

# The Diplomatic Club



December 2008



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AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO ISRAEL

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CREDENTIALS OF NEW AMBASSADORS  
FROM KOREA, BOSNIA, LATVIA, BULGARIA  
AND JAPAN

## RELIGION

THE KABBALAH AND JEWISH MYSTICISM

# The Diplomatic Club



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## Dear Friends,

This 2008 year is now approaching its end. Despite the rapid end of the purely military phase of the Palestinian Conflict, the conflict is still raging, claiming too many lives. We wish the Middle-East an active 2009 year focused on peace and development, where hatred dissolves and harmony blooms.

To our readers, as always we would like to offer our best wishes for 2009 may your health be obvious (and need no discussion) may your family relations be warm may your friends be loyal may your enemies become your friends (and those who don't, get lost) may your spam be filtered may your Emails be answered may your papers get published may your wisdom deserve the approval of Confucius, and your folly the praise of Erasmus may your power get shared, your wealth be free from greed and your poverty from envy may we communicate fruitfully across cultures so that our horizons widen and reason replaces violence

The Diplomatic Club Magazine is Israel's fast growing media magazine and media platform. As events in the Middle East continue to hold center stage and the world's attention, the Magazine provides further and additional real-time English-language coverage and supplements, with accurate in-depth, top-notch quality and quantity than any other Israel-based media.

The Diplomatic Club Magazine requests the pleasure to publish opinions, discussions and articles written by Ambassadors. We are looking forward to develop this idea.

## The Diplomatic Club and myself wish you all a successful New Year.

Yours sincerely,  
Julia Verdel  
General Manager  
And the Editorial Team

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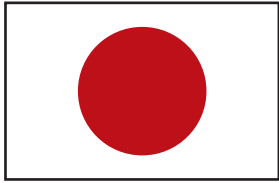


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## Mr. YOSHINORI KATORI

Ambassador of Japan to Israel

By Neil Sendler



This reporter had the pleasure of interviewing Japan's Ambassador to Israel Yoshinori Katori at his magnificent villa in Herzliya Pituach recently. The Ambassador's tenure in Israel finishes at the end of September 2008. He has been Ambassador to Israel for 2 years, since the summer of 2006.

The Ambassador explained proudly how Israel was one of the first countries that Japan opened diplomatic relations with, in 1952, after the U.S. occupation of Japan ended.

In recent diplomatic developments, in July 2005 Prime Minister Koizumi visited Israel, the last visit by a Japanese PM was 11 years earlier. Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu visited Japan in 1997. Since Ambassador Katori's posting here, FM Tzippi Livni went to Japan in January 2007 and Shimon Peres as Deputy Prime Minister was in Japan in March 2007. Japanese Foreign Minister Aso visited Israel in August 2007 and there was a joint meeting together with the Israeli Foreign Minister, Jordanian Foreign Minister and the Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister in Jericho, also attended by the Ambassador. Japan is sponsoring a major agricultural-industrial project between Israel and Jordan along with the Palestinians near Jericho which is planned to be finished in November. The project is known as the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity", and there have been several high-level summits to move its progress along. It was first pro-

posed in 2006 by Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi.

Prime Minister Olmert visited Japan in February 2008, accompanied by Shraga Brosh, Chairman of the Industrial Federation of Israel. Trade between the 2 countries is still modest, being \$2.7 billion in 2007, representing 0.2% of Japan's total trade, and only 2% of Israel's total trade. All visitors from Japan to Israel and Israel to Japan only number about 12,000 from each side. This from about 17 million travelers from Japan to all places abroad. The Ambassador names several problems, notably concerns about security by travelers as well as an absence of direct flights from Japan. He has been involved in negotiations with El Al about a direct flight, but there are concerns about the profitability. He feels that Japanese have only a vague idea about Israel and so need to know more to want to come here. What should be the magnet for Japanese to come to Israel, says Ambassador Katori, are the obvious historical and archaeological sites in Israel, as well as the fascinating landscape and terrain interests found in Israel, such as the Dead Sea. There are constant groups of Japanese Christians who come to Israel on pilgrimages. The Ambassador went on to say that Japanese are, by nature, curious about other countries' history, religion and culture. The Ambassador is certain that after the Japanese find out that it is relatively uncomplicated, safe and with so many sites

of great interest to see in Israel, they will come in greater numbers. He also feels that more gestures toward a peace process in the area will also help the image of Israel in the eyes of potential Japanese tourists.

The Ambassador sees a great similarity between Israelis and Japanese in regard to a dedication to traditions, great respect of ancestors, and tremendous importance of gathering the family together for holidays. Japanese are more formal than Israelis in business, in how they dress, talk and meet. Japanese are more likely to make courtesy talk when first meeting for business, thanking the business visitors for coming, etc., and making small talk. Israeli businesspeople are usually more open, talking about business right from the beginning of the meeting. Japanese very rarely, if never, say "no" directly, they express it in a more roundabout way. Information Technology, biotechnology, agriculture and medical technology from Israel are very attractive to Japan. For example, Given Imaging, a company that produces capsules that image the inside of the body has been introduced to Japan and has created a great sensation there and is initiating a business boom in this field in medicine between Israel and Japan. But he thinks many more companies need to be introduced to Japan. Medications, water treatment products, all products used by medical professionals and technicians are the main exports of Israel to Japan. The Ambassador sees technological cooperation between Japanese and Israeli companies as a key component of future economic ties between the countries, especially in the medical field. Japanese automobiles, of course, are a major import here, Mazda is number one for automobiles from Japan. Japanese and Israeli security experts meet often to discuss security issues. Last June the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange (TASE) concluded an agreement with the Japanese investment house, Aizawa Securities Co., Ltd., to supply information on companies included in the TA-25 stock index. The collaboration between TASE and Aizawa is expected to increase the exposure of key TASE-listed companies in Asian capital markets. The TASE invited Ambassador Katori in June 2008 along with the CEO of Aizawa, Mr. Motoya Aizawa to mark the signing of the agreement by taking part in the ceremony at the TASE. On this occasion Ambassador Katori said "I believe this is a first step for cooperation between the Israeli capital market and the Japanese financial industry".



Ambassador Takeuchi was born in the United States in 1952. Upon entering the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1975, he has served as Director of the Treaties Division, Director of the Press Division, Director of the Management and Coordination Division, and Director-General of the International Information Bureau in Tokyo before assuming the current position. His overseas posts include Brussels, Washington DC, and London.

Mr. Takeuchi is married, and has 3 sons.

Ambassador Yoshinori Katori graduated with an Economics Degree from Hitotsubashi University in Japan. He entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1973 and chose to learn German there. Very soon after entering the Ministry he had his first posting abroad at the Japanese Embassy in Germany in Bonn, then West Germany. From 1988 to 1992 he was posted again to the Embassy of Japan in Germany during the time of German re-unification. In 1992 he became Director, Security Treaty Division, North American Affairs Bureau, Cabinet Security Affairs Office, Cabinet Secretariat. In 1993 he became Director of the Japan-U.S. Secu-

rity Treaty Division and Director of the Press Division in 1994. He was posted to the Japanese Embassy in Malaysia from 1994 to 1996, as well as working at the Office on Internal Affairs, Cabinet Secretariat during that period of time. From 1997 to 2000 he was Consul-General of Japan in Munich. In 2000 he became Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan in the Republic of Korea. In 2002 he became Deputy Director General (Press and Public Information), in 2003 became Director-General, Consular Affairs Bureau, in 2005 Press Secretary/Director-General in Tokyo. In 2006 Yoshinori Katori was appointed Japan's Ambassador to Israel.

The Ambassador's wife's name is Etsko, and has enjoyed the life here in Israel, along with the Ambassador. The Ambassador's wife is a member of the Caesarea Golf Club and has been a First League Champion there. Both the Ambassador and his wife play tennis at two tennis clubs, one of them the Maccabee Tennis Club. Etsko is a member of the International Women's Club, where she is very involved with her colleagues. The Ambassador and his wife have a daughter, Rie, who is 23, who works for a hotel in Japan, as well as a son, Kentaro, who is 20 and studies literature in a university in Japan. The Ambassador has had the chance to visit cities, universities, companies in Israel, as well as agricultural projects. He especially enjoyed visiting some of the wineries, and says that Israeli wine is becoming more and more popular in Japan. The Ambassador has also worked in promoting the enjoyment of Japanese sake, and sponsored an industry sake-tasting event at his home last February. The Ambassador is also an avid photographer and he often brings his camera along with him when he goes to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem. He is compiling a memoir of his time in Israel on a CD Rom. The Ambassador has made many friends in Israel, among them Israelis from many backgrounds. The National Day of Japan is celebrated in December to honor the birthday of the reigning Emperor.

Zubin Mehta conducted the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra in Japan last year, and this year was awarded the Praemium Imperiale award, one of art's richest awards, backed by the Japanese imperial family, which recognizes accomplishments in the arts. In addition, famed Israeli dance troupes, such as Inbal, have been great hits in Japan, along with Israeli theatre groups.

Ambassador Yoshinori Katori leaves his posting here in Israel with fond memories of his time here and hopes to continue building his relationship with the State and the people of Israel.

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# ANDRE AZOULAY, AN ADVISOR FOR KING OF MOROCCO

urges Israelis and Palestinians not to miss a rendezvous for peace

By Ksenia Svetlova



A whole plead of celebrities gathered at Dan Tel Aviv hotel in order to take part in celebration of 10-th anniversary of Peres Center for Peace. Between Sarah Fergusson, the Duchess of York, ex-presidents of Poland, Cyprus and Peru, Katrin Turner, the Hollywood star of the 80s, it was hard to keep track of famous faces and names. One man, however, attracted a particular attention in this celebrity cloud. He was surrounded by dozens of old friends – Israeli, Arab and European politicians and diplomats, numerous guests and employees of Peres Center eager to shake his hand and exchange a couple of words. The man's name was Andre Azoulay. Born in 1941 in South Moroccan town of Essaouira, Andre Azoulay has engaged in many different spheres – from journalism to banking. For the last 15 years he serves as a special advisor of Moroccan king Hasan VI. Once upon a time, during the early Middle Ages such a configuration – a Muslim monarch or a caliph and a Jewish wazir, a close confidant, was rather common. Today, considering the changed nature of relations between the Jews and the Arabs his title evokes in many astonishment and curiosity. Multiple theories of conspiracy, so popular in the Arab world, appear almost on the daily basis in Arab mass-media and suggest that the Jews and the Israelis rule the world, dominate the world politics and manipulate the regimes in the East and in the West, while neo-antisemites of the Arab world embrace the ugly creations of Eastern Europe, such as "the Protocols of Zion elders". Yet, Andre Azoulay, a unique Jewish voice inside the

Arab world is confident that not all is lost for Jews and the Muslim world, and that the course of history can be reversed. During his inspiring speech during the closing session of the gathering in Dan Tel Aviv, Andre Azoulay has stressed that the Arab world is going through a capital change this days, and the most clear indication of it is the Arab Peace initiative which was first proposed by Abdullah bin Abd al-Aziz (then the crown prince, today the king of Saudi Arabia) during the summit of the Arab league in Beirut, April 2004. "This initiative was ratified by all the Arab nations, in addition to Islamic organizations which also embraced the idea. It sums up everything that Israel ever struggled for, ever dreamed of – every Arab leader in the region supports this peace initiative and signs his name below, offering a complete and overall peace agreement instead of separate treaties" said Azoulay, adding that the most overwhelming fact was that this initiative, as well as the dialogue between the 3 monotheistic religions was promoted by no others then the Saudis. "Not the most open and liberal country in the world, Saudi Arabia had the courage to go along with this initiative. And this is not the only change they are going through today. Once, when I had to visit Saudi Arabia, I had to conceal my Jewish origin. This is no longer the case" the advisor said, sharing from his personal experience.

The idea of dialogue and a search for identity is nothing new to Azoulay, who left his native Essaouira in 1966 for Paris. A decade later he was already leading his fellow Moroccan Jewish

friends into a group that became known as "Identity and Dialogue," based upon the Sephardic Jewish history and culture that flourished in Morocco throughout the 500 years that have passed since the expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Spain. "This Sephardic culture has, for a very long time, been neglected, unknown, and ill-known, and also often ill-treated", Azoulay says. Another reason behind creating the group was the necessity to establish a dialogue between the Jews and the Arabs. As a leader of a Jewish group, Azoulay felt that he should try to help Jews on the one hand, and Arabs and Palestinians the other, come to know each other better. Since its founding, therefore, "Identity and Dialogue" has systematically promoted such cross-cultural communication. "I'm a committed Jew, I'm an advisor to the Commander of Faith (the King of Morocco is not just a secular leader but also a leader of Muslims in his country), and I'm a champion of peace. I see no problem and no contradiction between all these roles. Just the opposite, I believe that as long as the Palestinians live under the occupation in horrible conditions, it erodes my Jewishness, my identity", the advisor explained during his passionate appearance. There are no diplomatic relations between Morocco and Israel till today, although there are economic ties as well as well steady flow of Israeli tourism to Morocco. Almost 700 000 Israelis are of Moroccan origins and the doors of the Kingdom were opened to them and other Israelis who wish to visit during the nineties. After the eruption of Intifada Al-Aqsa Morocco has closed its representative office in Tel Aviv, although the trade and the business connections continued to flourish. The rulers of Morocco has made it clear that they will not establish full diplomatic ties with Israel until a true solution for the Palestinian problem will be found. Yet, Hasan VI, the King of Morocco is famous for promoting "wasatia" – moderate conception of Islam in his country, which was hit by Al-Qaeda terror numerous times during the past 5 years. Despite the threats and the dangers along this tricky way, the course of events in Morocco itself indicates on moderation and tolerance, says Andre Azoulay, who has spoken emotionally about a coming festival of Arab and Jewish music and poetry in his hometown of Essaouira. "It took place not in Israel, but in proud Muslim country, proud Arab country. I believe that it has been an indication enough of Arab intentions these days" he said.

Living in the heart of the Arab world, Azoulay doesn't close his eyes on the reality. He is well aware of the hatred and feelings of animosity that were especially dominant during the 2-d Palestinian intifada. Talking to the Diplomatic Club he mentioned that "it's important to analyze the past in order to understand its lessons. What has happened then wasn't an accident at all. It happened for a reason. We need to understand this reason and try to prevent such an outbreak in the future. I personally believe that as soon as the Palestinian misery will be diminished in any way – I mean checkpoints, freedom of movement, economic opportunities, there will be an improvement for the best.

Just shortly before his departure to the airport, Andre Azoulay made another plea to those at the negotiating table, as well as the ordinary people who live in the conflict zone, urging them not to miss another rendezvous for peace. "Today the opportunity for peace is there. But it will not be there forever. We missed so many chances for peace in the past. Today we cannot afford another failure"





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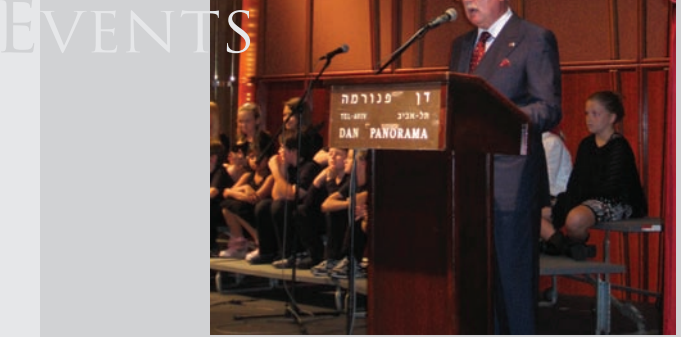
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EVENTS



EVENTS

## CELEBRATION OF THE 90<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA AT THE DAN PANORAMA TEL AVIV

Assembled guests celebrated the 90th Anniversary of the Republic of Latvia at the Dan Panorama Tel Aviv on Thursday, November 6th. The Ambassador Designate of Latvia and Mrs. Martins Perts were in attendance, and the new Ambassador gave a speech to the enthusiastic crowd. Also speaking were Mr. Eli Valk, representing the Latvian and Estonian Jewish Community in Israel, as well as Mr. Pinchas Avivi, Deputy Director General of the Government of Israel. Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Maris Riekstins was supposed to have attended, but instead had to stay in Latvia at this time to help deal with the current world-wide economic crisis.



EVENTS



National day of Croatia held on 25 of June 2008 at Sharon Hotel, Hrzeliya Pituah.

Honorary guest was Deputy Minister Of Foreign Affairs Mr. Majalli Whbee

## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Some 250 people, including dozens of Jewish veterans of the British armed forces, gathered Sunday at an annual memorial service for fallen soldiers at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Ramle. Remembrance Sunday was held on the Sunday, November 9, the anniversary of the end of the First World War. The day also commemorates soldiers and civilians killed in all wars since. Those present, most wearing traditional red paper poppies made by disabled ex-servicemen and women, observed two-minute silence for all who have died in the service of their countries.



British Ambassador to Israel Tom Phillips, speaking at the ceremony, expressed the hope that the memorial service would send a message of "reconciliation between peoples and nations." "Coming together as the representative of so many nations who have known war in our history, and conflict between each other," Phillips said, "we collectively send a signal of hope that even the most bitter of conflicts can come to an end, and of reconciliation between peoples and nations." As part of the service, representatives of diplomatic missions to Israel laid wreaths at the Stone of Remembrance, a monument at the entrance to the cemetery.



The religious service was conducted by Reverend Samuel Fanous, of the Emmanuel Anglican Episcopal Church in Ramle. A service led by the Israel Defense Forces chief cantor, Lieutenant Colonel Haim Weiner, was then held in the Jewish section of the cemetery.



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## DELEGATION FROM THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE COMES

### to Observe Local Authority Elections in Israel

A delegation from the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in the Council of Europe came to Israel to observe the local authority elections that took place on November 11. They were invited to come by the Union of Local Authorities in Israel. The delegation was led by Mr. Jean-Claude Frecon, from France. The other members of the delegation were Mr. Fabio Pellegrini, from Italy, Mr. Ian Micallef, from Malta, H.E. Mr. Paolo Rondelli, from San Marino, Ms. Susan Bolam, from the United Kingdom, Mr. Dobrica Milovanovic, from Serbia, Ms. Antonella Cagnolati, from Italy, Mr. Jean-Philippe Bozouls, from France and Ms. Stephanie Poirel, also from France. This reporter conducted an interview with Ms. Susan Bolam, who supplied the information about the delegation's official visit for this article.

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities regularly observes elections in Europe, mainly in Eastern Europe, to assist in the growth of democracy in the developing democracies of Eastern Europe. This mission was different in Israel, which has a much more developed democracy. So the usual procedure of observing elections was done differently in Israel because the election process is quite efficient here. The delegation looked at the polling places and spoke to participating people. Usually the Congress is not called on to monitor in other non-European countries, but Israel has a special relationship with the Council of Europe, and there is a lot of work being done in establishing working relationships between local authorities in Israel and with their European counterparts. Peaceful co-existence, prosperity and well-being in the Middle East is dependent on the development of democracy, especially at the local level. The group spent time talking to officials in the municipal governments about ways they are developing local municipal services for their communities. Ms. Bolam was observing the election in Ramle, which has quite a distinctive mix of different communities and offers challenges because of this. It is necessary get out all sectors of the community to vote for individuals who will serve to promote the interests of the entire municipality. Israel has an acute need, especially now, to successfully integrate newer immigrants who often do not have necessary skills and education to cope, and the delegation addressed this issue with local officials. The delegation will make note in their report that they were disappointed in the general low voter turnout, although participation was quite high

from the Arab sector. The delegation met with the Minister of the Interior, who is hoping to come to Strasbourg to meet with the Council around voting issues and to work on introducing electronic voting to Israel.

The delegation monitored voting in Rishon Lezion, Kfar Saba, Ramle, Rahat and Lehavim, municipalities which were selected by the Union of Local Authorities in Israel. The delegation requested that they also be given the chance to observe elections in Jerusalem, and at one point during the day they visited a polling place there. This visit was not like a normal observation, where the Congress staff makes arrangements about where to visit and then works out logistics with local municipalities. During Ms. Bolam's observation visit to Ramle, for example, she worked out a broader cross-section of polling stations to visit than the ones selected for the delegation. The delegation's poll observation usually consists of checking election processes such as determining how secret the voting really is,

the accuracy of voter lists, making sure voters sign off after voting, etc. There is a Voting Commission consisting of democracy lawyers that works with the Congress that determines the legal point of view in elections. Ms. Bolam was somewhat concerned about the extent of politicking which went on here even at the site of the polls and felt that this might have been creating undue influence on the vote.

There were 3 officers from the Congress on the delegation, including Ms. Antonella Cagnolati, who is Director of the Congress as well as 5 members who are councilors in municipalities, like Ms. Bolam. The report about the election has to go through different committees before being approved by the Congress. The report will be available after it is approved, and the report itself will be formally presented to the full Congress at the plenary session in March by the leader of the delegation, Mr. Jean-Claude Frecon, with all its recommendations. The Minister of the Interior is anxious to come to meet with the Congress about the voting process and is expected



*H.E. Mr. Paolo Rondelli (The Republic of San Marino), Elected Member of the Congress of the Council of Europe and Ambassador of the Republic of San Marino to the United States*



*Ms. Susan Bolam (United Kingdom), Elected Member of the Congress of the Council of Europe*

to do that within the next 2 weeks. There are already “twinning” arrangements between Israeli municipalities and those in Europe, and closer contacts are always being developed. The delegation found Israel to be an open place and were very impressed by the professionalism of, for example, the tourist guide provided to them in Ramle to give them a tour of the city. Ms. Bolam enjoyed seeing the historic

underground reservoir in the Old City of Ramle. The local officials said that improvement in education was key to integrating the diverse groups in the city.

The delegation was eager to see something of the voting process in Jerusalem so they were brought there at some point during the day, but not in the normal routine of their activities, which consisted of being

at the polls before they open, observing the voting in the course of the day and then being at the polls when they close, to see opening and closing procedures, including the counting of the votes. So they did get to observe something of the Jerusalem vote, but could not observe anything of the counting, because for the first time the counting was done at a central location and not at the individual polls.

### **PRESIDENT SHIMON PERES RECEIVED THE CREDENTIALS OF NEW AMBASSADORS FROM KOREA, BOSNIA, LATVIA, BULGARIA, AND JAPAN**

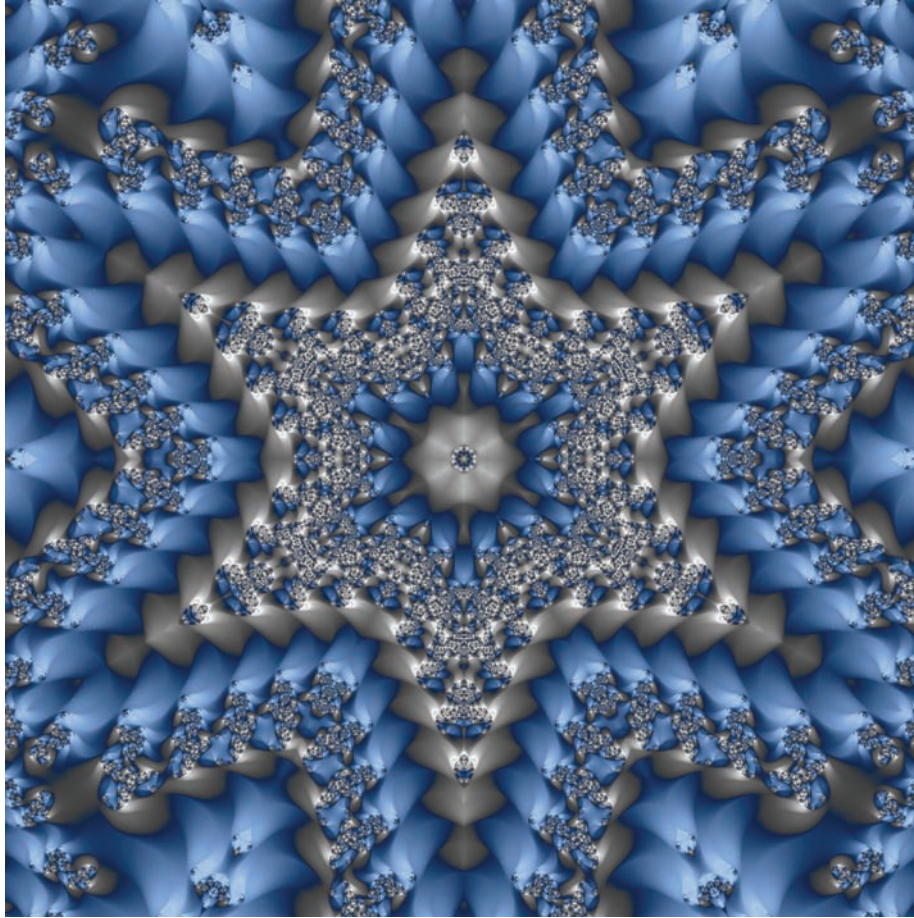
On 1 of December, 2008 President Shimon Peres received the credentials of new ambassadors from South Korea, Bosnia, Latvia, Bulgaria, and Japan. President Peres discussed with the ambassadors issues that are on the global and regional agenda. Among other topics, they discussed the current economic crisis, cooperation between Israel and their respective countries, sources of terror throughout the world and the most recent terror attacks that took place in India. They also discussed the price of oil, the development of alternative energy, and the tightening of state, commercial, cultural, and technological cooperation between the states. Following the recent terror attacks in Mumbai, the five new ambassadors expressed their sorrow and offered the condolences of their countries to Israel and the families of the slain.

President Peres told the ambassadors that: "Israel is happy to host you and your families. Israel offers its hand in greeting and hopes that fruitful work will take place between our countries." The incoming ambassadors thanked the President for his warm reception.



# The Kabbalah and Jewish Mysticism

by Eyal Riess  
Director of The  
International Center for  
Tzfat Kabbalah



The Kabbalah is the Jewish mystical tradition. The Kabbalistic wisdom, which is the oldest and most influential wisdom in the history of mankind, was given to the People of Israel along with all the other parts of the Torah at Mt. Sinai, in the year 2448 from world creation (1321 B.C.E.). As its Hebrew name implies, "kabbalah" means "receiving", and for thousands of years, the wisdom and secrets of Kabbalah were handed down orally from one generation to the next, yet remained virtually unknown and unapproachable to the general population. With the exception of a small and elite group of Jewish mystics and Sages that received the wisdom of the Kabbalah, very few even knew of its existence. Thanks to developments in the field of Kabbalah that have been emerging now for hundreds of years, and led by the greatest Kabbalists, many millions of people worldwide are now able to enjoy the secrets and wisdom of the Kabbalah in unprecedented proportions. Kabbalah investigates and explains the codes of both the universe and the soul of man. It meticulously describes the events that are unfolding in spiritual worlds and heavenly spheres, the world of the Zodiac and of the angels, and how such processes are affected

and influenced by our deeds. The study of Kabbalah develops a high level of self-awareness. A person who's studying Kabbalah will learn how to recognize the powers of his soul, and the intellectual and emotive attributes interacting within it. He then channels these traits toward a process of meaningful personal growth and harmonious development. Kabbalah teaches how to add spiritual and cosmic meaning to every aspect of daily life, turning every daily routine into an inspiring experience.

Kabbalistic tradition teaches us that Adam, the first human being, was also the first person to study Kabbalah, as well as compiling the book "Raziel the Angel". The book is a compendium of the Kabbalistic secrets Adam learnt after he was banished from the Garden of Eden. However, though with us since the dawn of creation, it was forbidden to reveal the Kabbalah's very existence to the masses. Even the 'Zohar' the ancient and most essential book of Kabbalah, written in the second century, C.E., was hidden, remaining totally unknown until being rediscovered by the Spanish Kabbalist, Rabbi Moshe De Leon at the end of the 13th century. Because of the restrictions on the study of Kabbalah, only very selected individuals

were allowed to delve into its mysteries.

The prohibition regarding learning and spreading Kabbalah in the past was based on our sages' real fear that lofty and highly spiritual Kabbalistic concepts would be misunderstood and misinterpreted, leading to dire consequences, like the anthropomorphism of G-d, distortion of ideas and even crises of faith.

With the rediscovery of the Zohar by Rabbi Moshe De Leon, a new era began for the study of Kabbalah. As the Zohar and other Kabbalistic writings became more available, more and more people began delving into serious study. Kabbalistic tradition has this new age starting some 700 years ago, at the beginning of the 6th millennium from world Creation. This is when preparations begun for the "7th millennium", described by the greatest Biblical prophets and Kabbalists as being the 'Sabbatical Millenium' or "Messianic Era", which will be a period in which superior consciousness will be available to all, and will encompass all of reality. These preparations are characterized by the revelation of, The Kabbalah and Jewish Mysticism which prepares human consciousness for unprecedented great revelations. This is accomplished by understanding the codes of both the universe and the human soul the way the Kabbalah teaches it. In the 16th century, the city of Tzfat in the upper Galilee in the north of Israel, became the center of all greatest Kabbalists who revealed the depths of Kabbalah and demanded that its wisdom be disseminated throughout the world.

Finally, the birth of The Chassidic Movement that promoted the spread of Jewish mysticism, as well as the increased involvement in Kabbalah of many spiritual leaders, has resulted in the popular study of Kabbalah today in every corner of the world.

## Kabbalah on Time

Albert Einstein defined time as one of the dimensions of creation, but it is undoubtedly a very special dimension. According to the teachings of the Kabbalah, time was created on the first day of the creation, after the formation of primordial matter. The great marvel of time is its constant flow in a single direction: forward, the continual change of the past to the present and the present to the future. At the same time, it is now quite clear to physicists that in some way all 'times' are one from a certain perspective.

The literature of Jewish philosophy and Kabbalah also present an interesting exploration of the nature of time: is it a single inclusive reality or a composite of many units? Another question that is yet unresolved is that of speed-

ing up or slowing down in the dimension of time. Can the movement along the axis of time be controlled? For now, physicists suggest a positive response to this question, but it is completely theoretical. There is no device today that can produce the tremendous levels of energy required to prove the theories empirically. Thus science offers no proof to date, but the Kabbalah do. The nature and multidimensionality of time are explained in the books of the Kabbalah and Chassidic philosophy. Each one of the four spiritual worlds (Emanation, Creation, Formation, action) has its own relative dimension of time, different to the others. On the practical level – regarding the actual acceleration of time – it emerges that there is a special 'trick'. We will not delve into the realm of the special acts reserved for the great Kabbalists, such as a leap (a folding of space) or prophecy (transparent vision of the future) – We refer here to a technique that exists in the realm of action that is open to regular, ordinary people. Each of us is capable of speeding up the time needed to learn an academic subject or to develop cognitive and emotional processes, matters that require their own special investment of quality time. This time can be reduced a thousand times (!) by means of a very simple act: doing another person good (materially or spiritually) – to put it simply, an act of kindness. One of the greatest Kabbalists of recent generations, Rabbi



Schneur-Zalman of Liadi, wrote that by means of a material or spiritual act of kindness to others, a person's mind and heart are refined a thousand times. In other words, the time needed for a person to achieve any mental or emotional insight is reduced a thousand times due to the act of kindness. For example, academic or emotional coping that is meant to take one thousand hours will be shortened to one hour. From a cosmic perspective, kindness

to others as part of repairing the world (Tikkun Olam) is one of the central channels for realizing what the prophet Isaiah describes in the expression "I, the Lord, will hasten it in its time." The lofty revelations described in the literature of Jewish mysticism, which will be revealed to all humanity in the era of the 'seventh millennium', will be revealed more speedily thanks to good deeds. ■

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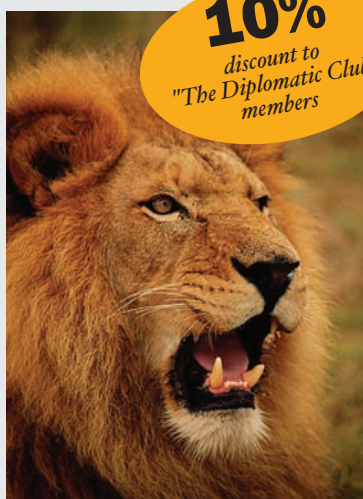
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## ALYN HOSPITAL WHEELS OF LOVE CHARITY RIDE

We at GVA Cornerstone believe we have a responsibility to give back to the community which provides us with so many opportunities. This week will be participate above 500 cyclists from Israel and around the world in the 5 day annual Alyn Hospital "Wheels of Love" charity bike ride ...a distance of 300 kilometers. Alyn is one of the world's leading specialists in the active and intensive rehabilitation of children who suffer from congenital birth defects, debilitating muscular and neuromuscular diseases and disabilities caused by the trauma of terrorism, accidents, fires and cancer treatment. Over the past five years, it has been privilege to come to know many of the dedicated staff and volunteers there who work miracles for one grateful family at a time. Year after year, the ride has exceeded its fundraising goal, topping \$3 million in 2007.



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## The Ambassador of French Cuisine... is in Israel!

When talking about top-notch culinary masterpieces, we can not start the conversation without talking about the extraordinary gourmet Cuisine of the French chef, Maurice Muniger.

Chef Maurice Mugnier was born in Lyon, France, the capital of gastronomy, and fell in love with the magical wonders of the French culinary. At the age of 17 years old his talent was discovered and he was appointed as an intern at the prestigious restaurant "Paul Bocuse". During the following years He specialized as a finger-food artist and was hired by the most exclusive restaurants in Germany, England and France.

At the age of 25, after achieving wide recognition he decided to travel to...Israel! While touring Jerusalem he met the head of the famous "King David" Hotel who offered Maurice to stay as the manager of the Hotel's prestigious restaurant. Maurice agreed...and his romance with Israel start. Few years later, the word about the young talented chef spread and in 1995 chef Mugnier was appointed as the head chef of the French embassy in Israel. There, he pampered

the guests that came from all over the world and introduce them with the outstanding cuisine he developed.

After 12 years as the French Embassy head Chef, Maurice decided to share his art with the local clients as well. He met the professional Israeli caterer Mr. Rafael Taragan and the magical symbioses created a rare combination of the European sophistication with the local kitchen. In 2006 they established the specialized catering company: "Mugnier Food Design".

Mugnier Food Design " " catering specializes in personal tailoring of an event that is precisely matched to the clients " " needs and desires

"Mugnier Food Design" catering specializes in personal tailoring of an event that is precisely matched to the clients needs and desires: from a festive and exclusive cocktail, or a dreamy breakfast to a complete, pampering chef's meals.

Today, "Mugnier food design: is the first choice of many private and business clients. Among the clients who chose "Mugnier" are: Mercedes, BMW, Jaguar, L'Oreal, Louis Vuitton, BNP Paris Bank, "Davis Cup" management, International Bank of Israel (FIBI), the Hebrew university, swatch and many more.

# TIME TO INVEST IN ART



MOSHE CASTEL (1909-1991), 'THE ROAD TO SAFED', 1940's, Oil on canvas, 80x100 cm.  
Original frame choosing by Moshe Castel. Confirmed Authenticity.  
Estimation: \$160,000-200.000

This painting will be offered for sale in our upcoming auction on the 17th of December 2008.

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