

## Making Israel Education Happen

**Abstract** The subject of Israel education is not Israel but the fostering of a personal relationship with Israel. The contents of Israel education are narratives created over the ages that reflect an overall commitment to the Land of Israel as a core Jewish value. The meanings of these narratives changed over time, and there is no one core narrative. The special case of teaching contemporary Israel is discussed, and a new paradigm for teaching this topic is presented. The existence of non-Jewish narratives of Israel must also be presented within the context of Israel education.

**Keywords** Covenantal • Exilic Judaism • Virtue epistemology • *Havruta* • Jewish and non-Jewish narratives • Values education

Chapter 1 focused on principles of Israel education. Educators and teachers may nod their heads in agreement with these principles, but they legitimately have some practical questions. What are the specific aims of Israel education? What are the contents to be taught; and how do we teach these contents? In order to assist us in answering those questions in this chapter, we shall briefly focus on some key words used in the practice of education. Words make a difference, and how words about education are used significantly affects how education occurs.

The word “aim” in education refers to the purpose of an educational activity; it states the direction toward which education is oriented. It is the answer to the question “why are we doing what we are doing?” Aims are

an important link between some of the larger visions about life and education and more specific issues related to subject, contents, and pedagogies. The aims of Israel education, according to the relational approach, are to initiate a relationship between an individual and the Land of Israel and to make Israel a meaningful dimension of the individual's character.

The word "subject" is generally used in education to refer to spheres of knowledge that constitute a curriculum or course of study. These spheres of knowledge were once assumed to be reflective of mental faculties essential for a student's intellectual development (Pinar et al. 1999). The phrase a "subject-centered education" is often used to refer to approaches that focus on the transmission of worthwhile bodies of knowledge. We use the word "subject" differently; for us a subject is a person. We believe that education is first and foremost about the individual; it is about human bodies and not bodies of knowledge. Therefore, the subject of Israel education is not the Land of Israel, but, rather, a person's relationship with the Land of Israel. According to this conception of a "subject-centered" Israel, education is one that focuses on the learner.

The word "contents" typically refers to topics taught in schools. For example, the contents of history are often regarded as the investigation of past events, societies, and civilizations and the contents of science are described as the study of knowledge about natural systems and the understanding of the processes by which such knowledge is attained (Hazen and Trefil 2009; Wineburg 2001). The content of Israel education encompasses the investigative, but ultimately its focus is in the realm of values. While Israel education unquestionably includes historical and sociological dimensions, this in itself does not exhaust the content since Israel education is ultimately about values and character. The Land of Israel is a value that has shaped Jewish life in past and in present. Its importance is related to both collective Jewish experience and to personal life and meaning. For all these reasons, we categorize Israel education not as history education, ethnic education, or religious education, but rather as values education.

The word "pedagogy" refers to methodologies and practices used in the daily work of the educator. Pedagogies are activities used in formal and informal educational settings to educate the young. There is no one fixed pedagogy for all education. Specific pedagogies emerge from distinct contents. Moreover, diverse cultures create their own distinctive pedagogies, which are shaped by ideals, values, and customs. In that sense, pedagogies are not neutral, but rather reflect viewpoints about the meaning of education, society, and knowledge.

## TEXTS AND NARRATIVES AS CONTENTS

The content of Israel education is the value of the Land of Israel.<sup>1</sup> As we have noted, this value has been important to Jewish civilization and has personal meaning for many Jews in the past and present. At the same time, there have been a variety of meanings of “The Land Israel” over time, and there is not one conclusive definition (Hoffman 1986; Segal 1987). These varied meanings are contained in a rich collection of diverse primary texts which constitute content of Israel education.

For pedagogues of Israel education, this vast collection of texts is formidable and requires some apparatus to make it accessible. The contemporary educator needs a reliable, conceptual GPS or framing structure in order to navigate this large landscape of education. Jewish education is fortunate to be able to draw upon the work of academicians who have devoted great energy to explicating the philosophy, history, sociology, and literature related to the Land of Israel. These academicians are the content specialists or experts who contribute to our understanding of the various meanings and who are helpful in developing diverse conceptual categories for organizing these narratives. Let us look at one model of categories of the meanings of the Land of Israel (Hoffman 1986; Lopatin 2015; Segal 2005).

The *covenantal* narrative refers to the biblical idea of the Land of Israel as the sign of a covenant between an omnipotent and omniscient deity who is the controlling force in history and in the lives of the people of Israel. This covenant calls upon the Israelites to follow the Godly will as enunciated in the Torah, and in return they will be God’s People. The Land of Israel constitutes the official seal of this covenant:

And the Lord said to Abram “Go forth from your native land and from your father’s house to the land that I shall show you

I will make of you a great nation  
And I will bless you”. (*Genesis*: 12:1–2)

And the Lord said to Abram “raise up your eyes and look from where you are. Raise up your eyes to the north and south, to the east and the west, for I give you all that land that you see to you and your offspring forever”. (*Genesis*: 13:14)

I will maintain my covenant between me and you and your offspring to come as an everlasting covenant throughout the ages to be God to you and to your offspring to come... I assign the land you sojourn in to you and your offspring to come all the land of Canaan as an everlasting holding. (*Genesis*:17:7–8)

The *spiritual* narrative refers to the idea of Israel as both the historic birthplace of the Jewish people and as an ongoing symbol of important religious and moral ideas and practices. It reflects the effort of post-biblical rabbis to transform a Jerusalem-cultic-centered religion into an exilic Judaism which preserves the concept of the Land of Israel but makes it relevant and communicative to the lives of Jews now living in many places throughout the world.

#### Jerusalem

The words have gone out of the land and entered holy books.

She is the city where waiting for God was born ...

This is a city never indifferent to the sky ... Prayers are vibrant

The Sabbath finds it hard to go away

Jerusalem is a witness, an echo of eternity. (Heschel 1983, 14–116)

The *emancipatory* narrative emerges from the Jewish confrontation with modernity and the shift in focus from a worldview rooted in an omniscient and omnipotent deity who controls history, to a worldview which regards history as shaped by human beings and reason. Modernity also encompassed a re-organization of social structures, making the state the paramount social framework and source of power. Many Jews who adopted modern viewpoints wrestled with the possibility of becoming fully integrated members of modern societies, while still retaining some form of link with their past and their people (Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz 1980). This search led to several alternative solutions, such as conversion, assimilation, reform, ultra-orthodoxy, Bundism, socialism, Jewish culturalism, and Zionism:

The National Assembly, conceding that the requisite to be a French citizen, and to become an active citizen, are fixed by the constitution, and every man who, being duly qualified, takes the civic oath, and engages to fulfill all the duties prescribed by the constitution, has right to all the advantages it assures, annuals all adjournment, restrictions, no exceptions, contained in the preceding decrees, affecting individuals of the Jewish persuasion, who shall take the civic oath, which shall be considered as a renunciation of all privileges in their favor. (French National Assembly, Emancipation of the Jews France, September 28, 1791)

The *Zionist* narrative was one of several narratives to emerge from the Jewish confrontation with modernity. It reflected one solution to the

desire to be a nation like all other people, while retaining distinctive Jewish elements. When some Jews lost faith in the possibility of attaining the goal of integration into societies, they came to regard the idea of a Jewish homeland as the only viable solution to “the Jewish problem”. Therefore, they claimed that Jews needed to live in their own land where they could be both human and Jewish:

Nothing prevents us from being and remaining exponents of a united humanity, when we have country of our own. To fulfill this mission we do not have to remain literally planted among the nations who hate us and despise us let sovereignty be granted us over a portion of the earth’s surface large enough to satisfy our rightful requirements as a nation. The rest we shall manage ourselves. (Herzl Diaries 1956)

The *Jewish state* narrative conceives of Israel as a modern state where Jews can live freely as Jews (or Israelis) and as human beings. This narrative retains links to the Jewish past and to the world of Jewry in the present. It regards Israel as nation like all other nations, while also having unique Jewish characteristics:

*Eretz Yisrael* was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained statehood, created cultural values of nations and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal book of books.

On the 29th of November 1947 the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in *Eretz Yisrael* ... This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their State is irrevocable. This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be master of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State, the State of Israel will be based on freedom, justice, and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel. It will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants. It will guarantee freedom of religion, education and culture. (*Megilat Ha’atzma’ut The Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel*, May 1948)

The *peoplehood* narrative says that Jewishness refers to an historical and contemporary civilization which encompasses culture, values, customs, a language, and a land which is a source of pride and connection to Jews around the world. This narrative conceives of Judaism as an all-encompassing civilization which includes religion, religious law, customs and mores, language, culture, and a state.<sup>2</sup>

Judaism is far more comprehensive than Jewish religion. It includes that nexus of a history, literature, language, social organization, folk sanctions, standards of conduct, social and spiritual ideals, and esthetic values, which in their totality form a civilization. (Kaplan, 178)

Judaism cannot maintain continuity without an environment where it will be able to exercise a civilization's primary prerogative. Palestine is the only land which can furnish such an environment for Jewish civilization. (Kaplan, 273)

Judaism as an entity is unlikely to survive either as an ancillary or co-ordinate civilization unless it thrives as a primary civilization in Palestine. (Kaplan, 273)

There are multiple texts which reflect these various narratives. Moreover, the ordering of these narratives is not exclusively chronological. Indeed, contemporary Israeli society may be regarded as an arena in which these various narratives continue to interact and conflict with each other on a daily basis. In that sense, these narratives are not just historical documents, but they also are living stories.

## PEDAGOGIES

The discussion of pedagogies flows directly from the analysis of aims and contents. A relational pedagogy of Israel education focuses on reading, analyzing, and discussing diverse texts and asking questions and discussing answers. The essence of this methodology is a pedagogy of relating and relationships (Lanski et al. 2015). The educator has multiple roles in this process. The first task is to choose "texts that talk", that is, sources that are accessible to the young at various ages. The next step is to read, analyze, and dissect sources together with the students so as to first understand words and then to explore meanings and ideas. Then the educator's role is to create personal interaction between students and text, students and students, and texts and texts. This process can include enabling students to, as it were, meet and talk with interesting figures from the Jewish past and present. The young should have the opportunity to sit in Abraham and Sarah's tent near Beer Sheva, meet with Dr. Theodor Herzl in Café Central in Vienna, have coffee with Golda Meir at Caffit in Jerusalem, and meet with Mordecai Kaplan in Starbucks in New York. The questions for discussion in these meetings might include: "Abraham, what does the word covenant mean?"; "What were the boundaries of the Land God promised to you?"; "Dr. Herzl you are not religious. Why do you

want a Jewish State?"; "Mrs. Meir, why did you change your name from Myerson to Meir?"; "Dr. Kaplan, why do you say that Judaism is not a religion?"<sup>3</sup> The teacher's role throughout the process is not to give the right answer, but rather to sustain a process of questions and answers. Sometimes, teachers also have a responsibility for correcting what might be called "glaring mistakes", such as focusing on Genesis as a chronology of Jewish history and neglecting the central purpose of these texts as the presentation of "big ideas" about the deity, humanity, history, and land.<sup>3</sup> It is important for educators to engage in a summative activity which provides some shape to the flow of the entire process and minimizes the sense that "it was fun but all we did was talk".

There is a rich library of Jewish texts, which reflect the diverse views on the meaning of the Land of Israel.<sup>4</sup> The texts of the biblical, talmudic and rabbinic eras are ideal primary sources for this approach. The prayer book contains many references to the Land of Israel, and it has the advantage of being a book that the young are likely to encounter in their pre-adolescent years. Zionist literature is replete with stories, memoirs, ideological treatises, and fiction advocating its cause. Contemporary Israel is the ultimate treasure chest of sources: street sounds, muezzin voices, church bells, a siren in Jerusalem announcing the imminent beginning of the Sabbath. Israel is street graffiti, political debates, pop and hip-hop music, art, dance, foods, and, most importantly, people. The doorway to these contemporary Israel education resources is increasingly available via the ubiquitous cell phones, iPad, and smart watches which currently are the ultimate pedagogical tools.

There are several pedagogic approaches from general and Jewish cultures which have much to offer in terms of reading and analyzing textual narratives. Such approaches encourage analysis beyond the literal word in order to find meanings that are either implicit in the text or that the student hears.<sup>5</sup> The interpretive process can motivate learners to talk with texts, and to query them about their meanings beyond the literal. The American curriculum theorist William Pinar suggests that the traditional Jewish methodologies of analysis of biblical and rabbinic texts have important potential for the reconceptualization of contemporary American curriculum:

I point to the two intellectually "repressed" traditions in the field, specifically Jewish and international studies, whose articulation now restructure the reconceptualization of curriculum studies in the United States. (Pinar, 73)

The implication of the interpretive process of traditional Jewish texts has been discussed by a group of contemporary Jewish educators who describe a variety of educational orientations to teaching biblical and rabbinic texts. These diverse orientations include the historical, the moralistic, the personal, the ideational, the action-oriented, and the commandment-oriented texts.<sup>6</sup> Since so many of the classical texts deal with the meaning of the Land of Israel, the literature of teaching biblical and rabbinic texts is a valuable resource for Israel educators.

Questioning is an important educational methodology with roots in classical non-Jewish and Jewish traditions (Dimitrovsky 1980; Marrou 1956; Jaeger 1986, 42). Socrates, Odysseus, Rabbi Akiva, and St. Augustine are but a few champions of the value of the question.<sup>7</sup> These traditions emphasized the virtues of a beautiful question as much as of the right answer.<sup>8</sup> The contemporary focus on the question is central to contemporary business, innovation, and entrepreneurship, which declare that the challenges of modern life are as much related to the ability to ask big questions as they are to dispensing a quick-fix solutions (Drew and Jacobberg 2014; Berger 2014). Questions about the Land of Israel are not a problem for Israel education, but are, rather, an important window of opportunity for discussion about a value that matters.

Collaborative learning is an approach that focuses on students working together, listening to each other, sharing viewpoints, and learning how to utilize diverse skill sets in the discussion of issues. Through working together, students are able to realize that learning is both an individual and a group process. Some Jewish educationists connect the concept of collaborative learning with a classical approach called *havruta*<sup>9</sup>:

*Havruta* means companionship or friendship. It is an extension of the Hebrew word “*haver*”, companion or friend. In its common use the word *havruta* can refer to the learning pair, and/or to the practice of paired learning itself. In using the term “*havruta* text study” we mean to refer to the symbiotic relationship between a text and two *havruta* learning partners. (Holzer and Kent, 1)

This technique expresses the belief that learning is not a lonely act of the individual but, rather, a collective and communal experience.

Just as in the case of iron when one implement sharpens the other, so too do two Torah scholars sharpen each other.... just as fire cannot be made to



burn with one piece of wood alone so the words of Torah cannot be retained by one who studies alone. (Holzer and Kent, 6)

Value education and pedagogy has been a long-standing and central dimension of the world of educational thinking (Chazan 1985). In the second half of the last century, American psychologist and educator Lawrence Kohlberg proposed an approach to moral education rooted in a six-stage model of cognitive moral development.<sup>10</sup> While Kohlberg's psychological theory of moral development became a much debated and questioned topic, his pedagogy of moral education has had widespread use. This approach, called dilemma discussion, encompasses the following: (1) reading together a short description of a specific moral dilemma, (2) asking someone to briefly summarize the story to be sure that there is agreement about the facts, (3) asking "What should x (the protagonist in the story) do and why?" (4) conducting a group discussion in which students discuss various choices and their reasons, and (5) summarizing the discussion without defining any specific answer as the right one. This technique highlights the role of reasoning about issues of values and creates a safe environment for open value discussion. It is an accessible and useful framework for navigating the many diverse landscapes of Israel narratives.

Virtue epistemology and pedagogy is a field in contemporary philosophy, which argues (as did Scheffler) that value decisions are neither inherently affective or capricious, but, rather, are characterized by "intellectual character virtues" or "faculty virtues" such as conscientiousness, open-mindedness, attentiveness, intellectual tenacity, the desire to know, and courage.<sup>11</sup> We decide to choose what we value in some reflective way, which, at the same time, is fueled by much affect and passion. In that sense, value education is about both thinking and reflecting and about feeling and identifying. This approach implies that study of the value of the Land of Israel should be implemented in a manner that is passionately deliberative and courageously open. It is driven by the desire to understand something that matters. This discussion is not a triumphal testimony for a preordained ideology, but rather an engaging activity of mind and the heart. It is a pedagogy of relationship, reason, and resonance.

The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development adds an important developmental element to our discussion of pedagogies (Vygotsky 1999). While observing children's learning, Vygotsky noticed that there was one type of learning, namely, language, which children could do more or less independently or spontaneously as

part of the normal process of development. In contrast, there were skills, which were too difficult for children to master on their own. In between these two poles, there is an area, which he called the zone of proximate development, in which children can master certain skills with guidance and encouragement from a knowledgeable person, teacher, or group. In terms of Israel, this means there are topics that may require minimal “teaching” interventions, while there are other topics which call for a much greater proactive role of teacher and the classroom community. This developmental approach means that contents and methodologies must speak to the child’s specific zone of proximal development. The voices of Vygotsky, Piaget, Korczak, and Bruner continue to remind us to never underestimate the child.

When discussing the practice of Israel education, it is important to realize that there is the temptation to co-opt methodologies which may seem attractive because they are contemporary or stylish, and then arbitrarily impose them on Israel education. At the same time, there is much to learn from general education and traditional Jewish education that is relevant for pedagogy of Israel education. Nevertheless, methodologies are not “one-size-fits-all” garments. Rather, they are finely woven, tailor-made garments specific to the body and being of each person. In that sense, the act of education and being educated is a very personal work of art.

### THE ISSUE OF CONTEMPORARY STATE OF ISRAEL

Teaching about contemporary Israel deserves special attention since this is both a topic with few precedents in Jewish or general education, as well as a highly charged subject. The newness of the topic, combined with its emotional dimensions, has often rendered the practice of teaching contemporary Israel either ambiguous or provoking.<sup>12</sup> The ambiguity flows from the difficulty of framing its content. Purely historical frames frequently underestimate the contemporary state. Purely spiritual frames generally choose to emphasize Heavenly Jerusalem and to disregard earthly Tel Aviv. Geo-political and sociological approaches often focus on politics, problems, and conflict, and neglect social, cultural, and spiritual dynamics.

A mode that became popular in twentieth-century Jewish education is what might be called “the Americanization of Israel” frame. It is best exemplified in Otto Preminger’s 1960 film version of Leon Uris’ book *Exodus*.<sup>13</sup> Preminger’s Israel was the saga of Israel as a modern American democracy, which transformed the desert into blooming fields, was led by

handsome hardened and committed heroes and heroines, and was forced to defend itself against indigenous populations who opposed the new state. Teaching Israel was not able to evolve a frame that emphasized the new but did not neglect the old, and that was honest and real but that was also inspiring and engaging.

The relational approach attempts to develop a new paradigm for presenting contemporary Israel rooted in four points of reference: (1) the role of home and homeland in human life, (2) the mindsets of contemporary young people, (3) the importance of Israel to the Jewish people, and (4) a multi-dimensional picture of the dynamics of the twenty-first-century state. These reference points are chosen because they present Israel in the broader context of the modern world and relate to ways of thinking of the twenty-first-century youth. This framing is translated into five ‘lenses’:

*Lens 1* The modern State of Israel is an improbable and unlikely phenomenon. It is what Nassim Nicholas Taleb described as a “black swan event” which is an occurrence that (1) lies outside the realm of normal expectations, (2) carries extreme impact, and (3) after the fact, there is a pronounced effort to make it seem obvious and predictable (Taleb 2007). For almost 2000 years, the majority of the Jewish people did not live in the Land of Israel. In 1948, a modern Jewish state was established which today is home to almost half of world Jewry. This is an out-of-the-ordinary event for the Jewish people and for the world. As Taleb indicated, there are numerous historical and political analyses that were developed to prove that this was obvious all along. They may be right and they may be wrong, but the fact is that this new state is some kind of statement about the role of the improbable in the flow of personal life and social history.

*Lens 2* The State of Israel was created by a variety of Jewish ideologies that came together for a brief moment to agree on one thing—the creation of a Jewish state. Since that state was created, the story of its existence has been greatly shaped by the ongoing interactions of these diverse ideologies. All the issues of statehood, including education, religion and state, culture, democracy, and theocracy, are hammered out within the context of this variegated ideological environment. Sometimes, these interactions have been creative and fruitful; usually, they have been characterized by friction, and, sadly, there have been times that they have been tragic. The saga of these interactions is an important lens for understanding and relating to contemporary Israel.

*Lens 3* The State of Israel does not exist in a vacuum. It is located in a part of the world that is a meeting place of people from diverse national, cultural, and religious sectarian backgrounds and sometimes violent ideologies. It is a state closely identified with Western nations and political cultures. Its dynamics are shaped as much by international politics as they are by internal Israeli politics. The dynamics of the contemporary State of Israel, like Jewish life throughout history, is not outside of general history, but in many ways because of it. One cannot look at contemporary Israel with Jewish eyes only; rather, the multiple lenses of the world civilization in which we live, and particularly the current clash of civilizations, is an indispensable lens in the camera toolkit.

*Lens 4* For most of its history, the Jewish people were small groups existing in larger societies. As such, they were “the other” both because of their size and because of their commitment to the preservation of a particular identity. The Jewish people were also relatively powerless in terms of socio-economic, military, or demographic forces. Any power the Jewish people had was its spiritual capital. The creation of the State of Israel changed these dynamics. Today Israel is the “we” and its non-Jewish minorities are the “other”. This situation became even more complicated because of the ongoing geo-political conflict to which we referred. The realities that the new state faced resulted in new challenges of majority–minority and “us” and “them” for a people not used to being a majority and not used to having power.

*Lens 5* The State of Israel is home to approximately seven million Jews. It is also important to the millions of other Jews who live elsewhere but who share a deep sense of connection to the survival, achievements, and people of the contemporary state. The State of Israel and world Jewry have developed ties of mutual responsibility. The lens of looking at contemporary Israel must focus both within and also at the interaction with world Jewry.

These frames—the unprecedented, multiple narratives, the Jewish and the general, the other and power, and Israel and world Jewry—shape the pedagogy of teaching contemporary Israel. This pedagogy encompasses a broad box of lenses, which includes the political, the economic, the social, the ideological, the cultural, as well as those moments in Israeli daily life when babies are born, elderly pass away, love is found, and love is lost.

Some people fear such diverse sets of lenses lest it reveal the good, the bad, and the ugly. However, a panoramic view, which includes some fuzzy

black and white snapshots, need not destroy this engaging and out-of-the-ordinary saga. Societies have many faces, and the many faces of Israel present a diverse, rich, dynamic modern society with links to the past and to Jews worldwide. All of the photographs are not pretty, and like all photographs what one sees depends on where one was standing when taking the picture. The presentation of a multi-dimensional, multi-lensed portrait is likely to tell a story worth telling and worth becoming part of one's own family album.

The discussion of teaching contemporary Israel would not be complete without dealing with the existence of significant non-Jewish religious, ethnic, and political narratives of the land of Israel. These narratives are long-standing value statements that must be understood and cannot be dismissed because they are the “other”. Israel education should not approach this task with the intent to dehumanize or demonize non-Jewish narratives simply because they are “the other”. In the process of learning and becoming comfortable with their own narrative, Jews must understand the contents of the other narratives and where they differ. Therefore, Israel education should deal with these narratives by looking at core documents, historical, geographical, and ideological dimensions, and current manifestations of them in practice. Jewish educators can legitimately claim that their mission is to educate young Jews and to generate a relationship with the place called Israel. This need not be at the expense of neglect of the other narratives. The passion to affirm one's own narrative should encompass the courage to understand divergent views.

We have had a long journey in a few pages in this chapter—from aim to content to pedagogy. Our journey is not yet over. In the next chapter, we turn to the role of an immersive culture and the nature of the Israel educator in a relational philosophy of Israel education.

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## NOTES

1. Values are ideals or beliefs that one holds dear. They often refer to core principles, which guide our lives. Value education is one of the many terms often used synonymously or closely with each other, e.g., moral education, character education, and humanistic education. See Brad Art. *What is the Best: An Introduction to Ethics Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1993* R. M. Here, *The Language of Morals* Oxford University Press, London: 1964).

2. Mordecai Kaplan was an American Jewish philosopher who contended that twentieth-century American Jewry was in need of a new conceptual frame, which he called Jewish civilization. His magnum opus on this subject was *Judaism as a Civilization*, New York: Jewish Publication Society 1934.
3. It is important to allow a free flow of discussion, but teachers also have the responsibility of correcting errors that would otherwise hamper fruitful discussion. One of the glaring mistakes is teaching Torah as history rather than as a major treatise about the nature of being human, ethics and morals, the meaning of a deity, order and chaos. See: Marc Brettler. *How to Read the Bible* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2005), and James Kugel: *How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture Then and Now* (New York: Free Press, 2007).
4. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the poet Chaim Nacman Bialik and his colleague Yehoshua Hana Ravnitzky created an extensive compendium of rabbinic legends from the Talmudic Midrash literature. The book was originally published in Hebrew in Odessa between 1918 and 1922. It was subsequently reprinted in many editions in Palestine. They called their book *Sefer Ha Aggadab* which while translated as the “Book of Legends” was actually a remarkable collection of homiletic literature from the Talmudic and rabbinic world. There are several sections that deal with selections about the meaning of the Land of Israel. Rabbi William Braudes translated the book into English in 1992. *The book of Legends: Sefer Ha Aggadab Legends from the Talmud and Midrash* (New York: Schocken Books, 1992). It is a useful resource for sources from classical texts about the meaning of Israel.
5. There is a theory that emphasizes the orality of ancient Jewish tradition. According to this approach, the Jews are better described as “people of the word”, rather than “people of the book”: (i) in Hebrew, the Ten Commandments are not commandments but rather words or statements, (ii) the *Shema* prayer calls upon the people to hear and listen; (iii) Jewish tradition speaks of two Torahs given on Sinai: the written Torah and the oral Torah of the rabbis. Moshe Idel refers to the Jews as “a sonorous or sound community”, and Rabbi Ashkenazi stated that the Jews “are not the people of the book ... God did not chose a people of readers or libraries” (Handelman. *Make Yourself a Teacher*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011). See also Amos Oz and Fania Oz-Salzberger *Jews and Words* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).
6. The volume *Turn It and Turn it Again: Studies in the Teaching Learning of Classical Jewish Texts*, which focuses on teaching and learning classical texts, is a useful guide for the analysis of traditional texts. (Jon Levisohn and Susan Fendrick *Turn It Over and Turn It Over Again*. Brighton, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2013). See also Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon *Interpretive Discussion* (Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press, 2014).

7. *Six Questions of Socrates* and *Teaching Plato in Palestine: Philosophy in a Divided World* are interesting studies of questioning in contemporary educational settings. (Christopher Phillips. *Six Questions of Socrates; A Modern-day Journey Through World Philosophy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004; Carlos Frankl. *Teaching Plato in Palestine: Philosophy in a Divided World* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).
8. The poet E.E. Cummings bemoaned the obsessive emphasis on the beautiful answer and the disregard of the beautiful question: “always the beautiful answer; who asks [about] a more beautiful question?” (Cummings 1972).
9. Holzer and Kent provide a comprehensive analysis of the traditional and contemporary philosophic underpinnings of *havruta* with references to rabbinic texts and to the writings of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur. The volume includes detailed pedagogy of texts, frameworks, questions, and evaluative tools of *havruta* study (Elie Holzer and Orit Kent, *A Philosophy of Havruta: Understanding and Teaching the Art of Text Study* (Boston, Ma: Academic Studies Press, 2013).
10. Lawrence Kohlberg was a psychologist who studied at the University of Chicago and subsequently established the Center for Moral Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He trained a generation of scholars in the theory and practice of moral education and conducted research in schools, prisons, and other settings. Works by or about Kohlberg include Lawrence Kohlberg. *A Philosophy Moral Development*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981 and Brenda Munsey, editor. *Moral Development, Moral Education, and Kohlberg* Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1980. Kohlberg and his colleagues created several summer seminars on moral development in Jewish education and published numerous articles. Many programs in the Jewish educational world were influenced by Kohlberg’s approach.
11. Virtue epistemology is a collection of contemporary approaches in analytic philosophy of education that assigns an important role to what it calls “intellectual virtue concepts” in value discussions. Virtue epistemology comes to restore the role of intellectual responsibility in the value domain. See: Ernest Sosa. 1991. *Knowledge in Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991 and Linda Zagzebski. (Cambridge, 1996). Dow’s book *Virtuous Minds: Intellectual Character Development: For Students, Educators, Parents* is an interesting application of virtue ethics to faith-based school settings. Philip B. Dow: *Virtuous Minds: Intellectual Character Development: For Students, Educators, and Parents* (Downdraft, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2013).
12. Several books and articles written in the last two decades discuss the complications of Israel education and propose new directions. See: Lisa Grant and Ezra Kopelowitz. *Israel Masters: a 21st Century Paradigm for Jewish*



*Education* (Jerusalem: Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education, 2012; Alec Sinclair). *The Aleph Bet of Israel Education, 2nd Edition* (Northbrook, The Center for Israel Education, 2015).

13. Leon Uris' novel was published in 1958 and Otto Preminger's film version in 1960. The novel and the subsequent film proved to be remarkable commercial successes. *Exodus* had great impact on the nascent Russian Jewish activist movement, whose founders circulated samizdat copies of the text, which ignited great excitement. A leader of the American Soviet Jewry Movement suggested that it was "probably more meaningful than even the Bible". M.M. Silver. *Leon Uris and Exodus: The Americanization of Israel's Founding Story* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010). In 2001, the influential Arabist thinker Edward Said commented that the novel constituted "the main narrative that dominates American thinking about the creation of Israel". *Al Abram Weekly*, August 30–September 5, 2001.



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