

Memories from my father, Enzo Bonaventura

*Daniel Ashery Bonaventura**

Abstract. Enzo Bonaventura, Professor of Experimental Psychology from Florence and the founder of Israeli academic Psychology was killed in 1948 in the Hadassah Convoy During the Israeli war of independence. He left a wife and 3 sons, the youngest less than 12 years old. Daniel Ashery, Bonaventura's youngest son became a Professor of Experimental Nuclear Physics in Tel Aviv University, and passed away on June 27, 2018. During the last months, with the decline of his health, he found comfort in the reconstruction of his childhood memories. Three years ago he was contacted by David and Miriam Meghnagi, who Initiated the reviving of Bonaventura's dramatic and tragic life-story and professional contribution. Daniel's memories of his father, the only personal testimony about the man Enzo Bonaventura - are now coming to light with David Meghnagi's initiative.

Key words: E. Bonaventura, Anti-Semitism, Jerusalem.

On April 13, 1948, during the Israeli War of Independence my father was killed in a brutal attack carrying professors, students, medical doctors and nurses to the Hebrew University and Hadassah hospital complex. I was twelve years old. Over the years my father and I became very close, spent time together and I was left with many memories. I would like to share some of them with you, in particular those showing him as educator and psychologist.

My father and I liked to go together on short trips, sometimes walking, sometimes taking short train rides. We would sit in an open field and my father would ask: "Danny, what is your question today?". This was a tradition. Over the days I would accumulate questions I encountered either while reading or from daily events. They could be on history, or about how lightning are formed. My father would go into detailed answers including his opinions. For example, when telling me about world history he said: "Don't believe the world was created in 6,000 years. We have scientific evidence that it took billions of years". And my father was a religious man.

When I had birthday parties and our house was full of children my father would invite them to his office and present them with tests. My friends loved it and considered it as games while he too his research notes. What I liked most was when my father took me with him to his lab in the university. There were plenty of instruments which I considered as toys. A favorite one was a big Meccano kit that I would build with while my father was watching me and taking notes. There was also a wheel with colored segments that when rotated fast would look white. I remember my father explaining to me that white is not a color but rather a mix of all colors. Then he took me out to watch the rainbow and explained how the colors separate again. He explained me about the different wave-lengths of the different colors and how red is the "slowest" color that therefore is the last one seen when the sun sets. My father enjoyed teaching me and I enjoyed learning, and this is probably the greatest gift I received from him.

I thank you for this wonderful opportunity you gave me to relive these memories again.

* Professor Emeritus, Tel Aviv University, E-Mail <aster@tauphy.tau.ac.il>.



Daniel Ashery Bonaventura as a teenager



Daniel Ashery Bonaventura



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Daniel Ashery Bonaventura with his wife Aviva