

ISSUES IN SCIENCE POLICY



HISTORICAL RESEARCH AT ISRAEL'S UNIVERSITIES

Historical Research at Israel's Universities

A report approved in the Council of the Academy
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by

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Principal Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1 A preliminary assessment of the impact of historical research carried out in Israel has indicated that the number of Israeli historians prominent at the international level is out of proportion to Israel's percentage of the world population and in comparison with developed nations whose populations are many times larger than Israel's. However, this assessment also attests to differences in the relative levels of prominence of Israeli universities in the sub-disciplines that were examined.
- 2 In order to maintain and strengthen this prominence, steps must be taken to ensure that university libraries purchase the books and periodicals needed for research.
- 3 The achievements of Israeli historians justify the allocation of resources to enable a substantial increase in the number of subfields in which Israeli historians play a leading role internationally.
- 4 The format of historical studies in Israel's universities, characterized by the splitting up of history among several departments and by severing national history from general history, is unusual and has negative implications for research.
- 5 In several universities, schools of history have been established that set out to correct this distorted situation in various ways. It would be worthwhile to monitor over a period of several years the relative success of these modalities and their contribution to realizing the distinctive potential of Israeli historians.
- 6 No university can hope to encompass, in teaching or research, all periods or geographical regions. There is a need for inter-university coordination to ensure that the universities

continue to compete in the core fields of history research while specializing in particular subfields.

- 7 Gaining familiarity with a variety of methods, approaches, and schools of thought is at least as important to the scholarly work of history students as their acquaintance with a variety of periods and regions. Therefore, students at all the universities must be introduced to an optimal range of methods, approaches and schools of thought.
- 8 Inter-university coordination should enable students to participate in courses taught at other universities on periods, regions, methods and schools of thought not studied at their home universities. Students should be allowed to take courses outside their own departments, and it is recommended that they be required to take a certain quota of courses in other history departments.
- 9 Inter-university coordination and cooperation should enable the attainment of some of the above goals through the utilization of advanced technologies, especially video-taped courses that would be accessible to students from different universities, and courses offered through video-conferencing.
- 10 Inter-university coordination should help ensure that approaches or topics not presently represented at any university will be taken up by at least some of the institutions.
- 11 Inter-university coordination should help ensure an effective acquisition policy for university libraries. Books and periodicals dealing with core fields should be acquired by every library, while those dealing with subfields should be acquired only by the university specializing in them. Joint acquisition of databases and electronic journals should be encouraged.
- 12 There has been a steady increase in the number of doctoral dissertations written in Israel on historical topics; however, their percentage of the total number of doctoral dissertations in the humanities, the social sciences and the fine arts has substantially remained stable.

Principal Conclusions and Recommendations

- 13 The breakdown of dissertation topics by period attests to a decided preference for the modern era (including the twentieth century), although the university curricula maintain a much more even-handed distribution by period.
- 14 Faculty members should consider whether the percentage of dissertations on the twentieth century currently written in their departments is desirable.
- 15 Dissertations on Eretz Israel (historic Palestine and the State of Israel) occupy first place in all the universities except for Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; however, the salience of these dissertations varies from one university to another and from one year to the next.
- 16 A comparison with universities in Western countries as to the proportion of dissertations dealing with the history of the country where the university is located shows that the degree of "Palestino-centricity" expressed in history research in Israel is not unusual.
- 17 On the other hand, Israel stands out for its high percentage of dissertations dealing with particularist topics (especially Jewish history and Eretz Israel studies), although there are major differences among the universities in this respect.
- 18 Strong emphasis on particularist topics has several inherent risks: lack of familiarity with general contexts and external parallels; narrowing of scholarly discourse; provincialization of research. Steps should be taken to circumvent these risks, for instance by adding a comparative dimension to particularist studies, with research questions formulated so as to deal with the particularist field while linking it to primary foci of scholarly debate. The format that has, for the past decade, characterized the historical research groups at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Institute for Advanced Studies could serve as a model in this respect.
- 19 Among historians whose projects were funded by the Israel Science Foundation between 1994/95 and 2005/06, there is

less of a tendency towards particularism and concentration on the twentieth century than among dissertation writers. This may point to an intergenerational difference, a hypothesis that bears further examination.

- 20 The conclusions arising from the breakdown by period of history dissertations require that departments and schools of history pay attention to the concentration of the younger generation on topics closer to it in time, place and culture. Does this pose the risk of a vicious circle, in which those currently writing doctoral theses on particularist topics will aspire, once they achieve university tenure, to focus on teaching those same topics, thereby bringing about an even greater increase in the percentage of particularist dissertations in the next generation?
- 21 Consideration should be given to changing the funding system of the Planning and Budgeting Committee of the Council for Higher Education, which currently presents a disincentive for students to learn other languages during their graduate studies and an incentive for the selection of particularist dissertation topics. Faculty members should encourage students with research potential to learn foreign languages as early as possible.
- 22 It is recommended that historians at all the universities initiate the establishment of international advisory committees that would survey the state of research every few years and formulate recommendations for improvement.
- 23 Efforts should continue to integrate into our institutions of higher learning the best Israeli historians currently writing dissertations in leading universities abroad. Furthermore, ways should be found to maintain links with those scholars who prefer to remain abroad, and to integrate them, even if only partially, into our research and teaching system.

Background

On 10 January 2002, the Humanities Division of the Israel Academy of Sciences decided to assess the field of history in Israeli universities, pursuant to the Academy's task of promoting scientific activity and giving guidance on topics of national importance in the areas of research and scientific planning. A steering team was established; when it began to work, it included Professors S.N. Eisenstadt, Benjamin Isaac, Avraham Grossman, Shulamit Volkov, Yoram Tsafrir, Benjamin Z. Kedar, Michel Confino, Yosef Kaplan, Gershon Shaked and Hayim Tadmor (all then or subsequently Members of the Academy), as well as Professors Menahem Ben-Sasson, Gad Gilbar, Michael Heyd, Dan Michman and Anita Shapira.¹

The team held its first meeting on 22 May 2002 and set up three working groups, which formulated guidelines regarding the directions to be taken by the assessment and the relevant data to be collected. These guidelines were discussed on 17 June 2002. Subsequently, the task of data-collecting was assigned to a group of students headed by Jonathan Rubin-Ronen.²

On 17 November 2002, the steering team discussed the categories to be used in the data collection. Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson, with Prof. B.Z. Kedar, supervised the students' group on an ongoing basis. On 21 March 2004, the steering team — now joined by two further Academy members, Professors Yehuda Bauer and Yohanan Friedmann — met again. The data collected up to then

1 Prof. Shapira subsequently requested to be released from membership in the steering team.

2 Assisted by students Ze'ev Elron, Yonatan Levy, Noa Milikovsky, Hannah Amar, Adi Zeller and Ran Segev.

were presented and discussed, and guidelines were established for the continuation of the project. In addition to the data collected in Israel, comparative data were obtained from various universities abroad, with the assistance of Mr. Bob Lapidot. Dr. Meir Zadok and Ms. Galia Finzi assisted the steering committee in its work and made a significant contribution to the completion of its tasks. An overview of the project was presented on 3 November 2004 to members of the University of Haifa's School of History. Their helpful comments facilitated the continuation of the project.

When it transpired that the Council for Higher Education was planning to establish a team to study the teaching of history in Israel's universities, it was decided, in order to avoid duplication of efforts, that the Academy's steering team would concentrate on the state of history research. Nonetheless, some of the data on teaching gathered in the meantime by the students' group is used in the following report.

A draft of the report was submitted in September 2006 to the members of the steering team, the heads of the university schools of history, and historians in the Academy's Young Scholars Forum. On 30 November 2006, the draft was discussed by a forum that included Professors Benjamin Isaac, Shulamit Volkov, Dan Michman, Yohanan Friedmann and B.Z. Kedar, as well as Dr. Guy Miron of the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, who is a member of the Academy's Young Scholars Forum. Another member of the forum, Dr. Iris Shagrir of the Open University, sent her response in writing. Subsequently, a letter was received from Prof. Gershon Ben-Shahar, President of the Open University. The report was submitted to the members of the Academy's Humanities Division, which accepted it on 27 February 2007. The Academy's Council approved the report on 13 March 2007. It is hereby presented to Israel's history departments, schools of history, university decision-making bodies and the general public.

A. The Format of Studies and Its Implications for Research

1. The Splitting of History Studies among Several Departments

The format of university history studies in Israel was established on 8 May 1935 at the conclusion of an intense discussion in the Council of the Faculty of Humanities of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The history professors, who had obtained their professional training at German universities, proposed a format corresponding to that customary in Europe at the time: a single history department, in which national history was emphasized within the framework of general world development. In contrast, most of the professors in the Institute of Jewish Studies, who had received their professional training in the rabbinical academies (*yeshivot*) of Eastern Europe, demanded that Jewish history be taught in a separate department, alongside a “general history” department. The professors of the Institute of Jewish Studies won the day, and thus the Hebrew University adopted an unusual format, perhaps unique in the modern world: two history departments, one dealing with “general history” and the other with “Jewish history.” According to this format, the “general” history department — unlike its European counterparts — does not deal with any aspect of national history; that is to say, “general” history is exclusively concerned with the history of non-Jews, while Jewish history is taught in a separate framework. The history of Islamic countries and that of the ancient Near East are taught in other departments.³ The department where “general”

3 On the discussion in the Council of the Humanities Faculty on 8 May 1935 and

history is taught consistently took pains to call itself the “History Department,” declaring, as it were, that this was *the* center for training in the historical discipline as a whole. However, this claim never went beyond the declaratory stage.

The splitting up of history studies and the severance of national history from the context of general history became deeply rooted at the Hebrew University. A 1951 proposal by the “General History” faculty members to unite the History and Jewish History departments was rejected. The new universities established since the 1950s for the most part adopted the Jerusalem model. Ben-Gurion University of the Negev tried to create a single department where “general,” Jewish and Islamic history would be taught, but that experiment ended in a split. Only at the Open University do “general,” Jewish and Islamic history coexist in a single department, and the university’s undergraduate program explicitly dismantles the barriers between the various fields.

Notably, most of the newer universities have adopted the appellation “General History Department”; that is, the pretension of the Jerusalem department to serve as the center for training in the discipline of history has not been adopted by the younger universities, at least not at the declarative level.

One may argue that the separation of “general” from Jewish history in Israel’s universities has helped develop the field of “general” history more extensively than in Europe, where universities typically have only one history department, in which the primary emphasis is on the history of the country or region. From this standpoint, the separation practiced in Israel has had a positive effect: “General” history has not become a relatively marginal field in a unified history department interested

its significance, see Ariel Rein, “History and Jewish History: Together or Separate? The Definition of Historical Studies at the Hebrew University, 1925–1935,” in *The History of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem: Origins and Beginnings*, ed. Shaul Katz and Michael Heyd, Jerusalem 1997, pp. 516–540 [in Hebrew].

primarily in the history of the Jews and of Eretz Israel (historic Palestine).

At the same time, the splitting up of history studies has had negative implications for research. Graduates of the “general” history department have not systematically been exposed to Jewish history and so, for the most part, find it difficult to exploit their knowledge of Hebrew — one of their advantages relative to non-Israeli historians — to add a distinctive perspective to their research work in the field of “general” history. Their lack of systematic training in the field of Jewish history has at times raised eyebrows among historians in other countries, who find it hard to grasp that Israeli historians would not be authorities on Jewish history for the period in which they specialize. On the other hand, graduates of the Jewish History department have not systematically been trained in the field of “general” history and thus are in constant danger of distancing themselves from “general” research in the period of their specialization. The same also holds true for those who have studied the history of Islamic countries. Generally, the format of studies has obstructed (if not prevented entirely) the development of Israeli historians capable of utilizing the potential inherent in their unique cultural and geographical background and thereby making a distinctive name for themselves in their ability to study phenomena in the field of Jewish history as well as in the fields of Western and Eastern history.⁴

In recent years, several attempts have been made to rectify this anomaly.

At Tel Aviv University, a school of history was created in 1971. It was first and foremost a school for research degrees, and its curricula included M.A. and Ph.D. studies in general history,

4 Obviously, even in a unified department, serious communication problems can arise between experts in different cultures or regions; see, for example, Anthony Grafton, “History’s Postmodern Fates,” *Daedalus*, Spring 2006, p. 59. Yet these problems arise against the background of a common education.

in modern and medieval Middle Eastern and African history, in the history and philosophy of science and ideas, in classical studies, and, to some extent, in geography and the human environment, and in Arabic language and literature.⁵ The school does not teach undergraduate courses and does not include the university's doctoral candidates in Jewish history. Recently, a decision was made to dismantle the joint structure for M.A. studies, which have again become the responsibility of separate departments.

In 1998 a school of history was created at the University of Haifa; today, it comprises the departments of Jewish history, Middle Eastern history, general history, Eretz Israel studies, art history and East Asian studies. The school offers a faculty seminar for instructors from these departments and courses for M.A. and Ph.D. students (a seminar for doctoral students, a methodological seminar for M.A. students in the research track and methodological courses for M.A. students). The purpose of these courses is to present to graduate students "a complex, richly variegated and up-to-date picture of the knowledge, methods and state of research in the central fields of historical scholarship."⁶ In the 2006/07 academic year, a joint M.A. program for students from all the history departments began to operate under the school's aegis.⁷

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem set up a school of history in 1999 that involved all the history departments. Its activities focus on undergraduate students, all of whom are required to take two basic courses: an introduction to world history and an introduction to the historical discipline. Excellent first-year students from all the history departments pursue their studies, for

5 www.historyschool/tau/ac.il/Structure_heb.htm

6 hcc.haifa.ac.il/Departments/history-school

7 This information is based on the website referred to in footnote 6 above and on complementary data supplied by the school's head, Prof. Arie Kohavi.

the next two years, in the context of a special track that includes tutorials. The best students in this track edit the school's journal, "Once upon a Time: A Young History Forum." The school's activities have recently been expanded and are now available to graduate students as well.

At Bar-Ilan University, the departments of Jewish history, general history, Eretz Israel studies and Middle Eastern history belong to a single faculty, the Faculty of Jewish Studies, and this leads to some collaboration among them. Jewish history students must take a general history course for their undergraduate degree and vice versa, while M.A. students are advised to do the same. Courses in Eretz Israel studies are recommended to students of Jewish history, and vice versa.

We thus have several different formats, each trying to link up the history departments in order to overcome the problem of the split dating back to 1935. A multi-year follow-up survey should be carried out on graduates of these programs who go on to do historical research, in order to determine their relative degrees of success in realizing the distinctive potential of the Israeli student of history.

2. Instruction in Periods and Regions; Instruction in Methods and Approaches

The curriculum developed in the history departments at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, which has been adopted over the years by the other universities as well, aspires to introduce students to three eras: ancient (Greece and Rome, but not the Ancient Near East), medieval and modern (subsequently split into the early and later modern eras). At the undergraduate level, the result, in many cases, is that students acquire a reasonable acquaintance with a few periods in these eras, but their chances of gaining a clear, comprehensive picture of the methods and approaches used in history research depend, haphazardly, on the

extent to which these have been demonstrated in courses they chose to take. Throughout their undergraduate or even their M.A. studies, they might well never encounter such approaches as those of economic history, historical demography, history of the emotions and so forth. Naturally, among students who choose to pursue historical research, these lacunae will influence the breadth of their horizons.

Moreover, a student's familiarity with a few segments of different periods may produce a disconnected picture: a few islands of detailed knowledge emerging from an only partially mapped sea. Since it is natural to forget information, many students who do not go on to more advanced studies or research will be left with fragments of knowledge that will grow dimmer with time. The current focus on acquiring familiarity with periods from different eras is also problematic from an instructional perspective, since no history department can ever hope to cover all parts of all eras.

The same holds true with regard to students' introduction to various geographical regions. There is no point in trying to create curricula including units dealing with many or all of the world's countries. Nor should one aspire to have experts for all regions at any single university. Naturally, all universities will teach Middle Eastern and Western European history; however, there is no justification to having an expert on Scandinavia or Australia at every university. A distinction must be made between pivotal areas, which ought to be studied and researched competitively at all the universities, and secondary regions, which ought to be studied in at least one university.

For all the above reasons, the curriculum should be restructured: Instead of demanding only that students become familiar during their studies with various periods and countries, steps should be taken to ensure that they will also become familiar with an optimal range of methods, approaches and schools of thought in the discipline, and with some of the chief problems

now being discussed by historians. Arguably, the latter type of instruction is more critical than the former in the training of students, whether their goal is research or school-teaching, since it goes beyond providing knowledge to inculcate a deeper understanding of the essence of the historian's profession, of the possibilities of historical explanation, and of methods that are steadily becoming more sophisticated. The various methods and approaches would, of course, be demonstrated largely through analysis of concrete historical realities, anchored in defined times and places. In this area as well, the Open University is ahead of the other universities in its aspiration to provide students with methods and comparative approaches.

Thus, in the field of history teaching (as in the humanities in general), inter-university coordination is needed.⁸ *Inter alia*, this would enable students to participate, through cross-registration, in courses at other universities and so to acquire knowledge about periods, regions, methods and schools of thought not represented in their home university's curriculum. Of course, history students should also be encouraged to take courses outside their own departments, and it is recommended that they be required to take a certain quota of courses offered by other history departments at their home universities.

Some of the above teaching needs might be filled through the utilization of advanced technologies, especially courses videotaped in university studios to be made accessible to students at other universities, or offered through video-conferencing. This, too, would of course require inter-university coordination and cooperation, which could be guided by the experience gained in this area by the Open University, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Institute for Advanced Studies and other institutions.

8 See the report *The Future of the Humanities at Israel's Research Universities*, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2007, Chap. 1 (in Hebrew).

Moreover, long-range plans for hiring teaching staff in the historical discipline should ensure that staff members represent a broad range of methods, approaches and schools of thought. At the national level, steps should be taken to ensure that new methods not currently represented at any university be represented in future in at least one of them. For example, environmental history, a new branch that may provide insights on issues of acute present-day concern, is not now represented at any Israeli university.

The shifting of emphasis from instruction in different periods to instruction in a range of methods and approaches will surely prove fruitful to the future of research.

3. Libraries: The Need for a National Development Program

The budget slashes of recent years have led to a steady decrease in library acquisitions of books, professional journals and databases. The constant rise in the prices of books is a phenomenon common to all developed countries. Local budgets for acquisitions are dwindling while books become more and more expensive, and so the number of books that no Israeli university library can afford to purchase is ever on the increase. This is a serious problem for historians, for whom the library is a necessary and vital element of research infrastructure. When the library cannot fulfill its role, historians must pay for the books they need for their research out of their own pockets. This is an inadequate solution that certainly does not meet the needs of the community of researchers and students. Today, many items required for regular, ongoing research are not to be found in the National and University Library in Jerusalem or in other university libraries in Israel, necessitating reliance on international book loans and trips to overseas libraries. This is a dangerous situation, which could lead to erosion in the quality of historical research in Israel.

A national development program is needed to ensure that university libraries acquire the books and professional journals required for research, and to bring about greater efficiency in library spending on the national level. Inter-university coordination, in the context of ensuring competitiveness in the central areas of history and institutional specialization in subfields, must also determine the acquisition policies of all the university libraries. That is, books and journals dealing with core fields should be acquired by every university library, while individual libraries should concentrate on books and periodicals dealing with the subfields studied at their universities. Furthermore, steps must be taken to enable the joint acquisition of databases and electronic journals.

B. Directions and Emphases in Historical Research

1. The Evidence of Doctoral Dissertations

We chose to study directions and emphases in research first of all through a longitudinal survey of the topics of doctoral dissertations approved by Israeli universities between 1975 and 2005 in the discipline of history, in its broad sense (“general” and Jewish history, history of the Islamic countries, Far Eastern and African history, art history, historical geography, etc.). The survey also included dissertations with a marked historical dimension that were written by students of archaeology, economics, sociology, etc.

Experience shows that students’ dissertation topics are good indicators of their future areas of research. For example, a student writing a doctoral thesis on the Ottoman reforms in Syria and Palestine in the mid-19th century may go on from there to focus, say, on modern Syria or the Palestinian national movement, but usually will not deviate from the history of the Islamic countries (also because of the nature of the curriculum and the structuring of the university history departments). Thus, the distribution of Ph.D. dissertation topics attests to the relative weight of geographical-chronological fields of research (such as Ancient Rome or early modern France) among a given cohort of historians. A study of their breakdown over a period of several decades will indicate trends in the enhancement, stability or weakening of the attractiveness of research fields, the emergence of new fields, and the relative weight of topical-methodological foci, such as economic, military or comparative history.

1.1 *History Dissertations and Their Share in All Dissertations in the Humanities*

The number of doctoral dissertations written in Israel on historical topics has risen steadily: From 28 in 1979/80, it climbed 20 years later, in 1999/2000, to 75, and in 2003/04 to 111. The increase can be explained partially by the entry of students from the younger universities into the circle of doctoral students. However, even if we examine the older universities by themselves, we will find a clear rising trend, more rapid from the 1990s onwards (see Table 1 and Graph 1).

Table 1: Number of dissertations on historical topics, 1974/75–2003/04

	1974/ 75	1979/ 80	1984/ 85	1989/ 90	1994/ 95	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04
HUJI	16	18	14	15	19	26	30	38	32	38
TAU	No data	4	7	17	15	23	31	17	33	22
BGU						2	2	3	5	3
Haifa					8	9	9	8	9	26
BIU	2	6	1	4	6	15	13	12	19	22
Total	18	28	22	36	48	75	85	78	98	111

HUJI = Hebrew University of Jerusalem

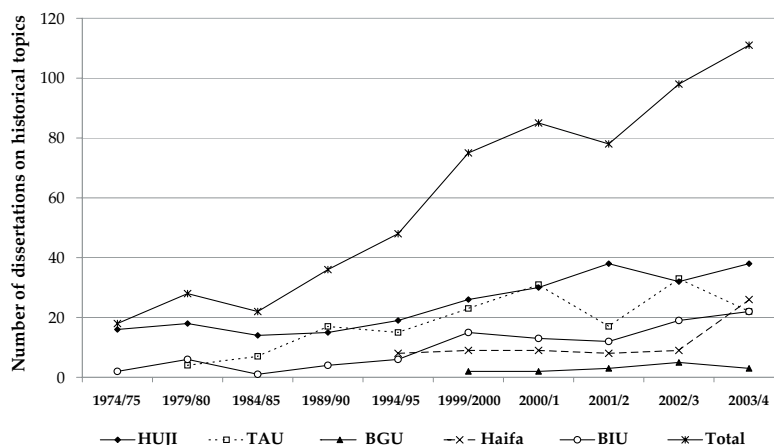
TAU = Tel Aviv University

BGU = Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Haifa = University of Haifa

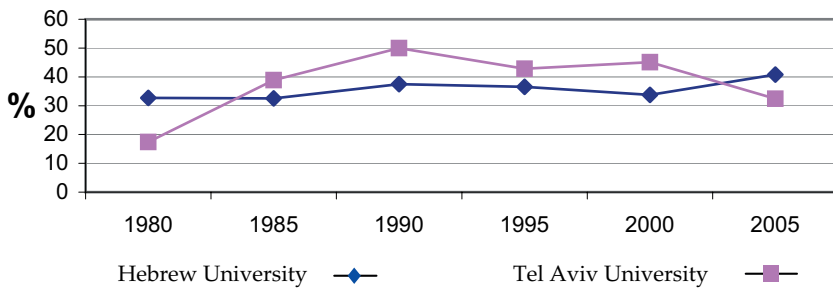
BIU = Bar-Ilan University

Graph 1: Number of dissertations on historical topics, 1974/75–2003/04



However, the data from the two largest universities indicate that the percentage of dissertations on historical topics within the total number of dissertations in the humanities, social sciences and fine arts has substantially remained stable (see Graph 2).

Graph 2: Percentage of dissertations on historical topics out of the total number of approved dissertations in the humanities, social sciences and fine arts



Thus, the rise in the number of dissertations written in Israel on historical topics is integrally linked with an overall rise in the number of dissertations in the humanities, social sciences and fine arts. Discussion of the factors underlying this overall increase, which seems to have accelerated since the 1990s, is desirable, but it would take us beyond the bounds of the present framework.

In any event, it is interesting to compare the number of dissertations on historical topics being written in our universities with the corresponding figures for leading overseas universities. Table 1 above indicates that in 2002/03, 33 dissertations on historical topics were approved by Tel Aviv University and 32 by the Hebrew University. In that same year, 34 dissertations on such topics were approved at Princeton,⁹ 46 at Harvard,¹⁰ 56 at the Free University of Berlin¹¹ and 79 at Cambridge.

1.2 Breakdown by Period

Between 1994/95 and 2003/04, the highest percentage of historical dissertations were written in the field of 20th-century history. However, these percentages, and the range of their fluctuations from one year to the next, differed among the various universities: At Bar-Ilan University the percentage ranged from 20 to 75 percent; at the University of Haifa, from 44 to 73 percent; at Ben-Gurion University, from 20 to 66 percent; at Tel Aviv University, from 35 to 67 percent; and at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, from 31 to 54 percent. Dissertations dealing with the modern era until 1900 for the most part were in second place, those dealing with Antiquity in third place, and those dealing with the Middle Ages even rarer for most years. Only a tiny percentage dealt with prehistory (see Table 2).

Table 2: Breakdown of dissertations on historical topics, 1994/95–2003/04*

a. Hebrew University of Jerusalem

	1994/95	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Prehistory	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Antiquity	21%	15%	10%	24%	19%	18%
Middle Ages	5%	8%	17%	11%	31%	5%
Modern era to 1900	5%	15%	23%	13%	13%	18%
20th century	42%	54%	47%	47%	31%	45%

- 9 See <http://catalog.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?DB=local&PAGE=First>. The breakdown is: Dept. of History — 16, Dept. of Art and Archeology — 6, Dept. of Near Eastern Studies — 4, Dept. of East Asian Studies — 3, Dept. of Religion — 3, Dept. of Classics — 1, Dept. of Comparative Literature — 1.
- 10 The data on Oxford (and on British universities whose data are presented below) were compiled by the Institute of Historical Research and appear at www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Resources/Theses/tc03.html.
- 11 The list of dissertations, their writers and the departments in which they were written was sent to us on 17 December 2004 by the Prüfungssekretariat des Fachbereiches Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften.

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b. Tel Aviv University

	1994/95	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Prehistory	0%	0%	3%	6%	3%	0%
Antiquity	7%	22%	13%	12%	6%	14%
Middle Ages	0%	9%	13%	6%	12%	9%
Modern era to 1900	13%	4%	26%	6%	18%	23%
20th century	67%	48%	35%	65%	48%	55%

c. Bar-Ilan University

	1994/95	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Prehistory	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%
Antiquity	17%	33%	31%	8%	14%	14%
Middle Ages	0%	7%	8%	0%	14%	14%
Modern era to 1900	0%	33%	23%	17%	10%	9%
20th century	50%	20%	38%	75%	47%	55%

d. University of Haifa

	1994/95	1999/2000– 2000/01**	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Prehistory	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Antiquity	13%	11%	29%	0%	4%
Middle Ages	0%	6%	0%	11%	4%
Modern era to 1900	6%	39%	14%	22%	15%
20th century	63%	44%	57%	67%	73%

e. Ben-Gurion University

	1994/95	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Prehistory		0%	0%	0%	20%	0%
Antiquity		50%	0%	66%	40%	33%
Middle Ages		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Modern era to 1900		50%	50%	0%	20%	0%
20th century		0%	50%	33%	20%	66%

* The annual breakdown does not total 100 percent, because some dissertations do not concentrate on a single period, or their focal period is unclear.

** There are no separate figures for 1999/2000 and 2000/01.

The clear preference for the modern era (including the 20th century) in the dissertations contrasts with the efforts of the universities to maintain a balance among the various periods in their curricula, so as to provide students with basic knowledge of all of them. To illustrate the gap between course distributions, which reflect departmental policies, and the distribution of the dissertations, which reflect the individual choices of their writers, data are presented in Table 3 on the Hebrew University and Bar-Ilan University for 1999/2000.

Table 3: Breakdown of dissertations and courses on historical topics at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Bar-Ilan University, 1999/2000

	Hebrew University of Jerusalem		Bar-Ilan University	
	Courses	Dissertations	Courses	Dissertations
Prehistory		4%		0%
Antiquity	16.40%	15%	23.67%	33%
Middle Ages	11.13%	8%	14.01%	7%
Modern era to 1900	26.72%	15%	28.02%	33%
20th century	17.41%	54%	13.53%	20%

The table reveals that the distribution of courses at the Hebrew University is somewhat more even-handed than at Bar-Ilan University.

A comparison with a number of overseas universities points to substantial variability with regard to the percentage of dissertations dealing with the 20th century out of the total number of dissertations on historical topics (Table 4).

**Table 4: Percentage of dissertations on the 20th century
at selected universities, 2003**

University	Total number of dissertations on historical topics	20th century
York ¹²	14	0 (0%)
Southampton	8	1 (12.5%)
Edinburgh	14	1 (14.3%)
Leeds	11	3 (27.3%)
Princeton ¹³	34	10 (29.4%)
Oxford	46	15 (32.6%)
Cambridge	79	27 (34.2%)
Berlin, Free University ¹⁴	53 ¹⁵	22 (41.5%)
University of Arizona ¹⁶	29	13 (44.8%)
Yale ¹⁷	17	8 (47.1%)
Cornell ¹⁸	17	9 (52.9%)
Data base of Italian dissertations ¹⁹	73	42 (57.5%)
Lomonosov University, Moscow ²⁰	9	6 (66.7%)
University of Sydney, Australia ²¹	8	6 (75.0%)

Thus, at leading universities — Princeton, Oxford, Cambridge, the Free University of Berlin, Yale and Cornell — the percentage of dissertations dealing with the 20th century ranges between 29 and 53 percent. At British universities located in more peripheral regions, the percentage is lower.

12 On the British universities, see note 10 above.

13 See note 9 above.

14 See note 11 above.

15 The total number of history dissertations is 56; however, the titles of three of them did not disclose the period they deal with.

16 See <http://history.arizona.edu/graduates/dissertations.php>. The total number of history dissertations is 55; however, in 26 of them, only the name of the author and the geographical region studied are mentioned.

17 Yale Department of History Newsletter, Spring 2005, p. 13.

18 My thanks to Dr. Yarden Kedar for providing these data.

19 See Archivio Telematico delle tesi di laurea at www.tesidilaurea.it, under "Storia." The database contains 84 dissertations written in recent years; however, the titles of 11 of them did not disclose the period they deal with.

20 See www.msu.ru/science/dissert/2003/cdis.html. My thanks to Prof. Sergei D. Serebriany for referring me to this website.

21 The data, sent by Prof. John H. Pryor of this university, refer to dissertations whose topics were approved in 2003.

The authors of a report of the American Historical Association, published in 2004, note that the high percentage of dissertations dealing with the 20th century runs contrary to the definition of history as the study of places that are distant from us in time.²² The faculties of the history departments in Israel's universities should consider whether the present percentage of dissertations on the 20th century being written under their supervision is desirable and whether it is possible to influence that figure — for example, through a change in policy regarding the study of foreign languages.

1.3 Breakdown by Approach (or Sub-Discipline)

An examination of dissertation contents to determine the principal approaches used by the writers yields the following results.

Table 5: The most frequent approaches used in dissertations at three universities, 1985–2000²³

a. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Ranking by frequency*	1985	1995	2000
1	History of ideas	Social history	Social history
2	Social history	Political history	Economic history
3	Political history History of culture, memory and myth	History of religion	Political history Historical demography History of ideas
4		Historical sociology	

22 Thomas Bender, Philip M. Katz, Colin Palmer et al., *The Education of Historians for the Twenty-First Century*, Washington, D.C., 2004; see www.historians.org/projects/cge/2004/Report/ch2.html → Fields

23 Changes in the method used over the course of the project resulted, in the present survey, in a different calculation (though not by a wide margin) than in other parts of this report of the total number of dissertations on historical subjects approved in any given year. It therefore seemed preferable not to present precise quantitative figures in Table 5, but rather to point to major trends, as their evaluation was not affected by the methodological changes.

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b. Tel Aviv University

Ranking by frequency	1985	1995	2000
1	Social history	History of culture, memory and myth	History of ideas
2	History of ideas	Political history	History of art
3	Political history	Social history History of ideas	Political history
4	History of culture, memory and myth		History of religion History of culture, memory and myth

c. Bar-Ilan University

Ranking by frequency	1985	1995	2000
1	<i>Insufficient data</i>	History of religion History of culture, memory and myth	Economic history History of religion
2	<i>Insufficient data</i>		
3	<i>Insufficient data</i>	Political history History of ideas	Social history Historical demography
4	<i>Insufficient data</i>		

* 1 = highest frequency. Where two or more approaches appear in the same box, they have the same rank.

In 1985, for which we have data only on the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv University, the same four approaches were the most frequent at both (although the first two approaches appear in reverse order). By contrast, in 1995 and 2000, for which we have data from three universities, the differences among the institutions are much more salient, and we also note changes within the individual universities over time. For instance, social history, which was in first place at the Hebrew University in 1995 and 2000, appears in third or fourth place among the most frequent approaches at Tel Aviv University in 1995, and not at all in 2000. At Bar-Ilan University, we do not find social history among the frequent approaches in 1995, whereas in 2000 it ranks third or

fourth. The history of religion, which was in first or second place at Bar-Ilan in 1995 and 2000, was in third place at the Hebrew University in 1995 and in fourth place at Tel Aviv University in 2000. Nonetheless, the trends common to all three institutions should be stressed; for instance, at no time was political history the most frequent approach at any of them.

1.4 Breakdown by Geographical Region

Table 6 presents the breakdown of dissertations by geographical focus.

**Table 6: Breakdown of historical dissertations by region,
1994/95–2003/04 (in percentages)***

a. Hebrew University of Jerusalem

	1994/95	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Eretz Israel	47	46	27	39	28	34
Western and Central Europe	10	4	20	10	19	16
Eastern Europe	16	12	7	8	3	5
Middle East	0	19	13	16	0	13

b. Tel Aviv University

	1994/95	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Eretz Israel	27	35	26	35	33	32
Western and Central Europe	26	8	19	24	21	19
Eastern Europe	0	4	3	0	6	0
Middle East	0	9	19	6	15	23

c. Bar-Ilan University

	1994/95	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Eretz Israel	17	47	46	0	47	36
Western and Central Europe	17	14	16	0	10	0
Eastern Europe	0	7	8	0	5	14
Middle East	17	7	23	0	16	18

d. University of Haifa

	1994/95	1999/2000– 2000/01**	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Eretz Israel	50	67	29	44	46
Western and Central Europe	0	6	0	11	4
Eastern Europe	0	6	0	0	4
Middle East	25	6	43	22	19

e. Ben-Gurion University

	1994/95	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Eretz Israel	0	0	0	33	20	33
Western and Central Europe	0	50	0	0	0	33
Eastern Europe	0	50	0	100	40	0
Middle East	0	0	0	0	40	33

* The annual breakdown does not total 100 percent because not all the dissertations deal with a defined region and because we have chosen in the tables to relate only to the principal regions.

** There are no separate figures for 1999/2000 and 2000/01.

Dissertations dealing with Eretz Israel (historic Palestine and the State of Israel) occupy first place at all the universities except Ben-Gurion University. However, their percentages vary from one university to another and from one year to the next: At the University of Haifa, the range is from 67 to 29 percent; at the Hebrew University, from 47 to 28 percent (perhaps showing signs of decline in recent years); at Bar-Ilan University, from 47 to 17 percent; and at Tel Aviv University, from 35 to 26 percent. By contrast, at Tel Aviv University much attention is focused on Western and Central Europe, and little on Eastern Europe. At the Hebrew University and Bar-Ilan University, the percentage of dissertations dealing with Western Europe is lower than at Tel Aviv University, while the percentage of those dealing with Eastern Europe is higher. At the University of Haifa, a relatively high percentage of dissertations deal with the Middle East.

A comparison with course distribution indicates that university curricula in Israel maintain a more even-handed balance among the various geographical regions than is reflected by the dissertations.

Data from a number of overseas universities point to major differences in the extent to which the dissertations written there focus on the country where the university is located (see Table 7).

Table 7: Percentage of dissertations dealing with local history at selected universities, 2003

University	Total number of dissertations on historical topics	History of the country where the university is located
Southampton	8	8 (100.0%)
York	14	10 (71.4%) ²⁴
Database of Italian dissertations	73	47 (64.7%)
Leeds	11	7 (63.6%)
University of Sydney, Australia	8	5 (62.5%)
Edinburgh	14	7 (50.0%) ²⁵
Yale	17	7 (47.1%)
Oxford	46	21 (45.7%)
Lomonosov University, Moscow	9	4 (44.4%)
Berlin, Free University	53	22 (41.5%)
Cambridge	79	30 (38.0%)
University of Arizona	55	19 (34.5%) ²⁶
Princeton	34	8 (23.5%)
Cornell	17	4 (23.5%)

For the sources of the data presented here, see notes 9–11, 16–17 and 19–21 above.

The percentage of dissertations dealing with the history of the country ranges from 50 to 100 percent in British universities

24 Of these ten dissertations, five deal with regional history: Yorkshire (three), Leeds (one) and Durham (one).

25 Of the seven dissertations on British history written at Edinburgh, five deal with Scottish history.

26 A further 18 dissertations written at the University of Arizona deal with Latin America.

located in peripheral regions. By contrast, at Yale, Oxford, the Free University of Berlin, Cambridge, Princeton and Cornell, the percentage ranges from 47 to 23 percent. There are grounds for asserting a connection between a university's excellence and the percentage of dissertations written there on national history: A 2004 report of the American Historical Association states that in the 1990s, the percentage of dissertations on topics related to American history in all U.S. universities was 54 percent, while the corresponding figure in U.S. history departments ranked in the top quartile by the National Research Council was only 44 percent. In history departments ranked in the bottom quartile, the percentage soared to 75 percent.²⁷

If we compare the data in Table 7 with the data for the same year in Table 6, we find that the percentages of dissertations focusing on the home country for Bar-Ilan University and the University of Haifa are close to those for Oxford, while the percentages for Tel Aviv University and the Hebrew University fall between those for Cambridge and those for Princeton and Cornell. Thus, it may be said that the extent of "Palestino-centricity" in history research in Israel is not exceptional.

Emphasis on the country in which a historian is active (or on one of its geographical regions) is indeed characteristic of historical scholarship in many countries. The reasons for this are obvious. The sources — printed or manuscript — on the history of the country or region are available to the scholar, as is the relevant secondary literature, and they are written, for the most part, in the scholar's mother tongue.²⁸ The nation-state spurred an interest in national histories in the nineteenth century, and, even today, a country's educated public will display a particular interest in local history. Thus, scholars specializing in national or

²⁷ See note 22 above.

²⁸ Eretz Israel studies differ in this respect with regard to the languages of the sources and of the secondary literature.

local history can find audiences for their publications with relative ease and can look forward to media exposure and prizes from local organizations. Furthermore, concentration on local history has gained scholarly legitimacy in an era of high esteem for studies of cultural and social topics focusing on narrow geographical areas.

However, emphasis on local history has its inherent risks: It can lead to lack of awareness of supra-local historical contexts and parallels; narrowing of scholarly discourse to a small, monolingual group; and provincialization of research. One way of overcoming these risks is to add a comparative dimension to studies on local topics. For instance, a historian devoting years of research to the Public Works Department during the British Mandate in Palestine might also investigate what was transpiring at the time in other British colonies, and perhaps in French colonies as well; in so doing, this scholar would both discover the particularities of the developments in Palestine and join a larger community of scholars traversing political and linguistic boundaries.²⁹

Local topics are not necessarily of marginal importance. As we know, the study of a remote village in the Pyrenees in the early fourteenth century can yield insights on a series of central issues to do with, say, the history of the family or the history of religion. A study's centrality derives not so much from its specific topic as from the questions it poses, which, while relating to a limited area, may be drawn from and linked to central foci of historical discourse. The centrality of a research topic thus depends to a large degree on the broadness of the historian's horizons and on his/her ability to identify essential and significant issues in the concrete case under study.

²⁹ On this matter, see the 2000 report on the universities of Lower Saxony: *Forschungsevaluation an niedersächsischen Hochschulen: Geschichte, Bericht der Gutachter*. My thanks to Prof. Jürgen Kocka for placing this report at my disposal.

1.5 Emphasis on Particularist History

Although the percentage of dissertations written in Israel's universities on the country's history is not exceptional, the distribution of Israeli dissertations is unique in the high percentage dealing with particularist topics, including the history of the Jewish people, of the *Yishuv* (the pre-1948 Jewish community in Palestine) and the State of Israel, of the Israeli-Arab dispute, and of Palestine's non-Jewish populations.

Table 8: Percentage of history dissertations dealing with particularist topics, 1974/75–2003/04

	1974/ 75	1979/ 80	1984/ 85	1989/ 90	1994/ 95	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04
JH*	55.6	28.6	27.3	28.1	27.1	35.5	23.3	22.1	29.6	17.1
Y&I**	11.1	21.4	27.3	18.8	27.1	29.0	20.9	31.2	25.5	14.4
AIC	5.6	0.0	0.0	3.1	2.1	0.0	1.2	0.0	4.1	1.8
Shoah	5.6	3.6	9.1	9.4	10.4	2.0	4.1	0.0	0.0	7.2
NJ	16.7	14.3	9.1	12.5	8.3	9.2	8.1	14.3	9.2	8.1
Total	94.6	67.9	72.8	71.9	75	75.7	57.6	67.6	68.4	48.6

JH = Jewish history

Y&I = Yishuv (Jewish community in Palestine 1882–1948) and State of Israel

AIC = Arab-Israeli conflict

NJ = Eretz Israel (Palestine): Non-Jews

* Excluding the history of the Yishuv and the State of Israel, the Shoah and the Arab-Israeli conflict

** Dissertations dealing with the history of the Jews of Palestine before 1882 are included among those on Jewish history.

In Table 8, we see that the percentage of dissertations on particularist topics exceeds 65 percent for all the periods measured but two, and mostly exceeds 70 percent. Since 1999/2000, it shows signs of decline.

Table 9 shows major differences among the universities with regard to emphasis on particularist history. Bar-Ilan University has the highest percentage: In some years, it reaches 100 percent. Tel Aviv University has the lowest — between 25 and 71 percent.

The Hebrew University and the University of Haifa occupy a middle position. Thus, the various universities have differing profiles in terms of the emphasis on particularist topics.

Table 9: Percentage of history dissertations dealing with particularist topics, by university

a. Hebrew University of Jerusalem

	1974/ 75	1979/ 80	1984/ 85	1989/ 90	1994/ 95	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04
JH	50.0	27.8	35.7	26.7	47.4	38.6	26.7	31.6	50.0	13.2
Y&I	12.5	16.7	21.4	20.0	10.5	34.6	20.0	21.1	21.9	18.4
AIC	6.3	0.0	0.0	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Shoah	6.3	5.6	14.3	6.7	10.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.2
NJ	18.8	22.2	14.3	20.0	21.1	7.7	10.0	18.4	9.4	10.5
Total	93.9	72.3	85.7	80.1	89.5	80.9	56.7	71.1	81.3	55.3

b. Tel Aviv University

	1974/ 75	1979/ 80	1984/ 85	1989/ 90	1994/ 95	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04
JH		25.0	14.3	29.4	6.7	17.4	16.1	5.9	18.2	18.2
Y&I		0.0	42.9	17.7	46.7	26.1	12.9	29.4	33.3	18.2
AIC		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.2	0.0	0.0	9.1
Shoah		0.0	0.0	11.8	13.3	4.4	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
NJ		0.0	14.3	5.9	0.0	13.0	3.3	17.7	3.0	4.6
Total		25.0	71.5	64.8	66.7	60.9	42.0	53.0	54.5	50.1

c. Bar-Ilan University

	1974/ 75	1979/ 80	1984/ 85	1989/ 90	1994/ 95	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04
JH	100.0	33.0	0.0	75.0	33.0	73.0	23.0	17.0	26.0	18.0
Y&I	0.0	50.0	100.0	25.0	17.0	20.0	31.0	75.0	21.0	18.0
AIC	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.0	0.0
Shoah	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.0	0.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	9.0
NJ	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0	15.0	0.0	21.0	14.0
Total	100.0	83.0	100.0	100.0	67.0	100.0	77.0	92.0	79.0	59.0

d. University of Haifa

	1974/ 75	1979/ 80	1984/ 85	1989/ 90	1994/ 95	1999– 2001*	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04
JH					12.5	22.2	12.5	11.1	23.1
Y&I					37.5	44.4	12.5	33.3	46.1
AIC					12.5	0.0	0.0	22.2	0.0
Shoah					0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NJ					0.0	11.1	25.0	0.0	3.8
Total					62.5	77.7	50.0	66.6	73.0

e. Ben-Gurion University**

	1974/ 75	1979/ 80	1984/ 85	1989/ 90	1994/ 95	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04
JH						0	100.0	33.3	20.0	0.0
Y&I						0	0.0	33.3	0.0	33.3
AIC						0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Shoah						0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NJ						0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0
Total						0	100.0	66.6	40.0	33.3

* There are no separate figures for 1999/2000 and 2000/2001.

** The number of dissertations was very small: 1999/2000 – 2 (none on particularist topics); 2000/01 – 2; 2001/02 – 3; 2002/03 – 5; 2003/04 – 3.

The percentage of dissertations on particularist topics should also be compared with the percentage of courses on those topics. To illustrate this point, Table 10 presents figures on courses at the Hebrew University and at Bar-Ilan University.

Table 10: Percentage of history courses dealing with particularist topics, 1974/75–1999/2000

a. Hebrew University of Jerusalem

	1974/75	1979/80	1984/85	1989/90	1994/95	1999/2000
JH	25.6	36.0	40.0	29.7	29.3	29.2
Y&I	2.8	5.6	5.6	3.9	6.8	5.9
AIC	1.1	0.3	1.0	1.0	1.4	0.8
Shoah	2.0	2.8	4.1	2.9	3.2	3.0
NJ	10.1	9.1	9.6	7.7	8.8	9.1
Total	41.6	53.8	60.3	45.2	49.5	48.0

b. Bar-Ilan University

	1974/75	1979/80	1984/85	1989/90	1994/95	1999/2000
JH	56.2	45.1	45.1	41.7	45.3	34.0
Y&I	5.3	5.3	6.6	5.4	5.3	6.7
AIC	1.1	0.9	0.6	1.2	1.3	1.0
Shoah	2.1	4.4	0.6	4.2	2.7	2.4
NJ	22.1	23.9	28.6	15.1	24.9	28.0
Total	86.8	79.6	81.5	67.6	79.5	72.1

We see a marked difference between the universities in this respect as well, but, at both, the percentage of particularist dissertations exceeds that of particularist courses. This difference, too, attests to a gap between the distribution of courses, which reflects the policies of the various departments, and the distribution of dissertations, which reflects the individual choices of doctoral students.

In general, faculty members of the history departments should consider whether the percentage of dissertations on particularist topics being written under their supervision is desirable, and also whether the individual choices of doctoral students might lead to pressure from them, once they join the faculty, to place greater emphasis on particularist topics in course offerings as well. Is there a danger of ever-increasing emphasis, over the years, on particularist topics, to the detriment of other topics?

There are grounds to suppose that one reason for the high percentage of dissertations on particularist topics is the university funding policy of the Council for Higher Education's Planning and Budgeting Committee, which demands the completion of a student's doctoral studies within a relatively short time. This is a negative incentive for the study of foreign languages — which requires a considerable time investment and sometimes even a brief sojourn overseas — and a positive incentive for the selection of a topic that does not require knowledge of a foreign language. Consideration should be given to the possibility of changing the

funding method regarding history students who are interested in learning foreign languages for the sake of pursuing non-particularist dissertation topics. Moreover, faculty members should encourage students with research potential to learn a foreign language or languages at the undergraduate level.

2. The Evidence of the Annual Reports of the Israel Science Foundation

Another way of studying directions and emphases in historical research is to examine projects on historical topics that have been funded by the Israel Science Foundation, which is well known for its rigorous process of evaluation. The list of projects funded by the Foundation thus includes what were evaluated as the best research proposals submitted on historical topics.

The Foundation's annual reports allow the identification of projects on historical topics whether or not they appear under the "History" rubric. They also identify the institution where the submitter of the proposal is active. Thus, it is possible to learn from them about distributions that the Foundation probably did not take into account: by period, region and particularist focus. In addition, the reports reveal the relative success of historians from the different universities who chose to submit proposals to the Foundation in obtaining funding for their projects.

We examined the Foundation's annual reports over a period of twelve years, from 1994/95 to 2005/06. We are aware that many historians prefer to work by themselves, without the help of research assistants, and thus do not apply to the Foundation for funding (although there is a greater tendency among younger historians to do so). In any event, the goal of our examination was to study, first and foremost, the research directions of a more mature group of historians than those who were writing dissertations.

2.1 Breakdown by Period

The breakdown of the projects into those dealing with periods up to 1900 and those dealing with the 20th century led to the results presented in Table 11.

Table 11: ISF-funded history projects dealing with periods up to 1900 and with the 20th century, 1994/95–2005/06

	up to 1900	20th century	Total	Percentage of projects dealing with the 20th century
1994/95–1996/97	53	13	66	19.7%
1997/98–1999/2000	51	10	61	16.4%
2000/01–2002/03	67	14	81	17.3%
2003/04–2005/06	113	50	163	30.7%

Source: Annual reports of the Israel Science Foundation, 1994/95–2005/06

The percentage of projects dealing with the 20th century thus remained relatively stable during the years 1994/95–2002/03 but rose significantly between 2003/04 and 2005/06. Even after the increase, however, the percentage is still considerably lower than that of the dissertations dealing with the 20th century approved in the same years (see Table 2 above). This relatively low representation may stem from the fact that historians of the 20th century have alternative foundations to which they can apply for funding, and therefore only some of them apply to the Israel Science Foundation. Perhaps the interest of doctoral students in the 20th century was greater than that evinced by scholars who submitted their proposals to the Foundation, and perhaps many proposals submitted on the 20th century were not judged worthy of support. This issue requires further study.

Table 11 also points to a dramatic increase in recent years in the number of historical projects funded by the Foundation.

Table 12 presents data on the universities for individual years.

Table 12: ISF-funded history projects dealing with periods prior to 1900 and with the 20th century, 1995/96–2005/06, by institution and year

Prior to 1900

	1994/ 95	1995/ 96	1996/ 97	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04	2004/ 05	2005/ 06
HUJI	13	8	8	7	7	4	6	8	10	18	21	19
TAU	8	9	6	7	7	6	6	9	10	10	11	13
BIU			1	1	3	2	4	3	5	1	4	3
Haifa					2	2	1	1	1		4	2
BGU				1	1			1	2	3	1	3
Tech												
Total	21	17	15	16	20	15	17	22	28	32	41	40

20th century

	1994/ 95	1995/ 96	1996/ 97	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04	2004/ 05	2005/ 06
HUJI	2					1	2	4	1	3	3	6
TAU	2	3	3	1	1	2	2	1	2	4	4	5
BIU											1	1
Haifa	1	1	1							4	4	4
BGU				1	2	2	1	1		3	4	3
Tech												1
Total	5	4	4	2	3	5	5	6	3	14	16	20

Overall total	26	21	19	18	23	20	22	28	31	46	57	60
% on 20th cent. out of total	19.2	19.0	21.1	11.1	13.0	25.0	22.7	21.4	9.7	30.4	28.1	33.3

HUJI = Hebrew University of Jerusalem Haifa = University of Haifa
 Tech = Technion, Haifa BIU = Bar-Ilan University
 TAU = Tel Aviv University BGU = Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Source: Annual reports of the Israel Science Foundation, 1994/95–2002/03

Table 12 highlights the dominance of the two largest universities among the recipients of funding from the ISF in the 1990s. That

dominance has decreased in recent years. In 1994/95–1996/97, funding was granted to 31 projects by historians at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and 31 at Tel Aviv University, out of a total of 66 funded projects. In 1997/98–1999/2000, funding was granted to 19 projects at the Hebrew University and 22 at Tel Aviv University, out of a total of 61. In 2000/01–2002/03, funding was granted to 31 projects at the Hebrew University and 30 at Tel Aviv University, out of a total of 81. In 2003/04–2005/06, funding was granted to 70 projects at the Hebrew University and 47 at Tel Aviv University, out of a total of 163.

The table also shows that, among historians at Tel Aviv University whose projects were funded by the Foundation, the percentage of projects focusing on the 20th century was greater than the corresponding percentage among historians at the Hebrew University. Similarly, the percentage of projects dealing with the 20th century was relatively high among funding recipients at the University of Haifa and Ben-Gurion University, and relatively low among funding recipients at Bar-Ilan University.

2.2 Breakdown by Geographical Region

An examination of the percentage of projects dealing with Eretz Israel (historic Palestine and the State of Israel) as opposed to those dealing with other geographical regions, yields the results presented in Table 13.

Table 13: ISF-funded history projects dealing with Eretz Israel and other regions, 1994/95

	Eretz Israel	Other regions	Total	% of projects on Eretz Israel
1994/5–1996/97	18	48	66	27.3%
1997/8–1999/2000	21	40	61	34.4%
2000/01–2002/03	16	65	81	19.8%
2003/04–2005/06	33	130	163	20.8%

Source: Annual reports of the Israel Science Foundation, 1994/95–2005/06

In contrast to the percentage of projects dealing with the 20th century, no clear-cut trend toward focusing on Eretz Israel is evident. Nonetheless, the percentage of projects dealing with Eretz Israel among all the history projects approved by the Foundation between 2000/01 and 2005/06 was much lower than that of the dissertations dealing with Eretz Israel among all those approved between 2000/01 and 2003/04 (see Table 6 above). One may hypothesize that the interest among doctoral students in Eretz Israel was greater than that shown by scholars who submitted their proposals to the Foundation; or it could be that many proposals dealing with Eretz Israel that were submitted to the Foundation were not judged worthy of support.

Table 14 presents data on the universities for individual years.

Table 14: ISF-funded history projects dealing with Eretz Israel and other regions, 1995/96–2005/06, by institution and year

Eretz Israel

	1994/ 95	1995/ 96	1996/ 97	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04	2004/ 05	2005/ 06
HUJI	4	2	2	2	2	3	1	4	3	5	7	6
TAU	1	3	4	4	2		1	1	3	4	3	3
BIU		1	1		1	1	1					
Haifa												1
BGU				2	2	2	1	1			1	2
Tech												1
Total	5	6	7	8	7	6	4	6	6	9	11	13

Other regions

	1994/ 95	1995/ 96	1996/ 97	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04	2004/ 05	2005/ 06
HUJI	10	6	6	5	5	2	7	8	8	16	17	19
TAU	10	9	5	4	6	8	7	9	9	10	12	15
BIU				1	2	1	3	3	5	1	5	4
Haifa	1		1		2	2	1	1	1	4	8	5
BGU					1	1		1	2	6	4	4
Tech												
Total	21	15	12	10	16	14	18	22	25	37	46	47

Directions and Emphases in Historical Research

Over- all total	26	21	19	18	23	20	22	28	31	46	57	60
% on Eretz Israel	19.2	28.6	36.8	44.4	30.4	30.0	18.2	21.4	19.4	19.6	19.3	21.7

Source: Annual reports of the Israel Science Foundation, 1994/95–2005/06

We see that between 2000/01 and 2005/06, the percentage of ISF-funded projects dealing with Eretz Israel among historians at the Hebrew University was higher than the corresponding figure for historians at Tel Aviv University. Similarly, the table points to the low percentage of funded projects dealing with Eretz Israel among historians at the University of Haifa and Bar-Ilan University. This low percentage is especially striking in view of the high percentage of doctoral students in both these universities who wrote dissertations on topics connected with Eretz Israel in the same years (see Table 6 above).

2.3 Emphasis on Particularist History

An examination of the percentage of projects dealing with particularist topics (history of Eretz Israel and Jewish history) out of the total number of ISF-funded projects yields the results presented in Table 15.

Table 15: ISF-funded history projects dealing with particularist topics, 1994/95

	Particularist topics	Total	% of projects on particularist topics out of total
1994/5–1996/97	40	66	60.6%
1997/8–1999/2000	39	61	63.9%
2000/01–2002/03	51	81	63.0%
2003/04–2005/06	91	163	55.8%

Source: Annual reports of the Israel Science Foundation, 1994/95–2005/06

The high percentages of projects dealing with particularist topics are still lower than those for dissertations approved in the same years (see Table 8 above). The slight decrease in the percentage of such projects in the years 2003/04–2005/06 is congruent with the decline in the percentage of dissertations on particularist topics for the period 2000/01–2003/2004.

Table 16 presents data on the universities for individual years.

Table 16: ISF-funded history projects, 1995/96

Particularist topics

	1994/ 95	1995/ 96	1996/ 97	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04	2004/ 05	2005/ 06
HUJI	13	7	6	4	4	5	6	11	8	15	14	16
TAU	2	5	5	5	2	3	4	6	5	7	6	6
BIU			1		2	2	3	2	3	1	3	2
Haifa		1								3	2	4
BGU				2	3	3	1	1		3	4	4
Tech												1
Total	15	13	12	11	11	13	14	20	16	29	29	33

Other topics

	1994/ 95	1995/ 96	1996/ 97	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04	2004/ 05	2005/ 06
HUJI	1	1	2	2	3		2	1	3	6	10	9
TAU	9	7	4	3	6	5	4	4	7	7	9	12
BIU				1	1		1	1	2		2	2
Haifa	1		1		2	2	1	1	1	1	6	2
BGU								1	2	3	1	2
Tech												
Total	11	8	7	6	12	7	8	7	15	17	28	27

Over-all total	26	21	19	18	23	20	22	28	31	46	57	60
% on part. topics	57.7	61.9	63.2	61.1	47.8	65.0	63.6	70.4	51.6	63.0	50.9	55.5

Source: Annual reports of the Israel Science Foundation, 1994/95–2005/06

The share of projects on particularist topics approved for historians at the Hebrew University was consistently much higher than that for Tel Aviv University. Similarly, there was a high proportion of particularist projects at Bar-Ilan University and Ben-Gurion University, as against a low one at the University of Haifa. This low proportion stands out in view of the much higher percentage of dissertations on particularist topics written at the University of Haifa in the same years (see Table 9 above).

Generally speaking, historians funded by the Foundation show less of a tendency toward particularism and focus on the 20th century than the writers of doctoral dissertations. It is possible that we have here an intergenerational difference and that members of the younger generation tend toward topics closer to them in place, culture and time. This hypothesis should be tested in other ways (for instance, by surveying the topics of all the history projects submitted to the ISF, and not only those that obtained funding). In any case, the picture emerging from the data on dissertations demands that history staff members discuss the desirability of this concentration of younger historians on topics that are close to them in time, place and culture. It is also recommended that they initiate, at each Israeli university, the creation of an international visiting committee to survey and evaluate the state of research every few years and formulate proposals for improvement.

3. Research Groups at the Institute for Advanced Studies as a Possible Model

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Institute for Advanced Studies is a national institution for academic research. Each year, three or four research groups at the Institute study subjects in the humanities, natural sciences, social sciences and law. Each group is established by a scholar (as of the past few years, not necessarily an Israeli) who proposes to the Institute's Academic Committee

a subject, a work plan and the composition of the research group (generally, four scholars from various universities in Israel and four from universities abroad). The committee, which comprises eight members — including two representatives of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities and one foreign scholar — selects a number of proposals, and the approved research groups convene in Jerusalem about two years later. Customarily, one group each year deals with a subject in the field of Jewish studies.

Between 1975 and 2007, 109 research groups were convened. Of these, 50 have dealt (or are dealing) with an expressly historical topic, or one that has a historical dimension. A look at the topics of these 50 groups reveals that only four of them have been concerned with Eretz Israel, and only eight with the 20th century. The difference between this breakdown and those of the dissertation topics and ISF-funded projects is striking.

The topics studied by the research groups were broken down according to whether they were non-particularist, particularist, or particularist topics studied from a comparative perspective. The result is presented in Table 17.

Table 17: Research groups on historical topics at the Institute for Advanced Studies, by particularism, 1975–2007

	Total number of historical topics	Particularist topics	Particularist topics with a comparative dimension
1975–1985	16	6	3
1986–1996	12	6	3
1997–2007	22	4	13
Total	50	16	19

Source: Institute for Advanced Studies

We see that, since the Institute's founding, most of the research groups in history have focused on topics with a particularist dimension. In the Institute's first two decades of existence, however, two groups dealt with an expressly particularist topic for

every one whose particularist topic was discussed in some sort of comparative framework. In the past decade, that situation has been reversed: For every group that dealt with an expressly particularist topic, there were three that dealt with a particularist topic in a comparative framework.

This deviation from particularism by means of adding a comparative dimension can serve as a model for research that is less self-centered and more in touch with major foci of historical discourse, and therefore more promising.

Although there is a certain overlap between the members of the research groups at the Institute for Advanced Studies and the scholars submitting proposals to the Israel Science Foundation, the initiators of the research groups, who also determine the content of those groups' discussions, have considerable seniority in their disciplines. To a great extent, they belong to an older age group than that of the scholars submitting proposals to the Foundation. Tracking dissertation topics, ISF-funded projects, and the history topics of research groups at the Institute for Advanced Studies thus allows us to monitor Israeli historians' activities across three cross-sections in time, or three academic generations, and to conclude, *inter alia*, that the concentration on particularist topics is increasing.

C. The Impact of History Research in Israel: An Initial Attempt at a Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment

Reliable assessment of research achievements in the field of history in particular, and in the humanities in general, is of indisputable importance to scholars and the institutions in which they work, to the university system and the general public in their countries, and to the worldwide community of scholars. However, it is notoriously difficult to carry out. The *Arts and Humanities Citation Index* is skewed toward professional journals published in English; moreover, by its very nature, the *Index* does not allow for evaluation of research published in books and monographs, which constitutes a major component of research in the humanities. As a result, the method for assessing scholarly achievements used in the natural sciences is not effective for the humanities.³⁰

This is why a tendency has emerged to evaluate research achievements in the humanities through peer review. This procedure, which requires specific consideration of the publications of individual scholars, demands a large time investment and is thus confined to limited frameworks. The most ambitious project in this area is the *Research Assessment Exercise*, which is limited to the United Kingdom and therefore does not permit assessment

30 For a detailed discussion of this issue, see "Judging Research on Its Merits: An Advisory Report by the Council for the Humanities and the Social Sciences Council," Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Amsterdam, May 2005, www.knaw.nl/publicaties/pdf/20051029.pdf. On a proposal for developing a method of assessing the impact of books in the humanities, see L. Carr et al., "Extending Journal-Based Research Impact Assessment to Book-Based Disciplines," <http://eprints.ecs.soton.ac.uk/12725/01/bookcite.htm>.

of the work of single scholars or of entire university departments in comparison to scholars or departments in other countries. Nonetheless, the work invested in the *Research Assessment Exercise* is immense: The next assessment, whose results will be published in 2008, will be based on the reports of some 70 assessment teams. For example, the team evaluating the quality of the research of historians in the U.K. is supposed to assess every research study (published in print or electronically) in terms of its originality, its contribution to the advancement of knowledge and understanding, the scope or range of the research and the rigor of its execution.³¹

However, with the appearance of electronic search engines, it may become possible in the foreseeable future, with little effort, to carry out reliable quantitative assessments of the relative impact of single scholars or university departments, in various comparative cross-sections. One of the most promising of these search engines is www.books.google.com, which instantly presents the extent to which both books and articles by a given scholar have been cited in books scanned and included in the search engine's database. The team operating the search engine began by scanning books in the university libraries of Harvard, Michigan, Stanford and Oxford, and in the New York Public Library. Books produced by a long list of publishers are also routinely scanned into the database. Today, the scanning includes books written in English, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Dutch and Portuguese, and the intention is to broaden it to additional languages. Citations in Latin characters appearing in books whose languages are not written in Latin script, such as Hebrew, are now also being included in the database. It was recently estimated that each year about ten million books (out of a total of 65 million existing titles)

31 On the examination process as a whole, see www.rae.ac.uk; on the manner of examining historical research studies, see www.rae.ac.uk/pubs/2006/01/docs/n62.pdf.

are scanned for this database.³² In other words, in the foreseeable future, the search engine will enable us to discover in a matter of seconds how many times the books and articles of a given scholar have been cited in academic books written in Latin characters; additionally, it will be possible to find Latin-character citations of this scholar's studies even where they appear in books written in another script. Even today, this search engine already enables us to obtain quite a clear picture of a given scholar's relative research impact.³³

To be sure, the use of www.books.google.com is fraught with problems. First, scanning of the books is still under way, and search results are therefore constantly subject to change. Second, the search engine provides data only on the quantitative impact, not the quality, of a given study; inferior studies may well be cited many times, if only to be condemned. Third, the search engine tells us how many times the books and articles of a given scholar have been cited in books, but not in journal articles. Fourth, at this stage in the search engine's development, it brings under a scholar's name articles s/he wrote as well as articles appearing in a volume s/he edited. Fifth, the search engine does not provide information on citations in non-Latin characters.

Nonetheless, there is justification for a cautious, experimental use of the search engine to arrive at an initial assessment of the impact of historical research in Israel. It offers an instrument for estimating the impact of both the books and the articles published by a given scholar, as expressed in books being published today in that scholar's discipline. This tool is thus preferable to the *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*, which does not enable us to estimate the impact of research published in book form. The ease with which the search engine can be used to examine the impact of a scholar's

32 "The Future of Books: Not Bound by Anything," *The Economist*, 24 March 2007, p. 86.

33 My thanks to the Google Book Search Team for granting permission to publish data based on a search carried out with the help of www.books.google.com and for providing me with answers to several technical questions.

research is in marked contrast to complex, expensive efforts like the *Research Assessment Exercise*, which, incidentally, has also come in for criticism. The appearance under a given scholar's name of articles s/he wrote and articles appearing in a volume s/he edited is problematic, but it can nonetheless be argued that the citation of articles appearing in an edited volume can be credited to the editor's professional prestige. The same can be said of mentions of a scholar's name in acknowledgments. The lack of information on citations of works written in non-Latin scripts does prevent us from learning the research impact of studies written in Hebrew or Arabic, yet it is possible to gauge the impact of a historian dealing with Jewish history or with the Islamic world on professional literature written in Latin characters. As for the concern that the search engine might bring up repeated condemnations of a study, our examination, whose results are presented below, turned up only a few isolated examples of this phenomenon. In an effort to forestall discrimination against a scholar whose citations were checked before those of another, because of the constant updating of the database, we checked the citations of all historians operating in a given subfield on the same day, and all the subfields were checked in the week ending 15 August, 2006. In addition, we endeavored, if only approximately, to check the validity of the data collected by means of www.books.google.com against an independent quantitative examination. Finally, we checked the quantitative data generated by www.books.google.com against qualitative data gathered by other means.

In this initial attempt to assess the impact of history research in Israel, we decided to concentrate on four subfields: ancient history (Greece and Rome); the history of the Islamic world up to about 1800; the "general" history of the European Middle Ages; and Jewish history from the seventh to the mid-eighteenth century.³⁴

34 Most Israeli historians deal with the modern era; however, for technical reasons, we chose to confine ourselves to the above subfields.

Via the data obtained from www.books.google.com, we surveyed the quantitative impact of scholars with the rank of full professor or associate professor who were faculty members in 2005/06.³⁵ To evaluate their respective qualitative impact, we surveyed appropriate sources in their fields: For ancient history, we checked for authorship of articles in the *Journal of Roman Studies* for 1986–2005 and of entries in the latest edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, and for membership in the American Philosophical Society. For the history of the Islamic world and medieval European history, we examined the percentage of Israelis among authors whose articles were republished in the *Variorum* series. For Islamic history, we also checked the percentage of Israelis among the authors of entries in the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* and in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*. For medieval history, we examined the latest edition of the *Cambridge Medieval History* and the membership list of the Medieval Academy of America.

1. Ancient History

The survey of citations found by the search engine produced the findings presented in Tables 18–19 regarding full professors and associate professors who were faculty members in 2005/06.

Table 18: Citations in www.books.google.com of Israeli scholars of ancient history with the rank of full professor³⁶

University	No. of scholars	Total no. of citations	Range of citations	Average no. of citations
HUJI	3	453	40–215	151.0
TAU	4	460	35–234	115.0
BIU	1	96		96.0
Haifa	1	30		30.0
TOTAL	9	1039	30–234	115.3

³⁵ On the method of checking with the use of the search engine, see Appendix A below.

³⁶ The data refer to faculty members in departments of history and in other departments that deal with the history of this period. My thanks to Prof. Benjamin Isaac for his help in the identification of these faculty members.

Table 19: Citations in www.books.google.com of Israeli scholars of ancient history with the rank of associate professor

University	No. of scholars	Total no. of citations	Range of citations	Average no. of citations
HUJI	1	108		108.0
BIU	1	104		104.0
TAU	1	34		37.0
BGU	1	1		1.0
TOTAL	4	250	1–108	62.5

We see that the average number of citations of the full professors is double that of the associate professors; however, there are full professors whose citations number less than a third of the average of colleagues with the same rank, and there are associate professors whose citations number only slightly less than the average of the full professors. It should also be pointed out that there are almost twice as many full professors as associate professors.

We tried to assess the validity of the above data regarding historians of the ancient period through the data on them appearing in *L'Année philologique* (Table 20). Each volume in this series, which began publication in 1928, sets out to list all the books, articles and book reviews in the subfield of ancient history that appeared in a given year. That goal is not entirely achieved: One of our team members found that, for the period on which we decided to focus, only 11 of the 32 articles he had published were noted in *L'Année philologique*, and his 20 book reviews were entirely unmentioned. Nonetheless, the data appearing in *L'Année philologique* is the closest we can get to a total picture of the research produced in the field of ancient history.

Table 20: Publications of Israeli historians of ancient history between 1985 and 2004 according to *L'Année philologique*, by university

a. Historians with the current rank of full professor

University	No. of scholars	No. of books Average /Total	No. of edited volumes Average/ Total	No. of articles Average/ Total	No. of book reviews they wrote Average/ Total	No. of reviews of their books Average/Total
HUJI	3	3.00/(9)	4.00/(12)	10.3/(31)	0.66/(2)	24.33/(73)
TAU	4	2.75/(11)	1.25/(5)	13.5/(54)	0.25/(1)	21.75/(87)
BIU	1		1	19	1	3
Haifa	1			10		6

b. Historians with the current rank of associate professor

University	No. of scholars	No. of books	No. of edited volumes	No. of articles	No. of book reviews they wrote	No. of reviews of their books
HUJI	1	1		9		7
TAU	1	2		5		8
BIU	1		1	7		3
BGU	1	1		4		1

The data in *L'Année philologique* on the research production of Israeli historians of the ancient period are roughly congruent with the www.books.google.com data on the citation of their studies. This holds true for the difference between full and associate professors, and for the prominence of the two leading universities. As one should not expect a very high correlation between the quantity of a scholar's publications and their impact,³⁷ the con-

³⁷ Beyond this general statement, it should be pointed out that two of the 11 books by Tel Aviv University full professors were published in 2004, and so it cannot be expected that they would be cited in books scanned by www.books.google.com, because of the time lag between the publication of a book and its being cited in other books. On the other hand, a book by a Hebrew University associate professor

gruence of the results arrived at by these two different methods is impressive and points to the fact that, even in its present stage of development, www.books.google.com, is a tool worthy of our attention.

Let us move on to the qualitative data.

If we look at the *Cambridge Ancient History*, we learn that four articles by three Israeli historians appeared in the volumes published between 1982 and 1994. All three were faculty members of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (two have since passed away, and the third has retired). In contrast, two articles written by two Israeli historians who are currently on the faculty of Tel Aviv University appeared in the volumes published between 1996 and 2005. One of them is the sole Israeli historian who is a member of the American Philosophical Society.³⁸

If we look at one of the leading journals in ancient history, the *Journal of Roman Studies* issued by the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies in London, we discover that four articles by Israeli historians — three by Hebrew University historians³⁹ and one by a historian from Tel Aviv University⁴⁰ — appeared in this publication between 1986 and 2005.

What is the share of these four articles among all the articles published in this leading British journal? The answer is given in Table 21.

that first appeared in 1987 and was republished in paperback in 2002 is mentioned in *L'Année philologique* only in 1987, although its paperback republication certainly attests to its impact.

38 The breakdown of the 22 non-American historians who are currently members of this society is: France — 5, German — 4, United Kingdom — 4, Italy — 2, Sweden — 2, Austria — 1, Bolivia — 1, Canada — 1, Israel — 1, Switzerland — 1. Source: www.amphilsoc.org/members, sections 303, 404–405.

39 Of these, two are by a professor whose citations were checked by means of the search engine and one is by a senior lecturer.

40 This is the same historian who is a member of the American Philosophical Society.

Table 21: Articles published in the *Journal of Roman Studies* between 1986 and 2005, by author's country

United Kingdom	102
United States	35
Canada	10
Germany	4
Israel	4
Italy	3
Australia	2
France	2
Greece	2
South Africa	2
Belgium	1
Finland	1
India	1
Japan	1
Spain	1
Switzerland	1
Turkey	1

If we look at these leading forums for scholars of ancient history, we discover a salience of Israeli historians who are faculty members of Tel Aviv University and the Hebrew University. In contrast, the quantitative examination by means of www.books.google.com gives pride of place among full professors to the Hebrew University professors, followed by their Tel Aviv University colleagues. Among the associate professors — whose number is about half that of the full professors — a Hebrew University historian is in first place, with a Bar-Ilan University historian only slightly behind. The correlation between our quantitative and qualitative surveys is thus only partial. It should be pointed out that the three historians who wrote chapters in the *Cambridge Ancient History* and published articles in the *Journal of Roman Studies* are not prominent in terms of the number of citations (122, 40 and 35 respectively) found by the www.books.google.com search engine.

2. History of the Islamic World to Circa 1800

In this category, the search engine produced the findings presented in Tables 22–23 for full professors and associate professors, respectively, in 2005/06.

Table 22: Citations in www.books.google.com of Israeli full professors of the history of the Islamic world to circa 1800⁴¹

University	No. of scholars	Total no. of citations	Range of citations	Average no. of citations
HUJI	7	781	57–180	111.6
TAU	3	298	93–108	99.3
BGU	1	66		66.0
BIU	3	176	37–80	58.7
TOTAL	14	1321	37–180	94.4

Removing the four full professors at the Hebrew University who retired at the end of 2005/06, the data would read:

HUJI	3	279	75–126	93.0
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Thus, primacy has now shifted from the Hebrew University to Tel Aviv University.

Table 23: Citations in www.books.google.com of Israeli associate professors of the history of the Islamic world to circa 1800

University	No. of scholars	Total no. of citations	Range of citations	Average no. of citations
HUJI	5	244	24–100	78.9
TAU	1	75		75.0
Haifa	2	79	24–55	93.5
TOTAL	8	398		49.8

Here, too, we see that the full professors' average number of citations was much higher than that of the associate professors, but

41 The data refer to faculty members in the departments of Middle Eastern Studies and Arabic who focus on history. My thanks to Prof. Etan Kohlberg and Prof. Yohanan Friedmann for their help in the identification of these faculty members.

one full professor had fewer citations than the average for the associate professors, while one associate professor exceeded the average for the full professors. In this field as well, the number of full professors exceeds the number of associate professors.

Let us move on to the qualitative data.

We checked the distribution of the authors of entries in the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, volumes VI–XI, published between 1991 and 2002. This survey does not fully overlap that carried out by means of www.books.google.com, because the encyclopedia deals with the Islamic world in all periods and not just up to 1800; furthermore, many of the Israeli authors of entries were no longer faculty members in 2005/06, while a few of them had not yet reached the rank of associate professor. However, our survey did enable us to learn something about the position of Israeli scholars of Islam in world research. The averages are presented in Table 24.

Table 24: Authors of entries in the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, volumes VI–XI, by country

	VI 1991	VII 1993	VIII 1995	IX 1997	X 2000	XI 2002
U.K.	55	62	67	62	56	47
U.S.	40	36	58	59	80	63
France	31	24	49	53	60	52
Germany	22	29	37	31	34	31
Israel	16	19	17	20	20	16
Netherlands	12	16	24	19	20	13
Tunisia	7	4	9	8	12	2
Turkey	10	5	6	4	4	3
Canada	5	4	6	7	11	4
Spain	3	3	6	5	9	8
Switzerland	1	3	3	6	8	6
Italy	6	4	5	4	2	3
Australia	1		6	4	2	1
India	3	5	1	4	2	1
Morocco			1	1	5	4
Greece	1	2	3	4	4	1

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	VI 1991	VII 1993	VIII 1995	IX 1997	X 2000	XI 2002
Austria	3	4	3	2	3	3
Norway	1	1	1	4	3	2
Lebanon	1	1	3	3		1
Hungary	2	1	1	1	3	1
Jordan	1	1	3	1	1	1
Egypt			2	2	2	2
Japan			1	2	1	2
Poland	2	1	1	1	1	
Iran	1	2			1	
Sweden	2		1			
New Zealand	2					
Taiwan			1	1	1	1
Finland		1	1		1	1
Pakistan	1	1	1	1		
Ireland			1	1	1	
Algeria		1		1	1	
Bulgaria				1	1	1
Bangladesh			1	1	1	
Kuwait	1				1	1
Syria	1			1		1
Saudi Arabia			1		1	1
Denmark				1	1	
Senegal	1				1	
Mauritius				1	1	
Palestine (Bir Zeit)			1		1	
Indonesia		1				
Belgium					1	
Brunei			1			
Dubai						1
South Africa				1		
Malaysia		1				
Muscat	1					
Nigeria			1			
China					1	
Singapore		1				
Portugal				1		
Czech Republic					1	
Cyprus					1	

We see that in four of the six volumes, Israeli historians occupy fifth place after the historians of the U.K., the U.S., France and Germany; in one of the volumes their number exceeds that of the Dutch historians, while in another the number of Dutch historians exceeds that of the Israelis.

A similar picture emerges if we look at the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, whose chief editor was American, which perhaps explains the Americans' predominance in this enterprise (see Table 25).

Table 25: Authors of entries in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, by country

	I 2001	II 2002	III 2003	IV 2004	V 2006
U.S.	48	45	45	38	49
U.K.	11	8	9	9	8
Germany	7	5	8	9	8
Israel	5	8	6	5	7
Canada	6	8	5	3	4
Netherlands	4	5	2	4	6
France	2	5	6	2	5
Italy	3	1	3	3	4
Australia	1	2	2	1	1
Lebanon		2	1		1
Belgium	1	1		1	1
Russia		1	1	1	1
India	1			1	1
New Zealand	1	1			
Switzerland	1		1		
Austria		1			
Algeria		1			
Bosnia		1			
Denmark			1		
Kuwait	1				
Egypt			1		
Norway	1				
Spain			1		
Oman					1
Thailand		1			

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Here the Israeli scholars take fourth place, after the U.S., the U.K. and Germany; only in the first volume do the Canadians precede the Israelis.

The institutional distribution of the Israeli authors of the entries in the two encyclopedias is as follows:

Encyclopaedia of Islam

University	VI 1991	VII 1993	VIII 1995	IX 1997	X 2000	XI 2002
HUJI	12	12	12	11	15	10
TAU	2	7	3	5	3	2
Haifa	2		2	4	2	1
BIU						1
BGU						1
Total	16	19	17	20	20	15 ⁴²

Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an

University	I 2001	II 2002	III 2003	IV 2004	V 2006
TAU	3	4	2	2	2
HUJI	1	2	3	2	1
Haifa	1	2	1	1	1
BIU					1
BGU					
Total	5	8	6	5	5

Thus, if the participation of Hebrew University scholars was very prominent in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, the contribution of Tel Aviv University scholars was prominent in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an* (although not to the same degree). It may be noted that a Tel Aviv University scholar was a member of the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an's* advisory council, alongside two scholars from the Netherlands, one from the U.S., one from the U.K., one from Germany and one from France.

42 To these scholars, we must add an official of the Ministry of Justice who was not affiliated with any university.

As noted above, many of the Israeli authors in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* were no longer faculty members in 2005/06, and some had already passed away. The authors of entries in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an* also included several who were not faculty members in 2005/06. If we consider only those who were faculty members in 2005/06, we obtain the following picture:

	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam,</i> volumes VI–XI	<i>Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an,</i> volumes I–V
HUJI	17	5
TAU	6	5
Haifa	6	1
BIU	1	1
BGU	1	

We thus see that among current faculty members who wrote entries in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, too, Hebrew University scholars take first place; yet the gap between them and Tel Aviv University scholars is smaller than if we were also to include scholars who are no longer faculty members. The number of current faculty members at the University of Haifa who wrote entries for the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* is identical to that of their colleagues from Tel Aviv University. On the other hand, among current faculty members who wrote entries in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, the number of Tel Aviv University scholars was identical to the number of their colleagues from the Hebrew University.

With the retirement of four full professors from the Hebrew University at the end of 2005/06, the following picture emerges:

	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam,</i> volumes VI–XI	<i>Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an,</i> volumes I–V
HUJI	13	4
TAU	6	5
Haifa	6	1
BIU	1	1
BGU	1	

Another way of assessing the achievements of Israeli scholars in the field of the history of the Islamic world is to examine the *Variorum Collected Studies* series. Each book in this series presents a photocopied collection of articles published in scholarly journals by a single scholar, dealing with defined topics, chiefly the history of the Islamic world to circa 1800 and European history in the Middle Ages (including Byzantium and the Crusades), and the Renaissance. The dedication of a book to the writings of a certain author expresses the assessment that they are significant and worthy of being collected for the reader, especially as some of them may originally have appeared in journals and collections not found in a typical university library.

On 1 March 2006, 555 volumes in this series were available for purchase.⁴³ Of these, 24 (4.2 percent) were written by Israeli scholars; here is the distribution by university affiliation:

HUJI	19 (Islam – 11, Europe – 8)
TAU	2 (Islam – 1, Europe – 1)
BIU	1 (Islam)
Haifa	1 (Europe)
BGU	1 (Europe)

Many of the historians whose writings are collected in the *Variorum Collected Studies* series are veteran scholars who have already retired from teaching; some of them have passed away. This is true of the above Israeli scholars: Four of the 24 volumes are by historians who have passed away, while 11 contain articles by retired historians. In other words, the impressive percentage of volumes written by Israeli scholars to a great extent reflects esteem for the work of a generation past. Only three volumes contain articles by scholars specializing in the history of the Islamic world who were on staff in 2005/06. In all three cases, the

43 *Variorum Complete Stocklist*, 1 March 2006. www.ashgate.com/subject_area/downloads/Variorum_Stocklist.pdf.

authors are Hebrew University faculty members, one of whom retired at the end of 2005/06.

The *Variorum Collected Studies'* sister series, *Formation of the Classical Islamic World*, which has 16 volumes, includes one by a Tel Aviv University faculty member and one by the above Hebrew University faculty member who retired at the end of 2005/06.⁴⁴

The latest catalogue of the *Variorum* series⁴⁵ notes the institutional affiliation of the authors of the articles in 61 recently published or forthcoming volumes, showing us the breakdown of these volumes by the country in which the authors are active:

U.S.	28 (45.9%)
U.K.	12 (19.7%)
France	7 (11.5%)
Israel	4 (6.6%)
Canada	2 (3.3%)
Netherlands	2 (3.3%)
Poland	2 (3.3%)
Belgium	1 (1.6%)
Germany	1 (1.6%)
Greece	1 (1.6%)
Spain	1 (1.6%)

Of these volumes, 15 deal with the history of Islam. Their breakdown is as follows: U.S. — 8, U.K. — 2, Israel — 2, Belgium — 1, France — 1, Netherlands — 1. Two of the Israelis are from the Hebrew University; one was a faculty member in 2005/06, and one has passed away. Each has one or two volumes in the *Variorum* series.

Generally speaking, various indices point to the salience of Israeli scholars at the international level and to the continuous narrowing of the gap between the two largest universities in this field of research.

44 See the website cited in the previous note.

45 See note 42 above.

3. Medieval European History

In the category of medieval European history, the search engine produced the findings presented in Tables 26 and 27 for full professors and associate professors, respectively, in 2005/06.

Table 26: Citations in www.books.google.com of Israeli historians of the European Middle Ages with the rank of full professor

University	No. of scholars	Total no. of citations	Range of citations	Average no. of citations
Haifa	2	310	89–221	155.0
HUJI	3	454	60–269	151.3
TAU	3	289	68–131	96.3
TOTAL	8	1053	60–269	131.7

With the death of one of the Haifa University professors and the retirement of one of the Hebrew University professors at the end of 2005/06, the following picture is obtained:

University	No. of scholars	Total no. of citations	Range of citations	Average no. of citations
TAU	3	289	68–131	96.3
HUJI	2	185	60–125	92.5
Haifa	1	89		89.0
TOTAL	6	563	60–131	93.8

Table 27: Citations in www.books.google.com of Israeli historians of the European Middle Ages with the rank of associate professor

University	No. of scholars	Total no. of citations	Range of citations	Average no. of citations
BGU	1	60		60.0
TAU	2	102	42–60	51.0
BIU	2	53	21–32	26.5
TOTAL	5	215	21–60	43.0

We again see that the average number of citations of the full professors is higher than that of the associate professors; however,

two associate professors are each cited the same number of times as one of the full professors. We also again see that the number of full professors is higher than the number of associate professors. Moreover, two universities have only full professors but no associate professors, while two others have only associate professors. Tel Aviv University is the only one that has historians of both ranks.

Let us move on to the qualitative data.

Two chapters by Israeli historians were included in the fifth volume of the new edition of the *Cambridge Medieval History*, published in 1999. One of them was on the staff of the Hebrew University's history department, while the other was a retired faculty member of the University of Haifa affiliated with its Jewish history department. It should be noted that our survey using www.books.google.com did not turn up a striking number of citations for the Hebrew University faculty member.

In 2006, two Israeli historians were Corresponding Fellows of the Medieval Academy of America.⁴⁶ One of them retired at the end of 2005/06 from the Hebrew University's history department, while the other retired several years ago from its Jewish history department.

Of the volumes in the *Variorum* series that were available for purchase on 1 March 2006, nine were by six Israeli historians who specialize in the European Middle Ages. Their university affiliation and status were as follows:

University	Total	Faculty members	Emeriti
HUJI	3	2*	1**
Haifa	1	1***	
TAU	1	1	
BGU	1		1

* One of them retired at the end of 2005/06.

** He is the author of four of the volumes that were available for purchase on 1 March 2006 and of two others that are out of print.

*** Passed away in the early part of 2006/07.

The latest catalogue of the *Variorum*⁴⁷ lists 42 volumes dealing with medieval European history, Byzantium, the Crusades and the Renaissance. The breakdown is as follows: U.S. — 19, France — 7, U.K. — 7, Canada — 2, Israel — 2, Germany — 1, Greece — 1, Netherlands — 1, Poland — 1, Spain — 1. The two Israelis are affiliated with the Hebrew University's history department; one retired several years ago, and the other at the end of 2005/06. (The former has seven volumes in the series; the latter, two.)

In sum, the quantitative index shows a considerable similarity, in 2006/07, in the salience of Tel Aviv University and Hebrew University full professors. Our qualitative indices point to the salience of Hebrew University full professors; however, to a great extent this reflects past achievements.

4. Jewish History from the Seventh to the Mid-Eighteenth Century

To what extent can a search engine like www.books.google.com shed light on the impact of Israeli historians who deal with Jewish history? As we have already seen, the search engine reveals the number of their citations in books written in Latin characters and the number of their Latin-character citations in books written in Hebrew characters; however, it does not reveal the number of their citations in Hebrew characters. Thus, the search engine's contribution to our particular interest is limited to disclosing the impact of Latin-character publications in Jewish history by Israeli historians.

46 The breakdown of the 63 Corresponding Fellows is as follows: U.K. — 23, France — 11, Germany — 11, Italy — 5, Belgium — 3, Spain — 3, Israel — 2, Poland — 2, Austria — 1, Russia — 1, Switzerland — 1.

47 See note 42 above.

Tables 28 and 29 reveal the picture that emerges regarding one group of these historians.

Table 28: Citations in www.books.google.com of Israeli scholars of Jewish history (seventh century to 1750) with the rank of full professor in 2005/06⁴⁸

University	No. of scholars	Total no. of citations	Range of citations	Average no. of citations
TAU	2	440	82–358	220.0
HUJI	6	558	33–173	93.0
BIU	1	43		43.0
Haifa	2	72	29–43	36
TOTAL	11	1113	29–358	101.2

Table 29: Citations in www.books.google.com of Israeli scholars of Jewish history (seventh century to 1750) with the rank of associate professor in 2005/06

University	No. of scholars	Total no. of citations	Range of citations	Average no. of citations
TAU	2	57	16–41	28.5
BIU	3	84	7–39	28.0
BGU	2	56	23–33	28.0
TOTAL	7	197	7–41	28.1

The above data clearly indicate major disparities among historians of this period from the standpoint of the number of their Latin-character citations: One Tel Aviv full professor is cited 358 times, much more than any other full professor in the subfields we examined, whereas one University of Haifa full professor is cited 29 times, less than any other full professor in the above subfields. The same conclusion emerges from the ratio of the citations of these two full professors, which is 12.3:1 (358:29), much higher than the ratio of the highest and lowest numbers of

⁴⁸ The figures refer to faculty members in the various departments dealing with Jewish history in the above period. My thanks to Professor Kenneth Stow for his assistance in the identification of these faculty members.

citations in the other subfields we examined — 7.8:1, 4.9:1 and 4.5:1, respectively. In other words, there is a wide divergence among these historians from the standpoint of their appearance in Western-language publications. The same holds true for associate professors specializing in this subfield, although to a more moderate extent.

Our survey of this field clearly presents only a partial picture. A search engine capable of surveying Hebrew-language citations of books and articles by these historians presumably would yield different results.

5. General Conclusions

Were our separate surveys of the ancient history, Islamic history and medieval European history subfields really justified? The answer seems to be positive, because our survey using www.books.google.com turned up significant differences between these subfields. For example, we found that in medieval European history, the average number of citations of the full professors was 131.7;⁴⁹ in ancient history it was, 115.3, while in Islamic history the average was only 94.4.

The examination exposed major, consistent differences between the averages of full and associate professors: 115.3 versus 62.5 in the field of ancient history, 94.4 versus 49.8 in the field of the history of Islamic countries, and 131.7⁵⁰ versus 43.0 in the field of medieval European history.

Among the full professors, the most prominent were faculty members of the Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University. Only in medieval European history was the picture different: Faculty members of the University of Haifa were in the lead, followed, although by a narrow margin, by faculty members of the

49 In 2005/06; in 2006/07 it was only 93.8.

50 See the previous note.

Hebrew University. Among the associate professors, the picture is much more diversified: In ancient history, the leaders were Hebrew University and Bar-Ilan University; in Islamic history, the Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University; in medieval European history, Ben-Gurion University and Tel Aviv University; while in the field of Jewish history (seventh century to 1750), we find Tel Aviv University, Bar-Ilan University and Ben-Gurion University roughly equal.

On two occasions, we saw only a partial correlation between the figures emerging from the www.books.google.com search engine and those obtained using our qualitative criteria; some of the professors who were deemed prominent by their publications in such leading forums as the *Cambridge Ancient History* or the *Cambridge Medieval History* did not stand out in terms of the number of citations of their books and articles found by the search engine. Nonetheless, in our comparison of the universities, there was considerable overlap between the quantitative and qualitative surveys in all four subfields, and the leading universities according to the search engine were also prominent in terms of qualitative criteria.

Wherever we had figures that enabled us to track long-term trends — early and later volumes of the new edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, entries in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* written by past and current faculty members, or the publication of volumes in the *Variorum* series — we discerned a narrowing and even elimination of the initial gap between faculty members of the Hebrew University and those of the other universities, especially Tel Aviv University.

Finally, wherever we had figures that allowed comparison with the activities of historians in other countries, we found that the leading Israeli historians in ancient history, in Islamic history to circa 1800 and in medieval European history are salient in the world hierarchy. Among the articles published in recent decades in the *Journal of Roman Studies*, those by Israeli historians take

fourth or fifth place, numerically, after those by British, American and Canadian historians (the number of articles written by German historians is equal to that of the Israelis). In the last six volumes of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Israelis are in fifth place as authors of entries, after the U.K., the U.S., France and Germany, and in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an* they are in fourth place, after the U.S., the U.K. and Germany. Among the historians whose articles were republished last year or are forthcoming in volumes of the *Variorum* series, Israelis are in fourth place, after the U.S., the U.K. and France. An Israeli historian is one of the 22 non-American historians who are members of the American Philosophical Society. Two Israelis are among the 63 Corresponding Fellows of the Medieval Academy of America.

Israeli historians are prominent in the international arena, out of proportion to Israel's share of the world population and also in comparison to developed countries with populations many times greater than that of Israel. This prominence deserves special mention in view of the significant difference between the salaries of Israeli historians and those of their counterparts in Western countries and in view of Israel's compulsory military service and reserve duty, which have no parallel in these countries.⁵¹

Nevertheless, the paradigm that is still the most widespread is that labeled over 40 years ago by Israeli sociologist Joseph Ben-David as the "science in a small country" syndrome, referring to scholarly activity that, though it is attached to the international system and enters into its bloodstream, does not overcome its own inherent limitations to assume a leading role.⁵² However,

51 We did not see any reason to present comparative figures on salaries, because the facts are well known. For a comparison between historians in Germany and the United States in terms of working conditions that leads to a similar conclusion, see Peter Herde, "Die Geschichtswissenschaft an deutschen und amerikanischen Universitäten: Ein Vergleich," *Würzburger medizinische Mitteilungen* 21 (2002), pp. 446–463.

52 See Joseph Ben-David, "Science in a Small Country," *The University: Journal of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem*, August 1964, pp. 12–17 [in Hebrew].

there are several exceptions to this paradigm. The accomplishments of the last generation of Israeli historians justify an allocation of resources that would enable a quantum leap forward — a significant increase in the number of arenas in which Israeli historians will be among the world leaders.

A considerable number of fine Israeli historians, who received their initial training — and sometimes all their training — in our universities, have joined leading institutions in the West. Had they remained in Israel, the salience of historical research in Israel would have been even more pronounced. We should therefore continue with our efforts to find places in our institutions for the finest Israeli historians who are writing their doctoral theses at important universities abroad. In addition, we should find ways of making connections with those who decide to remain overseas. Instead of bewailing the “brain drain,” we should seek to integrate these scholars, even if only partially, into our research and teaching network.

Appendix A: Technical Comments on the Probe by Means of the www.books.google.com Search Engine⁵³

1. The database of books scanned at www.books.google.com is expanding constantly. We conducted all our checks for a given subfield within a few hours on the same day in order to ensure that the citations of works by all the scholars in that subfield would be checked in an identical database (or almost identical, taking into account that the database expands somewhat even over a few hours). The survey of all subfields was carried out in August 2006.

To illustrate the rate at which the data bank grows, let us compare the number of citations found in August 2006 for the three full professors of ancient history at the Hebrew University (Table 18 above) with the number found in early February 2007, that is, after less than six months:

	Total no. of citations in books.google.com	Range of citations	Average no. of citations
August 2006	453	40–215	151.0
February 2007	559	52–259	186.3

2. An initial probe revealed that the search engine did not, for example, identify “Ehud Toledano” with “Toledano, Ehud,” but saw them as two different persons: a search for the first returned citations of works that were not listed for the second (or were

⁵³ My thanks to Prof. Gideon Czapski for his assistance in the formulation of the rules appearing below.

listed there with references to different page numbers in the same work). Moreover, the search engine distinguished not only between "Ehud Toledano" and "Toledano, Ehud," but also between "Ehud R. Toledano," "E.R. Toledano," and "Toledano, E.R.," with the latter three names also taken to represent three different people. Thus, to find all references to books and articles by Ehud R. Toledano in the search engine's database at any given moment, we had to check under all five options and add up the numbers given in all five. However, this procedure would discriminate against a historian such as Yosef Kaplan, for whom only two checks are possible: under "Yosef Kaplan" and "Kaplan, Yosef," because a check under "Y. Kaplan" will return citations of studies by other persons surnamed Kaplan whose first name begins with Y., and of sentences in Spanish containing the expression "y Kaplan" (= and Kaplan). To prevent such discrimination, we decided to conduct all five checks regarding Ehud R. Toledano but to add up only the two highest numbers generated by the search.

3. The requested name was always submitted in quotation marks (for example, "Benjamin Isaac") so that the search engine would check for both components and not return the many instances in which only one component appears ("Benjamin" or "Isaac").

4. Since the requested name may belong not only to the historian whose citations we are seeking but also to another person or persons, it is essential to go over all the citations and count only those that definitely (or very likely) belong to the historian in question. Thus, the check must be made by someone knowledgeable in the field.

5. In many cases, the first book that appears in the list generated by the search engine is by the historian in question him/herself, creating a sort of "self-citation." Such mentions were eliminated from the list.

Appendix B: The Number of Historians Active in Israel's Academic Institutions in 2005/06

The total number of historians in the various history departments at the Hebrew University, Tel Aviv University, Bar-Ilan University, Haifa University, and Ben-Gurion University is 345.⁵⁴

The Open University has nine faculty members (of whom three have the rank of professor) and an additional 17 coordinators with Ph.D.s who are historians.⁵⁵

On the historians employed by local and regional colleges, see Appendix C below.

54 This number represents the sum of the figures we received from the various departments.

55 These figures were received from the Open University.

Appendix C: The Impact of the “College Revolution” on History Research in Israel: Current Situation and Trends

by Guy Miron

In recent years, there has been a marked increase in the scope of the activities of higher education institutions that are not universities but have been authorized by the Council for Higher Education to grant first and/or second degrees. These institutions are required to build an internal teaching staff that meets research productivity criteria, and their productivity is assessed, with regard to candidates for the rank of associate professor or higher, by an inter-university committee. In many of these institutions there is a growing attentiveness to research. Some of them have established research authorities and provide research budgets for their teaching staff, although these, in most cases, are much smaller than the budgets commonly allocated in the universities.

These institutions still do not have history programs. Nevertheless, according to our data, 22 of them — public (budgeted) academic colleges, private (non-budgeted) institutions recognized by the Council for Higher Education, and teachers' colleges — employ some 50 staff lecturers who do history research from various perspectives; more than 40 of them have doctorates, and around ten are professors (not including retirees from the universities who are now employed by the colleges). These history lecturers are integrated into — and in some cases are the prime movers of — programs of study in a range of fields, such

as Jewish studies, Israel and Middle East studies, behavioral sciences, cultural studies, multi-disciplinary studies, media studies, education, etc.

The research conducted by history lecturers at these institutions focuses on the following fields:

- History of the State of Israel and of Eretz Israel, primarily — but not exclusively — in the 20th century. Some of the researchers devote a considerable amount of attention to the topics of Palestinian society and the Israeli-Arab conflict.
- Jewish history from various perspectives and in all periods, from the biblical period to the Shoah and Eretz Israel.
- The particular character of some of these colleges channels their lecturers to focus their research work on such areas as the history of education, health, art, sports, etc.

The study of “general” history is relatively limited among the lecturers at these institutions, and their focus on local research fields that pertain to the Israeli milieu in terms of place and time appears more pronounced than at the universities. Nonetheless, there are several lecturers (around 10 in all) at the institutions of higher education who deal with other periods and fields: medieval history, South American history, German history, etc.

Looking toward the future, Israel’s non-university institutions of higher education can be expected, in view of the limited number of jobs available at the universities, to continue absorbing a portion of the country’s university-trained historians who are interested in continuing their research work. Because of the more limited access of their staff members, who are primarily engaged in teaching, to infrastructures vital for research, serious thought should be given to reinforcing and formalizing the contacts between the researchers at these institutions and the research universities. (This topic has already been discussed in general terms by the Council of Higher Education’s Planning and Budgeting

Committee and in the inter-university forum, but not in the context of history research.) Their integration via conferences, seminars and research groups, as well as by teaching university courses related to their specific fields of research and even by supervising dissertations, could facilitate a more effective utilization of Israel's potential for historical research and enhance discourse in the field.