

ABSTRACTS

The Agricultural School in Petach Tikva, headed by Dr. Pickholtz 1912-1925

Yosef Lang

In the course of the ten to twelve years of its existence, the secondary-agricultural school in Petach Tikva exerted an unprecedented influence on the development of education in the Land of Israel. It was the first secondary school established in one of the colonies of the First Aliyah (wave of immigration), preparing the youngsters for work on the land on both the practical and the theoretical level. It was a novel project in two important respects: It was the first time that the establishment of an educational institution was financed by the coloniists themselves, not through the generosity and financial support by Jewish philanthropic groups in the Diaspora (Alliance Israelite Universelle and Hilfsverein), which until then had provided ongoing support to the schools in pre-state Israel. It was only at a later stage that Hovevei Zion and the Zionist Commission for Palestine provided support. This venture was the result of rare cooperation between the peasants and the workers, who, as we know, were not greatly respected in the colonies in general, and in Petach Tikva in particular.

As luck would have it, from the moment it was opened in 1912 until it was shut down in 1922, its principal, the agronomist Eliezer (Yehuda) Pickholtz (Chaniel), had to struggle to keep it going. Moreover, most of the teachers taught for short and specific periods of time, and most teachers had no pedagogic training. Nor did the physical conditions meet the needs of a school with such pretensions. The First World War, which had a disastrous effect on the pre-state Jewish community in Israel, did not give the school a chance, and the students scattered far and wide.

In spite of the harsh circumstances, Pickholtz and the teachers did very good work. The graduates left the school with a satisfactory level of knowledge and were praised for their work habits. The local students

and those from abroad imbued the colony with a fresh spirit; the modern approach to agriculture, the fostering of national education, focusing on the study of Hebrew and universal enlightenment, all appeared to threaten the Petach Tikva conservative circles, which made them object vociferously to the existence of the school. They refused to support it, fearing the students would impinge on the ways of life and cultural ambience in the colony. That is why the school was consigned to oblivion and hardly mentioned in the jubilee books.

Nevertheless the school spearheaded the establishment of agricultural schools in Petach Tikva (the agricultural school in the name of Achad Ha'am, and later also a school of gardening and planting) and in other locations in Israel; this resolved for some time the debates as to the value of agricultural schools in the earlier years of the 20th century.

Art Teaching at the time of Pre-State Israel: Tzvi Goldin combines tradition with innovation

Miri Steinhardt

At the beginning of the 20th century, under the influence of the educational innovations of progressive education, the teachers of drawing abroad rejected the strict compliance to specific rules and the total disregard for the pupils' individual personality. They maintained that the teachers should be permitted to choose the models to be presented in class and also the pace, and the children should be enabled to express themselves and use their imagination. At the time of the 'yishuv' (the pre-state Jewish community), the teaching of drawing as a compulsory subject was included in the curriculum relatively late, as an outcome of the demand of the society and its education system.

One of the teachers who implemented the new approach in the 'yishuv' was Tzvi (Hirsh) Goldin (1893-1972). When he immigrated from Russia in 1929, he had already completed an art school, studied pedagogy and taught drawing in state schools in Riga and Moscow. When he started teaching in this country he still adhered to the traditional conventions, namely making the pupils copy a model, as befit the authoritarian function, fulfilled by the curriculum and the teacher, representing society. However, when he became

acquainted with the atmosphere in the country, he suggested that art should be taught according to the methods proposed by the 'new education', such as group work, and using a child-centered approach, taking into consideration the stages of the children's development and their interests and experiences, relating to them with great sensitivity. In their reminiscences about the teacher Goldin, some of his students mentioned his attitude and qualities, typical of 'a good teacher': his unconventional relationship with his students, perceiving himself as their guide and educator. As an artist, Goldin contributed indirectly to the imparting of cultural values to the 'yishuv', creating the scenery for plays for children and illustrating children's books. In all these ways he shared in the prevalent perception of the school as mediator, promoting the new values: settlement of the country and the image of the 'New Jew' and his culture.

Goldin's innovations can be summed up as follows:

In his writings he combined arguments anchored in psychology, the appreciation of emotions and of creative processes, and the work ethos. His innovations in the methods of teaching art were apparent in the way he combined an interdisciplinary approach with great sensitivity in his attitude to the students and an awareness of the stages in their development. He was influenced by the child-centered approach, in line with that of the 'new education'. He believed in teaching art as a means of educating all the children, not only the gifted.

When he constructed the visual catalog for teachers, he included universal subjects, traditionally used abroad, as well as local ones, to be presented in novel ways. He also wished to bring the students closer to the country's natural environment, its landscapes, and to become acquainted with its visual symbols and traditions, as well as the innovations in its culture. This catalog enabled the Hebrew teachers to foster the students' affinity to their environment and their homeland — an important component of the construction of the social-national image of the revival, gradually creating a national Land of Israel culture and the experience of a local way of life. Thus Goldin, the art teacher, contributed to the process of change, occurring in the education system of the 'yishuv'.

The Educator as an Author:
Books for Children by Eliezer Smoli
Ayelet Gil-Ronen

Eliezer Smoli (1901-1985) was an Israeli author and educator of the Workers Stream. In the course of his life he published dozens of popular books and stories for children. This article deals with two of his books: *Sons of the First Rain* ("Bni HaYoreh" in Hebrew) published in 1937, and *On the way to School* ("BaDerech leBeit HaChinuch"), published in 1953. The study explores Smoli's educational and literary perceptions and the connection between them.

The article focuses on an analysis of the two books, within the context of the author's life and the period in which he was active, coupled with a discussion of several historical and literary issues, arising out of the analysis. The comparative analysis of the two books delves into the way in which literary elements, used by Smoli — the first person plural in which he wrote, his elevated and flowery Hebrew, the abundance of Israeli characters populating his books — are woven into an ideological point of view, revealed also through his educational work. Moreover, the article deals with a sense of "nature within the city" that Smoli created in his books and classrooms and with the way Smoli's ideology was expressed in the historical narrative that he constructed in his books, creating a direct linkage between the Old Testament period and the Zionist return to the Land of Israel. The article concludes by dealing with the way Smoli's literature embodies the methods of progressive education, which he believed in.

A Children's Village in Eretz-Israel — An Exemplary
Educational Project
Yaffa Wolfman

The Children's Village near Givat Hamoreh was an interesting, daring and innovative experiment, praised by prominent educators such as Jean Piaget and Adolphe Ferrière, and described by various Men of Letters in their publications and also in newspaper articles in many countries. However,

in Mandatory Israel there were people who underestimated it and even criticized it vociferously. The article also deals with this glaring difference. The village brought under the same roof various unlikely bedfellows: orphaned youth, survivors of pogroms against Ukrainian Jews; Shneur Zalman Pugatchev, the principal of the village, a charismatic educator, who was engrossed in all the educational innovations in Europe after the First World War, as well as in Jewish thought and Zionist values; and the South African Jewish community offering financial and organizational assistance. All these components created the opportunity for the establishment of this unique educational project.

The children in the village were empowered to govern themselves: they set up committees dealing with all the aspects of their life, such as self-management regarding work, cultural activities, health, supervision of the synagogue, hosting visitors, and disciplinary procedures. According to Pugatchev, the aim was “to educate them to be creative and work hard, adhering to humanist values, and anchored in the community”. Owing to the difficulties of living together permanently, Pugatchev provided them with a vision to aspire to — being part of the pioneers' agricultural endeavors in the valley of Jezreel in particular and contributing to the foundation of the envisaged state of Israel. The educational activities in the valley were intended to impart to the youngsters cultural values and vocational skills. Jewish tradition served as the spiritual component, embodied in the study of Hebrew, the Bible, the history of the Jewish people and their country's geography. They acquired the basic knowledge via individual study and mutual help. The ‘new education’ promoted responsibility, helping and respecting others, and a judicious and fair assessment of one own's qualities. While combining autonomy in educational matters and daily activities together with respect for religious values with emphasis still placed on the all importance of work in order to contribute to the economic development of society. The youth leaders had to serve as a model for the moral as well as dynamic behavior of the youngsters. The problems in the village were to be resolved democratically.

The educational project at the Children's Village was initiated in 1924 and closed in 1931. Pugatchev was able to fulfill a part of his educational dream, and hoped to earn international recognition, with documentation of his methods. Appended to the article is the Hebrew translation of the impressions of the visit to the village by the French Jewish writer of Russian origin, Joseph Kessel.

The Achdut School in Kiryat Motzkin, 1935–1958

Reuven Leibel

Kiryat Motzkin was founded in 1935. The settlers were professionals, merchants and skilled workers, secular, traditional and religious, who wished to establish a homogeneous petit bourgeois community, with a school that would not belong to any of the educational streams in the country. The principal of the Reali High School in Haifa, Dr. Arthur Biram, agreed to take the school under his wing. He appointed the principal, and together with the staff of his school, guided and supervised him, and advised the leaders of the community on educational matters. The school was unique in many of its features: closely bound up with the community, achievement-centered, with emphasis on Jewish studies and Zionist and pioneering values. The school grew rapidly and attracted children from the whole region. It was a public school, from the first to the twelfth grade, owned by the Kiryat Motzkin Cooperative Association. The fees paid by the parents were high, covering most of the costs.

After the establishment of the state the conditions changed. New residents came to Kiryat Motzkin, changing the demographic, socioeconomic and political environment. The young state set up a centralized educational system and the school lost its unique vision and turned into the usual type of Israeli secondary school. The history of the school during the first twenty years of its existence demonstrates that however innovative it may be, its characteristics are determined by the circumstances created by developments in the community and the country, and by the needs and values of the resources provider. Its uniqueness met the needs and wishes of the community within which it flourished. When the community and the political environment changed, so did the school.

From a Private-Sectorial System at the time of the Yishuv
to Supervised Privatization and its Reinforcement after the
Establishment of the State

Yuval Dror

The article details all the historical material available regarding privatization during the first 60 years of the existence of the State of Israel and the period preceding it, and analyzes the tendencies in the development of this phenomenon. The introduction presents the updated definitions of privatization proposed by researchers worldwide and in Israel, related to three main dimensions: 1. The characteristics of privatization. 2. The strategies of privatization. 3. Private agents, whom 'the public', represented by the state, makes partially responsible for education.

During the time of the 'yishuv' there was no privatization since there was no state education, but the education system was organized along three "private" political-ideological trends in a quasi-public manner: The Mizrahi Zionist-religious Trend, the Workers' Zionist-socialist Trend, and the General Trend. This political infrastructure of the education system affected the way it was financed and the syllabus, as well as the privatization of unique elementary and secondary schools, the training of teachers, various components of higher education and adult education, also youth movements, complementary education and even 'Aliyat HaNoar' (Youth Aliya) institutions. Privatization in similar areas occurred after the establishment of the state when it was absorbing large numbers of immigrants until 1968: mainly in secondary education, but also in relation to textbooks, the establishment of boarding schools for outstanding students in development areas by the Association for the Advancement of Education, and in regional colleges. During the 1970s a transition occurred to gradual decentralization of the educational system, and 'the Integration Reform' was introduced (while the first signs of autonomy made themselves felt). During this period "privatization" occurred in the curricula by the transfer of various activities to the universities, as well as in non-formal education. During the 1980s, 1990s and early years of the 21st century a trend towards privatization with respect to both the policy and in the field became evident. The policy was implemented via 'the Autonomy Project', in the 'Parents' Choice' given to parents in some places to choose their children's schools, as well as in

the 'Holistic Project', which took place in the 1990s in some 30 deprived locations. Privatization in schools took place under the leadership of the unit dealing with experiments and initiatives of the Ministry of Education and by various educational networks — ethnic, religious, ultra-Orthodox, ideological and others. Privatization occurred also in complementary education and through the establishment of private colleges, while an attempt was made to counteract excessive privatization via the curricula for the 'bagrut' (the final secondary school exams) by introducing 'core curricula' and national tests to check the achievements in these curricula.

This study presents a historical summary and reaches the following conclusions: Privatization went on from a private-sectorial system at the time of the yishuv to supervised privatization and its reinforcement after the establishment of the state; the rate and amount of transition from the public to the private sector differed. As for the ways privatization affected other areas in the course of this historical process, the following dimensions can be discerned: the economic, organizational dimension, and two types of frameworks, or 'privatization agents': a) private educational institutions or networks that parents choose for their children; b) educational frameworks of trends and networks established on ideological-political and/or ethnic grounds; c) institutes, associations/nonprofit associations and similar frameworks, initiated by the educational system — some with the cooperation of the academic and professional agents ; d) academic bodies assisting the educational system.

At the end of the article I propose, on the basis of the description, the historical analysis, and the educational-social discourse in this country and worldwide, a balanced approach with respect to the following: the parents' choice (including from the multi-cultural point of view) as to the curriculum, also to state supervision of the associations of the 'third sector' and to the cooperation with the academia (and professional experts) and 'the field' as to the frameworks.

Education in the Jewish Settlements in Argentina up to the First World War

Yehuda Levin

Jewish people with the specific intention of working in agriculture began immigrating to Argentina towards the end of the 19th century. Most of them came to live in settlements established by the JCA (Jewish Colonization Association). These settlements were located in the peripheral areas where the compulsory education law was not always implemented, owing to financial and other problems. The JCA had to set up educational institutions, in order to provide elementary education for their children. Moreover, the JCA objected to the teaching of religious subjects within the 'cheder' framework, which it considered outdated, not in line with the modern and rational educational approach. Therefore the association established a comprehensive educational system based on modern principles, developed at AIU (l'Alliance Israélite Universelle) schools, combining the demands of compulsory education and the teaching of Jewish subjects.

The study describes the difficulties encountered in the course of the establishment of the new framework, the aims and the steps taken to attain them. It also mentions a clash between the parents' wish to devote more hours to Jewish education in the school syllabus and the requirements of the Argentinean education system. The article then discusses the extent of the success of the integrated system during the first two decades after it was established.

The research study is based on JCA and AIU Archives, as well as on the archives of other institutions.

The Student Levin and the Teacher Hendel From a Jewish Girl's Diary in Poland

Adina Bar-El

The Jewish community in Poland spoke three languages Polish, Yiddish, Hebrew – and was heterogeneous in its political-social-cultural make-up. This resulted in the existence of various trends among the Jewish educational

institutions. There were religious and secular schools, Zionist and non-Zionist ones, choosing to teach in different languages.

From 1924 to 1936 a girl, Bracha Levin, wrote a diary in a rich and fine Hebrew. Her diary reveals that in the course of those years she studied in three different institutions, reflecting some of the diversity of schools in the Jewish communities in Eastern Europe in general, and in Poland in particular: She went to an elementary school belonging to the state education system, where she was taught in Polish; from the age of 14 she studied in the Hebrew Tarbut Teachers' College in Vilna; and finally, for economic and religious reasons, she completed the Sarah Snenerer Teachers' College, studying in Yiddish.

Bracha Levin was born in 1912 in Minsk. After the First World War her family crossed the border to her mother's place of residence, the little town Robzevitz In the Minsk District, at that time under Polish rule. Her parents were religious. They spoke Yiddish, but also knew Russian. Yet her father, Moshe, always spoke with his daughter in Hebrew, with his Ashkenazi accent. When she was a child he sent her to learn in a 'cheder' with boys. He also taught her the Polish alphabet before she started to go to the second grade of a Polish school. After she had completed the Polish elementary school, she knew how to speak, read and write in three languages: Yiddish, Hebrew, and Polish, and she also knew how to speak Russian.

The article focuses on the period when Bracha Levin was studying in the secular Teachers' College Tarbut in Vilna. In her diary she describes how she is torn between her promise to her father, the Rabbi, to keep up her religious way of life, while at the same time she has to fit into the secular ambience of her friends and teachers at the college, an institution where even her teacher writes on a Sabbath. She expresses her love for Hebrew and her longing for the Land of Israel. Her diary also includes detailed descriptions of people and their characteristics, and reflects various feelings and changes in her moods, typical of an adolescent girl. Moreover the diary also highlights the figure of the teacher Hendel, as he is perceived by his student. Dr. Michael Hendel was teaching history and geography in the secondary school of Lutzek and Bialystock. He taught for 4 years at the Vilna Tarbut College, and then became the principal of a bilingual secondary school (Hebrew and Polish), founded by the Agudat Chavarot in Chelmno and Mezeritz. After immigrating to Eeretztz Israel in 1934, he had a great deal of influence on the study of history in secondary schools and the way it was taught, by means of his writing, guidance, administration and supervision.

The Impact of Dr. Alexander Shafran, the Chief Rabbi of Rumania, on the Hebrew Education System

Yakov Geller

In February 1940, Dr. Alexander Shafran became the Chief Rabbi of Greater Rumania, which at that time had a Jewish population numbering 800,000. He was one of eight candidates for the post and was elected owing to his outstanding qualities: He was an educator and an accomplished speaker, and was the son of the great rabbinical authority Bezalel Zev Shafran, author of the 'Responsa' in three parts. He was less than 30 years old when he was elected to the Rumanian Senate to represent the Jewish communities, and in this capacity protected them against the anti-Semitic parties.

His main concern was Hebrew and Jewish education, and he devoted a great deal of time to it during two difficult periods as Chief Rabbi:

During the Holocaust, from June 1940 to 23rd August 1944, when Rumania was liberated by the Soviet Army.

For more than three years at the time of socialist-communist rule until December 1947, when he was expelled from the country then under communist rule, as proposed by the yevsektzia (yevreyskaya sektsiya, Hebrew section), the Jewish group within the communist party. He arrived in Geneva and was appointed Chief Rabbi there. Moshe Rosen replaced him as chief Rabbi of Rumania.

While also fulfilling many other functions, for eight years he devoted himself to fostering Hebrew education. In September 1940, all the Jewish pupils, students, teachers and professors were expelled from the institutions belonging to the Rumanian education system, from public schools and universities. The Rabbi and the Jewish communities expanded the existing community schools and established new ones for those students. Thus during the years of the Holocaust there were 160 educational institutions, ranging from kindergartens, through primary, secondary, academic and vocational schools, with 22,000 learners of Hebrew, Judaism and religion, as well as of all the other subjects. The university lecturers established three academic colleges, Onesco, Abason, Politechnicum Berkovitz, all named after the previous institutions, also a school for nurses and an art and drama school, three colleges of music and courses for boys and girls teaching them crafts. Dr. Shafran worked to expand Jewish and Hebrew education: He prepared

curricula for schools, opened additional grades, made arrangements for teachers of Jewish studies to hold Saturday prayers, and was active in the establishment of the first Hebrew school in Bucarest in 1941, where all the humanities and sciences were taught in Hebrew, and which existed until 1948.

In order to educate additional teachers of Hebrew, the Rabbi organized refresher courses together with prominent teachers of Hebrew. He also promoted the re-establishment of a school for poor children, preparing them for their bar mitzvahs, run by the son of Rabbi Sofer Kaufman, its founder before the war. He furthered the printing of new textbooks for the teaching of Hebrew, religion and the history of the People of Israel right in the midst of the war.

After the Holocaust, from September 1944 until December 1947, for over three years, Rabbi Shafran was active in the Hebrew education system run by the Association of Communities, jointly with Avraham Feler, the veteran Zionist and Hebrew scholar, in order to improve the teaching of Hebrew, religion and Israeli history, together with the best teachers. The aim of the new syllabus was to teach Hebrew as a living language in the Sephardic community, and to impart basic knowledge of religion and traditions: the prayer book; the synagogue; blessings; the Pessach Haggadah; the People and the Land of Israel past and present; the Ten Commandments; the Prayer Book, the lighting of candles on Sabbath Eve, and so on. The authors of the program emphasized that the Hebrew subjects, and Israeli history and religion are the all-important ones. At Hebrew teachers' conferences Rabbi Shafran pointed out that a new more intensive phase in Hebrew education had begun.

In Kolentina, next to Bucarest, a Hebrew agricultural school was established, preparing youth for work on the land in Israel (in which I also studied), but it was closed down a few months later by the communist government, at the beginning of 1949.