

*Naama Yahalom-Mack and Yigal Erel*

### **Environmental Studies and the Archaeology and History of the Land of Israel: Metallurgy and Pollution**

In the article the authors focus on the development of metal use and its effect on the environment. Through this they present the scientific methodology of archeological-environmental research. The metallurgical activity conducted in antiquity left its mark on the environment in various ways. The most substantial evidence lies in smelting and metalworking sites, where ancient smiths left heaps of slag that contaminated the local soil. In addition, tiny metal-rich particles were emitted into the atmosphere and were carried by the winds to a distance of thousands of kilometers, creating world-wide pollution.

Documenting metal content in human skeletons showed that tooth enamel is the best suited for this purpose. Metal concentrations in tooth enamel from ten different sites in Israel dated as early as the Natufian period were measured. A significant contamination of metals affected humans only during the Iron Age, some 3000 years after the beginning of metal use in the Levant. This increase in metal pollution of humans is contemporary with the industrial-scale metallurgical activity in the Arabah Valley and the increasing use of iron (and other metals such as lead and silver) throughout Israel. It is also manifested in metal content increase and changes in the lead isotope pattern in lake and bog sediments in Europe and in Greenland ice.

*Oren Tal*

### **Aspects in the Study of the Coins and Mints of Palestine during the Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods**

This article deals with the intense development during the last two decades of numismatic research of

Persian (and early Hellenistic) local ('autonomous') coin minting. It summarizes the state of research of the coins and mints of the different regions of southern Palestine, namely those of Philistia, Samaria, Judah, and Edom, and surveys the new directions in their study. This coin minting, which was the earliest in Palestine, is unique in terms of its artistic manifestation, inimitable motifs (and their unprecedented quantities), and the relative autonomy the minting authorities received from the Persian rule as shown in the diversity of the coins. In these aspects, southern Palestinian Persian-period coin minting differs significantly from the royal Hellenistic coin minting that succeeded it. In addition to the typological study of these coinages, in which emphasis is given to new coin-types, the article examines the progress in research of the minting authorities and their mode of operation, of coin denominations, weight standards, die links and their implications, the number of coins in circulation, the role of coins in their respective populations, and their chemical composition. Understanding these aspects can assist us in reconstructing the period and its society from economic, social, and political perspectives.

*Dafna Langgut*

### **The Role of Pollen Analysis in Archaeology: Reconstruction of the Royal Persian Garden in Ramat Rahel, as a Case Study**

Pollen grains, nature's fingerprints of plants, are required for sexual reproduction in flowering plants. The outer layer of the pollen grain is an extremely durable substance that can remain preserved in sediment as a fossil for thousands of years. The study of fossil pollen enables scientists to infer the paleo-climatic conditions from the reconstruction of past vegetation. In addition, fossil pollen can also reveal human uses of plants in the past. This can

help determine seasonality of site occupation and the presence or absence of agricultural practices or products and plant-related activity areas within an archaeological context. This article demonstrates the role of pollen in reconstructing ancient gardens. Ramat Rahel, on the outskirts of Jerusalem, features an impressive residency and a palatial garden dating to the 7th-4th centuries BCE, when Judah was ruled by the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires. A unique method of extracting fossil pollen from ancient plaster enabled reconstruction of the vegetation of this royal garden. The most surprising find, marking its earliest appearance in the southern Levant, is the citron (*Citrus medica*), which later acquired a symbolic-religious role in Judaism. Other imported trees are cedar and walnut. Native fruit trees and ornamental plants include fig, grape, willow, poplar, myrtle, and water lily.

*Rina Talgam*

### **Methodological Aspects of the Study of Art in Eretz Israel from the Hellenistic to the Umayyad Periods**

The article reviews the contribution of the discipline of art history to the understanding of the social and cultural history of Eretz Israel from the Hellenistic period (late 4th century BC) to the Umayyad period (mid-8th century CE). The object of the article is to expose the reader who is unfamiliar with this discipline to the methodological aspects of the study of art and to point out art history's potential for illuminating various aspects in the history of Eretz Israel.

The article begins by presenting the characteristics of the art of Eretz Israel and the unique challenges they pose. These challenges arise as a result of the fusion between ancient Eastern traditions and Western influences, as well as the complex ethnic and religious blend of the country's population and its political history. Furthermore, examination of the interrelationships between the conquerors and the conquered, the peripheral nature of the art of Eretz Israel and its acknowledgement of changing artistic centers, and of course its complex social stratification are called for. The article demonstrates how to deal with a work of art as a historical document and elaborates the methodological aspects of the encounter between

art and text. The concluding section establishes that analysis of the formative-aesthetic components of a work of art, and the study of relations within the field of art itself, may serve to illuminate paramount historical and cultural developments.

*Yaffah Berlovitz*

### **The Literature of the First Aliyah as First Settlers Literature: A Proposal for Historiographical Revision**

Presentation of the literature of the First Aliyah (the first immigration of Hovevei Zion) in the history of modern Hebrew literature seems to be problematic. Though the first works were published at the outset of the first Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel (late 19th and early 20th century), there was no consensus among researchers as to its definition and classification: whether it continued the literature of the Jewish Enlightenment, or served as a precursor of the writings of the Second Aliyah. Others argued that this literature is 'a coincidental and isolated phenomena' as opposed to the literature of the Second Aliyah which from the beginning represented 'totality of life and development'.

The present study seeks to re-examine the nature of this literature, one that aspired to disengage itself from the Jewish literary life of Europe with the aim of establishing itself in Eretz Israel, thus constructing a strata of poetics for a new future local Hebrew literature. From this point on the discussion deals with two issues: a. Analysis of the writings of the First Aliyah (belles-lettres works, memoirs, journals, and essays), revealing the various ideological and political stances, longings, and disappointments of their authors; b. Identifying the characteristics of the literature of the First Aliyah, using the general poetic model of First Settlers literature, in particular that of the Puritan settlers in New England during the 17th century.

In sum, the object of this study is to present the literature of the First Aliyah as a unique corpus in its own right, revising its historiographical missing position in the development of modern Hebrew literature, during the transition from Diaspora to Homeland.

*Margalit Shilo*

### **Women, Gender, and the History of the Yishuv: Achievements and Further Goals**

In the last two decades the number of books and articles dealing with the history of women and gender in the Yishuv has increased at a very rapid pace. Yet, the vast new knowledge has not been integrated into the master historical narrative, and it has remained behind, relegated to the 'women's section'. The objective of the article is twofold: a. To bring to the fore some of this knowledge concerning three important topics: The immigration experience in a gender perspective; women's status in the family and familiarity; women's penetration into the public sphere. b. To present the new conclusions emerging from this cutting edge historical research and to suggest innovative ways in which social history can be rewritten.

*Nir Kedar*

### **The Centrality of Law in Israeli History: On the Historiography of Israeli Law and Its Contribution to Israel Studies**

Legal history is today one of the most dynamic and exciting fields in Israeli academia. This article has a twofold purpose: first, to draw a picture of Israeli legal historiography and its history; and second, to demonstrate the discipline's contribution to the field of Israel Studies, and mainly to our understanding of Israeli legal and civic culture. Following a general description of the field's history since Israel's foundation, the article sketches an outline of current research in Israeli legal history. It then focuses on the contribution of Israeli legal historiography to the understanding of Israeli civic-legalist culture, that is, of Israeli society's reverence to the law and to the rule of law, as well as the centrality of law and the legal system in Israeli life. Research in legal history explains Israel's civic strength as a democracy, while at the same time contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the societal tensions and the shadows darkening the Israeli *Rechtsstaat*, i.e., the discrimination and violence that still exist in Israel in spite of democracy and the rule of law.

*Uri Bialer*

### **State Building and Diplomacy: On the Historiography of Israel's Foreign Policy**

State building was naturally the overriding aim of Israel's leaders, especially during the formative years of the fledgling state. Independence in 1948 was a major success of Zionism, yet it left thorny existential problems which endangered the sheer existence of Israel. The task of tackling these issues was very problematic, as it necessitated acquisition of commodities which could not have been found within its territory and dependence on the good will of other states. Likewise, the issue of foreign recognition was far from an academic one. Therefore, Israel's foreign policy was intensely mobilized to solve these issues. Thus among other endeavors constant efforts were devoted to securing regional and global diplomatic recognition, to facilitate aliyah, and accumulate arms. The article analyzes the historiography of these constant and continuous efforts which undoubtedly served the purpose of securing the existence and well being of Israel.

*Maoz Azaryahu*

### **Memory in the Landscape: Invisible Memorials – Three Case Studies**

The study of the geography of memory entails the design and operation of symbolic landscapes and memorial sites that serve the social construction of memory in the public space. This article claims that a study of the geography of the memory of fallen soldiers in Israel should also include the 'invisible' memorials: such that were discussed, approved, planned, and possibly designed, but never materialized in the landscape. The traces of such memorials are to be found in archives and newspaper articles. Following a discussion of memory and commemoration in space, the article offers a detailed historical analysis of three such 'invisible' memorials: Tel Aviv's memorial to the fallen soldiers in Israel's War of Independence planned for Kikar Malkhei Israel; Michael Kara's design for the memorial at Sha'ar Ha'Gai commemorating those who fought to keep open the road to beleaguered Jerusalem in 1948, and Tumarkin's design for a memorial for the 'seafarers' in Haifa.

*Aviva Halamish*

### **The Biographic Era in Israeli Historiography**

The article reconstructs the history of the biographic genre in Israel while pointing to the main milestones in its development, surveys the genre's characteristics, depicts its current trends and presents its sub-categories. It addresses the question, what caused the delay in the emergence of research-based biographic writing in Israel relatively both to the world and to other historiographical genres in Israel, and proposes an explanation for the recent flourishing of biographical writing in Israel. It points to a significant presence of women in writing biographies and to the rapidly increasing number of biographies of women.

It proposes the year 1980 as a turning point in the status of biography in Israel, though the significant breakthrough and the actual beginning of the 'biographic era' in Israeli historiography occurred in the 21st century. The article indicates a causal connection between the prospering of biographies and the processes that Israeli society has been going through, such as the decline of the collective ethos, the high status afforded to commemoration, and the tendency to give an academic touch to many spheres of life. Another claim put forth is that biography writing has been motivated by disdain of post-modernism, and may be conceived as a wish to deviate from the rules of deconstruction, to be freed of the dictates of determinism, and to rather tell a comprehensible and well narrated story.