

אגרת

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Presidential Perspective

Oy, Here Comes AI

Since my previous presidential perspective, we have learned quite a few new terms.

Chatbot. Generative AI. Large language models.

Last fall, especially towards the end of the semester, there was even a mini-wave of panic gripping institutions of higher learning all over the country, when it was discovered that programs like ChatGPT can produce a decent undergraduate paper at a simple prompt and in no time. Schools and departments were hastily crafting statements branding the use of generative AI as plagiarism, and makers of anti-cheating software scrambled to build tools for identification of such use. Of course, it had long been suspected that some students buy their papers rather than writing them, but that must be costly and therefore at least cannot be widespread. By contrast, ChatGPT and similar programs are entirely free and easy to download.

And, of course, there was a deluge of sensationalist publications, some darkly predicting robot takeover and humanity's concomitant extinction, others breathlessly promising a utopia of unprecedented productivity, prosperity, and pleasure, and both sides agreeing that an entirely new age is looming. Heaven or hell, the millennium is here.

As usual, the reality is much more mundane. The advent of chatbots is but another milestone of humanity's centuries-long march down a path strewn with both gains and losses. That has, perhaps surprisingly, a lot to do with the mission of our association. As teachers and students of Hebrew, we can do little to maximize the gains, but we can contribute to minimizing the losses. Let me explain.

Our age is, among other things, the age of the generic. We consume generic foods. We take generic drugs. We live in generic houses choke-full of generic fixtures, from electric outlets to faucets and toilets. In many respects, standardization is a blessing.

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When a construction company buys everything in bulk, the house costs much less to build. When a generic drug becomes available, its price drops from stratospheric to negligible. If all countries had their electric grids at the same voltage and their electric sockets at the same configuration, we would not have to include transformers and adapters in our already heavy luggage – in some cases only to discover that online advice on what to pack was dead wrong.

But when the generic takes over, something is often lost – something very important, even vital.

I remember thinking about it for the first time when the euro was introduced in 2002. The overall economic benefits may be debatable, but it definitely became easier – and cheaper – to travel between European countries. You did not have to worry about running out of cash, having too much left over, or finding an exchange kiosk offering the lowest – if still outrageous – rate.

Yet, I also found myself missing the visual and sometimes even tactile distinctiveness of national coins and especially paper money. They were all different sizes, shapes, and colors, bearing images that were unique to each country – faces of the people it was proud of, coats of arms and other symbols, landscapes, buildings, monuments. You could learn a thing or two just by perusing a coin or a note. The euro replaced all that with generic architectural shapes, meant to resemble a lot of things but nothing in particular.

Herein lies the danger of humanity's inexorable march towards the generic: when it leaves the sphere of the practical and invades the spheres of the cultural and the social, something is inevitably lost, and as the losses mount, we find ourselves in grave danger. We face death, not physical but spiritual.

Even in the physical world, for something to happen there needs to be a difference. The only reason why there is any movement or change in the universe is that energy is not distributed evenly – or, more precisely, that energy comes in different forms, none of which is distributed evenly. In a flat, homogeneous world nothing is possible (which, by the way, is the reason why after having God create a perfect world in Genesis 1, the biblical authors had to start over in Genesis 2.)

So much so when it comes to the universe of human mind. As we look back at the millennia of our history, we can clearly see that all our achievement has been the function of the unique, the distinctive, the different, the unexpected, the implausible, the bizarre. Nothing has ever come out of the ordinary, the normal, the conforming, the commonsensical (if that is a word). For a painting to emerge, the palette needs to offer at least a few different colors. If there is nothing but gray, even a Rembrandt will not get very far.

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Yet, at times it seems we are drowning in the gray. Our aural ambience is *muzak*. Hollywood is being taken over by Marvel. (The smash hit status of *Barbie*, a rather mediocre film, demonstrates just how tired moviegoers are of the comic book heroes and villains.) Literary agents refuse even to look at a book project with a hint of originality. (Just ask J. K. Rowling.) Rather than advancing specific policies, politicians peddle slogans like “Hope and change” or “Make America great again” that everyone can understand in their own way. There are sustained efforts to achieve ideological conformity, on the premise that only a fool or a scoundrel could possibly subscribe to a different set of ideas.

And now here comes generative AI.

To the extent we know how it works (“OpenAI” is open only on the user’s end), it seems to create texts by processing vast amounts of already existing texts found online and picking out words and sentences that satisfy the algorithm set by the prompt. Such a product cannot by definition be anything but generic. Surprises are out the question. Originality is beyond reach. Do not expect the unexpected. To quote Freddy deBoer (who describes himself as “cool but rude”), “Personally, I find that conversation with ChatGPT is a remarkably polished and effective simulation of talking to the most boring person I’ve ever met. How could it be otherwise?” (<https://freddiedeboer.substack.com/p/ai-or-the-eternal-recurrence-of-hubris>).

What we can reasonably expect, given that generative AI is free, handy, and increasingly efficient, is that the number and proportion of texts created with its help (or, rather, created by it with some help from lazy humans) will be growing exponentially in foreseeable future. A mighty stream has been added to the tide of the gray, and it is not going to recede anytime soon.

But there is also at least one levee that may hold: The diversity of human languages.

Each language is distinctive. Each contains at least some unique features while sharing others. (A language that is not unique in at least some respects would be a contradiction in terms.) To be sure, these days it should not be very difficult to create a Hebrew chatbot. (I would not be surprised if at least one existed already). Yet, generic Hebrew would be different by definition from generic English (or Swahili, or Mandarin). It would still add an individual color, or at least tinge, to the global linguistic palette. The only way this tinge might disappear is for Hebrew to go the way of the dodo – or, rather, of countless other languages that become extinct day in and day out.

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This is what makes our work so important, even vital. By studying and teaching Hebrew, we help keep it alive. We enhance its contrast with other colors on the linguistic palette by plumbing the properties that set it apart and the original, creative, unexpected, sometimes even bizarre ways it works in speech and writing.

To be sure, at present Hebrew is not in immediate danger, and its survival mostly depends on lay speakers, not specialists. But with all due humility we can be rightfully proud of what we do. Our task is noble.

חברות וחברים, חזקו ואמצו!

בברכה,

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Disclaimer: The views expressed above are mine as a private individual and NAPH President. They do not necessarily reflect the stance of SMU as an institution.

Notes From Here & There

Zev Garber

I. Book in Focus

Zev Garber and Kenneth L. Hanson, eds., *Teaching the Shoah: Mandate and Momentum*. Newcastle upon Tyre: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2023. xi+198 pp. ISBN 1-5275-9120-4 (cloth)

Today, more than 80 years after the Holocaust/Shoah, the events surrounding Hitler's campaign of murder have not receded into the distance, but remain memorialized in multiple venues, both scholarly and popular. This volume is an anthological collection of essays and creative pieces showcasing the pedagogical issues related to the Nazi genocide. It addresses the field of Shoah education, featuring new and novel ways to promote awareness of the reality of the genocide, as well as an understanding of the instrumentalities (both philosophical and physical) which drove and concretized it. In addition to serious academic contributions, this volume features a play, a short story, and a discussion of the use of educational video in an online environment. It provides insight into the overarching question: how can and should the Shoah be taught, and what approaches can be utilized in sharing the most important lessons of this most unspeakable example of ethnic cleansing in human history?

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Post-publication, the co-editors were asked by Cambridge Scholars to offer pivotal issues leading to and from the Shoah. They agreed. Hanson writes on antisemitism and anti-Judaism; and Garber on the tragic woes associated with Christendom.

Antisemitism, Anti-Judaism

Eli Wiesel once expressed concern that within a single generation the tragic events of the Shoah/Holocaust might no longer be remembered. He was wrong. Today, there is arguably more interest in the unparalleled destruction unleashed by the Nazi terror than ever before. In the media, in film and in print, the Holocaust remains a central memory, perhaps the most salient memory of the twentieth century. Understandably, teaching the Shoah is especially relevant in the twenty-first century, with Holocaust education being particularly germane when it comes to combating the scourge of contemporary antisemitism.

To be sure, while the Shoah continues to be memorialized, the phenomenon of antisemitism shows no signs of abatement. There is no shortage of anti-Jewish rhetoric in public discourse, which makes teaching the Shoah all the more consequential. When it comes to students, many, if not most, assume that antisemitism is proverbially “as old as the hills.” It must be explained, to the contrary, that this is not the case. In fact, it is not strictly correct to speak of antisemitism, or more correctly anti-Judaism, before the birth of Christianity. For many students of sincere Christian faith, this is a difficult reality to convey, and equally difficult to accept.

Moreover, one could not properly call anti-Jewish incidents in the Greco-Roman world antisemitism. Indeed, the ancient world was, by and large, a fairly tolerant place. While there was occasional hostility against Jews in Greco-Roman society, there was also a degree of admiration for Jews that took root in the ancient classical world, with many choosing conversion to the Jewish faith. With the birth of Christianity, however, new and sinister currents of anti-Jewish bombast began to emerge, as the crucifixion of Jesus came to be blamed on the Jewish people.

In Christian preaching and teaching on the Jews, Catholic Saints (including Augustine, John Chrysostom, and Thomas Aquinas) and Protestant Reformers (such as John Calvin and Martin Luther) appear united in their teaching of contempt for the Jewish way, contrasting it with God’s grace and love. It was the venerable St. Augustine who declared: “Judaism, since Christ, is a corruption; indeed, Judas is the image of the Jewish people: their understanding of Scripture is carnal; they bear the guilt for the death of the Savior.” He also wrote: “Throughout all nations there have been scattered abroad the Jews, witnesses of their own iniquity and our truth.” Sadly, such words were matched with action, resulting in the systematic exclusion of Jews from Christian society across Europe. The late Christian theologian Franklin Littell stated: “I think that Christian antisemitism laid foundations, a ‘bottom layer’ if you will, not only in Germany but in all of Christendom, so-called, on which cultural stereotypes and prejudices were then built

Antisemitism, which began as anti-Judaism, was of course religious in nature. However, after centuries of anti-Jewish agitation in Christian Europe, motivated by the charge that the Jews are “Christ killers,” the phenomenon shifted in the nineteenth century from religious to racial. Jewishness had to be defined as something in the blood, for which no Christian conversion could atone. Secular European culture inherited its antisemitism from its religious past, but it was now reframed in Darwinian terms, as a kind of survival of the fittest. This was pointed out by Richard Weikart, a history professor at Cal State University, in his book: *From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics and Racism in Germany*.

The so-called father of modern antisemitism was a disillusioned democratic German revolutionary named Wilhelm Marr. According to Marr, antisemitism must focus on the racial, not the religious characteristics of Jews. In 1879 his book, *The Victory of Judaism over Germandom*, was published. Contrary to many other antisemitic tracts, Marr’s analysis of the “Jewish Question” posits “the world-historical triumph of Jewry” and announces “the news of a lost battle.” His text concludes with the resounding words, “*Finis Germaniae!*” (“Germany’s end!”). But for antisemitism it was only the beginning.

What Franklin Littell called “cultural stereotypes and prejudices” were perpetuated by the most notorious and widely distributed antisemitic publication of modern times, called *The Protocols of Elders of Zion*. It was purported to consist of conversations among a secretive cabal of Jewish financial moguls, intent on dominating the world. Not long after the Russian Revolution of 1917, *The Protocols* surfaced across Europe, having been carried by anti-Bolshevik émigrés. It also appeared in the United States, South America, and Japan, along with an Arabic translation in the 1920s. At the same time, automobile magnet Henry Ford published a series of articles based on *The Protocols* in his newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*. A book that included these articles, called *The International Jew*, was highly praised by none other than Adolf Hitler and Joseph Goebbels.

The Protocols continue to circulate around the world today. It should come as no surprise when Kanye West (who now goes by Ye) essentially declared open season on Jews, tweeting that he would go “death con 3 on Jewish people.” DEFCON (not “death con”) is an abbreviation of the term Defense Readiness Condition, used to measure safety alerts, with five levels in total. DEFCON 1 is the most serious, signaling nuclear war. The Anti-Defamation League said his remarks use “age-old anti-Semitic myths about Jewish greed and power and control of the entertainment industry.”

Antisemitism today finds a political home on both the right and the left. In February 2019, Ilhan Omar, a Minnesota Congresswoman known for her left-leaning views, tweeted that US support for Israel was “all about the Benjamins” (a reference to the \$100 bill, adorned by Benjamin Franklin’s face). In another

tweet, Omar named the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC, saying that it was funding Republican support for Israel. There was bipartisan backlash, and Omar was widely accused of antisemitic speech.

After World War II, antisemitism is not the same as earlier expressions of anti-Jewish hatred, but arguably it is not different either. Not the same because it has spread across radicalized portions of the Arab / Islamic world, rather than being headquartered in old Europe. Not different because it has been imported back into Europe, being found in ever more virulent forms among the continent's Muslim population, and fanning out to non-Muslim communities as well. As Phyllis Chesler points out in her 2005 book *The New Anti-Semitism*, this old-fashioned hatred has become newly fashionable, even politically correct, threatening the Jews of the world, America and Western civilization. Today, lethal activism against the Jews often takes the form of anti-Zionism.

Some say that antisemitism is back with a vengeance. By the same token, however, it never actually abated. Multiple disturbing events witnessed around the world today certainly echo the Nazi reign of terror and all the more beg for Shoah education. Synagogues have been torched or shot up with worshippers inside; Jewish cemeteries have been defaced; Jews have been attacked on the streets. No, this is not Germany in the 1930s. It is continental Europe and the United States, and it is happening today. Welcome to the twenty-first century.

Ken Hanson

Christianity and Christendom

The subject of the Shoah, which is to say the destruction of the Jews of Europe, when linked to the attempts by the state of Nazi Germany to destroy the Europeans during World War II, is one of great moral significance in the history of human civilization. A major objective in compiling *Teaching the Shoah* may be explained thusly: tribalism, racism, and revisionist extremism are on the rise, and the importance of the Shoah is, therefore, descending before the general public. This book aims to offer a plethora of teaching suggestions and topical recommendations to stabilize and perpetuate Shoah education. Take the Shoah and papal symbology, for example.

In the year 1095 Pope Urban II proclaimed a military expedition against the Muslims to recover Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulcher. The following year, in the spring of 1096, bands of burghers, adventurers, run-away serfs, and criminals, led by zealous monks and soldiers, ravaged the historic Jewish communities of Speyer,

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Worms, Trier, and Cologne on their way to Jerusalem. The murderous mob was fed on the slogan, “kill a Jew, and save your soul.” Nazi Germany tapped into theological antisemitism and applied this hatred to the murder of Jews. In a post-Auschwitz age, however, the Roman Catholic Church confronted and fully rejected Christian imperialism, which validated and intensified Christian antisemitism, through the advocacy of reconciliation and fraternity with the Jewish People. The Second Vatican Council's 1965 declaration, “*Nostra Aetate*,” was the first document in this church's history that takes seriously the Jews as God's ongoing covenantal people, and whom the Holy See, in its understanding of God's Word in Scripture and tradition, is morally bound to defend and support. Indeed, ever since 1965, Catholic efforts to combat worldwide antisemitism, teach the Shoah and its lessons, and to reconcile the Vatican with the State of Israel are impressive.^[1]

Many apologetica and polemica found in centuries of Vatican supersessionist teaching are now corrected. Jews are not seen as “ancient” Israel; the Hebrew Bible is not referred to as the “Old” Covenant; and antisemitism is soundly condemned. Still, not all facets of the replacement theology are properly focused upon nor criticized in a scholarly fashion. For example, at the beatification ceremony of Edith Stein (Carmelite nun, Sister Teresa), on May 1, 1987, Pope John Paul II invoked, “Salvation is from the Jews,” but in the Johannean context this is limited by salvation in the spirit and in truth, that is to say, in Christ.^[2] Or his comments following a Jewish incident at the Carmelite convent built in the vicinity of Auschwitz that suggest Jews have failed in their divinely charged mission.^[3] Also, why the heavens did not darken over the heart of Christendom during the Shoah is explained in Christ-like image; that is to say, God's presence in suffering. Alas, from my Jewish perspective, this proclamation is understandable but not accepted.

Nonetheless, Pope John Paul II was a confessing Christian, committed to and engaged in *teshuvah* (repentance, return). Most memorably, in his powerful talk at Yad Vashem, he said that “we wish to remember (the Shoah) to ensure that never again will evil prevail, as it did for millions of innocent victims of Nazism.” His profound identification with Jewish suffering at Christian hands was also in the note he left at the Western Wall (March 26, 2000): “God of our fathers, you chose Abraham and his descendants to bring your Name to the Nations: We are deeply saddened by the behavior of those who in the course of history have caused these children of yours to suffer and, asking your forgiveness, we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Covenant.”

Confronting the legacy of religious anti-Judaism and racial/ethnic antisemitism is a requisite for the Church's reconciliation with the Jewish People. In this context, when Pope Benedict XVI, the first German pope in 500 years, was in Germany for the Roman Catholic Church's World Youth Day (August 18-21, 2005), he

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visited the synagogue in Cologne that was destroyed by the Nazis. On this occasion, he joined the congregation in Hebrew prayer. In his address, he recalled the words of his predecessor for the liberation of Auschwitz (15 January 2005) and remembered the crime committed against seven thousand named Cologne individuals during the Nazi era; in the words of *Nostra Aetate*, he deplored “feelings of hatred, persecutions and demonstrations of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews at whatever time and by whomsoever” (No.4). He also affirmed that the Nazi’s racist ideology derived from neo-paganism, which did not recognize the holiness of God, and “consequently contempt was shown for the sacredness of human life,” created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26).

Arguably, deep-rooted antisemitism is the matrix around which the crooked cross of the Kingdom of the Night is spun. But deep-seeded Christian “teaching of contempt” contributed immeasurably to the *Endlösung*. Disturbingly, in his visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau (May 28, 2006), Pope Benedict XVI failed to condemn the participatory role of Catholic and Protestant leadership (religious and secular), which included German and Polish bishops in carrying forth *des Führers Wunsch*. In his public meditation at Jewry’s greatest death field, he said that “the rulers of the Third Reich wanted to crush the entire Jewish people,” but failed to see this in racist terms. Instead, he Christianized the Shoah. He began with a Jewish thought (“Why, Lord, did you remain silent? How can you tolerate all this?”), and proceeded to condemn a ruthless state policy, guided by “spurious and godless reason,” which “used and abused” the German nation, which ultimately was an attack of the Christian faith. Not a proclamation of conscious malice, but a misguided spiritual soliloquy slightly tinged with historical revisionism.

On Rosh Chodesh Sivan 5766 (May 28, 2006), in remembering the Event, the German Pope made an errant mistake.^[4] Similarly, misdirected meaning may be understood in Pope Francis’s delivered statement during his visit to Auschwitz (July 29, 2016): “Lord, have pity on your people. Lord, forgive so much cruelty.” Still we ought not to condemn but teach and correct.

Zev Garber

[1] Relevant documents include *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah* (1998); *The Pontifical Biblical Commission Statement on the Jewish People and its Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible* (2002); and the *Reflections on Covenant and Mission issued by the Consultation of the National Council of Synagogues and the Bishops Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs* (August 12, 2002). See Zev Garber, “Religious Intolerance and Prejudice: What’s Love Got To Do With It?” in James Moore, ed., *Post-Shoah Dialogues: Re-thinking Our Texts Together* (Lanham, MD: 2004) 181-193.

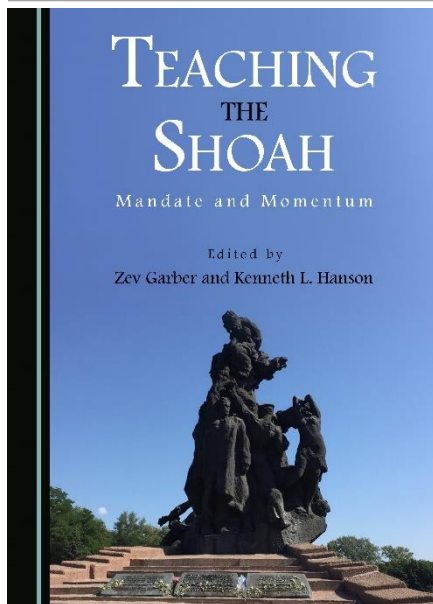
[2] See Chapter 5 in Zev Garber, *Shoah: The Paradigmatic Genocide* (Lanham, MD: UPA 1994), and discussed in William Cardinal Keeler’s “Advisory on the Implications for Catholic-Jewish relations of the Canonization of St. Edith Stein” (September, 1998).

[3] See “The Furor Over the Auschwitz Convent: The Inside and Outside of the Language of Bias,” in Z. Garber and B. Zuckerman, *Double Takes: Thinking and Rethinking Issues of Modern Judaism in Ancient Contexts* (Lanham, MD: 2004) 57-78.

[4] Pope Benedict XVI (1927-2022) passed on December 31, 2022 at 9:30 AM at his residency, Mater Ecclesiae Monastery, located in the Vatican. His reported last words, “Lord, I love you,” mirror his Christian belief and Church commitment.

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Kenneth L. Hanson is an Associate Professor and Coordinator of the University of Central Florida Judaic Studies Program. He earned a PhD in Hebrew Studies from the University of Texas at Austin, in 1991. His many scholarly articles, his monograph, *Hebraic Luke*, and his co-written *Judaism and Jesus* focus on the Second Jewish Commonwealth, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the historical Jesus and Jewish Christianity. He has also published several books of popular scholarship, including *Dead Sea Scrolls: The Untold Story* and *Secrets from the Lost Bible*.



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II. Faith from and to the Ashes

Sibylle Sarah Niemoeller von Sell was born Baroness Sybilla Augusta Sophie von Sell in Potsdam in 1923, the only daughter of Baron Ulrich von Sell, Keeper of the Privy Purse to Emperor Wilhelm II, and his wife Baroness Augusta, née Baroness von Brauchitsch, and moved to Berlin-Dahlem with her parents in 1926. She was raised in Prussian conservatism. In 1938 she was confirmed a Christian in Pastor Niemoeller’s “Confessing Church” in Dahlem and questioned National Socialism. For her confirmation speech she had consciously chosen Matthew 6:24: “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love

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the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and Mammon.” In the years after 1938 she became the outcast in her class, for she would not join the *Bund Deutscher Maedl* (“Hitler Youth for Girls”).

Twice-married Sibylle von Sell married widower Pastor Martin Niemoeller (her childhood pastor) after WW II. Pastor Martin Niemoeller (1892-1984) wrote his memoirs of the First World War, *Vom U-Boot zur KANZEL* (1933, “FROM U-BOAT TO PULPIT”), in part to replace Germany’s traumatic defeat and fragmentation by a program of national unity inspired by the duty and honor and the fatherland. At the end of his reminiscence, he saw hope from the “years of darkness” of the Weimar Republic in Adolf Hitler’s National Socialist Party. But Niemoeller’s support for Hitler (since 1923) was to end abruptly and permanently. He became a founder of the anti-Nazi *Bekennende Kirche* (confessing Church) and was imprisoned in Moabit, Sachsenhausen, and Dachau as Hitler’s “personal prisoner” from 1938 to 1945. Sibylle identified with and supported her husband’s Christian *teshuvah* (here, “repentance”) from loyalties to the Nazi Caesar to genuine hero of the church struggle.

Having left the church, not formally but actually, she felt compelled – after her marriage to Pastor Martin Niemoeller – to be a proper minister’s wife. She began studying Christianity again, hoping to find the faith she had been brought up in. Alas, she became entangled at the roots of the Christian faith and the roots were Jewish from which she could not nor chose not to entangle. Her choosing Judaism was supported by church officials in Germany and her entire Niemoeller family stood by her and showed great love and understanding; however, her biological family dropped her for what they believed was an act of disloyalty committed against her husband, Pastor Niemoeller, whose days began and ended with Jesus, the Messiah. Under the mentorship of her friend Rabbi Albert Friedlander (in London) she studied for close to six years and was converted to the Jewish faith in June of 1990 at the Leo Baeck College in London. Upon conversion she assumed the Hebrew name “Sarah”; name associated with imprisoned Jewish women by the Nazis.

In writing and in personal conversation – we initially met at the 22nd Annual Scholars Conference on the Holocaust and the German Church Struggle (now named the Annual Scholars Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches) at the University of Washington, Feb. 29 to March 4, 1992 -- Sarah Niemoeller acknowledged that the Christian Church in the war years “failed so appallingly until it was finally bankrupted by the Holocaust,” and so an urgent factor for her earlier decision to convert to the faith of a Jew and identified wholly with the fate of the Six Million.

Sarah Niemoeller’s life bears witness to the horrors of the Shoah – she consistently used the cohortative

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Zachor/ “Remember” to express her aristocratic, activist, and combatant way to teach and educate audiences near and far of the horrors of the Kingdom of the Night. Her autobiography in German, *Furchtbar Einfach – Wird Gemacht* and *Zu Neuen Ufern ein Neuer Tag* (Ullstein publishers, 1992 and 1993), was very successful. We managed to publish an altered version of her life story in English entitled *Crowns, Crosses, and Stars* (Purdue University Press, 2012), with an introduction by her close friend and mentor, Elie Wiesel. The title reflects her story in three parts: “Crowns,” the world of nobility in which she was raised; “Crosses,” her life with Martin Niemoeller and his battles with the Third Reich; and “Stars,” the spiritual journey that brought her to Judaism and her new destiny under the stars and stripes.

In my interview with Sarah Niemoeller published in *Shofar* 22.2 (Winter 2004), she revealed that Martin’s first wife asked him after his one and only encounter with Adolf Hitler in January, 1934, “Is Hitler a great man?” He responded, “He is a great coward.” In Sarah’s words, “He had met with the Antichrist *cum* Satan personified. And that was the day when Pastor Niemoeller declared total war against Hitler.” Reciprocally, Hitler declared Niemoeller his personal prisoner and interned him to suffer not be executed. However, for the believing Christian Pastor Niemoeller his total trust in his Lord and Master Jesus Christ is what sustained his seven years of life in the Nazi concentration and death camps.

Nonetheless, in Sarah’s strong opinion, Pastor Martin Niemoeller’s survival was an embarrassment to the German people. In our interview, she asserted, was he not living proof that resistance had existed, contrary to the general opinion that nobody could have done anything to oppose Nazism? How wonderful it would be to remember the sacrificial efforts of this great Christian Pastor by building a chapel in Dachau? Instead, he had come back and pointed an accusing finger at the people, at the church, never excepting himself. All in all, throughout the years after the war in Germany, unlike in the United States, France and England, in his own “fatherland” he was treated almost shabbily, often called a traitor and a turncoat for having turned to pacifism.

Over the decades, by phone and email, and *panim el panim* at the Annual Scholars Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches, Sarah and I talked on aspects of Jewish belief and practice; and on theological issues related to the Shoah. She told me that Martin did not support her decision to become a Jew; but he had no choice. She opposed my suggestion not to include her active support in the killing of Nazis in *Crowns, Crosses, and Stars* by asserting, what are they (authorities) going to do to me now, put me on trial? In conversation and in print, I have expressed that Sarah Niemoeller is a true daughter of Israel. She lived religiously the faith of 613 Commandments, embodied in the *Shema* (“Hear O’ Israel”) and “Love of Neighbor,” as testified by her visit to Ground Zero (World Trade Center) in the aftermath of September 11,

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2001 to say the Kaddish in honor of the Jewish and non-Jewish dead “of this unimaginable tragedy” (Mayor Rudolph Giuliani). Daily she renewed her ties with her beloved *`ezer* (“soul mate”), by asking Martin’s ubiquitous question. “Lord, what do you want me to do?” She dedicated her *Crowns, Crosses, and Stars* to her parents, her husband Martin Niemoeller, and her cousin Werner von Haeften (he carried the bombs on July 20th, 1944. intended to assassinate Hitler), who chose the dangerously narrow path of resistance over indifference to evil. Finally, she was excited that I was writing an article on her husband for *Reference Guide to Holocaust Literature* (2002) and quipped, she approved. Years later, Sarah gifted me with Niemoeller’s daily smoking pipe insisting that he and I shared similar cadences in scholarship, sensitivity, and smoking habits. The Niemoeller pipe lies on my home study work desk. It serves as an inspiration; I have not nor will not smoke from it.

Martin Niemoeller is famous for the saying (edited version cited in Bucks County Courier Times, 12/19/22): “First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out — because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out — because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out — because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me — and there was no one left to speak for me.” And in the spirit of her husband’s sentiment, Sarah often cited in her *Zachor* talks/lectures: “First, the Nazis said, Jews should not live in Germany. Then they said, Jews should not live among us. Then they said, Jews should not live.”

In her last years, Sarah and I lost contact; probably due to a variety of personal and professional obligations. If I were aware of her life-threatening situation, including, hospice care, I would have made every effort to contact her. Alas, it hit hard when I was informed by my good friend, Rabbi Dr. Richrd Libowitz, whom I appointed to copy edit Sarah’s autobiography, that she passed on December 18, 2022, *erev Chanukka* 5783. A Jewish memorial service was held on December 22. I asked about the internment service; he responded that he had no knowledge. A newspaper story mentioned “internment, private.” Why the non-disclosure? I asked and investigated and discovered that Sarah was cremated! Needless to say, I was shocked by the news.

Pastor Niemoller and Professor Garber in unity would have objected to this non-halakhic ritual – burnt offering, no minyan, and no Kaddish – done to this passionate daughter of Israel. I will respect the privacy of who decided on the rite of cremation. I resolve my perpetual anguish by declaring that Sibylle Sarah Niemoeller von Sell discovered her Jewish faith from the ashes of the Holocaust (“burnt offering”) to which she returned in her 99th year.

Barukh Dayyan HaEmet

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III. Briefly Noted

The Posen Library, Vol. 5

Yosef Kaplan, ed., *The Early Modern Era, 1500-1750* (Volume Five, The Posen Jewish Culture and Civilization). New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2023. cxii + 1279 pp. ISBN 978-0-300-13551-0 (hardcover)

The fifth volume of The Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization covers the years 1500 to 1750. To inform intellectually and compassionately the diversity of Jewish life and culture in what editor Yosef Kaplan, Bernard Cherrick Emeritus Professor of Jewish History at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, calls the “early modern era.” Chapters are parsed by decades and divided into historical documents, egodocuments (e.g., autobiographies), community, congregation, and self-government, religious practices, family life, magic, death, visual and material culture, spiritual ideologies, attitudes toward Land of Israel, print and book culture, languages of Jewish creativity (Yiddish, Ladino, etc.), education and scholarship, and literature and the arts. Of particular interest, are a number of items written by women, significant collection of images, and translation of multiple non-English writings into English. These entries originate from Eastern and Western Europe, the Americas, the Ottoman Empire, North Africa, Kurdistan, Persia, Yemen, and India. Credible is the volume’s self-evaluation: “The simultaneous centrifugal and centripetal character of Jewish communities during this era illustrates the distinctiveness of the early modern period in Jewish history and informs developments in world history at large.” (book cover)

General introduction to Volume 5 by the editor is necessary reading to understand Jewish life and culture in the early modern era and why particular entities are selected. Short insightful introductions introduce the varied sections of the contents. Known, less known, and unknown personalities, events, artifacts, etc., are introduced by a short biographical sketch and followed by a primary selection reflecting the importance of the subject or topic. Selections from important works by important luminaries are highlighted (e.g., Judah Abbravanel, Abraham

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Michael Cardoso, Glikl bas Leyb Hamel, Moses Isserles, Joseph Karo, Shabbatai Tzvi, Barukh Spinoza, Rebecca Tiktimer, etc.) Entries chronicle Jewish cultural differences between Ashkenazic and Sephardic communities, track the pitiful fate of settled Jews uprooted and wandering in a worldwide early modern diaspora, and *lamrot hakol* preserves Jewish distinctiveness and informs developments in world history at large. Of teaching interest, complimentary and conflicting views of Jewish culture, religious thought and practice, artistic creativity, and secularity in diverse lands of dispersion.

The publisher's and editor's goal of providing primary texts, documents, artifacts, and images from 1500-1750 c.e. are well attested in this volume. New understanding of established writers/works and introduction of important but hitherto unknown writers and sources of vast geographical disparity are accomplished. Unfortunately, however, the hefty publisher's price (\$200, hardcover) and bulk of the volume do not make for classroom instruction. Library reserve, copying selections or the interactive Posen Digital Library may ease the instruction dilemma.

Embodied Cognition

Pavol Bargar, *Embodied Existence: Our Common Life in God*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books. 179 pp. ISBN 978-1-6667-4408-8 (pb); ISBN 978-1-6667-4409-5 (hc); ISBN 978-1-6667-4410-1(epub)

Author Pavol Bargar (Protestant Theological Faculty, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic) seeks to present an ecumenical Christian perspective on the meaning and teaching of classical New Testament teachings associated with Jesus of Nazareth and developed in classical and contemporary Christian thought and writing and implied in contemporary secular culture, e.g., cinema. His chapters attempt to understand what it means to be human created *Imitateo Dei* living in conjunction with the Other (humanity) and creation. Bargar's volume represents theological anthropology and missiology. His writing is not restricted to cognitive computation, meaning. the brain/mind in the physical body computing the body's interactions with people, environment, etc. Adding to the physical body's cognitive abilities is the body's interactions with the environment which contribute to a new framework of thinking beyond cognitive science. Such a combination, body/mental and soul/interaction, enables the author's innovative Christology to seek and pursue a common life of normalcy for all mankind and creation in the vision of God's radical and transformative reign.

Embodied perception has made inroads in learning, memory, problem solving, emotion, social cognition and expectedly in religion and theology. This does not exclude hard questions as to the merit of embodied

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perception with or without cognitive mental/brain prowess. Is it desirable, realistic to minimize computational cognitive science to evaluate the way of humanity and Earth in this day and age? Yet, as Bargar's creative Christology suggests there is a new perspective on some old biblical and Christian theological questions concerning our common life and responsibility in God's image and Earth suggested by the new language of *kin-ship* and *com-unity* not Kingdom of God nor community.

Six topical chapters convey Bargar's ecumenical Christian theme that our view of our common life with or in God and Earth is not totally viewed by separate reality but also experienced by embodied existence. Chapter One talks of *creatio ex nihilo* and following Gen 1 ("Creation of the World"), Man is drawn into the Creation narrative ("our common life in God," p. xiv). Chapter Two speaks of the centrality of the Body-Self: human corporeality, actions, vulnerable, relational). In the Christian community, the social body is interpreted as the body of Christ since the members are expected to embody Christ's words and deeds. Chapter Three speaks of the power of Imagination invested by divine grace that can engage and transform various ills, injustices, and evils into a new existence of justice, reconciliation, and peace. Activating Imagination is the focus of Chapter Four: Transformation. That is, with godly inspiration, transform a world of brokenness and woundedness; convert personal and societal stories of failure by the vision of justice, mercy, repentance, peace, acceptance, and reconciliation. The author labels Creation the "kin-dom of God." Humanity created in the image of God realizes its full mission in participating together "in eschatological transformation of the entire creation," (p. xv)

The process of "transformation of creation" (called in Judaism, *tikkun `olam*) is named in Chapter Five as Relationality. Here the author explicitly describes and advocates the importance of human cooperative relations for global existence and our common life in God. He cites the fellowship of unity, love, inclusion, and acceptance portrayed in the doctrine of the Trinity (Father-Son-Holy Spirit) as the role model. The concepts of "incarnational discipleship" and "kenotic presence" are represented in this chapter. Finally, Chapter Six is titled Feast summarizing, elaborating and defending a central message of the volume: "the unity of humankind is based in the image of God as well as human interconnection with the rest of creation." (p. xvi). Feast for the author is a powerful scriptural image that accounts for human embodied existence exhibiting our common commitment to believing and living life in God.

In sum, highly motivated, exegesis on synonymity of Christian responsibility and humanity. Standard of language and argumentation upper division level. For the untutored, church audiences, and general public, assistance is necessary. The reward will be in the understanding.

Bourekas Film

Rami Kimchi, *Israeli Bourekas Films, Their Origins and Legacy*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2023. 191 pp. ISBN 978-0-253-06341-0 (cloth); ISBN 978-0-253-06342-7 (pb); ISBN 978-0253-06344-1 (ebook)

Rami Kimchi's analytic study of Bourekas films in the Israeli film industry is distinguished by a tri-fold objective. First, Kimchi's text proposes seeing and understanding Bouregas films from a critical, exegetical, comparative view that separates it from other groups of Israeli films. The term "Bourokas films" is derived from a popular Sephardic-Mizrach pastry that has its origins in Turkey; gastronomy aside, film wise, Bourekas was first used by the Israeli director Boaz Davidson to describe his first Bourekas film, *Charlie Vahetsi (Charlie and a Half)*, 1974) as an expression of "Bourekas culture ... the 'primitive,' vulgar culture of Mizrahi immigrants to Israel." (vii) Second, Kimchi acknowledges the significant role played by classical Yiddish writers and contemporary Ashkenazi directors in the composition and production of Bourekas films. He embraces Yiddish language and idioms and Ashkenazi religio-geographical-historical themes from inside and outside the shtetl walls. Yiddish, a Jewish language of medieval Germanic origin, infused with Hebrew, Aramaic, and Slavic words. The *mammaloshn* of millions of Jews from Eastern and Central Europe before World War II and the death camps of Nazi Europe. In the Jewish parlance and beyond, these Jews are called Ashkenazi (s) and Ashkenazim (pl) in contrast to other Jewish geographical designation, e.g., Sephardi/im (Portuguese and Spanish descent), and non-European Mizrachim, who emanate from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. An extensive Yiddish *verderbukh* embraces nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronunciation, stress, and an array of stylistic, orthographic, orthoepic, and geographic variants of Yiddish that forged the *Geistesgeschichte* and identity of the Jewish people living in the *groyser shtot*, *kleiner shtetl*, *davening shtiblekh* in pre-World War II Europe, the immigration tenement neighborhoods in the United States, and the Ashkenazi *'olim* (immigrant-settlers) of the Yishuv (Palestine). Noteworthy is Yiddish bilingualism with Hebrew and a host of Indo-European languages. Minimal cited are words and expressions selected from language, literature, and cultural text. Third, Kimchi's inside knowledge and accomplished writings on Mizrahi culture are intended to evoke recognition of the important impact that Bourekas films play in Israeli cinema and serve as an important Israeli cultural phenomenon

This source work of life, culture, and society of shared history between Mizrachim and their surroundings is properly researched by Rami Kimchi who teaches film and television in the School of Communications at Ariel University, Israel. He writes with fortitude and fairness. Attempts at factual

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history, statistics, focused research, and onsite reporting permeate the six chapters of this illustrated, and intense reader friendly volume. The chapters from the birth of the Bourekas – factually, *Oded the Wanderer* (1933) but acclaimed as *Sallah* (1964) -- to its dearth in the mid-1970s and beyond till today cover history, geography, culture, language, literature, religion, media, food, dress, cinema. Of particular interest is the interweaving of Ashkenazi-Yiddish Diaspora values into Mizrahi Zionist laden themes and lifestyle. Who would expect reference to the three giants of Yiddish literature -- Mendeley Mocher Sefarim, Sholem Aleichem, and Y.L. Peretz -- in the discussion of a low-level Mizrahi *ma`abara*? Commendable, the volume contains primary references and numerous notes related to the culture, history, literature and religion which are commented upon. For the most part, the chapters exhibit historiography, defining origins, group belief and diversity before and after the emergence of Medinat Yisrael. Kimchi's research and discussion represent a wellspring of facts and tidbits of a diverse people who practice different varieties of traditional Jewish beliefs and non-beliefs, bounded by common history, defined by land, and group survival. Helpful to the non-specialist are discussions of relevant belief claims and behavior patterns, and the effect of sacred tradition on the life Mizrachim depicted in Israeli Bourekas comic melodramas. Highly recommended. *Abi Gesunt*.

IV. поздравления (“pozdravlenia”)

A well-earned *yasher koach* to Professor Serge Frolov, Southern Methodist University, who has completed with distinction his two year tenure as President of NAPH. From his natal Russian youth to his Israeli living experience, completion does not mean inactivity. Yisrael ben Yelena and Boris, continue to share and receive. Kudos to Professor Pamela Barmash who completed her tenure as Editor of Hebrew Studies; and we extend a hearty welcome of success to W. David Nelson, the new Editor of HS (2022ff.). Finally, we extend wishes of health and success to our new president, Professor Karen Grumberg, University of Texas at Austin. Lead with determination and perception; all else is *בלגן/בלגאן*.

NAPH Leadership Directory, 2024-25

Karen Grumberg (NAPH President) – **Becomes president 2024-2025**

Esther Raizen (NAPH Executive Vice President)

Pamela Barmash (NAPH Vice President) – **becomes 1st VP 2024-2025**

Ilana Szobel (NAPH Vice President) **NEW VP Nominated at Fall SBL 2023***

W. David Nelson (Editor, Hebrew Studies)

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Karen Grumberg (NAPH International Conference Coordinator)

Nitza Krohn (Editor, Hebrew Higher Education)

Zev Garber (Editor, Iggeret)

Hélène Dallaire (Coordinator, ETA BETA RHO Honors Society)

Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College, garberzw@lavc.edu

V. On the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Do you know that:

1. Israel is neither an imperialist nor colonialist state. It is the only (small) Jewish state in the world.
2. Israel is not occupied Palestine. Palestinians lived there under the rule of Ottoman Turkey, British Mandate and the Kingdom of Jordan, none of which have enabled them to found a state.
3. Israel is not a state of white people. Its population is multi-ethnic. The Jewish population is half European, half Eastern (including 200,000 from Ethiopia).
4. 20% of the Israeli population are Muslim and Christian Arab citizens. They have equal rights and relative to other Muslim countries they have a high standard of life. They are integrated in Israeli industry, medicine, academic research and art. They have separate education systems (elementary and high school).
5. King David was the first to make Jerusalem a capital city. King Solomon was the first to build there a temple to God. The Jewish temple was destroyed in 70 AD. In 705 AD a Muslim Mosque was built on the same place. While under Muslim rule Jerusalem has never been a capital city.
6. Jews lived as a minority in places that to-day belong to Israel since 70 AD to 1948, especially in Jerusalem, Tiberias, Safed and Hebron.
7. Agricultural Zionist settlement began during the 1880s on areas which were bought from Palestinians. Vast areas were bought by private people and by Zionist organizations during the first half of the 20th century.
8. Following WW1 the British mandate ruled the areas which are now Israel, PA and Jordan. Under Arabic pressure, the British limited Jewish immigration, even after the Holocaust.
9. The state of Israel was founded in 1948 on the basis of the UN decision from 1947 and the Balfour declaration from 1917, after about 2000 years when Jews lived as a persecuted minority in European and in Muslim countries .
10. The area of the state of Israel according to the UN 1947 decision was much smaller than it is to-day. It could have stayed like that. However, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq refused to accept this decision. They decided to simultaneously attack the young state of Israel. In a most cruel war, which lasted about two years, the Israel army occupied areas which were not included in the UN plan, including Palestinians villages and towns.
11. 600,000 Palestinians left their houses and fled to Jordan, Syria and the Gaza strip (which then belonged to Egypt). At the same time and during the 1950s and 1960s, 900,000 Jewish refugees from these countries fled to Israel.

12. With good will this situation could have been accepted as a population exchange (in Jordan about 30% percent of the population are local Palestinians). But Muslim countries did not accept these refugees as citizens. They put refugee camps for them and left them to the care of UN and UNRA.

During the period 1970-1971, Jordan aggressively suppressed local attempts to found an independent Palestinian state.

13. In 1967 Israel was simultaneously attacked by Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. In this war, which lasted only 6 days, Israel occupied areas which belonged to Syria, Jordan and Egypt, including what is now PA (part of Jordan before 1967) and areas which belonged to Egypt – the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip. At that time Israel hoped to give them back for peace.

14. In 1979 a peace contract was signed between Israel and Egypt. Israel gave back Sinai Peninsula to Egypt, who refused to take back the Gaza strip, and is still refusing.

15. In 1994 a peace contract was signed between Israel and Jordan. Jordan refused to take back the area which is now PA.

16. On the areas which Israel occupied from Jordan in 1967 and were not returned to Jordan, Israeli settlement began to appear, at first on areas which belonged to Jews before 1948 (Gush Etsion, Hebron) then on Jordanian state lands, side by side with Palestinian villages and towns. No Palestinian village or town was destroyed.

17. Since 1967 Israeli Governments tried again and again to find a solution to the Palestinian wish to have an independent state, with no success. In the meantime, incessant terror acts were committed in Israel by Palestinians, in which many citizens were killed.

18. In 2005 Israel left its rule in the Gaza strip. Successful agricultural settlements, which were founded there, were deserted, and their inhabitants became refugees inside Israel – this was done with the hope that with the financial help that streamed to the Gaza strip it would become a flourishing industrial and touristic pearl.

19. In 2007 Hamas began to rule the Gaza strip. In its Charter the destruction of Israel is a repeated aim. For this aim they used the money which was sent to Gaza by European and Muslim countries. They built a rich and sophisticated underground empire, while the citizens under their rule lived in poverty. For years they shot rockets to the neighboring Israeli agricultural settlements, making their everyday life impossible.

20. From time to time, Israel reacted by bombing from airplanes, always making sure to inform the citizens to evacuate their houses before the action. While Israel does its best to protect its citizens by building a shelter in every house, or if necessary, by evacuating citizens in time of war, Hamas does not show efforts to protect the citizens in Gaza strip. On the contrary – they do not enable them to leave dangerous places and they locate their headquarters in schools, mosques, and hospitals, being sure that Israeli army will not touch them.

21. On October 7th Hamas and Gaza citizens invaded these settlements and committed an unbelievably cruel massacre of hundreds of young people who were enjoying a party, women, babies, old people, torturing the bodies, raping young women and taking more than two hundred hostages, including old men and women in wheel chairs, sick people and babies. This was the opening of Israel's war against Hamas

22. Israel wishes now to end the rule of Hamas in the Gaza strip, whether it will succeed or not – Israel's final aim is to have the right to exist and to live in peace with its neighbors.

23. However, the destruction of the state of Israel has now become a matter of prestige and leadership among some Muslim countries, who encourage Palestinians to fight in the Shahid style, namely the sacredness of the war and the one who was killed for Islam.

24. Israel do not have Shahids. Israel is a shelter country for Jews who suffered in many countries, who survived and want to build new life in a country where they are the majority.
25. The world now needs Muslim leaders who wish to make peace with Israel and to solve together the problem of a Palestinian state in a realistic way.

Publications, Editors' Reports

Hebrew Studies (HS)

Hebrew Studies 2023 Editor's Report

I am pleased to report another industrious and impactful year for *Hebrew Studies*. Based upon the volume and topical range of submissions over the past year, *Hebrew Studies* continues to serve as a vitally appreciated and highly regarded publication venue for a broad, international scholarly community. Additionally, the Journal maintained its central profile and focus on Hebrew language and literature, while also broadening to an appreciable degree its scholarly purview along related trajectories. Finally, the Journal remained committed to fostering and publishing research produced by scholars at all stages of their careers that meets high standards of scholarly rigor.

In addition to a range of articles and book review essays, the forthcoming 2023 volume (LXIV) will be distinguished by a symposium entitled "Reading, Writing, and Ritual: Jewish Books and Manuscripts in Late Antiquity." Arranged and overseen by guest editor, Dr. Laura Lieber (Duke University Smart Family Professor of Jewish Studies; Chair, Department of Religious Studies; Director, Duke Center for Jewish Studies), the symposium, as Prof. Lieber explains in her forthcoming preface, begins with the understanding that:

Perhaps somewhat reflexively, we often use the word "text" as a convenient shorthand, without getting into the weeds of what we mean by the term. The essays assembled in this symposium invite our readers to join a lively and ongoing set of conversations in which assumptions about the nature of texts and textuality are drawn out, undermined, and complicated, and at times unexpectedly affirmed. Taken together, these five pieces explore the nature of "texts," "textuality," and "author," as well as the processes of composition, use, and re-use. They take seriously the ways in which written works can be active in the world and demand engagement despite their inanimate and fixed nature, even as unwritten—oral—works can be surprisingly stable and enduring, for all that they are quite literally embodied. These essays raise questions about directions in which influence can travel and creatively, with genuine curiosity, unsettle conventional assumptions, and engage with the underlying complexity of seemingly straightforward categories such as "canonicity."

As Prof. Lieber explains, the five contributions by Monika Amsler, Jonathan Homrighausen, Laura Lieber, Daniel Picus, and Rebecca Scharbach Wollenberg “truly are the product of a symposium: of a lengthy period of intellectual and social dialogue and exchange, of companionable give-and-take, with everyone learning and everyone teaching. We make cameos in each other’s footnotes—and I suspect we will continue to do so for a long time after this, because this is the kind of collaborative enterprise few scholars (or perhaps I should say few senior scholars) have had after graduate school.”

I express much gratitude to Prof. Lieber for the effort, enthusiasm, and expertise she brought to her oversight of this symposium, as well as to the authors for their engaging and insightful contributions.

I conclude by expressing, as well, deep appreciation and gratitude for the ongoing efforts and excellence of the Journal’s editorial staff and NAPH staff members whose professional expertise supports the Journal’s mission in so many ways: Dorit Lemberger (Associate Editor); Orna Goldman (Managing Editor); Matthew Goldstone, Karen Grumberg, Tania Notarius (Book Review Editors); and, Jared Henson (Associate Director, NAPH). I welcome Prof. Notarius (Department of Hebrew, University of the Free State) to the editorial team as its Biblical Studies Book Review Editor. This past year she replaced Jeremy Hutton, to whom I extend gratitude for his many years of valuable service in this capacity. Prof. Notarius brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm that will serve our shared endeavor very well.

The work of *Hebrew Studies* is a collective endeavor and I am very fortunate to be working in tandem with these colleagues.

Respectfully submitted,

W. David Nelson
Editor, *Hebrew Studies*
wdavidnelson29@gmail.com

Hebrew Higher Education (HHE)

***Hebrew Higher Education Journal* Editor’s Report**

The mission of HHE, the NAPH peer-reviewed journal, is to publish articles of interest to educators in the fields of Hebrew as a second language, modern Hebrew literature and the teaching of Biblical Hebrew.

We also have a book review section, edited by Professor Laura Wiseman of York University. If you are aware of any new books or periodical publications in your area(s) of expertise that you think merit a review,

please contact her at LWiseman@edu.yorku.ca. And should you be willing to write a review yourself, we would of course be delighted!

Each issue also includes tables of contents of other journals of interest to our readership and reports of conferences in areas covered by the journal (you are most welcome to send a report of a conference or workshop you attended).

HHE is on a “rolling publication” schedule, whereby articles and book reviews appear online on the journal site over the course of the year and the publication of each article is announced to NAPH members. Just before the annual NAPH conference, all articles are aggregated into the annual issue. Our 2023 issue, volume 25, is accessible here: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/7idffkcy3awzddn/HHE%2025%20%20final.pdf?dl=0> Submission instructions for articles and book reviews and can be found [HERE](#):

and for further questions, you may contact our managing editor, Ms. Orna Goldman (ornagoldman@yahoo.com).

Nitza Krohn

Editor, HHE, nitzaswork@gmail.com

Meetings and Conferences

NAPH Annual Meeting in Conjunction with AAR-SBL

Minutes of the 2023 NAPH Business Meeting

November 19, 2022, San Antonio, TX

1. Serve Frolov, NAPH President, welcomed all to the business meeting.

After brief introduction, **Serge Frolov** introduced **Jared Henson**, Associate Director, who gave a summary of the following report.

2. Jared Henson: I am happy to report that our membership numbers have climbed from 277 members to 343 from 2022 to 2023. This is a positive development, reversing a steep decline. Much of our membership comes from presenters who participate in our NAPH International Conference in the June of each year, from whom we require membership. This past June we had a great turnout at the Conference, and this correlated with higher membership numbers. This was my expectation, indicated in last year’s report, and I am thankful that this proved to be the case. Our numbers by membership category are as follows, up in all categories:

Regular 221, including 56 who received the Journal (up 35)

Retired 63, including 16 who receive the Journal (up 4)

Student 59, including 5 who receive the Journal (up 27)

Members receiving hard copy journal: 77

Our overall financial position is positive, with continuing income from Individual Membership, Institutional Membership and Royalties from MUSE and JSTOR relating to Hebrew Studies Journal, along with reduced shipping costs related to the Journal. Our account balance has increased over the past year. I anticipate some expenses relating to the website in the coming year as we upgrade from Drupal 7, whose support life concludes at the end of 2024, but I have found a local and competent programmer to work with who gives non-profits a generous hourly rate reduction. We will move to upgrade to the latest Drupal version to ensure we only have to do minimal updates for some time.

Congratulations and thanks to Editor of *Hebrew Studies* journal, **W. David Nelson**, Associate Editor, **Dorit Lemberger (Bar-Ilan)**, and Managing Editor, **Orna Goldman (Rutgers University)**, its Review Editors, **Matthew Goldstone (JTS, Rabbis)**, **Karen Grumberg (UT-Austin, Modern)**, and **Tania Notarius (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, University of the Free State & Polis Institute)** for the upcoming volume of *Hebrew Studies* Journal. The 2023 volume is at press now, so I will be mailing out copies to members who choose to receive a hard-copy in December. **Orna Goldman** has worked very hard to get this latest volume out and deserves our thanks for her hard work.

The 2023 NAPH summer conference was held in-person in June at Tel Aviv University. It was quite successful with lots of positive feedback. Congratulations to Einat Gonen and Dana Olmert, both of Tel Aviv University, for a very well organized conference. They worked very hard to make the conference exceptional. Thanks also to **Karen Grumberg**, Conference Coordinator, for a successful 2023 International Conference program. Karen will issue a full report on the 2023 Conference in the forthcoming *Iggeret*, which will be emailed to members in early December.

In addition to the virtual conference, NAPH held two zoom seminars since we last met, one in November of 2022 and another in March of 2023. These seminars, organized by the co-chairs of the literature section of the conference committee, Dana Olmert (Tel Aviv University) and Ilana Szobel (Brandeis), called “Conversations with Friends (who are also writers)” add to the vibrant activities of our organization.

We continue to receive financial support from Institutional Sponsors, which provides a number of travel grants to advanced doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows. We were able to provide gratis registrations and travel grants to all non-Israeli graduate students in June (Israeli Students did not need a travel grant). These Institutional Memberships, combined royalties from *Hebrew Studies*, along with the registration fees and membership fees paid by the growing number of conference participants, have kept

the Association in sound financial shape. **Esther Raizen**, Executive Vice President, will be sending out requests for Institutional Membership soon. For 2023 we had 24 Institutional Members.

Our conference subcommittees, chaired by **Jonathan Grossman** (Biblical / Post-biblical), **Esther Borochofsky Bar Aba** (Language and Linguistics), **Ruth Ben Yehuda Adler** (Pedagogy), **Ilana Szobel and Dana Olmert** (Modern Hebrew Literature) and **Shiri Goren** (Chair Coordinator), did an exceptional job behind the scenes reviewing abstracts and providing assistance in program planning. Thanks also to **Sarah Baker**, our Conference Information Manager, whose efficient work in organizing and distributing abstracts to committees was and is always invaluable to me. We would like to thank Ilana Szobel and Dana Olmert for their work as Literature Committee co-chairs. They will be handing over the Literature committee to **Neta Stahl, Johns Hopkins University** as chair for 2024. We would also like to thank **Esther Borochofsky Bar-Aba, Tel Aviv University**, for her many years as chair of the Language Committee. She has always gone above and beyond to keep Language and Linguistics sessions top-notch. She has stepped down, and we await a replacement for the Language Committee.

The known schedule of future summer conferences is as follows:

2024: The University of Washinton, Seattle, WA (Hosted by Prof. Naomi Sokoloff)

The new issue of our newsletter, *Iggeret*, will be ready soon, thanks to **Zev Garber's** usual diligent work. We miss his presence here. As always, it will be published online and sent to members by email soon after this meeting. Many thanks to Zev Garber for also arranging the program for the NAPH sessions here at SBL. **Zev Garber** was unable to make it to today's meeting, but we will receive his report in *Iggeret*.

We would like to express our appreciation to **Paul Overland** for his work organizing the NAPH Pedagogy sessions at SBL this year. We appreciate his willingness to take on this role and the enthusiasm he has for Hebrew pedagogy, and we look forward to hearing from him about what is happening in those sessions.

A new volume of *Hebrew Higher Education*, edited by **Nitza Krohn**, and **Orna Goldman**, Managing Editor of *HHE*, was published online in June. **Nitza and Orna** should be recognized for their diligent work in soliciting participation in the journal and continuing to bring quality scholarship to it. They are continually adding articles and reviews in the "rolling publication" format, and have already published a couple of articles, one review and one workshop report on the NAPH website for the 2024 volume. The rolling publication format – releasing articles and reviews as they are published – continues to be working well for *HHE*. You may view the complete 2023 journal (and previous journals) at the NAPH website and read the newly published items that will be included in the 2024 volume.

Lastly, as our by-laws state, we need to elect a new Vice President for 2024-2025. The NAPH Advisory Council for the organization was confirmed for a two-year period (2023-2024), so nothing needs

3. Paul Overland issued a report on the SBL/NAPH Pedagogy Sessions held at the 2023 SBL Annual meeting. One session would explore the creation of a Universal Hebrew Exam.

NAPH Advisory Council 2023-2024

Bill Arnold, Asbury Seminary
John Cook, Asbury Theological Seminary
Hélène Dallaire, Denver Seminary
Tim Finlay, Azusa Pacific Seminary
Michael Fox, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Frederick Greenspahn, Florida Atlantic University
Vivian Johnson, Union Theological Seminary
Kyong-Jin Lee, Fuller Seminary
Jacobus Naudé, University of the Free State of Bloemfontein
Tania Notarius, Hebrew University
Pamela Scalise, Fuller Theological Seminary
Bruce Zuckerman, University of Southern California

Emanuel Allon, Beit Berl College
Shmuel Bolozky, University of Massachusetts
Esther Borochofsky Bar-Aba, Tel Aviv University
Shiri Goren, Yale University
Lev Hakak, UCLA
Sari Havis, University of Denver
Nitza Krohn, Jewish Theological Seminary
Chana Kronfeld, University of California, Berkeley
Shachar Pinsker, University of Michigan
Yigal Schwartz, Ben-Gurion University
Vered Shemtov, Stanford University
Ilana Szobel, Brandeis University

Nominating Committee: Serge Frolov, Zafira Lidovsky Cohen, Marvin Sweeney, Esther Raizen

NAPH 2023 Annual Meeting

P19-326

National Association of Professors of Hebrew

4:00 PM to 6:30 PM

11/19/2023

Room TBD

Imagine Universal Assessment of Proficiency in Biblical Hebrew (Working Group)

This is Year One of a two-year working group. Panelists have committed to strategy sessions in Nov. 2023 and Nov. 2024, with voluntary work assignments during intervening months. While session-visitors are welcome and may offer observations, the ultimate direction and outcomes will be determined by panelists.

Paul Overland, Ashland Theological Seminary, Presiding

Sarah Baker, Duke University, Panelist

Aure Ben-Zvi Goldblum, New York University, Panelist

Randall Buth, Institute for Biblical Languages and Translation, Panelist

Kenneth Cherney, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Panelist

P19-132

National Association of Professors of Hebrew

9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

11/19/2023

Salon F

How to Supply Meaningful, Comprehensible L2 Input for Learners of Biblical Hebrew

A growing number of instructors of Biblical Hebrew are looking to Second Language Acquisition (SLA) to help their learners accelerate language acquisition and extend its retention. Foundational in SLA is the supply of target language (L2) input that is both meaningful and comprehensible. This session will outline the underlying pedagogical theory, then will model actual avenues for L2 input at beginner, intermediate, and advanced learner-levels.

Paul Overland, Ashland Theological Seminary, Presiding

Jennifer E. Noonan, Columbia International University

Comprehensible Input: Theory and Rationale for Biblical Hebrew (30 min)

Tag(s): Pedagogical Theory (Learning & Teaching), Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics))

Break (10 min)

Benjamin Kantor, Cambridge University

First Semester Hebrew: How to Use Conversational L2 Input to Enable Discussion of Hebrew Bible Texts (30 min)

Tag(s): Pedagogical Theory (Learning & Teaching), Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), General Linguistics (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics))

Break (10 min)

Lee Fields, Zondervan Publishing

Second Semester Hebrew: How to Employ Multiple Avenues of L2 Input for "X+1" Acquisition of the Target Language (30 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), General Linguistics (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Pedagogical Theory (Learning & Teaching)

Break (10 min)

Travis West, Western Theological Seminary

Advanced Hebrew: How to Design L2 Input to Facilitate Comprehension of a Biblical Text (30 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Pedagogical Theory (Learning & Teaching), Hebrew Bible / Old Testament / Greek OT (Septuagint) (Biblical Literature - Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Greek OT (Septuagint))

S20-228**Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew**

1:00 PM to 3:30 PM

11/20/2023

Room TBD

Morphology and Etymology

Sophia Pitcher, University of the Free State, Presiding

Roey Schneider, Universität Leipzig

New Etymological Proposals for Biblical Hebrew based on Modern South Arabian (25 min)

Tag(s): General Linguistics (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), General Philology (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Other (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics))

Adina Moshavi, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

From Precursor Action to Negative Polarity Minimizer: Biblical Hebrew shalah yad (25 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), General Linguistics (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), General Philology (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics))

Galia Hatav, University of Florida

Root Naming in Hebrew (25 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Hebrew Bible / Old Testament / Greek OT (Septuagint) (Biblical Literature - Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Greek OT (Septuagint))

Aaron D. Hornkohl, University of Cambridge

Verbal Stem Shift in Ancient Hebrew: The Case of כ"ח 'fill' in the Tiberian and Samaritan Pentateuch and Beyond (25 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Torah/Pentateuch (Biblical Literature - Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Greek OT (Septuagint))

Jonathan Howard, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Wayyēṭē' (Deut 33:21): From Textual Variance to Lexical Uncertainty (25 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Text Criticism (Interpretive Approaches), Torah/Pentateuch - Deuteronomy (Biblical Literature - Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Greek OT (Septuagint))

Benjamin Kantor, University of Cambridge ? Harvard University

The Etymology of סלה (Selah) in Light of the Various Biblical Hebrew Reading Traditions (25 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Prayers, Psalms, and Odes (Early Jewish Literature - Jewish Pseudepigrapha)

S19-227**Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew**

1:00 PM to 3:30 PM

11/19/2023

Room TBD

Semantics and Historical Grammar

Misheck Nyirenda, United Bible Societies, Presiding

David B. Ridge, University of Chicago

The Non-specific Generic Use of the Definite Article in Non-repeated and Non-stereotypical Situations: The Case of "the" Satan in Job 1–2 and Zechariah 3 (30 min)

Tag(s): General Linguistics (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Writings - Job (Biblical Literature - Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Greek OT (Septuagint))

Ambjörn Sjörs, University of Cambridge

Grammatical Collectives in Biblical Hebrew (30 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics))

Paola Mollo, Sapienza Univ. - Pontifical Biblical Institute

Figurative Extension and Grammaticalization Patterns of Posture Verbs in Biblical Hebrew (30 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics))

Richard W. Medina, University of California-Santa Barbara

Dependent Clauses in the Hebrew of Daniel: A Historical Study (30 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Hebrew Bible / Old Testament / Greek OT (Septuagint) (Biblical Literature - Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Greek OT (Septuagint)), Dead Sea Scrolls (Early Jewish Literature - Dead Sea Scrolls)

Emmanuel Mastey, Tel Aviv University

Late Biblical Hebrew and Pre-exilic Hebrew Inscriptions (30 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Inscriptions (Epigraphy & Paleography), Epigraphic Sources (Ancient Near Eastern Literature - Genre)

S18-130

Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew

9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

11/18/2023

302A (Ballroom Level)

Linguistics of Biblical Poetry

Aaron Hornkohl, University of Cambridge, Presiding

John Hobbins, Trinity Lutheran Seminary (Gambella, Ethiopia)

Meter and Rhythm in Ancient Hebrew Poetry: A Close Prosodic Reading of Psalms 34 and 119 (25 min)

Tag(s): General Linguistics (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Hymns, Prayers, and Laments (Ancient Near Eastern Literature - Genre), Wisdom (Ancient Near Eastern Literature - Genre)

Chadd M Feyas, Asbury Theological Seminary

Reevaluating 'Information Structure' Approaches to Word-Order in Biblical Hebrew Verse (25 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Literary Criticism (incl. poetics, new criticism, formalism, close reading, narratology) (Interpretive Approaches)

Hannah Clardy, Cambridge Digital Bible Research

Global Speech Acts in Biblical Hebrew Poetry (25 min)

Tag(s): Writings - Psalms (Biblical Literature - Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Greek OT (Septuagint)), Genre Criticism (Interpretive Approaches)

Kathryn McConaughy Medill, University of Washington

Goal-Marking in Biblical Hebrew Poetry (25 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Hebrew Bible / Old Testament / Greek OT (Septuagint) (Biblical Literature - Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Greek OT (Septuagint))

Rachel Krohn, Trinity College Queensland

Ellipsis as a Syntactic Phenomenon and Poetic Technique in Proverbs 8:22–31 (25 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Writings - Proverbs (Biblical Literature - Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Greek OT (Septuagint))

Elizabeth Robar, Cambridge Digital Bible Research

A Possible Poetic Constraint: Reference Point Movement (25 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew (classical) (Philology / Linguistics (incl. Semiotics)), Writings - Psalms (Biblical Literature - Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Greek OT (Septuagint))

P19-133

National Association of Professors of Hebrew

9:00 AM to 10:30 AM

11/19/2023

Milam

Book Event, Zev Garber and Kenneth Hanson, eds., Teaching the Shoah: Mandate and Momentum (Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2023)

Roberta Sabbath, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Presiding (5 min)

Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College

Teaching Shoah/Holocaust as Historiosophy (30 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew Bible (Ideology & Theology), Pedagogical Theory (Learning & Teaching), History of Judaism (History & Culture)

Kenneth Hanson, University of Central Florida

Technology, Theatrics, and Teaching the Shoah: Bringing Niemöller to Life (30 min)

Tag(s): Hebrew Bible (Ideology & Theology)

Discussion (25 min)

M19-101

National Association of Professors of Hebrew

7:00 AM to 8:45 AM

11/19/2023

Salon E

National Association of Professors of Hebrew Annual Breakfast and Business Meeting

Serge Frolov, Southern Methodist University, Presiding

Report on the 2023 International Conference on Hebrew

Language, Literature, and Culture

Tel Aviv University

June 20-June 22, 2023

The NAPH 40th annual International Conference on Language, Literature, and Culture was held on June 20-June 22, 2023. Chaired by Dana Olmert and Einat Gonen of Tel Aviv University, the conference was supported by the Faculty of Humanities of Tel Aviv University (Department of Hebrew Literature and Department of Hebrew Language) and by NAPH institutional memberships. The conference was attended by over 275 scholars from 6 different countries and featured 199 presentations.

The presentations were offered in concurrent panels throughout the three-day conference, covering diverse topics in modern Hebrew literature and culture (91 presentations); biblical and postbiblical literatures (48 presentations); language and linguistics (29 presentations); Hebrew language instruction (27 presentations) and Hebrew Language Instruction / Language (4). The presentations were grouped into thematic sessions; some were organized by colleagues and others by the conference committee. The literature subcommittee organized a special session on Leah Goldberg as part of Tel Aviv University's Annual Symposium in Memory of Professor Yossef HaEphrati, sponsored by the Department of Hebrew Literature. The session was chaired by Michael Gluzman of Tel Aviv University and included presentations by Anat Weisman (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev), Dina Berdichevsky (Tel Aviv University), and Lilah Netanel (Bar-Ilan University). Another panel organized as part of the Yossef HaEphrati Symposium, on Harold Schimmel, was dedicated to Uzi Shavit, ז"ל. It was chaired by Stephen Katz (Indiana University) and included presentations by Maytal Sohar (Tel Aviv University), Dror Burstein (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), and Michael Gluzman (Tel Aviv University). The conference also included a special evening roundtable discussion on translation to Hebrew from non-European language, chaired and moderated by Almog Behar and featuring prominent translators including Daniel Behar, Orly Noy, Peter Amram, and Marzuk Al'chalabi.

Many thanks to Dana Olmert and Einat Gonen of Tel Aviv University, our host, for working to ensure an intellectually stimulating conference. Particularly in this period of heightened social and political disquiet, the camaraderie and community fostered by the return to an energetic in-person conference were even more meaningful.

The 2023 conference committee included Ruth Ben-Yehuda Adler (Brown University), Shmuel Bolozky (University of Massachusetts Amherst), Esther Borochofsky Bar-Aba (Tel Aviv University), Nurit Buchweitz (Beit Berl College), Guy Ehrlich (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), Einat Gonen (Tel Aviv University), Illan Gonen (Columbia University), Shiri Goren (Yale University), Jonathan Grossman (Bar-Ilan University), Gali Huminer (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), Yitzhak Lewis (Columbia University), Ganit Mayer (New York University), Pnina Shukrun Naggat (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev), Lilach Netanel (Bar-Ilan University), Dana Olmert (Tel Aviv University), Dina Roginsky (Yale University), Na'ama Rokem (University of Chicago), Shira Stav (Ben Gurion University), Dina Stein (University of Haifa), Ilana Szobel (Brandeis University), and Tamar Zewi (University of Haifa). We greatly appreciate their commitment to NAPH and their contributions to the high standards of the conference.

Special thanks to Jared Henson, NAPH Associate Director, for his hard work behind the scenes. His efficiency, clear thinking, and remarkable dedication are crucial to the success of the conference. Thanks also to Sarah Baker, NAPH Information Manager, for her meticulous attention to detail and her contribution to the flow of information.

The continuing support of NAPH's institutional members allowed us to offer generous travel grants to three graduate students this year from outside Israel and gratis registration for 25 Israeli graduate students.

The location of the 2024 conference will be finalized and announced in early Fall. For more information, please visit our website <http://www.naphhebrew.org>

Karen Grumberg
NAPH Conference Coordinator
keren@austin.utexas.edu

NAPH-*Eta Beta Rho* Honor Society Report for 2022-2023

Hélène Dallaire, PhD

National Director of the EBR Honor Society

Standard EBR report for 2022-2023 will be given in conjunction with next year's 2023-2024 national EBR report.

Hélène M. Dallaire, PhD.
EBR National Coordinator, Denver Seminary
Helene.dallaire@denverseminary.edu

News From Our Members

Recent Publications

Ehud Ben Zvi, University of Alberta (em.), “‘Your Gates’—Evoking a Landscape of Fortified Cities in Deuteronomy: Meanings, Implications, and Comparative Considerations with Other Constructions of the Israelite Past”, *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 37 (2023): 17–33; “Matters of Authorship, Authority, and Power from the Perspective of a Historian of the World of Yehudite/Judean Literati”, in: Sonja Ammann, Katharina Pyschny, and Julia Rhyder (eds.), *Authorship and the Hebrew Bible* (FAT 158; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2022), 93–113.

Scott N. Callaham, Institute of Public Theology: “Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit: Rejecting the Sign of the Covenant,” *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 45 (2023): 37-58; 心中音乐 *Songs from the Heart* (Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2023). The latter work is a collection of 41 modern hymns in Chinese, composed during my years in Asia teaching Hebrew through the instructional medium of Chinese.

Michal Fram Cohen, Open University of Israel: "The personal Hebrew letters of the 19th Century *Maskilot* as ego documents", the 3rd International researchers' workshop on the Usage of Ego Documents in Jewish Historical Research, Western Galilee College, 6-7 June 2023 (in English) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhhUJxQjaWU&t=9s>; "Hebrew Classics – By and About Sarah Feiga Foner: The Portrayal of the City of Dvinsk", *Hashiloach* 32 (February 2023): 182-204 (in Hebrew); "From Haskalah to Zionism in two Decades: The Ideological and Literary Turnabout in the Writing of Sarah Feiga Foner, *Hador Hebrew Annual in America* 11-12 (2022): 218-226 (in Hebrew); *The First Hebrew Woman Writer – Sara Feiga Foner née Meinkin* (Tel Aviv: Resling Publishing, 2022) (in Hebrew), 530 pages.

Lee M. Fields, Zondervan Publishing, Hebrew for the Rest of Us, 2nd edition (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2023); Hebrew for the Rest of Us Workbook (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2023). Currently involved in preparing online auxiliary materials for Hebrew for the Rest of Us and in developing graded reading materials for students of Hellenistic Greek that are suitable for students learning in both communicative and grammar-translation courses.

Zev Garber, Los Angeles Valley College (em.): Editor and Contributor with Kenneth Hanson, *Teaching the Shoah; Mandate and Momentum* (Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2023); reviews in CBQ, JES, and AAR Reading Religion. Editor and contributor, IGGRET 95.

Mayer I. Gruber, Professor Emeritus, Ben-Gurion University: Review Essay Concerning Shaul Magid, *The Bible, the Talmud, and the New Testament. Review of Rabbinic Judaism* 25, no. 2 (September 2022), 257-280; “The Salvia Plant and the Menorah Revisited.” *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society*. JANES Special Supplement: : Studies in Honor of David Marcus November 2022) 60-71; Review of Zev Garber and Kenneth Hanson, *The Annotated Passover Haggadah*, in *Reviews in Religion and Theology* 30, issue 2 (April 2023), pp. 46-48.

Jonathan Kaplan, The University of Texas at Austin: *Covenant and the People of God: Essays in Honor of Mark S. Kinzer*. Co-edited with Jennifer M. Rosner and David Rudolph. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2023; “Bat Asher and the Disclosure of Special Knowledge, A Second Temple Interpretive Tradition?” *Jewish Quarterly Review* 113.2 (2023): 191–204; “The Levitical Jubilee as a Utopian Legal Institution.” *Utopian Studies* 33.3 (2022): 495–513; “The Book of Jonah, Non-Israelites, and the Limits of the Covenant.” Pages 91–104 in *Covenant and the People of God: Essays in Honor of Mark S. Kinzer*. Edited by Jonathan Kaplan, Jennifer M. Rosner, and David Rudolph. Pickwick Publications, 2023; “‘Dripping from the Lips of Sleeping Ones’: The Interpretation of the Song of Songs from Tannaitic Literature to the

Reuven Kimelman, Brandeis University: “The Theology and Politics of Idolatry,” *Idolatry: Contemporary Jewish Conversation*, ed. Alon Goshen-Gottstein (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2023): 43-69; “Judaism and the Ethics of War,” *The Cambridge Companion to Religion and War*, ed. Margo Kitts (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2023): 215-240; “Abraham Joshua Heschel, The Jewish Theologian of the 1960s,” review of Julian Zelizer, *Abraham Joshua Heschel: A Life of Radical Amazement*, *Tikkun*, Oct. 4, 2022, <https://www.tikkun.org/abraham-joshua-heschel>.

Paul Overland, Ashland Theological Seminary: *Proverbs*, in *Apollos Old Testament Commentary Series* (London: Apollos / InterVarsity Press, 2022).

Articles on Ladino and Judeo-Spanish are listed below, for the editor's consideration. Editor: *Las Ortografías del Ladino*, La Akademia Nasionala del Ladino en Israel, Nahalieli, Tel Aviv 2021 (Hebrew part: *Ktvey Haladino*) "Ladino Haggadot and an Unknown Prayer in a Haggadah from Sofia", *Ladinar* 12: 2021, pp. 125-144. "Ladino in Cyrillic Letters: The Uniqueness of the Haggadah from Sofia", *Massorot* 21-22: 2022, pp. 289-310 (H) "Laws of Slaughter, Constantinople 1510 (*Hilkhot Shehita in Ladino*)". *Ginze Qedem* 18: 2022, pp. 15-34. (H) with Dov Cohen) "The Puzzle of Rabbinic Identification at the End of Chapter Five in the Ladino Translations of Pirke Avot". *Meldar: Revista internacional de estudios sefardíes* 3: 2022, pp. 137-146. [Núm. 3 \(2022\) | Meldar: Revista internacional de estudios sefardíes \(upo.es\)](#), <https://doi.org/10.46661/meldar.7420> (with Dov Cohen) "Review of *Ladino Here and Now* by Shmuel Refael", *Ladinar* 12: 2021, pp. 35*-40*. "Review of Lutz Edzard and Ofra Tirosh-Becker (editors), *Jewish Languages: Text specimens, grammatical and cultural sketches*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag 2021, 777 pages". *Iyunim besafa vehevra* 16: 2023, pp. 156-162. (Hebrew)

Laura Wiseman, York University, Toronto, Canada: “Love Urgently, Wistfully, Playfully, Sacredly” Canadian Readings of Jewish History: From Knowledge to Interpretive Transmission. Daniel Maoz and Esti Mayer, Eds. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing (2022), 367-406; A review of THE Retrospective Imagination of A. B. Yehoshua by Yael Halevi-Wise. 2021. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press. 206 pp. Hebrew Higher Education 25: 2023. 155-161

Current Research in Progress

Recent Promotions or Change in Position

David E. S. Stein, independent scholar, continues to research the semantics and pragmatics of the noun שִׁיחַ in ancient Hebrew, as manifested in “Linguistic Analysis behind Innovative Renderings of שִׁיחַ in a Newly Published Translation,” paper to be presented to the SBL Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew section, annual meeting in San Antonio, November 18, 2023.

Ora R. Schwarzwald, Professor Emerita, Bar-Ilan University: Member of the Academy of the Hebrew Language, president of the National Ladino Academy in Israel, and academic correspondent of the Spanish Royal Academy. Editor of *Ladinar* 11-12 (2010-2011), 13 (forthcoming).

ETA BETA RHO HONOR SOCIETY

National Scholastic Honor Society for Students of Hebrew Language and Culture

See Report above

Hélène M. Dallaire, EBR National Coordinator, Denver Seminar, Helene.dallaire@denverseminary.edu

National Scholastic Honor Society for Students of Hebrew Language and Culture

(* = inactive or non-responsive)

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|--|
| 1. | <i>Alpha</i> | *Hunter College, Yitzhak Berger (Yitzhak.berger@hunter.cuny.edu) |
| 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, Jeffrey Shandler (shandler@rutgers.edu); Azzan Yadin-Israel (azzan@rutgers.edu) |
| 7. | <i>Eta</i> | Wheaton College, Illinois, Andrew Abernethy (Andrew.abernethy@wheaton.edu) |
| 8. | <i>Theta</i> | *Immanuel School of Religion, Milligan College, Jason Bemby (JABemby@milligan.edu) |
| 9. | <i>Iota</i> | *Lehman College, Zelda Newman, (ZELDA.NEWMAN@lehman.cuny.edu) |
| 10. | <i>Kappa</i> | *Los Angeles Valley College, Zev Garber (zev.garber@juno.com) |
| 11. | <i>Mu</i> | *Western Seminary, Jan Verbruggen (jverbruggen@westernseminary.edu) |
| 12. | <i>Nu</i> | *University of Wisconsin, Jeremy M. Hutton (jmhutton@wisc.edu) |
| 13. | <i>Heh</i> | Cincinnati Christian University and Seminary, Sara Fudge |
| 14. | <i>Vav</i> | *Yeshiva University |
| 15. | <i>Zayin</i> | *Florida Christian College |
| 16. | <i>Heth</i> | *Stern College, Ephraim Kanarfogel (kanarfog@yu.edu) |
| 17. | <i>Chi</i> | Indiana University, Steven Katz (katzs@indiana.edu) |

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26. *‘Ayin* University of Arizona, J. Edward Wright (edwright@email.arizona.edu)
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(shorr@brandeis.edu)
28. *Tsadeh* Washington University, St Louis, Pamela Barmash (pbarmash@wustl.edu)
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31. *Shin* University of Mary Hardin– Baylor, Tim Crawford (tcrawford@umhb.edu)
32. *Tav* University of Illinois at Urbana, Bruce Rosenstock (brsnstck@illinois.edu)
33. *Yod-aleph* George Washington University, Yaron Peleg (ypeleg@gwu.edu)
34. *Yod-beth* University of Oklahoma, Ori Kritz (okritz@ou.edu)
35. *Yod-gimel* City College, New York, Roy Mittelman
36. *Gimel-dalet-lamed* *Waldorf College
37. *Yod-dalet* University of Kansas, Sari Havis (shavis@ku.edu)
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45. *Kaph-aleph* The Reformed Theological Seminary, DC, Peter Lee (plee@rts.edu)
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47. *Beth-vav* University of the Free State, SA, Cynthia Miller-Naudé
(millerCL@ufs.ac.za)
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