

Comment by Dan Censor:

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**Subject:** Dean of Advance Studies to the HoD  
**From:** Yossi Ben-Artzi  
**Date:** Wed, 16 Apr 2003 15:21:19 +0200  
**To:** ACADEMIA@TECHUNIX.TECHNION.AC.IL

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This is the letter of Prof. Gideon Fishman, Dean of Advanced Studies at the U. of Haifa , to the heads of the Depts. It might be helpful for all of this community.

April 15, 2003

To: Department Chairpersons  
Subject: Setting matters straight about the refereeing process in regard to Mr. Teddy  
Katz's thesis

As you know, Mr. Teddy Katz's thesis was found by the Graduate Studies Council to be unworthy of receiving approval.

The thesis was a subject that shook the university community for a very long time; and after Mr. Katz was given an opportunity to revise the work, we all hoped that it would be approved and accepted. However, serious methodological faults and failures at the level of analysis, which the referees pointed out, did not allow the council to approve the thesis, despite the fact that many of its members, the Rector and I among them, had hoped prior to receiving the referee reports that the work would this time be worthy of acceptance. Unfortunately we could not act otherwise.

In the aftermath of this decision, another foul wave of rumors started up, only one of which I shall relate to here. This has to do with the "purity" of the refereeing procedure. The referees who were selected were those whose names were conveyed to us by professionals with whom we consulted, including the Dept. of Middle East History itself. As a principle, we refrained from appointing someone who had any connection with the previous work, whether it was to express a direct

opinion about its quality or to participate in the public debate that developed. The group of referees selected, five in number, are well-known academicians who had no connection or involvement in the matter of Mr. Katz's thesis, whether directly or indirectly. All the referees also said, before taking on the role, that there was no conflict of interest that would preclude objective academic refereeing.

I am writing this letter to you in order to arrest the foul wave of false, unfounded accusations, which stem from different reasons, whether ignorance, wickedness, a direct interest, and frustration, or all of them together. In my opinion, the entire process was fair and just as could possibly be, despite its ending as it did. If we wish to preserve academic integrity, there is no escaping that we must accept the council's decision.

Sincerely,

Prof. Gideon Fishman  
Dean, Graduate Studies

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