

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program:
Year: 2013-2014

Please present your activity report according to the following lines. The whole report will not exceed 2 or 3 pages (as word document).

Name of the Program:

“Foundation Images of the 13th century Kabbalah in Provence and Spain”

Year of activity:

2014

Name of the report's writer: Professor Haviva Pedaya

Function of the report's writer: Head of Elyachar Center, BGU

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Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):

In the academic year 2013-2014 a monthly meeting of the research seminar took place, led by one of the three collaborators (Dr Shifra Assulin, Dr Sandra Velebuerg-Perry, Dr Oded Porat), under the instruction of the group organizer – Dr Oded Porat. Research students from various universities participated and contributed to the discussions of Zoharic Literature – specifically the analysis of foundational pictures in that literature and its parallels.

The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):

'Foundation Images' in Kabbalah deal with the metaphysic elements and primal agents that establish the foundation of divine and earthly existence, and with the dynamics that is characteristic of the primary processes of emanation and creation. The systems of elements and the nature of the primal dynamics appear in two major kinds: a process compelling a fundamental change, a break or a metamorphose of the primordial element into the system of divine attributes; or processes that do not involve with a primal crisis, in which the first shift from the fundamental or abstract into being occurs without the repress of the pre-creational situation. An emanative system of the second kind allow to draw and to make the divine present within

creation, or to allow the activity of the primordial elements as unchangeable and permanent factors within the change of emanation and multiplicity of creation. The research group deals with the images of foundation and establishment in early Kabbalah of the 13th century, from the *Iyyun* literature in Provence, through the Theosophic-Teurgic Kabbalah in Spain up to '*Sefer haZohar*', and with their sources in Biblical wisdom literature, in *Sefer Yetsira*, in Jewish exegesis and philosophy and in *Sefer haBahir*. In this scope we describe different images and concepts of the status of founding principles and primal processes of emanation in three different kinds of Kabbalah: the anonymous *Iyyun* literature, the kabbalistic literature influenced by and cultivates the descriptions of beginning in Jewish philosophy literature, and the mythic section of the first pages of Bereshit section of the *Zohar*. These three kinds of Kabbalah represent different attitudes for the same question of beginning or origin: *Sefer Ma'ayan haHokhma* and *Iyyun* literature discuss the emerging of the first divine sound, the appearance of the primal lights and colors, and the status of the elements of air, spirit and water at the first stages of emanative processes. The Theosophic-Teurgic Kabbalah represent a use of the philosophical terms by their adaptation and forging into the Kabbalistic system, at the quests of the status of infinity and the form-matter relations. The first section of *Bereshit* section of *Sefer haZohar* presents the kabbalistic cultivation of the myth of the appearance and its hiding, the image of emerging of the first divine point and the fusion of creational matters into the divine names that allocate the beat of primordial days and essences. This introspection of the foundation images and the systems of elements in early Kabbalah produced significant insights, within the study and discussions of the research group, of the different languages of creative processes, of the different consciences of kabbalists, their divergent literary sources, their connections and the different modes of literary cultivation arise from each of them.

Events (second semester: 11.06.2014 , 21.05.2014 , 07.05.2014 , 23.04.2014 , 09.04.2014 , 26.03.2014 , 12.03.2014

The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future...):

The discussions produced research agendas that are now geared towards producing publishable results in a collaborative authorship and personal research of the three lead participants.

Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

Dilation on the *Zohar* itself utilizing the lessons learned from the surrounding literature and basic philological and conceptual co-textual influences thereof.

A summary table – as **PDF document** – specifying the progress in the program since the beginning of the encouragement by the Matanel Foundation according to the main parameters and objectives such as:

Number of events: 13

Number of participants: 50

Number of beneficiaries: 3

Other...

Please join the Evaluation Report, the Financial Report and the list of the participants to the program (**as PDF documents**)

Please join photos – as **photos** – and any link or any other document connected to the program which will seem to you relevant – as **PDF document**.