



# תקופות

Autumn 2022

59

ISSN 0792-0113



TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY

The Shalom Rosenfeld Institute for Research of  
Jewish Media and Communication at Tel Aviv University  
The Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities



**Keshar**

---

Journal of Media and Communication History in Israel  
and the Jewish World

The Shalom Rosenfeld Institute for Research of Jewish Media and Communication

The Daniel Abraham Center for International and Regional Studies

The Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities

Tel Aviv University, P.O.B. 39040 Ramat Aviv, Tel Aviv 6139001, Israel

Tel. 972-3-6405144

Email: [presstau@tauex.tau.ac.il](mailto:presstau@tauex.tau.ac.il)

<https://dacenter.tau.ac.il/shalom-rosenfeld>

Head of S. Daniel Abraham Center: **Nadine Kuperty-Tsur**

Founder of the Institute: **Shalom Rosenfeld**

First editor of *Keshet*: **Dr. Mordecai Naor**

*Keshet* is published in cooperation with **REEH**, the European Journal  
of Hebrew Studies, University of Paris 8

Graphic Editor: **Michal Semo-Kovetz**, TAU Graphic Design Studio

Cover Design: **Michal Semo-Kovetz**

Cover Illustration: **Judith Eyal**

Back cover image: Shutterstock

Print: **Sdar Zalam Printing**

*Keshet* is published twice a year.

Annual subscription: 100 N.I.S.

Single issue: 60 N.I.S.

Please contact us by mail:

[presstau@tauex.tau.ac.il](mailto:presstau@tauex.tau.ac.il)

# KESHER

---

Journal of Media and Communication History in Israel  
and the Jewish World

Editor:

**Prof. Gideon Kouts**

Editorial Board:

**Prof. Meir Chazan, Dr. Orly Tsarfaty, Dr. Baruch Leshem,  
Prof. Ouzi Elyada, Prof. Nurit Guttman**

Editorial Assistant: **Nurit Karshon**

Hebrew Copy Editor: **Herzlia Efrati**

English Translations: **Naftali Greenwood**

English Copy Editor: **Beryl Belsky**



The Shalom Rosenfeld Institute for Research of Jewish Media and Communication  
The Daniel Abraham Center for International and Regional Studies  
The Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities

## ADVISORY BOARD

**Prof. Hanna Adoni**, Reichman University, Herzliya  
**Prof. David Assaf**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Ami Ayalon**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Judy Baumel-Schwartz**, Bar-Ilan University  
**Prof. Haim Be'er**, Ben-Gurion University  
**Prof. Ella Belfer**, Bar-Ilan University  
**Prof. Menahem Blondheim**, Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
**Prof. Jerome Bourdon**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Judit Boxer Liwerant**, National Autonomous University of Mexico and Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
**Prof. Aviva Chalamish**, The Open University  
**Prof. Joseph Chetrit**, Haifa University  
**Prof. Akiba Cohen**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Daniel Dayan**, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, France  
**Prof. Bruno Di Porto**, University of Pisa, Italy  
**Prof. Ouzi Elyada**, Haifa University  
**Prof. Shmuel Feiner**, Bar-Ilan University  
**Prof. Anat First**, Netanya Academic College  
**Prof. Nurith Gertz**, Sapir College  
**Prof. Yossi Goldstein**, Ariel University  
**Prof. Yosef Gorny**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Nurit Govrin**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Daniel Gutwein**, Haifa University  
**Prof. Ruth Kartun-Blum**, Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
**Prof. Elihu Katz**, Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
**Dr. Eran Eldar**, Open University  
**Prof. Gideon Kouts**, University of Paris 8, France  
**Dr. David Lavie**, Hadassah Academic College, Jerusalem  
**Prof. Shmuel Lehman-Wilzig**, Bar-Ilan University  
**Prof. Noam Lemelstrich Latar**, Reichman University, Herzliya  
**Prof. Yehiel Limor**, Bar-Ilan University  
**Prof. Rafi Mann**, Ariel University  
**Dr. Mordecai Naor**  
**Prof. Mordechai Neiger**, Bar-Ilan University  
**Prof. Hillel Nossek**, Kinneret Academic College  
**Prof. Moshe Pelli**, University of Central Florida, Orlando Fl., USA  
**Prof. Yoram Peri**, University of Maryland  
**Prof. Krzysztof Pilarczyk**, The Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland  
**Prof. Dina Porat**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Raanan Rein**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Ephraim Riveline**, University of Paris 8, France  
**Prof. Ofer Schiff**, Ben-Gurion University  
**Prof. Anita Shapira**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Yaacov Shavit**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Zohar Shavit**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Dov Shinar**, Hadassah Academic College, Jerusalem  
**Prof. Shmuel Trigano**, University of Paris 10, France  
**Dr. Tzvi Tzameret**  
**Dr. Rafael Vago**, Tel Aviv University  
**Prof. Gabriel Weimann**, Haifa University  
**Dr. Ada Yurman**, Bar-Ilan University  
**Prof. Mordechai Zalkin**, Ben-Gurion University

# CONTENTS

*Kesher* No. 59, Fall 2022

<b>What's in <i>Kesher</i> 59: "The Death of Television?" – Change, Crisis, and Confrontation in the Media</b>	7e
<b>English Abstracts</b>	9e
<b>On "The Death of Television": Virtual Dialogue with Elihu Katz</b> – Gabriel Weimann	9
<b>"Tweety": Patterns of Activity of Israeli Journalists on Twitter</b> – Tal Laor	16
<b>The New Challenge: Cyber Communication Crises</b> – Yarden Vatikay and Yehiel Limor	40
<b>Collection Networks of US Jewish Donations and Their Distribution to Jewish Refugees in Eastern Europe during World War I as a Self-Organizing System</b> – Moshe Harpaz	60
<b>The Genesis of Ben-Yehuda's <i>Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew</i></b> – Zohar Shavit	85
<b>"A Stage Show": "Old" and "Young" as Pioneers of Criticism of the Hebrew Press</b> – Gideon Kouts	132
<b>Abba Ahimeir and the Hebrew Press in Mandatory Palestine</b> – Ouzi Elyada	148
<b>The Impact of Articles in Israeli Media on Judges and Their Rulings</b> – Tal Laor and Anat Peleg	164
<b>Israeli Cinema in the Early Twenty-First Century: Contradictions in Traditional Sephardi-Mizrahi Religious Practice, Community Hierarchies, and Family Life</b> – Yvonne Kozlovsky Golan	188
<b>Documentation</b>	212
<b>Research Reports</b>	228
<b>Book Reviews</b>	232
<b>Contributors to This Issue</b>	250

*Kesher*, a scholarly journal devoted to the history of the press and media in the Jewish world and in Israel, is published twice yearly by The Shalom Rosenfeld Institute for Research of Jewish Media and Communication at Tel Aviv University. *Kesher* seeks to publish original research articles and academic reviews on all subjects relating to the history, endeavors, and influence of Jewish media and media people, from a multidisciplinary perspective. All articles are peer reviewed blindly by experts, members of the Journal's Advisory Board, and if necessary, externally. Articles should be submitted in Word to [press@tauex.tau.ac.il](mailto:press@tauex.tau.ac.il). A reply will be given within three months. Articles should not usually exceed 8,000 words. The bibliography and notes should appear at the end of the article. Citations should follow the conventions of your discipline.

The editorial board invites reviews of new books in the journal's areas of interest and proposes such reviews itself. *Kesher* also publishes a list of recently approved doctoral dissertations and master's theses, along with abstracts of no more than 250 words in length (for master's theses) and 500 words in length (for doctoral dissertations).



## WHAT'S IN *KESHER* 59

### “THE DEATH OF TELEVISION?” – CHANGE, CRISIS, AND CONFRONTATION IN THE MEDIA

At a seminar for the launching of *Kesher* 58, held on September 8, 2022, under the title “Personal Influence: From Leaders of Opinion to Social Media Influencers,” and dedicated to the memory of Prof. Elihu Katz, “classic” communication scholars met new “influencers” who have been steering personal influence and other theories in new and unexpected directions and destinations with the help of the new media. Among the many topics discussed were the question of survival of traditional media in their confrontation with the new media, and what Elihu Katz called the “death of television.”

We begin *Kesher* 59 with Gabi Weimann, who disputes claims of the demise of traditional media and, in fact, finds evidence of “fusion.” Tal Laor, writing in the same context, describes Israeli journalists’ patterns of activity on Twitter. Prof. Katz receives another tribute in this issue: Yvonne Kozlovsky-Golan concludes the Research section with an article on interethnic tension in traditional Mizrahi society and its representation in Israeli cinema in the twenty-first century, basing her study, among others, on Katz’s “Two Dilemmas of Religious Identity and Practice among Israeli Jews.”

Change, crisis, and confrontation in the media are also central to the remaining Articles section of *Kesher* 59. Yarden Vatikai and Yehiel Limor write of a new challenge: media crises in cyberspace, while Moshe Harpaz describes the reflection in the press of the contribution of the Jews of the United States to Jewish refugees in Europe during World War I, in a direct reminder of the ongoing tragedy in Europe occasioned by the Russia-Ukraine war.

Zohar Shavit, referencing hitherto unknown documents, sheds new light on the birth of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda’s *Dictionary and Thesaurus of the Hebrew Language* as part of her comprehensive history of the man, supported by the Israel Academy of the Sciences and Humanities. Gideon Kouts discusses the “literary war” that did or did not take place between “elders” and “youth” upon the appearance of the first critiques of the fledgling Hebrew press in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century. Ouzi Elyada discusses the place of the controversial publicist Abba Ahimeir in the history of the Hebrew press in Eretz Israel.

Based on an initial study by Tal Laor, a talented researcher who passed away prematurely, Anat Peleg analyzes the impact on Israeli judges of publicistic writing in the daily print media.

In the Research section, we present the remarks of former chief editors and senior writers from the daily press in Israel who convened, as they rarely do, at an event conducted by *Kesher* and the Shalom Rosenfeld Institute for Research of Jewish Media and Communication, upon the publication of the book by our colleague, Dr.

Mordechai Naor, *Everyday: Israeli Dailies in the 20th Century* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 2022).

In this issue, we bid farewell to Prof. Raanan Rein, who chaired the S. Daniel Abraham Center for International and Regional Studies and our own Institute, and was the managing editor of *Kesher* during the past four years. His role in the rejuvenation of our journal was definitive and, like his predecessors, he will continue to contribute with his pen and his experience. We welcome the new head of the Center, Prof. Nadine Kuperty-Tsur, who has already been involved in preparing this edition, and wish her success – which will be our success, too.

Our regular columns follow as always. We look forward to meeting you again in our next issue.

The Editor

## **ON “THE DEATH OF TELEVISION”: VIRTUAL DIALOGUE WITH ELIHU KATZ**

GABRIEL WEIMANN

The advent of the Internet and online platforms, which have influenced all aspects of life, have reinforced predictions about the death of traditional media. In 2009, the late Elihu Katz, one of the world’s leading media researchers, published an article entitled “The Death of Television?” Already then Katz began to discern the decline of television, referring mainly to the multitude of channels, the decline of cohesive family viewing, and the decrease in TV camaraderie. But the history of mass media is replete with harsh prophecies about its demise in light of the emergence of new competitors, and these predictions have been discredited. In this article, I will present a number of answers to the questions posed by Katz regarding the death of the old media, in a virtual dialogue that is, sadly, one way. My main argument is that instead of its death we are witnessing a process of fusion, the merging of platforms rather than the extinction of traditional media.

## **“TWEETY”: PATTERNS OF ACTIVITY OF ISRAELI JOURNALISTS ON TWITTER**

TAL LAOR

Social networks are a prominent element in the daily life of this century. The Internet and most social networks undermine the role of journalism in shaping agendas and reality, partly by increasing interaction with the audience and blurring the boundaries between the news producer and the consumer.

In the current study, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with leading Israeli journalists in the traditional media and on Twitter. The goal was to understand the characteristics of Twitter activity and examine whether journalists realize the potential inherent in this medium as a pluralistic platform that can promote an agenda. The study is innovative in that it outlines the characteristics of the Twitter arena and its implications from the point of view of journalists in Israel. In addition, relationships formed on Twitter between journalists and politicians, and among journalists themselves, were examined.

The findings suggest that Twitter is a complementary space for traditional media, through which journalists prepare and debate agendas, among themselves. It also emerged that interactions on Twitter between journalists and politicians sometimes break down barriers and reduce gaps and distance between them. Twitter seems to be an echo chamber used by a clique of journalists which, rather than undermining their work, reproduces and reinforces the existing social order through conformist thinking.

## THE NEW CHALLENGE: CYBER COMMUNICATION CRISES

YARDEN VATIKAY AND YEHIEL LIMOR

On Monday, January 24, 2022, approximately seventy million attacks, breaches, or attempts to hack into computerized systems were registered worldwide. This was just a randomly selected day, and was in no way extraordinary.

Modern technology, which has made cyber a global house commodity, in addition to the wide scope of cyber-attacks, has created a new reality of pancyberdemia, namely, a universal cyber pandemic which threatens to cause organizational crises and, potentially, communication crises.

We propose identifying and defining cyber crises as a separate kind of organizational crisis, since their characteristics differ from those of other crises. Hence, their communicational and reputational conduct must be treated differently. Unique strategies and tactics must consequently be created in order to handle adequately the communication and reputation aspects of such crises.

We propose distinguishing between various types of crises: economic, security-military, health, strategic terror acts, natural disasters, and cyber-attacks. By comparing the different types, we have found that cyber-attacks possess some unique characteristics, among which are: their potential extent, their development and range, and the difficulty of assessing actual damage.

A cyber crisis, as opposed to other crises, might have various initiators: a single individual, a group or organization, or even a country. Another characteristic is that in most cases the attacker's identity remains anonymous, so that a deniability range is formed, which may benefit both the attacker and the attacked.

The article indicates the necessity of preparing for cyber-attacks on the reputational, as well as the technological level, because crises caused by cyber-attacks are both expected as well as unexpected, so one must adopt an attitude of *expecting the unexpected*.

We propose a particular model of managing a communicational cyber crisis, which requires treatment on two parallel tracks, both of which must be coordinated jointly, namely, the managerial-operational track and the communications-reputation one. The model is based on seven main stages. The first takes place upon discovering the cyber event, when the actual damage assessment must be accompanied by a reputation damage assessment. The second stage is the reprisal, whereby a distinction should be made between practical responses and communicational ones. The third stage is assessment of the main situation, namely, the practical damage caused by the cyber-attack, as well as the reputational one. The fourth stage is the complementary reaction, when the damaged organization is on its way to functionality – either fully or partially. On the communications level, it is necessary to consider whether steps are needed in order to facilitate a return to normal functioning. The fifth stage is evaluating the situation, during which the success of returning to normal function is examined, as well

as the effectiveness of the communications strategy. The sixth stage is rehabilitation, whereby organizational activity returns to its usual level and relationships with whoever has been harmed directly are rehabilitated. On the reputation level, various actions must be taken to ensure the organization's rehabilitation. The seventh stage is returning to organizational routine. At this stage, the organization should be prepared for possible future crises. Preparations on the communications level should include, among others, training designated workers and constructing adequate communication tools.

One of the most important aspects of communicational handling in cyber-attacks is "attacker awareness," namely, an activity intended to create in the attacker a sense of failure, an awareness of the target's immunity and the effectiveness of its defense systems, and the threat of its capacity to retaliate effectively against the attacker.

A cyber-attack, and moreover, a communicational cyber crisis, is not merely a challenge to the organization targeted and to its public relations staff; it also presents a number of challenges and difficulties for reporters and media that are expected to cover the events. This is due to the uncertainties surrounding them, as well as the fact that they constitute fertile ground for spreading fake news and disinformation.

The cyber world, therefore, has created a new reality for public relations experts and journalists, one that requires training and acquisition of singular tools to deal appropriately with the challenges it poses.

## **COLLECTION NETWORKS OF US JEWISH DONATIONS AND THEIR DISTRIBUTION TO JEWISH REFUGEES IN EASTERN EUROPE DURING WORLD WAR I AS A SELF-ORGANIZING SYSTEM**

MOSHE HARPAZ

This article discusses the process of massive monetary aid that the Jews of the United States transferred, in their various sectors and political, religious, and social alignments, to Jewish refugees in Eastern Europe, mainly in the area of the Moshav, which was controlled at the beginning of World War I by Tsarist Russia (until the summer of 1915) and, for the most part until its end, by the German and Austro-Hungarian empires. I regard the donation collection networks among American Jews and the routes for transferring the money to the refugees as self-organizing systems, with multiple agents, which adopted various strategies and practices depending on time and space.

This can be seen at the outbreak of the war in August 1914, during the Russian occupation of parts of Austrian Galicia, in the establishment of central committees in the course of 1915 (the Joint in New York, the YACUPO in Petersburg, and the Alliance in Vienna), during the German-Austrian occupation of the territories of Western Russia, and the area of Jewish settlements in their center, starting from the second half of 1915 until the war's end. The US joined the circle of war against

Germany and Austria in April 1917, during those times of crisis and instability, in response to which local committees were established to solve economic problems and new or alternative routes were found to transfer money to refugees, a process that can be seen as generating a new order leading to periods of stability.

The research is based on a discourse analysis of articles, news items, and reports about financial aid by American Jews to Jewish refugees in Eastern Europe that appeared in Hebrew in newspapers during the war. The period reviewed was from the outbreak of the war (August 1, 1914) until its end (November 11, 1918). Thirteen relevant newspapers published in the United States, Eretz Israel under Ottoman rule, and Eastern Europe formed part of the collection. The body of these newspapers constituted the textual search space in which 67 news items or articles were located that dealt directly with the collection of specific donations of money for Jewish refugees in Eastern Europe and their approach to them.

Those were halcyon days for committees, both small and large, in the United States and in Eastern Europe. Whenever a problem arose, a committee was established which was tasked with providing assistance to refugees. The committees arose, as a rule, not from a directive or instruction from above but from the practical need for a solution. The transfer of support to Jewish refugees in Eastern Europe was carried out in two main ways: public and private. The public route was based on community donations that were coordinated by the Joint Distribution Committee of American Jews (the Joint) and through it, using US diplomatic missions, to local committees in Eastern Europe for dispersal among the needy. The private route, for people who supported their relatives and families outside the United States, generally used the same infrastructure that was set up as part of the public route. Diplomatic missions received sums of money along with payment instructions to the recipients.

During the war, the Joint supported about 800,000 Jewish refugees in Eastern Europe to the extent of about 15 million dollars. This was the contribution of American Jews as a public. The scope of the private sector's contribution, that is, people's support for their relatives outside the United States who became refugees, is difficult to quantify.

## **THE GENESIS OF BEN-YEHUDA'S *COMPLETE DICTIONARY OF ANCIENT AND MODERN HEBREW***

ZOHAR SHAVIT

The circumstances under which Eliezer Ben-Yehuda conceived of and created one of the most important assets of modern Hebrew culture, the *Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew*, have to date scarcely been explored. This article seeks to remedy this deficiency with the help of materials recently discovered in the archives of the Alliance israélite universelle (AIU) in Paris. The file consists of more than one hundred letters, mostly in French and some in German, written by and to Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and his spouse Hemda between 1880 and 1909 – the period during which the *Dictionary* came into being.

The letters uncover the circumstances and motivations that led Eliezer Ben-Yehuda to alter his original plan to compose a practical dictionary on a relatively small scale and instead to take on the immense project of compiling a seventeen-volume historical-scientific dictionary, complete with an extensive introductory volume. They tell the unknown story of an enormous intellectual and scholarly enterprise – and of the tireless fundraising required to ensure its publication. Indeed, the letters make clear that it was the philanthropists that provided support for the Dictionary and insisted that Ben-Yehuda change the project from a practical reference intended for learners of Hebrew into a work of academic significance that would fully encompass the richness and evolution of the Hebrew language over generations.

The letters also shed light on a perhaps unexpected obstacle: The enterprise of composing the Dictionary failed to win the support of Zionist institutions and organizations; Ben-Yehuda was instead forced to plead for support from non-Zionist sources in order to secure funding. Not only did Zionist organizations not cooperate with Ben-Yehuda, but they sought to discourage the project and at times even stood in his way. In contrast, Ben-Yehuda was able to recruit several non-Zionist organizations and individuals whose assistance would ultimately enable the realization of his endeavor. Their support for what would become one of the flagship projects of the Hebrew national revival stemmed not from national-Zionist motives but from a desire to enrich the corpus of Jewish literature with a monumental reference that would stand proudly alongside the great dictionaries of other major languages.

The article proposes that the history of Ben-Yehuda's Dictionary be read as a heroic and moving story of determination, sacrifice, and devotion. The *Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew* – one of the most important enterprises in the revival and development of Hebrew culture – was above all the vision of one man and his spouse, who together defied obstacles and opposition in order to bring it to fruition.

## **“A STAGE SHOW”: “OLD” AND “YOUNG” AS PIONEERS OF CRITICISM OF THE HEBREW PRESS**

GIDEON KOUTS

Shalom Yaakov Abramovich, otherwise known as “Mendele the Bookseller,” and Abraham Uri Kovner, appear to symbolize two opposites, two poles in the last generation of Hebrew Haskalah: one, a figure revered and respected by his lovers as well as rivals, the official “grandfather” of Hebrew and Yiddish literature; the other, the “accursed” rebel of Hebrew society and literature who “concocted” scathing and scandalous criticism, a man of quarrels who did not hesitate to live an equally scandalous life, to break the law, and also to convert his religion. Both these figures often collided with each other.

Nevertheless, both are entitled to be designated “the first critics of the Hebrew press,” and in this field they actually showed, each in his own style, great similarities to one another in positions, analyses, and conclusions.

The first critiques of the Hebrew press were, in fact, a by-product of the initiative of the Russian government in Ukraine, which sought to encourage books of the Jewish Haskalah. On November 14, 1864, the newspaper *Kievlianin* – published in the capital city of Kyiv, in coordination with the local government – addressed “wise men of the Jewish people from all denominations,” in a lead article, with questions that the local authorities had passed on to it. The respondents were asked to forward their answers to the Office of Writers of the Governor of Kyiv, Volhynia, and Podolia. The questions revolved around the Hebrew literature of the Haskalah and its promotion among the public. However, both Mendele-Abramovich and Kovner, who answered the survey, also referenced the Hebrew press in their responses.

Kovner hurried to publish his answer, which included a pioneering critique of the Hebrew press and literature of the period, in a pamphlet – a “notebook,” in the parlance of the period – titled “Investigating the Matter.” His text was a “bombshell” on the small world of Hebrew literature due to its combative and uncompromising style and its attack on some “sacred cows” of the period. He targeted the three Hebrew newspapers, *Ha-Magid*, *Ha-Carmel*, and *Ha-Melitz*, complaining that in most cases they did not live up to readers’ expectations of conveying the “spirit of the time.”

Abramovich wrote his answer, translated into Russian, in a “notebook,” which he delivered to the governor’s office. It appeared in a series in *Ha-Melitz*, even before the publication of Kovner’s booklet. He protested granting the title of “pioneer” also to his opponent in the field of literary criticism. Abramovich referred only to the two periodicals appearing in Russia at the time, *Ha-Carmel*, and his host, *Ha-Melitz*.

The two critiques were similar in writing technique: expectations from the newspapers, followed by disappointment. Both saw the problem of the economic situation of the newspapers – and their readers – as central. Abramovich suggested direct support of the newspapers and their editors, while Kovner hoped for free distribution of newspapers and books. Abramovich’s goal was also to lower the price of newspapers, but there was no difference between the willingness of the two to rely on the “holder of the purse strings,” the Russian government, while believing in its good will and its non-interference in opinions and content that would be favorable to it anyway.

The words of the two critics fit into the sharp debate that broke out at the time in the Haskalah camp on the question of Hebrew literature. Among the variety of opinions expressed, it was possible to distinguish clearly between two prominent factions in the literature of the Hebrew Haskalah, that of the “veterans,” led by Abraham Ber Gottlover, Abramovich’s teacher, and that of the “youth” led by Kovner. The “veterans” comprised teachers at the Beit Midrash in Zhytomyr, and the “youth,” its students, and students of the University of Kyiv.

Abramovich joined the “old” generation also against the background of settling personal “accounts,” sometimes petty, that spread within and outside *Ha-Melitz*. As a rule, Kovner and his friends came out against the autodidacts of the old generation who did not have the same formal education as they had, even if, in the end, many of



their positions, as in the field of press criticism, were, as the article shows, very close.

Chronologically, both Mendele and Kovner were young people at the time. Abramovich “the old man” was not yet thirty, and Kovner was twenty-three. Ere”z (Alexander Zederbaum), the editor of *Ha-Melitz*, whose newspaper served as host for this historical literary struggle, preferred to treat it as a media show. “There are neither old nor young here,” he commented on an article by Menashe Margalit defending Kovner against the “old,” “neither a battlefield nor the drums of war ... just a stage show.”

## **ABBA AHIMEIR AND THE HEBREW PRESS IN MANDATORY PALESTINE**

OUZI ELYADA

Abba Ahimeir (1897-1962) devoted a considerable part of his public activity to journalistic work. He wrote for most of the leading Hebrew newspapers including, in the 1920s, for the left-wing press, and later, from the end of the 1920s until his death, for the right-wing press.

However, besides being a political activist, Ahimeir analyzed the Hebrew press from a historical and sociological point of view, studying development trends and their characteristics, and the people who shaped them. His analyses were presented in a series of articles that he published in the revisionist newspaper *Ha-Mashkif* in the 1940s, and which continued in *Herut* in the 1960s.

In the present article, I examine Ahimeir’s analyses of the main players that shaped the map of the Hebrew press in Palestine during the Mandate period: *Haaretz*, the liberal elitist newspaper edited by Moshe Glickson until 1936, and later controlled by the Schocken family; the popular *Doar-Ha-Yom*, a sensationalist right-wing newspaper edited by Itamar Ben-Avi; and *Davar*, a socialist labor union newspaper edited by Berl Katznelson.

During the Mandate period, there was a long and animated conflict between the newspapers. Ahimeir emphasized that its underlying cause was socio-cultural: between Jews born in Palestine, representing the “new Hebrew generation” who were liberated from the inferiority complexes of diasporic Jews (both Ashkenazim and Sephardim), and new immigrants from Europe who represented the Old-World Jews. These groups created newspapers with different ideologies, and with a different format and discourse structure. The native-born generation launched a popular, commercial sensationalist press, represented by the daily *Doar-Ha-Yom*, while the new immigrants rejected “yellow journalism,” preferring a “responsible,” “honest,” and “serious” press via, on the one hand, the elitist commercial *Haaretz* and, on the other, the socialist party organ *Davar*.

## **THE IMPACT OF ARTICLES IN ISRAELI MEDIA ON JUDGES AND THEIR RULINGS**

TAL LAOR AND ANAT PELEG

This article is based on the PhD thesis of the late Dr. Tal Laor, a promising young scholar of law and media, who passed away before her time and whose outstanding academic talent is sorely missed. Laor's research explored the influence of the Israeli media in general, and of articles by legal experts in particular, on the country's judges. Her main research question was: do professional legal articles published in the Israeli media influence judges' rulings, and if so, how?

The study drew on mixed methods. The quantitative segment is based on a statistical questionnaire circulated in 2015 among 700 judges in Israel, assessing their media consumption, as well as their stand regarding the influence of the media, including legal articles, on their decision making. Dr. Laor also conducted in-depth interviews with ten acclaimed judges, including two retired Supreme Court chief justices who presided over high-profile trials that garnered significant media attention. She also became the first researcher to sort, scan and analyze 1,300 Israeli court rulings that included citations from legal media articles.

Dr. Laor's findings depict the multifaceted influence of the media on judges in Israel. A majority of the judges (53.7%) thought that the media affects judicial conduct, but 58.2% claimed that they themselves were not influenced by professional legal articles in the media; 55.2% asserted that it is legitimate to be influenced by legal articles. While only 22 of the 1,300 court rulings scanned in the scope of this research contained citations from legal articles, those that did were presented as legitimate professional references for judicial writing.

It is impossible to draw conclusions about the media's impact on judges in Israel based on Laor's quantitative findings. Their detailed answers in the interviews present a contradictory image of how, if at all, legal articles impact their rulings. On the one hand, judges consider legal articles to be highly intellectual journalism. On the other, this positive perception is only one part of a larger and overwhelmingly *negative* attitude toward the Israeli media in general, which the judges perceive to be biased and infected by commercial motives. Moreover, their answers downplay the very notion that the media has any influence on their individual rulings.

Following my 2012 study on this topic in Israel, it appears that Laor's research also supports the assumption that a limited process of mediatization has penetrated the legal sphere in Israel.

---

**ISRAELI CINEMA IN THE EARLY TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: CONTRADICTIONS IN TRADITIONAL SEPHARDI-MIZRAHI RELIGIOUS PRACTICE, COMMUNITY HIERARCHIES, AND FAMILY LIFE**  
YVONNE KOZLOVSKY GOLAN

This article presents an applicative study which incorporates two disciplines: research of sectarian tension in traditional (Masorati) Israeli society (Sephardi-Mizrahi) and its representation in Israeli cinema in the decade from the 2010s to the present; and a historical review of the rise of the Shas religious party and the influence of the Ashkenazi leader Rabbi Shach on the life of traditional Sephardi-Mizrahi Israelis who joined or supported the party, led by Rabbi Ovadia Yosef and his representatives in Israeli politics, especially Aryeh Deri.

During the decades when the party and its leaders were effecting dramatic changes in the DNA of parts of Sephardi-Mizrahi society, a change also occurred in the culture and arts scene of “secular-leaning” traditional Sephardi-Mizrahi Jews, characterized by their affinity for mild Israeli secularism. They chose to refrain from adopting a new religious lifestyle and worked as professionals in the arts. Their productions, particularly Israeli films and television series, began to react against the ultra-Orthodox dogma of Shas’ rabbinical and political leadership. This opposition, which was expressed in two waves of films: the first from 2000 to 2012 and the second from 2013 to 2019, primarily reflected psychological and familial changes experienced by Sephardi-Mizrahi protagonists.

In the article, I will present an overview of second-wave films that depict everyday situations, events, and celebrations of traditional Sephardi-Mizrahi Jews, such as *God’s Neighbors* (2012), *Encirclements* (2014), *The Women’s Balcony* (2016), and *The Unorthodox* (2018). Through these works, I argue that developments in traditional Israeli society have led to substantial changes in the narrative medium, and demonstrate how filmmakers have voiced opposition to and criticism of the patriarchal establishment, in order to counter the political and religious establishment’s attempt to control their lifestyles and traditions and promote a return to the traditional and simple origins of their ancestors.