



News Update Summer 2006

Conferences/Lectures

Our conference **From the Bezalel National Museum to the Israel Museum - Mordechai Narkiss, the First Curator in Eretz Israel: His Personality and Activities, 1925-1957** was a great success, filling the Artists House in Jerusalem to the brim. Organised by the Society for Jewish Art in cooperation with the Center for Jewish Art, the Artists House, the Israel Museum and the Jerusalem Municipality, it was held on 15-16 May 2006; the programme included greetings by Yigal Zalmona, Chief



Mordechai Narkiss instructing blind youths, 1955

Curator of the Israel Museum; lectures by Israel Museum curators: Yona Fischer, Miriam Apfeldorf, Irit Salmon, Ester Muchawsky-Schnapper, Meira Perry-Lehmann, Stephanie Rachum, Shlomit Steinberg and Ayala Gordon; by Hebrew University scholars: Prof. Bezalel Narkiss, Prof. Shalom Sabar, Ariella Amar, Michal Sternthal, Dr. Simona Gronemann and Dr. Sarit Shalev-Eyni; and by Prof. Katrin

Kogman-Appel of Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Gideon Ofrat of Jerusalem and Nirit Shalev-Khalifa of Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi. The full programme (in Hebrew or in English) can be obtained from the Center.

The conference was successfully chaired by the Center's new Director, Dr. Rina Talgam. More about Rina - in our website www.hum.huji.ac.il/cja

We plan to publish in the near future the papers presented at the conference (in Hebrew).



Dr. Rina Talgam



Ariella Amar gave a lecture entitled “The Journey of the Torah Cases” in a two day seminar on **The Aleppo Community – History and Culture** held in June at the Ben-Zvi Institute in Jerusalem. Ariella’s lecture was based on the Center’s documentation and research carried out in recent years on the Aleppo community in Israel.

Torah Case, Aleppo

The Italian Jewish Museum in Jerusalem, in cooperation with the Society for Jewish Art and other organizations, held a series of meetings on **Communities and Folklore (people, colours, voices, sights) and their connections with the Italian culture**; the events included: In the Deserts of Eritrea (November 2005); Ashkenazim in Italy (December 2005); Dona Gracia’s Sepharad and Italy (December 2005); Memories from Lybia (January 2006).



A coin of Dona Gracia

During June-July 2006 Center’s senior researcher Dr. Sergei Kravtsov delivered two lectures in L’viv under the title “**Synagogues in West Ukraine**”. He also participated in a number of round table discussions dedicated to the culture and history of the Jews in West Ukraine. Our researcher Vladimir Levin gave a course in Odessa on the **History of the Jewish Community of Odessa**, which included a lecture on Synagogue and Religious Life. In Dnepropetrovsk he gave a course on Jewish Politics in Russia at the Beginning of the 20th Century, and in St. Petersburg he held an archival workshop in the Manuscripts Department of the Russian National Library. This activity was organized by **the Moscow Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization “Sefer” and the Chais Center of the Hebrew University.**

Vladimir is scheduled to deliver a lecture in September on: **Russians in Eretz Israel**, as part of a course including lectures and tours organized by Yad Yitzhak Ben Zvi of Jerusalem.

The Index as a Resource

Although not yet on the internet, many scholars, students and laypeople use the vast wealth of material of the Index. The Ariel Company of Jerusalem produced 17 posters in Hebrew and English under the Jerusalem *Haggadah* Project, using material prepared by the Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts Section of the Index. Placed on walls in the Old City of Jerusalem during Pessach, the huge posters presented various *Haggadot* housed in the Israel Museum dating from the end of the 13th to the 18th century.

Two authors intending to produce a book on synagogues around the world, were persuaded by Prof. Aliza Cohen-Mushlin to focus on abandoned synagogues, using our database.



The study of the *Shadai'ot* in the Jewish Museum of Athens has now been completed and sent to the Museum for their use. The Ritual Objects Section is working on a comprehensive study of *Shadai'ot* to be published in the near future.

Shadai plaque with a blessing for a youth, 1769

Guest Researcher at the Center: Dr. Katrin Kessler of *Bet Tfila Research Unit* is a guest researcher at the Center, gathering material in archives in Israel on Berlin synagogues and communities as part of a project supported by the DFG on the synagogues and their communities in Berlin from the 17th century up to 1945.

Last June, Prof. Cohen-Mushlin attended a reception at the home of Dr. Harald Kinderman, German Ambassador to Israel, where she met **Dr. Annette Schavan**,

Minister of Education and Research of the Federal Republic of Germany. Aliza related to the Minister the extraordinary cooperation between the Center and the University of Braunschweig, hoping the Minister will be able to help create a foundation to support our mutual projects.

Congratulations to the Center's part researchers - **Dr. Boris Khaimovitz** ("The Iconography and Style of Jewish Decorated Tombstones from Podolia and Galicia of the 17th-20th Centuries") and **Dr. Simona Gronemann** ("The Extant Ashkenazi 15th Century Illuminated Manuscripts of *Meshal Hakadmoni* by Isaac ibn Sahula") for being awarded Doctor of Philosophy.

Friends of the Center, of Tzali and Aliza: For the academic year 2006/2007 we plan to create new student scholarships to honour Tzali's 80th birthday (on 14th December 2006) and Aliza's retirement and 70th birthday (8th April 2007). We are sure that your close acquaintance with Tzali and Aliza and their work will urge you to contribute towards our scholarship fund. (An annual M.A. scholarship amounts to US\$10,000 and a Ph.D. scholarship costs \$15,000.)



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