



Vice President for External Relations  
and Resource Development  
Division of Marketing & Media

# At a Glance

LATEST NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA



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1

At a ceremony held at the Hecht Museum, chess Grandmaster Boris Gelfand and his wife Mia were presented with a University picture by Russian artist Yuri Krotov immortalizing the duel between Gelfand and India's Anand at the World Chess Championship in 2012. This is part of the collaboration between Gelfand and the University to research the employment of chess as a platform for youth education. "I am pleased about the collaboration developed with the University of Haifa, that we are endeavoring to work together to use chess as an educational tool", said Gelfand. The initiative was reported on *Ynet* and other websites.



2

The University's "Ambassadors Online" program, which trains students to counteract negative publicity and attempts to delegitimize Israel by using new media, has given an annual Appreciation Award to the Israeli Ambassador in Ireland, Boaz Modai, and his staff. The award was given for their extraordinary work combating the cultural economic boycott against Israel and addressing anti-Semitic factions. They have also promoted Israeli culture and tourist attractions, as well as showcasing the technological breakthroughs of Israelis in Ireland. The staff have promoted academic, cultural and economic collaboration as well as recruiting supporters who actively advocate on behalf of the State of Israel.



3

Congratulations to Prof. Gal Richter-Levin from the Sagol Department of Neurobiology on his selection as President of the Israel Society for Neuroscience. The Society promotes and publishes research in Neurology and every year holds the biggest conference on Neuroscience in Israel.



4

Prof. Gershon Galil from the Department of Biblical Studies has managed to decipher the earliest Hebrew inscription found in Jerusalem. The inscription, which was written almost 3000 years ago apparently during the reign of King Solomon, testifies to the ability to write and the existence of an organized administrator during the period who collected taxes, recruited forced labor and managed their needs. The discovery has won much acclaim in the media, including [Ynet](#), [Maariv](#) and the [Hayadon](#) science news website.



5

Dr. Harry Sessler, Honorary Fellow of the University, represented the Institution at a poignant and distinguished event to celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Sofia University. Representatives from 38 other Universities academically cooperating with Sofia University also participated in the ceremony. Dr. Sessler was the force behind the collaboration between the two institutions. "I was the only representative from Israel - it was very moving and dignified"



6

Am I just a Complaint? A new exhibition on the ground floor elevator lobby of the Eshkol tower has just opened. It exhibits petitions (complaints) submitted by the citizens of the land of Israel to the Sultan of Istanbul in the late Ottoman period. Some of the petitions displayed are a product of the research of Dr. Yuval Ben-Bassat, from the Middle Eastern History Department. They deal with taxes, corruption, crime, land, local politics, pleas for help and pardons.



7

Many musicians gathered at the "Hateiva" studio in Jaffa to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of Prof. Arie Shapira of the Department of Music. The happy occasion was marked by a concert in which friends and musicians, amongst them also students from the Music department, performed nine of his original compositions.



8

Research by the University's Department of Biology at the Oranim College has found that antioxidants produced by, amongst other things, desert plants reduce oxidative damage to body tissue. These could therefore be used as a cure for diabetes and other complications.



9

Congratulations to Dr. Jacques Cory who has been selected as a member of the Public Advisory Council of the Israel Boards of Directors' Forum. The aim of the Forum is to promote and improve the standards, performance and functioning of Boards of Directors in Israel (both commercial and non-commercial). The Board also conducts research, fosters professional know-how, promotes legislation and supports business management in Israel.



10

Prof. Oren Gazal-Ayal, from the Faculty of Law, appeared on the "Meet the Press" program on Israeli TV's *Mako* channel with other panelists to discuss the significance of plea bargains. In an article written following the plea deal with Shushan Barabie, Prof. Gazal-Ayal stated that "There is an ignorance of the tremendous difficulties which plea bargains cause. They are conducted by the prosecution, in secret, where there is no real accountability and inspection of them."



11

Dr. Tirtsa Joels of the Department of Psychology and a member of the "Schnitt Committee" examining the legal aspects of parental responsibility in divorce, was interviewed for a piece on divorced fathers broadcast on Israel's TV *Channel 2*. "In the end, everyone tries to draw the interests of the child towards them for their own purposes" she said during the piece.



12

Dr. Haran Reichman from the Faculty of Law was interviewed by the *Yediot Ahronot* newspaper for an article dealing with the school that makes students wear a sign saying "bathroom" when they leave the classroom for that purpose. "This is inappropriate in the extreme. In the discussion on children's' legal and moral rights it has been well known for years that children are human beings with rights and privileges entitled to their dignity and autonomy," said Dr. Reichman.



13

Prof. Raphiq Ibrahim's research, from the Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, on the cognitive flexibility of bilingualism continues to generate worldwide interest. The research was recently cited on the *National Geographic Israel* website. "Those who are bilingual succeed better in jobs that require monitoring capabilities than those who speak only one language. They are especially good at prioritizing what is more and less important in performing specific tasks" writes Prof. Ibrahim.



14

"Yariv is still considered the head of the Military Intelligence Directorate (AMAN) and as such the best national evaluator the State of Israel has ever had" Says Prof. Uri Bar Joseph, of the School of Political Sciences, in his review in the *Haaretz* newspaper of the new book by Amos Gilboa on the life of Aharon Yariv. Yariv was head of IDF military intelligence between 1964-72. According to Prof. Bar Joseph the book will become one of the major books available dealing with Israeli intelligence.



15

Dr. Dan Schueftan, head of the National Security Studies Center from the School of Political Sciences was interviewed for a popular current affairs program on Israel Radio on the subject of negotiation with the Palestinians. Dr Schueftan spoke of the hidden motives of the Palestinians in negotiations and on the problems of each side in negotiations in general.



16

The [Jerusalem Report](#) published an article about the soon to be published book written by Prof. Almog Oz, of the Department of Land of Israel Studies, and Dr. Tamar Almog, from the Faculty of Education dealing with Generation Y. The Researchers characterize the generation as having a sobering attitude towards Capitalism and striving for peace and a new world order.



17

A conference on the subject of 'Philosophy for Children', initiated by Dr. Arie Kizel from the Department of Teaching and Instruction, gained extensive coverage in *Yediot Haifa* and the *Gefen* northern region local newspapers. Dr. Kizel, who researches and promotes this issue in Israel was also chosen recently to serve on a team of international evaluators of the new European curriculum on the subject of philosophy.



18

Narcissus, "the King of the Swamp". Every week Prof. Dafni Amotz of the Department of Evolutionary and Environmental Biology, and Prof. Ruth Lorand of the Department of Philosophy, will present a picture and a few details about flowers we all love but do not really know. This time, they are looking at the Narcissus. The Narcissus is not just "the king of the swamp" when it comes to life in winter. It also grows in the mountains where it begins to bloom, often before the rains come. The flower offers its animal visitors, long - tongued bees and butterflies which skim over its sticky pollen during the day, nectar hidden deep inside a long tube within its head.



19

Prof. Gad Barzilai, Dean of the Faculty of Law, was interviewed by Israel Radio on a number of topics: the initiative to raise the minimum threshold for the Knesset elections; the absence of a Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee; and the issue of childhood sexual vulnerability and its legal implications.



20

Dr. Ido Zerkovitz of the Ezri Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies, and the Department of Middle Eastern History, spoke in an Israel Radio interview about the release of Palestinian prisoners. In the interview Dr Zerkovitz explained the significance of the prisoners' release to the balance of power between Fatah and Hamas. He discussed the importance of the prisoners and their status as a national symbol to the Palestinian on the street. He also explored the feasibility of renewing the political process in the light of the opening requirements set by US Secretary of State John Kerry for the Israeli government and the PLO leadership



Prof. Baruch Gur-Gurevich, from the Department of General History was interviewed on Israel Radio about the behavior of Russia. Prof. Gurevich said that the gesture that Putin made at the end of the year, or the series of gestures he is making now, appear to be about human rights "but it was more linked to the Sochi Olympics and directed at the West".

