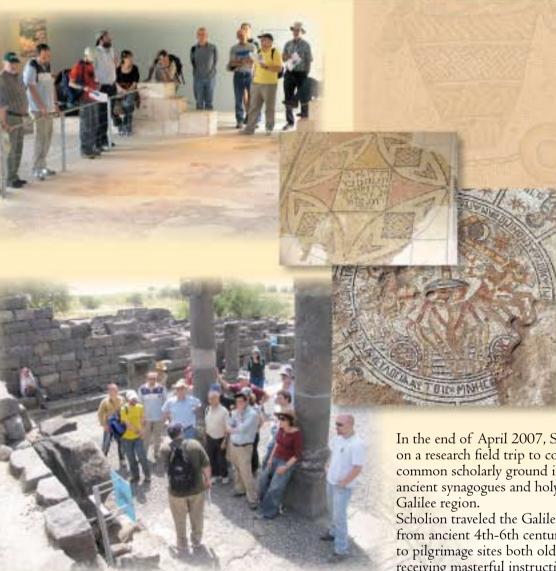


### Scholion Takes to the Field



In the end of April 2007, Scholion went on a research field trip to cover and discover common scholarly ground in and about the ancient synagogues and holy places of the

Scholion traveled the Galilee for two days from ancient 4th-6th century synagogues to pilgrimage sites both old and new, receiving masterful instruction on all matters: architectural, artistic, sociological

and anthropological. Architectural and artistic phenomena were meticulously expounded by Prof. Zeev Weiss from the Religions of Place and Religions of Community research group, while Prof. Yoram Bilu from the Ascending and Descending research group took up the many socio-anthropological aspects of the creation of new holy sites in the Galilee.

One of the highlights of the trip was the visit to the Sepphoris synagogue. This early-fifth-century CE synagogue - one of several synagogues standing in this multifaceted city according to Talmudic literature - represents the first-known synagogue building in a dense urban setting. "The synagogue's architecture is not of a particularly high quality and its plan is rather simple. Nevertheless, it calls into question several of the conclusions reached so far in the study of ancient synagogues", explained Prof. Weiss, Head of the Sepphoris Expedition, who was first to discover the ruins of the synagogue. "The constructions of an elongated building with a single aisle, the

> addition of a narthex with a water cistern in the front of the structure, the lack of the apse typical of Byzantine synagogues, and the direction of prayer not oriented towards Jerusalem are all unusual features that seem to indicate a much more varied basic plan of the ancient synagogue than so far imagined", he added.

"The synagogue's main importance, however, lies in the range of depictions in its mosaic and in their iconographic wealth, since it demonstrates that Jews used to decorate their synagogues with depictions of biblical narratives, especially the message of God's promise to the

Jewish people and the hope for future redemption", emphasized

From Sepphoris the group took off to Mount Meron, one of the sites most strongly associated with pilgrimages and mass gatherings nowadays. There, on location, Prof. Yoram Bilu pointed out how mistaken it would be to think that this phenomenon is purely historical; "Ritual visits to graves are going on before our very eyes, right here, right now," said Bilu. "It's a dynamic process, and it transforms all the time, but it's always there. Take the compound of Rabbi David u-Moshe in Safed, for example. Up to 30 years ago his grave was still in Morocco. Only then was it moved to Israel in a dream", continued Prof Bilu. "The Moroccan immigration to the State of Israel left a particular community emotionally vulnerable

as their chief holy site was left behind. Well, if Muhammad won't come to the mountain, then the mountain must come to Muhammad. A member of the community dreamed that the tomb had travelled from Morocco to Israel in order to answer the needs of the community", he added. "Today the site is a flourishing place of pilgrimage. Why this dream came about when it did, and how it came to be believed and accepted in the community, are both really challenging questions," concluded Prof. Bilu.

On the second day of the trip, Scholion visited the synagogue at Korazim, constructed in the late fourth century or early fifth century C.E. from basalt, the most commonly found stone in the area. One of the most unusual artifacts in the Korazim synagogue is the socalled Cathedra of Moses, a basalt





Domus Galilaeae

armchair with a dedication in Aramaic on its back, which likely was a seat for the important members of the community.

On its way back to Jerusalem, one and a half kilometers away from the ancient ruins of Korazim, the group came across the Domus Galilaeae, a seminar for Christian acolytes built in 1999 on the mount of Beatitudes with the support of pope Paul VI. The seminar serves as a place where Christians have direct contact with the living tradition of Israel, following the footsteps of several Fathers of the Church who returned to their Hebrew roots to better understand the meaning of prayer, feasts, and Hebrew liturgies. The Domus is an attempt made by the Roman Catholic Church to rediscover architectural and iconographic shapes.



Courtesy of the Sepphoris

Expedition, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Photo: G. Laro



# A WARM

# WELCOME

Top: Dr. Yemima Chovav, Dr. David Snyder, Dr. Ya'akov Deutsch, Dr. Benjamin Brown, Dr. Miriam Goldstein, Dr. Hizki Shoham, Dr. Yael Shenker, Dr. Ronnie Goldstein

Scholion's flagship event marked the commencement of the year 2007, as the traditional Mandel Scholarship lecture marathon witnessed ten lectures by ten finalists before the Academic Committee and an attentive audience. Though all who attended walked out feeling noticeably enriched by the caliber of the candidates, only two of the ten could be chosen.

At this year's lecture marathon, the ten candidates addressed topics

that ranged from gender issues, through archaeological findings, to biblical textual analysis, and more. Each presentation faced pointed questions posed by the Academic Committee and distinguished members of the audience. After much deliberation concerning the lectures, and personal interviews conducted with each of the candidates in turn, the Academic Committee finally reached a hardwrought consensus on the two future

Dr. Uzi Leibner. Dr. Amos Goldberg held forth elegantly about the emotional complex at play in contemporary memorialization of the Holocaust, addressing the centrality of witness and testimony in cultural and historical memory.

"One can hardly recall an event in which witness and testimony alike have

become so central to historical and cultural memory that they are perceived as synonymous with it; events in which the witness thereof is elevated to the status of a symbolic paradigm, as in the case of the Holocaust." noted Dr. Goldberg. In his lecture, Dr. Ğoldberg outlined a path towards understanding this phenomenon, by probing the concept of





Dr. Uzi Liebner

Dr. Amos Goldberg

testimony from two angles: testimony as autobiographical text; and its social function. These two "testimonies" appear almost diametrically opposed. Whereas the former embodies the radical dissolution of identity, the latter is key in establishing collective identity. It is this tension that allows the witness to exist as a paradigmatic figure in memory and culture, one who embodies several distinctive characteristics of post-modern reality. Dr. Uzi Leibner presented a fascinating textual and archaeological analysis of the liaison of priestly courses (Mishmarot) with Galilean settlements from the Hasmonean period.

"The liturgical poetry of Eretz Israel from the Byzantine period alludes to the 24 priestly courses outlined in I Chronicles, linking each course with a specific settlement in the Galilee. Nevertheless, it remains to be answered just what significance lies in the correspondence have between priestly courses and Galilean settlements (e.g. geographic, Historic, Nostalgic, mnemonic)?" emphasized Dr. Leibner.

Mandel Scholarships call for a uniquely interdisciplinary bent, and Dr. Leibner answered that call with gusto. Artfully balancing the historian and the archaeologist within him, Dr. Leibner presented a profusion of archaeological findings from the Galilee region upon which he based the discourse on the history that those findings implied. He proved conclusively that the "priestly course settlements" of the list were all of them founded during the Hasmonean period, while many settlements founded in the Roman period of consequence (chiefly Tiberius – the capital of

> the Jewish Galilee) are conspicuously absent therefrom. This would indicate that the list did not reflect a geographic reality of the Hasmonean period, but rather a pungent nostalgia for past Hasmonean glory, further attested to by the pervasive employ of priestly motifs in the Galilee towards the end of Late Antiquity. Scholion is confident that the distinctive research interests and expertise of the new Mandel fellows will significantly enrich the academic and cultural discourse.



#### The Annual Mandel Scholarship Lecture Marathon

Each year Scholion hosts an annual lecture Marathon to determine its Mandel Fellows. About fifty applications for the Mandel scholarships are received every year, and the Academic Committee narrows down the list to seven to ten finalists, of which only two would be chosen for the Mandel post doctoral fellowship.

On the appointed day, the finalists outstanding researchers from Israel and abroad who

have recently received their doctorates - are evaluated based on a brief lecture of his/her thesis and a subsequent personal interview. Following his/her presentation each of the candidates answers pointed questions posed by the committee and the audience. The intellectual diversity of the applicants is evident in the assorted issues addressed at the marathon.



Prof. Israel Yuval, Academic head of Scholion

#### The Mandel Fellows Program

The Mandel Fellows Program offers two teaching and research positions to young, outstanding Ph.D.s in the fields of Jewish society and culture. The positions are awarded to researchers from Israel and abroad who have recently received their doctorates; demonstrated exceptional abilities, conducted original and insightful research in Judaic Studies and whose research may enrich the academic and cultural discourse. The Mandel Scholarship allows its fellows to devote the majority of their time to research.

### SAYING GOODBYE:

#### Scholion has made it a point of tradition to honor its two finishing Mandel Scholars. On June 18, 2007 the entire Scholion family came together to hear the finishing scholars speak about their topic of research one last time. This year the members of Scholion were drawn into the realms of study explored over the last three years by their colleagues Dr. Manuela Consonni and Dr. Tamar Hess. Dr. Consonni, after thanking Scholion and several more people for their support, dove right into Plato's Phaedrus and, holding up the postmodern looking glass to the father of philosophy, she introduced the timeless conflict between the written word and human memory in the context of the Shoah. Her research aims to get beyond the historical narratives pertaining to those troubled times and to address the

# Mandel Scholars Speak Out

minds and memories in which those narratives are embedded and the context in which they are communicated. Second to take the podium was Tamar Hess, who began by expressing her thanks to the

Second to take the podium was Tamar Hess, who began by expressing her thanks to the Scholion Center and said that her three year Fellowship at Scholion was like spending three years "suffused in ointment of myrrh". She then guided the audience through the ambiguities of autobiography,

a literary genre that was entirely overlooked even until nigh on three decades ago. It used to be assumed that literary critique was unnecessary to autobiography, since the work itself was a critique and reflection of sorts. Only in recent times has it become clear that the genre comprises a dynamic interplay of opposites, to wit memory and fiction, faithful record and fiction, filtered, the present self and the self of the past.



Dr. Tamar S. Hess

Dr. Manuela Consonni





#### KNOWLEDGE AND PAIN:

### The Cultural

### Constructions of Suffering

Scholion's sixth research group joined the Center in October. The new group deals with an abstract that transcends bounds of discipline and category. The multiple facets of pain - as cultural event, personal experience, physiological process, and historical phenomenon - and the cross-cultural need to endow it with meaning is shared by the four disparate thought systems that the group plans to address: Judaism, Christianity, sociology, and Medicine. The investigation of pain as a cultural construction and its manifold representations in the past and present indeed presents a unique opportunity and foundation for an interdisciplinary study.

Academic investigation of the history of emotion and its attendant history of sensations is a relatively recent development, gaining momentum over the last decade or so. The subtly elusive nature of such a study invites diverse methodologies in order to ascertain a boundary that might divide primary emotions of a universal nature and their subsequently divergent cultural expressions. It has become apparent, however, that no clear boundary can be drawn. Most cultural historians today would agree that the most we can accomplish is to investigate the culturally constructed expression of feelings and

Unfortunately, the methodologies of investigation in social and physical sciences have become segregated from and contrasted with the practices and disciplines common in the humanities. An interdisciplinary and cross-cultural study of pain presents an opportunity to reunite the disparate discourses and cultures of knowledge around a common theme. Pain therefore presents a rich and fruitful venue where the "Two Cultures" of knowledge might meet around a shared focus. Here is a matchless intellectual opportunity for gathering scholars from various fields — and from the different campuses of the Hebrew University – in order to create a shared dialogue around a notion whose shifting representations appear in all aspects and discourses of human knowledge. It is hoped that the Knowledge and Pain research group will be able to create an intra-university platform to bring together representatives of a plurality of arenas and techniques that both work on and with pain – whether they are practitioners of assuaging or curing it, or experts of cultural and historical practices for representing, imagining or managing it.









#### Interdisciplinary Teamwork

Scholion hosts three concurrent research groups, each dealing with a particular topic in the field of Jewish Studies. Each group comprises four senior and four junior researchers, along with assistant research students from the Hebrew University. Scholars from outside the Hebrew University are also invited to participate. The group as a whole explores its topic making the most of the diverse methodologies and perspectives that each member brings from his/her discipline. It is firmly believed that this collaborative approach yields research both more original and more insightful. Potential groups submit their research proposals around the start of the academic year. The Scholion Academic committee, consisting of high-standing academics from Israel and abroad, discusses the merits of each proposal from an interdisciplinary perspective and judges each on its potential contribution to the field of Jewish Studies. The group that is finally chosen by the Committee is invited to join the Center the

following October, in lieu of its graduating predecessor that just completed its third year. Upon concluding its research, each group is responsible to publish a book in which they unfurl the academic headway that they made under the auspices of Scholion.





### Between Tradition and Novelty



**Church of Annunciation** 

Professors Michael Heyd, Immanuel Etkes, Tamar El-Or and Baruch Schwartz, along with junior members Shlomo Tikochinsky, Avi Lifshitz, Michal Kravel-Tovi and Asaph Ben Tov, focused most of their academic attention on the local scene. In the attempt to map the polar attraction that exists between tradition and novelty in religious education they applied diverse methodologies from the humanities and the social sciences. This approach was manifested in the two concluding events of the group.

In order to better familiarize themselves with the educational institutions in Israel the group organized a research field trip to study educational establishments of the Christian and Muslim communities in the Galilee. The focus of the two day trip, a joint venture with the Interreligious Coordinating Counsel in Israel (ICCI), was the encounter between religious education and

the modern world.
On the first day of the trip the group visited the Atid Al-Ahlia high school and the Islamic College in Umm-El-Fahem, as well as the Al-Qasami academic college of education in Baqa-El-Garbia, the only recognized Arab higher education Institute in Israel.

"It seems as though Muslim educators are far more at ease with the tension between tradition and modernity, while orthodox and ultra-orthodox Jewish groups in Israel regard the educational process as the core of their religious formation" said Tikochinsky. "The traditional circles of the Jewish society, in which religion played a major role up until modern times, such as the family and the community, were weakened. Therefore the Yeshiva as an educational establishment was left alone to play in defense of religion and to provide guidance in face of modern challenges", he concluded.

From Baqa-El-Garbia the group took off to the Christian village of Ibillin, to meet the faculty of Mar Elias educational institution. The group was surprised to learn that although Mar Elias is a Church affiliated institute, the school's curriculum barley includes religious activities.

A couple of weeks later, the group called an open concluding conference to take stock of three fruitful years of research. Prof. Michael Heyd opened the conference, recapitulating the group's three years of

scholarly research. He made reference to the group's full title of "Education and Religion: Between Tradition and Novelty", recalling that their research focused on the interplay between those two forces. "Though they appear superficially contradictory, the group found them to be mutually enriching in many ways", said Heyd.

The conference opening session was entirely dedicated to contemporary Israeli society, as Prof. Tamar El-Or dilated on modern religious feminism, followed by her student, Michal Kravel-Tovi, who spoke about the complex interplay between modern pedagogy and orthodox conversion.

The second session touched upon all three of the great Abrahamic religions in the medieval context. Avi Lifshitz examined the discursive methodology of innovation within established tradition, drawing on the Tossafist's development of the art of problem-stating. Guest lecturer, Dr. Daniela Talmon-Heler, addressed parallel themes in medieval Islam, followed by a very broad anthropological view of the social organization of educated elites, Jewish, Muslim and Christian, delivered by Prof. Gadi Algazi from Tel-Aviv University.

The third and fourth sessions were devoted to the Modern Era. Dr. Ben-Tov and Prof. Heyd gave back to back lectures on Teacher-Student relations, such as teacher discipline and student autonomy required by traditional Jewish

and Christian education in the Early Modern Era.

The fourth session was dedicated to religion and education in modern period Jewish society. Prof. Etkes discussed the ways in which Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi perceived himself and functioned as an educator to his *Hassidim*.

Prof. Baruch Schwarz concluded the conference presenting the dynamics of authority and autonomy as expressed in the Havruta of Litvak Yeshivas.

> Prof. Israel Yuval, Prof. Tamar El-Or, Prof. Israel Bartal, Dean of Humanities, Prof. Immanuel Etkes, Ms. Michal Kravel-Tovi, Prof. Michael Heyd





# Strolling Down Collective Memory Lane: the Children of Kfar Ezion

At the end of April 2007 Scholion honored Prof. Amia Leiblich, psychologist, former member of Scholion's first research group (Canon and

Genizah). Prof. Leiblich had just published a book that discuses the ways in which collective memory is maintained in Israeli society. Her work studies a particular group of people who call themselves "the children of Kfar Ezion". They were children during the Israeli War of Independence in 1948 when Kfar Ezion was taken by the Jordanian Legion. Their fathers were killed in action, and they grew up with their mothers, all together at first (at Ratisbonne Monastery in Jerusalem, and later just outside Tel Aviv in Bat Yam), until the families eventually went their separate ways. Even after their separation they nurtured a collective memory, and have maintained their identity to this day as "Children of Kfar Ezion" – they are now around sixty years old. During her term at Scholion, Prof. Leiblich interviewed almost every one of them in order to study the ways in which they maintained their

collective memory (much of it invented). She published her results in a book that has spent some weeks on the Israeli best seller list for nonfiction. "I was working in

Scholion's Canon

and Genizah research group that sought to understand the process of canonization, i.e. how some things are retained in the collective memory and how others get discarded. When two members of this interesting group of individuals, having just returned from an emotionally charged visit to holocaust Poland, contacted me, It seemed the perfect opportunity to see this process in action by inquiring into the collective memory - the canon, if you will - of the children of Kfar Etzion," Recalls Prof. Leiblich. "I must admit that the Scholion

were always there to give there input and lend a hand." she continues. To celebrate the publication of the book, Scholion invited the author along with the heroes to a conference about the making of the book and its impact.

this project happen so fast. I

Among the speakers of the evening were Prof Yehoshua Ben Aryeh, geographer and historian, Prof. Yoram Yovell, a psychologist, and Dr. Vered Vinitzky Seroussi, sociologist and anthropologist, each of whom spoke about the book

from the vantage point of his own area of expertise. The conference was held at the Rabin Building with hundreds in attendance. The evening's guests included most of the interviewees themselves along with their families, for whom the event itself served as yet another intersection in which to cultivate their bond. Also present were various Academics and Media representatives.

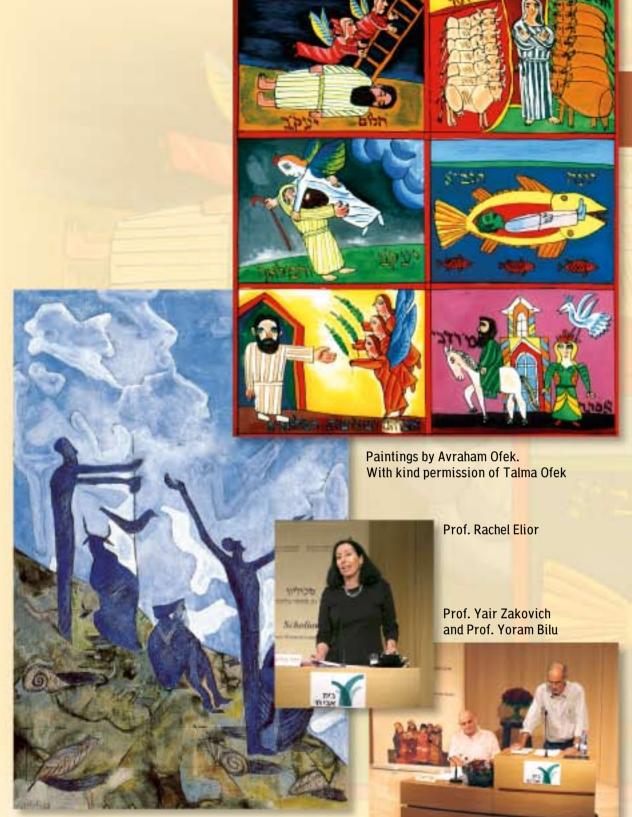


The children of Klar Ezion

ילדי כפר עציון

עמיה ליבליך





### Dispelling Dreams

In early November 2007, the Ascending and Descending group held its annual summary conference under the title "Fleeting Like a Dream: Dreams and their Interpretation in Jewish Tradition". The lectures took place at Beit Avi-Hai in downtown Jerusalem. The broad public appeal of the group's weekly seminar lectures dictated

the group's choice of location for the conference: they wanted it to be accessible to the general lecture-going public.

"It was a dream year for our research group," says Prof. Avigdor Shinan, senior member of the group. "Our seminars, which approached the dream concept from many different angles, was well-attended all year, and a great deal of interdisciplinary territory was covered."

The interdisciplinary territory that Prof. Shinan alluded to is obvious, as the group strove to understand the psychology of the dreamer, i.e. his or her individual religious/mystical experience. This is intimately related to the socio-anthropological study

mystical experience. This is intimately related to the socio-anthropological study of the community's acceptance or disregard of the dreamt message. Not to mention, or course, the religious or theological status of that message, and how it comes to be reflected in ritual observance. The lectures certainly gave voice not only to the interdisciplinary nature of the group's chosen topic of inquiry this past year, but also to its historical scope. Lectures ranged from the Biblical and

Shuli Natan

and beyond.

Half of the November lectures were delivered by guest lecturers from outside the group due to the group's wish to extend the scope

Talmudic tales of dreams, to dreams recorded in Holocaust diaries

and depth of their research as far as possible.

At the end of the day, to festively conclude with the musical aspect of the dream came the singer Shuli Natan up to the stage, and sang old and new songs about dreams while the audience cheerfully joined with applause.

## Khirbet Wadi Hamam Synagogue

Dr. Uzi Leibner, a Mandel Fellow in Scholion and a lecturer in the Institute of Archaeology led an excavation team in Khirbet Wadi Hamam in September this year, and revealed the remains of an ancient synagogue from the Roman-Byzantine era.

The synagogue's design is a good example of the eastern Roman architectural tradition. A unique feature of the synagogue is the design of its mosaic floor, he said.

The synagogue ruins are located at the foot of the Mt. Nitai cliffs overlooking the Sea of Galilee, amidst the remains of a large Jewish village from the Roman-Byzantine period. The first season of excavations there have revealed the northern part of the synagogue, with two rows of benches along the walls. The building is constructed of basalt and chalk stone and made use of elements from an earlier structure on the site.

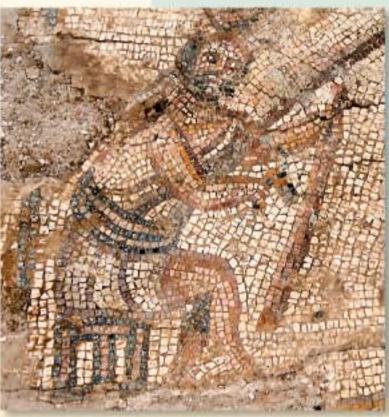
Archaeologists differ among themselves as to which period the ancient Galilean synagogues belong. The generally accepted view is that they can be attributed to the later Roman period (second to fourth centuries C.E.), a time of cultural and political flowering of the Jews of the Galilee. Recently, some researchers have come to believe that these synagogues were built mainly during the Byzantine period (fifth and sixth centuries C.E.), a time in which Christianity rose to power and, it was thought, the Jews suffered from persecution. Dr. Leibner noted that this difference of scholarly opinion has great significance in perhaps redrawing the historical picture of Jews in those ancient times.

The excavators were surprised to find in the eastern aisle of the synagogue a mosaic decoration which to date has no parallels -- not in other synagogues, nor in art in Israel in general from the Roman-Byzantine period. The mosaic is made of tiny stones (four mm. in size) in a variety of colors. The scene depicted is that of a series of woodworkers who are holding various tools of their trade. Near these workers is seen a monumental structure which they are apparently building. According to Dr. Leibner, since Biblical scenes are commonly found in synagogue

art, it is possible that what we see in this case is the building of the Temple, or Noah's ark, or the tower of Babel. The mosaic floor has been removed from the excavation site and its now in the process of restoration.

The archaeologists at the site are also attempting, though their excavations, to gain a clearer picture of rural Jewish village life in Roman-era Galilee. In addition to excavating the synagogue, they also are involved in uncovering residential dwellings and other facilities at the site, such as a sophisticated olive oil press and solidly-built two-story homes.

"There are those who tend to believe that the rural Jewish villagers of that era lived in impoverished houses or in huts and that the magnificent synagogues existed in contrast to the homes that surrounded them," said Dr. Leibner. 'While it is true that the synagogues were built of a quality that exceeded the other structures of the village, the superior quality private dwellings here testify to the impressive economic level of the residents."



Photography: Gabi Laron

Participating in the excavations were students from the Hebrew University Institute of Archaeology, Jewish youth groups from abroad and many other volunteers.

(The article was written by the the Division of Development and Public Relations of the Hebrew University and published in the Hebrew University website.)

### NEWS >>

The Bar Ilan Connection - Prof. Eliott Horowitz from Bar Ilan University joined the Knowledge and Pain research group as a senior researcher this year. Thus far, senior researchers have always hailed exclusively from the Hebrew University. This could open the door to a new framework for future research groups.



The Israeli Association for Byzantine Studies – Four years ago Scholion helped put Byzantium back on the academic map of Jewish studies with its 2003-2006 research group, Byzantium between majority and minority. From this pioneering effort was reborn "The Israeli Association for Byzantine Studies," which convened its first conference at Yad Ben Zvi in Jerusalem, on 13-14 June, 2007.





Junior Researchers Chosen on Merit – This year Scholion decided that junior candidates for research groups will no longer be submitted in the general research group proposal, but will be chosen on merit after a new research group has been settled upon. This process should broaden the candidate base, ensure the excellence of the junior research staff and the relevance of their expertise to the group's research interests. The Knowledge and Pain research group was the first group to have selected its four junior members out of a total of 16 candidate applications.



**Jesus Reads the Gospels** – Prof. Yair Zakovich from the Ascending and Descending research group has recently published a new book - Jesus reads the Gospels - a collection of original poetry inspired by the life of Jesus, with an introduction by his friend and colleague, Prof. Avigdor Shinan.



#### Scholion Hosts non-Scolion Scholars –

A group of students interested in reading Greek texts together requested to be allowed as guests at the Center in order to benefit from the special learning atmosphere that prevails in the Center. Another group of students from the prestigious 'Amirim Program' (Hebrew University's foremost Honors program in the humanities) gather on occasion at Scholion for group learning.

The Carmel quartet, one of Israel's leading classical ensembles, rehearses occasionally at the Center, adding a cultural touch to the center.



Scholion Holds Session at the "Friends of the Hebrew University" Conference - The biannual "Friends of the Hebrew University" conference held in May invited the "dream" experts from Scholion's Ascending and Descending group to lecture before hundreds in attendance. Scholion members and ex-members new capacities:

Prof. Eva Ilouz was made full professor at the Department of Sociology & Anthropology.

Dr. Otniel E. Dror was appointed to the Joel Wilbush Chair in Medical Anthropology.

Dr. Tami Hess became lecturer in the Faculty of Humanities in Hebrew Literature Dept.

Mr. Asaf Ben Tov received his PhD and got the prestigious Rothchild post doctoral fellowship in Germany.







Mr. Asaf Ben Tov

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