

The Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center for the Study of Women in Judaism

Newsletter no. 15, May 2016, Iyar 5776



***Prof. Judy
Baumel-Schwartz***

Dear Friends,

It is a pleasure to be able to share with you the various activities of the Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center for the Study of Women in Judaism during the past academic year. During this year, the Center has continued its active involvement in cooperative research ventures, has supported national and international conferences, and has been instrumental in promoting academic research on both the graduate level and among upcoming and prominent scholars dealing with various aspects of women in Judaism. As in previous years, this year the Center distributed a large number of student (graduate) grants in addition to the grants given to academic staff dealing with research topics pertaining to women in Judaism. The Heller Center is proud to be able to continue its tradition of furthering and supporting academic scholarship that shed light on the lives and activities of Jewish women in various countries and at different periods in Jewish history. By doing so, we continue our mission of promoting a better understanding of women's lives as connected to different aspects of Jewish life and practice.

As always, we are indebted to Mrs. Fanya Gottesfeld Heller for her support and direction, and see her own experiences as a guiding light for young scholars wishing to explore and document various academic facets of the study of women in Judaism, both today and in the past.

We also wish to thank the Faculty of Jewish Studies at Bar-Ilan University, and particularly the Dean, Prof. Elie Assis, for his continued and enthusiastic support of the Heller Center and its various academic activities.

As in previous years, during the past academic year the Heller Center was active in three areas: Sponsoring Academic Conferences and Symposia, supporting publications dealing with women in Judaism, and

distributing grants for Bar-Ilan Staff and Graduate students who have studied and written about the lives of contemporary Jewish women. These activities, along with plans for the next academic year, are featured in this year's newsletter. Please follow our website for further information.

Wishing you a summer and upcoming year of good health, fulfillment and Jewish growth,

Prof. Judy Baumel-Schwartz, Director

Research Grant Recipients:

Dr. Rivka Tuval-Mashiach



Dr. Rivka Tuval-Mashiach is a clinical psychologist and senior lecturer in the Psychology Department at Bar-Ilan University. She serves as a senior member of the steering committee of the Department's clinic and is in charge of the clinic's conferences and special activities. For the last ten years she has held a joint appointment in the Graduate Program for Gender Studies, where she teaches courses on the subject of women's psychology and mental health. She received the 'Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center for the Study of Women in Judaism' Grant on her study of "Between Anxiety and Ethos: Israeli mothers' coping with the enlistment of their firstborn sons to combat military service".

Despite the centrality of military service in the lives of Israeli young adults, little is known about this service's impact on the psychological and emotional wellbeing of the soldiers' parents in general, and mothers in particular. The current research wishes to explore the junction between the Israeli cultural ethos, which stresses the importance of the military, and the anticipatory anxiety that this service evokes.

Based on the literature, it is assumed that the tension between the two may lead to a conflict, and it is the aim of this study to explore whether in fact this conflict exists, and if so, how it is experienced, expressed and coped with. Specifically, using a mixed method design we will interview

50 Israeli Jewish mothers of combat and non-combat soldiers shortly before they enlisted, and six months in to their service. Mothers will be interviewed using an open-ended narrative approach, about their feelings, thoughts, and attitudes towards their sons' upcoming enlistment. In addition, they will fill out questionnaires to evaluate their stress and Post Traumatic stress symptoms.

In the pilot stage, which was already conducted, interviews were analyzed using a model for narrative analysis. As anticipated, the participants expressed a deep conflict between on the one hand the support they had for their sons' military service and their identification with the need for a strong army, and on the other their emotional reactions, which included anxiety, restlessness, guilt, and symptoms of secondary traumatization. Most mothers, however, described an adequate level of coping. The findings shed light on the tension between the collective construal of the ethos of military service in Israel, and the solitary, many times lonely, coping of the individual mothers.

Prof. Adam Ferziger



***Prof. Adam S. Ferziger** teaches in the Israel and Golda Koschitzky Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry. He is the incumbent of the S. R. Hirsch Chair for Research of the Torah with Derekh Erez Movement and a Senior Associate of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. Prof. Ferziger received a 'Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center for the Study of Women in Judaism' translation grant for his study of American Modern Orthodoxy's attitude towards feminism as seen in his article "Feminism and Heresy: The Construction of a Jewish Metanarrative".*

The connection of women with heresy and deviance has a long history within religious traditions throughout the world. Our discussion uncovers a new chapter in this convention, by highlighting the efforts of a prominent rabbinical authority to reject attempts at upgrading the public religious roles available to women.

The legal or “halakhic” position that he expounds is not unto itself exceptional. What is *sui generis*, rather, is his construction for polemical purposes of a “metanarrative of Jewish heresy” in which a historical chain that begins with the Sadducees in ancient times and extends to contemporary Orthodox Jewish feminism is linked through the common complaint of rabbinic discrimination against women.

By describing the context from which this teleological understanding emerged and analyzing its characteristics, this study offers a new perspective on the role that feminism is playing in the development of American Orthodox Judaism. More broadly, it serves as a case study for how the rise of feminism within contemporary religious life has engendered original theological responses and strategies not only among its supporters and ideologues, but among the “guardians” of the various religious traditions as well.

Outstanding Graduate Student Prize Recipients:

Ayala Friedman



Ayala Friedman is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Literature of the Jewish People at Bar-Ilan University. She is writing her dissertation under the supervision of Prof. Rela Kushelevsky on the topic of *"Matchmaking Biblical Figures in the Midrash: Intertextuality and Reading Processes"*.

My thesis deals with rabbinic homilies found in the Talmud and in the early Amoraic Midrash concerning novel relationships between Biblical figures-marriage, betrothal, divorce or extramarital intercourse - both in cases where these relationships were not mentioned at all in the Bible and where known relationships were merely refashioned by the Rabbis. Examples of such relationships are the matches made between Rahab and

Joshua, and between Caleb and Miriam, about which the Bible tells us nothing preceding the Rabbis' account, and the coupling of Abraham and Hagar, which is mentioned in the Bible but altered by the Rabbis who bring Hagar back from expulsion as Keturah.

The thesis expands the ranks of these relationships, and the variety of homiletical representations of these relationships in rabbinic literature, which range between non-narrative homilies and fully developed stories, and it discusses this phenomenon and its significance in literary terms.

In this thesis I make use of theories from the field of narrative poetry and specifically their implementation in the analysis of homiletic narrative, hermeneutic theories that focus on the reader, intertextual and dialogic reading theories, and of historical and anthropological studies of marital relationships and gender in the Tannaitic and Amoraic periods, in order to facilitate understanding of the cultural context in which these homilies were created.

The thesis includes a conceptual and thematic investigation of the Rabbis' worldview on various issues as it is expressed in the reconstruction of the family stories of the Biblical figures. It shows that understanding the new or refashioned relationships in the homilies makes it possible to perceive the ways the Rabbis read the Bible and see how they react to certain familial aspects that are absent from the Biblical narrative, or which contradict, in a literal reading, the Rabbis' worldview.

These aspects are expressed in the narrative homilies and they are connected, for example, to the importance of the structure of marital relationships in personal and national perpetuation, the importance of joining families of good pedigree in the Jewish nation, and the Rabbinic belief that illegitimate relations damage the offspring.

In terms of homiletic ways of reading, the thesis deals with common homiletic devices, such as imparting identity and biography to women who are anonymous in the Bible. In terms of the response to what is said in the Bible, the thesis examines how the Rabbis filled gaps by creative interpretation of the Bible, and granted, for instance, a husband and children to women in the Bible who saved lives, and identified the spouse and children of figures whose relationship status was unclear or damaged in the Bible.

In effect, the thesis explores how the Rabbis told the Biblical story, and how they evaluated the figures in it.

Shani Babay



Shani Babay is a doctoral candidate in the Naftal-Yaffe Department of Talmud at Bar-Ilan University. She is writing her dissertation under the supervision of Prof. Jeffrey Wolff on the topic of "Yemenite Jewish Marriage and Matrimonial Law, in light of the 'Misawwadeh' (and parallels in other Halakhic Traditions)".

My research is about “Yemenite Jewish Marriage and Matrimonial Law, in light of the “Misawwadeh” (and in light of parallel developments in other *halakhic* traditions)”. This study examines the development of the *halakhic* decisions of the Yemenite Jews regarding Jewish marriage and matrimonial law, as reflected in the two volumes of the Sana’a rabbinical court records from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, known in Arabic as the *misawwadeh* (مَسَوْدَة), and comparing them with *halakhic* traditions from around the Jewish world over the generations. As part of the study, I examine central issues in the world of the Jewish woman in Yemen, and the changes that occurred after the emigration to the Land of Israel.

The study is comprised of five chapters:

The first chapter discusses divorce. Studying cases of divorce recorded in the Misawwadeh casts light on the attitude towards divorce, reasons for divorce, and its frequency among the Jews of Yemen, and we will compare the situation there to that in Ashkenaz and Spain, particularly with a comparison to the decree of Rabbenu Gershom (that was not accepted in Yemen) that forbade divorcing a woman against her will. I will also cite from travelers to Yemen – Rabbi Jacob Saphir who visited Yemen in 1859, and Samuel Yavnieli who visited during 1911-1912, who were given the impression that couples were getting divorced there with relative ease. In light of my study, it would seem that the

phenomenon of easy divorce was more common in the villages, and less in the large cities, and I will examine the reasons for this, while referring to women's status.

The second chapter is about the law of a rebellious wife and the question of forcing the husband to give a *get* (Jewish divorce) because she claims that “he disgusts me”. I will discuss here two issues regarding what was prevalent in Yemen, as opposed to other Jewish communities: (1) the relative ease of divorce in Yemen; (2) the law of the rebellious wife and forcing a *get* on a husband whose wife refuses to have marital relations with him, since she claims that he is disgusting to her.

The third chapter is on the issue of levirate marriage and *halitza*. I will show in my research that levirate marriage was the preferred choice for the Yemenite Jews. Regarding this, I will discuss the issue of “temporary marriage” that was instituted in southern Yemen. The communities there preferred temporary levirate marriage to *halitza*. Meaning, the Jews had a custom of performing levirate marriage for a limited time and then divorcing, because of the influence of kabbalistic sources that warn that someone who carries out *halitza* will be harmed. I would add that there were exceptional cases in Israel where couples of Yemenite origin were permitted to perform levirate marriage.

The fourth chapter discusses polygamy. The ban of Rabbenu Gershom that prohibits marrying two women distinguished Ashkenazi Jews from Jews of Sephardic origin and from the Islamic countries regarding this matter. On this issue, I will analyze queries sent by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Hacoen Kook to the rabbis of Yemen during 1911-1912, and the response of the scholars of the rabbinical court in Sana'a to these questions. At the end of the chapter, I will discuss the changes that have taken place regarding this issue since the emigration to the Land of Israel.

The fifth chapter examines the matter of marriage of minor girls. As I will demonstrate, minor girls married in all Jewish communities from ancient times. I will focus on the Misawwadeh records that describe cases of marriages of a minor that were performed in the presence of her father, and whose agreement to the marriage was required by Torah law and registered in the Jewish court. To complement the material in the Misawwadeh, I will examine the factors that led to the phenomenon and it becoming widespread. For example, the Orphans' Decree in Yemen that was one of the harshest decrees against the Yemenite Jews in their

exile, that demanded that orphans below the age of adolescence should be forcibly converted to Islam. It appears that this decree was not the only reason for marriages of minor girls, and we will also discuss the additional social and economic conditions that led to the spread of this practice. Likewise, I will discuss the declarations of the sages of Sana'a who sometimes came out against the practice of child marriage. We will also examine the responsa of the sages who were asked regarding child marriage and the girls' rights to refuse marital relations. At the end of the chapter, we will discuss the situation among the Yemenite Jews in the Land of Israel after their immigration, following the Chief Rabbinate's ruling on the issue.

In conclusion, the study will focus on an analysis of Jewish Marriage and Matrimonial Law as it appears in the two volumes of the Misawwadeh – and from which we can learn a great deal about the status of women in Yemen. Alongside this pioneering work, I will also publish new documents from private and public collections that complement the study and the topics it discusses.

Hadas Naiman



Hadas Naiman is writing her M.A. Thesis in the Bible Department at Bar-Ilan University under the supervision of Prof. Amos Frisch on the topic of "Peshat and Drash in the formation of the Image of Sarah from Bereishit (Genesis) to Bereishit Raba".

Sarah the Matriarch stands out as an exceptional woman cited in the Pentateuch. She is mentioned by name in eleven different scenes in the book of Genesis. Among the episodes of the Abraham Cycle over half the incidents concern her, and in the majority of these she is the focal point. Even in those incidents where Abraham plays the main role, clear

conclusions can be drawn about her character. As a woman, her presence and role in so many Biblical stories is outstanding and extraordinary. On the other hand, the discretion between her various appearances and her notable silence raises wonder. She is quoted only three times in three scenes in the Book of Genesis.

The review of Sarah's personality in Rabbinic Literature and her appearance in different Midrashic works rises above other women in both quantity and scope. Because it would be practically impossible to cover all the Midrashic Literature, this thesis will deal with Sarah's character in Genesis Rabbah only. This Aggadic Midrash has been chosen due to its relative early historical position and its extensive content portraying Sarah: a total of 53 Drashot, more than 30 of which mention her directly. In 24 Drashot she is directly characterized by the Sage or through a description by other characters in the Biblical Narrative. Other Drashot depict her character indirectly, through the completion of discrepancies in the Biblical scenes, creation of dialogues and monologues, a description of her relationships with Abraham, and even her becoming of a Prototype for the nation of Israel. Many of the Drashot are redundant. About 20 repeat themselves in Genesis Rabbah itself and 33 in other Aggadic writings. For twelve of them, there are exact parallels found in the Babylonian Talmud and Jerusalemite Talmud.

The main questions at the center of the discussion are the following:
How is Sarah's character portrayed in the Biblical Narrative and what is the main personage that arises from the different scenes? Are there any consistent exegetical methods used by the sages in designing her character in Genesis Rabbah? To what extent is the Midrashic view of Sarah's character a result of exegetical motives, or of exegetical questions arising from the Biblical text? How much is it a reflection of the Sages' philosophical perceptions, of the status of women in their society, of their desire to educate their followers to a certain social order, or of controversy with other religions?

The study will be conducted in six stages:

1. Close reading of each Biblical scene that includes Sarah and an evaluation of her character in its entirety.
2. Accumulation of the Drashot in Genesis Rabbah that deal with Sarah, and their analyses.

3. Careful study of the exegetical association between each of the Drashot to the Biblical text.
4. Comparison between the character-portrayal of Sarah in the Midrash as opposed to the scriptures, in each of the stories.
5. Classification of the methods of character portrayal in the different Drashot: Direct characterization through the narrator or other characters, or through the external appearance of the character; indirect characterization through the words or actions of the character itself, use of parallel characterization such as through objects or metaphors, comparison to other characters, use of femininity on the whole, and the evolution of Sarah as the prototype of the Jewish nation.
6. Searching for the common thread among the Drashot that characterize Sarah within all the methods mentioned above.

Yossi Erel



***Yossi Erel** is a doctoral candidate in the Bible Department at Bar-Ilan University. He is writing his dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Jonathan Jacobs on the topic of "The Rambam's Approach Towards Women as Reflected in his Commentary to the Torah".*

The Ramban is one of the greatest classical Biblical commentators, as well as one of the most important commentators on the Talmud, halachic experts and social leaders of the 13th century Spanish-Jewish community. My analysis of his commentary to the Torah reveals that the Ramban displays a very positive and sympathetic attitude towards women and their needs.

Chapter One of my doctoral dissertation is devoted towards the attitude displayed by the Ramban towards women who were sexually harassed or assaulted. The Ramban exhibits a great deal of empathy and compassion

to women who are victims of rape and to women who are harassed or molested sexually, even if the crime is not as severe as actual rape. This attitude is especially clear in his commentary to the story of Dinah's rape (Genesis 34), in which the Ramban strenuously rejects the opinion that Dina was partially to blame, or that she enjoyed being raped. Similarly, the Ramban condemns Lot's offer to the men of Sodom to rape his daughters (Genesis 19:8). The Ramban also judges Abram harshly in Genesis 13, in regards to offering Sarai to Pharaoh. In regard to the laws of the seducer and the rapist in Deuteronomy, the Ramban squarely places the burden of responsibility on the man, not the woman; in a similar fashion, the Ramban shows great compassion concerning the beautiful captive woman (Deuteronomy 21).

Chapter Two will be devoted to the Ramban's sensitivity and emphasis on marital fidelity, love and intimacy. This is demonstrated in his commentary to Genesis 2 (in which the emotional bond between man and woman is emphasized); the relationships between Jacob and Rachel, and between Abraham and Sarah; and the conjugal rights of the Hebrew maidservant (Exodus 21:10).

My dissertation will also focus on the historical context of Jewish life in the Kingdom of Aragon during the reign of the Ramban's contemporary, King Jaime I; his court was known for its sexual permissiveness, which the Ramban did not want to affect Jewish society.

Although the academic researcher must be careful not to allow his personal views to influence his research, I do believe that my research will show that the Ramban's attitude and insights have great relevance for contemporary Jewish and Israeli society. His educational approach can counterbalance both the excessive permissiveness of some segments of society, as well as the excessive conservatism of other segments.

Tirza Markowitz



***Tirza Markowitz** is a doctoral candidate at the Israel and Golda Koschitzky Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry, Bar-Ilan University. She is writing her dissertation under the supervision of Prof. Moshe Rosman on the topic of "The Construction of Jewish Life in Ego-Documents Written by Orthodox Women Shoah Survivors in Israel".*

In my research I will analyze the unique characteristics seen in the description of Jewish life as it appears in memorial volumes written by female orthodox Jewish Holocaust survivors, who live or lived in Israel.

The research analyzes different aspects of the survivors memories of Jewish life before, during and immediately after the Holocaust, and their presentation in the memorial volumes: the importance of Judaism and gender in these memories, the religious, gender related and nationalistic values stressed or deleted in the written records, and whether any common denominator can be found among various groups of women studied according to country of origin, family or religious background, experiences during the Holocaust, religious affiliation at the time of writing, socio-economic status in Israel and various other parameters as emerge during the research.

I plan to investigate the centrality of the religious experience in the lives of these women, presuming that the religious experience was an important factor in the rebuilding and reinforcement of post-Holocaust orthodox society, and in light of the centrality of women in the orthodox family unit.

In order to increase the scope and depth of this research I used a wide variety of memorial volumes: different family backgrounds and countries of origin – western , central and eastern Europe; differing wartime experiences – foreign occupation, ghettos, camps, exile, disguised identity, monasteries and partisan groups; differing religious affiliation

before and after the Holocaust and at the time of writing. My research includes approximately 40 memorial volumes.

Osnat Elgom-Mizrahi



Osnat Elgom-Mizrahi is a doctoral candidate in the Gender Program at Bar-Ilan University. She is writing her thesis equivalent under the supervision of Prof. Sylvia Fogiel-Biajoui about "Finding Meaning to Pregnancy Loss or the Death of a Newborn among Jewish women in Israel".

The phenomenon of pregnancy loss occurs in 10% -20% of pregnancies and is discussed in the research literature in relation to termination of pregnancy, which might happen at different stages of pregnancy and under different circumstances, including a miscarriage, an abortion of a desirable pregnancy (due to various medical reasons such as fetal abnormalities), or Stillbirth - in which a baby, from 22nd week of pregnancy or later, is born dead. According to the literature, on the personal level, the loss may lead to and be followed by responses of mourning, along with feelings of shock caused to a personal set of beliefs, meanings and worldviews among women who experience it.

From a social aspect, pregnancy loss may be considered a 'transparent' event, because it is associated with a very personal experience. This kind of loss also constitutes a liminal state of transition between social statuses – relating to both - the woman who 'was about to be' a mother, and the fetus who 'was about to be' a person, but was not yet accepted into any social community, and therefore it is unclear whether what happened was an 'event of death' or maybe a mere 'non-event'. It is to be added that in many societies, there are no publicly regulated customs of mourning following a loss of a newborn or a stillbirth. This is the case in the Israeli society, for example, since according to Jewish law a dead

fetus or dead newborn (under 30 days after birth) is defined as if it was miscarried, after whom there is no Shiva sitting.

Therefore, it is common among women who lost a pregnancy or experienced stillbirth, to report lack of acceptance of social legitimacy to their mourning, and a gap between their feelings and the reactions that tend to minimize the incident. In light of this gap, and with the understanding that meanings and identities are formed and shaped as the outcome of negotiation and a complex meeting occurring between 'personal' and 'social' facets, this study aims to trace the meanings that Jewish women in Israel attribute to their experience of pregnancy loss or stillbirth, with reference to the social context in which these experiences take place.

In Israeli society, which glorifies the role of the woman as a mother and as a wife, an event such pregnancy loss, may bear unique meaning such as a 'failure' in fulfilling the maternal role and as a failure to implement the social expectations that accompany it. Thus, examining the significance of pregnancy loss in Israel, as experienced by the women themselves, with reference to their coping within their surrounding social circles and their religious affiliation, has a unique ability to put under the spotlight and illuminate in a unique way the complexity that exists in the relationship between 'Individual' and 'public' regarding this issue.

Method of study: The study used a qualitative research methodology, which aims to bring the voices of the women participating in the study.

The study population consisted of 21 women who define themselves as religious or non-religious, who have experienced the loss of a pregnancy in different stages of pregnancy and under various circumstances. The research tool to be selected was a semi-structured interview. In order to obtain a thorough picture of the phenomenon under study, we used two methods of data analysis: categorical-thematic analysis, and holistic analysis. The methodological ultra-framework used to structure the research questions was derived from the narrative approach to study of identity and meaning. According to this approach, the events of trauma and loss may be a major focus that results in destabilizing meaning among individuals, and requires coping that is associated with structuring new meaning to the event and to life (Niemeyer, 2001).

The findings illustrate the need for women who have experienced pregnancy loss to search for meaning and explanation of the event. The

women reported feelings of pain and guilt, as well as shattering of assumptions that they had before the loss, regarding the world as a justice place. Another example of this process is that of religious women who have experienced pregnancy loss, and reported feelings of destabilization of their religious faith in The Creator that is believed to benefit His worshipers. In addition, the study participants testified ongoing processes of mourning, similar in their characteristics to dealing with other cases of loss.

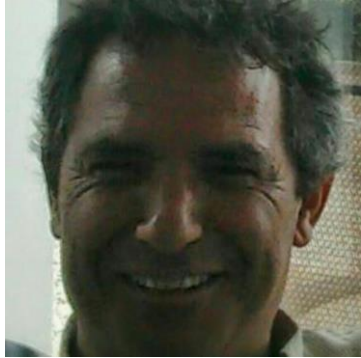
Moreover, many women have demonstrated the need for attributing special meaning to a 'ambiguous' event that lacked any social or cultural recognition by the various circles of their environment. Accordingly, the loss event of 'the one who was supposed to be born', created ambiguousness and personal vacuum, which the women filled using different and unique ways to serve for the purpose of remembrance. Subsequently, the women made use of the **event of loss in itself** for the purpose of structuring a new meaning to it by causing it to be attended. Accordingly, they undermined and interfered in the social discourse that belittled the loss that they had experienced, while adopting personal rituals, imparting human and meaning to the fetus as a "child who died" and to themselves as "mothers who lost a baby."

However, the processes of structuring meaning to an ambiguous event such as pregnancy loss, do not exist in a vacuum. They occur while conducting ongoing personal and social negotiations. The findings revealed that women who experienced pregnancy loss, attribute much significance to the value of motherhood and fertility in their lives, and emphasize the need to become pregnant again and give birth in order to establish their maternal identity and be 're-accepted' into the group of 'mothers' in society. By that they adopt main parts of the social and cultural discourse in which they live, as the importance of motherhood is concerned, and at the same time they undermine these parts of the social discourse that belittle the value of their loss.

The findings also highlight the importance of granting special meaning to the events of bereavement and loss, for the purpose of coping. However, as evidenced by many women participating in the current study, the dynamic pain caused by the loss is always present and accompanies them over the years. It is not 'deleted' or 'corrected' even after the birth of a new child. These findings support the approach of "ongoing connections" used in processes of loss and bereavement, which sees the mourning as a circular and ongoing process. Another finding relates to the need of

raising awareness among medical staff to the phenomenon of pregnancy loss, by adopting a sensitive treatment approach which fits the personal and cultural needs of women who have experienced this loss.

Yaakov Lichtman



***Yaakov Lichtman** is writing his M.A. thesis in the Bible Department at Bar-Ilan University under the supervision of Dr. Yael Shemesh on the topic of "Father-Daughter Relationships in the Biblical Narrative".*

Biblical daughters are more of the children of their fathers than of their mothers. Moreover, unlike their male counterparts who are described as having an array of conflicting allegiances to their fathers – like Jacob's sons and David's sons – the repertoire of the biblical daughters is limited. Biblical daughters are liminal creatures who live in an uncertain space, neither in their fathers' house nor outside it.

Yet, the father's responsibility for his daughter's demise is often obscure and ambiguous, as is the patriarchal system that places the daughters out of power and status. The biblical daughters' main purpose is to bear children, hopefully sons. Their goal within the patriarchal system is to build the connection between two father households through marriage. In my essay I explored three different father-daughter stories:

1. The story of Lot and his two daughters – Genesis 19, 1-8. 30-38.
2. The story of Caleb and his daughter Achsah – Judges 1, 11-15.
3. The story of Jephthah and his nameless daughter – Judges 11, 34-40.

Through these stories emerged three different types of fathers:

1. The victimizing father – Lot, the father who was willing to hand his virgin daughters to the mob who circled his house in order to save his visitors.
2. The nourishing providing father – Caleb, who gave Achsah, his daughter, a land and two pools of water.
3. The victim and victimizing father – Jephthah, the father who could not retract from his vow to God, sacrificed his nameless virgin daughter, and by doing so, his own house was eliminated, as she was his only child.

Michal Fram Cohen



Michal Fram-Cohen is a doctoral candidate in Department of Literature of the Jewish People at Bar-Ilan University. She is writing her dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Moshe Goultshin on the topic of "Sarah Feiga Foner née Meinkin (1854-1937): The First Hebrew Woman Writer".

This research offers poetic, historic, linguistic, and gender-oriented analysis of the fictional and culture-retaining literature written by Sarah Feiga Foner née Meinkin at the turn of the Twentieth Century. The research seeks to complete a missing link in the historiography of Modern Hebrew Literature – a link that connects the Hebrew writing of enlightened Jewish women in Nineteenth Century Europe to women's Hebrew writing in early Twentieth Century Europe and pre-State Israel; a link that connects the poetry of Rachel Morpurgo (1790-1871) and the translations of Miriam Markel-Mosessohn (1841-1920) to the stories of Chava Shapira (1878-1943), Dvora Baron (1887-1956), Hemda Ben-Yehuda (1873-1951) and others.

Providing this link is intended to complete a horizon of creativity and culture that apparently eluded the scholars of Hebrew Literature: the

contribution of Foner Meinkin's fiction to Modern Hebrew literary writing done by women.

The questions addressed in this research are: how can Foner Meinkin's work be attributed to the various schools of Modern Hebrew Literature (Enlightenment, Revival, or Modernism) as far as its language, genre, or cultural criticism? How does each of her works comply with the norms of the Hebrew fiction of her time or depart from them as a result of her being a women writer? How does Foner Meinkin attach herself, knowingly or not, to the literary and extra-literary processes around her – to her being a part of the national enterprise of reviving the Hebrew language and its literature on one hand, and to her being a groundbreaking woman writing in Hebrew on the other hand? In what way and to what extent does the reception of her works from their publication to the present day reflect the marginalization of her writing as a result of its departure from the hegemonic masculine literary norms, as well as the developing insight among literary scholars of her uniqueness as a woman writer?

Limor Raubach



***Limor Raubach** is doctoral candidate in the Department of Literature of the Jewish People at Bar-Ilan University. She is writing her dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Rachel Albeck-Gidron about "The term "Female Anticipation" and its implementation in Leah Goldberg and Ruth Almog's poetics".*

The study provides a new term in the field of gender studies in literature, the term "Female Anticipation". The starting point of the study is that at the heart of the anticipation stands the awaiter's perception of time.

The research works of feminist waves which began in the late sixties in various fields, especially those tied to the "second wave" of feminism, raised awareness of the fact that women's perception of time is different

from that of men. One of the questions at the center of the debate regarding gender perception of time, was whether this change arises from essential differences, or whether it comes from differences in social background, in other words, the differences between man's and woman's perception of time comes from different social roles assigned by society to each sex.

As a first step, the study will lay a systematic definition of the term "Female Anticipation" and subsequently, I will examine the term using the tools of literary studies, both in theme and format categories. My aim is to show that in literary and semi-literary texts describing women waiting, certain qualities characterizing the anticipation experienced by women can be isolated, which do not apply to anticipation experienced by men in similar texts. These findings and characteristics will be applied in my work in the texts of two Hebrew writers. One is a diaristic text by the writer and poet Leah Goldberg in addition to texts in which waiting is an integral part of the work as well as the works of the writer Ruth Almog.

Oralit Nachshon



***Oralit Nachshon** is writing her M.A. thesis in the Bible Department at Bar-Ilan University under the supervision of Dr. Jonathan Jacobs on the topic of "Tamar, Rahab and Ruth – Three Women and the Common Thread Between Them".*

When we start looking into the Biblical tales we will find that most of them are manned by men, of whose status in a social, economic, religious, judicial and governmental statuses are higher and greater than women's.

Most of the Biblical laws themselves do not seem to have gender equality, and put the women at a more inferior legal stance from a man. From a low starting point such as this women have managed to establish their underground ruling, to make fatal decisions and execute them

wisely. When we speak about foreign and gentile women who are not in their natural place, we get to know even greater appreciation to their enterprise.

Following Biblical tales about gentile women, led me to finding common ground for the three of them: Tamar, Rahab and Ruth. According to my review, other gentile women mentioned in the Bible neither fit the model proposed in this study, nor meet the very literary character's characteristics representing the three.

This study deals with three Biblical female characters: Tamar, Rahab and Ruth. The study examines how their hidden dominance - which alters their lives significantly, while satisfies their yearning and passion for life – is reflected. This study is aiming to present a basic model which can fit the three women, while two issues are in the background: the first is the status of the Biblical women, and the second is the Biblical attitude to the gentile women. The study looks into the status of the Biblical women as reflected in the three characters, as well as into the Biblical gentile women as manifested by the three.

The core of this study is the model which presents a gentile woman of a non-Israelite origin, who reveals a behavioral pattern reflecting traits of cleverness, initiative, courage and resourcefulness. The woman takes actions that break social and gender conventions, and sees family values and her own well-being, while ultimately becomes part of the Israelite people. Gentile Tamar and Ruth became the mothers of heroes and great men; About Rahab it is said: "... and she dwelt in the midst of Israel, unto this day..." (Joshua 6:25).

The study incorporated characters analysis in order to reveal the character design which fits the proposed model. The study investigates the nature of the characters' traits through textual analysis that includes special attention to literary devices, character's speech, the conversation in the story and the actions performed by the characters described in the three stories, specifically those of Tamar, Rahab and Ruth. The conclusion of the study is that the three characters carried out extraordinary acts with respect to their gender, ethnic and social status, in order to achieve their purpose of family values.

Tair Karzi-Pressler



Tair Karzi-Pressler is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Bar-Ilan University. She is writing her dissertation under the supervision of Prof. Orna Sasson-Levy and Prof. Edna Lomsky-Feder on the topic of "Phenomenology of Power Among Women in the Military and Public Sector in Israel".

What significance does the experience of having power play in the personal narratives of women in positions of power in different organizations? How does the organizational context shape the women's experience of having power? How do women from different societal groups perceive having power? These questions stand at the heart of the current study, which researches the experiences of women in mid-ranking positions of power in the military and various government ministries in Israel.

Despite the close connection between gender and power, only a few studies have dealt with the phenomenology of power among women. Most of the theoretical and empirical attention has remained focused for the most part on social processes that create gender inequality in access to power both at the macro-societal level and at the organizational level (Kanter 1977; Acker 2006; Ridgeway 2001; Eagly & Karau 2002). Moreover, traditionally, power has been understood and measured mostly by the influence of the wielders of power on others and not their influence on themselves. Outdated feminist theories related to power and the use of it in a monolithic manner as a sort of array of ideal types and not as a complex network one experiences, understands and acts within (Allen 1998; Elshtain 1985; Peterson & Runyan 1999). In this study, I intend to propose a phenomenological and structural analysis that examines the inner realms of work organizations and their power structures from the subjective perspectives and experiences of women in positions of power.

The research began with my Master's thesis, which analyzed the connection between women and power. On the basis of interviews with women junior officers in the IDF who talked about their experiences in retrospect (10 to 20 years after their discharge), having power was very significant in their narratives and an experience that they continued to relate to with great emotional intensity. Having power over others generated dual emotions which ranged from empowerment, enjoyment and pride in the wielding of such power to self-criticism, guilt and shame over the way in which they wielded it.

Specifically, I analyzed the interviewees' shame in political-gendered concepts, as a socio-cultural mechanism to regulate and normalize gender expectations. Shame was a response to a perceived crossing of gender boundaries (Ridgeway & Correll 2004): As young women at the beginning of their professional careers, they wielded the power reserved for men in a military organization, using a harsh and masculine command model, which was inimical to them. From this prior study, I have extracted two main additional factors to research: the organizational connection and the career stage.

While this first study focused on young women in the military, it must be asked - do women in civilian organizations also feel ashamed when wielding power? Do high-ranking women in the military continue to feel ambivalent? What other emotions develop while wielding power?

The purpose of my doctoral thesis is to delve deeper into gendered power experiences by comparing subjective perceptions of power in two different settings: The military and the civilian/public sector. Comparing the military organization to government ministries in the public sector will allow for comparative study of the way in which configurations of patriarchy cause women to cope with the varying rules of the game regarding power, which then call for different coping strategies and gendered ideologies. While the hyper-masculine military organization will always generate findings, examining power perceptions in public sector institutions, where the declared policy is gender blindness, could reveal hidden gendered criteria in organizations today. In addition, in order to learn about the nature and measure of influence differing work environments have on perceptions of power, I will also examine women at different stages of their careers as well as life stages. I propose to compare a group of younger junior officers to a group of older and more senior officers.

For the first time, this study connects three main knowledge bases to uniquely describe and analyze women's experiences handling power: power and organizations from a gendered perspective (Acker 2006; Eagly & Carli 2007, Calas et al. 2014), the cultural debate concerning women and power (Danacher et al. 2002; Lakoff 2003; Sjoberg & Gentry 2007), and the politics of emotion (Ahmad 2004; Warner 1999; Lutz & Abu-Lughod 1990). Relying on these knowledge bases, I contend that three dimensions mainly shape women's experiences with power: the organizational-structural, the cultural and the subjective.

I will use qualitative research methodology from an interpretive-phenomenological approach (Shkedy 2003; Berg 1998; Geertz 1990) influenced by feminist theory (Stanley & Wise 1990; De Vault 1990). The study is based on the analysis of 80 women in three groups: managers in middle management in government ministries, mid-ranked career officers (major-colonel) and women who served as junior officers (lieutenant-captain) during their mandatory service (the group that I researched in my MA thesis).

My research offers an applied contribution to reducing gender inequality, a unique empirical tracing of the experience of women, significant theoretical contributions to the sociological study of the military, emotions, and organizations, and a meta-disciplinary contribution to questions of comparison, all through a qualitative study of the experiences of women who manage military and public sector institutions in Israel.

Hagit Reichart



***Hagit Reichart** is doctoral candidate in the Department of Literature of the Jewish People at Bar-Ilan University. She is writing her dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Vered Tohar about "A Diachronic View of Hagar's Expulsion".*

This study will examine the design of the biblical character Hagar in Hebrew poetry and prose, as depicted in a diachronic series including fifty versions. The study is based on a comparative analysis, utilizing thematological methodology.

The thematic series analyzed in the study is based on Gen. 21:8-21. According to the Biblical narrative, Sarah decided to banish Hagar and Ismael from her home, with Abraham's consent. After the banishment, Hagar and Ismael wander through the desert, face a life-threatening situation, and are miraculously rescued. The story has been repeated in numerous contexts and versions ever since, for myriad purposes.

The Biblical text poses difficult moral questions regarding the justification for banishing Hagar, and the responsibility for the repercussions of this action. Countless adaptors, commentators, and authors have attempted to offer a response throughout the generations, by reformulating the narrative in correlation with their ideological and poetic worldview. Isolating Hagar from the full narrative emphasizes the distinctions between emotional, cultural, and ideological worlds of various interpreters.

The introduction discusses the design of the Biblical narrative in general, and the Hagar narrative in particular, while emphasizing the thematological methodology as a tool for the analysis of narrative series spanning multiple versions in Jewish culture. A chronological survey of the versions is offered, and each version is described while considering time, location, and unique features in relation to the Biblical narrative.

The second chapter examines various theories and approaches relating to character design in narrative poetics. Hagar's character is analyzed as a primary character in the versions, series, in correlation with three dominant interpretive designs, classified in three possible categories: Hagar as a victim of social norms; Hagar as an insightful stranger; and Hagar as the recipient of a miracle.

The third chapter discusses the design of the other characters in the narrative: Abraham, Sarah, and Ismael. The accountability of each of these personalities has been offered numerous interpretations and justifications throughout the generations, offering various illuminations of Hagar's character: Was Abraham righteous or sinful? Was Sarah insightful or jealous? Was Ismael a dangerous threat, or a brother deserving equal rights?

Debating the versions of the narrative reveals the consciousness of various authors, which is conveyed in the decision to emphasize or omit various elements from the original plot, in order to express the needs of the interpreter and express his or her worldview. At times a version of the story inadvertently reveals more than the author might have intended.

The interpretive debate at the conclusion of the study discusses the overt purpose (*telos*) and underlying messages (deep patterns) reflected in various versions of the narrative. These include, among others, divine providence and fear of the stranger, who poses a physical and spiritual danger to the Nation of Israel, while focusing on Hagar as the representative of the "Other" in culture and gender, according to Simone de Beauvoir's quintessential "Other" theory, supported by similar positions of various scholars.

Miriam Kosman



***Miriam Kosman** is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Jewish Thought at Bar-Ilan University. She is writing her dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Hanoch Ben-Pazi on the topic of "A Gendered Reading of the Maharal".*

The Maharal is well known for the form/matter paradigm which he uses to describe the male/female dynamic. Despite a few positive statements about women, and about man's need for women sprinkled throughout his work, his view of the female may seem to some beyond retrieve. The Maharal uses the female as metaphor for the secondary, the subordinate and as the embodiment of physicality which ideally one should transcend. While form is active, and male, matter is passive, and female. The male represents independent, superior reason, whereas the female represents changeable, mutable emotion. She is both in need of being ruled and recalcitrant to that rule: she symbolizes both deprivation and depravity.

The main question of my research is whether the feminine in the writings of the Maharal can be redeemed through a more nuanced, feminist reading of the text. Beyond the obvious lower hierarchical status he grants to the feminine in the form/matter dyadic, can viewing the traits he deems feminine-- in other contexts-- reveal a different pattern?

I hope to show that by championing a particular kind of being, knowing and interacting, Maharal often essentially favors the specifically feminine, particularly in places where he does not address the issue of male and female directly. By devaluing the bias free, impartial, autonomous, self-sufficient, transcendent creature of reason which defines the male prototype and championing the receptive, immanent, intertwined, responsive and embodied receiver —the female prototype— as ontologically superior, Maharal surprisingly reverses the negative feminine thematic by recasting it as the human ideal.

My method includes mining "women centered" or 'difference' feminist thought for an understanding of and delineation of the particularly feminine. I use the term "women centered" feminist thought to describe a wide swath of thinkers, who represent diverse voices, and disparate views, yet, all of whom approach the concept of the "feminine" critically and, to varying degrees see the moral and philosophical ramifications of bringing the "feminine" into sharp focus. The focus of these thinkers on what distinguishes the particularly feminine, brings to light subtleties and nuances of feminine traits, values and virtues and this clarity helps to unveil the Maharal's idealizing the feminine in unexpected contexts.

It is my hope that the value of this research will not only contribute to a deeper understanding of the Maharal but will broaden the perspective of later thinkers who relied on Maharal's writing, (examples include Rav Kook, and Hasidism) who even while assigning positive value to feminine traits, essentially saw the feminine as inferior and secondary. In addition, through opening the text to Maharal's elevation of the female prototype as an ideal for humanity in a number of places, I hope to contribute to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the feminine persona in Jewish thought.

Elisheva Federman



Elisheva Federman is an MA student in the Translation Department at Bar-Ilan University. She is receiving a prize for a paper she has written about "The Women of Hebron and their Impact upon the City's Jewish Settlement".

Hebron was occupied by the Israeli army in 1967. Since the murderous events of 1929 Hebron was abandoned by its Jewish residents but in 1967, with the entry of the Israeli army, the city returned to Jewish control. Yet, it was governed by the army with all the ramifications of an army regime.

Immediately after returning to Hebron, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion called to bring back the Jews to settle the city. But all requests to populate the city with Jews were declined by Moshe Dayan who was the Defense Minister at the time.

As time passed, many attempts were made to reconstitute Jewish life in Hebron. This is why the 'Park' hotel was rented from its owners by a Jewish group which was led by Rabbi Levinger. Soon after that, a sales counter was placed next to the 'The tomb of the patriarchs'. A few years later, Prof. Tavger conducted a struggle on behalf of excavating and rebuilding the old Jewish synagogue - 'Avraham Avinu' - which was deserted since the 1929 massacre.

Women took a significant part in the attempts for the renewal of Jewish presence in the city. In one of those attempts which took place in March 1979, a group of women started the Jewish settlement in the 'Hadassah' site in the heart of the city of Hebron. The 'Hadassah' facility used to be a hospital serving all people, Jewish and Muslim until the 1929 riots. The group of women, with their little children, entered the facility in the middle of the night, without a permit from the authorities, and refused to leave the place when asked to. Prime Minister Menachem Begin, did not order to take the women and children by the use of force, but he ordered

the army to surround the place and not let anyone in - including the husbands and fathers of those who were in the building.

The women held strong under harsh conditions until May 1980 when permission was granted to reunite the families and let the husbands in. With this permission, the Jewish settlement in Hebron was officially established.

Another example for a woman's struggle for Hebron is Sarah Nachshon's struggle to bring her baby son to burial in the old Jewish cemetery in the city. In the winter of 1975 he died from a sudden infant death syndrome. Sarah decided to bury him in Hebron, but the Defense Minister gave an order not to allow the burial in Hebron and sent troops to stop the funeral procession. Sarah Nachshon made it clear that no one will stop her from burying her son in Hebron, and she took the little body which was wrapped in a prayer shawl, and started walking with her dead son in her arms towards the old Jewish cemetery of Hebron. Shortly after that, permission was granted to continue the funeral ceremony and bury the baby in Hebron.

These are only a few of many examples of women's participation and efforts in the struggle to bring back Jewish life to Hebron throughout the years.

My study attempts to combine the field of my studies, which is language study and translation and the study of Jewish history of our time. It seems that numerous women, who took part in the efforts to reestablish the Jewish community of Hebron, came from an Anglo-Saxon background.

My research deals with the participation of women in the struggles of the Jewish community of Hebron, the way they were perceived by men and by themselves, in the light of the fact that they were part of the Orthodox Jewish world. Furthermore, I will investigate whether their Anglo-Saxon background influenced their choice to become active, sometimes more than the men, in the struggle to bring the Jews back to Hebron.

I will base my research on the following resources:

1. Original source materials: letters which were written in English by those women to their families abroad in which they describe their struggles and hardships from the female and personal point of view. This original material was never before investigated or

published. I will use skills which I acquire in the department of investigating and translating Hebrew and English.

2. Archival materials: the archive of the Jewish community of Hebron has a variety of material which focuses on the struggle to reestablish Jewish presence in Hebron. This includes: articles, testimonies, tapes, newspapers and videos that were not yet published.
3. Interviews: for my study, I will interview some of the women who took leading parts in the struggles that I mentioned. I will focus on the Anglo-Saxon women, and I will try to establish the extent of any connection between their acts and their culture and backgrounds.

Pictures from the May 9, 2016 prizegiving ceremony



**Prof. Judy Baumel-Schwartz addressing
The Prizewinners Ceremony**



**Ayala Friedman Receiving the Fanya
Gottesfeld Heller Outstanding Graduate
Student Prize**



**Prize Winner Elisheva Federman
Speaking About her Research Project**



Hadas Naiman Receiving the Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Outstanding Graduate Student Prize



Prize Winner Limor Raubach Speaking about her Research Project



Hagit Reichart Receiving the Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Outstanding Graduate Student Prize



**Prize Winner Michal Fram Cohen
Speaking about her Research Project**



**Oralit Nachshon Receiving the
Fanya Gottesfeld Heller
Outstanding Graduate Student Prize**



**Prize Winner Osnat Elgom-Mizrahi
Speaking About her Research Project**



**Dr. Rivka Tuval-Mashiach Receiving
The Fanya Gottesfeld Heller
Research Grant**



**Prize Winner Tair Karzi-Pressler
Speaking about her Research Project**



**Shani Babay Receiving the Fanya
Gottesfeld Heller Outstanding
Graduate Student Prize**



**Prize Winner Yossi Erel Speaking
about his Research Project**



**Prize Winner Tirza Markowitz
Speaking about her Research Project**



Group Picture of the 2016 Prize and Grant Winners

Co-Production of Academic Publications:

The Fanya Gottesfeld-Heller Center has traditionally supported the publication of books dealing with different aspects of Jewish women's lives, or those focusing on women and Judaism. Some of this support is given as research, translation or publishing grants to individual scholars. At other times it translates into co-producing academic publications with other research institutes or publishing houses. During the 2015-2016 academic year the Center entered into a co-operative venture, together with Peter Lang International Publishers (Switzerland) of publishing an academic study focusing on the immigration of young Jewish women to the United States during the Great Wave of Immigration (1881-1914) through the story of a young Jewish girl who immigrated to America on her own at age fifteen. The book, written by Center Director, Judith Baumel-Schwartz, is entitled ***My Name is Freida Sima: The American-Jewish Women's Immigrant Experience Through the Eyes of a Young Girl from the Bukovina***. It will be published in 2017.

Academic Conferences and Symposia:

On December 31 2016 the *Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center* co-sponsored a symposium entitled "Women's Rights: Religious, Education, Legal Aspects or Maybe Political?" together with The Faculty of Social Sciences, the School of Education, Josef Burg Chair in Education for Human Values, Tolerance and Peace, the UNESCO chair for Human Rights, Democracy, Peace and Tolerance, and the Council of Women's Organizations in Israel. Prof. Hannah Herzog delivered the Keynote Lecture about "Women's Rights: Legal, Religious, and Educational Aspects". Speakers at the Conference included Prof. Rina Lapidus, Prof. Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, Rabbi Dr. Shlomo Riskin, Prof. Zehavit Gross, Mrs. Mazal Renford, Dr. Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder, Dr. Janan Fridgi-Falah, Dr. Simcha Gathun, Mrs. Gila Oshrat, Prof. Rivka Lazovsky, Mrs. Leora Minka, MK Dr. Aliza Lavie, MK Rachel Azaria, and MK Shuli Moalem-Refaeli.

On March 9, 2016 the *Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center* co-sponsored a symposium entitled "Women in the Religious Zionist Movement: Past, Present, and Future" together with the Institute for the Study of Religious

Zionism and The Joseph Orgler Chair for the Study of Religious Zionism. Speakers included Prof. Dov Schwartz, Prof. Yossi Katz, Prof. Zehavit Gross, Dr. Deganit Boni-Davidi, Ms. Na'ama Teitelbaum-Kari, Dr. Udi Abramowitz, Dr. Rachel Levmore, Dr. Dina Zimmerman, Ms. Michal Printz, MK Dr. Aliza Lavie, MK Shuli Moalem-Refaeli, MK Orit Strook, Ms. Leah Shakdiel,

On March 31, 2016 the *Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center* co-sponsored the Second Annual Conference of the Israeli Society for Comparative Education and particularly the session on Gender and Feminist Discourse among Religious Women (Jewish and Arab) in Israel – A Comparison. Together with the Rector's Office, the Vice Rector's Office, the Faculty of Social Sciences, the School of Education, the UNESCO chair for Human Rights, Democracy, Peace and Tolerance and the Sal Van Gelder Institute for Holocaust Instruction and Research. The Keynote speaker was Prof. Carlos Alberto Torres who spoke about "The Dialectics of the Global and the Local in Comparative Education". Other speakers included Dr. Halleli Pinson, Mor Zehavi, Sami Atar, Zahurit Dadon Golan, Prof. Adam Lipstein, Dr. Yariv Feniger, Mirit Yisraeli, Itai Pollack, Dr. Aliza Sigal, Islam Abu-Assad, Hanita Hadad, Dr. Min Chang, Prof. Clara Sabag, Prof. Nora Rasch, Prof. Edna Lomsky-Feder, Dr. Debby Goldin, Dr. Lauren Ardich, Dr. Sveta Roberman, Dr. Yosefa Taviv-Halif, Dr. Zvi Beckerman, Dr. Merav Bin-Nun, Dr. Asaf Meshulam, Dr. Bob Mark, Dr. Julia Reznick, Nahum Balas, David Ma'agan, Dr. Noga Magen Nagar, Erez Zablevsky, Dr. Orly Shapira-Leschinsky, Prof. Zehavit Gross, Dr. Yossi Klein, Rudeina Badir, Samahar Altori, Aviva Elmo, Prof. Yaakov Iram, Avi Hami, Dr. Najawa Saada, Lilach Greenfield-Yona, Hila Goren, Dr. Miri Yemini, Alexandra Polip, Ravit Mizrachi-Stellman, Gili Drori,

Cooperation with other Centers both inside and outside Bar-Ilan University:

The *Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center* continued its tradition of cooperating activities with other centers and institutes both inside and outside the university. The Center is planning three joint conferences next year, the first in cooperation with the Institute for Religious Zionism at Bar-Ilan University and two additional conferences to be held in cooperation with the School of Education. Several meetings have been

held between the Center's Director, Prof. Judy Baumel-Schwartz and Prof. Dov Schwartz, Head of the Institute for the Study of Religious Zionism to begin planning future conferences. Similar meetings have been held with Prof. Zehavit Gross of the School of Education at Bar-Ilan University and incumbent of the UNESCO Chair for Human Rights, Democracy, Peace and Tolerance at the University about possible conference topics. Conferences are scheduled to be held in early 2017.

The Center continues its cooperation with the Israel and Golda Koschitsky Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry Department at Bar-Ilan University and with other university institutes and programs connected with the study of women in Judaism.

In addition to these two conferences we plan to continue the tradition of student prizes, research grants, publication and travel grants, and support for translation of scholarly articles dealing with women in Judaism.

Staff



Yitzhak Pass, a graduate student at the Israel and Golda Koschitzky Department of Jewish History at Bar-Ilan University, continues to admirably coordinate the administration of the *Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center for the Study of Women in Judaism*. Mr. Pass has been instrumental in smoothly ensuring the day-to-day running of the Center, acting as liason with other Institutes and Departments inside the university in terms of both the co-sponsored symposia and conferences. He is a pivotal figure at the prize-giving ceremony, coordinating the participants and cooperating Departments, and ensuring a successful reception before the ceremony began.

Updates on our conferences and programs will appear on our website:

We hope that you will be able to join us for all the activities that we will host this year. For further information about conferences and fellowship opportunities:

<http://www.hellercenterforjewishwomen.org/>