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## "PERESTROIKA" SPRING

Perhaps no single development can testify more persuasively to the spiritual and cultural upheaval that is taking place among the Jews of Eastern Europe — especially in the Soviet Union — than the flowering of the free, independent Jewish periodical press after decades of suppression. The reality, which surpasses the imagination, is reflected not only in the content of the new newspapers, but in their names and even in their design. Names such as *Kol Zion* ("The Voice of Zion") in contrast to *Sovetish Heimland* ("Soviet Homeland"), and *Yerushalayim de-Litta* ("Jerusalem of Lithuania") in contrast to *Birobidzhaner Stern* ("Birobidzhan Star") tell the whole story: a metamorphosis from papers that were forced to sing the praises of the "motherland" which destroyed their culture and obliterated nearly every trace of their national identity, to papers which openly and proudly identify with the Jewish people, its symbols, the languages in which its culture once blossomed, and its state — Israel.

This issue of *Qesher* is an attempt to reflect Jewish communications history in liberated Eastern Europe at this moment. We shall not be dealing with the past this time, but with the present, although on an exceedingly fragmentary basis, inasmuch as the upheaval referred to is still in a stage of after-shocks, both below and above the surface.

A caricature which appeared in a recent issue of the monthly IPI (International Press Institute) organ illustrates the pace of the changes taking place in the Soviet Bloc: a newscaster at a microphone, surrounded by piles of bulletins, announces: "We interrupt this bulletin from Bulgaria, which interrupted the bulletin from East Berlin, which interrupted the bulletins from Moscow, Poland and Hungary, in order to bring you news that has just come in from Prague." This process of change is approximately paralleled within the Jewish communities in these countries, and, as elsewhere in all periods, it is clearly reflected in the press.

We requested author and journalist David Markish, who, together with his family, suffered the Stalinist hatchet-blows to Jewish culture in the Soviet Union, to conduct an initial survey on what is happening now in the Jewish periodical press throughout the Soviet Union. After nightmarish decades of winter, the Jewish press throughout the Soviet Union has come alive. Markish, who has first-hand knowledge of the country, visited the Soviet Union as a tourist during a recent two-month period, traveling through it as extensively as possible. Not only did he gather background information, but he collected copies of the new publications themselves which appear in Russian, Yiddish and Hebrew,

some of them actual periodicals (though there are no dailies yet) and others information sheets combined with journalistic material. His impressions, as well as photocopies of some of the new publications that have begun to appear in Russia as a result of "glasnost," are included in the main section of this issue of *Qesher*. Most of the new Yiddish-language papers have abandoned the system of Soviet Jewish spelling introduced by the *Yevsektzia*, which had eliminated the use of final letters and mauled Hebrew words that appear in Yiddish. The new newspapers have returned to traditional, pre-Soviet Yiddish. Probably, the two surviving papers of the former period, *Sovetish Heimland* and *Birobidzhaner Stern*, will sooner or later also adopt the traditional spelling. Gennady Estraiikh, Secretary of *Sovetish Heimland's* editorial board, who participated in the World Conference of Jewish Journalists held in Jerusalem earlier this year, told me that the problem with traditional spelling isn't an ideological one, just a practical one, as the readership of his monthly had grown used to the new spelling.

How many new Jewish papers are there in Russia now, as we go to press with this issue of *Qesher*? Probably, no one knows. Publishing a Jewish paper there is enormously difficult. It is difficult to find Hebrew letters and Jewish typesetters. It is difficult to obtain paper, to find printshops and even to locate Yiddish and Hebrew writers. The few writers who began this work have left for Israel, and sometimes it is impossible to find replacements. Papers open and close, then resume publication sometime later on. Some estimates place the number of papers from Czernowitz to Leningrad, from Tashkent in Bukhara to Tallinn in Estonia and from Kiev and Lwow in the Ukraine to Vilna and Riga at at least a dozen. And, having mentioned Vilna, I must point out a unique characteristic of the Jewish press from the start, which is even reflected in the first issue of *Yerushalayim de-Litta* — the humor column. Space limits expanding on this subject further, but anyone doing in-depth research on Jewish humor — humor that Jews used as a "weapon" against their persecutors and as a refuge from their sufferings in nearly every situation — will want to include material from the Jewish periodical press in every language.

While it is difficult to obtain a complete, updated picture of the new Jewish press in Russia, it is easier to do so in Hungary, if only because the Jewish population, as well as the geographical area involved, are much smaller. Naftali Krausz, monitoring developments in the Jewish community of Budapest and in the provincial cities, where there are only

tiny Jewish communities, has prepared a report on the Hungarian Jewish press for this issue. Professor Hayim Rimer, editor of the only Jewish periodical in Rumania, talks about the changes in his newspaper and about its background in an interview held in Jerusalem. There is little to tell about the new Jewish periodical press in Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia; new journalists have not necessarily replaced the old in the existing press in these countries, although a new spirit and style have undoubtedly emerged. The limited information that is available is included in this issue as well, in order to round out the picture.

Only minimal information exists on East Germany. Some 400 Jewish families are left there, scattered in eight Jewish communities, although according to statistics in February's issue of *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, there are actually about 4,000 Jews and half-Jews in East Germany who are not formally identified as such. These Jews will now very likely make themselves known to the Jewish periodicals in West Germany, Austria and Israel. There is a flowering of Yiddish in East Germany, although so far it has manifested itself in music and the theater alone.

Leaving the large eastern empire and its developments, and returning to Israel, we have included a first-time survey of the Arabic press in Israel by well-known journalist Atallah Mansour. Dr. Nissim Kazzaz, who in the last issue of *Qesher* presented the story of the Jewish press in Iraq, now completes his survey with the history of Jewish journalists there.

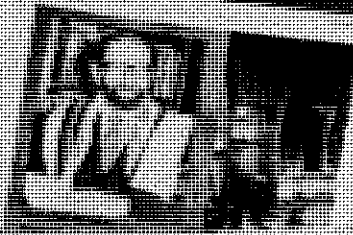
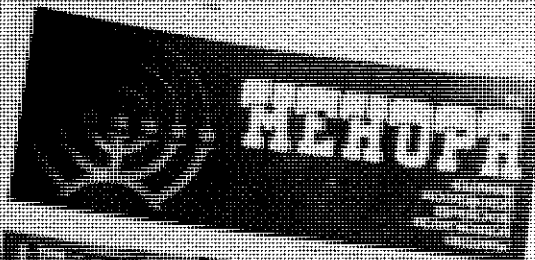
I imagine there is no one in Israel who doesn't recognize the name, and know about the rare journalistic achievements of our "national radio correspondent" Michael (Micky) Gurdus. He is also the person who, during the glorious European spring, brought us daily, and sometimes hourly or even minute-by-minute reports on the liberation of the countries of East and Central Europe from their totalitarian bonds. I am certain that Micky himself, and the readership of *Qesher*, will be pleased to read journalist Theodore Levite's article on Micky's predecessor — none other than Micky's father, Nat Gurdus, "a legend on wheels."

You will find all this, as well as about a dozen interesting articles and chapters about the past, in this, our spring issue, which focuses on the spring that has come to Jewish culture and the Jewish press of East European Jewry.



Head of the Journalism Studies Program  
and Institute for Research of the Jewish Press

EASTERN EUROPE'S NEW JEWISH PRESS



יודנטלים ד' לונדא

CULTUR

ה' ספרים

פריד



השחר

העיתון

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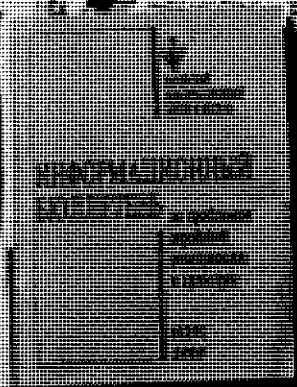
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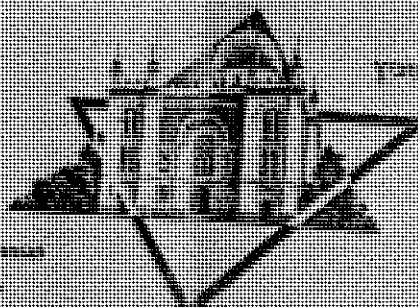


ВЕЩНИК

ÚJ ÉLET



MULT DE JOIE



# THE USSR: THE JEWISH PRESS YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

DAVID MARKISH

Any right-thinking person can hardly dispute the fact that everything in our world begins with the word. Whether spoken or written, the word stirs up internecine strife and impels to bloodshed and war. The gunpowder of the word destroys a magnificent structure as easily as if it were a pastry made of sand. The word rules over minds, souls and actions, and the mass media dominate the world since they are loaded to the breech with the word. A weak and empty person submits to the word gladly, while a resolute person takes a stand and argues with it.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 also began with the word. Gold and silver words calling for the establishment of a fabulous justice by means of real violence were first printed abroad in leaflets and brochures and then smuggled into Russia. These words were heard and they shook the people and aroused them from their age-old political slumber. The Russian Revolution was brought about by the word; once again the word changed the face of the world.

Today's Gorbachev *glasnost* is the word which has torn itself free from its Stalinist prison. Circulating in tens of millions of copies, the word is creating a new revolution in Russia. The people devour the free word like bread; they swallow it down like water. The word engenders violence as well as opposition to this violence, and in the collision of these forces there is the danger of an explosion and civil war. Once again, the word in flight becomes a bullet.

The Jewish press is scarcely visible in the ocean of the official, the semi-legal and the totally illegal Soviet press. Its readership is the Jews themselves as well as the employees of the appropriate branches of the Soviet secret service. The total print run of all Jewish publications, according to approximate estimates, does not exceed 150,000-170,000 copies. The problem is in no way a lack of potential readers, but rather the publishers' lack of paper and printing facilities.

(This problem affects not only Jewish periodicals; paper is also lacking for the weekly *Ogonek* with a print run of almost four million, and the weekly *Argumenty i Fakty* ["Arguments and Facts"], with a run of 33 million. The paper shortage in the Soviet Union involves not only economics but also politics: the runs of "pro-Gorbachev" publications inevitably rise, and this arouses the displeasure of the anti-Gorbachevites, whose journals and newspapers have small print runs.)

However, it would be a mistake to think that ten, twenty or even thirty years ago the Jewish press or the Jewish word did not exist at all in the Russian desert of "glasnostlessness." Jewish *samizdat* did exist. Starting in the mid-1950s, this press made its "nest" in the Baltics, in Riga and Vilnius, where a few Zionists, who had survived Stalin's camps by a true miracle and returned home, gradually began to nurture a small flame of national consciousness among Jewish youth. Typewriters began to clatter, reproducing highly varied materials: information, politics and literature. In keeping with the Russian cultural tradition, first came poems — "Zionides" (songs of longing for Zion), with copies passed in secret from hand to hand. The distributors, and even the readers, faced the threat of arrest, but this *samizdat* rivulet kept trickling into Russia proper.

In 1974, the Israeli series *Biblioteka Aliya* ("Aliya Library" — books in Russian on Jewish and Israeli topics) published the anthology *Na Odnoi Volne. Evreiskie Motivy v Russkoi Poezii* ("On One Wave. Jewish Motifs in Russian Poetry"). The anthology opened with this epigraph:

My people, listen: perhaps  
I will not be able to fully express myself,  
But — listen attentively — our hearts  
Are transmitting on a single wave.

These lines — and the title of the anthology — come from



the pen of a person known as Magen. The preface written by Tamar Dolzhanski states:

We open our anthology with an epigraph from the poem by neo-Zionist poet Magen. His verses, which have reached us from the Soviet Union, well define what guided us in our choice of material. We listen attentively to the voices of poets "who are transmitting on a single wave" or on adjacent waves — on waves of Jewish tragedy, Jewish pain, Jewish faith and hope, Jewish achievements.

An editorial note indicates that work on the anthology was begun in 1971. Thus, the verses by the mysterious Magen "which have reached us from the Soviet Union" had made their way to Israel even earlier. But they did not simply arrive as if taken by the editor, Tamar Dolzhanski, from Soviet newspapers! Magen's verses had been circulating in Jewish *samizdat* from the beginning of the 1960s; they arrived in Israel in *samizdat* copies and were read by the late [poet] Avraham Shlonsky, who urged that they be published. The verses were translated into Hebrew and published under the name David Magen in *Ma'ariv*. Other works by the same "David Magen" appeared in *Ma'ariv* as well.

"David Magen" was, of course, a pseudonym. It belonged to a writer who reached Israel in the early 1970s and who now lives in the country under his real name. Why he was referred to as a "neo-Zionist" is rather puzzling, but that is a matter for the conscience of those who referred to him thus.

In any case, Magen was a Jewish *samizdat* author, a phenomenon which preceded today's *glasnost*. It was hardly for esthetic reasons that he adopted the camouflage of a pseudonym. Such verses as:

No, I will not hang myself from grief.  
I will eat your bread, drink your water.  
Smash my fists against your cheekbones —  
But I shall survive for my people...

written in 1958, which circulated in *samizdat* and also reached Israel, where they were published, might have caused the "neo-Zionist" poet the considerable unpleasantness of a jail term of five to seven years.

David Magen was one of a group of authors who wrote for early Jewish *samizdat*, a press that was single-mindedly nationalist and Zionist. Paralleling this Jewish *samizdat* was the Russian literary *samizdat*, which made available the banned work of great deceased writers, primarily Mandelstam and Tsvetaeva. Russian *samizdat* thus fulfilled the function of preserving a cultural heritage, while Jewish *samizdat*, with its "Zionides," was more political: whatever their quality, the literary offerings were less devoted to evoking esthetic feelings in their readers and more to exhorting them to a national awakening and to the fight for emigration to Israel.

For better or worse, the language of Soviet Jewry today is Russian, as the language of American Jewry is English and that of Israeli Jewry Hebrew. Practically the entire Jewish

"Vek", a Jewish newspaper in Riga with a print run of 30,000 copies

# Вестник

## ЕВРЕЙСКОЙ СОВЕТСКОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ

Издание  
Ассоциации  
деятелей  
и друзей  
еврейской  
советской  
культуры

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## ИСТОРИЯ — ЭТО ИНТЕРЕСНО

УЖЕ БОЛЕЕ ГОДА при МЕКПО работает историческая секция. Чем занимаются здесь? Историей, конечно. Точнее, историей еврейского народа. Регулярно проводятся лекции и беседы, готовятся доклады на исторические, литературные, философско-реалистические темы. Особое место занимает тема Катастрофы и героизма европейских евреев в годы второй мировой войны. Проводятся историко-литературные и музыкальные вечера, посвященные трагическим событиям недавнего прошлого.

активным участии Л. Минненберга, Е. Иглова, И. Темной и др. Большую помощь в работе оказывает руководитель МЕКПО Ю. Сокол.

Как-то известного Французского историка Марка Блока спросили, зачем нужно изучать историю? Он ответил: «Это интересно». Мы глубоко убеждены в том, что вселенную историю можно познать лишь тогда, когда узнаешь историю своего народа. Двери нашей секции открыты для всех, кто хочет узнать о прошлом своего

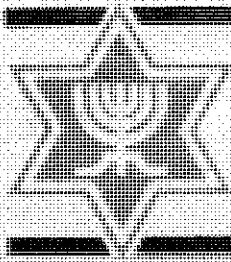
Мнение читателя

## У МЕНЯ ОДНА РОДИНА — КАХОВКА

Возможно, кому-то выгодно превращать свою страну в проходной двор. Я же болезненно воспринимаю сообщения о том, что мои соотечественники покидают Родину. Нет слов, при Сталине всем жалось трудно. Да и сейчас не сладко. Но покидать землю в период Перестройки,

Когда началась война, отец Софьи Владимировны служил в Красной Армии и находился на строительстве укрепрайона в Западной Украине. Был ранен и ранением попал в плен. Гитлеровцы гнали военнопленных под Севастополь. Ему удалось бежать. Тогда он не знал еще, какие страдания выкажут из его долю и долю его жены. Что дети его, такие крохотные и беспомощные, будут зваться сиротами.

К концу 50-х годов в Темные густели,



# השחר

ТАШТАРАШ (РАССЕТ)

СЛУЖБЕНИ ИНФОРМАЦИОННИ КЛУБОВИ. Таштараш, 28 мај 1990. 40 стр. (12-18) Цена 1 руб.

## СЕГОДНЯ В НОМЕРЕ

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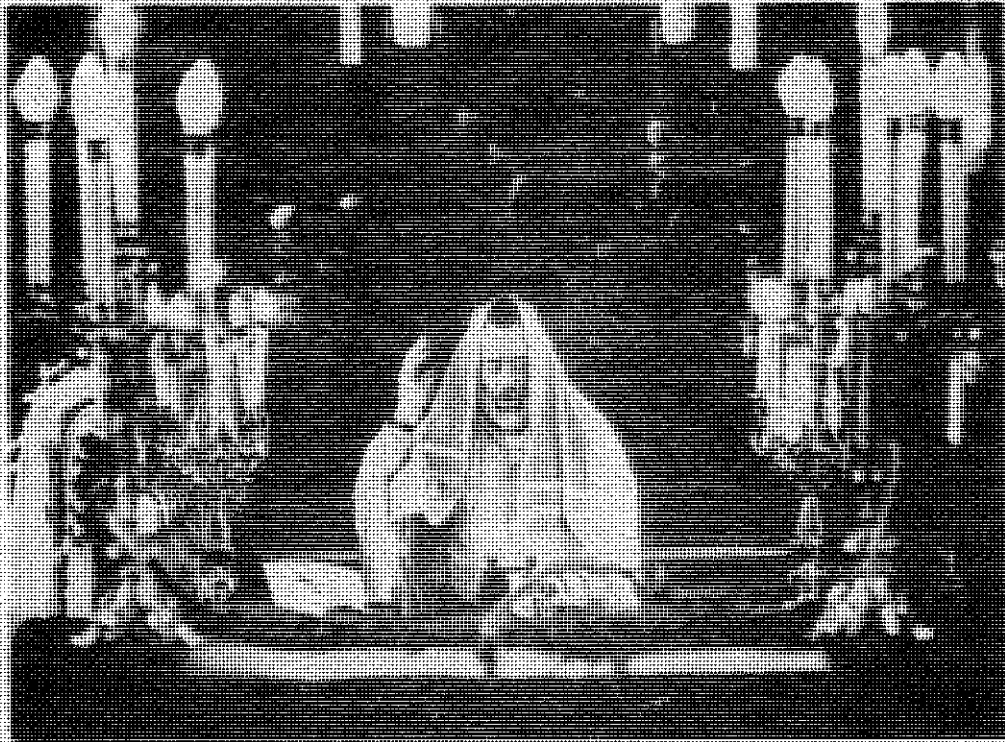
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Савремени проблеми српског народа



## ЗАЈАВЛЕНИЕ ВСЕСОЮЗНОЙ КОНФЕРЕНЦИИ ПО ВОПРОСУ С АНТИСЕМИТИЗМОМ

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Савремени проблеми српског народа

"Ha-Shahar" ("Dawn"), Jewish newspaper appearing in Tallinn, Estonia

press in the Soviet Union today is in the Russian language. The exception is the semi-official periodicals established for political purposes long before the onset of the Gorbachev era, which have served the authorities loyally. These are the two Yiddish publications — the Moscow journal *Sovetish Heimland* and the Birobidzhan newspaper *Birobidzhaner Stern*. Of course, these publications were available by subscription or in libraries. By contrast, it was only by chance that one could buy or “get hold of” the non-official (literally “non-censored”) Jewish press in Russia. However, such opportunities are rather numerous. I bought a complete set of the Moscow newspaper *Vestnik Evreiskoi Sovetskoi Kul'tury* (VESK) on January 18, 1990, in the Moscow Writers' Club on the eve of the much-publicized pogrom staged there by the bullies of the Black Hundred [anti-Semitic] *Pamyat'* organization. The newspaper was sold there by two lovely young ladies who were sitting at the entrance to the auditorium of the Club. Broad-shouldered Black Hundred toughs wearing the insignia of the tsarist two-headed eagle and of St. George teasing a long-nosed Jewish caricature with his lance, strode past the young ladies.

The number of Jewish publications — journals, newspapers and leaflets — is almost impossible to count. I doubt whether the “specialists on the nationality question” from the KGB would venture to estimate this number with any accuracy. Before undertaking to focus on specific publications, let us consider the background of the rise and fall — typical of the unofficial press — of the astonishing number of Jewish periodicals.

Freedom, which landed on the heads of the Russian people like a bag of sand from above, triggered endless conversations about the present, past and future; split society into politicized groups and subgroups; and diverted people from their usual work. The result was a shortage of items which are required in any civilized country: meat products and soap, footwear and medicines, razor blades and contraceptives. Shortages became the norm, with corruption and bribery rising and flourishing with unprecedented vigor. For large sums of money, or through “connexions,” one can get a fox hat or a Kalashnikov rifle, a leg of mutton or an airline ticket.

For the Jewish press, it is neither more nor less difficult to get hold of paper than it is for any independent national or political organization; all that is needed is dollars. Soviet rubles simply will not buy paper, and people in the know don't even try that way. However, one can also manage without dollars: in the Soviet Union today there is a revival of the barter system. One Jewish publisher was offered a handsome supply of paper in exchange for a personal computer. If a computer is unavailable, a telefax may be



“Hadashot” (“News”), a Jewish newspaper in the Ukraine. Its motto is: “Am Yisrael Hai!” (“The Jewish People Lives!”)

substituted; one computer equals three telefaxes. This type of deal is considered official, documented “according to all the rules” and concluded to the satisfaction of both parties. If there is a computer, there will be paper; no computer — no paper. There is the feel and the flair of a free market here!

VEK, a Jewish journal published in Riga, is an example of a newspaper that has only a limited amount of paper at its disposal. The authorities do not prevent it from being published, but simply do not provide the quantity of paper it requires. Consequently, it can print only 30,000 copies, although 100,000 to 120,000 copies would be snapped up nationwide. One is permitted to dream big, but one must be satisfied with a small reality. On the other hand, 15 or 20 independent Jewish publications cannot be considered a small thing. Nor are the problems merely related to paper or to yet another technical matter — Hebrew type needed for quotes and insertions in the Russian text. This type, like paper, cannot be bought in a store. It must either be made by hand



or begged from Jews abroad with a keen interest in the cultural and political life of Soviet Jewry. The basic problem for all the Jewish unofficial publications, without exception, is the complete uncertainty about tomorrow and the resulting desire to say everything possible today....

*VEK*, then, is a typical Russian Jewish publication whose frequency depends on the availability of paper. The abbreviation *VEK* stands for either *Vestnik Evreiskoi Kul'tury* ("Jewish Culture Herald") or *Vozrozhdenie Evreiskoi Kul'tury* ("Rebirth of Jewish Culture"), depending on individual preference. It has a full-color cover and professional material, for its editors include experienced journalists. The Latvian authorities have provided *VEK* with premises in the building that houses the editorial offices of major Latvian newspapers and journals. *VEK* publishes articles and essays, artistic works and political, publicistic pieces — all connected in one way or another with Jewish themes. The journal's contributors include both Soviet and Western authors and journalists and Jews from the Diaspora and from Israel. The price of a single issue is rather high — 3 rubles, but on the black market it fetches 30 rubles. The journal would like to publish a "*VEK* Library" — a book supplement to the journal which would include works by Jewish writers from the Soviet Union, Israel and America. However, so long as there is no paper, the project is on hold.

There is no commercial competition between the Soviet Jewish publications, primarily because the demand exceeds the supply many times over. The Moscow *VESK*, a four-page newspaper which appears approximately bi-monthly, in no way competes with the Riga *VEK*. *VESK* publishes political reviews and reports on Jewish cultural life in the USSR, the Diaspora and Israel. One page is devoted to literature — poetry or prose. But the newspaper's cutting edge is reserved for anti-Semites, with all four pages combatting the greatly increased anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. For example, an editorial in *VESK* (No. 1 [19] Jan. 3, 1990) describes the opening of the First Congress of Jewish Organizations and Communities of the USSR thus:

On the day of the opening of the Congress, a crowd of anti-Semites arrayed themselves in front of the building where it was taking place. "Kike prostitutes," they screamed at the women. "Get out of Russia!" they shouted as they pushed old people.... Representatives of *Ruch* [the Ukrainian Movement for an Independent Democratic Ukraine] came from the Ukraine in order to defend the participants in the Congress from hooligan bullies.

*VESK* was one of the only papers in Russia to report that *Ruch* fighters — Ukrainian nationalists — routed Black

Hundred *Pamyat'* fighters. And where, of all places? At a Jewish congress! That amazing event will undoubtedly enter the history of Jewish-Ukrainian relations and will merit study. *VESK* should be given credit for recording the event.

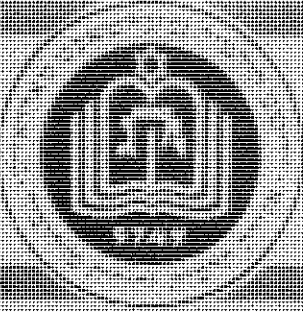
Another newspaper, which has the Hebrew name *Ha-Shahar* ("The Dawn") and a logo of a seven-branched *menorah* against the background of a Star of David, is published in Tallinn, Estonia. It is the organ of the Jewish Culture Society of Estonia, with a print run of 6,000. Like *VEK* and *VESK*, it is primarily oriented toward opposing anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. A kind of triangle comprising Soviet Jewry-anti-Semitism-Israel has become the basis of the Jewish press. Israel, Israeli Jewry or *aliyah* are inferred in every article, whether the subject is the escapades of the Black Hundred *Pamyat'* thugs, the opening of a Jewish library or Jews being blamed for the outbreak of plague among Christians in the 14th century. Jewry, anti-Semitism and *aliyah* are also the topics of the Kiev *Hadashot* (Hebrew for "News"), which displays the Hebrew motto *Am Yisrael Hai* ("The Jewish People Lives"), as well as of the *Informatsionnyi Biulleten' Chernovitskogo Evreiskogo Obshchestvenno-Kul'turnogo Fonda* ("Information Bulletin of the Chernovitsy Jewish Community Cultural Fund"). Actually, there is not one Jewish publication in the Soviet Union that limits itself to describing cultural life only, even though a certain flourishing in this area is to be found in today's era of Gorbachev reform.

For example, issue number five of *Shalom*, a socio-political, literary and artistic journal of the Jewish Culture Association of Moscow, contains the following: "Pogroms and Self-Defense," "The Russian and the Jewish in the Russian Revolution" and a dialogue between the leader of the Russian fascists, G. Shimanov, and the Russian Orthodox priest A. Borisov. The first item is quite topical: pogroms and resistance to the *pogromshchiki* today occupy the minds of Jews throughout the USSR. Although the article specifically deals with the history of the pogroms and Jewish self-defense, and does not contain any practical application to today's situation, an attentive reader will comprehend where indecisiveness and inaction in the face of pogroms lead. Youth is the first to draw conclusions; I met Jewish fighters in the Soviet Union who were training in hand-to-hand combat and handling weapons. "The Russian and the Jewish in the Russian Revolution" deals with a topic which has been equally relevant for Jews and for Russians: Who was guilty for what occurred in October 1917? Who brought Russia to the October upheaval — foreigners, with Jews in the lead, or the Russians themselves? And who should be held responsible today? A significant proportion of Russians tend

1  
1978  
1978

# НАШ ГОЛОС

Газета Общества еврейской культуры Молдавии



## ДЕК

В традиционной еврейской культуре  
каждый человек несет ответственность перед  
Богом и людьми. Эта ответственность перед  
Богом и людьми является основой еврейского  
бытия. В еврейской культуре человек не  
состоит из души и тела, а является единым  
целым. Душа и тело неразделимы. Человек  
является творением Божьим, и он должен  
быть благодарен Богу за то, что он существует.  
Человек должен стремиться к совершенству  
и к счастью. Это является целью еврейской  
культуры.

В еврейской культуре человек является  
частью народа. Человек не может существовать  
вне народа. Народ является основой жизни  
человека. Человек должен быть связан с  
народом. Это является основой еврейской  
культуры. Человек должен стремиться к  
единству с народом. Это является целью  
еврейской культуры.

Свобода является основой еврейской  
культуры. Человек должен стремиться к  
свободе. Это является основой еврейской  
культуры. Человек должен стремиться к  
единству с народом. Это является целью  
еврейской культуры.

Для нас, евреев, свобода является  
основой жизни.

Еврейская культура является основой  
жизни еврейского народа. Человек должен  
быть связан с народом. Это является основой  
еврейской культуры. Человек должен  
стремиться к единству с народом. Это  
является целью еврейской культуры.

Для нас, евреев, свобода является  
основой жизни.

(Составлено редакцией)



תורת

**В HOMEPE**

СЕКЦИЯ ЛИНИИ (на пути  
обучения на еврейском  
языке)

ПОДРЕДАКТОР МАХАРИК  
БРАМЕР

РЕДАКТОР НАУЧНО-ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛЬСКОГО  
ЦЕНТРА

**В ГОРАНИИ ИОНЕАН**

ИОНЕАН - РАУТАН  
АПОЛ И ТЕА ИОНЕАН

В. ПУАН  
О. ТЕОН ТЕОН

СЕКЦИЯ НАУЧНО-ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛЬСКОГО  
ЦЕНТРА

to blame the Jews generally. The Jews reply, with good reason, that Leon Trotsky considered himself not a Jew but an internationalist. This decades-long debate inflames passions, and today, in the atmosphere of uncertainty and general animosity, it threatens to lead to bloody conflict. The article makes an effort to analyze the October events of 73 years ago in a historical and philosophical context. The construct which emerges quite impartially presents the main perpetrators of the Revolution as the Russians. It is a bold and profound article. Should it fall into the hands of Russian chauvinists, it could be used as a weapon against the Jews. Compromise in this discussion is not yet possible, and debate merely heats up the powder keg.

The third article in *Shalom* on which I would like to focus briefly is "The Banned Theme" by G. Shimanov, a Russian fascist. This article, which deals with the reality of a "Judeo-Masonic" or "Zionist-Masonic" conspiracy, is summarized as follows:

Thus, the conspiracy [of the Jews] against the Russian people is only part, although an important part, of a conspiracy that is much more significant in scale and profound in meaning, directed in actuality against all the peoples of the world, although at a given stage in history it was directed primarily against the Russian people as the foundation of the whole socialist fraternity of peoples. (p. 61)

One could be astonished, of course, at the limited imagination of the fascists — Russian, German or other — and their maniacal desire to besmirch Jewry as such. They ought to be

able to come up with something fresher than "a Judeo-Masonic conspiracy." However, the reaction of *Shalom's* readers, and not only they (since the Shimanov article is being actively distributed by his supporters), is not likely to be surprise. Once they become acquainted with this "creation," Jews hasten to pack their suitcases and flee Russia. And the honorable, sincere article of Shimanov's opponent, the Russian Orthodox priest Borisov, will not stop the Jews, although he deserves a thank-you for his effort.

I have touched upon only a small section of the contemporary Jewish press in the USSR. However, from it one may define the whole, which rests, as the Russian proverb says, on three "whales," or pillars: Soviet Jewry, anti-Semitism and Israel. Even the semi-official Yiddish journal, *Sovetish Heimland*, is gradually beginning to "retreat," at least temporarily, and to reflect, however superficially, the general social and political themes of the rest of the Jewish press.

What awaits the Jewish press in the future? A professional flowering? Graphic and printing innovations? The fate of the Jewish press is closely linked to the fate of Gorbachev and his reforms. No serious person would dare predict Gorbachev's future, and, therefore, not of the Jewish press in the USSR either.

However, I believe that there will be no flowering of the press, for one most important reason: by the end of the present decade, the Jews will have left Russia. The process of this departure is underway, and we are its witnesses.

Translated by Yisrael (Elliot) Cohen

## “PAST AND FUTURE” WITH A GREY PRESENT IN BETWEEN

### The New Jewish Press in a Changing Hungary

NAFTALI KRAUSZ

The 80,000-100,000 Jews in Hungary today comprise the second-largest Jewish population in Central and Eastern Europe, following the USSR. On a sort of “Richter Scale” of assimilation, the Jews of the Land of Hagar (as Hungary was termed in the Jewish literature of the Middle Ages) rate much higher than their counterparts in the Soviet Union, and even higher than the few Jews remaining in Rumania. Although not the subject of this article, the level of the Hungarian Jews’ attachment to Judaism, whether in a national or a religious context, inevitably has bearing on the existence of a Jewish press and on the extent of its Jewishness. This introduction is essential in order to understand the development of the Jewish press in Hungary from the beginning of the century till now, and to appreciate the enormous effort required today to create something (or nearly something) from nothing.

It is noteworthy that, unlike in Poland, Russia, the Baltic countries and others, the Jewish press in Hungary, while it had been varied and well-established, was nearly always published in Hungarian. There was no Hebrew press, except for a few rabbinical periodicals, such as *Ha-Zofeh Me-Eretz Hagar*, *Ha-Zofeh Le-Hokhmat Yisrael* and *Ha-Soker*, which were limited to a very small circle, printed in a few hundred copies and published irregularly. There was no Yiddish press either, except for periodic publications in German when most Hungarian Jews still spoke German, and a few isolated efforts in Transylvania among the ultra-Orthodox, such as *Transylvanische Yiddische Tzeitung* in the Seget region during the 1930s.

A German-language daily printed in Hebrew letters, *Algemeine Yudische Zeitung* (“General Jewish Newspaper”),

appeared in Budapest for about 30 years (1890-1919), published and edited by Leopold (Aryeh) Grossberg, but was circulated primarily in Transylvania, Carpathian Russia and other peripheral areas of Greater Hungary where Jews still read German. A curious footnote is the appearance of an ultra-Orthodox weekly published by Agudat Yisrael called *Hohmesz* (“The Truth”) in Turda, which, despite the Hebrew ring of its name, was written in florid literary Hungarian.

#### Assimilation Begins With Language

There was, then, none of the varied Yiddish press of Poland, Galicia and Czarist Russia, nor the nascent Hebrew press of Eastern Europe. Hungarian was the language of the entire Jewish press, even the most ultra-Orthodox.

The Jewish press of Hungary up to the Holocaust, and immediately thereafter until the Communist regime, can be divided into three categories:

1. Newspapers which were involved in justifying the prevailing thesis that the Jews of Hungary were neither a people nor very Jewish. “We are Hungarians of the Mosaic faith” was the message of Hungarian Jewish newspapers such as *Egyenlőség* (“Equality”) and later *Magyar Zsidók Lapja* (“The Paper of Hungarian Jewry”), a weekly that was the official organ of the Jewish community during 1939-45. This line was adopted by numerous weeklies and monthlies published throughout Hungary which emphasized the “Hungarianness” of the Jews and preached assimilation, although they opposed intermarriage and fought against conversion. These papers would highlight the Jews who fought with Lajos Kossuth in the 1848 revolution, as well as the Jews who fought and fell during World War I “for the homeland.” Simultaneously, they waged a stubborn, inflexible war against the Zionist movement and the idea of a Jewish revival. “We are a religion, not a nationality,” they maintained in response to the Zionist ideology which disturbed their artificial patriotic tranquility.
2. Newspapers which fought against assimilation in a religious context. These papers embraced traditional Judaism totally, while simultaneously rejecting the Zionist idea entirely. This Orthodox press was led by *Zsidó Ujság* (“Jewish Newspaper”), a weekly which derived from the above-mentioned daily *Algemeine Yudische Zeitung*. *Zsidó Ujság* was forced to close in 1939, to be replaced by another weekly, *Orthodox Zsidó Ujság* — both of them organs of the ultra-Orthodox community which rejected Zionism on a religious basis.

# ÚJ ÉLET

XLV. évfolyam 1-2. szám. 1998. január 15. Tévész 18. 5750

A MAGYAR ZSIDÓK LAPJA

A duplaszám ára:  
23,50 Ft

## A BIH és a MIOK képviselőtestületének együttes tanácskozása

A Budapesti Izraelita Hittközség és a Magyar izraeliták Országos Képviselete december 17-én, vasárnap délelőtt – dr. Losonci András elnöklétével – együttes közgyűlést, illetve teljes ülést tartott.

Az elnök üdvözölte a tanácskozás résztvevőit: mindkét képviselet tagjait és a vendégeket. Megállapította, hogy az összevont közgyűlés határozatképes, majd – felkérésére – Hochberger László főrabbi elmondotta a nyilvános

Az elmúlt négy évért nem várok köszönetet, vagy elismerést, de kötelességem elmondani, hogy a Hittközséget ha nem is sikerült meggyógyítani, amiben reménykedtem, életben tartani azonban igen. Néhányat közülük felsorolok.

Olyan eredményeket sikerült elérni, amelyekkel nem szükséges részletezni, és amelyek megítélése Önökre tartozik.

Fennmaradtuk a hitéletet, a nagy ünnepeket, a

közelmúltban Izrael egészségügyi minisztere, Jakov Gur úr és minden felekezeti rendezvényünkön részt vett Shlomo Marom úr, Izrael budapesti nagykövete és Gordon úr, valamint felekezetünk kedves barátja Mark Palmer úr is. Verdegül láttuk még Szimcha Dinitz urat, Mose Kacav közlekedési minisztert, Silanski urat, a Kneszet elnökét és sokan másokat, mint pl. a szatmári rabbit, Edgar Bronfman urat, továbbá megtisztelt

"Uj Elet" ("New Life"), the only Jewish newspaper in Hungary during the Communist regime

3. Zionist newspapers, led by *Zsido Szemle* ("The Jewish Observer"), a weekly which appeared from 1908 to 1938, and the prestigious monthly *Mult És Jövö* ("Past and Future"), which appeared for a relatively long time, from 1911 until the Nazi takeover of Hungary in 1944. Zionist weeklies and periodicals also appeared in the Hungarian provinces, mostly in Hungarian. The most famous was *Uj Kelet* ("New East") in Kioje and *Népünk* ("Our People") in Najvarad (Uradia).

It is worth noting that in addition to the Jewish papers mentioned above, the Hungarian press itself was "Jewish" to a great extent by virtue of the large number of Jews working in the field and their influence on the press — "the Jewish spirit," according to the anti-Semites.

### The Axe Falls Twice

As a result of discriminatory "Jewish Laws" instituted in 1939, the Jewish press was considerably constricted. With the Nazi conquest of Hungary in March 1944, the remaining Jewish and Zionist papers were closed, along with the general liberal, Jewish-influenced papers. A single paper was allowed to survive — the official community weekly, whose name was changed by the authorities to *Magyarországi Zsidók Lapja*, a change intended to convey that the Jews were not Hungarians but simply residents of Hungary.

With the liberation of Hungary in early 1945, several

Jewish papers espousing a Zionist point of view resumed publication. But this trend was soon ended under Communist rule and all the Jewish papers were closed once again, with the sole exception of a Communist bi-weekly, *Uj Elet* ("New Life"), controlled by the authorities.

Thus, within a short period, the Jewish press of Hungary was eliminated twice over — once by the Nazis, and the second time by the Communists. The bi-weekly *Uj Elet*, which still exists today, appeared for about 40 years under the domination of the Hungarian *Yevsectsia*. It became a paper that was anti-Israel and anti-Zionist, without a word of Hebrew in it, faithfully serving the regime's aim to suppress any manifestation of Jewishness. In fact, its editors, and the appointed community leaders who backed them up, were so zealous in their task, that the organ, with its meager content and dull format, was either disregarded or despised by the remnant of the Jewish community.

The situation had become so distorted, that after the Six-Day War, when Hungary broke off relations with Israel and sided with the "victim of aggression," Egypt, *Uj Elet* would not print the word "Egypt" in its "rabbinical" articles about Passover and the exodus from Egypt. Instead, it used the Hebrew transliteration "*Miktajim*," lest anyone identify ancient Egypt which had been punished by the ten plagues with the "enlightened" Egypt of Gamal Abdul Nasser.

In 1984, an Israeli journalist of Hungarian descent who was visiting Budapest initiated an effort to get *Uj Elet* to include



some Jewish content by printing the Hebrew date on the masthead, using the letters ם"ב at the top of the paper and instituting a column on Jewish tradition for the benefit of the youth.

The requests were rejected on the grounds that they were impossible to implement, they were unnecessary, there was no precedent and there was no one to handle a Judaism column. But after a protracted struggle, which involved proving that up to 1949 the newspaper had, in fact, printed the Hebrew date, plus arranging to receive a copy of the Moroccan government Jewish organ (in French), published in Casablanca, which prints the Moslem, the general and the Jewish dates, the leadership of the Jewish community was persuaded to oblige the editor to make the necessary changes. In fact, the Hebrew date and the ם"ב appear to this day, but — the column on tradition slowly expired, presumably for lack of a writer, or due to "unsuitability." Recently, a lead article that included some weak commentary on the weekly Torah portion was also cancelled.

### What Has Changed?

I have given detailed background information so that the changes in Hungary during the past two years will be understood, for this period has also witnessed the decline of Jewish Stalinism.

Unfortunately, the conclusion to be drawn is rather pathetic. The far-reaching changes that have swept through Communist Hungary and turned it into one of the free countries of the Eastern bloc, as of the time of this writing (March 1990), seem to have bypassed the country's Jews, at least in terms of the press.

Today, there are three declared Jewish papers in Hungary: *Uj Élet*, described above; *Szombat* ("Sabbath"), the organ of the Jewish-Hungarian Cultural Organization established in Budapest in 1988, intended to appear ten times annually; and *Múlt És Jövő* ("Past and Future"), a literary periodical intended as a quarterly.

Significant changes have indeed occurred in the lives of the Jews in Hungary during the past two years. The founding of the Cultural Organization, which publishes *Szombat* (two issues have already appeared); the renewal of diplomatic ties with Israel after intensive activity on the part of the Israel Special Interest Section; permitting Zionist activity and the arrival of representatives from Israel; the operation of a Hebrew-study network — all this has occurred but is hardly reflected in *Uj Élet*, still edited by the same faithful Communists as during the past 25 years. Although news items about Israel do appear now, and an interview with Ambassador Shlomo Marom was printed, the bi-weekly in no

way reflects the changes that have taken place in the lives of the Jews or in the leadership of the community. The latter have all, or nearly all, been dismissed, and new, democratic elections are anticipated after 42 years of harsh Communist rule.

The print run for *Uj Élet* today is 5,000, with a substantial number of copies sent abroad. The paper still does not publish religious material, articles by rabbis or any of the materials supplied by Israel. Recently the paper changed its logo from *A Magyar Izraeliták Lapja* ("Organ of Israelite Hungarians") to *A Magyar Zsidók Lapja* ("Organ of Jewish Hungarians") — an unimportant semantic difference. Despite repeated demands, the community paper does not publish a list of the Hebrew schools where Jewish children can learn about Judaism once- or twice-weekly. In fact, with the exception of mention of the existing Jewish secondary school named for Anna Frank, and a proposed Hebrew day school being discussed by several international Jewish organizations, the paper avoids the entire subject of Jewish education. On the other hand, it is filled with nostalgic items about the past, recollections of the Holocaust — the nature of which repel young readers — and organizational announcements, including endless speeches by community leaders.

### "Szombat" Doesn't Welcome the Sabbath

The appearance of the organ of the Jewish Cultural Organization, *Szombat*, caused a great deal of interest. The organization's founders — young intellectuals — declared war on the established community and its leadership, their accusations being well-founded. But, unlike the community leadership and the editors of its organ who pay lipservice to Jewish religion — if only to distance themselves from the nationalistic Zionist aspect of Judaism — the Cultural Organization (MZKE) spokesmen say: We are atheists; we are not religious. We are not Zionists; we are not nationalistic. When asked how they do express their Judaism, they have no clear answer, which reflects the great confusion that exists among them on this subject.

With that, paradoxically, the activities of the organization — ideological clubs, trips, self-defense karate classes for youth, etc. — are much more impressive than the two issues of *Szombat* would suggest. The paper is anemic in format and ambivalent in its Jewish content. The first issue, in November 1989, which contained 32 pages, included, as in *Uj Élet*, an interview of the Israel Ambassador, a dispute with Hungarian anti-Semitism (a manifestation which keeps reappearing), a discussion with an immigrant to Israel who had returned, two articles about the monastery affair at Auschwitz, an article about a brave Protestant minister during

the Holocaust, an impressive piece by George Varhegi about the responsibility of the Hungarian people for the Holocaust, and an equally impressive article which is an open expression of pride by an assimilated Jew of his assimilation. In addition, there is an article by Simha Dinitz, Chairman of the Jewish Agency (translated from *Midstream*, published in New York), a weak collection of items on the domestic situation in Israel, a story about the execution of Hanna Szenesh in 1944, book reviews and a research article on the four newspapers in the past that were called *Szombat*, published during the last century (one of them non-Jewish). Janos Kőbányai, editor of the renaissance *Mult És Jövő*, writes about the lives of the Jews in the capital, Budapest, today. There is also a report on a symposium on the problems of Jewish rights, a cooking column ("Grandma's Recipes") which emphasizes that the intention is not a kosher kitchen, and a satire on rabbis based on a book by Woody Allen.

The second issue of *Szombat* (January 1990) is surprisingly similar in content to the first. György Konrad, a famous Hungarian writer and a highly respected dissident, continues his painfully honest discussion on the substance of his Judaism, which he relates to with pride, without knowing what Judaism means. He raises the possibility of mass emigration, "even to Israel, because it is a state which will receive us and grant us citizenship," but his conclusions, if any, are confused — "like the situation itself," they would say in Budapest.

### Shalom to "Shalom"

In general, Jewish intellectuals are guarded in their criticism of *Szombat* and what it represents. "This is what there is," they say. "These issues represent and reflect the ideological confusion of Hungarian Jewry. Today, we're allowed to weigh options, to think out loud, and that's what is being done in these issues." Recently, a Hungarian rabbi who is not Orthodox said, while on a visit to Israel: "You should know that those people [the members of the Cultural Organization] declare themselves irreligious and seem to be running away from their Jewishness, but their Jewishness pursues them, just as honor pursues someone who seeks to elude it."

The Cultural Organization has some 2,000 members, with *Szombat* printing about 1,500 copies. It is not self-sustaining and is supported by contributions, but the fact of its existence serves as a spur to the community leadership and to the editors of *Uj Élet*.

In the first issue of *Szombat*, Shalom, an underground Jewish-Zionist organization of several score members, announced the termination of its underground, *samizdat*-style publication called *Magyar Zsidó* ("Hungarian Jew"). This

publication appeared three times during the mid-1980s, with the third issue confiscated by the police. Before the fourth issue could be printed, the Cultural Organization was founded and the Shalom group united with it. The editor of *Magyar Zsidó*, George Gado, joined the staff of *Szombat*.

The most serious effort to revive something of the glorious Jewish past of Hungary in the journalistic area was accomplished by the group that publishes the renaissance *Mult És Jövő*. This prestigious literary monthly had been published for 33 years under the editorship of Josef Patai. It had been a fighting Zionist journal. Patai organized trips to Eretz Israel, published translated works of the writers and poets of Eretz Israel and encouraged young talent in Hungary, while struggling against the assimilation propounded by the anti-Zionist Jewish community and its futile Jewish-Hungarian patriotism. Patai himself settled in Eretz Israel in 1939, while *Mult És Jövő* continued to be published in his spirit until it was closed by the Nazis in 1944.

Last year, an experimental literary anthology appeared in Budapest, boldly bearing the name *Mult És Jövő*. Its editor, Janos Kőbányai, a talented young Jewish writer, has visited Israel several times, wrote a travel book about Israel (as yet unpublished) and writes regularly for several Israeli Hungarian-language newspapers. The anthology caused great interest and was followed by the first issue of the magazine by the same name in October 1989, with the second issue appearing in February 1990.

The magazine, with a 134-page first issue and a 124-page second issue, is somewhat similar in content to *Szombat*, but with several pronounced differences: there is more literature, the articles are longer, there is less daily political material and there is more poetry and illustrations. Oddly, all the illustrations show bearded Jews with *shtreimels* in the ultra-Orthodox style, which are nowhere to be seen in Hungary today. Absent is an unequivocal stand on Zionism, nor is there any apparent effort to instill Jewish knowledge. There is a sense of resignation to a given situation. A significant proportion of the material, though not all of it, could have been published in any of the high-level liberal literary magazines that are being published in Hungary today, without Jewish affiliation.

The appearance of *Mult És Jövő* was accompanied by a level of expectation that could not possibly have been fulfilled. The magazine is expensive — five times the cost of the subsidized journals such as *Uj Irás* ("New Writing"), *Kortárs* ("Of Our Time"), *Mozgó Villág* ("World in Movement"), *Nagyvilág* ("Big World") and others, which cost 20 to 25 forint (about 30 cents). The second issue of *Mult És Jövő* cost 120 forint, and the first, 98 forint.

### A Childhood Composition by Herzl

A survey of the three volumes of *Mult És Jövö* — the experimental anthology and the two published issues of the magazine — reveals a wide variety of material, including Elie Weisel, I.B. Singer, Primo Levi and Joseph Roth; Buber and Rosenzweig side by side with Gershom Scholem, along with compositions written by Herzl when he studied at the Hungarian gymnasium in Budapest. There are translations of poems by Meir Wieseltier, Anton Shamas, Yehuda Amichai, Amir Gilboa, Ya'akov Besser and Itamar Yazo-Kest. There is Yonatan Ratosh and Avigdor Hameiri. There is a scholarly article on the influence of the French Revolution on the emancipation of the Jews, a research article on Gustav Mahler's Jewishness (written by a Hungarian Jewish musicologist who became a Habad follower), an interview of Arthur Koestler (translated from English), two pages of anonymous Yiddish folk poetry from Transylvania, with the original text (in Hungarian transliteration) side by side with a translation, a piece by Andre Neher asking "Who Am I?" and an article by Rabbi Thomas Rai on the Book of the Zohar. This last piece, along with two short Hasidic stories by Jósef Patai, the founder of the original *Mult És Jövö*, comprise, thus far, the only material that is purely Jewish. Each issue also has an article from Israel by Editor Kóbányai, and we again meet György Konrad struggling painfully and honestly with his Judaism. Christian elements can be detected here and there — descriptions of the points where Judaism and Christianity converge, and a budding Christian-Jewish dialogue which has its supporters in the new Hungary. One interesting piece is a Hungarian translation of the Damascus Paper found in Qumran, with the Hebrew text side by side with the Hungarian translation. The translation was rendered by a Protestant minister, a well-known Christian activist who lives in a small village in western Hungary and observes certain Jewish commandments, such as kashrut and Sabbath, according to his own theological reasoning.

The sum total of the three volumes of *Mult És Jövö* is positive, and although there is little resemblance to the original magazine in content or statement of goals, the fact is



"Past and Present" in its new version

that during 40 years of Communism in Hungary, there had never been this kind of luxury. Hopefully, this magazine and others to follow will give a bit of color to the grey face of Hungarian Jewry which is poised between a glorious past and an unknown future, with the present demanding fateful decisions as to whether or not to continue being Jewish.

## A QUADRILINGUAL "JOURNAL"

An Interview with Professor Hayim Rimer, Editor of the Only Jewish Newspaper in Rumania, Conducted Before and After the December 1989 Revolution

MORDECAI NAOR, Interviewer

Professor Emeritus Hayim Rimer, a mathematician who is editor of Rumanian Jewry's periodical, visits Israel several times a year. An Israeli citizen today, he nevertheless spends most of his time in Rumania editing the paper.

**Q:** *What is the name of the paper?*

**A:** It's called *Ktav Et* (Hebrew for "Journal"). I had wanted another name, but we were restricted by censorship. We had proposed *Maccabi*, *Menorah* and all sorts of other names, but they were all rejected. So we ended up with this name, *Ktav Et*. In English it's *Journal of the Jews*, in Yiddish *Zeit Shrift* and in Rumanian *Revista Cultului Mozaic*.

**Q:** *How many languages is it published in?*

**A:** In four languages — Yiddish, Hebrew, Rumanian and English. It's a 12-page bi-weekly — eight pages in Rumanian, two in Yiddish, one in English and one in Hebrew. As far as I know, ours is the only paper in Europe that appears in Hebrew.

**Q:** *You're a mathematics professor. How did you get into journalism?*

**A:** I'm fond of journalism. When I was in 11th grade, I published a Zionist newspaper in Rumanian. It was called *Echo of the Ghetto*. I printed 100 copies. One had to get approval to publish a newspaper at school, but I managed to put out the paper anyhow. When I was a high school teacher, I published a government newspaper on culture. Later, Rabbi Rosen asked me to replace the editor-in-chief of the Jewish paper, who was going to Israel.

**Q:** *How long have you been editing "Ktav Et"?*

**A:** Twelve years, although the paper has been appearing for 36 years.

**A Voice That Calls or That Screams?**

**Q:** *Perhaps you would describe the nature of censorship in Rumania.*

**A:** There was terrible censorship until the end of 1989. We had to submit everything we wished to publish, and they decided whether to approve it or not. They wouldn't approve anything they considered useless to the government or opposed to the politics of the regime, even if it had nothing to do with what was happening in Rumania. For example, when we submitted material about Jerusalem, they said: "No, comrades, this can't appear." When we asked why, they replied: "Let's wait until there's peace between you and the Palestinians — then we'll see what belongs to you and what belongs to them. You may not write about places that won't remain in Israel's hands, like Shekhem or Bethlehem, nor about the whole question of Jerusalem." Their opinion was that this was an open question.

**Q:** *You mentioned that there was a Hebrew page. How did they check it?*

**A:** They didn't check it, but we had to state in print that the material was an exact translation of the Rumanian version. We were the guarantors. Something interesting once happened. Rabbi Rosen wrote an article for Passover. In Rumanian it was titled "Message for Passover." In Hebrew we titled it "A Voice That Calls." The censor had a Hebrew "expert" — a priest who had studied in Jerusalem and who was sometimes consulted on Hebrew matters. He translated "a voice that calls" as "a voice that screams." The censor called me in and said: "Comrade Rimer, we thought you were a serious person who always tells the truth. We allowed you to write: A Message for Passover. Why did you translate it: A Voice That Screams? What do you have to scream about? Are you in pain? Have we harmed you?" I replied: "Comrade Director, you must have a translator who doesn't know Hebrew. You ought to get rid of him. 'Voice' really is 'voice.' 'Calls,' however, can also be 'screams.' But the Hebrew expression 'a voice that calls' means: a message."

**Q:** *Why do you make such an effort to publish a Hebrew page? Are there enough readers to warrant it, or is it symbolic?*

**A:** It's symbolic, and something else besides. Twenty years ago, certainly thirty years ago, there were several hundred people who read Hebrew.

# ROMANIA SI-A CUCERIT LIBERTATEA !

## REVISTA CULTURII MOZAIC

ANUL III

NUMERUL 662 - 1989

ANUL III  
Nr. 662  
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### COMUNICATUL CĂTRE ȚARĂ al Consiliului Frontului Salvării Naționale

În numele poporului românesc, Frontul Salvării Naționale (FSN) și-a declarat independența față de orice putere străină și față de orice putere comunistă. Acesta este primul pas în realizarea libertății și a democrației în România. FSN este o organizație largă, care cuprinde toate forțele democratice și progresiste ale țării. El este rezultatul unei lupte îndelungate și curajoase a poporului românesc împotriva dictaturii comuniste și a ocupației sovietice. FSN este deschis tuturor celor care doresc să contribuie la construirea unei țări noi, libere și democratice. El este gata să ia în considerare orice propunere care să conducă la o soluție negociată și echilibrată a problemei române. FSN este gata să participe la negocierile de pace și să contribuie la realizarea unei înțelegeri globale care să pună capăt războiului și să asigure pacea și stabilitatea în Europa de Est.

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### TELEGRAMA

**TELEGRAMA**  
**FRONTULUI SALVĂRII NAȚIONALE ROMÂNESC**

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**Telegrama organizației „JOINT”**

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Q: Has the paper always been published in four languages?

A: Before my time it appeared in three languages. When I began as editor-in-chief I added the English page, in addition to Rumanian, Hebrew and Yiddish.

Q: Who, actually, is your audience?

A: First of all, the Jews living in Rumania. Then, the approximately 400,000 Rumanian Jews living in Israel whom we cater to with something from the old country and information about the Jewish community. As for Hebrew, we publish it not just for the few in Rumania who know the language, but for the Jews in the Soviet Union. The same holds true for the two Yiddish pages. It's not for the Rumanian Jews — they read the Rumanian pages anyhow — but we see it as our responsibility to provide spiritual sustenance to the Jews of the Soviet Union. Our role has been to remind them of their Jewishness and their obligation to remain Jewish.

Q: Did the Rumanian regime know that one of your targets was in the north — the Soviet Union — during all these years?

A: It knew we were sending the newspaper to Russia, as well as elsewhere. The paper does reach the U.S., England, Austria and other countries as well. From the point of view of the regime, the paper constituted a sort of showcase. Ceausescu and his people were interested in disseminating the message that Jewish life in Rumania was normal, that Rumania allowed its Jews to live Jewish lives. And it really was so. For instance, we had Talmud Torah schools in Rumania, which did not exist in the Soviet Union or in Poland.

The Circulation Doesn't Drop

Q: What response do you get from Rumania and from the rest of the world?

A: We receive many letters, first and foremost from the Jews of the Soviet Union. For example, one person wrote: "I read your paper with great interest. I found it at a friend's home. I should like to request that you send it to me too." We send it to the Soviet Jews free of charge. The important thing is that they read it. Another letter stated: "The paper reaches us in Kishinev, and we read it aloud. At least ten people listen. Sometimes we photocopy the paper and distribute it by hand." It's a great experience for us. We feel our work isn't for nought, and that what we are doing is a mitzva. Jews who have no concept of what Judaism is, living under Communist rule for 70 years, see a Jewish word! Now the situation has improved, but then...

Q: The Jewish population of Rumania is shrinking. What about the paper's circulation?

A: When I began working as editor-in-chief twelve years ago, there were 65,000 Jews and we printed 10,000 copies. Now there are 20,000 Jews left, maybe less, and we still print 10,000 copies. You may well ask how this can be. Well, we have many non-Jewish readers in addition to the Jewish readers. For example, university professors. One that I know personally is Dumitu Miku, a lecturer in philology at the University of Bucharest. He is one of our subscribers. Year in and year out he pays for his subscription and has never feared receiving the paper. There are other lecturers and academicians like him, and even priests. The number of non-Jewish subscribers is rising daily, while the number of Jews is decreasing.

# כתב-טת

## מרון הרב הראשי ד"ר דוד משה רוזן שליט"א - חתן פרס שז"ר

בערב יום ירושלים הישן, התקיים במשכן הגדול בירושלים הטבח להענקת הפרס, "שז"ר - חתן פרס שז"ר" לכבוד מרון הרב הראשי ליחודי רומניה דר. דוד משה רוזן שליט"א. את הפרס קבלו גם המספרות ולפסן בית הספר העברי, "תרבות" במספריו סטי, המרכזית המרכזית בנאום אירוס, הסמינר ע"ש ש. י. עננו בכאונס אירוס, ל"ג הילדים ובית הספר היסודי ע"ש" מרסקיל - צפת.

### ברכת נשיא מדינת ישראל, מר חיים הרצוג

ברכה מיוחדת לידודי כבוד הרב דר. דוד משה רוזן, רבה של יהודת רומנית, הוגבה בפרס אישיו על פעלו החינוכי הרב. אכן הרב רוזן רשם בפעולת חייו פרק היסטורי שחרם בהולדת ישראל ויהודה מוסת ודגמא להנשמת יהודית ולקיומו של הערעון הציוני. מניחותו הרוחנית המוכשרת, סגולותיו ותכונותיו, שמו לא שריתו בהפניה כדור הזה

### מזכיר דר. אלי תבין, י"ר המחלקה לחינוך ותרבות בגולה

ברבים בישראל ובארות הברית, שמעתי גם אני במשך השנים על פעולתו המפוארת של דר. דוד משה רוזן, הרב הראשי של יהודת רומנית, לשם שירת האופיו ותחונת היהודים של החולות רומנית, שרובם חביתו עלו ועזבו לישראל, אך אישית חברתו

### נאומו של כבוד הרב הראשי

נשוא את ראש בני גושן הם הם (במלכרי בכב) כבוד הנשיא סורי ורבותי, הטבח המפואר ברע זה כאן בבית נשואי ישי ראל, המלך המרוש בירושלים, הטבח שבו נשואי המדינה סיוון לשבח, על פי המלצת מחלקת החינוך ותרבות בגולה, מסורת ואנשים, שהענינו בעבודת החינוך, מסר בני החינוך במסגרות החינוך על פי כבוד הארץ - טכנות עומד במשך

**Q:** *At this rate, you'll have to publish the paper even without Jews...*

**A:** No. But as long as we have a Jewish community here, it is useful to them. We believe that in the not too distant future, only some 5,000 Jews will remain — no more than that. All the rest will settle in Israel, and the old people will die out. But even 5,000 Jews need a means of expression, something to gladden the soul.

**Q:** *I understand that you personally are both there and here.*

**A:** Yes. Our whole family settled in Israel three years ago — 15 people: my wife, my son, my daughters and grandchildren. Before I left, Rabbi Rosen said to me: "Comrade Rimer, I can't discourage you from going, but there is no one who can do this work. You are the last Jew who has studied Torah and Gemara. You know what Judaism is and you love Judaism. You are an old-time Zionist."

He requested that I continue my work. I replied: "Honored Rabbi, how can I continue? My family is settling in Israel, our passports are in our hands." He wished me a good trip and added: "Go in peace, stay there for a few weeks, and then return to Rumania. I will arrange for you to travel to Israel two or three times a year to see your wife and family." He suggested this arrangement for a year's trial. I thought: A year isn't so terrible. But it is difficult. I have been given a small apartment where I live all alone. My whole family is in Israel. I have no one in Rumania. Three years have passed already. I would like to stop but I can't. There is no one to replace me.

### Without Censorship

**Q:** *What happened to you and your paper during the revolution of December 1989 which eliminated Ceaucescu?*

**A:** We quickly got out a special edition — just two pages — to inform the community that our work is continuing, that Jewish life is continuing, that they shouldn't think that everything is over. Everything is over for Ceaucescu, but not for the Jews. That was on December 22nd. On December 24th we put out another issue which included both the weekly portion and the declaration of the new regime. The main point was: no censorship. It was the first issue we published without censorship. There was a special feeling. For the first time, I went to the printer's without their stamp. And it's been that way ever since.

**Q:** *Who works on the paper?*

**A:** We have a number of workers. One of them knows Hebrew — he worked in Israel. He went to Israel in 1938 and

stayed till 1946. He was a Communist, and when he heard that a Communist regime had been established in Rumania, he left Israel and came back to Rumania — "to build and be built in Rumania." He's still a Communist and holds views I don't like, but I can't help myself — I have no one else who knows Hebrew. I check every one of his translations for accuracy. Another worker is a Bessarabian Jew who translates into Yiddish. The rest of the staff consists of a Rumanian-language journalist and a typesetter. That's it — five people.

**Q:** *Are there any ads?*

**A:** There are no ads. Only obituary notices.

**Q:** *Let's go back to the difficult days. What did you have to do for Ceaucescu personally? Was there really a cult of personality, even amongst yourselves?*

**A:** Of course. His birthday was on January 26th, and every year we had to write about him, feature his picture on page one, thank him, glorify and praise him. Otherwise, the rest of our material wouldn't have been approved. It happened that I would forget, or act as if I had forgotten, to write about Ceaucescu. They would then phone me and say: "Comrade Rimer, you have submitted 80 pages of material, but you apparently forgot that Ceaucescu's birthday is approaching." I would try to explain that I intended to submit the material in a few days, but it was made quite clear that nothing would be approved until I submitted that material as well. We simply had to submit it.

**Q:** *Did this happen in all the newspapers?*

**A:** Of course. There wasn't a paper in Rumania that didn't do it. Every sports paper, chess magazine and medical journal had to glorify and praise Ceaucescu and print his picture on the front page.

**Q:** *Did they care which picture it was?*

**A:** What a question! It wasn't a picture I would select, but one that was given to us. If you look at the pictures that were published during the last few years, you will notice that it was always the same picture — Ceaucescu younger by 20 years. That was the only picture we were allowed to publish.

**Q:** *Did you print pictures of Israel?*

**A:** In every issue. We published many pictures of Israel and of the Jewish communities all over the world — Algeria, Germany, the U.S., Argentina and others.

**Q:** *What are your plans for the future?*

**A:** Meanwhile, I'm returning to Rumania to publish the next issue of our *Ktav Et*.



## CZECHOSLOVAKIA

### New Editorship for "Vestnik"

As this issue of *Qesher* goes to press, the May issue of the Jewish community organ *Vestnik* ("Newsletter") is also being prepared for press. Its new editorship reflects the openness in Czechoslovakia following the "Silken Revolution," as well as the new relationship between Czechoslovakia and Israel. Yeri Danicek, an observant young Jew who served time in prison during the Communist regime, is the new editor of the monthly. He recently visited Israel together with a group of Jewish leaders from Czechoslovakia who accompanied President Václav Havel. *Vestnik*, which appears in Czech and Slovakian, serves the 10,000 Jews in Czechoslovakia. It contains only 12 pages and faces financial problems. Besides the monthly, the Jewish community also publishes a literary annual, and until two years ago an English-language quarterly.

## EAST GERMANY

### 2,500 Copies for 400 Jews

The *Nachrichtenblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinden in der DDR* ("Jewish Community News Bulletin of the Democratic Republic of Germany"), which appears four times annually, has served the Jewish community of 400 since 1961 when the Berlin Wall went up. Beforehand, West German Jewish publications had been available. The paper has functioned with self-imposed censorship under the Communist regime. A 30-page publication, it has a print run of 2,000-2,500 copies for a readership that includes non-Jews, institutions and libraries. The readership has grown since the dismantling of the Wall. During the harsh Communist period the paper did not refer to Israel and followed the Party line. It dealt with political issues, the Jewish holidays and Jewish culture. It is likely that forthcoming issues will be different as a result of the democratic changes instituted in East Germany during the past few months.

## YUGOSLAVIA

### "Survey," "Kadima," "Bulletin"

Since 1949, the Yugoslavian Jewish community of 6,000, centered mostly in Serbia and Croatia, has published a newsletter, *Jevrejski Pregled* ("The Jewish Survey"), four to six times annually, as well

as a youth newsletter, *Kadima*. Both are published in Belgrade. During the past 18 months, a periodical named *Bilten* ("Bulletin") has been published by the Jewish community of Zagreb. It appears once a month in a newspaper format on quality paper. The Jewish press in Yugoslavia has not been influenced by Soviet *perestroika* inasmuch as it has always been an open press.

## POLAND

### "Folks-Sztyme" — Past and Present

The democratic revolution brought about in Poland with the establishment of a Solidarity-led government is reflected most keenly in the media. Freedom of expression is reflected in Poland's single Jewish periodical as well, the bilingual weekly *Folks-Sztyme* ("Voice of the People"), founded in 1945 and appearing under its present name since 1950. The paper was under Communist Party control until recently. Its editor is Adam Kwaterko, its assistant editor is Joshua Piasek and the secretary of its editorial board is Adam Rok. The staff comprises ten people. Printed in the government printing press, and government-subsidized, the paper has a run of 6,000, which is also the figure for the Jewish population of Poland. It reaches many countries, including the USSR, the US and Israel.

## BULGARIA

### "Jewish News" in a New Guise

Communist Bulgaria had a single Jewish newspaper, *Jevrejski Vesti* ("Jewish News"), which began in 1944. Run by the Communist Party, the bi-weekly was hostile to Israel and Jewish values and was known by the Jews as "*Anti-Jevrejski Vesti*." Today the paper reflects the changes that have taken place in Bulgaria and in its Jewish community, which numbers 4,000 to 6,000. It is no longer government-sponsored. Its editorial board has been replaced. It now highlights Jewish history and ties with Israel. On the other hand, unlike the previous period, it must now deal with the problem of financing. In addition to the newspaper, an annual publication devoted to Jewish history had appeared in Bulgarian and English over the years. The forthcoming issue is being awaited with considerable anticipation.

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# A LEGEND ON WHEELS: A PERSONAL RECOLLECTION OF NATHAN GURDUS

THEODORE (TEDDY) LEVITE

Nat Gurdus in the telecast of the "This is Your Life" program directed by Sifon Daban (r.), London, 1962





In the field of Israeli journalism, few legends can match that of Nathan Gurdus, the wheelchair-borne master of international news, king of scoops and champion of humor.

Nat Gurdus was born in Warsaw in 1909 to a middle-class Jewish family. The first time his family began to realize that something was fundamentally wrong was when little Nat was learning to walk. He would break his legs easily and frequently. Breast-fed by a nanny, Nat was growing up on milk that lacked calcium, but by the time his condition was diagnosed as osteoporosis, it was too late. From the age of five, Nat spent his life in a wheelchair. However, thanks to his remarkable vitality, the physical strength of his arms and his exceptional personality, he managed effortlessly to make everyone in his company forget he was an invalid. "Nat would even dance in his wheelchair," his widow, Irka, recalls. He lacked any inhibitions regarding his invalidity.

In 1917 Nat, then eight years old, was sent to Copenhagen to join his brother-in-law, Avram Josef Stiebel, a successful businessman dealing in leather. Stiebel was a patron of Hebrew literature who devoted a considerable part of his wealth to promoting Hebrew writing. He exercised a marked influence on young Nat, encouraging him to write. Nat also learned Danish, which was to enable him in later years to monitor Scandinavian broadcasts during World War II and to work for the distinguished Danish newspaper *Politiken*.

Eventually, Stiebel, with Nat in tow, left Copenhagen for Berlin during the pre-Hitler period. At about that time, the first radios appeared on the market, and young Gurdus soon realized the potential of the new device for his chosen vocation — journalism. Nat became one of the first full-fledged radio correspondents in Germany.

In 1933 the well-known British journalist, Sefton Delmer, then chief correspondent for the London *Daily Express*, appointed Nat the paper's correspondent in Berlin. The Nazis were already in power. It did not take them long to decide that the Jew in the wheelchair was writing things that did not glorify Adolf Hitler. He was ordered expelled from Germany, escorted to the Polish-German border by two S.S. men. In Warsaw Nat became the *Daily Express* correspondent, also providing a large part of the Soviet coverage of the London mass circulation paper which was so tremendously interested in world affairs. In addition, Nat also worked for the distinguished Danish paper *Politiken*. Since the USSR was under strict press censorship, Nat used every possible means to get the news from behind what was not yet known as the "Iron Curtain." Two of his main "weapons" were the radio — listening to various big and small Soviet and other stations — and personal interviews with ranking Soviet personalities transitting Warsaw. In those days, airplane

travel was still unknown and the route from Western Europe to Russia led via Poland, by train. Tipped off by his numerous contacts, Nat would try to "catch" those Soviet personalities at the Warsaw railway station. In this manner he scored his great triumphs, interviewing, among others, Maxim Litvinov, the then-Soviet Foreign Minister, and the legendary Marshal Tuchachevsky. It was the last interview the Marshal ever granted. On his arrival in Moscow, he was executed by order of Stalin.

Nat Gurdus' amazing journalistic achievements, and above all the news scoops that were his specialty, literally "covered" the world. But they didn't always work out. Once, he traveled from Warsaw to Bialystok upon discovering that the brother of Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov (whom Nat had interviewed at the Warsaw railway station) lived there. But the brother, an Orthodox Jew complete with sidecurls (*payot*), refused to grant an interview or permission to photograph him, and would not be tempted even by the large amount of money that Nat offered him on behalf of the *Daily Express*. The refusal was based on deep religious conviction that money would not overcome...

A few days before the German invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, Sefton Delmer arrived in Warsaw in a car with Dutch registration plates. As German bombs began falling on Warsaw and the advancing German panzers loomed not too far away, Delmer realized that, as an outspoken "enemy" of the Germans, he was in danger, but that Nat, being a Jew, was in even greater danger. And so, on the fifth day of the war, the *Daily Express* "team" drove out of Warsaw, bound for Rumania. In the car were Delmer, Irka and Nat Gurdus and another *Daily Express* staff man, de Purie. Nat and Irka left Warsaw penniless, with only the clothes they wore, and without valid travel documents. Stopping at Lwow (Lemberg), they tried to get passports, but it turned out to be "mission impossible." It was at this moment of despair that Mr. de Purie, the British journalist with a French name, arrived at the passport office. Within minutes, the Gurdus pair were in possession of travel documents. How did the miracle happen? Irka Gurdus explains: de Purie was, in addition to being a journalist, a high-ranking British intelligence officer.

Arriving in Czernowitz, still penniless, Nat had another surprise in store for him. The head concierge of the number one hotel in town, where the *Daily Express* team had put up after crossing the border into Rumania, knocked on Nat and Irka's door and said: "Mr. Gurdus, here is money [a fairly

large amount] for you from Copenhagen." It transpired that the Danish newspaper *Politiken* knew that Nat, their correspondent in Poland for many years, had left Warsaw, trying to escape. They guessed he would try to cross into Rumania, and knew that Czernowitz was the biggest city on the way to Bucharest. The Danish editors also guessed correctly that the *Daily Express* team would put up at the city's leading hotel. So it was to this hotel that they forwarded a fairly large amount of money for Nat, on a mere hunch.

With his strong Zionist feelings, and with part of his family already living in Palestine, Nat chose to go to the "Promised Land." On his arrival in Tel Aviv, two papers, *Ha-Aretz* and *Davar*, competed for his services. Nat chose *Ha-Aretz*, and thus a long association began. He covered World War II in brilliant news commentaries and reports. It did not take long for Nat to begin working for *Yediot Aharonot* as well. With the establishment of the State of Israel, Nat also became the Agence France Presse correspondent, promoted to Bureau Chief in 1962. He worked for them until his untimely death in 1972.

In his years in Israel, Nat singlehandedly created a circle of close friends and admirers among the consular corps, first in what was still British Mandatory Palestine and then in the growing diplomatic colony after the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. On any given evening, one would either find Nat and his witty and attractive Warsaw-born wife, Irka, entertaining a whole bunch of ambassadors, or providing unique entertainment at some ambassador's dinner table by telling his "ready-made" friends what was going on.

Among the countless amazing events in his life, Nat often recalled, in later years, a senior British CID officer who, like so many other British and Jewish personalities, would visit Nat from time to time. One day in 1947, the officer was just leaving when Nat, looking at his watch, told him: "Be careful, there will be a major explosion in two minutes from now." The officer smiled, waved goodbye and walked out. Two minutes later, a huge bomb went off in nearby Marmorek Street. The British officer returned in panic.

Nat was the only foreign correspondent that the IZL took to a Natanya orange grove to show him the two British

Gurdus at one of the many diplomatic events he attended



sergeants they had killed in retaliation for the hanging of three IZL men for their attack on Acre prison.

His relations with the three Jewish underground movements were excellent, and their leaders as well as their spokesmen would visit him frequently. "Sometimes, we would have to keep one of them in one room while another one was with Nat," Irka recalls.

Among his "underground" guests was Nathan Friedman-Yellin, the Stern Group commander (Lehi), who loved coming for Irka's gefilte fish. Although Menachem Begin, camouflaged as a rabbi, lived in nearby Yosef Eliahu Street, as Nat well knew, he did not come, but Nat and Irka would often see his son, now Knesset Member Dr. Benjamin Ze'ev Begin, playing on Chen Boulevard. Nat was friendly with Sharett and was well-known to Ben Gurion.

Among the world-famous foreign correspondents who would spend a good part of their time, while in Israel, in Nat's home-cum-office, were Cassandra, Willy Forest, Donald Wise, Robin Stafford and of course, Sefton Delmer, as well as hundreds of others.

Typing invariably with only two fingers, Nat usually had a cigarette dangling, having smoked at least three packs a day all his adult life, coughing accordingly. The cause of his death was emphysema, his lungs literally burnt out. He died a day after his 63rd birthday.

Nat's cigarette packs were also his "notebooks." In big letters on small cigarette packs he would note a word or two, and soon afterwards write long and detailed articles or commentaries based on those few words jotted on cigarette packs.

Nat wrote in German and was translated. His languages, in order of fluency, were German, Russian, Polish and English. His son Micky, the noted present-day radio correspondent in Israel, is fluent in many more.

In the latter part of his life Nat was awarded two foreign medals: one by the Danish King because of what he had written about the Danish rescue of Jews under the Nazi occupation, and the other by the Italians for "contributing to the development of friendly relations between Italy and Israel."

In 1967 Gurdus had one of his greatest scoops: he reported the outbreak of what was later to be known as the Six-Day War over half an hour before all the other news agencies reported it. Agence France Presse had to decide whether to use it, and trust Nat, or wait for confirmation from another source. Knowing their "scoopist" in Tel Aviv, they ran the story. Soon afterwards Nat was given a huge bonus and he and Irka were invited to Paris where they were treated like visiting royalty. On another occasion he was invited by the

BBC to London to be the "surprise guest" appearing on a "This is Your Life" program devoted to Sefton Delmer.

His unique sense of news assured Nat, his wife Irka and later his son Micky a pretty comfortable living even during World War II in Tel Aviv. One distinctly recalls Noah Mozes, then acting editor and owner of *Yediot Aharonot*, phoning Nat in utter despair at some morning hour as the paper was about to go to print, and in Yiddish (Nat's Hebrew always remained his weak spot) begging Nat: "*Mir darfen dringed a rashit.*" The meaning was plain: *Yediot Aharonot's* front page was already made up but lacked a good, sensational "lead." This being during World War II, Nat had no problem in satisfying Noah's appetite for a headline story. With his knowledge of Polish, German, Russian and even Swedish, and his unique talent for monitoring foreign broadcasts, which his son Micky inherited and perfected, Nat would listen to all kinds of radio stations that hardly anybody else bothered about. Also, his radio equipment then was such as to enable him to pick up various distant stations. Two of those he invariably quoted when Noah Mozes of *Yediot Aharonot* (and, to some extent, his other employer in those days as well, *Ha-Aretz*) called were Radio Stockholm and Columbia Broadcasting in the U.S. Within 20 minutes or so of Noah's dramatic S.O.S., Nat would usually supply the banner headline that helped sell the paper, attributed to either Stockholm or Columbia.

Dividing his time in the years 1940-47 between radio monitoring and frolicking with foreign consuls and other potential news sources, Nat would spend quite some time in the Tel Aviv cafes he particularly fancied. Nat loved pranks at the expense of the unsuspecting, though never in an evil or harmful manner. One evening, the whole crowd of us were sitting in Nat's ground-floor apartment on 7 Chen Boulevard while Nat was telling us how much he suffered from people mistakenly dialing 2984 (his number) instead of 2894, the number of a popular taxi station in Tel Aviv, to call for a cab. Nat was getting progressively more fed up with these calls, particularly in the late hours. Among the callers — usually drunk — were Australian soldiers serving in Palestine who used that particular taxi company to get back to camp after "drinking Tel Aviv dry" of beer. One such drunken "kangaroo," as Nat called them, phoned that very night. "Sorry," Nat replied very politely to a request for a cab to drive the caller and his friends to their Qastina camp, "we have ran out of cabs, but we can send you a tank instead, or a battleship if you wish." The Australian was stunned and Nat delighted with having taught at least one "kangaroo" a lesson.

In due course, with the State of Israel about to be born, and Nat a correspondent for Agence France Press and other

ranking foreign media, a bizarre character joined him. His name, believe it or not, was Bob Dollar, and he was a Rumanian. How he managed to get to Israel would fill a book, but unfortunately his son, Lelly, who later became one of El Al's best pilots, died before completing the book he had started to write about his father. Bob Dollar somehow managed to become the owner of a four-seater Hillman car and placed it and himself unstintingly at the disposal of Nat and his newspaper employers. Despite the small size of the Hillman, Bob managed to acquire great expertise in getting Nat from his wheelchair into the car, seated in front next to Bob, while the wheelchair would fold up and go into the trunk. With Irka and myself making up the rear passengers, we would be off.

When Capt. Roger Lioret became the AFP manager for Israel, there was no room for me, the "lowest-ranking animal in the pack," inside the small four-seater. But in those days traffic police had not yet been born (and amazingly, the number of car accidents was very small even in relation to the number of cars and people in Israel), so a unique way was found for all of us to travel together. I was dispatched to sit outside on the front right mudguard, which I soon learned to do. I would sit holding my hands Buddha-style, and Bob Dollar would drive slowly and try to avoid sudden braking. Nat enjoyed every minute of that circus parading through the streets of Tel Aviv, great showman that he was — particularly the attention it attracted.

★

Writing about Nat 40 or 50 years later is no easy task, as the many fantastic exploits by that remarkable man simply fade from one's memory. But I can't forget a late afternoon when Irka and I were pushing Nat's wheelchair up Hanev'im Street, returning from one of his favorite kaffee-klatsch sessions. Suddenly, Nat, perennially short of cash and a believer in cash only, noticed an impressive-looking apartment building going up. "Oh, if it were mine..." he mused. "What would you do if it were?" he was asked. "Would I take out a mortgage on it and spend the cash!" he replied in all seriousness. Even post-dated checks from Tel Aviv newspapers made Nat happier when he could find someone to cash or even discount them!

When his wonderful spouse Irka was pregnant with Micky, relations between Jews and Arabs were not at their best and Nat would normally avoid driving through Arab townships, especially at night. But when one night Irka developed an urgent craving for apples after all the shops in Tel Aviv had long since closed, Nat did not think twice. With the omnipresent Bob, he drove to Arab Ramleh and returned home

proudly bearing the fruit to his wife.

Micky's birth was the great event in Nat's and Irka's life, and at times even a close friend could not help feeling that in their eyes it was the first child ever born in the world. Nothing was too dear for Micky, and no care good enough. For quite some time Nat and Irka would not go out in the evenings, giving up those diplomatic dinners at which Nat invariably held court. Eventually, Nat and Irka discovered the idea of a babysitter. Scores were interviewed until finally one was found worthy of being left in charge of the Gurdus "Crown Prince," today Israel's famous radio correspondent. One dinner followed another with not the slightest problem either with Micky or the pretty babysitter. But one night Nat



Nat and Irka Gurdus

and Irka returned early from a dinner party and found the girl making love with a seaman in the Israel Navy. The girl, Nat and Irka soon discovered, had administered a suppository to the baby to make sure he slept well. Needless to say, the girl was sacked on the spot, and the dramatic event became the talk of Tel Aviv, no one telling it better than Nat.

Of the many personalities who come from all over the world to visit Nat, one deserves special mention: Sefton Delmer, the world-famous British journalist who covered the invasion of Poland in 1939 for the London *Daily Express*, and who saved Nat's and Irka's lives. At one point he came to visit Nat and the fledgling State of Israel, spending many an evening in Nat's home. Some of the most amazing journalistic exploits were related and relished during his visit. Delmer was to take an early morning plane from Haifa airport (Lod was not yet operating), and the whole crowd spent a long evening in Nat's home the night before, consuming Irka's superb food and Scotland's most famous liquid. Delmer summed up his impressions of his brief visit, regretting the fact that he had not been able to secure a major international story that his paper, still the *Daily Express*, could have splashed on its front page. Even Nat could not produce an "instant scoop" on this particular occasion. But a British diplomat present in a very drunken state must have made a mental note of Delmer's problem. As dawn approached, the party finally broke up and the British diplomat and his wife loaded Delmer and his suitcase into their car and drove off in the direction of Haifa to its tiny airport. Passing what was later to become the Wingate Institute, Delmer suddenly spotted a lot of heavy earth-

moving equipment lined up on the left side of the road. What appeared to be vast dunes were apparently being readied for major construction between the main road and the Mediterranean coast. "What is this supposed to be?" Delmer asked. "Sorry, can't tell you," the diplomat answered, "it's top secret." It was enough to wake Delmer up completely and he begged the diplomat to stop to enable him to have a closer look at the site. But the diplomat refused, saying, "I'm afraid to be caught here in a car with CD plates." Finally, and seemingly most reluctantly, the British diplomat let Delmer in on the "secret." "The Israelis are building an atomic air base here." Delmer realized that this was his chance to get yet another of his world scoops. He finally made the diplomat tell him that the Israelis were due to get Yak aircraft from the Russians and needed an air base for these planes, which were capable of carrying atomic bombs.

Promising the diplomat that he would never disclose who had told him about it, Delmer could not wait to reach Cyprus. He filed a huge piece from Nicosia which the *Daily Express* splashed across seven columns on its front page: Yaks of the Red Airforce in Israeli Skies — Atomic Air Base Under Construction. (If my memory fails me after all these years and the headline was slightly different, I beg forgiveness.) It was an instant world sensation, shocking no one more than the Israeli Government, which embarked on a somewhat futile campaign to deny the story.

It was not Nat's scoop. Had he reported it, it would have been true, as were so many of his world-shaking stories, and another Gurdus legend would have been born.



## JERUSALEM, TEL AVIV AND HEBREW JOURNALISM / Shmuel Shnitzer

Hebrew journalism precedes the founding of the city of Tel Aviv by a considerable span of time. The first Hebrew periodicals appeared in the 18th and 19th centuries in Germany, Austria and Galicia, where the Enlightenment movement was nurtured. These publications included *Koheler Mussar*, *Ha-Me'assef*, *Ha-Maggid*, *Ha-Tzfirah* and *Ha-Melitz*.

Another wave of Hebrew journalism developed in Eastern Europe during the 1880s, producing the first Hebrew dailies — *Ha-Yom* and *Ha-Zman* in Petersburg (later in Vilna), and *Ha-Tzofeh* in Warsaw. A third wave emanated from Jerusalem in the wake of the establishment of several printing presses. The weekly *Ha-Levanon* was published in 1863 by Yoel Moshe Solomon's press, supported by the Mitnagdim faction. The rival *Havazelet* was brought out by Yisrael Bak's press, supported by the Hasidim, in the same year. Jerusalem then had few Hebrew readers, and neither paper lasted long. *Ha-Levanon* transferred to Western Europe where it served as the organ of Orthodox Jewry. *Havazelet* was revived in 1870, advocating agricultural settlement. Another Jerusalem paper, *Ha-Ariel*, was also short-lived, but *Sha'arei Zion*, begun in 1876, lasted nine years, followed by *Yehuda Ve-Yerushalayim* whose editor later became one of the founding pioneers of the new settlement of Petah Tikva.

The first real journalist, who was to establish the first authentic newspaper, was Eliezer Ben-Yehuda. He settled in Jerusalem in 1881 after serving as the Paris correspondent of *Havazelet*. After working as assistant editor of that newspaper, he founded his own paper — *Mevasseret Zion*, reflecting the new Yishuv and written in modern Hebrew. It focused on the establishment of the new settlements. Ben-Yehuda soon founded a second newspaper, *Ha-Zevi*, in 1884, which tenaciously established itself as the first independent newspaper, resisting rabbinic influence. It included Hebrew translations of French novels, thereby helping create a new, simplified Hebrew style. The rabbis prohibited reading it, but Ben-Yehuda did have the support of Baron Rothschild.

Maliciously accused of advocating revolt against the authorities, Ben-Yehuda was imprisoned and *Ha-Zevi* impounded, but 14 months later, his reputation enhanced by imprisonment, Ben-Yehuda renewed publication. In 1908 he realized his goal of turning the paper into a daily, despite the poverty of his readers. In this effort he was assisted by his son, Ittamar Ben-Avi. The paper closed down while the press was occupied with the printing of Ben-Yehuda's dictionary,

and was later reopened as *Ha-Or*, but it failed, possibly as a result of its sensationalist tendencies.

New periodicals were founded by Russian and Polish immigrants — *Ha-Omer* and *Ha-Po'el Ha-Za'ir*, the latter founded in Jerusalem but moving to Jaffa in a step that foreshadowed the eventual shift of the center of journalism to the coastal plain. Another periodical founded then was *Ha-Ahdut*, to which Joseph Hayim Brenner contributed.

A new daily in Jerusalem, *Ha-Herut*, was established by Sephardim for Sephardim. Although a modest effort, it played an important role in the struggle against institutionalizing German as the language of instruction in the schools.

World War I marked the end of a chapter in the history of journalism in Eretz Israel.

Oddly, it was the British occupation army which initiated the first Hebrew newspaper after World War I — *The Palestine News*, a trilingual (English-Hebrew-Arabic) weekly. A year later it was sold to Yehuda Leib Goldberg who published it in 1919 as *Hadashot Ha-Aretz*, which eventually became today's *Ha-Aretz*. Begun in Jerusalem, it moved to the new city of Tel Aviv in 1922. Meanwhile, Ittamar Ben-Avi founded *Do'ar Ha-Yom* in Jerusalem in 1919, which he saw as an indigenous paper as against the Russian-dominated *Ha-Aretz*. *Do'ar Ha-Yom* survived until 1937.

All the dailies founded henceforth were based in Tel Aviv: *Davar* in 1925, *Ha-Boker* in 1935 and *Ha-Tzofeh* in 1937. The Revisionists founded *Ha-Mashkif* in 1939, Ha-Shomer Ha-Za'ir established *Mishmar* in 1943, the Communists founded *Kol Ha-Am* in 1947 and Ahdut Ha-Avodah established *La-Merhav* in 1954.

Only the English-language *Palestine Post* (later *The Jerusalem Post*) remained in Jerusalem, as well as several small ultra-Orthodox newspapers.

With the establishment of the State of Israel, the number of dailies published in Tel Aviv reached a zenith of over 20, most of which represented specific political points of view. Tel Aviv was the de facto capital of the country, including the world of news, both in terms of events and readership. However, once the capital was officially established in Jerusalem, a major source of news was removed from Tel Aviv. In addition, radio and TV broadcasting was based in Jerusalem.

While the financial, artistic and entertainment areas are still the province of Tel Aviv, the future role of Tel Aviv in the area of journalism is in question at present.

## A CENTURY OF JEWISH JOURNALISM: "THE JEWISH EXPONENT," 1887-1987 / Maxwell Whiteman

The impetus for the creation of a Jewish press can be traced to the Damascus Affair (1840), when the Jews of Syria were violently persecuted. The affair aroused awareness of the need for intercommunal cooperation and hastened the spread of Jewish journalism in Europe and America.

The first Anglo-Jewish newspaper in the U.S., *The Occident and American Jewish Advocate* (1843-72), was based in Philadelphia, where a German Jewish paper and several Yiddish papers were also published in the mid-1800s.

By the late 1880s, the American Jewish community had become largely English-speaking, and a considerable number of English weeklies were launched in all major cities. *The Jewish Exponent* was part of this upsurge. In contrast to earlier papers which were either privately owned or under rabbinic control, it was founded by a stock company composed of Philadelphia's most prominent Jewish leaders. Its news coverage was broad and impartial, primarily of local events. There were also special articles by prominent thinkers and writers, including Cyrus Adler on Semitics, Solomon Solis-Cohen, a physician who pioneered tuberculosis treatment, and Meyer Sulzberger, who became the first president of the American Jewish Committee.

With the start of the mass immigration of East European Jews during the 1890s, *The Exponent* covered in detail the diversity of new ideological and religious views as well as the customs and needs of the immigrants. The response of the Americanized German Jewish community was also reflected in news about the philanthropic and welfare efforts that were organized. Reports of the Dreyfus Affair in France also filled the columns during this period.

At the turn of the century *The Exponent* expanded and introduced literary and scholarly articles. Later, news about New York and Baltimore, as well as reprints of major stories from other Jewish papers, were regular features.

By 1900, immigration swelled the Jewish population of Philadelphia to nearly 100,000, and the attendant challenges and problems reflected national Jewish concerns of the time. A major issue was the determination of several of the city's leading philanthropists to consolidate the various charities, which was achieved in 1901 with the establishment of the Federation of Jewish Charities. By this time, *The Exponent* was the recognized voice of Philadelphia's Jewish community. Several members of the group which owned the paper combined both financial standing and literary ability, and

were unusually articulate community leaders. The paper was evenhanded in its point of view, and sometimes bold in dealing with provocative issues. In 1903 it became an effective fund-raising vehicle in response to the Kishinev Pogrom in Russia, printing condemnations of the event by the Archbishop of Philadelphia and others.

During and after World War I, the effort to alleviate the mass suffering of European Jewry dominated the newspaper. There were also debates about Zionism in articles by Louis Brandeis, Louis Marshall and Cyrus Adler. During the 1920s, restricted immigration policies meant that the U.S. could no longer provide a haven for refugee Jews. *The Exponent* reflected ongoing concern within the community for the plight of European Jewry, which grew after the rise of Hitler and the Nuremberg Laws of 1935. These stories, and the Depression, were the themes of the 1930s. But despite the Depression, concern and fund-raising for European Jewry continued. Some of the finest American Jewish thinkers in the fields of literature, history and philosophy contributed articles during the 1930s, including Ludwig Lewisohn, Horace Kallen and Oscar Janowsky. National news covered the growth of anti-Semitic movements in the U.S. International news focused on the anti-Jewish terror in Europe, the growth of Zionism and the Peel Report on the partition of Palestine.

As the shocking facts about the fate of European Jewry trickled out during World War II, the debate about Zionism was vigorously pursued in the paper's columns. When the British White Paper closed Palestine to Jewish immigrants in 1944, *The Exponent* denounced the act as another step toward the destruction of European Jewry. The news was dominated by reports of concentration camps, D.P.s, Philadelphia Jews serving in the war, the victory over Germany and the defeat of Japan. After the war, immigration of survivors to Palestine became a major fund-raising issue, along with the imminent declaration of the State of Israel and its defense against Arab attack.

In 1954 the newspaper gave wide coverage to the tercentenary celebration of the first Jewish settlement in North America. The only old-established Jewish newspaper to survive, *The Exponent* had wisely transferred ownership to the Allied Jewish Appeal and Federation in 1944, which helped insure its existence. While the newspaper is guarded in reporting criticism of any Federation projects, it continues its long tradition of editorial challenge to any discriminatory

acts against Jews.

The paper has also focused on local Jewish history, such as a series of articles on the development of Jewish neighborhoods and how they changed. Real estate advertisements, as well as all the advertising sections of the paper, reveal

much about the city's Jewish history.

From the Six-Day War onward, news about Israel appeared in every issue of the paper, comprising a considerable proportion of its total subject matter.

## JEWISH JOURNALISTS IN IRAQ / Nissim Kazzaz

Part One of this article appeared in the last issue (no. 6) of *Qesher*. Part Two consists of brief biographies of ten outstanding Jewish journalists in Iraq from the last century until the 1970s.

**Barukh Moshe Mizrahi** — founder of the first publishing house in Baghdad and publisher of the newspaper *Ha-Dover*, or *Dover Meisharim* ("Speaker of Truth") during 1863-71. In 1869 Mizrahi contributed several articles to *Ha-Maggid* about the activities of the Alliance Israelite Universelle in Baghdad, and became the Baghdad agent for *Havazelet* in 1871.

**Nissim Yosef Somekh** (1888-1928) — one of the first Arab-language Jewish journalists in Iraq. Scion of a well-known Baghdad family, he was educated in Aleppo and Beirut. After the Young Turks' revolution and the advent of a liberal policy in the Ottoman Empire, he co-published a political newspaper in Arabic and Turkish in 1909, *Al-Zuhur* ("The Flowers").

**Sulayman 'Anbar** (1875-1941) — publisher of the 1912 newspaper *Tafakkur* ("Thinking") in Arabic and Turkish with the advent of the liberal policy in the Ottoman Empire. A member of a prominent Baghdad family, 'Anbar was educated in governmental communal schools and was fluent in Arabic, Turkish, French and English. In 1913 he traveled to Paris and was the only Jew to participate in the Arab Congress held there, which demanded equal rights for the Arab nations of the Ottoman Empire. During World War I, he and other Iraqi journalists were exiled by the Turkish authorities, but the order was rescinded four months later.

**Salman Shina** (1899-1978) — prominent Jewish public figure. Shina studied at the Alliance school and in a government school. He served in the Turkish army during World War I against the British. Fluent in English, French, Turkish and Arabic, he was attached to the staff of the German General von Becker, who headed German air assistance to Turkey in Iraq. Shina was taken prisoner by the

British in 1917 and held in a prisoner-of-war camp in India for over a year. He was among the founders of the Hebrew Literary Union in 1920 and the Zionist Union of Mesopotamia in 1921, of which he was secretary. He studied law in Baghdad (1922-25) while also publishing the Arabic-language weekly *Al-Misbah* ("The Lamp") begun in 1924, edited first by 'Anwar Sha'ul (see below) and later by Shina himself. By the 1940s he was a prominent Jewish community leader in Baghdad, and in 1947 and 1948 was elected to the Iraqi parliament, one of six Jewish delegates. He left Iraq in 1951 and shortly thereafter settled in Israel. His autobiography, *From Babylonia to Zion* (Hebrew, 1955), provides background on the Iraqi Jewish community during the modern period up to the mass migration.

**'Anwar Sha'ul** (1904-1984) — poet, attorney, writer and journalist. Starting out as an Arabic teacher in Jewish schools in Baghdad, Sha'ul became editor of *Al-Misbah* in 1924 under the pen-name 'Ibn Al-Samaw'al. Thereafter, he published the weekly *Al-Hasid* ("The Harvester") during 1929-38, which featured the work of leading Iraqi authors and poets as well as Jewish intellectuals. Sha'ul is considered the pioneer short-story writer in Iraq. His first collection of stories was *Al Hisad al-Awal* ("The First Harvest") in 1935, followed by *Fi Ziham al-Madina* ("In the City's Density") in 1955. He was also an English and French translator; wrote the screenplay and score for the first Iraqi film (1948); wrote several volumes of poetry; and compiled a dictionary of modern Arabic terminology. Sha'ul was also an attorney, serving the Iraqi royal estate during 1935-49 and acting as legal counsel to commercial firms. Like many Jewish intellectuals, Sha'ul considered Iraq his homeland, was active in public affairs and hoped for a bright future for the young state in which Jews could participate fully. Like most of the Jewish intellectuals, he did not join the mass immigration to Israel in 1951. He arrived 20 years later, after the dream of integration in Iraq had been finally shattered by unprecedented persecution of the Jews who had remained. In Israel, his works were aired on

Arabic radio and TV. He wrote for the Jerusalem paper *Al-Anba'*, and published his autobiography, *The Story of My Life in Mesopotamia* (Arabic, 1980), and *A New Dawn Broke* (Arabic, 1983). He was awarded the Israel Prize for Arabic Literature in 1984.

**Ya'akov Sha'ul / Jack Saul** (1907-1967) — English-language journalist and writer. Educated at London University, he served as editor of the *Baghdad Times* (later, the *Iraq Times*) for 25 years. He was arrested in 1941 by the revolutionary anti-British, pro-Nazi regime headed by Rashid Ali Al-Kayalani. During the 1958 revolution he was again arrested. He was among the group of Jewish intellectuals who did not immigrate to Israel in 1951, but arrived in Israel in 1967.

**Menashe Za'rur** (1900-1972) — one of the first Iraqi journalists. He began as a reporter for *Al-Arab*, then became editor-in-chief of *Al-Iraq*, where he directed both the editorial and administrative aspects of the paper. Due to his talents, it soon became the most important daily in Baghdad. Za'rur was proud of his Iraqi and Arab identity and was respected by his Moslem colleagues. *Al-Iraq* was politically moderate, supporting the Iraqi politician Nuri Al-Sa'id. It was pro-British at a time when fascist and nationalist propaganda were at a peak. During World War II, the paper sided with the Allies, and was closed after the war. Za'rur became editor of *Al-Bilad*, and later worked for *Al-Ahd*, a political paper published by Nuri Al-Sa'id. Rising anti-Semitism after the establishment of Israel and the mass emigration of the Jews in the early 1950s created a hostile atmosphere for the Jews who identified as Iraqis and remained there. Za'rur, unemployed, was forced to work as an ordinary reporter, shunned by his former friends. He left Iraq and eventually settled in Israel.

**Na'im Salih Tuwayq** (1916-1989) — outstanding Iraqi Jewish journalist. He began his 30-year career in journalism upon graduating the Alliance school in Baghdad in 1934. He was an editor of such noted Iraqi papers as *Al-Ahali* and *Al-Mabda'*, and worked for *Al-Hasid*, *Sawt Al-Ahali*, *Al-Zaman*, *Al-Ra'i al-Am*, *Al-Hawadith* and others. He was one of the first newspapermen in Iraq to utilize international media sources, especially English and French. He was also a noted member of the Iraqi Journalists' Union until he left the country in 1973. In his early years he joined the underground Communist Party in Iraq, but left in 1945 for the National Democratic Party founded by his friend Kamel Al-Chaderchi. Together with Murwad Al-Imari (see below), he edited the party organ, *Sawt al-Ahali*. An Iraqi patriot, as many other

Jewish intellectuals, he predicted a bright future for the Jews there, despite discrimination and violence directed toward them from the 1930s onward, especially the June 1941 pogrom in Baghdad which claimed the lives of about 180 men, women and children. Even the official government anti-Jewish policy from 1948 didn't shake their faith. Tuwayq continued working as a journalist until the downfall of Abd Al-Karim Qasim's regime in 1963, when the newspaper he worked for, *Al-Zaman*, was closed. From then on, persecution of the small number of remaining Jews increased and included arrests, imprisonment, torture and death sentences. Arriving in Israel, Tuwayq continued his literary and journalistic activity through Israel's Arabic broadcasting service and in Arabic periodicals, especially the Jerusalem-based *Al-Anba'*.

**Salim Al-Bassoon** (born 1927) — political writer and journalist. At age 16 he began writing for Shafiq Nuri Al-Sa'id's *Al-Shihav*, a newspaper that espoused democracy and opposed fascism in Iraq during the 1930s. He published articles, poetry and short stories in various newspapers where he was also employed, including *Al-Majalla*, *Al-Rabita* and *Al-Zahra'*. He was arrested in 1943 for publishing a political poem in the Lebanese *Al-Tariq*, criticizing the regime in Iraq. He resumed his journalistic work in 1945 as editor and parliamentary reporter for *Al-Sha'b*, and later as secretary and editor of *Al-Si'asa*. Al-Bassoon joined the National Democratic Party in 1946, then the Al-Watani Party soon after, working for its organ *Tsawit al-Si'asa*. In 1948 he began publishing the paper *Al-Istiqlal*. He wrote bold articles critical of various Iraqi governments, which resulted in his arrest and exile for a year, followed by two months' imprisonment in Baghdad. Upon his release, he resumed his work at *Al-Sha'b* and other papers. Like most of the other Jewish journalists, he too did not immigrate to Israel during the mass migration. After the 1958 revolution which resulted in General Abd Al-Karim Qasim's rule, Al-Bassoon was named editor of two pro-Qasim papers, *Al-Ra'i al-Aam* and *Al-Jumhuriyah*, and edited other papers as well. He was falsely accused of involvement in an attempt on Qasim's life in 1959 and briefly imprisoned, but was released on Qasim's orders. After Qasim's government was brought down in 1963, an attempt was made on Al-Bassoon's life and he went into hiding. He then left journalism and went into business, though he continued writing articles for the independent *Al-Ta'akhi*. Arrested again in 1973 by the Ba'ath government, he was aided in his release by friends, and left Iraq for Israel, where he became a highly regarded political commentator in Arabic radio.

**Murwad Al-Imari** (born 1922) — author, poet and journalist. Al-Imari began his journalistic career as a radio

announcer and as secretary of the newspaper *Al-Sha'b*. He lost his job at the radio for refusing to broadcast the official report on a large anti-government demonstration in Baghdad in 1946, which omitted mentioning that the police had killed the Jewish organizer of the demonstration. Al-'Imari also worked as parliamentary reporter, foreign news editor and editorials writer for *Sawt al-'Ahalī*. In 1949 he became parliamentary reporter for the *Iraq Times* and reporter for

United Press. His work for *Sawt al-'Ahalī* ended in 1952 after the October rioting against the closing of opposition papers and arrest of political leaders. Al-'Imari was also arrested. He was again arrested after the 1963 revolution which overthrew Qasim, and he left the field of journalism for business. Forced into unemployment in 1969 because of anti-Jewish governmental pressure, he settled in Israel in 1971 and worked as an Arabic radio news editor.

## E. R. MALAKHI: RESEARCHER OF THE HEBREW PRESS / Ya'akov Kabakov

Eliezer Raphael Malakhi (1895-1980), born in Jerusalem, devoted his whole life to studying the history of the Jewish Yishuv in Eretz Israel as reflected in the history of its Hebrew press. His phenomenal memory and his broad erudition in the area of Hebrew journalism made him the acknowledged authority in this field. He prepared comprehensive bibliographies on the leading Hebrew writers in Eretz Israel and abroad, and wrote profusely about the Hebrew press all over the world.

As a Jerusalemite he knew the pioneers of the Hebrew press personally — A. M. Luntz, Y. D. Frumkin, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and Y. M. Pines, and while still a teenager he wrote an article entitled "Journalism in Jerusalem" (Hebrew) which was published in Luntz's *Lu'ah Eretz Yisrael Le-Shnat 1911*. Malakhi was to return to this subject in the years to come, marking commemorative dates of the founding of the various papers. In an extensive article on *Ha-Levanon*, the first Hebrew paper published in Jerusalem, he traced the origin of the paper in the rivalry between the Pharisees and the Hasidim in the old Yishuv. He wrote about the contribution made by Yoel Moshe Solomon as printer and publisher and as initiator of the idea of working the land. The development of the settlement and pioneering movement was researched in other articles as well, as was the history of the other early Jerusalem newspaper, Yisrael Bek's *Ha-Havazelet*.

Malakhi was particularly interested in researching rare newspapers which were nearly lost to history, piecing together obscure journalistic developments by means of contemporary sources. He covered the earliest humorous press of Eretz Israel in detail, for example the first printed humorous paper, *Hamor-Gelem* (1909), a monthly edited by Ben-Yehuda, as well as the special Purim editions of *Ha-Tzfirah*, *Ha-Tzofeh* and *Ha-Mitzpeh*.

Malakhi relied heavily on the Hebrew press in Europe to

reconstruct developments in Eretz Israel. He focused especially on *Ha-Melitz*, *Ha-Tzfirah* and *Ha-Yom*. In a series of articles entitled "'Ha-Melitz' and its Editors" (Hebrew) in *Ha-Do'ar* (אֲדוֹר and thereafter), he analyzed its first editor, Alexander Zederboim, who blended Enlightenment principles with belief in tradition, as well as a later editor, Y. L. Gordon. In a series entitled "One Hundred Years of 'Ha-Tzfirah'" (Hebrew) in *Birzaron* (1962-63), Malakhi pointed out that its editor, Hayim Zelig Slonimsky, was less interested in disseminating Enlightenment principles than in conveying popular general information such as politics and news. Malakhi credits *Ha-Tzfirah* as the first illustrated Hebrew paper.

He was an admirer of the editor of the first Hebrew daily, *Ha-Yom* (established in 1886) — Yehuda Leib Cantor, whom he describes as one of the founders of Hebrew journalism. Cantor had encountered a great deal of opposition from established editors such as Y. L. Gordon and Nahum Sokolov who accused him of being anti-nationalist. His ambition, Malakhi wrote, was to bring out a totally secular paper which would reflect not only Jewish life but general news. His principles were, in fact, soon accepted within the Hebrew press.

A pioneering Yiddish paper in Galicia edited by Yosef Cohen-Zedek, *Nyeste Nakhrikhten* (1866), is analyzed by Malakhi in its supportive role for an earlier Hebrew paper by the same editor, *Ha-Mevasser* (1861): The editor published the Yiddish paper in order to boost the Hebrew one. Malakhi did considerable research on the history of the Yiddish press as well.

He devoted several studies to editors, including Ahad Ha'am, whom he cited as a thorough, careful editor who maintained high standards, and Y. D. Berkowitz, who also made an important contribution to the papers he edited in

the U.S. and in Eretz Israel.

Malakhi devoted considerable effort to indexing all published Hebrew articles, especially those in the paper *Ha-Do'ar*, with which he was associated.

He delved into a wide range of subjects as reflected in the Hebrew press. For example, in a piece entitled "The Jewish State' in the Hebrew Press" (Hebrew, Bitzaron, 1946), he surveyed reactions to Herzl's book, which included coolness on the part of Sokolov in *Ha-Tzfirah*, and a critical article on the book's Hebrew translation in *Ha-Shilo'ah*.

In addition to researching Hebrew satiric newspapers, Malakhi explored other types of journalism: linguistic journals in Hebrew, the first Hebrew bibliographic periodical (*Yerushalayim*, Cracow, תר"ס-תרס"א) and the first Hebrew pedagogical periodical (*Ha-Eitanim*, Galicia, 1898).

Malakhi first visited America in 1912, eventually moving there in 1922 and joining the staff of *Ha-Do'ar*. He did extensive research on the American Hebrew press, which had begun in the early 1870s, revealing hitherto unknown details about its history. He traced the beginnings of *Ha-Tzofeh Ba-Eretz Ha-Hadasha*, founded by Zvi Hirsch Bernstein in 1871,

and described the immigration that began in the 1870s and that was to constitute the future readership of the Hebrew press. He researched Aharon Yehuda Leib Horowitz, who assisted in founding Bernstein's paper and was a political activist. He described Ze'ev Shur, editor of the weekly *Ha-Pisgah* and *Ha-Tehiya* and supporter of the Hibbat Zion movement; Gershon Rosenzweig, a talented satirist who edited *Ha-Ivri*; and other Hebrew editors in America such as Michael Levi Radkinson, Ephrayim Deinard, Leon Zolorkof and Yehezkel Anowitz.

In an article surveying the history of the Hebrew press in America, in *Ha-Do'ar* in 1935, Malakhi showed that almost 50 Hebrew papers had been published there thus far, though none had lasted as long as *Ha-Do'ar*. In a later article he discussed the contribution of the paper's editor, Menahem Ribolov. He also wrote pieces on the contribution of various authors to the Hebrew press in America, such as Agnon, Tchernikowsky, Sokolov and Shneor. In addition, he extracted unusual perspectives of American events and personalities from the Hebrew press, including material on Abraham Lincoln, Grant's election and the issue of Alaska's statehood.

## HONESTY AND CREDIBILITY IN JOURNALISM

### Eretz Israel Newspapers and Reports on the European Occupation, 1939-41 / Hava Zeinfeld

Coverage of this subject by the Eretz Israel press was problematic because news sources were clandestine, and in the case of the few neutral oases — e.g., Switzerland — strict neutrality was adopted, especially regarding the Jewish question.

It was particularly difficult to publish any information from Germany. In an article that appeared in *Ha-Mashkif* in October 1941, an American journalist describes various means utilized by foreign correspondents to get news out to the free world, such as the denial technique: "Sources in Berlin claim there is no basis for news published abroad about riots in Czechoslovakia." Furthermore, revealing sources of information meant arrest by the Nazis or their minions in the occupied countries.

Some of the sources utilized by the Eretz Israel press were intended not for the press but rather to keep the leadership of the Yishuv informed about events. There were three main sources of information:

1. Formal sources — press agencies in Eretz Israel and abroad, and foreign radio broadcasts and newspapers that reached Eretz Israel.

2. Informal sources — representatives of political bodies and organizations, religious personalities, students and private individuals who were in Europe, especially in neutral Switzerland and Turkey. Information was transmitted to journalists orally or by letter to Eretz Israel.

3. Independent sources of the Yishuv leadership — the Jewish Agency office in Geneva, which included the Eretz Israel office, the World Jewish Congress and the He-Halutz movement. Information also came in regularly from Constantinople and London.

The Jewish Agency was aided by diplomatic mail services supplied by the Polish Consul in Eretz Israel, Dr. Rozmarin, as well as the Polish government-in-exile in London.

The problem of credibility was a difficult one, as there was no way of checking sources. The reader was left to his own devices in making up his mind whether to believe the information or not — a situation that created a generally sceptical or even negative attitude toward the press. Specifically, this resulted in disbelief of reports as to what was happening to the Jews during the Nazi occupation.

One device used by the Hebrew press to achieve credibility



was to ascribe news to "a neutral source," the message being that the information was reliable. Another device was to credit a "telegram source" or "our special correspondent." Both German and Allied press articles were utilized simultaneously in an effort to present a true picture. But the problem of credibility remained, with the public constantly suspicious of propaganda in the guise of news.

A Journalists' Association symposium held in Tel Aviv during the winter of 1940 on the subject "Nonsense, It's All Propaganda," testifies to the seriousness of the problem at a time when news about the grave condition of the Jews in Poland was being received.

There were three causes for the public's disbelief regarding the plight of the Jews of Europe during the Nazi occupation: 1. suspicion of enemy propaganda, 2. the shockingly unbelievable nature of the news itself, and 3. the instinct to compare this tragedy to previous tragedies that had befallen the Jews, and the traditional belief that the Jews would withstand this too.

One of the problems of the press was finding suitable terminology to define the unprecedented nature of the persecution. This was exemplified in the Nazi "Lublin Plan" of December 1939 in which the Jews were enclosed in a specific

area and put to work at hard labor. The journalists themselves variously described this as a sort of "territorial solution" for the Jews; a "ghetto;" an "encampment;" or "a Jewish state." Another example of conditioning based on the past was an illogical assumption that the Jews would survive no matter what, and that it wasn't necessary for the Jews of Eretz Israel or the free world to take any extraordinary measures to save them. The newspapers encouraged this myth with stories of Jewish heroism of the past. Extensive upbeat coverage of the pioneers of Eretz Israel, rather than reports about the Jews of Europe, also accounted for a distortion.

The Hebrew press in Eretz Israel was aware of all these problems, and editorials repeatedly called for journalistic caution and accuracy. However, as the war progressed, reliable sources became scarcer and credibility was increasingly difficult to verify. The situation was exacerbated by the direct effect of reports in the press on the many family members of European Jews in Eretz Israel.

It may be surmised that generally the public did not believe in the newspapers' credibility during the early years of World War II, nor did the journalists themselves always believe in the truthfulness of their own sources.

## "HA-ZAFON" — THE FIRST LOCAL NEWSPAPER IN ERETZ ISRAEL / Yosef Kister

Haifa, known as a stronghold of the Left, was also the cradle of the Revisionist press in Eretz Israel. The first issue of *Ha-Zafon* ("The North") was published on Feb. 19, 1926, edited by Dr. Avraham Weinshall, an attorney who headed the Haifa branch of the Revisionist Party. Its editorial explained the need for a local paper in light of the impressive development of Haifa and the northern region. While the Jewish population of Haifa at the end of World War I was about 2,000, by 1926 it was over 12,000. The editor claimed that Haifa had become the center of development for heavy industry, as well as an important cultural center, with the opening of the Technion. New construction on the Carmel indicated that the Jewish community would continue to expand. Haifa had also attracted health and vacation tourism due to its railway links with Egypt and Syria and planned new links with Lebanon and Iraq. Above all, its natural harbor would turn the city into the commercial center of Eretz Israel. In addition, the editorial mentioned, new urban centers were

emerging in the north, such as Afula and Acre.

All these developments, the editorial noted, were accompanied by problems which demanded public attention. Yet the paper would also address broader national questions, the editor promised, including the relationship between the *Yishuv* and world Jewry. There was a need for a non-partisan platform to analyze national current events. The newspaper's principles were the building of the nation, national discipline and loyalty to democracy.

Scarcely the first few issues were local in nature. The opening ceremony of the city's new post office in 1926 was reported in detail. Whereas in 1920 there had been only one telephone in operation in Haifa, it was noted that in 1926 over 300 telephone subscribers were being served by the new post office. On the other hand, a report on the city's religious facilities criticized the absence of even one proper synagogue, as compared to the situation in Beirut, which had fewer Jewish inhabitants.

Ze'ev Jabotinsky was a contributor to the paper from its beginning. In 1927 he wrote a piece titled "The Last Country of Romance" in which he praised the settlement of Eretz Israel and hoped for better conditions there. His poem "*Shir Ha-Degel*" ("Song of the Flag") was reprinted.

Noted leaders were often profiled, such as Dr. Max Nordau upon the reinterment of his body in Eretz Israel in 1926, and Ahad Ha'am upon his death in 1927. A special issue was devoted to the acquittal of a Jew who had been convicted of the murder of an Arab, and whose sentence was overturned in a retrial in the Haifa District Court.

Curiously, Arthur Koestler was also connected with *Ha-Zafon*. Influenced by Jabotinsky, he arrived in Eretz Israel in 1926 to fulfill the Zionist idea, and contacted Dr. Weinshall. Since his Hebrew was not good enough to write, he began to work at soliciting ads for the paper. In addition, he opened

the National Political Agency — a wire news service geared to Europe, as well as a legal aid organization for Jewish victims of British Mandate discrimination. None of these efforts were successful, although Koestler did begin to write a series of muck-raking articles for the paper.

Other well-known journalists and writers who contributed to *Ha-Zafon* included Aryeh Altman, Miriam Bernstein-Cohen and Avigdor Hameiri.

The paper was printed on a hand press, first in a small printshop located in the Arab market of the lower city, and later in the Hadar neighborhood. It started out as an eight-page weekly, then became a four-page biweekly. Some 100 issues of *Ha-Zafon* were published during a 1½-year period before it closed in 1927, probably because of the general economic crisis of that year.

## BENZION KATZ: MASTER OF THE SCOOP / Ruth Baki

In July 1906, 200 delegates to the first Russian Duma gathered in Vyborg, Finland, and issued a proclamation urging the Russian people to cease paying taxes and serving in the army. It was a call for civil rebellion after a thousand years of autocratic, totalitarian rule. Although Czar Nikolai forbade publication of these resolutions, Benzion Katz, editor of the Hebrew daily *Ha-Zman* ("The Time"), was the only journalist to publish this information in Russia. Eventually he was charged with inciting to rebellion and sentenced to a year's solitary confinement.

Called Master of the Scoop in his day, Benzion Katz began his journalistic career as a champion for equal rights for Jews in Czarist Russia. Previously, however, he had been a Talmud scholar in the village of Dweig and author of several respected scholarly works. Influenced by major changes within the Jewish world then — Zionism, revolutionary agitation, an abandoning of religion, the renewal of Hebrew — Katz enrolled at the University of Peterburg where he was one of the few students accepted without a matriculation certificate, with the additional handicap of being a Jew. There he became aware of the downtrodden status of the Jews of Russia and decided to found a party devoted to the improvement of their condition, with the establishment of a newspaper as the first step.

It took Katz two years of negotiation to gain permission to publish the paper, and the first issue aroused much interest.

Katz boldly waged a campaign against anti-Semitism and the residential and economic restrictions against Jews. He alone, among the Russian journalists, published an eyewitness account of the Kishinev Pogrom in Bessarabia in 1903, in which approximately 50 Jews were murdered and hundreds wounded while the authorities stood by. He also printed an editorial condemning the government for allowing it.

Katz waged a constant battle with the censors. The Jewish censors, most of them converts to Christianity, occupied a unique place in Russian society. They were the only Russians who understood what was being written in the Jewish press, and were systematically bribed to turn a blind eye. Nevertheless, there were numerous struggles in dealing with them, such as Katz's efforts — ultimately successful — to publish Bialik's poem *Ba-Ir Ha-Hariga* ("In the City of the Killing") about the pogrom in 1903. The poem elicited strong reactions and contributed to enhanced Jewish self-defense, although it put Katz in a dangerous position. Katz was also a supporter of revolutionary ideas, and was warned by the censor on this account as well.

Katz's newspaper was the first in Russia to publish the draft version of a constitution which the Czar had secretly commissioned after the October 1905 revolution — an exceptional scoop which resulted in his being questioned by the government press office. Another example of his fighting journalistic approach was a series of probing questions which

he prepared in 1913 for a so-called expert on Jewish ritual in the Beyliss trial. His questions exposed the "expert's" ignorance and indirectly contributed to Beyliss's eventual acquittal.

The Czar's officials eventually caught up with Katz on the Vyborg affair and, in light of his background, sentenced him to a year's imprisonment. During this time, Katz read intensely about communism and also managed to convey editorial material to his newspaper as well as participate in

current journalistic debates in the Jewish world. He rejected a plan to escape prison, saying: "A political activist must take responsibility for his actions. One can't write and run."

Katz first visited Eretz Israel in 1914, settling there in 1931. He was an authentic journalist and a master of every aspect of his field. He didn't simply write articles — he waged campaigns. *Ha-Zman* was a major influence on Ben-Gurion, Ben-Zvi and all the Jewish leaders of their generation.

## THE GERMAN-LANGUAGE JEWISH PRESS IN EUROPE / Reuven Assor

The German-language Jewish press, up until the rise of Hitler, was read not only in German-speaking countries, but in Eastern Europe and the U.S. as well. It was a multi-faceted, pluralistic press on a high intellectual level. Even during 1933-38, over 100 such papers continued appearing in Nazi Germany. With the destruction of the German, Austrian and Czechoslovakian Jewish communities, and the ageing of the survivors in the U.S., England and Israel, the assumption has been that this press has come to an end.

Yet now, 50 years after the outbreak of World War II and 45 years after the Holocaust, the surprising reality is that the German-language Jewish press in Europe is growing and practically flourishing. While the pessimistic predictions have proven true for the U.S., England and Israel, there is an inexplicable revival in Europe. Nearly 20 periodicals are being published in Germany, Switzerland and Austria. Although they appear only weekly, monthly or even more infrequently, they reflect the need of the Jewish community for its own press.

The oldest ongoing Jewish German-language periodical is the Swiss *Israelitisches Wochenblatt* ("The Israeli Weekly"), founded in Zurich in 1901 by Rabbi Martin Litmann and Dr. David Strauss. The weekly is brought out by the Manfred Marx publishing house, headed by Pierre Rothschild. Its editor-in-chief is Marcel Klorzender. Although the paper is formally devoted to the Zurich Jewish community, it is actually read by all the Jews in Switzerland, usually together with its Basel-based competitor, *Jüdische Rundschau*. Advertising and subscriptions keep the paper self-supporting. Its regular circulation is about 5,000, with an increase for holiday editions. There is a sizeable non-Jewish readership. About a third of the readership resides outside Switzerland, primarily Jews who have settled in Israel or elsewhere. The

paper is sold on newsstands within and outside Switzerland. Since the readership is bilingual, a third of the paper is written in French. Each issue has 50-60 pages, making it the largest Jewish German-language periodical anywhere. It is a popular-style weekly geared to all age groups. It focuses on Israeli news and supports official Israel government policy. Its correspondent in Israel is Rabbi Dr. Roland Gradwahl, formerly rabbi of Bern. Former Israel Ambassador to Switzerland David Rivlin contributes occasional articles. Printed on quality paper, the weekly is well-written and well-illustrated, with an impressive list of advertisers. It has become an inseparable part of the Jewish community scene in Switzerland.

The *Jüdische Rundschau* ("The Jewish Review") — *Maccabi* was founded nearly 50 years ago in Basel as the organ of the Maccabi sports organization. With the outbreak of World War II, and especially with the establishment of Israel, the paper shifted its emphasis to issues of the survival of the Jewish people, and today is considered one of the most serious Jewish papers. Its readership includes residents of Austria, Germany and Israel. It too has many non-Jewish readers. While explicitly Zionist in point of view, the paper also criticizes Israel. It has consistently attracted the best Jewish reporters in Switzerland and abroad. It was founded by Adrian Blum and Otto Avish. A grandson of the latter is now the Israel correspondent. A former editor (1974-84), Jacques Unger, also settled in Israel. Today's editor is Heinrich Unger. The paper's circulation is 5,000, reaching 8,000 on holidays. Former Israel Ambassador to Bern Yohanan Meroz occasionally contributes articles on Israel.

In post-war Germany, the *Allgemeine Jüdische Wochenzeitung* ("General Jewish Weekly") was initiated in 1946 under a series of different names by the founder of the post-

war Jewish community in Düsseldorf, Carl Marx. He took the paper's name from an old German Jewish newspaper begun in 1837 by Ludwig Philippson, which had closed in 1922. Marx's energy and talent resulted in a high-level paper read throughout Germany. He attracted the best surviving journalists, as well as intellectuals and rabbis who contributed to the paper. Cultural and communal life was emphasized, but the main articles were political and timely. The paper consistently championed German restitution over the years. It also covered the founding of the State of Israel at a time when the general German press was preoccupied with the rehabilitation of Germany and was apathetic to the question of Israel.

It was apparent from the start that the German establishment followed the weekly with exceptional interest, with the subscription rate among non-Jews exceeding that among Jews. The paper was eventually bought up by the Central Committee of the Jews of Germany and became the official organ of the community. The paper covers German and Israeli political policy, culture and religion, Jewish community news, especially of the largest community, Berlin, news of Nazi war crimes trials and Jewish world news. Circulation is 20,000. It is sold abroad, especially in the U.S., Switzerland, Austria and Israel, where it also has correspondents. It is based in Bonn today.

Two periodicals are based in Munich — *Der Landesverband*

*der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden in Bayern* ("The Regional Organization of Bavarian Jewish Communities"), a monthly which includes a Yiddish section, and *Jüdische Zeitung* ("Jewish Times"), the monthly organ of the Munich Jewish community, edited by Raphael Zeligmann. Both stress the centrality of Israel and fight for Jewish causes actively. In Frankfurt, a bi-monthly, *Unsere Stimme* ("Our Voice"), has been published for the past 18 years by the Organization of Jewish Refugees and Deportees in the Republic of Germany. It is a fighting paper on behalf of Jewish causes and Israel, and takes much of its material from Simon Weisenthal's Vienna-based monthly, *Ausweg* ("The Way Out"). In addition, various German communities such as Karlsruhe, Düsseldorf, Stuttgart and Hamburg bring out local organs.

Jewish periodicals in Austria are enjoying a boom that is disproportionate to the small Jewish population (7,000). The monthly *Die Gemeinde* ("The Community") devotes most of its space to community affairs, while *Illustrierte Neue Welt* (which recalls the first Zionist newspaper issued by Herzl, *Die Neue Welt*), founded in the 1960s and edited by two young women editors, is more innovative and professionally produced. It is widely read by non-Jewish friends of Israel in Austria. Various political organs are also published: *Der Bund* by Po'alei Zion, *Zentrum* by the General Zionists, *Herut* by the Revisionists and *Mizrachi*, as well as Simon Weisenthal's monthly, which is widely read abroad.

## "KOLNO'A," THE FIRST ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER IN ERETZ ISRAEL, 1931-35 / Tirza Shafir Binyamini

There is no room for heavy questions or serious issues in *Kolno'a* ("Perpetual Motion"). We have, thank the Lord, enough boring newspapers packed with "serious" material. Here everything is alive and in motion, everything flits and flies... the gravest matters become light and fresh as they pass through the filter of these pages....

This guiding principle, expressed by *Kolno'a's* editor, Daniel Persky, in the bi-weekly's first edition in April 1931, was only partially realized during its four-year existence, due to financial and technical difficulties as well as frequent changes in editorial management.

The owner of the paper, Raphael Abulafia, had been a member of Nili, a settler of Rishon Lezion and a founder of the farmers' association, B'nei Binyamin. Politically he was associated with the Center and the Right, an orientation

which was reflected in the paper. *Kolno'a*, which sometimes appeared irregularly, had a run of 2,000 copies.

Persky, who had arrived in Palestine from America, was a writer and teacher with an interest in Hebrew linguistics. He is thought to be the first compiler of Hebrew slang and street language. The next editor was Pesach Ginsburg, a writer, poet, publicist and translator originally from the Ukraine, who had also come to Eretz Israel from America. He was associated with *Ha-Aretz* and other papers. The third editor was Aharon Hermoni, an experienced journalist who had arrived in Eretz Israel during the Second Aliyah. Among the contributors to the paper were Bialik, Avraham Shlonsky, Natan Alterman, Nahum Gutman, Ze'ev Vilna'i, David Tidhar and Avigdor Hameiri.

The paper contained short news items, including sen-

sational crime reports, illustrated by pictures. Until then none of the papers in Eretz Israel had been illustrated. Based in Tel Aviv, it had the feel of a city paper. It did many background pieces on well-known personalities, such as Bialik, Ahad Ha'am and Aharon Aaronson, and covered milestones in the development of national institutions. The Arlosoroff murder and the Stavsky trial were covered extensively. In general, the paper avoided editorial comment. There is little humor or irony in its writing style, but there is some pathos and emotionalism.

Although *Kolno'a's* policy was mostly to exclude international news, it did deal with the rise of Hitler through caricatures, comics and jokes. Yet there is an odd disproportion between this and the paper's relatively extensive coverage of Germany's cultural life, especially film, at the time. Similarly, the Arab-Jewish question received scant attention. German Jewish immigration at the time, an important development in the Yishuv, received virtually no coverage except for several curiously negative references to the "Hitler aliyah."

On the other hand, considerable space was devoted to

literature and the arts by well-known writers who explored both local and foreign developments in depth. Quality short stories and serialized novels were also published. Sports, both local and foreign, were covered extensively, with the paper also sponsoring sporting events such as bicycle races, motorcycle races and the first marathon in the country. The paper's involvement in sports was the work of staff member Yosef Yekutieli, founder of the Maccabiah.

The foreign film world also received a great deal of attention in *Kolno'a*, with a distinct focus on the Berlin film industry. Curiously, there were no film reviews of current showings, although there were three cinemas in Tel Aviv and one which opened in Jerusalem during this period.

Certain topics received regular coverage, including commemorative dates connected with public figures and institutions, education, sporting events, gala entertainment events and polls. Conversely, *Kolno'a* completely ignored the labor and settlement movements and never mentioned kibbutzim and moshavim, apparently reflecting the owner's political orientation.

## THE ARAB PRESS IN ISRAEL / Atallah Mansour

During the first 20 years of the existence of the State of Israel, the Arab population had practically no press of its own. The government published an Arabic-language daily called *Al-Yom* ("The Day"); the Israel Communist Party, Rakah and Mapam all published small party weeklies in Arabic; the Histadrut had its own Arabic weekly; and the Greek Catholic, the Latin and the Anglican churches published monthlies in Arabic.

The first general Arabic-language newspaper in Israel was published in 1951 by the late Daoud Khouri, an academician and son of a wealthy landowner from the village of M'alul, who had become a homeless refugee as a result of the establishment of Israel. (His father lived as a refugee in Lebanon until his return to Israel later on.) Called *Al-Wasit* ("The Agent"), the paper was conceived as a monthly but appeared only six times during a period of three years. During 1954-58, the Nazareth teacher and poet Michel Hadad published a literary monthly named *Al-Mujtama* ("Society"). The first Arabic political weekly, *Al-Ard* ("The Land"), was begun in 1958 and appeared 14 times until it was closed and its Nasserist publishers convicted. These were the sum total

of Arabic newspapers published in Israel up to the 1960s.

Apparently, Arabs with experience, initiative and capital weren't interested in publishing independent newspapers on a commercial basis, nor was there any demand on the part of a potential readership, economic interest or political grouping. Furthermore, the military government which controlled the Arabs of Israel had nearly unlimited emergency powers and effectively discouraged any tendencies in this direction.

With the end of military government in December 1966, and the advent of the Six-Day War, a new era began for the Arab citizens of Israel. They began to realize that they need not rely on the Arab world to solve their problems. Furthermore, their national identity wasn't simply Arab, as they had imagined, but first and foremost Palestinian. They realized that they had a great deal in common with their Palestinian brothers suffering in the refugee camps in the territories and the neighboring countries — namely, the need to look after their own interests and not wait for Arab unity, which was remote. In fact, they also discovered that they were not simply Palestinians. The East Jerusalem press, which

leaned toward Jordan or toward the various PLO groups, did not reflect them any more than the establishment Israeli government and Histadrut press did. The weekly Histadrut *Hakikat Al-Amar* ("The Word of Truth") ceased publication, as did the government *Al-Yom*. The successor to the latter, *Al-Anba* ("The News"), fared no better and closed in 1984.

Several attempts to publish Arabic papers in Israel were made in the 1970s. Starting in 1971, various ambitious young Druze published periodicals that were conceived as bases for their political careers. They included the Ussefiya educator Fa'iz Azam who published the monthly *Al-Hoda* ("The Truth") for 12 years; Kamal Al-Kassem, a lawyer from Rama who published *Al-Druze* for about two years; and Samih Natur of Dalyat el-Carmel, publisher of *Al-Emama* ("The Turban") for a brief period.

In the early 1980s, with political and economic conditions ripe for a media revolution in Israel's Arab society, a flood of Arab newspapers appeared. This development was an outgrowth of certain social and economic factors: an internalizing of the bitter experience in the territories; the extensive spread of Jewish local papers; the political changing of the guard in the country and the ambivalent attitude of the new regime to the Arabs — half-liberal, half-contemptuous. All these factors had stimulated the founding of the Democratic Nazareth Front and the National Council of Heads of Arab Local Authorities in Israel (1974). Hadash was formed in 1977 when Rakah joined with non-party Arab and Jewish forces. The convening of the Committee to Defend Arab Land followed, as did the establishment of the Progressive Movement (1981), the Progressive List for Peace (with Alternative, a group which ran in the 1984 elections) and the Democratic Arab Party (Daraushe) in the 1988 elections. Above all, the technical know-how involved in publishing newspapers with relatively inexpensive modern technology had been acquired, along with an awareness of the impact of a free local press.

The growth of the new Arabic press was interrelated with the development of new organizational patterns within Arab society. Every party or political body considered it essential to publish a newspaper or to support certain existing papers by tempting their owners with promises of substantial pre-election political advertising.

The growth of such political groups as Abna'a Al-Balad (1973), Hadash (1977), the Progressive Movement (1982), the Moslem Movement (1987) and the Democratic Arab Party (1988) was connected with the flowering of the press, as the press contributed to the development of ideological and organizational pluralism among the Arabs of Israel. Nearly all the papers are subsidized by parties or political groups and

are viewed as organs of their patrons' opinions. The few exceptions are *As Sennara* ("The Fishing Rod"), a shrill Nazareth weekly; *Kul Al-Arab* ("All the Arabs"), a colorful weekly published by the Al-Bustani advertising firm (a subsidiary of Ariely Advertising); and the weekly *Al-Arabi* in Acre and *Al-Ajami* in Jaffa — two commercial papers which try to cover costs through advertising. These papers had provided Israeli manufacturers with an advertising outlet in the territories, while giving industry in the territories advertising opportunities in Israel. Since the Intifada, however, advertising has fallen off. Several newspapers have closed and the others have cut back, hoping for better days.

Most of the newspapers manage to survive primarily because of the assistance of sponsoring political parties or public bodies. The commercial papers alone strive for balanced budgets and profit margins. The rest — the weeklies, monthlies and quarterlies — are free of this burden and do not even bother to conceal the sources of their support. The big contributors, as well as the recipients of the funding, publicize these arrangements themselves. There isn't a single issue of these papers that doesn't devote the major part of its contents to serving its financial master in the most obvious fashion.

The commercial papers stop at nothing to attract advertising and advertisers, approaching this task with great thoroughness. For example, the General Secretary of Na'amat, Masha Lubelsky, receives royal treatment in *As Sennara* by virtue of placing Na'amat's Arabic magazine as an ad in this weekly. *Kul Al-Arab* ("All the Arabs") treats Dr. Ahmed Tibi, "Ezer Weizman's friend," as if he were a distinguished public personality because of his poor relationship with the competing weekly, and consequently gets big ads for the monthly *Shau'on Akademia* ("Academic Matters") edited by Tibi, which is usually not on sale in Nazareth kiosks.

Many of the journalists employed in these papers are academic authorities, especially in the religious and literary journals. In the political papers, however, though the journalists may be academicians with distinguished status, they must belong to the paper's political party and must devote their talents to serving its point of view even if it contradicts their own. Their salary, moreover, is minimal.

The situation in the commercial papers is even worse. The editor-publisher himself receives the advertising material, develops the ads and settles with the client on price and discount. Lutfi Mash'ur, Manager-Editor of *As Sennara*, broke all records in this area during the last Knesset elections. In addition to his regular tasks, he functioned as an advertising consultant for the Labor Party. Given this mixing of roles,



even a journalist who strives for objectivity will always be suspected of partiality to his advertising client. Separation between the advertising and the editorial areas in the Arab press is still a long way off.

The situation in radio and TV is also distorted. The Arabic telecasting and broadcasting services are not geared to the local population; their target audience is across the border, with the content of the programs often suspiciously resembling propaganda rather than information. This situation does not contribute to building an image of the media as an objective and fair information service and as a free, balanced platform serving its audience and society at large.

## A Brief Survey of the Arabic Press

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### Party Newspapers

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1. *Al-Atihad* ("Unity") — Rakah, founded in 1944 as a weekly, became a semi-weekly during the 1970s and a daily from 1985.
2. *Al-Wattan* ("The Homeland") — Progressive, founded in 1985 as a weekly. Appears irregularly.
3. *Al-Tadamun* ("Solidarity") — Progressive, existed as a weekly during 1983-85; from then on, occasional appearance.
4. *Al-Di'ar* ("The Birthplace") — Arab Democratic Party weekly (Daraushe); appeared only during the 1988 pre-election period.
5. *Al-Jamahir* ("The Masses") — weekly edited by Afif Salah Salem of Rakah, founded in 1985 but closed by government order on the basis that it received financial backing from hostile organizations.
6. *Venus* — Nazareth commercial weekly begun in the late 1970s, published irregularly. Reorganized in partnership with Ariely Advertising in 1986. Closed in 1988. Reappeared in 1989 as a free radical political weekly; now an ideological political monthly.
7. *Al-Raya* ("The Flag") — official organ of the Abna'a Al-Balad ("Natives") movement, 1986-88. Closed by government order. As of 1989, a weekly named *Al-Midan* continues the paper's work.
8. *Saut Al-Hak wal-Hwryya* ("The Voice of Truth and Freedom") — organ of The Moslem Movement, published weekly in Um el-Fahm.

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### Religious Newspapers

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1. *Al-Rabra* ("The Tie") — monthly, begun in 1943; oldest religious journal in Israel. Greek Catholic Church.

2. *Al-Kalima* ("The Word") — new ecumenical monthly begun in Haifa in 1989 by young historian Johnny Mansour.
3. *Al-Ra'id* ("The Pioneer") — prestigious monthly of the Anglican Church. Begun in the early 1960s. Discontinued.
4. *Al-Salam wal-Khair* ("Peace and Charity") — monthly of the Latin Catholic community. Begun in Nazareth; from 1967 based in East Jerusalem.
5. *Al-Bashir* ("The Harbinger") — small missionary monthly of the Ahmadiya community in Haifa.
6. *Al-Hoda* ("The Truth") — Druze monthly begun in the early 1970s by Fa'iz Azam of Ussefiya. Irregular appearance during the past year.
7. *Al-Beshara* ("The Good News") — Christian Orthodox monthly in Nazareth.
8. *As-Sarat* ("The Good Road") — the first organ published by the Moslem Movement. Um el-Fahm.
9. *Al-Bayan* ("The Proof") — Dr. Ahmed Diab's monthly, Nazareth. Two issues only have appeared.
10. *Al-Qalam* ("The Pen") — moderate Moslem monthly edited by Abd as Salam of Nazareth, a Communist activist who returned to religion. Appeared in 1987 only.
11. *Al-Druze* — weekly published in 1971 by Kamal Al-Kassim of Rama.
12. *Al-Emama* ("The Turban") — Druze quarterly edited in Dalyat el-Carmel by Samih Natur. Appeared during the Lebanese war only.

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### Commercial Newspapers

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1. *As Sennara* ("The Fishing Rod") — weekly begun in 1983 by advertising man Lufti Vida Mash'ur in Nazareth. Advocates freedom of expression.
2. *Kul Al Arab* ("All the Arabs") — published by Al-Bustani advertising agency since 1987. Color advertising.
3. *Al-Arabi* ("The Arab") — free weekly published irregularly in Acre since 1986. Taken over in 1989 by a Rakah faction. Focus on neo-Marxist ideology.
4. *Al-Ajami* — free Jaffa newspaper, also distributed in the Galilee. Leans towards the Arab Democratic Party.
5. *Hada Al-Asbu'a* ("The Week") — moderate, informative newspaper begun in early 1990 in Haifa, edited by actor-director Yosef Farah.
6. *Sada Al-Jalil* ("Echo of the Galilee") — published in Acre in 1988 before the Knesset elections.
7. *Kol Ha-Galil* — free Hebrew-language newspaper. Only two issues were published.
8. *As Sabil* ("The Way") — free newspaper published in Haifa in 1984. Closed two years later.

9. *Al-Nadwa* ("Symposium") — free weekly published in the Triangle since March 1990.

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### Local Newspapers

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1. *Afaq* ("Horizons") — Shfar'am, appears irregularly since 1986. Culture and literature.
2. *Marj Ibn Amer* ("Jezreel Valley") — leftist-nationalist newspaper published in Daburiya since 1987.
3. *Al-Jawwal* ("The Wanderer") — published in Tira since 1988. Mostly commercial content; supports the Moslem Movement.
4. *Panorama* — published in Taiba since 1988. Local, commercial content.
5. *Sho'aa'a* ("Sunbeams") — Yaffa, outside Nazareth, monthly begun in 1985. Includes literary material as well as local news.

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### Literature and Ideas

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1. *Al-Manbar* ("The Pulpit") — culture and popular-science bi-weekly. Religious-nationalist leanings.
2. *Al-Jadid* ("New") — literary and cultural monthly published since 1953.
3. *Al-Mojtamah* ("Society") — independent literary monthly published during 1954-58 and 1984-89. Founded by teacher-poet Michel Hadad. In 1990 it became radical-nationalist in point of view.
4. *Hewar* ("Dialogue") — intellectual monthly published by Zuhir Sa'ad in 1981-82.
5. *Al-Mawakeb* ("Caravans") — literary-political monthly aligned with the Progressive Movement since 1984.
6. *Al-Aswar* ("The Walls") — independent quarterly

reflecting Hadash point of view.

7. "48" — monthly journal of the Association of Arab Writers reflecting Hadash point of view.
8. *Qadaya* ("Matters") — research quarterly begun at the end of 1989, edited by Dr. Mahmoud Maharb.
9. *Al-Fikr Al-Jadid* ("New Thought") — new quarterly published by Saliva Hamis of Maki-Rakah. First issue appeared in the summer of 1989.
10. *Shau'on Akademia* ("Academic Matters") — quarterly edited by Dr. Ahmed Tibi. Published irregularly since 1987.
11. *Liqa'a* ("Encounter") — quarterly devoted to improving Christian-Moslem relations. Edited by Dr. Jerje's Khouri of Fasuta. Published in Jerusalem from 1986. Occasional seminars organized by the journal.
12. *Al-Mashrek* ("The East") — literary quarterly begun in 1970. Edited by Mahmoud Abassi of Shfar'am.
13. *Mifgash* — *Liqa'a* ("Encounter") — Hebrew-Arabic literary anthology begun in 1964; appears occasionally.

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### Miscellaneous

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1. *Al-Ghad* ("Tomorrow") — youth monthly published by Rakah.
2. *Sadah Al-Tarbiya* ("Echo of Education") — old-established monthly for teachers.
3. *Abir* ("Scent of Flowers") — color monthly for the family.
4. *Al-Ma'arefa* ("Knowledge") — monthly for students.
5. *Arbiutar* ("Arab Computer") — devoted to Arab high school students of computers. Begun in 1989 by Arab students at the Technion.
6. *Al-Hayah* ("Life") — popular-medicine monthly. Begun in 1986 in Haifa.
7. *Majallaty* ("My Newspaper") — monthly for students published by the Histadrut Arabic press since the mid-1960s.

## Contributors to This Issue

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**Theodore (Teddy) Levite:** foreign correspondent for the *London Standard*, the *Mirror Group*, *Bild Zeitung* (Hamburg), *Milliyet* (Istanbul) and Sky TV (London).

## המחברים

שלום רוזנפלד: ראש התוכנית ללימודי עיתונאות והמכון לחקר העתונות היהודית בעולם, אוניברסיטת תל אביב. ממייסדי "מעריב" ועורכו הראשי, 1974-1980. יו"ר הדירקטוריון של הרצאת "מודיעין".

דוד מרקיש: סופר ועיתונאי, בנו של המשורר הידוע פרץ מרקיש. פרסם 16 ספרים, רומנים וסיפורים קצרים, שחלק מהם תורגם ל-7 שפות.

נפתלי קראוס: עיתונאי, חבר מערכת "מעריב".

ד"ר מרדכי נאור: מרצה לעתונות באוניברסיטת תל אביב. כתב וערך ספרים בתולדות ארץ ישראל. עורך "קשר".

שמואל שניצר: עורך ופובליציסט. העורך הראשי של "מעריב", 1985-1980.

מקסוול ויטמן: היסטוריון, ארכיבאי ועורך ביבליוגרפיות. חיבר 11 ספרים ויותר מ-150 מאמרים. אחראי על אוספי ה"יוניון ליג" בפילדלפיה. היה חבר ב"ועדה להיסטוריה ומוזיאונים" בפנסילוניה.

ד"ר נסים קזז: מוזחן. יועץ לענייני ערבים במשרד ראש הממשלה. מרצה באוניברסיטת בן גוריון בנושאי מורחנות ויהדות עיראק. מומחה למשפט ולמורשת של הברווים.

פרופ' יעקב קבקוב: יליד ניו יורק, כיהן כפרופסור לעברית וללימודי היהדות בלהמן קולג', שלייד האוניברסיטה העירונית של ניו יורק. עורך "שנתון הספר היהודי" ומחבר ספרים על הספרות העברית באמריקה.

חווה זיינפלד: מוסמכת אוניברסיטת תל אביב בחוג להיסטוריה של עם ישראל.

יוסף קיסטר: עובד-מחקר במכון ז'בוטינסקי. היה עורך הירחון "בארץ ישראל".

תרצה שפיר-בנימיני: בוגרת התוכנית ללימודי עיתונאות באוניברסיטת תל אביב.

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ראובן עשור: עיתונאי ששימש ככתב של אמצעי תקשורת ישראליים בגרמניה ובאוסטריה ומשמש עתה כתב של עיתונים גרמנים ושוייצים.

עטאללה מנצור: סופר וחבר מערכת "הארץ" מאז 1958. פרסם שלושה ספרים ותרם מאמרים לתריסר נוספים. עוסק בעיקר בנושאי הערבים בישראל.

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