. Reuven Amitai  
Dean of the Faculty of Humanities  
Prof. Oded Irshai  
Head of the Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies  
Prof. Israel Yuval  
Head of the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School for Advanced Studies in the Humanities  
Prof. Daniel R. Schwartz  
Academic Head of Mandel Scholion

### Mandel Scholion Academic Committee, 2013/14

*ex officio:*  
Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson  
President of the Hebrew University  
Prof. Asher Cohen  
Rector of the Hebrew University  
Prof. Reuven Amitai  
Dean of the Faculty of Humanities  
Prof. Oded Irshai  
Head of the Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies  
Prof. Israel Yuval  
Head of the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School for Advanced Studies in the Humanities  
Prof. Daniel R. Schwartz  
Academic Head of Mandel Scholion  
*at large:*  
Prof. Anna Belfer-Cohen  
Institute of Archaeology  
Prof. Peter N. Miller  
Bard College, New York  
Prof. Judith Olszowy-Schlanger  
École pratique des hautes études, Sorbonne  
Prof. Carl Posy  
Dept. of Philosophy  
Prof. Malka Rappaport Hovav  
Dept. of Linguistics  
Prof. Edwin Seroussi  
Dept. of Musicology  
Prof. David Shulman  
Depts. of Comparative Religion and East Asian Studies  
Prof. Yfaat Weiss  
Dept. of History of the Jewish People and Contemporary Jewry

General Editor: Maya Sherman  
Writers and translators: Mandel Scholion members and staff  
Design: Janis Design  
Photography: Sasson Tiram, Douglas Guthrie, Mandel Scholion members

Mandel Scholion – Interdisciplinary Research Center in the Humanities and Jewish Studies  
Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School for Advanced Studies in the Humanities  
Rabin Building  
The Faculty of Humanities  
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
Jerusalem, 91905  
Tel: 02-5881279 Fax: 02-5881196  
Scholion@savion.huji.ac.il

## NEWS IN BRIEF: >>

- >> New appointments: Dr. Shimrit Peled of our "Eros, Family, and Community" research group, and Mandel Fellow Dr. Joseph Witztum, were both appointed to tenure-track positions at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- >> Congratulations to three of Mandel Scholion's doctoral fellows who received postdoctoral appointments: Uri Davidovich received the distinguished Rothschild Fellowship and will be spending next year at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at the University of Cambridge; Or Hasson received both a Rothschild Fellowship and a Fulbright postdoctoral fellowship and will be at the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard; and Dana Kaplan received the Ginsberg Fellowship for postdoctoral studies at London College.
- >> A fruitful year for three Mandel Scholion members who published new books: *The Crisis in the Humanities* by Prof. Yoav Rinon (who also published a Hebrew translation of Dante's *Inferno*); *The Israeli Sovereign: The Novel and the Discourse 1967-1973* by Dr. Shimrit Peled; and *Rethinking the Buddha: Early Buddhist Philosophy as Meditative Perception* by Dr. Eviatar Shulman, who also published a volume of Hebrew translations of ancient Buddhist poetry.
- >> Congratulations to Dr. Yael Reshef of the "Emergence of the Modern Hebrew" research group for receiving the 2013-2014 Academy of the Hebrew Language award for her accomplishments in the study of the Hebrew language.

## SAVE THE DATE

Our annual Marathon will take place on **Monday December 22, 2014**.

On **January 5-7, 2015** Mandel Scholion will hold a joint international symposium with the Martin Buber Society of Fellows entitled "Images of Perfection: An Interdisciplinary Conference in the Study of Religion". The conference is organized by Dr. Eviatar Shulman (a 2013-2016 Mandel Fellow) and Dr. Shai Secunda, a former Mandel Fellow.

The Picture Power research group will hold its concluding international conference on **January 12-14, 2015**. The conference is entitled "Picturing Royal Charisma in the Near East".

For additional information please visit our website.

## NAME CHANGE:

Along with Hebrew University's decision to grant Morton Mandel the 2014 Samuel Rothberg Prize this past spring, the name of our Center has recently been expanded (as readers of this newsletter will have noticed) so as to give recognition where it is due: instead of Scholion, we are now proud to be Mandel Scholion.