



EDUCATION AND CONTEXT

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Abstracts

What is in-depth education and why are the Humanities needed?

Ayalon Eidelstein

Behind this article stands the teaching crisis that followed the 2020 COVID epidemic and the switch to distance teaching. It seeks to define the concept of “depth” relevant in teaching the Humanities. The article begins by distinguishing between education and mass culture, and between education and propaganda (Ernst Akiva Simon, 1983). It proceeds to map out the four aspects of depth embodied in the Humanities: depth of a phenomenon occurring in the world, conceptual depth, emotional depth, and linguistic depth. For each of these aspects, the article proposes two criteria that could help answer the question of how to recognize an in-depth approach in the humanities.

This conceptual mapping aims to underscore several points that should be regarded as essential in teaching the Humanities and pinpoint their crucial role in Education. The criteria proposed in this article would offer a more focused and clearer way to explore the extent to which the depth dimension is preserved in the transition to distance teaching in the Humanities.

Teaching controversial topics: Preliminary groundwork

Eran Gusacov

Many contemporary books and scholarly articles address questions concerning the teaching of controversial issues. Such questions also preoccupy the Israeli educational system, especially in connection with

teaching controversial issues in Civics classes. This topic acquires particular significance given Israel's social polarization and the fact that many teachers refrain from discussing controversial issues in their classrooms to avoid confrontation with students, parents, or politicians.

The described circumstances require setting goals for teaching controversial issues and examining the feasibility of achieving these goals, while exploring the options teachers have in teaching these issues. Accordingly, universities and teacher colleges should determine ways to prepare teachers-to-be for tackling this matter and devise training programs to this end.

The present paper aims to propose a much-needed preliminary platform for approaching the above requirements. It seeks to clarify the concept of "controversial issues" to allow using it as an agreed-upon basis in the educational discourse.

The proposed platform has three classification aspects. The first distinguishes between the term "controversial issues" and the definition of "meaningful statements" by the logical positivism school. The second aspect explores the use of an epistemic criterion to determine a controversial issue. The third aspect regards an issue as controversial if it is politically authentic. The paper also maintains that the above classification depends upon and is influenced by the time and space context of the educational occurrence.

Teaching the Bible: culture instead of religion

Moran Gam Hacoen & Shai Frogel

The paper addresses the essential difficulty underlying the state education system's bible syllabus for secular pupils and offers an alternative. It shows that the syllabus reflects and promotes a religious-national worldview which is based on religious faith and ascribes a religious significance to human existence and the state of Israel. This view stands in opposition to the secular worldview, which rejects religious faith and understands human existence in humanistic and historical terms rather than metaphysical and

divine ones. We claim that imposing on secular children a worldview that contradicts their parents' is an ethical bias that needs correction. The proposed alternative perceives the bible as a constitutive text of the Hebrew culture rather than a holy text. It urges highlighting its historicity and its association with other texts in Hebrew culture and other cultures . This approach is better tailored to the secular worldview, which attaches supreme ethical importance to freedom of thought and cultural openness.

A feminist perspective of art education: Revising the canon of masterpiece teaching

Hadara Scheflan Katzav

The premise underlying this article is that the art curricula of most higher education institutions still rest on the patriarchal conception and are essential agents of preserving this conception.

Feminist scholars have demonstrated that basing art paradigms on gender differences reflects and reinforces gender power relations.

This point has a twofold meaning in undergraduate studies of art history in institutions training art education teachers. The traditional teaching of art history sharpens the sense of objectification among female art students. Moreover, male and female students of art history who study the canonical masterworks that dominate the artistic discourse preserve and perpetuate the gender paradigms once they become school teachers and pass them on to their pupils.

I claim that new tools are required to allow expanding or changing the standard visual reading of works taught in art history classes and thus change the power relations and expand the understanding of art history.

The study introduces a critical method of teaching two commonly taught art topics by creating a dialogue between the work of a male artist and a female artist from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These topics also feature in the "Salon of rejected women artists" class I teach as part of the undergraduate program of the Art Department at the Kibbuzim College of Education, Technology, and the Arts. In each of the topics, I

present a way to develop a critical gender reading of art works. I show how acquiring critical feminist visual reading skills advances the dismantling of traditional gender representations and enables male and female students to regard women as subjects rather than objects.

Exodus, Kiddush Cup, Grandma and the Holocaust: Historical Thinking in Young Children

Henn Fintz

It is commonly assumed that young children have a concrete way of thinking. An important support for this view is Piaget's developmental theory (Piaget, 1973). This concept considerably impacts early education, as manifested in the great emphasis put in the curricula on logical-mathematical thinking and immediate and tangible content. In the history discipline, the prevailing view is that to develop historical thinking skills, we must possess a pool of significant concepts inherent to the history discipline. These are general, complex, and abstract concepts that differ from concrete everyday life concepts. Based on this approach, Israeli children do not learn history in the first five years of primary education.

The article examines and argues against this prevailing approach. Contrary to the common belief that historical thinking requires concepts inherent to the history discipline, I claim that young children think about history in different terms. Following Foucault (2005), I argue that historical thinking concepts do not have an objective existence outside the historical discourse, which means that children's historical thinking concepts should make part of the historical discourse and allow for teaching history at a young age.

Cartographic mapping of an international academic course: Towards developing trainee teachers' professional identity

Sigal Chen & Doly Levi

The article uses a cartographic mapping to show how seven Israeli participants in an international academic course interact with 25 fellow participants from the USA, Poland, China, and Australia, thus shaping their professional identities.

Identity and learning are not disconnected. Identity forms through learning and consists of connections created while working together. Moreover, interactions based on communication, message exchange, and reciprocal influence play an important role in shaping professional identity. In the process, the students create contacts, convey messages, work on a joint assignment, hold a discussion, and are exposed to new perspectives other than their own - all of which help formulate a personal, social and professional identity. This is a narrative-cartographic study that investigates the intrapersonal reflections of a student during a socio-cultural learning experience. The collected data consisted of reflections written by the participants at the end of each of the course's eight sessions.

The findings suggest that the international course offered the students the unique experience of a collaborative online learning environment that put emphasis on individual religious, cultural, and social perspectives. Over the course, gaps emerged between familiar local perceptions and beliefs and opinions and attitudes of fellow students from other geographical areas with different social and cultural backgrounds. The participating students became active members of a community of learners, were introduced to a multicultural environment, and learned about their place in the global mosaic.

The research is relevant to educators, lecturers, and policy-makers involved in setting outlines for higher education courses that will allow crossing the institution boundaries in favor of a direct international encounter with students from other countries and cultures. Such meetings

will cultivate educators that are open to thoughts, emotions, beliefs, and behaviors different from theirs, and would be able to promote integration and inclusion processes while showing respect for the other.

Comparative Mythology: The Flood Narrative and God Succession Myths

Maayan Mazor

Comparative research of myths began in the 18th century and has continued to this day. The European imperialism that exposed cultures previously unknown to the West triggered linguistic studies that tracked similarities between phenomena in different languages. Those studies revealed associations between European and non-European languages that enabled grouping them together and tracing their source back to a common theoretical language of origin known as Proto-Indo-European. The linguistic findings motivated researchers to look for similarities between the myths of geographically close cultures and even attempt to determine whether they have a common source. They have also been searching for similarities between myths of cultures that are geographically far apart to find out whether they also derive from a common ancient source.

The article reviews the history of this research approach and illustrates it by exploring the flood narrative, the creation of gods, and god successions. It offers a brief summary of the early development of comparative mythology and its association with socio-historical developments in Europe, introducing the reader to a series of compelling examples from this field.

“The Holocaust is tattooed on our collective arm”: The Holocaust and Mizrachi Jews – between passion and rejection

Hadas Shabat Nadir

In this article I examine the writings published between 1985 and 2014 by Mizrachi authors from the first immigrant generation to the *ars poetica* group. I aim to demonstrate how those writers chose to be part of the Israeli discourse and Hebrew poetry dealing with the Holocaust. I maintain that the lack of Holocaust-related narrative among the newly arrived *Mizrachi* immigrants, and the speed with which the Holocaust narrative was accepted into the Israeli discourse stand at the background of two parallel processes manifest in their poetry: The first- and second-generation poets made an effort to obliterate their Mizrachi origins in their writing about the Holocaust. I show that Amira Hass and Ronny Someck adopted multiple narratives from the Holocaust era, but found themselves in a traumatic whirlpool that made the Holocaust a threatening presence of living visages and incidents, preventing them from processing the story, and leaving them detached from the Holocaust narrative. Interestingly, the writings of the third generation display quite an opposite stance. The memory of the Holocaust becomes a closed destructive narrative that eliminates all the other Israeli identities. In his poetry, Matti Shmuelof seeks to restore the front position of those eliminated identities and defuse the aggressive use Israeli society makes of the Holocaust remembrance.

**“Strangers’ toilets”
Representation of Russian new-immigrant or migrant
housecleaners in Hebrew Literature**

Mimi Haskin & Dina Haruvi

This article is part of a broader research project studying the representation of female housecleaners in Hebrew literature. The article deals with legal and illegal housecleaners of Russian origin who arrived in Israel in the early 1990s and entered the cleaning sector . It explores the way literature depicts them and tags them as outsiders.

The article reviews the ways in which Hebrew literature formulates the marginal position of “Russian” housecleaners, and proposes an explanation for the esthetical and social connotations of this position. It leans on literary and sociological studies, including those of Julia Kristeva and Mary Douglas, to explore how “Russian” housecleaners are positioned outside the limits of what is permitted without disrupting social order. The concept of abjection coined by Kristeva helps to understand that position. Abjection refers to that part of ourselves that we reject and define as “not I” to protect our limits. Mary Douglaswork Purity and Danger elucidate the social position of Russian housecleaners against the backdrop of Israeli society’s ethnocentricity. Douglas addresses impurity and shows how religion needs a system that distinguishes between purity and impurity and uses it as an expression of organization and social order.

The article shows how literature, as a social mirror, might reflect a collective unconscious. It testifies to the trauma of immigration and exploitation of “Russian” housecleaners and assumes an ethical, sometimes activist position, regarding their situation, the ethnocentricity of Israeli society, exclusion, and exploitation.

The mixed community: A new socio-political organization

Carmit Fuchs-Abarbanel

The purpose of this article is to present a new and different socio-political model of mixed Jewish religious, traditional, and secular communities. A marked religious-secular rift exists in the Jewish society, and research studies have often argued that Israeli society is divided into social groups, educational streams, and political parties. The idea of mixed communities defies separatism and seclusion. These communities exhibit a novel model of dialog and political discourse. The article introduces a singular way of dealing with individual and general questions, an encounter between identities, and a way to create an inspiring inter-cultural space that fosters collaboration.

The development of such communities inspires thinking about current or potential social development processes in Israeli society. This new political model lays the foundations for a social discourse that believes in collaboration and ongoing dynamic coping with social challenges. Meanwhile, the mixed communities have been coping successfully with complex socio-political dilemmas. One such example is their success in setting up integrative education systems where religious, secular, and traditional students go to the same school. With their new discourse, these communities promote a new Israeli socio-political ideal that has been gathering momentum in the 21st century.

The qualitative research conducted leaned on field material, including observations, interviews, and content analysis. The research population included secular, traditional and religious members of mixed communities aged 18 and up, as well as community leaders (coordinators, heads of independent communities, heads of urban communities), and persons involved in creating ties within and between the communities. Interviews were held with 40 individuals and about 20 families. Some of the approached individuals recommended other participants, and all those who agreed to participate were included in the research. It is worth noting that most of the approached candidates agreed to participate and were willing to share the communities' activities with the researcher.

On the social construction of trust and the rise of new occupations: Reflection on food shopping in Tel Aviv during the lockdown

Liora Givon

Trust in food is an emerging property based on citizens' belief that the information they receive about the food they eat is true. The outbreak of COVID-19 in Tel Aviv, Israel, this essay claims, initiated a foodways conversation not about the safety of food items, but about trust in people in the food retail business. Their violation of regulations might have consequences for consumers' shopping routines and generate changes in food procurement habits. These changes, caused by the outbreak of a pandemic, make a good case study for examining the rise of "food pickers," who introduce a different human capital to food stores and for discussing how trustworthiness in food workers, such as vendors, is no longer taken for granted, but rather is reactivated based on personal acquaintance and the worker's social capital.

Ecohumanism as an educational paradigm for tackling present day global risks

Nimrod Aloni

The initial premise in this essay is that the youth of today and the future generations in the 21st century are threatened by 5 major global risks that are interconnected and interdependent: environmental, political (erosion of liberal democracies), social (growing economic and social gaps), health (body and soul or mental), and cultural (decline in the commitment to both serious culture and multiculturalism). The remedy or solution proposed consists in committing ourselves to Ecohumanism as a paradigm for values education and teacher training: seeking peace and harmony by merging the humanist dialogical interpersonal relations with the ecological consideration of nature not as a commodity to own but as a community to join.