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

The Melton Centre for Jewish Education

## From the Director: Prof. Jonathan Cohen



I am most pleased to be writing to you as the new Director of the Melton Centre for Jewish Education for the first time. I began my academic life here at Melton as an (ostensibly!) One Year Student in the academic year of 1969-70. Ever since, I have been connected with the Centre, either as a student, curriculum writer/coordinator or teacher/researcher, in one way or another. Among other courses – I have had the privilege and the pleasure of teaching the required Introduction to Philosophy of Jewish Education quite a number of times over the years. This has allowed me to welcome the ever new waves of students that have enrolled in our MA program since I started teaching in the early 90's – and this, as you can imagine, has been a source of great satisfaction. They are very fine students indeed, combining keen intellectual curiosity and acumen with a passion for education and social change.

During this past academic year, we have remembered the great teachers of the past who gave the Melton Centre its unique character. We are also continuing and hopefully expanding existing programs that we value greatly, and undertaking new initiatives for the future. In January, we held an international conference in memory of **Prof. Michael Rosenak, z"l** entitled "Continuity and Creativity in Jewish Education." The conference reflected "Mike's" dual concern with visions of Jewish education as well as with its practical enactment (see article on page 2). The Conference made a deep impact on all participants, as I can testify from many comments made to me, and my colleagues, in its course and afterward. It was an occasion for heartfelt rededication to the ends and purposes for which the Melton Centre was established.

This past April, we held an evening in memory of **Dr. Zeev Mankowitz, z"l**. Close friends, academic colleagues and students spoke beautifully and profoundly of Zeev's groundbreaking academic

achievements, his unique charisma and authenticity as a teacher and his endearing personal qualities as a friend and overall *mensch* (see article on page 3). I, myself, was very affected, as were many others, by the seriousness and genuineness of the sentiments expressed.

We take inspiration from these gatherings in order to carry forward partnerships, programs and activities that we have always valued and continue to cherish. One such partnership is the Coalition with the two other Melton Centers established by **Sam Melton, z"l** – at the Jewish Theological Seminary and at Ohio State University (see article on page 2).

One of the core values of the Melton Centre, and an integral part of its vision, together with the Jewish humanism exemplified by the life and work of Michael Rosenak and Zeev Mankowitz, has always been a commitment to pluralism in Jewish education. The Melton Centre is not associated with any of the denominations of contemporary Judaism – it rather seeks to be an academic and educational resource for the cultivation of plural visions of Jewish culture and community. This orientation is embodied in our continued partnership with the Hebrew Union College (HUC), Jerusalem, by way of our joint MA program in Pluralistic Jewish Education. HUC, although organically connected to Reform and Progressive Judaism, is typified by a pluralistic student body and faculty, originating from all communities and ideologies that make up the fabric of Israeli society. The program brings 15-18 outstanding new students to the Melton Centre every two years. Each new cohort enriches our student body with a high-level group of intellectually serious and educationally committed young people. I wish to thank **Prof. Michal Muszkat-Barkan** and her colleagues at HUC for all they have done to develop and enhance this most important program.

In addition, we are currently conducting discussions with representatives of other institutions associated with modern Orthodoxy and the Conservative movement – in the hope of partnering with them to develop new academic and in-service programs.

In dwelling on the value of pluralism for the Melton Centre, I wish to announce the recent publication of *Speaking in the Plural*, Volume 14 in the Studies in Jewish Education Series, published jointly by Magnes and HUC Press. Congratulations to the editors, **Dr. Michael Gillis**, **Prof. Michal Muszkat-Barkan** and **Dr. Alex Pomson**, and the writers on a superb volume that once again underscores the Melton Centre's commitment to Jewish pluralism - in Jerusalem, in Israel and in the Jewish world at large.

*continued on page 7*



# Jewish Education: Continuity for Creativity

## Conference and Limmud in Memory of Professor Michael Rosenak

Dr. Avinoam Rosenak

The conference on “Jewish Education: Continuity for Creativity” in memory of my father and teacher **Prof. Michael Rosenak**, was held this past January at the Hebrew University under the auspices of the Melton Centre and chaired by **Prof. Jonathan Cohen**. Known as “Mike” to all his friends, colleagues and students, the mention of his name throughout the conference evoked much affection, love, admiration and longing for the teacher who had such a presence in the lives of the participants and whose passing has left a deep and painful void.

The conference opened with greetings and warm words in Mike’s memory by **Prof. Menachem Ben Sasson**, President of the Hebrew University and **Prof. Moshe Tatar**, Head of the School of Education. This was followed by the launching of **The Michael Rosenak Jewish Education Library** and the publication of the first volume in the series: *Teaching Jewish Culture: Values, Authenticity and Relevance* by Michael Rosenak (edited by **Dr. Asher Shkedi**).

The evening sessions reflected a more academic and theoretical perspective. Prof. Cohen said “the evening was characterized by the leading scholars, educational figures and heads of academic institutions in Israel and abroad who spoke about new visions for Jewish education in the 21st century – trying to recapture Mike’s own unique vision of a living, relevant Jewish humanism and each speaking out of a deep affinity and friendship for him.” It was an emotional evening, in scope and in depth, and in its complex connection, so characteristic of Mike, between theory and practice, academia and education, to research and the needs of society.

The second day of the conference, however, expressed Mike’s unique pedagogic orientation and was held, for the most part, in parallel sessions with master teachers and educators engaging in interactive study of Jewish texts and subjects in the by now well-known “Limmud” style.

The conference closed with warm personal words from Mike’s very close friend, **Avraham Infeld** (President Emeritus of Hillel International) and an evening of song led by **Shuli Natan**, that included the beautiful song “*Yerushalayim shel Zahav*”, that Mike so loved.

Melton’s wonderful staff were responsible for the outstanding orchestration of the conference and special thanks go to **Carmela Hariri**, **Vivienne Burstein** and **Tlalit Ganz** who were involved in all stages of the organization, from start to finish.

[Click here for the full program of the conference.](#)



Dr. Avinoam Rosenak addresses the conference

## Textuality and Orality in Jewish Tradition and Education

This year the Melton Coalition Conference took place at the Melton Center in Jerusalem, and centered on the topic of “Textuality and Orality in Jewish Tradition and Education.” Over the course of three days scholars and educators from the three Melton Centers established by Sam Melton z”l – Hebrew University, JTS and Ohio State University – as well as other universities, presented engaging and fascinating papers on the Textual and Oral qualities of the Bible, the Talmud, Kabbalistic Texts and more modern Jewish writings and their educational implications.

The papers were on a particularly high level and we anticipate their publication in a new volume of the Studies in Jewish Education series by the Hebrew University’s Magnes Press, in partnership with the Jewish Education Series of JTS Press.

[Click here for the program of the conference on the Melton Centre website.](#)

[Click here to view the conference sessions.](#)



Prof. Matt Goldish



## Remembering Zeev Mankowitz

Dr. Sharon Kangisser Cohen

There are many aspects that make up an individual: those which are displayed publicly, those which are reserved for a select few, and those which are reserved for the self alone. When writing about Zeev Mankowitz (ז"ל) I am aware that my vision of him is based on my own experience, the aspects which he revealed to me and to those around him. Nothing can encapsulate the entire man; I can only attempt to convey a few features which I remember and feel are meaningful to share. On meeting Zeev, you couldn't help but notice his dignified manner, his meticulous dress, the smell of his pipe, his appreciation of fine food and chocolate, and his passion for books. A visit to his office or his home and his book collection show you a true intellectual. He read widely and deeply, traversing disciplines and periods. He was a gifted teacher, an erudite orator and a principled yet not dogmatic man. For me, Zeev was many things: a teacher, a colleague, a friend, and one could say that eventually he became a member of my family. Over the years, as we both moved through life, our relationship and connection changed. When I first met him as a student, his name and reputation preceded him. I felt privileged to study with him, learn from him, and be guided by him in my academic work. One of the key elements of his teaching was the recognition of humanity in history. He treated the protagonists of his historical work with empathy and care; he was not driven by judgment nor did he want to create grand theories or statements, rather he sought to uncover, reveal and appreciate the complexity of the human condition, particularly of those who were thrust into an incomprehensible reality and managed to survive the unsurvivable. I appreciated his humility when exploring the past and assessing the behavior and reactions of those who lived through historical moments. In the course of our collaboration on various publications, I was always amazed at his insight, his relentless search for the correct use of words and phrases, and his reverential treatment of the subject matter we were dealing with.

A central theme of his work and contemplation was the relationship between memory and forgetting. Through this prism he taught me about the complexity of the human experience, particularly how individuals live with and make meaning of their past. This intellectual endeavor manifested itself in his own persona, in his relationships and in the way he experienced life. The outline of Zeev's own tragic past was known to most of us; yet it was silently present and hardly ever spoken

about. Zeev's illness was likewise hidden. While his physical suffering was obvious and palpable, it did not interrupt his work, his relationships or his sensitivity. Even though it was not easy for him to receive visitors, he never turned visitors away out of concern for them. On visiting Zeev during the last years of his life, I witnessed the battle of a man against a terminal illness; a cruel, unrelenting sickness that challenged him each and every day, and yet an illness which he claimed to respect because of its "cleverness". Zeev was not alone in his battle, he was cared for lovingly by Bella and surrounded by close family and friends. During those years, I would always visit him with some trepidation, not knowing what condition I would find him in. Yet, after a few minutes in his company, my anxiety and fears dissipated as we began to work, talk and laugh. Laughter and communication vanquished illness for the short time we met, and I always left his home feeling enriched. Zeev succeeded in making me forget his pain and struggle as I engaged with the brilliant and caring man that he was. He fought hard not to be defined by his illness and continued to plan for new projects through which he hoped to make a contribution to Jewish history and the Jewish people.

Throughout my professional and academic activities, Zeev advised me, directed me and always gave me honest advice. As a close friend, he listened empathically to my personal issues and concerns and always gave me meaningful guidance. He was usually correct, and I will miss the privilege of his insight.

Zeev was also an optimist. He was blessed with the ability to see the good in life and in people. His optimism seemed to buffer him or allow him to forget the cruelty of his illness and his pain. His generosity enriched me and helped me to recognize the goodness in the world. Through his confidence in me, I gained confidence in myself. Thus, for me, Zeev was not only a gifted teacher of history but a dedicated and inspiring teacher of life. In his work on "She'erit HaPletah," Zeev honored and marveled at the endurance of people who, despite great loss and suffering, continued to put their faith in the human project and rebuild their lives. It seems that history informed his own outlook or that the fortitude of these remarkable people resonated with his own life experience.

May his memory be blessed.



## Wovite Worku, PhD: An Amazing Journey

Rena Ashkenazi

When Wovite Worku received her PhD at the recent graduation ceremony of the School of Education at Hebrew University's Mt. Scopus Campus, it was an amazing highlight on the remarkable journey she has undertaken so far, both personally and professionally.

Born near Gondar in Ethiopia, Wovite aged 10, together with her mother and seven older siblings, made their way on foot through Sudan to make Aliya during Operation Moses, in 1984, a journey that took two years. Unfortunately, a few years after they arrived in Israel, her mother passed away. Wovite was lovingly looked after by her older siblings. She spent her high school years as a boarder at Yemin Orde and after graduating, did her national service as a teaching assistant at a school in Safed. This was to be her first step on the road to an interesting and fulfilling career in education.

With her national service completed, Wovite registered for a BA in Informal Education at Bar Ilan University, followed by a Teacher's Certificate and an MA in Educational Administration. Throughout her studies Wovite worked in the field, first as a counselor with at-risk youth, then as a facilitator at the Leadership Center for Ethiopians in the education system, where she trained teachers how to deal with youth and multiculturalism. For a short period she managed a neighborhood center in Ramle for the Ethiopian community, before going back to work with Ethiopian youth on the Ethiopian National Project sponsored by the Ethiopian Community, the Jewish Agency, Joint-Israel, the New Israel Fund, Keren Hayesod and the Jewish Federations of North America.

With two degrees in hand, Wovite's remarkable journey continued with her being chosen to participate in the prestigious Mandel Leadership course, an experience she defines as life-changing. She then returned to academia to do her PhD, to further her research on Ethiopian youth – a subject she holds so close to her heart – choosing to focus her research on Ethiopian youth and the connection between ethnic identity, perceived discrimination and the drop-out rate from the educational system. In her search for an advisor, Wovite was fortunate to find herself in the office of **Prof. Gabriel Horenczyk** who specializes in issues of acculturation and adaptation of immigrants in general, and Israeli Olim in particular, at the School of Education at Hebrew University. They found common interests in the study of factors associated with “hidden dropout” among Ethiopian immigrants in Israel and she immediately began her research under his supervision. As Gaby was director of the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at the time, Wovite soon found herself in the supportive environment of Melton, which she describes as a second home. It proved to be a place that enabled personal and professional growth and development, providing her with ongoing support and advice. Wovite's face lights up and her enthusiasm bubbles over when she speaks about her experience at Melton and carrying out her research with Prof. Horenczyk. She is also grateful for the emotional and practical support she received from **Eti Gershon-Cohen**, administrator of Student Affairs, and **Anat Haim-Jani**, then-administrative assistant at Melton. Her wish is for all doctoral students to be fortunate enough to study in such an environment.

Wovite's research revealed interesting findings indicating a connection between drop-out rate and discrimination, and between drop-out rate and support from parents and teachers. Recommendations have been made to develop intervention programs for teachers to prevent this discrimination (both hidden and overt), and to provide tools to increase parents' involvement in their children's education.



Wovite Worku at graduation on Mt. Scopus





Throughout the years that Prof. Horenczyk worked with Wovite, he was deeply impressed by her willingness and motivation to study and develop further, as well as her strong commitment to education, in general, and the education of youth from the Ethiopian community, in particular – through research and work in the field.

Wovite's research reflects her many years in the field. She feels that the courses at The School of Education, so varied in scope, gave her an interesting perspective on her work in the field and taught her how to be both creative and critical. In addition, Melton's work with a wide range of communities around the Jewish world provides a unique way of dealing with different cultures and has provided Wovite with new ideas and tools.

Obviously our discussion led to the situation of Ethiopian Olim in Israel today and their recent demonstrations against discrimination. Naturally, Wovite has strong feelings about the issues at hand, both individually and for the community as a whole. She has no doubt that changes in the situation in the country have to come from the top down, as well as through education from an early age.

Wovite for the past 13 years has been the national supervisor for new immigrant at-risk youth at the Ministry of Education, a field she loves and in which she is dedicated to making a difference. In addition, she teaches one day a week at the David Yellin College of Education; is a mentor to two talented Ethiopian students through the organization "Olim BeYahad"; and volunteers on the Parents' Patrol in her hometown of Nes Ziona. She is married to Yossi, an educator, who also arrived in Israel on Operation Moses and they have two daughters, Linoy (12) and Tehila (8.5).

In 2013 Wovite was the recipient of the Matanel Prize for Education awarded by the Van Leer Institute. Her dream is to continue to strengthen the connection between academia and the field, to continue to carry out research and develop in her career and to make a difference in the education system to ensure equal opportunities for all and that the voice of the weak is heard. At Melton, we all look forward to hearing about the next stages of Wovite's amazing journey.

## For Teachers with Love: Launch of Dr. Ora Zohar's Book

Israel Sykes



Dr. Ora Zohar

On March 15 the Melton Centre, together with the School of Education at Hebrew University, held a launch for Dr. Ora Zohar's recent book: *For Teachers with Love – Helping Educators become Significant*.

Between 1977 and 2005 Ora served on the faculty of the School of Education, where she founded and directed the Center for Staff Development and the Principal's Center. During these years, as described in the book itself and during the event by former Melton director **Alan Hoffmann** and current director **Prof. Jonathan Cohen**, staff at the Center brought their unique approach to professional development to many Jewish schools across the globe that were adopting Melton's new Jewish Studies curricula. These included schools in England, Australia, South Africa, the United States, Canada, Mexico and Hungary.

During the evening, participants were reminded of Ora's uniquely engaging style in her introductory remarks. **Prof. Moshe Tatar**, director of the School of Education, and **Dr. Michael Gillis**, director of Teacher Certification programs, praised the book, its significance and its ongoing relevance. In addition, former students and colleagues spoke lovingly of the profound impact that Ora's work had upon them as educators.

All in all, the book launch was a moving and well-deserved tribute to the immense value and impact of Dr. Ora Zohar's life's work. *For Teachers with Love* is already becoming a valued resource in Jewish schools and in teacher training programs, enabling new generations to benefit from the enduring significance of Ora's practice wisdom.



## Farewell to Dr. Marc Silverman

Haim Aronovitz

On May 11th we marked the retirement of Dr. Marc Silverman from the Mercaz, the Melton Centre with which he has been associated for the past 45 years and more.

It took this occasion for Marc himself to realize that he had served as an assistant to (then) Dr. Mike Rosenak, preparing background readings for an early course way back in the 1960's... and was to continue his involvement over the coming decades as teacher and project coordinator, teaching a number of courses that became classic fare for decades of Melton graduates.

Most particularly, Marc shared the educational philosophy of his own model, Janusz Korczak, with many hundreds of students taking part in a classic course that brought honor and fame to the university. He also instructed hundreds of students in the pathways of Zionist ideology and the Israeli education system.

Always, Marc conveyed his deep commitment to his students, and this quality came out most strongly during this evening in Marc's honor, when accolades



Marc and Orna Silverman

from former students were read and broadcast from across the Jewish world.

Uniquely, the members of the Hallel Choir, of which he is a beloved member, came to sing with and for him, as a gesture of warmth and love that matched the warm atmosphere of this special tribute and farewell.

Marc: teacher, educator, but above all, *adam* - person - stressed by all those who have worked with and learned with Marc over the decades. We wish him much pleasure in translating his book on Korczak into English, and enjoying the coming years with his family in tackling all the special projects that he and Orna want to address... *Tam velo nishlam!*

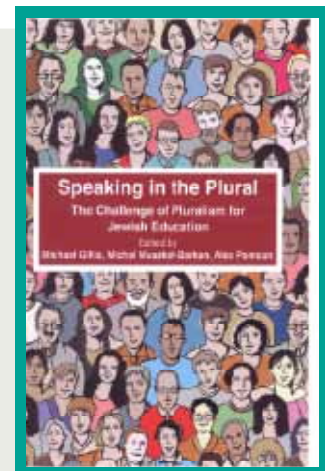
## Speaking in the Plural: The Challenge of Pluralism for Jewish Education

An important collection of articles on pluralism and Jewish education has been recently published under the title "Speaking in the Plural: The Challenge of Pluralism for Jewish Education." The book is published by Magnes Press and its publication was supported jointly by the Melton Centre and Hebrew Union College. It is the fourteenth volume to appear in the series "Studies in Jewish Education" and is edited by **Michael Gillis, Michal Muszkat-Barkan and Alex Pomson**.

The use of the term "pluralism" has become widespread in the context of Jewish education and the articles included in the book are a contribution to our understanding as researchers and educators, and to the development of a language which can deepen educational and research discourse. The volume seeks to mark out some of the educational dilemmas, possible educational aims as well as some of the costs and benefits that arise from the encounter between Jewish education and pluralism.

A number of articles contain reflections on the idea of pluralism, making conceptual distinctions between pluralism and related themes such as tolerance and relativism. Articles in the philosophical section of the book propose a basis for the connection (or opposition) between Jewish education and pluralism. The book's middle section focuses on the theory and pedagogy. It proposes educational theories concerned with pluralism and discusses their pedagogical potential. It also includes the reflections of practitioners whose work, in a variety of educational settings, is animated by a commitment to pluralism and, at the same time, is challenged by it. The last section of the book brings together empirical studies that describe and analyze the practices of pluralistic Jewish education. Bringing together these studies, which represent a wide range of disciplines and approaches, brings into focus the multiple ways of describing and analyzing the expression of, and responses to, pluralism in Jewish education in Israel and abroad.

[Click here to purchase the book.](#)





## MELTON TEAM TRIP

With the start of spring, the Melton Centre's staff, both academic and administrative, left the office for a day to enjoy its annual tiyul, this time to the Ela Valley. **Haim Aronovitz**, colleague and tour educator, shared his extensive knowledge as they walked through the area, enjoyed lunch together and a visit to "Srigim", a boutique beer brewery. Everyone appreciated the beautiful day in the fresh air and the magnificent landscapes in full bloom and of course, the team spirit.



### From the Director:

*(continued from page 1)*

In conclusion, I would like to thank **Prof. Gabriel Horenczyk** for sharing the burdens of leadership with me at the Melton Centre, in his role as Director of Academic Studies. His knowledge and experience (as a former Director of the Centre) have proved most valuable. I would also like to thank **Dr. Alex Pomson, Dr. Alick Isaacs** and **Dr. Sharon Kangisser** – who returned to serve on our faculty as adjunct instructors during the past academic year. I am looking forward to keeping the readers of "Kol HaMercaz" informed as we continue to grow and flourish. We consider you to be our "family circle" and encourage you to view new events and programs on our [Melton website](#).



## ANNOUNCING TWO NEW MELTON MA PROGRAMS

In facing the dynamic and complex Jewish future, the Melton Centre has launched two new and very exciting MA programs.

The first is an MA degree program that combines distance learning with face-to-face instruction. This program is due to begin in March of 2016 with a semester of distance learning, continued during the summer of 2016 with an intense six weeks of study at the Hebrew University, and followed by another semester of distance learning. The course of study, to be taught in the English language, will give Jewish education professionals, both in the formal and informal spheres, an opportunity to widen and deepen their knowledge of the theoretical and practical aspects of Jewish education – in an intense and high-level framework, but without sacrificing their connection to the workplace. We have engaged some of our best teachers for the task and anticipate a robust response to this program. Special thanks go to **Dr. Zvi Bekerman**, the previous Director of the Centre, for creating the conditions for the development of this program, and for facilitating its approval by the Hebrew University's Standing Committee. We also

thank **Dr. Marcelo Dorfsman**, the new coordinator of the program, for all his work in constructing the curriculum and aiding faculty in the development of on-line courses.

The second MA program is a new partnership between the Melton Centre, the School of Social Work and the Rothberg School for Overseas Students. It is an MA in Leadership for Non-Profit Organizations – with a specialty in Jewish Education. Also taught in the English language, it will enable Jewish education professionals – who might otherwise have to study in two institutions in the Diaspora in order to acquire the managerial expertise and content knowledge necessary to direct Jewish non-profits – to advance themselves academically and professionally within one institution that also affords a meaningful Israel experience. There is great enthusiasm for this program among all three partners, and there are early indications of a promising response from the field. We would like to thank **Dr. Jonathan Mirvis** for all the work he has invested to bring this partnership into being.

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