



A Newsletter of the Melton Centre for Jewish Education
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

BRACHOT

The Hebrew University has recently granted tenure to three Melton Centre faculty members: Drs. Zvi Bekerman, Michael Gillis, and Marc Silverman. Mazal Tov!

Zvi Bekerman joined the Melton Centre in 1996, and is currently Director of the Melton Digital Media Unit. His main academic interests lie in the study of cultural, ethnic and national identity, including identity processes and negotiation during intercultural encounters, in formal/informal learning contexts and in computer-mediated environments.

Michael Gillis joined the Centre in 1994, and is currently Educational Director of the Revivim Program. His teaching and research interests include teaching rabbinic literature, the theory of interpretation, teaching other faith traditions, the philosophy of Jewish education and the thought of Emmanuel Levinas.

Marc Silverman joined Melton in 1987, and currently heads the research project on Israel as a Resource in Jewish Education (IRJE). His main areas of academic interest are contemporary Jewish cultural and educational trends and the role of Jewish tradition and Israel in them; and educational thought and curriculum theory, especially progressive/radical approaches within them.

Memory, History and Education: Israelis, Jews and Palestinians, in the First Two Decades of Statehood

By Prof. Adel Mana
& Prof. Dalia Ofer

A series of academic meetings between historians and educators – Israeli Palestinians and Jews, and West Bank Palestinians – entitled *Shared Histories*, brought starkly to the fore the different narratives of each group and the imperative to listen, understand and acknowledge the narrative of the other. In subsequent discussions, we resolved to share this important experience with our graduate students: educators, students of education and students of Contemporary Jewry.

Our goals were three-fold: a) To create an academic environment in which intricate issues of memory and history amongst Israelis, Jews and Palestinians, could be studied and discussed with rigor and honesty. b) To study different approaches to the writing of history, and to examine the role of collective memory in shaping the writing and understanding of the current national narratives. c) To discuss the meaning and implications of conflicting memories among Israelis for the teaching of history in both the Jewish and Palestinian school systems.

The course discussed the theoretical issues of problems of historiography, oral history and methodology of interviewing, theories concerning the construction of personal and collective memory in modern societies and nation states, and the role of history in the school system – both as a source of general knowledge and as a tool for instilling national and humanistic values. These critical perspectives were applied to discussions of the war of 1948 and the refugee problem within the borders of Israel, the mass immigration to Israel 1948-1951, the Holocaust, the infiltration of Palestinian refugees into Israel until the war of 1956, military rule, and the events at Kfar Qasem. Themes related to education were part of the discussion of each subject.

The seminar made extensive use of the internet site provided by the Hebrew University, which served as a forum for further discussion of issues raised in the



classroom, and the airing and critical examination of many social, cultural and ideological conventions.

It also became a venue for multi-disciplinary expressions, including poems or articles students encountered in other courses that were relevant to the discussion. Comments were both scholarly rich and deeply personal, and reflected in a meaningful way the three dimensions of the seminar: the personal and the collective in relation to memory and the agents of memory; historical research and historiography; and confrontation with the educational thinking of the students.

It is important to note that many of the students are involved in educational activities, either as elementary or high-school teachers, teachers of teachers, or as informal educators. They addressed different disciplines such as history, literature, sociology, political science and mid Eastern studies. Some of the students were able to read Arabic and took advantage of this skill in reading Palestinian newspapers and other sources.

As teachers we experienced our own enthusiasm and that of the students in studying the subject. We experienced our pain and tolerance and that of the students, as well as a strong resolve to examine and re-examine conventions and ideological perspectives. In retrospect, we felt that our goal of reaching critical thinking and a genuine dialogue between the students was truly achieved.

Melton Faculty Around the World

The Melton Centre's International Advisory Board

Jeffrey Mahemoff
Chair (Melbourne, Australia)

Natalie Wasserman Barkan
(Ramat Efal, Israel)

Isaac Bloch
(Herzliya Pituach, Israel)

Jonathan Brodie
(Washington D.C., USA)

Peter Joseph
(New York, USA)

Charles Perlow
(Pittsburgh, USA)

Gerald Rothman
(London, Great Britain)

Joseph Steiner
(Toronto, Canada)

Upcoming

Sustained Peace Educational Efforts for Social Cohesion in International Conflict and Post-Conflict Societies

Together with The Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace of the Hebrew University, and Stranmillis University College of Queen's University, Belfast, the Centre will host a 3-day conference on Peace Educational Efforts in which 23 scholars from 9 countries will participate. The conference will take place at Mount Scopus in June.

Correction:

Melton graduate, Dr. Alex Sinclair, is Chair of the Education Department of the JTS, and not as stated in the December 2004 Kol HaMerkaz. Our apologies.



Zvi Bekerman spoke on *Challenging Theoretical Perspectives in Peace Education* at the conference on "Inclusive Education for an Inclusive Cyprus", organized by the Cypriot Department of Education and held in Cyprus University in March 2005.



Steven M. Cohen talked on *Gender Variations in the Status of Conservative Rabbis* to the New York Jewish Women's Foundation, and on *Modern Orthodoxy in Israel and the US* for Edah at the JCC Manhattan in November 2004; on *New Trends in American Jewish Identity* to the Wexner Israel Fellows at Harvard University in December 2004; and gave the Keynote Address at the Community Summit on Affiliation of the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, entitled *Reaching the Moderately Affiliated* in April 2005. In January 2005, he was a Scholar in Residence in Temple Beth EL, Chicago, IL.



Howard Deitcher gave a seminar for Bialik College Bible teachers in Melbourne, Australia, in August 2004; spoke on *From Prince to Leader - The Story of Moses' Development* at the RAVSAK Conference for Community Day Schools in Irvine, California, and on *Exploring Theological Issues with Children* at the conference on "Challenges of Modernity in Jewish Education" in Florida in January 2005. In April, he spoke on *The Seder as a Model for Raising Children* for the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University in Toronto, Canada, and on *The Pain, Power and Courage of Prayer: I Samuel 1* at the Seminar for Jewish Educators of the Association for Jewish Life in Pittsburgh, PA.



Tova Hartman spoke on *Roles, Rules and Responsa: Rabbinic Reactions to Increased Women's Participation in Public Life* at the Edah Conference in New York in February, 2005, and on *Loyal Daughters and Liberated Women: An Interfaith Discussion* at Brandeis University, in March.



Marc Hirshman was the Stanley H. Arffa Visiting Professor in Judaic Studies at Yale University in February, 2005, where he gave three public lectures entitled *Beginning with Aleph: Children, Late-Learning Adults and Converts, Oral Learning as Revelatory Mimesis: Alternative Approaches in Light of Plotinus and Origen, and Torah Study: Memorizing, Retention and Motivation*, and three seminars on *A Close Study of Babylonian Talmud Eruvin 53a-55a*.



Gabriel Horenczyk gave a two-day workshop on *A Social Constructivist Approach to Jewish Identity* at the Annual Meeting of Jewish Teachers in Buenos Aires, Argentina in July 2004; and presented a paper on *The Complexity of Acculturation Orientations and of their Assessment* at the XVII International Congress of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology, X'ian, China, in August.



Zeev Mankowitz gave a short course on *Issues in the Study of the Holocaust* at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, in August 2004, and gave the Annual Cape Town Holocaust Centre Lecture on *From Holocaust to Homeland: The Relationship of the Shoah to the Establishment of the State of Israel* in September.



Dalia Ofer gave the Annual Pearl A. and George M. Zeltzer Lecture on Women and Judaism, entitled *Motherhood Under Siege* at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI; and organized a panel at the AJS Conference in December 2004 on 'The Telling and Retelling of Holocaust Testimonies in Israel: History and Memory' in which 3 PhD graduates she had supervised presented their research. In January 2005, she gave the George Mosse Lecture at the University of Berlin, entitled *The Politics of Remembrance of the Holocaust in Israel*; and in April, gave the David and Sara Rabin Lecture on *Class, Gender and Authority in East European Ghettos*, and a teachers' workshop on *Gender and the Holocaust*, both at Michigan State University.



Alex Pomson spoke on *Getting Personal with Professional Development: The case of short-term trips to Israel for Diaspora educators* (together with L. Grant), and on *Cultivating Community in Day Schools* (together with R. Schnoor & D. Ross), both at the Network for Research in Jewish Education, Baltimore, MD, in June 2004; and on *Documenting and Using Data on the Impact of Jewish Education* (together with E. Cohen), at the Annual Conference of the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education, Boston, in October.



Shaul Stampfer gave a paper on *Changing Male-Female Relations in Eastern Europe* at the Orthodox Forum in New York in March, 2005; and on *The Influence of Hasidism on the Jewish Family* (in Russian) in Moscow.

Melton Centre International Advisory Board

The International Advisory Board of the Melton Centre met in Jerusalem in mid-March for three days of fruitful discussions. In opening the Board meetings, Professor Seymour Fox, Director of Programs of the Mandel Foundation and co-founder of the Melton Centre, spoke of the world-wide dearth of academics in Jewish education and of the place of the Melton Centre at the forefront of academic as well as practical involvement in the field. He spoke of the crucial role of community leaders in bringing their unique perspectives on the needs of the field to deliberations on

the development of the profession; praised the commitment of the Board to the further growth of the Melton Centre; and called for strengthening the partnership between community leaders and Jewish education professionals the world over. Over the following three days, the Board and Melton faculty explored ways of enhancing the Centre's role in promoting the collaboration of lay leaders and Jewish education professionals, directions for the further development of the Centre, and strategies for meeting the Centre's needs.

Cultural Education for Cultural Sustainability

In December 2004, the Centre sponsored the Founding Conference of the CE <=> CS Network, an International Association of Scholars studying Cultural Education and Cultural Sustainability. Chaired by Drs. Zvi Bekerman and Ezra Kopelowitz, the 3-day conference addressed the role of formal, non-formal and virtual educational practices in identity construction and cultural sustenance, from a range of theoretical

perspectives, and in relation to a host of diaspora, minority and indigenous populations the world over. The papers presented at the conference – by scholars from Israel, the USA, Canada, Bulgaria, Australia, the UK, Cyprus, China, and Korea – have been accepted for publication as a volume by Lawrence Earlbaum Associates, who have also expressed interest in launching a new journal devoted to CE<=>CS.

Departmental Seminars

- In December 2004, Ms. Arella Yedgar spoke on her PhD research on *The Place of the Biblical Story in Shaping the Religious Personality in Our Time*; and Professor Stuart Charmé (Rutgers University, New Jersey) spoke on *Authenticity and Modern Jewish Identity*.
- In March 2005, Dr. David Gurwin (City University New York) spoke on *"Bein Kodesh LeChol": Primary Sources in a History Lesson*.
- In April, Dr. Brenda Bacon (Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies, Jerusalem) spoke on *A Gendered and Theological Reading of Three Curricula for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.
- In June, Professor Daniel Pekarsky (University of Wisconsin, Madison) spoke on *Education and the Challenge of Meaning*.

Visiting Faculty

This is the 4th year that the Melton Centre has invited a visiting scholar for 2-3 weeks to share his new research with our faculty and to participate in the activities of the Centre. This year the Centre hosted 2 visiting scholars in December 2004.

Prof. Stuart Z. Charmé, Professor of Religion at Rutgers University, New Jersey, presented a paper to Melton's Departmental Seminar, in which he traced the development of his interest in issues of identity and authenticity. Melton doctoral student, Katka Reszke, responded to Prof. Charmé, relating his approach to authenticity to her doctoral research on the identity of young Jewish Polish adults.

Prof. Joseph Reimer from Brandeis University, whose area of expertise is non-formal Jewish education, gave 3 lectures to Melton faculty and advanced students. His lecture to the faculty focused on the institutional history of the Hillel movement on American university campuses; his lecture to Melton's Doctoral Seminar discussed his tutelage under Prof. Erikson of Harvard University, and focused on Erikson's methods and autobiographical reflections in his approach to behavioral psychology; and his public lecture to the Jerusalem Forum discussed the interaction between formal and non-formal education, and the training of personnel for non-formal education. In addition to these lectures, Prof. Reimer met individually with members of faculty, doctoral students and Senior Educators.



○ Professor Seymour Fox



○ Howard Deitcher, Isaac Bloch, Gerald Rothman, Jeffrey Mahemoff, H.U. President Prof. Menachem Megidor, Joseph Steiner, Natalie Barkan & Jonathan Brodie



○ CE <=> CS Conference participants



○ Dr. Alex Pomson, Prof. Joseph Reimer & Dr. Jonathan Mirvis

Research at the Melton Centre

At the end of May, Melton faculty and doctoral students met for a full day workshop focused on the research agenda of the Centre and its individual members. Dr. Howard Deitcher opened the meeting with a review of current developments at the Centre and elaborated briefly on his vision for the future. Professor Immanuel Etkes then discussed his research into Lithuanian yeshivot in the 19th Century, and the critical balance between (the educator's) authority and (the student's) autonomy – the central axes of the educational process. The 45 workshop participants then broke up into three groups, each of which received updates from two faculty members and one doctoral student on the state of their current research. The

afternoon sessions were devoted to reports on two empirical research projects. Dr. Hagit Wolf and Dr. Gabriel Horenczyk reported on the findings of Hagit's quantitative research on Israelis who define themselves as 'traditional' for her doctoral dissertation entitled *Perceptions of the In-Group and Group Identification: The Case of Jewish Identity*, co-supervised by Prof. Dov Schwartz from Bar-Ilan University; and Bruria Samet and Dr. Tova Hartman reported on the findings of Bruria's qualitative research on sex education in Israeli yeshivot and ulpanot for her doctoral dissertation entitled *Family Life Education in Religious School Systems in Israel*, co-supervised by Professor Rivka Bar-Yosef of the Hebrew University.



Bruria Samet & Dr. Tova Hartman



Dr. Hagit Wolf & Dr. Gabriel Horenczyk

Bialik College, Melbourne

In May, Dr. Alick Isaacs spent a week in Bialik College in Melbourne working on the design of a new Jewish History curriculum for Tenth Grade students. Over the past few years, the staff at Bialik have been working with Dr. Howard Deitcher designing a new Bible curriculum which is now being implemented in the school. The remaining component of their Tenth Grade Jewish Studies program as it stands, is dedicated to teaching the history of the Holocaust, Zionism and Israel.

The object of the Jewish History project is to update the school's approach to the teaching of Israel in a way that engages issues raised by more recent events in the State's history, and addresses the school's sense that the

classical Zionist narrative currently being taught is no longer convincing or compelling for young CNN-watching students growing up in Australia today.

During the course of Alick's week in the school, he met intensively with senior teachers to begin the process of designing a new approach to Israel education that integrates the teaching of Israel into the wider conversation of contemporary Judaism. By drawing on examples from Israel's modern history, the curriculum will broadly explore issues such as the role of women in Judaism, the meaning of 'sacred land', conflict (internal and external) in Jewish law, religious and secular statehood, history and culture, multiculturalism, Judaism and democracy, and others.



Dr. Howard Deitcher opening the workshop



Professor Immanuel Etkes

The Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School, Washington

The Melton Centre has recently embarked on a new project with the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School of Washington. The aims of the program are to develop a Jewish Studies curriculum that will serve the pluralist nature of a community school, will maintain standards of excellence in Jewish Studies on a par with General Studies, and will allow for the development of a cohesive Jewish Studies program from the lower school through to the high school.

In December 2004, program director Dr. Zeev Mankowitz and program coordinator Stephen Markowitz, visited the school and, in conjunction with the school leadership and Jewish Studies teachers, are currently formulating a long term work plan that will include a series of workshops to be run at the school and in Israel which will address the Jewish Studies curriculum initially in the middle school. This project is part of a research project at the Melton Centre that explores issues of community and Jewish education.

THE MELTON CENTRE FOR JEWISH EDUCATION
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM
Director: Dr. Howard Deitcher
Associate Director: Ms. Carmen Sharon

The Melton Centre for Jewish Education
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Mount Scopus Campus, Jerusalem 91905, Israel.

Tel: +972-2-588-2033/34 Fax: +972-2-532-2211
Email: mamelton@mscc.huji.ac.il
Website: <http://melton.huji.ac.il/>

kol hamerkaz is published by the Melton Centre for Jewish Education of the Hebrew University
Editor: Vivienne Burstein Art Direction: Michael Dinitz Design: Tal Stern