Diversity at the Bauhaus
the lives of Friedl Dicker and Arieh Sharon

Friedl Dicker (1898-1944) had already a background in photography and textile design, before she attended Johannes Itten’s art class in Vienna. In 1921 she moved with him and a group of fellow students to the Bauhaus in Weimar. During her studies, she was considered to be one of the most talented, versatile students of the school (fig. 2). With an enormous dedication, she attended the classes of Georg Muche, Lyonel Feininger, Oskar Schlemmer and Paul Klee, thus promoting her status as being talented at many fields of art. From 1923 onward, she worked in cooperation with her fellow student Franz Singer on different types of designs: together they developed toys, graphics, textiles, book covers and even stage settings and theater costumes. With their architectural work and proposals for multifunctional interiors they soon gained a good reputation (fig. 3 and 4).

During the 1930s, some major changes took place in her life; she split up with her partner Franz Singer and then fled to Czechoslovakia in 1932 because of her communist political involvement. Her sense for pedagogy and her intuition for the impact of art education on children became her new purpose in life. Especially after her and her new husband’s deportation to Terezin in 1942 she encouraged hundreds of children to take part in her art classes. She was convinced that art is channeling imagination and emotions, and thus helping to express the children’s thoughts and feelings (fig. 5).

Arieh Sharon (1900-1984) emigrated already during the Third Aliyah in 1920 from Poland to Palestine. Being a member of the Zionist youth organisation Hehalom Ha’Tsoar, he helped to establish the Al-Bitter Gan Shmuel and worked there as a beekeeper. Since he wanted to participate as an architect in establishing the settlements of immigrants that came to Palestine during and after the Second World War and provided an overall organisation of infrastructure for the whole country, he was commissioned by David Ben Gurion, the head of the Histadrut, to establish a masterplan, called the Physical Plan (fig. 11), for the new founded state of Israel. Friedl Dicker being murdered on 09. October 1944 in the Auschwitz extermination camp. The diversity of characters among the Bauhaus student body and their different paths after leaving the school can be reconstructed by taking a closer look at the two very diverse biographies of Friedl Dicker and Arieh Sharon.