

Pe'amim

Studies in Oriental Jewry

161

Children and Childhood

Editor: Yair Adiel



**Ben-Zvi Institute for the Study of Jewish
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In This Issue

Giuseppe Luzzatto (1849-1916), an eleven-year-old Italian Jew and the son of Samuel David Luzzatto, wrote a diary in the momentous year of 1861, the pinnacle of Italian unification. The diary contains the description of a family visit to relatives in Gorizia, Trieste and Venice, as well as some short literary essays, calligraphic exercises, and poetic compositions by its young author. Giuseppe's diary sheds light upon the everyday life of the Luzzatto family and reveals the cultural and political concerns of a Jewish youth with a strong secular and religious education in the second half of the 19th century.

Prof. Asher Salah teaches at Bezalel Academy of Arts & Design and at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

oriash@013.net

The childhood cantiga 'La Tora' has been discussed by folklore scholars within the framework of the repertoire of Sephardic childhood songs. It is noteworthy that some of its contents and structural features are echoed in inquisitorial protocols destined to identify crypto-Jews. The present study suggests a new reading of the cantiga as an anti-Christian polemic. This reading intends to promote a more historical approach to folklore oral textuality.

Dr. Ilan Shoval teaches at The Department of History, The Open University of Israel.

ilakaugust@gmail.com

Ronel Atia's paper characterizes the image of the student in Djerba by analyzing expressions from the educational system that Rabbi Kalfon

Moses Hakohen established at the beginning of the twentieth century. This description includes a presentation of the main principles of Rabbi Kalfon's educational-pedagogic program that applies to the student, a definition of the ultimate student that the Rabbi aspired to develop as far as the level of involvement and creativity of the student was concerned.

Dr. Ronel Atia teaches at Orot Israel College of Education.

ronel@orot.ac.il

Naomi Shmuel's article focusses on the transition of the family from Ethiopia to Israel, initially describing childhood in Ethiopia and continuing to discuss changes following immigration. Each family finds their own way of coping, and the main question addressed is the extent to which the younger generation, born in Israel, can adopt both cultures and become bi-cultural, and which social and familial forces encourage or prevent this process.

Naomi Shmuel teaches at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

naomi.shmuel@mail.huji.ac.il

Joseph Yahalom's article examines rhetorical aspects of eulogies for children in the Middle Ages. Negotiations with dead children reflect the aspirations and hopes of bereaved parents. Yeshúa the judge from Gaza did this in his own special way, by presenting the questions that his wise son had asked him before his death. The questions themselves reflect the ideals of sensitivity and knowledge embedded in the

education of a clever child. In 'Iraqi Dinawar a sick son who speaks from the grave regrets the sudden interruption of his studies and having to abandon them; according to his lament, the joys of study were taken away from him. The talkative tomb of a young child from the Galilean Beit She'arim has a similar function. There Justus declares that he had enjoyed all the fruits of wisdom before he was laid under the tombstone. Yehuda Ha-Levi wrote his eulogies for children that were not his own. In these eulogies, he presents negotiations between father and son, mother and daughter. The father expects to celebrate the marriage of his son, and the daughter longs for her marriage day. Anonymous Palestinian Aramaic eulogies denote the unique sorrow of burying a young son who is usually expected to bury those who bury him. Prof. Emeritus Joseph Yahalom, The Department of Hebrew Literature, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
joseph.yahalom@mail.huji.ac.il