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QESHER 20: GENERATIONS, TRIBES AND IDEAS

It is the custom of the world, the press included, that a round number constitutes a sort of way station for pausing and taking stock. Pedants might require a self-examination beyond the dry facts that sometimes veers toward ideology and politics, while minimalists, who question themselves critically every day of the year, tend to use the occasion simply to inquire: have we fulfilled what was promised at the beginning? What has been achieved and what has not?

Twenty issues of *Qesher* is that kind of way station for us.

Traditionally in the Jewish press the first issue of a new paper contained a solemn manifesto — a statement of intent or promissory note that the editorial staff deposited with the readership. When we published the first issue of *Qesher* some ten years ago, in May 1987, we wrote in this column, *inter alia*:

This issue... is a prototype for a periodical that we hope to print as regularly as we can. The periodical will print articles from a field that we have called "in black and white." [This was a reference to the deep respect that the Jewish people have for the written word, perhaps as a legacy from Mt. Sinai where our forebears saw Moses, the first author in Israel, write the Torah in "black fire upon flames of white."]

We wrote further:

Initially there will be no attempt at any kind of research methodology. Once the Institute is running smoothly, and its work is progressing in an orderly way under the supervision of a constituted Academic Committee, there is no doubt but that we shall adapt the periodical accordingly.

Meanwhile we shall collect and collate everything available; let the historic and current lie cheek to cheek; allow research (necessarily meager) to intertwine with actual events in stories on persons and deeds that contributed to the written Jewish media. We shall raise the particular problems that occupy today's Jewish press both here in Israel and wherever, and in whatever language that Jewish newspapers exist. This is the message that we are sending out with our first issue.

Have we redeemed that promissory note?

The twenty issues of this magazine that we have published regularly for approximately ten years were aimed at expanding knowledge of, and stimulating interest in, the cultural and social essence and role of Jewish newspapers that were published throughout the world in dozens of languages, in an amazing variety of styles, almost always and everywhere in difficult circumstances of financial or political struggle for existence, and sometimes in circumstances beyond comprehension. Many of the issues that we published contained personal and intellectual portraits of noted Jewish journalists who were thinkers and eloquent writers, such as Herzl, Sokolov, Jabotinsky, Itamar Ben-Avi, Abe Cahan, Joseph Hayim Brenner, Berl Katzenelson, Azriel Carlebach and many others who elevated the art of the *feuilleton* and editorial commentary, in all their shadings and ideological streams, to unimagined heights.

We also wrote about highly professional editors and writers who turned the Jewish press into a vehicle for information on what was happening to all the Jewish tribes in their dispersion, and into a communications link between Jewish communities, just as wandering Jewish troubadours once conveyed news to their audiences both verbally and through rhymed lyrics before the emergence of the written press.

These practiced professionals in the written word saw to it from the beginnings of the Jewish press, in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, that it would function as a kind of seismograph to record developments in near and far Jewish communities, especially in times of distress and danger. At the same time, they also fashioned it as a forum for disseminating knowledge, at first in the religious area (as the earliest Hebrew periodical, *Pri Etz Hayim*, devoted to responsa by teachers of the *Halakha*), and later more broadly. The newspaper was also a vehicle for entertainment as well as a stimulant for discussion round the table. Several families would share a single copy, engaging in lively debate over what was written, and especially what was written between the lines, while the populace of the synagogue study halls would critically analyze distant war campaigns conducted by generals, along with the local politics of the *shtetl* leaders, between

minha and *ma'ariv* prayers.

We also published portraits of journalists of Jewish origin who grazed in foreign fields and made brilliant contributions to the development of the press in many lands, attaining world fame as publishers, editors, writers and founders of the earliest news agencies, from Heine to Pulitzer, from Havas and Reuter to the legendary Egon Erwin Kisch, from Theodor Wolff and Kurt Tucholsky to Ilya Ehrenburg and Walter Benjamin, to mention only a few.

An index that we published containing data on our first 15 issues included by then thousands of names of newspapers, journalists, places and topics. Side by side with serious, well-documented research, we documented curiosities as well, such as the "penny novels" written by a number of important journalists (including even Isaac Bashevis Singer), who, to preserve their self-image or for reasons of livelihood, hid behind pseudonyms; the first Jewish military correspondent, who reported on the Anglo-Sudanese war; the writer and journalist Urke Nachalnik who rocketed to success in the press directly from prison; and Shalom Aleichem's satire of the wars of local newspapers in Kasrilevke. Curiosities have been, and remain, the salt and pepper of journalism. Indeed, the first Jewish newspaper, published in Yiddish in Amsterdam over 300 years ago, informed its readers of strange and unnatural events that occurred on distant continents — always distant continents, the farther the better.

Along with stories and research on the past, we also focused on contemporary ethical, judicial and professional issues and published extensive pieces on such topics as Israel's "Editors' Committee" and security and political censorship. We held several symposia with the participation of academicians and senior journalists, for the specific purpose of publishing the proceedings in *Qesher*, on such topics as the press in times of distress and the issue of "negative news"; women in journalism and journalism for women; the press during the Gulf War; the phenomenon in Israel of the closing of veteran dailies and weeklies; and freedom of expression and its limitations. We described the fascinating phenomenon of one-man newspapers that were characterized by the unique viewpoint and incisive style of their creators, such as Uri Zvi Greenberg's *Sdan* and Itzik Manger's *Getseilte Verter*. We have yet to publish the amazing story of the one-man newspaper created at the end of the 19th century by the rabbi and philosopher

of Cracow, Aaron Marcus, who shut down his paper for a period of several months so that he could devote all his energies and funds to saving his son, the victim of a despicable blood libel, apologizing to his readers afterward and explaining the circumstances that forced him to take this drastic step.

We published several bilingual issues devoted to the history of the Jewish press in specific countries, such as Germany and the U.S. We appended a first-of-its-kind atlas to one of our issues (No. 10) devoted to the various languages of the Jewish press throughout the world, including photocopies of the front pages of 40 representative periodicals, covering such languages as Caucasian Jewish dialects, Judeo-Arabic, Esperanto, Amharic and Hebrew in Latin orthography. This project was undertaken under the aegis of the Institute for Research of the Jewish Press.

This might be the place to devote a few words to one aspect of the "note" that we signed ten years ago and to describe the institute that publishes *Qesher*. After existing for a number of years as an "institute in formation" for various administrative reasons, the Institute for Research of the Jewish Press was granted full academic status this year and will be affiliated from now on with two faculties at Tel Aviv University: Humanities, and Social Sciences. This is important not only from the point of view of the research undertaken by the institute, but also in terms of the implications for the scope and content of our periodical, *Qesher*. In addressing the primary task of the institute, we have, to date, computerized "identity cards," or brief profiles, for some 5,000 Jewish newspapers in every language and in all parts of the world. The input into this data base includes the original name of the publication and its translation into Hebrew, publication years, language, names of editors and main contributors, political orientation (if any), and location of the extant copy of the newspaper or the archive. Today we have sufficient knowledge to estimate that our present input constitutes a quarter to a third of all Jewish periodic publications throughout history.

Just as generations pass, so do newspapers. Some Jewish papers have lasted for decades or more, while others expired shortly after they appeared, and nearly always for the same reason: lack of funding. In addition there are one-time papers, usually humoristic, which are published for holidays and are not meant to be ongoing. The Israeli

press both before and after statehood constitutes a separate chapter, in which the birth and demise of each newspaper enfolds an interesting segment of the history of generations of the Jewish Yishuv and the state.

A great many papers have expired even since the above-mentioned atlas was printed. Due to circumstances beyond our control — primarily the mission of collecting multilingual materials and documentation in places where access is difficult or where the possibility exists that sources will be lost for political or even human biological reasons — we have generally followed the principle both in collection and publishing that chronological organization is secondary. Similarly, we have minimized the publishing of "theme" issues in favor of an eclectic approach. Still, even within this framework, we have from time to time focused on the Jewish press and Jewish journalists in various countries in Europe, the Americas, Africa, the Middle East and even Indonesia and China. We have also focused on newspapers printed in the underground — in ghettos, prisoner of war camps, the detention camps of the "illegal" immigrants in Cyprus, and the prison camps for underground fighters exiled to Africa. We have written about papers that have risen phoenix-like from the ashes, specifically after the fall of the Germans at the end of World War II. One such newspaper was a handwritten one that began to appear in liberated Bergen-Belsen until printing machinery became available. Another was the paper that began appearing in Lodz when it was liberated by the Red Army at a time when part of Poland was still in the hands of the Germans. That paper was founded and produced by former Polish Jewish prisoners of Soviet slave labor camps who, upon release, made their way back to Poland and immediately began issuing a Jewish paper printed on machinery that had been used by the former "King of the Ghetto" under the Germans, Chaim Rumkowski.

From time to time we widened our scope beyond the print medium to explore the electronic media as well. A noteworthy example may be found in the present issue, in which we trace the contribution of "Kol Yisrael" to the molding of Israeli culture both before and after the establishment of the state in the areas of political commentary, sports, humor and satire, and Jewish tradition. We also shed light on the history of the very first radio station in the country, in the early 1930s.

Still, despite all the editorial and design efforts we have invested in the magazine, we are left with a sense

of frustration at having entered a wondrously vast and rich world within the parameters of Jewish culture, an area not sufficiently known, yet being unable to satisfy even half our desire. The more we have delved into the stacks of libraries, archives and private collections, tracing periodicals about whose existence we had known, the more names of other Jewish periodicals in various languages, formats and places we have discovered, about which we had no prior inkling.

Of course, thought had to be devoted to the definition of "Jewish periodical," i.e., the criteria of a specifically Jewish newspaper. Although we dealt with this in various articles in past issues, we did not arrive at a definitive answer. At this stage, we are guided by the House of Hillel and are evaluating those publications whose identity is debatable as Jewish.

As a consequence of a chronic shortage of funding, which, as is known, is endemic to many projects in this country, we have been forced at least temporarily to forego the acquisition, and therefore the exposure in *Qesher*, of part of the material that has come to light. Once or twice we were able to send representatives abroad to investigate new sources and at least record what they contained. Here and there we were assisted by academic institutions in several countries. Some of the lists which we acquired were incomplete or imprecise even as regards names of publications. Sometimes detective work was required to reveal the intent of the copier of Hebrew or Yiddish words in Ukrainian or Lithuanian orthography. Still, we published what we could. We acquired several private archives of veteran journalists in Israel, whose importance as firsthand historic sources is immeasurable. Besides organizing and processing this material at the institute, we have extracted segments from it for articles in *Qesher* to the extent that our resources permit.

I once noted that the Jewish press of the past deserves to be researched on its own merits, not to mention its usefulness in the research of varied areas in the history of our people from nearly every imaginable point of view: geography, linguistics, literature, philosophy, humor, ethnography, the survival of the tribes of Israel in all their dispersions, and the ideological and political wars between all streams of thought and activity. Evidence of this is to be found in the use made of issues of *Qesher*

as source material by researchers and students from many disciplines.

I would not want this summary of twenty issues of *Qesher* during the ten years of its existence to resemble a dry annual report for a board of directors or the state comptroller. Perhaps for this reason as well I shall allow myself to conclude this article with a moving story published by a Jewish physician and author in one of the newspapers that was revived in a republic of the former Soviet Union. It concerned a high-ranking Russian officer who came to the physician for a cardiological examination. After several visits, during which the officer and the physician became close and befriended each other, the officer revealed that he was Jewish and that he felt a need to tell the physician, whom he learned was also a writer, the story of his miraculous escape from death during World War II.

During the course of the difficult battles in which he had taken part, a bullet struck him in the left side of his chest, but it did not penetrate, as if blocked by a bulletproof vest. The officer then reached into the breast pocket of his uniform and said: "Here, Doctor, is what saved my life." He held a small, hard wad of paper, which turned out to be two sheets of newspaper folded over and over. The newspaper was a segment of an old Yiddish paper printed by Jewish workers in a huge industrial concern where the officer had been employed before the use of the Hebrew alphabet was banned. The man had saved the newspaper and had taken two pages from it before going to the front. Why? For what purpose? I, of course, did not know. I even thought of contacting the physician-author to obtain further details, but this did

not materialize. Was the event actual, or was it a literary allegory?

I myself am an agnostic from my youth and do not believe in miracles or in the magic powers of amulets, even amulets of Kabbalists. But I do believe that strange things sometimes happen that we cannot explain and that are symbolic, or that we deeply wish to invest with symbolic significance. Such, at least in my mind, is the type of event involving the officer and the old Yiddish newspaper that he claimed saved his life. I have been addicted for years now to the Jewish press, yellowing and crumbling with age, because I believe that it contains the power to draw us close intellectually and emotionally to the past. If we do not learn from the past, we shall never understand the secret of the continuity of our existence through generations, a diversity of tribes and a constant flow of ideas, sometimes in bitter conflict and sometimes in agreement but nearly always with a sense of common destiny. *Qesher* is one of the manifestations of this addiction, shared by my colleagues as we delve into our past in the realm of the press and, by definition, not only there.



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YISHUV INTELLECTUALS AND THE APPROACHING HOLOCAUST

Na'ama Sheffi

Retrospective criticism of the behavior of the leaders of the Jewish Yishuv (the Jewish community of Palestine before the State of Israel) following the Nazi rise to power has intensified over the last 20 years. Did the few warnings they issued stem from a real understanding of the dangers inherent in this development, or were they attributable to Zionist rhetoric alone? Did they fail to truly grasp the implications of this regime for European Jewry, or did they ignore the danger inherent in it from sheer helplessness? Was it, indeed, helplessness, or could those same leaders have evoked greater public concern for the fate of their brethren? Broadening this avenue of speculation further, were the Yishuv and its leadership indifferent to events in Nazi Germany, or were there those who realized that foretold These events catastrophe?

A study of the contemporary press shows that on the political plane the Yishuv reacted to the rise of the Nazis less in the Jewish context and more in terms of its effect on the lives of the Germans and on the nature of the relations that the Nazi regime would develop with its neighbors and friends. As has often been pointed out, concern for the fate of the Jews on the part of the political leadership of the Yishuv was too little, too late and too limited, a failure that was well reflected in the news sections of the press. From the start, the Nazi question was marginalized vis-a-vis the burning issues that preoccupied the Yishuv then: the absorption of immigrants, the disturbances of 1936-39, and the struggle for international recognition for the building of the "national home."

Even when war broke out, it was perceived essentially as a European affair at a time when its significance for the fate of the Jews was immense. For a prolonged period, the newspapers continued reporting on the war as the more important event, while the full severity of the transfer of the Jews to ghettos was not understood, and, in retrospect, did not receive the attention it merited. The shock to the Yishuv of the revelation of the extent of the slaughter of the Jews in Europe from late 1942 on was reflected

as well in the press, which from then on highlighted the tragedy of the systematic murder.

Ironically, the shock and rage at what had happened, and was continuing to happen, was contrasted by lamentable indifference toward the survivors who gradually began to reach the country from the areas in which the Third Reich had been defeated.

The press also had another side, however, namely in-depth editorials and debates on cultural issues, which took up a considerable part of the newspapers. Despite the small size of the Yishuv population, its cultural life accommodated diverse tastes, reflecting the various countries of origin — mostly European — of the early settlers. Indeed, the quantity of newspapers at the disposal of the Yishuv population was impressive in range, and every Hebrew reader could find the daily, weekly and monthly that suited his special interests. The overwhelming majority of this press addressed itself to the events in Nazi Germany in one way or another, especially *Davar*, *Ha'aretz* and *Hasha'a* in terms of hard news; and *Hapo'el Hatza'ir*, *Ahdut* and *Moznayim* in their mix of editorial commentary and cultural critiques of events taking place in the Third Reich.

A glance at the editorial columns and reviews of cultural events reveals that there was awareness and trepidation on the part of some writers regarding the events to come in Germany even at an early stage.

This awareness may not necessarily have stemmed from the intellectuals' political sensitivity but from regret over the break it caused from the culture that had served them as a beacon for decades. Or, possibly, it was precisely they, exposed to German sensibilities, and themselves concerned with emotions, who sensed the impending disaster for European Jewry. Without minimizing the work or the role of the political leaders of the Yishuv, it is conceivable that the intellectuals' advantage in internalizing and interpreting the events in Nazi Germany stemmed from the fertile cultural discourse that was the province of the Yishuv

then.

The reaction of the Yishuv press to Nazism was also reflected in its handling of German culture in the Third Reich as a vehicle for protest, for example by translating German works written by Jews and by anti-Nazis banned by the Nazi regime, or, in contrast, in the banning by the Yishuv itself of all works by Richard Wagner, who was so admired by Hitler. Similar reactions were reflected in the arts pages of the Yishuv press, whose contributors were generally the same people responsible for selecting the cultural elements to be presented to the public in Palestine. A study of cultural imports from Germany, and the attitude of the Yishuv intellectuals to German culture and to the Third Reich, reveals the unique struggle waged by the Yishuv against Nazism, conducted not on the political but rather on the cultural plane.

The response in this context to the Nazi ascent to power in Germany had four major foci, as reflected in editorial columns and cultural reviews in the Hebrew press: direct treatment of the political implications of the establishment of the Third Reich; expressions of regret and fear over the forced cutoff of the Jews from Germany and its culture; sharp criticism of the Jews who fled Central Europe and arrived in Palestine; and a new perception of German culture and the role of the Jews in it against the background of current events.

The Shattering of the Dream

The intensification of anti-Semitism in Europe and the ascent to power of the Nazis in Germany evoked abhorrence in the Yishuv, sometimes expressed with a bluntness that would later be viewed as a deep understanding of the situation in Germany. One such view was expressed by the author and critic Jacob Fichmann, who, writing in *Moznayim* in the summer of 1932, perceived the danger inherent in Hitler precisely because he was "vulgar" and "the lowest and most contemptible type of Jew-hater." Fichmann, a literary rather than a political figure, identified this danger even before the Nazi Party took control in Germany.

Immediately after the Nazi ascent to power, *Moznayim* published an even sharper attack on that regime, comparing it, in the spring of 1933, to the repression of the Middle Ages, or to the era of the Huns, exacerbated, however, by the general assent of the German population to the evil of the regime as shown by their silence. This extremist

approach may have reflected a certain linguistic paucity at a time when the Hebrew language was still in the process of being revived, or perhaps it demonstrated a license for unrestrained self-expression that was unsuitable for political figures, by comparison. With hindsight, it might have shown a prescient perception of the true nature of the Nazi regime. In any event, this style typified the intellectuals more than the news reporters, although the information available to both was the same.

Some commentators reacted to the rise to power of the Nazis as entirely predictable. An article on the opening page of *Hapo'el Haza'ir* at the beginning of February 1933, titled "With Hitler's Ascent," argued that previous internal developments had clearly pointed to the end of the civil republic in Germany and that the victory of Nazism was inevitable.

Conceivably, the space allocated to the issue of Nazism in the editorial and cultural pages of the press, and the foreboding of disaster reflected in the articles, stemmed, inter alia, from an awareness of the rigid cultural parameters delineated by the Nazis. As early as the start of 1934, the Yishuv was aware that the Nazi "Coordinating Staff" (*Gleichschaltung*) had taken control not only of economic, political and religious life, but of the arts as well, purifying them of "harmful and suspect elements" and Aryanizing them totally. While the deeper implications of the "Coordinating Staff" probably were not obvious to the Hebrew editorial writers, undoubtedly the attention they devoted to the "purification" of art was part and parcel of the general regret expressed by the intellectuals over the loss of the cultural tie with Germany. German culture had elicited great interest and admiration on the part of European Jewry as far back as the late 18th century, not only in terms of the arts per se but as a model for lifestyle generally. This admiration was not limited to German-speaking Jews, but typified large groups of Jews in Eastern Europe who incorporated a German outlook in their intellectual, scientific, business and civic pursuits.

Suspected Isolationism

Simultaneous with the reaction to the political, social and cultural break brought about by the Nazi rise to power, the intellectuals addressed the issue of the German-speaking Jewish immigrants who fled Central Europe prior to World War II. By 1939, some 50,000 German-speaking Jews from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia had arrived

in Palestine, most of them out of desperation rather than Zionist motivation. In fact, a large proportion of them had little knowledge of Jewish tradition at all, much less of the Hebrew language, which they found particularly difficult. In light of these drawbacks, the immigrants faced a cool reception. As all immigrant groups who preceded them, they were not viewed sympathetically to begin with; their difficulty with Hebrew was interpreted as opposition to the ideal of entrenching the Hebrew language and as an attempt at isolationism; and their efforts at self-help, for example by means of the formation of the Association of Immigrants from Germany and Austria, annoyed the Yishuv population even further. Possibly, the absence of sympathy was also rooted in the more distant past, when East European Jews migrating to Central Europe discovered that they were unwelcome by the local Jews. It could have also stemmed from the 1914 "language wars" in the Yishuv, evoked when German was advocated as the language of instruction in the Technion then in formation. Perhaps, too, there was resentment at this educated and relatively prosperous population that somehow had not invested enough in the effort to integrate itself into Yishuv society.

As early as the summer of 1933, a writer in *Hapo'el Hatza'ir* predicted that every location settled by the Jews from Germany would turn into a German island within the Yishuv unless systematic counter-cultural efforts were made — a prediction that in fact proved accurate. An article six years later in the same publication criticized the German Jewish immigrants as not only largely illiterate in Hebrew but audacious in their expectation that the rest of the population should adjust to them rather than the other way around.

A year later, in 1940, the German Jewish immigrants sought a temporary solution to their linguistic problem by establishing a new Hebrew-language newspaper, *Yediot Hadashot*, which would fill their specific needs by translating difficult words into German. However, the Public Committee for the Protection of the Hebrew Language, displaying unconcealed intolerance, imposed a 25% limit on German-language content in the newspaper and rejected a special request to deviate from this allocation on one page only.

The Politicization of Culture

Paradoxically, German cultural materials continued to be

imported, often by the critics and editorial writers covering these items themselves. However, the import, and the critiques of it, took on a distinctly political orientation. Published materials by Jews and anti-Nazis were translated into Hebrew and interpreted in the current political context. German plays, mostly written by and about Jews, explicitly reflected the contemporary Jewish condition. In the field of music, special emphasis was put on works by Jewish composers who had not necessarily gained popularity, such as Anton Rubinstein, while the first steps toward banning Wagner were taken. Yet, Bauhaus architecture, German welfare and medical norms, the German banking system, and German judicial tenets permeated the Yishuv, without evoking any direct association with their German origins.

For example, in 1933, just when the Nazis took control of the German government, Habimah presented the play *Jud Suess* by the German Jewish writer Lion Feuchtwanger. Although the critics were not enthusiastic about the translation, the play had a run of 88 performances; impressive for the time. Most of the reviews focused on the content of the play in the context of what was happening in Germany, specifically the struggle between the Jewish and the non-Jewish worlds. Another play presented by Habimah a year later, *Professor Mannheim*, was written by the communist-inclined German Jewish playwright Friedrich Wolf using the pen name Hans Scheier. Running simultaneously in theaters in Europe and America, and made into a film titled "Professor Mamlock," the play dealt with the dissolution of German liberalism and the shift of popular adulation from the figure of President Paul von Hindenburg to that of Chancellor Adolf Hitler as illuminated by the theme of the rise of anti-Semitism. By then — 1934 — the topic of the play so obviously reflected current events that it automatically attracted large audiences.

That same year, a Hebrew translation was published of the German book *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, by the Austrian Jewish writer Franz Werfel, which depicted the Armenian struggle against the Turks, a subject little known in the West then. It was perceived by the Yishuv audience as a depiction of brothers in distress whose history was all too familiar.

The German play *The Marranos*, by the Jewish writer Max Zweig, presented outside Germany only, was mounted in Hebrew translation by Habimah during 1938-39 and broke all records, with over 35,000 theatergoers attending,

constituting nearly a tenth of the Jewish population of Palestine then. The 450-year-old story of the Marranos of Spain was perceived in the context of contemporary events in Germany, a comparison that had been made as early as 1933 by *Moznayim* and by *Hapo'el Hatza'ir* in 1935. By 1939, comparisons were made by nearly every reviewer of the Jewish "golden age" in both places, of the ejection of the Jews from societies into which they had been integrated, and of the shock of recognition that assimilation was only an illusion. The final denouement that was to come in Germany and beyond was of course still unimaginable in 1939, so that exile seemed the worst forecast then, based on the historical precedent of the Inquisition.

A Turning Point

The awareness of the need for safe refuge outside Germany was heightened by the brutal Kristallnacht pogroms of November 1938, prompting the usage for the first time of the terms "holocaust" and the "destruction of the Jews of Germany" by such public figures as Ben-Gurion to depict developments in the Third Reich. By then, and in light of the annexation of Austria by the Nazis eight months previously, increased attention was devoted to the Nazi regime by the Hebrew periodical press, which now assigned the topic to the front pages.

Another aspect of the reaction to Nazism in the cultural world of the Yishuv related to the 1938-39 concert season of the Palestine Philharmonic Orchestra, scheduled to open in November with Toscanini conducting. One of the works on the program was to be the overture to Wagner's "Meistersinger from Nuremberg." When word of the Kristallnacht pogrom, which occurred three days before the concert was to be performed, reached Palestine, the chairman of the Tel Aviv Association of the Orchestra, Moshe Chelouche, persuaded Toscanini to drop the overture from the program. Wagner was, in fact, still played in the Yishuv, but the association of the name Nuremberg with the racist laws finalized in that city in 1935, and, more probably, the Nazification of Bayreuth, home of Wagner's following, had tipped the scales.

Hebrew editorial writers had long been aware of the danger emanating from Bayreuth, as reported, for example, in *Moznayim* in October 1933 by the composer and music critic Menashe Ravina, who denounced the place as devoted to non-musical goals. Until Kristallnacht, however, these

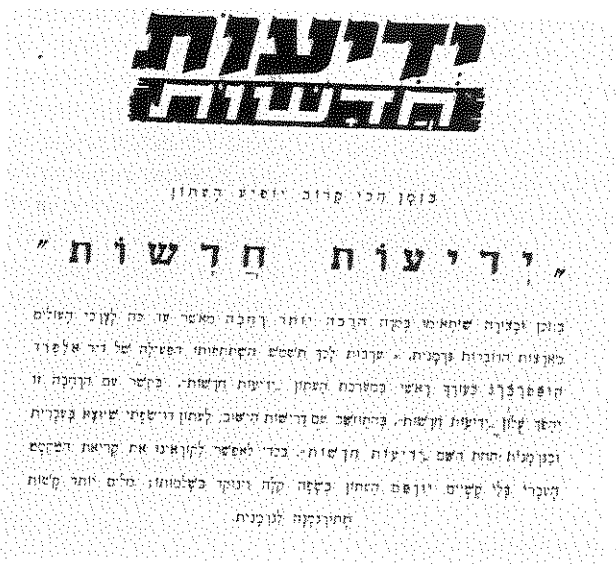
fears were not translated into alarm. Wagner, in fact, along with Neitsche, were regarded as "the last representatives of the extolled Germany" in the view of *Turim* of August 1938. Following Kristallnacht, the situation changed. A sense of helplessness and defeatism in the face of the new German regime overtook the editorial writers. Moshe Smilansky observed in *Bustena'i* two weeks thereafter that the Jewish people had not realized, when the "wild dog first bit," that if they were unable to kill him, they must devote all their efforts to escape to a safe place "and not provoke him."

Meanwhile, the cultural life of the Yishuv continued to feature translations of German works by and about Jews and by opponents of the Nazi regime. Notable among the latter was Thomas Mann, Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1929, whose activity — including a brief visit to Palestine — was followed in detail, especially by *Moznayim*. Yet, certain doubts were raised about him as well, for example by Rabbi Binyamin (Yehoshua Radler-Feldmann) in a series of articles in *Moznayim* pointing to Mann's admiration for Wagner (reflected, for example, in *Buddenbrooks*) and his nationalist stance during World War I. In 1936, after the Nazi book burnings, an article in *Hapo'el Hatza'ir* castigated Mann for continuing to publish in Germany and for failing to explicitly denounce the Hitler regime when every self-respecting writer and artist had fled. Mann, however, was "purified" at the end of the year when the Nazis stripped him of his citizenship, banned his books, and forbade his publisher to print his works. *Hapo'el Hatza'ir* reported at the time that he had defined the Nazi regime as "close to barbaric."

An Act of Rescue

The Jewish aspect of events in Europe continued to be relegated to the sidelines in the news sections of the press, in contrast to the editorial and feature pages, which gave it wide exposure. Intensive efforts were made both by publishing houses and the press to preserve works by Jews in the German language by translating them into Hebrew. In addition, the press was filled with articles emphasizing the Jewishness of the writers, especially those from German-speaking regions. One such writer was Arthur Schnitzler, memorialized in *Bamah* in 1942, a decade after his death, as "the most explicitly Jewish poet."

A writer who was recognized in this context posthumously was Ernst Toller, who had converted to



An attempt to inculcate Hebrew among the immigrants from Germany: a newspaper in German and Hebrew

Christianity in an effort to escape his Jewish origins and committed suicide in 1936 after arriving in New York. His autobiography, written in 1933 and banned by the Nazis, was translated into Hebrew in 1944 after the Yishuv had become aware of the transformation of Germany into a mass-murder machine. Reviewed by *Hapo'el Hatza'ir*, it was seen as epitomizing the tragedy of the Jews in Germany who were educated to embrace German culture and dissociate themselves from their Jewish roots. Other noted personalities who had left Judaism and were similarly adopted back into it retrospectively included Karl Marx, Rosa Luxemburg and especially Heinrich Heine.

The Opening of a Chasm

Two years passed from the time news was received in the Yishuv about the Holocaust and the comprehension of its true implications for the Jews. From late 1944, the daily press finally began blaming the Germans collectively for the fate of the Jews.

Here, too, the reaction of the intelligentsia differed from that of the news reporters: they continued to lament the terrible chasm between the German cultural heritage and the terror of the Nazi regime, even giving immigrants from Germany — the only group to deny German collective responsibility — an opportunity to express their dismay over this internal contradiction in German society and culture.

Even when vengeance against the Germans was

demanded (and actively implemented by the "Revenge Organization" from 1944), the Yishuv population continued to have difficulty internalizing the horrifying testimonies of the concentration camp survivors.

Clearly, the attitude toward German culture was largely influenced by the events of the moment. Most of the selection of the elements of this culture to be presented to the public was made by intellectuals who were also the critics and reviewers of this material in the numerous Hebrew periodicals published in the Yishuv. Their selections revealed a preference for plays in that illustrated the problematic situation of the Jews in the Diaspora generally and in Germany particularly, and for literature that dealt with the problems of minorities. A positive attitude was displayed toward Jewish and anti-Nazi creators, and explicit rejection demonstrated toward those who revealed themselves as Nazi sympathizers. Moreover, an attempt was made to minimize exposure to the German language, a trend that was strengthened even further after the establishment of the State of Israel.

Even if these steps had no political significance outside Palestine, the Yishuv intelligentsia could at least feel that they had expressed their opposition to the Nazi regime. In effect, they subtly defined the "good German" and denounced the bad — the Nazis and their supporters. The more significant protest in the press, however, both in the realm of politics and of culture, was to become pronounced only later, after the establishment of the state.

THE MEDIA AND THE ALTERNATIVE MEDIA IN ISRAEL'S 1996 ELECTIONS / Tamar Liebes, Yoram Peri, Tsfir Grebelsky

The role of the media in Israel's elections of 1996 illuminates the phenomenon of the limitations of the power of nationwide television in culturally segmented democracies.

The election campaign in Israel proceeded under the assumption that the conduct of personal (rather than party) elections for the position of prime minister, and the competition between the two national television channels — both recent developments in Israeli society — would strengthen the role of TV as the central arena of public debate and would turn this medium into the decisive factor in the race. Moreover, inasmuch as the national media have a leftist tendency, the assumption was that the left, the Labor Party and Labor's candidate for prime minister, Shimon Peres, would be aided in this respect to achieve victory.

These assumptions, however, were not born out, for three reasons: (1) The election propaganda program slots, allocated proportionally to each party on public television, had limited influence only, due in part to their perception by the media as a packaging and marketing tactic only. (2) The real impact of the medium lay in news coverage, especially such news as terrorist incidents in a "disaster marathon" genre. (3) The outcome of the elections was largely decided by the votes cast by four cultural minorities within Israeli society, which communicated with their constituents through alternative intra-communal media channels that competed with national television. The communities in question were the Ashkenazi ultra-Orthodox, the Sephardi religious, the Russian immigrants and the Israeli Arabs.

These cultural minorities, which constitute a quarter of Israeli society, were not represented in the public dialogue being conducted on national television and were largely ignored, especially by the politicians and the campaign managers of both major parties and by the journalists and broadcasters of all the national media. This may be explained by the perception of mainstream opinion molders that the national media occupies a central, vital place for all groups in Israeli society.

In fact, however, the subgroups relied on the combined influences of community leaders, traditional oral and print media, and sophisticated communication technologies

applied locally in the task of opinion molding. The leaders of these groups devoted most of their energies to promoting their positions and their candidates within the community rather than in the national arena, a strategy they considered maximally effective. The alternative media that they employed played a major role in the conduct of internal forums, the instruction of constituents as to the "right" choice, and mobilization of voters on election day.

Following the elections, these communities established a coalition of cultural minorities that challenges the traditional concept of democracy as a shared public sphere. This bears out the results of recent studies which show that multi-cultural politics embrace both the public sphere and distinct "sphericules," in contradiction to long-held perceptions of democracy as a bridging of social and ideological differences in order to create a common agenda and conduct a dialogue between opposing views.

In Israel, where political decision-making has direct existential significance, the presence of the public sphere is vital for the fostering of social responsibility and civic partnership. In this context, interrelations between the public sphere and the communal sphere are critically important.

From the point of view of the national media, the question is whether the political strength of the subcultures is sufficient to give them a voice, and involvement, in the public dialogue, as well as whether the central media themselves will be attentive to what is being articulated in the alternative media. From the point of view of the alternative multi-cultural media, the question is to what extent recognition from the center will foster intercommunal dialogue, or, on the contrary, strengthen communal insularity and particularity and possibly even intensify the ideological struggle with the rest of society.

Despite the successful incorporation of mass-media technologies by the cultural minorities in Israel, it remains to be seen whether the technicological determinists will not be shown to be correct, i.e., that ultimately media technology will work toward the disintegration of such populations. In the final analysis, "media logic" dictates the adoption of a style that is uniform in content as well as form, and the relinquishing of particular ideologies in favor of standardization.

TEN FOUNDERS OF "DAVAR" / Mordecai Naor

Davar, the Israeli daily which closed in May 1996 after 71 years, was for a time the most important paper in the Yishuv, representing the views of the influential Histadrut (General Federation of Labor). Profiles of ten of its founders convey a cumulative image of the goals and message of this ideological newspaper.

Berl Katzenelson (1887-1944), founder and first editor from 1925 until his sudden death at age 57, arrived in Palestine with the Second Aliyah (the wave of socialist Zionist immigration from Eastern Europe which began in 1903, spurred by the Kishinev pogroms, and lasted until World War I). Multi-faceted, Katzenelson was a labor leader, an intellectual, a seminal ideologist of the labor movement in the Yishuv, and an editor. Although not explicitly a newspaperman, he was a major figure in the journalistic world of the Yishuv during most of the British Mandatory period.

Immediately upon the establishment of the Histadrut in late 1920, he initiated efforts to publish a daily under its auspices, which, although a sponsored organ, would be above all qualitative and readable. Overcoming financial constraints, internal frictions, and doubts evoked by the small size of the Jewish population — some 130,000 in 1925, not all of whom read Hebrew — as well as the existence of two well-entrenched dailies (*Ha'aretz* and *Do'ar Hayom*), Berl was convinced that the strength of the Histadrut, vigorously led then by David Ben-Gurion, combined with editorial excellence, would guarantee success.

This confidence was born out, for in a short time the paper attained a circulation of 4,500, more than the combined circulations of its competitors. Success stemmed from strong organizational and subscription support provided by the Histadrut, along with impressive editorial content contributed by a wide pool of noted intellectuals, soon turning the paper into a sociocultural institution. Although it was the semi-official organ of establishment Yishuv institutions, Berl maintained editorial independence, for example in sharp criticism aimed at the British despite the Jewish Agency's self-imposed policy of restraint in this area.

Berl reduced his involvement with the paper during the 1930s, partly because the public demanded lighter editorial

content, to his disappointment, and partly because of his many other roles within the Histadrut, Mapai, the Jewish National Fund and the Hebrew University, among other bodies. Nevertheless, he remained the paper's moving spirit in the impact that his articles had and in the innovations he continued to introduce. It was he who brought in the poet Natan Alterman to write satiric verse on current events, and the caricaturist Aryeh Navon as a permanent member of the staff — a first in the Yishuv press.

Katzenelson was a unique editor in that he was, in addition, an ideologist and intellectual mentor, viewing the newspaper primarily as a vehicle for the conveying of ideas.

Moshe Beilinson (1890-1936) was the paper's leading editorial writer during its first 11 years and the Yishuv's most widely read columnist. Born into an assimilationist family in Russia, he acquired higher education in Switzerland and Germany, including a medical degree, and lived for a time in Italy. He was a non-Zionist socialist writer when he was recruited into the Zionist movement by Katzenelson and Zalman Rubashov (Shazar) and immigrated to Palestine in 1924. Although he knew no Hebrew, Beilinson was a talented journalist and was taken on by *Davar* when it was established, at first writing in Russian, which was translated into Hebrew, until he acquired proficiency in Hebrew. A riveting polemicist, he defined *Davar* as broadly Zionist and moderately socialistic. During the course of his career with the paper, he wrote no less than 2,300 articles for it, covering a broad range of topics with intellectual acumen.

In addition, he filled key roles in Mapai, in the Histadrut and in the Va'ad Le'umi (the representative body of the Jewish population of the Yishuv).

Zalman Shazar (Rubashov; 1889-1974), writer, poet, scholar of Hasidism, editor, member of Knesset, government minister and chairman of the Jewish Agency, eventually served as third president of the State of Israel (1963-73). An avid writer from his youth, he contributed articles to the Jewish and Zionist press in Russia, Germany and Austria. His encounter with Second Aliyah pioneers such as Katzenelson and the poetess Rahel, while on a visit to Palestine in 1911, left a lasting impression on him.

Immigrating to Palestine in 1924, he joined the founding staff of *Davar* and became one of its central figures. Like many of the paper's staff members then, he was not a newspaperman in the modern sense, but rather viewed journalism as a public mission and the role of the newspaper as educational and cultural, especially in the sense of providing qualitative political commentary. A razor-sharp intellectual, he took over the editorship after Katzenelson's death for five years until he was elected a member of the first Knesset and the country's first minister of education. His retirement from *Davar* left a vacuum filled by an editorial committee for over five years until the appointment of a new editor, Haim Shurer.

Moshe Sharett (Shertok; 1894-1965), one of the younger founders of the paper, was its expert in Middle Eastern affairs, foreign news and the English language. Had he not left six years later (to serve as secretary to Dr. Chaim Arlosoroff, head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, a route that was to lead to government service and eventually the position of prime minister in 1954-55), he would very likely have taken over as successor to Katzenelson.

Brought to Palestine from Russia by his parents at age nine, he was a member of the first graduating class of the Herzlia Hebrew Gymnasia, served as an officer in the Turkish army, and later studied at the London School of Economics, from which he was summoned by Katzenelson to take part in the establishment of *Davar*. A talented linguist, he was at the same time deeply involved in political activity in the Histadrut, in the Ahdut Ha'avoda Party and later in Mapai. In addition to his Hebrew editorial duties at *Davar*, he edited a weekly English edition of the paper during 1929-31.

Haim Shurer (1895-1968), the first Israeli journalist to be allowed to tour the Soviet Union and meet with Jews there (in 1954) at a time when that country was closed to the outside world and its Jewish population subjected to repression, joined *Davar* in 1936. One of the younger immigrants of the Second Aliyah, he was a leader of the Hapo'el Hatzza'ir Party and a founder of Nahalal, the first moshav. He was sent by his party to work with Jewish youth in Eastern Europe and wrote articles about his experiences abroad for the labor Zionist press. In 1954 he was appointed editor in chief of *Davar*, ending the five-year period that the post had been unfilled. It was at

that time that his observations on the Soviet Union were published in the paper over a period of several weeks (later published as a book), exposing the desperate situation of Soviet Jewry.

During his cadence, which lasted until 1965, the paper witnessed a decline in influence as well as intense internal friction, exacerbated by the politically divisive "Lavon Affair" in the early 1960s.

Bracha Habas (1900-68), the first Hebrew-language woman field journalist, was linked with *Davar* from the start of her career. Born in Russia, she was brought to Palestine by her parents at age seven, graduated a teachers seminary, and began working as a youth worker while also submitting articles to *Davar*. Invited by Katzenelson to join the staff of the paper, she was at first assigned to the social welfare area but later reported on events of every kind throughout the Yishuv and abroad. She covered the establishment of the "Stockade and Watchtower" settlements in remote areas of the country during the 1930s (later anthologized in book form). Abroad, she reported on Zionist Congresses in Europe, on Jewish rescue work undertaken by Yishuv activists in the Middle East during World War II, and on the Holocaust survivors. With the establishment of the State of Israel, she focused on the mass immigration to the country, viewing her role as spokesperson for the newcomers. During the 1950s she accompanied her husband, David Hachohen, who served as ambassador to Burma, and reported from the Far East.

Habas was also involved in various youth and immigrant periodicals initiated by *Davar*. In addition, she wrote and edited books on events which she had witnessed first hand as a journalist.

Dan Pines (1900-61), journalist and editor, was first and foremost a dedicated Zionist, imprisoned in the Soviet Union for several years for his activity as leader of the Hehalutz movement there. Arriving in Palestine in 1930, he took up journalism and joined *Davar*, where he played a central role as secretary-general of the staff and as editor of *Omer*, a voweled newspaper for new immigrants, which he viewed as a mission. Attaching the highest importance to the press as disseminator of ideas and to the moral obligations of the journalist, especially in respecting the principle of the privacy of the individual, Pines reflected Ben-Gurion's credo of the press as an extension of the establishment, with an obligation to view immediate events

through a historic prism.

Pines' broad knowledge was reflected in his editorship, together with his son, of the popular *People's Encyclopedia* during the 1950s.

Herzl Berger (1904-62), a senior *Davar* staff member who wrote many of the paper's lead articles, was also a member of Knesset from the first through the fifth cadences and a political commentator on *Kol Yisrael*. Born in Russia and educated in Germany, where he acquired a doctorate in law and political science, he was raised in a socialist Zionist home and later wrote for various newspapers and periodicals in Poland identified with this ideology. Upon his arrival in Palestine in 1934, he joined *Davar* and, inter alia, wrote the "*Dvar Hayom*" ("Daily Comment") column.

Berger was both a staunch ideologist and a strong advocate of a free press and of democratic government, as exemplified by his outspoken opposition to a proposal made during Israel's War of Independence to close down the press and rely on a single governmental daily. He was awarded the prestigious Sokolov Prize for Journalism.

Yehuda Gotthelf (1903-94), editor of *Davar* during the

latter 1960s, was a founder of Hashomer Hatzair in Poland and a member of Kibbutz Ein Hahoreshe for ten years after immigrating to Palestine in 1929, but had an ideological falling out with the leadership of that movement when he questioned their zealous adherence to Soviet dogma. Joining *Davar* in 1939, he was a prolific writer, while also holding senior posts in the Histadrut. He, too, viewed the purpose of the press as ideological, maintaining that it was the obligation of society to support the regular appearance of newspapers.

David Zakay (1887-1978), a Second Aliyah immigrant and a founder of the Histadrut, was a close friend of Katzenelson and a colleague at *Davar* from its beginnings. He wrote a column of personal observations, articles on culture and literature, and the first ever column on astronomy in the *Yishuv*, a topic on which he also wrote for domestic and foreign scientific journals. Serving, inter alia, as secretary-general of the editorial staff, Zakay, like his colleagues, was totally identified with the ideals of socialist Zionism, the preservation of the independence of the State of Israel, and, more broadly, the goal of world peace.

THE CLOSURE IN PARIS OF "UNZER WORT," THE LAST YIDDISH DAILY IN THE WORLD / Gideon Kouts

The closure of *Unzer Wort* ("Our Word") in Paris on June 28, 1996, marked the demise of the last Yiddish daily in the world and attracted considerable media attention. Its 84-year-old editor, Ya'akov (Jacques) Zippel (Cypel), was interviewed on French television; *Le Monde* ran a front page obituary of the paper; and the London *Guardian* published a lengthy article on it as well. Its passing, however, was uncommemorated either in Israel or in the French Jewish establishment.

Zippel was not surprised by the indifference in Israel, particularly in light of the closing of *Davar*, the labor daily, at about the same time. *Unzer Wort* was the organ of the Labor Zionist movement in France. Zippel had tried vainly to find funding from the Jewish community in Paris, from the Jewish Agency and the Zionist Federation, and from private sources through the landsmanschafts of Poland, Galicia and Bessarabia, in order to keep the paper

a float for a few more years.

The Yiddish press in France dates back to the Revolutionary period with the appearance in 1789 in Metz of *Tsaytung*, dedicated to the struggle for emancipation. But it was only during the interwar years of the 20th century that this press acquired a strong audience and pool of contributors, including such Yiddish writers as Zalman Shneur and Shalom Asch, as a result of the emigration of East European Jews to France. The first of the papers to be established then was *Parizer Bletter* ("Paris Pages"), begun in 1926 as a weekly and renewed as a daily, *Parizer Haynt* ("Paris Today"), by one of Warsaw's Yiddish "press barons," Samuel Jacob Yatzkan, founder of the well-known *Haynt* there. *Parizer Haynt*, which had a nationalist Zionist orientation, met with considerable success, prompting its founder's competitor in Warsaw, Noah Priotsky, publisher of *Moment*, to establish a Yiddish paper of his own in

Paris, *Der Tog* ("The Day"). Eventually, *Der Tog* failed, as did yet another daily, *Parizer Morgenblat* ("Paris Morning Paper"), established by Zalman Shneur.

The 1930s saw the establishment of a Yiddish political press in Paris, pioneered by the Zionist leader Marc Yarblum, who founded the weekly Poalei Zion *Unzer Wort*, modeled after *Davar* in Palestine and *Das Wort* in Warsaw, which became *Die Naye Tsayt* ("The New Times") in 1936. The sole viable party daily was the Communist *Naye Presse* ("New Press"), established in 1934, which lasted until the outbreak of World War II in 1939. *Parizer Haynt* continued to appear until the Nazi conquest in 1940.

After World War II, a significant segment of the surviving Polish Jewish intellectual left relocated in Paris, bringing with it the seething internal ideological wars that had characterized this population before the Holocaust, albeit in smaller proportions. No fewer than three Yiddish dailies appeared during that period: the Communist *Naye Presse*, the Bund's *Unzer Shtime* ("Our Voice"), and, from 1947, *Unzer Wort* — the fourth version of this socialist Zionist paper, founded at that stage by Yarblum and another Zionist leader, Yisrael Yefiroikin, first as a weekly and

from 1949 as a daily.

Unzer Wort's competitors continued to appear until 1993, reflecting the durability of Yiddish communal life in Paris. The paper maintained loyalty to its aim — reporting on events in Israel and the Zionist movement from a pro-Labor point of view. The fact that it appeared daily constituted a major advantage over its competitors, which were weeklies or monthlies, although the opening of Jewish radio stations in France diminished this contribution.

At its peak, the paper sold some 10,000 copies daily, and even at the end, it had some 1,500 subscribers. Approximately 500 copies were distributed in the former Soviet Union for a long period. Commenting on the closure of the paper, *Le Monde* viewed it as symbolizing three crises — of the ideological press generally, of socialist Zionism, and of the Yiddish language. One Yiddish paper remains in France, *Unzer Weg* ("Our Way"), a nationalist-religious party periodical that appears only several times a year.

The first ever Yiddish daily was *Der Fraynd* ("The Friend"), published in St. Petersburg in 1903, initiating an era that ended 93 years later in Paris.

THE STICKER AND THE ISRAELI CAR / Devora Olinsky

With the passage of time, stickers have become increasingly popular, their function shifting from mere identification to the conveying of a social message, transforming them into a communications medium. Sociologically, the sticker offers an opportunity for self-expression, providing an escape from the anonymity of modern life.

Stickers have become the main alternative communications medium in Israel today, replacing the graffiti of the 1980s. The messages on them reveal a great deal about Israeli society. Political texts are widely used, reflecting the importance of this aspect of the country's life. Similarly, the widespread display of stickers on cars in Israel reflects the importance of this conveyance in society: inasmuch as it is an expensive purchase in Israel, the car is linked to its owner's self-image and status.

The intense political involvement of Israelis, and the norm of expressing personal political views uninhibitedly, support the widespread public expression of these views on car stickers, a practice that is less acceptable elsewhere in the world.

Various factors account for the notable increase in

popularity of car stickers in Israel during the past few years, namely, the rise in standard of living on the one hand, and the entrenchment of a variety of relatively new mass communications formats (local newspapers, a selection of TV channels, and a proliferation of radio stations) on the other, stimulating the public's appetite for self-expression.

A sociological study on stickers conducted in the U.S. in 1992 was based on the assumption that less affluent, non-elite persons are more apt to make use of car stickers to express their ideology and personal identification than the elite, who utilize the more established media, which they control in effect, for this purpose. Checking over 2,000 cars, the study found support for this premise based on model and year of car vis-a-vis prevalence of stickers.

A recent study in Israel conducted by the author focused on the same question, along with content of sticker, the premise being that in light of the imminent 1996 elections, most of the stickers would be political. On the first question — type of car vis-a-vis prevalence of stickers, the findings were similar to those of the American study.

On the second question — content of the stickers — the author's assumption was born out: most of the stickers in

Israel (58%) were political, as compared to only 5% with political content in the U.S. survey.

THE WAR OF THE JEWISH PRESS IN MOROCCO, 1932-1940 / Hagar Hillel

The establishment of the French colonial government in Morocco in 1912, replacing the rule by a Muslim sultan, initiated a sudden process of transition there from a traditional to a modern society. Among many other changes, the exposure to Western political, social and cultural ideas had an immediate effect on the Jewish communities of the large cities, particularly Casablanca, which saw in them models for modernization.

Two conflicting ideologies vied for the embrace of this community during the 1920 and '30s — pro-Zionist nationalism and Western reformism.

The Zionist movement in Casablanca devoted major efforts to the publishing of a weekly, *L'Avenir Illustré* (literally "The Illustrated Future"), founded in 1926 by Jonathen Thursz, an immigrant to Morocco from Eastern Europe. The orientation of the periodical, however, was not classical Zionism but rather a blend of social reformism and Jewish nationalism. The goal was the economic and social rehabilitation of the Moroccan Jewish community according to the principles of liberal enlightenment, without the need to remove itself to Palestine. The community would blend into its gentile environment while retaining its Jewish distinctiveness and its independent institutions, at the same time supporting the rebuilding of the Jewish national home in Palestine as a source of inspiration.

L'Avenir's primary competitor was *L'Union Marocaine*, founded in 1932 by Eli Nataf as a response to the older periodical, which had enjoyed a journalistic monopoly until then. *L'Union* espoused classic Western reformism and was linked with the pro-French sector of the community and with the Alliance Israelite Universelle establishment.

Thursz, in *L'Avenir*, chose not to highlight what was clearly his Zionist stance, settling instead for a moderate nonpolitical message so as to avoid provoking the local colonial authorities, who viewed political propaganda of any kind as incitement against the existing order.

L'Union, however, attempted to expose its competitor's sources of funding in an effort to discredit *L'Avenir*, which was an illustrated, high quality publication. Although

Thursz never revealed circulation or financial figures, evidence shows that he did receive assistance from the Zionist Federation in exchange for publicity he ran for its national funds — Keren Hayesod and the Jewish National Fund. However, he also developed local sources of funding, cultivating ties with affluent Jewish Casablancans and communal leaders who inserted advertisements and bought shares in a company he established to support the publication. He also involved the Jewish middle class as subscribers and writers.

The truth was that he aspired to use the publication as a vehicle for inculcating Zionist communal solidarity, terming his subscribers "Friends of *L'Avenir Illustré*"; holding an annual gala for subscription canvassers to mark the anniversary of the founding of the periodical; and organizing raffles and contests. He also developed a pool of contributors in Jewish communities throughout Morocco and attempted to expand his base to Algeria and Tunisia as well.

Simultaneously, he cultivated a new communal leadership interested in nontraditional approaches to solving Jewish problems, namely through modernization and reform, appealing both to the impoverished masses in Casablanca's *mellah* (Jewish quarter) and to the Westernized intelligentsia, while bypassing the establishment leadership. A staff writer who personified this aspiration was Ya'akov Ohayon, a graduate of an Alliance school, who had been born in the *mellah* of Mogador and who spoke both the language of the masses and that of the Westernized community.

L'Union Marocaine, by contrast, functioned in tandem with the Jewish establishment. Significantly, Nataf, its founding editor, formerly an Alliance teacher, served as secretary of the Casablanca Jewish Communal Council while editing his periodical. *L'Union* was supported by a group of French Jews, some of them Orthodox and some associated with the Alliance, who viewed the French Jewish community as a model for the Moroccan one.

Both periodicals competed for the same readership — unaffiliated, Westernized Jews. Both were published

in French with an overlay of Arabic and Judeo-Arabic expressions; both charged approximately the same price; and both carried advertisements for consumer goods that appealed to a modern urban society. Both were also aware that the key to attracting readers lay in the editorial staff and the contributors, whose personal image, no less than the opinions they expressed, evoked a sense of personal identification in an audience that sought role models for the modern Jew. If Ohayon epitomized *L'Avenir's* image, Abou-el-Foudoul (a pen name) epitomized *L'Union's*. Both writers were native-born and had become Westernized. Their respective writing styles each reflected a synthesis of three cultures — Jewish, French and local Arabic. Both portrayed themselves as reformers anxious to improve their society. Yet they differed in important ways. The image projected by Abou-el-Foudoul was of a multi-cultural intellectual who espoused tolerance and liberalism

but was unwilling to align himself with any particular ideological camp. Ohayon's columns, by contrast, were devoted to unrestrained criticism of the government and of French Jewry, reflecting his oppositionist, non-establishment approach and his commitment to illuminating the needs of the silent underclass of Jews from whence he sprang.

In the view of *L'Avenir's* supporters, the Abou-el-Foudouls of Moroccan Jewish society represented assimilationism and opportunism, in contrast to the fighting spirit symbolized by Ohayon, which was devoted to Jewish nationalism and social justice for the unenlightened masses.

Both periodicals reflected new social and political influences in the Jewish community in Morocco during the 1920 and '30s. They competed with each other until 1940, when the publication of both was brought to a sudden end with the fall of France to the Germans and the extension of the pro-Nazi Vichy administration to Morocco.

BEN-GURION AND THE PRESS / Zaki Shalom

Israel's first prime minister had a sustained dualistic relationship with the press, comprising, on the one hand, recognition of the power of the press and respect for it, and on the other an expectation that, in light of this power, it ought to function in a quasi-establishment capacity. He expected the press, and journalists, to work for the general good, even though he was well aware of the necessity implicit in the profession to question the establishment's conception and implementation of the general good.

As far back as 1936, in a meeting of the leadership of the Jewish Agency with some 40 members of the Journalists Association of the Yishuv, Ben-Gurion, then chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive, appealed to the journalists to highlight the unifying elements within the Jewish community rather than the divisive ones in view of the difficult times that lay ahead. Another example of this point of view was reflected in an exchange of letters between Ben-Gurion and the editor of *Ha'aretz*, Gershom Schocken, during Israel's War of Independence. The correspondence was initiated by Schocken in reaction to criticism voiced by Ben-Gurion of journalists, who, in his view, did not carry out their tasks with the same integrity as soldiers at the front. Schocken pointed out that journalists who also served as soldiers surely did not

perform less well than other soldiers, and, similarly, soldiers who worked as journalists performed no differently from the rest of the journalists. Responding, Ben-Gurion defined the journalistic profession as bearing the responsibility of playing an educational role in society.

His view of the press as a quasi-establishment sector was retained after the state was established as well. At times, in fact, he shared highly sensitive information with members of the press on the assumption that they would not leak it.

In an address to the Journalists Association in 1951, he focused on the necessity for the leadership of the state to take a long view of the demands of the day for the sake of guaranteeing the viability of the nation in the future. By contrast, journalism, he argued, was devoted to the short view — a day-to-day, or even a half day-to-half day view (in light of both morning and evening papers) — and therefore could play only a marginal role in the realm of history. True historic processes, he explained, unfolded subtly, but the press, which was locked into the dramatic and noisy issues of the day, was unequipped to convey them.

An intense exchange of letters in 1958 between Ben-Gurion and the editor of *Ma'ariv*, Aryeh Dissentchik,

centered on a charge made by the prime minister that the press as a whole lacked credibility, illuminating an

adversarial atmosphere between the prime minister and the press at that time.

"A WIRELESS BROADCASTING STATION IN PALESTINE": THE FIRST HEBREW RADIO STATION IN THE WORLD / Eytan Almog

The first Hebrew and Zionist broadcasting station ever, established in Palestine in the spring of 1932, operated for some five weeks, was renewed sporadically in 1933 and 1934, and was finally closed in 1935.

It originated at the "Levant Fair" of 1932 that took place in Tel Aviv from April 7 to May 10 at the initiative of several business interests and Revisionist Zionist activists in the Yishuv, with the support of the City of Tel Aviv and the British Mandate government. Impressive even by today's standards, the fair featured 1,200 exhibitors from various countries, including 300 local exhibitors, with a total of 70 pavillions in an area of 52 dunams (13 acres) in what is today the old Central Bus Station area. At the entrance, an "Information City" listed (under the entertainment category) a "transmitting radio broadcasting station" by special government license.

The initiator of this station was a Russian-born engineer, Mendel Abramovitch, who had immigrated to Palestine in 1925 after studying electrical engineering in Germany. Following a period of work at a Radio Institute founded by the Histadrut in the mid-1920s, Abramovitch opened a retail enterprise, Palradio, for the sale of imported radio transmitters. He also installed public address systems, and was invited to do so at the Levant Fair, whereupon he proposed setting up a temporary radio transmitter there, with governmental license. This was granted, and some five weeks before the scheduled opening of the fair, Abramovitch began operating the station on an experimental basis out of a shack on the fairgrounds, where he erected a high antenna.

The content of the broadcasts was handled by the fair committee, headed by Aryeh Babkov. Significantly, remarks by British High Commissioner Sir Arthur Wauchoppe, who officially opened the fair, were not broadcast, presumably so as to avoid showing partiality to the Jewish Yishuv. A speech by Tel Aviv Mayor Meir Dizengoff was not broadcast either. Later in the day, however, the station

went on the air with a few words by Abramovitch and general remarks by the mayor to the residents of the city and the country, including an expression of hope that the station would be expanded to reach a worldwide Jewish audience. This was followed by a live recital of classical music. The entire broadcast was in Hebrew.

For the next five weeks, the radio programs, announced on a day-to-day basis, focused on publicizing the scheduled events and speeches at the fair. According to Mandatory statistics, there were a total of 675 licensed radio receivers in Palestine then. Abramovitch appealed to the owners, especially in coffee shops, restaurants and hotels, to set their receivers to the station's transmission wave between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. (reception was too poor during daytime hours, although Abramovitch managed to overcome this problem toward the end).

Programs included Hebrew and classical music, informative lectures with a nationalist Zionist emphasis, speeches and a daily "meteorological announcement." At a certain point, the first Hebrew announcer appeared on the scene — Yitzhak Obestbloom, a radio enthusiast with proficiency in Hebrew, English and Arabic.

With the approach of Passover during this period, national religious themes were introduced in the programming in the form of lectures on the broader significance of the holiday. The Histadrut, too, was allotted a program, featuring the first radio address by Ben-Gurion, musical performances by labor-sponsored ensembles, a dramatic presentation by the Ohel theater, and remarks by labor leader Joseph Sprinzak. Shortly thereafter, perhaps for balance, a similar event was arranged by the sponsoring committee of the fair in the form of the opening of the "World Conference on Behalf of Palestinian Produce."

A significant cultural event reflecting the Zionist motif underlying the programming was a live broadcast of excerpts from the Habimah theater repertoire with noted Jewish actors.

The station closed at the end of the fair, this time with live coverage of the final ceremony, which was addressed by a representative of the Mandate government followed by programming that spanned some ten hours. Included was the awarding of medals for national productivity, one of whose recipients was Abramovitch himself, for his transmission station. The program ended with the singing of the Jewish national anthem, *Hatikva*.

By the end of the five weeks, the station had in effect evolved from a vehicle for announcing events, covering speeches and promoting the fair to a Zionist forum on behalf of the Yishuv. Despite a lack of professionalism and poor technical conditions, the broadcasts constituted a significant step in developing consciousness of the radio as a communications medium and an awareness of the potential for operating a radio station in Palestine.

By 1933, the number of radio receivers in the country had risen to 2,313, three-quarters of which were owned by Jews — some 7 receivers for every 1,000 Jewish residents — a figure that had undoubtedly grown as a consequence of exposure to the Levant Fair station, among other factors.

Following the fair, Abramovitch made concerted attempts to convince the Mandatory authorities to grant him a license to establish a station on a permanent basis. The British, however, were apparently reluctant to sanction private ownership of such a medium, whether by Jews or Arabs, for fear of distortion in the presentation of news. Nevertheless, a year later, in the summer of 1933, a permit was granted to Abramovitch with stringent stipulations guaranteeing government control in all areas — technical, programmatic, advertising and rights. Still, he stood to benefit commercially by the very fact of operating the station, and indeed his sales of radio receivers increased significantly.

Toward the end of 1933, with no publicity and no financing from any public body, "Radio Tel Aviv" began broadcasting, essentially as a one-man effort: Abramovitch was his own technician, programmer and announcer. He hoped to elicit supportive public opinion that would influence the Mandatory authorities to incorporate his station, and himself personally, into extant plans for a governmental broadcasting station. This proved futile, however, as the leadership of the Yishuv apparently felt that they did not need him to advance their interests in playing a role in the Mandatory concept of the radio

station to be.

Abramovitch again operated his station at the next Levant Fair, held in 1934, but it was no longer viewed as an attraction, as the public was aware that a formal governmental station was being planned. Even the fair management seemed to ignore it and gave it no publicity. In an effort to capture the attention of the public, the Yishuv leaders and the authorities, Abramovitch managed to widen the station's transmitting range. Evidence of this success was reflected in critical commentary that appeared in both the Hebrew and the Arabic press following the broadcast of the high commissioner's speech.

Several days later, another event commemorated at the fair and broadcast live — the 25th anniversary of the founding of Tel Aviv — blended a nationalist Zionist message with that of the Mandate administration. The British commissioner for the southern district read out greetings from the high commissioner in English and added his own personal good wishes in Hebrew, while remarks were also delivered by the president of the World Zionist Organization, Nahum Sokolov; Chief Rabbi Kook; Chairman of the Va'ad Le'umi Yitzhak Ben-Zvi; and Tel Aviv Mayor Dizengoff — all of whom, with the exception of the mayor, speaking on radio for the first time. Reports in the press mentioned that the broadcast of the event was heard clearly throughout the country as well as in Egypt.

On British Empire Day, which also fell during the fair, Abramovitch's station transmitted a speech by the colonial secretary that was broadcast by the BBC in London — probably the first international broadcast transmitted to Palestine through a local station.

Abramovitch ceased broadcasting after the 1934 fair for nearly a year, resuming in the spring of 1935 with recorded classical music and live coverage of a commemorative event devoted to Bialik in April 1935, but this proved to be the last broadcast by "Radio Tel Aviv." The Mandatory authorities informed Abramovitch that he must cease his "experiments" in October of that year, when the government broadcasts were scheduled to begin.

Obviously, the Yishuv leadership of the early 1930s favored cooperating with the Mandatory authorities in the hope of achieving broadcasting autonomy for Jewish, as for Arab, interests, rather than join forces with a private venture. In the event, the Mandatory radio station, which opened on March 30, 1936, soon evoked antagonism and criticism by both Jews and Arabs.

OUR POLITICAL COMMENTATOR — MOSHE MEDZINI OF "KOL YERUSHALAYIM" / Meron Medzini

One of the most popular Hebrew-language programs on "Kol Yerushalayim" Radio in Palestine under the British Mandate during 1939-45 was the 15-minute weekly political commentary broadcast every Saturday night by Moshe Medzini, devoted to international political analysis. Virtually the entire Yishuv tuned in to Medzini during that period of history, his concise, comprehensible and credible talks laying the foundations for a genre of political commentary that was to be adopted by Kol Yisrael and the Army Radio later on.

Medzini, born in Irkutsk, capital of Siberia, in 1896, received a Jewish education in the *heder* headed by his father, later attending high school in Harbin, Manchuria, where Jewish boys from various cities in Siberia were sent for a general education. With the outbreak of World War I, he was drafted into the Czar's army, followed by service as a lieutenant in the White Russian army after the Revolution. At that point, he came into contact with several Zionist leaders in Siberia, including Moshe Novomysky (later the founder of the first phosphate company in Palestine) and Leib Jaffe (later head of Keren Hayesod), who influenced him greatly. Participating in a Zionist conference in Moscow in 1918, Medzini made up his mind to settle in Palestine. He crossed the Siberian border into Manchuria illegally and reached Yokohama, Japan, where he stayed for a while with other Jewish emigres from Siberia. From there he arrived in Shanghai and sailed for Egypt by way of India, reaching Palestine in late 1919. His knowledge of English, acquired at school in Harbin and furthered on his own, landed him work in the Haifa office of the Mandatory railroad, but he soon contracted malaria and was advised by a physician to move to a better climate. Jerusalem, his next destination, was to become his home until his death in 1983.

There he found work with *Ha'aretz*, which was published in Jerusalem during that period, and in 1923 was appointed correspondent in London, probably the first foreign correspondent of a Palestinian newspaper. To supplement his meager salary, he also worked in the Information Department of Keren Hayesod in London and became acquainted with a group of other young people from Palestine who were also there on assignments or to

study, including Moshe Sharett, Rachel and Zvi Schwartz (parents of Ruth Dayan and Reuma Weizman), David Hacoheh and other future leaders of the Yishuv. During this period he traveled through Europe, mastered several more languages, and took a keen interest in international politics.

Returning to Palestine, he began writing lead articles for *Ha'aretz*. He also joined the General Zionist Party, espousing liberal political views. Two books that he wrote in Hebrew in the late 1920s were to contribute to Zionist historiography: *Ten Years of Eretz Yisrael Political Policy* (1928), and *Zionist Policy From its Beginnings Until Herzl's Death* (1934), both based on a careful study of documents in the Zionist Archives and elsewhere.

In 1929, Medzini was appointed as the first secretary-general of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, later serving as secretary of its Political Department until 1933, when he returned to *Ha'aretz*. Just before the outbreak of World War II in 1939, the Hebrew section of *Kol Yerushalayim* sought an independent journalist who could comment on world events. Medzini was offered the job and was an immediate success, continuing the assignment for six years until he left for London in 1945 to cover the end of the war.

Although he had no formal higher education, like many in the Yishuv then he had broad general knowledge acquired by self-education, especially in the area of international relations and history.

During the course of the week he would gather items of information from the international press and radio as well as from discussions with colleagues and friends in the Jewish Agency, the Mandate service and the faculty of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Then he would write out his talk on six pages, the necessary length for 15 minutes of spoken delivery.

One of Medzini's characteristics was the optimism that he conveyed regarding the eventual victory of the Allies and the survival of the Yishuv even when the Nazi armed forces were advancing to Alexandria in the summer of 1942. He blended military and political aspects of the war with human elements, personal knowledge of places and people in the news, and ideological background

information. His programs were listened to religiously and became a factor in the maintaining of national morale both within the civilian Yishuv population and among its 30,000 soldiers serving in the British Army. Although he did not touch directly on Yishuv topics, he referred to the news that began to arrive from Europe regarding the Holocaust and spoke of the need to rescue Jews.

Every Sunday, his radio survey was published in *Ha'aretz*, and from 1944 in the Mandate radio newspaper

Hagalgal as well, a publication edited by Medzini himself.

Toward the end of the war, he also broadcast a brief daily survey together with several other journalists.

In the summer of 1947, he was sent to New York by *Ha'aretz* and *Kol Yerushalayim* to cover the UN debate on the partition of Palestine, and broadcast the historic vote of November 29, 1947, live to Palestine. Later, in the 1950s, he served as UN correspondent for *Ha'aretz* and *Kol Yisrael* in New York, returning to Israel in 1959.

NEHEMIAH BEN-AVRAHAM (1921-79): PIONEER ISRAELI SPORTSCASTER AND SPORTSWRITER / Hayim Kaufman

Nehemiah Ben-Avraham's sportscasts constitute an integral part of Israel's collective memory of its early years and serve as a model for Israeli radio sportscasting to this day.

Born Nehemiah Goldberg in Brest-Litovsk, Poland, in 1921, he was brought to Palestine by his parents when he was a year old and grew up in Tel Aviv. He began writing sports articles while still a pupil at the Geulah Gymnasia, at a time when Hebrew sports journalism was in its infancy. The very first Hebrew sports column appeared in *Hazafon*, published in Haifa in 1926-27, followed by a column in *Davar* in late 1927 by Shimon Samet, and columns in *Do'ar Hayom* and *Ha'aretz*, mostly on a weekly basis only. The country's three Hebrew dailies gradually institutionalized their sports sections, which generally appeared on Fridays, during the 1930s.

Young Goldberg served as a junior writer for the sports section in *Ha'aretz* during 1936-39, where the senior writers were Samet (who had switched from *Davar*), Meir Benayahu (Yavneh) and Ben-Zion Patt. Following a period of study at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Goldberg began working for *Haboker*, which was launched in 1935 and which introduced the first sports supplement in Hebrew journalism, edited by Alexander Alexandrovitch (Alexandroni), in 1937. Goldberg, who was required to Hebraicize his name when he joined the staff in 1941, favored reportage over background writing. In addition to sports, he also covered other areas for the paper, including special events in Haifa, military matters, film and theater reviews, and reports from his many travels abroad as a *Kol Yisrael* (Israel Broadcasting) sportscaster. These reports were characterized by the same qualities he brought to his

sportscasts: incisive, evocative use of language, attention to detail, and a sense of immediacy.

Late in 1946 he took part in the first attempt in Israel to publish a sports magazine, *Sport Hashavu'a* ("Sports Weekly"), under Kurt Benjamin (later chief sports officer of the Israel Defense Forces), who had also been a sportswriter for *Haboker*. The magazine lasted until the outbreak of Israel's War of Independence. A more successful effort, the weekly *Hadashot Hasport* ("Sports News"), involved Ben-Avraham along with six other journalists, including Alexandroni, in 1954. Five years later it became a daily. Marking a turning point in Israeli sports journalism, it was nonpolitical, i.e., unidentified with any of the party-sponsored sports clubs, which dominated Israeli sports. It was also innovative journalistically, setting precedents in Hebrew sports jargon. The paper lasted until 1985, by then unable to compete with expanded sports sections in the daily press, and especially with TV sports coverage.

Parallel to his role as one of the publishers of *Hadashot Hasport*, Ben-Avraham edited the sports section of *Ma'ariv* from its founding in 1948 until 1964, while also serving as its night editor and as contributor of reports from abroad. In addition, he wrote three books on sports.

His role as a founder of sports print journalism notwithstanding, Ben-Avraham is best remembered as the country's founding father of radio sportscasting. He began this career with *Kol Yerushalayim* during the Mandatory era, when sports were allocated ten minutes of airtime weekly. Only in 1947 were sports covered live for the first time, with Ben-Avraham emerging as a colorful sportscaster

with a flair for the dramatic. Broadcasting from the edge of the field — not in a booth, as nowadays — and without any backup commentator, he gave a running blow-by-blow report punctuated by commentary during "dead" moments. Linguistically, he was exceptionally fluent and nuanced, his voice a substitute for the camera. He also managed to interweave a sense of the mood of the crowd, the effects of the weather, and a good deal of his own personality.

He broadcasted for 31 years, during which he covered most of Israel's all-star football games, Asian regional cups and Olympics participation until 1976 (Montreal). It

was he who reported the tragic murder by terrorists of the eleven Israeli athletes and coaches at the Olympics in Munich. He also served as director of Kol Yisrael's sports department and as editor of two popular sports programs. Another role that he filled at Kol Yisrael was as reporter of the prestigious annual Israel Defense Forces parade and air display, in which he revealed both his sportscasting talents and his military expertise.

His voice and persona familiar to over a generation of Israelis before and after the founding of the state, Nehemiah Ben-Avraham is regarded as a historic national treasure.

"THREE IN ONE BOAT" (1956-59) / Yitzhak Shimoni

During the long period when Israel had only two radio stations, and even those did not broadcast continuously (while television was still over a decade away), the writer conceived the idea of an extemporaneous radio program with a moderator and three panelists who were expected to address ostensibly serious subjects humorously, along with a composer and a lyricist assigned to write an original song during the course of the program.

"Three in One Boat," aired at first before a small audience of students in Jerusalem, and later in progressively larger halls throughout the country, was an instant hit, appealing to a wide public. Notable regular participants included Shalom Rosenfeld, Dan Ben-Amotz and Gavriel Tsiproni, along with such musicians as Moshe Wilensky, Naomi Shemer, Yitzhak Graziani and Marc Lavri.

It introduced biting, unbridled humor into the Israeli scene and transgressed some of the prim consenses of

the time on such topics as sex, governmental leadership and religion. Soon, criticism of what were regarded as excesses on the program was voiced in the press and even in the Knesset, although the Broadcasting Service — a government-funded body — consistently backed the program's creators. The program inspired social games in the same genre at get-togethers and special events throughout the country, as well as imitations on other programs. Several English-language versions were also produced. Three print anthologies of material from the program were published, illustrated by the popular artist Yossi Stern.

The program ended when its staff feared that it might lapse into routine, opting to end it at its height. Retrospectively, it played an important role in molding Israeli popular culture during the first decade of the existence of the state.

EFRAYIM DI ZAHAV (GOLDSTEIN): THE RADIO CANTOR WHO SIGNALLED THE CONCLUSION OF SABBATH IN MANDATORY PALESTINE / Akiva Zimmerman

For virtually the entire Yishuv, Cantor Efrayim Goldstein's singing of the traditional *Hamavdil* blessing and the *Shavu'a Tov* melody on "Kol Yerushalayim" radio every Saturday night, followed by Moshe Medzini's weekly

political commentary (see article above), signaled the end of Sabbath and the start of the new week during the period of the British Mandate and thereafter.

Goldstein (1902-57), who Hebraicized his name after the

establishment of the State of Israel, was born in Jerusalem, the son of a cantor. At the age of 17, he began a career as a correspondent for various foreign newspapers, while simultaneously pursuing both Judaic and general studies. He was appointed cantor at the new Yeshurun Synagogue in Jerusalem, a post he held for six years, while also working for the Jerusalem post office and continuing as a journalist.

With the opening of the radio station in Palestine by the British, Goldstein joined the Hebrew programming staff, editing the first ever Hebrew news broadcast in March 1936 and serving in a variety of programming posts. He established the formats for Jewish religious programs

and introduced live and recorded broadcasts of cantorial music, his expertise in liturgy reflected in programs on the nuances of both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic traditions. At a time when explicit anti-British protest was prohibited, Goldstein's judicious selections of Bible readings and prayers to be aired on the radio served as a pointed message and a morale-builder for the Jewish community.

Many of the programs that he initiated were retained after the establishment of the state in 1948 and the founding of "Kol Yisrael" radio. Continuing his cantorial career alongside his radio work, Goldstein-Di Zahav also wrote books and articles on music. The city of Jerusalem honored his memory by naming a square for him.

PERON, EVITA AND PERONISM AS VIEWED BY THE HEBREW PRESS, 1949-1955 / Raanan Rein

Juan Peron, president of Argentina during 1946-55, devoted considerable efforts to ridding himself and his government of the fascist image that clung to both during his entire regime. This image was rooted in the Germanophile stance of the Argentine army from the start of the 20th century, exacerbated by the position of neutrality adopted by Argentina during World War II, which angered the United States.

Improving relations with the US was perceived by Peron as crucial to the success of his domestic modernization and industrialization plans. Toward that end, he attempted, inter alia, to remove any suspicion of anti-Semitism from himself, as well as to establish good relations with the Jewish community in his country and, later, with Israel in an exaggerated assessment of the influence of the American Jewish community on decision-making processes in their country.

Argentina's Jews remained largely opposed to Peron and did not support his movement electorally. The American Jewish community, too, viewed him as suspect. Israel's reaction, by contrast, was more complex, as reflected in the contemporary Hebrew press, then largely a political press. The opening of the Argentinian diplomatic mission in Israel in 1949, marking the first such move on the part of a Latin American country; a bilateral trade agreement signed in 1950; and a visit to Argentina by Knesset Speaker Joseph Sprinzak that year, during which he was accorded a warm reception, were significant achievements

for the fledgling State of Israel and were lauded in the Israeli press. Particularly interesting in this context was the coverage by *Davar*, the Histadrut daily, which, as a spokesman for the Mapai government, highlighted its achievements in establishing positive relations with Argentina while relegating criticism of the Peronist regime to the sidelines.

However, coverage of internal Argentinian developments in the Israeli press gave a more accurate picture of the image of Peronism in Israel. The 1951 presidential elections in Argentina, in which Peron ran for a second term, were treated factually and neutrally by *Ha'aretz*, while *Davar* included guarded criticism of the suppression of oppositionist activity and press freedom. Further left on the spectrum, *Al Hamishmar* referred to the victory of "dictator" Juan Peron, while the Communist *Kol Ha'am* labeled him a "fascist tyrant" who "initiated a bloody campaign of terror against his opponents, especially the forces of progress." Both the religious *Hazofeh* and the rightist *Herut* were entirely neutral in their reportage.

The death of Evita Peron in 1952 evoked similarly partisan reactions, ranging from neutral, informative reports to a critical and disparaging article in *Ma'ariv* which depicted Evita as the power behind the regime and the Peron couple as demagogues. *Al Hamishmar*, for its part, used the occasion to attack the Peronist regime as autocratic and as having betrayed the trust of the working class. With this, the paper credited the regime for improvements

that it did make in the lives of the workers. This dual approach was evident in a later article which attacked Evita's flamboyant lifestyle and questionable methods of self-advancement throughout her life, yet acknowledged her achievement in having reached the heights that she did as a woman in a repressive Catholic milieu.

A visit to Argentina by Israel's Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett in 1953 was covered widely in the Israeli press, again as evidence of Israel's diplomatic achievement, yet a bombing incident that occurred at a trade union rally in support of Peron — which Sharett had been invited to view — was minimized editorially. The two exceptions to this trend were *Al Hamishmar* and, even more bluntly, *Kol Ha'am*, which accused the regime itself of staging the

incident for its own ends.

Interestingly, the anti-Peron revolutionary attempt of June 1955 and the subsequent "liberation revolution" of September evoked several articles in *Ma'ariv* that were sympathetic to Peron, crediting him with introducing reforms beneficial to the working class despite his fascist leanings and dictatorial style, and pointing to the absence of concentration camps and the relatively small number of political prisoners. *Davar*, too, was equivocal, criticizing Peron's "reprehensible methods" that weakened civil liberties and the rule of law, yet acknowledging his socially progressive policies. *Herut* remained consistently pro-Peron until the end, while the leftist press was essentially critical.

"CHWILA" — THE LARGEST POLISH-LANGUAGE JEWISH DAILY / Barbara Latocha

Chwila ("Moment"), a Polish-language Jewish daily founded in Lvov, eastern Galicia, in 1919 and closed in 1939, served as an important spokesman and unifier for the large Jewish community of that city during the entire period of the second Polish Republic.

A Jewish population existed in Lvov (Lemberg in Yiddish and German) since the early 14th century. During the mid-18th century, 27,000 Jews lived there (28% of the total population), and in 1939, 110,000 (33%), making Lvov the third-largest Jewish community in Poland. The community exerted a strong influence over various aspects of the city's life, including the press. A Jewish press emerged there during the 19th century, with the earliest periodicals published in Hebrew and German.

The granting of equal rights to Jews in 1867 spurred a rapid process of Polonization, supported by exposure to the Galician education system. Assimilationist Jewish periodicals in Polish began appearing from the late 1870s advocating embracing Polish culture and the Polish way of life. This trend was countered by the emergence of Zionism in the 1880s, as reflected in the appearance of Zionist publications both in Polish and Yiddish. In 1918, in response to widespread anti-Jewish sentiment culminating in a pogrom in Lvov, the local community organized a Jewish National Council to defend its interests, leading to a decision, inter alia, to publish a unified Polish-language Jewish daily to present the Jewish viewpoint to society at

large.

From the start, *Chwila*, begun in January 1919 under the editorship of Gerschon Zipper (1862-1921), was a qualitative paper both in its broad range of coverage of political, economic and cultural issues and its exacting linguistic standards. Zipper, a noted attorney, publisher and Zionist leader, attracted a large group of public-spirited personalities who devoted themselves to the paper. These included co-publisher Henryk Rosmarin (1882-1955), an attorney, journalist, publisher and ardent Zionist who, in addition, was a member of the Polish parliament. The other co-publisher was David Schreiber (b. 1874), another prominent Jewish communal leader, newspaper editor and member of parliament. Succeeding the ailing Zipper as editor in chief in 1920 was Henryk Heschel (b. 1886), a translator, literary and theater critic and prominent patron of the arts in the city who widened out the scope of the paper to include the contributions of young writers and art critics.

Another noted personality linked to the paper from its beginnings was Leon Reich (1879-1929), writer, editor, lecturer, Zionist leader and member of parliament who championed the rights of the Jewish community not only to combat persecution and injustice but to achieve institutional recognition and support by the state. He, as the board of *Chwila* generally, undertook ongoing assistance for the needy within the Jewish community, a cause which he

consistently publicized in the paper.

Other regular contributors were Fishel Rotenstreich (1882-1938), teacher, Zionist leader and member of parliament who settled in Palestine in 1935; Emil Zomerstein (1883-1957), a member of parliament, active in the Lvov Bar Association and a prolific economic and political writer; Ignatz Schwarzbart (1888-1961), writer and editor who later was a member of the Polish government-in-exile in Paris and London; Adolf Rothfeld (1886-1942), attorney, Zionist leader and city councillor, murdered by the Germans; Emil Shmurek (1886-1953), Zionist leader and city councillor; Ludwig Mond (1884-1934), an economic writer; Bernard Singer, parliamentary writer; and Azriel Carlebach, later to become editor in chief of *Ma'ariv* in Israel.

Zionist in viewpoint, *Chwila* organized a variety of fund-raising activities in eastern Galicia on behalf of the Jewish National Fund, regularly publishing donation figures and information on land purchases by the Jewish National Fund in Palestine and focusing editorially on the importance of this effort. Another major cause was support for the establishment and development of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Reporters were regularly sent to Palestine on assignment to provide first-hand coverage. From 1935, a permanent column, "Information from Palestine," was devoted to immigration, settlement, vocational guidance, investment, schooling, travel details and relevant legal questions.

With this, the paper was intensely involved with the city of Lvov, while also devoting considerable space to all the cities and towns of Poland and the region. Side by

side with Jewish culture, it highlighted Polish culture in its coverage of literature, theater, art and music. Serialized novels were a regular feature, translated from Yiddish, Hebrew, Russian, German, English, French and Italian literature. The large variety of regular columns included the realms of literature, children, women's issues and students.

From September 1924, the paper appeared twice daily in a morning and evening issue.

In 1939, before the Nazi invasion, *Chwila* published lists of signatories to the Anti-Air Defense Loan, along with the sums of the contributions from the Lvov Jewish community and appeals to the public for generosity. On August 29, under the headline: "Jews of Lvov Ready to Sacrifice their Lives and Property for the Defense of the Country," the paper reported on a meeting of representatives of the entire Jewish community of the city in which a committee was established to involve the Jewish population in defense activity. An emotional declaration of Jewish loyalty made at the meeting by Emil Zomerstein was reprinted. A similar declaration by the rabbinic chief council was printed on September 2.

Henryk Heschles, who fulfilled his duties as editor of the paper to the end, was killed by the Germans in Lvov in 1942, as were other staff members and contributors.

Today, *Chwila* constitutes valuable source material for historical research in such areas as political, economic, communal and cultural activity within the Jewish community of Poland generally and Lvov specifically, testimony to the termination by the Nazis of this vibrant, multi-faceted culture.

"HASULAM" — A HEBREW MONTHLY DEVOTED TO CHRISTIAN MESSIANISM / Menuha Gilboa

This curious magazine was published in Hebrew in London at the start of the 20th century under missionary auspices. Its editor, Paul Philip Levertoff (1878-1954), was born to a Hassidic family in Belorussia and thereafter lived in Poland, Germany and eventually England, also spending long periods in Turkey and Palestine. A Bible professor (of the Old Testament) in Poland and in Germany, he became a leader of the British Mission in England devoted to the conversion of Jews to Anglicanism. He also attempted to

lead services in Hebrew in the London church he headed.

The contents of the magazine, which appeared once only, consisted of varied New Testament references, philosophic essays and literary pieces implying the continuity between Judaism and Christianity. The ladder (*sulam*) of the title, Levertoff explained, symbolized the extension of Judaism to Christianity. That he published only a single issue of his magazine was most likely due to the absence of a Hebrew-reading audience for Christian preaching.

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