

Journal of Media and Communications History in Israel and the Jewish World  
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## No. 36, Autumn 2007

## CONTENTS

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<b>Editorial / Yosef Gorny</b>	2e
<b>Keshet 36 / Gideon Kouts</b>	3e
<b>Foreign News and Contemporary History in the Early Hebrew Press</b>	
<b>Remarks on the "Invention" of Foreign News in the Hebrew Press</b> / Gideon Kouts	5e
<b>Window on the World / Ya'akov Shavit</b>	7e
<b>Covering Disaster in the Israeli Popular Press: <i>Ha-Or</i> and the Sinking of the Titanic / Ouzi Elyada</b>	7e
<b>Iconology of Advertising in Israel: The Image of the Seashore</b> / Avivit Agam Dali	8e
<b>Statesmen as Columnists in Israel</b>	
<b>Ahad Ha'am: Journalist in Practice, Potential Politician/ Shulamit Laskov</b>	8e
<b>Ben-Gurion's Attitudes toward Communism / Yosef Gorny</b>	9e
<b>Moshe Sharett's Transition from Journalism to Statesmanship, 1931</b> / Mordecai Naor	9e
<b>Me'ir Ya'ari as an Artist of Polemic Writing / Aviva Halamish</b>	10e
<b>Yitzhak Laufbahn, Editor of <i>Ha-Poel ha-Tzair</i> / Meir Chazan</b>	10e
<b>Menachem Begin as a Journalist / Arye Naor</b>	11e
<b>The Price of Being Present: Yosef Haim Brenner as Cultural Hero</b> / Nurit Govrin	11e
<b>Media Darkness: The Attitude of <i>The Times</i> of London and <i>The New York Times</i> to the Issue of the Displaced and Refugee Jews during the Last Year of World War II / Arie Kizel</b>	12e
<b>The Jewish Press in Argentina after the U.N. Decision on the Partition of Palestine: Images and attitudes regarding Zionism and the State of Israel, 1947-1956 / Yossef J. Goldstein</b>	12e
<b>Anti-Jewish Campaigns in the Moroccan Press in the Years 1962-1963</b> / Yigal Bin-Nun	13e
<b>The Immigration from Islamic Countries in the Eyes of Israeli Press between 1950 and 1952 / Nathan Yeyni</b>	13e
<b>Israel and the Foreign Press in the Six Days War /Meron Medzini</b>	14e
<b>Myths in Service of the Struggle: <i>Ha-Tzofe</i>'s Coverage of the Disengagement from Gaza / Orly Tsarfaty</b>	14e
<b>The Contributors to this issue</b>	16e
<b>Archives and Documents</b>	167
<b>Book Reviews</b>	172
<b>Research Reports</b>	188

## EDITORIAL

### Yosef Gorny

The section of essays, titled “Statesmen as Columnists in Israel,” is based on a series of lectures held by the Andrea & Charles Bronfman Institute for the Study of Jewish Press & Communications at Tel Aviv University in 2005/6. The lectures were devoted to political leaders who wrote articles in the newspapers of their time and to journalists who were interested in politics: Theodor Herzl and Bernard Lazar; Max Nordau and Leon Blum; Berl Katznelson and Meir Ya’ari; Dov (Ber) Borochof and Ze’ev Jabotinsky; Ahad Ha’am and Nahum Sokolow; Martin Buber and Rabbi Maimon; David Ben-Gurion and Menachem Begin.

In this issue we have focused mainly on statesmen (or politicians in the broadest sense), who lived and wrote in Eretz Israel, but we have also included an intellectual such as Ahad Ha’am, who was not an active politician, but whose fascinating observations regarding the field we are dealing with and its limitations are undoubtedly valid even to this day.

What all these notable figures have in common is that they are what I call “internal intellectuals.” What I mean by this is that they were not “mobilized”, but rather “mobilizers” to a certain ideological and political goal, as leaders of political organizations or as thinkers, who wished to influence the ideas and the political conduct of their movement, in the national and social sense. Therefore the critical approach, which is the *raison d’être* of the involved intellectual, was restricted a priori by the choice of belonging to a political framework. This decision characterizes the “internal intellectuals”, who

have a constructive approach, as opposed to the “external intellectuals”, bearers of the “destructive vision” that manifests itself in public discourse today.

The difference between the two groups is not only that they operate either within or outside the hegemonic establishment, but in the very possibility of combining the two terms, politician and intellectual. In the case of the “internal” intellectuals, this combination did indeed exist in the past, and still exists nowadays, although to a much lesser extent; whereas it is rare in the case of the “external” intellectuals, despite their keen political interest, although it cannot be denied that they have social influence, especially when we speak of academics, and Western academics in particular.

The second focus of this issue is the link between the publication of world news in the early Hebrew press and the historical consciousness of the Jewish public, that is, the Hebrew press’s attempt from the very beginning to open its readers’ eyes to what was going on in the world and to the modernization processes that were taking place there. This meant that the foreign news in the Hebrew press not only had the obligation to convey updated and accurate information to the readers, but also had the historical and educational role of encouraging the integration of the Jews, both as individuals and as a national group, in the international community. As such, the Hebrew press became a significant factor in forming modern Jewish national consciousness, whether Zionist or anti-Zionist.

*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 Andrea and Charles Bronfman Institute for the Study of Jewish Press and Communications 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 [presstau@post.tau.ac.il](mailto:presstau@post.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).

In this respect it is worth noting the difference between the newspaper as an instrument for transmitting information and as a historical source, assuming that in both cases the press is selective in what it publishes and, quite naturally does not always discern the actual significance of the information at the particular moment of its publication.

Nonetheless, there is no doubt that the press has an enormous influence not only on shaping public opinion, but also on shaping its historical consciousness, both by means of its “historical” inquiry into the past and also as a result of the fact that the routine flow of information will itself become a historical source in the future.

## **KESHER 36 – INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

### **Gideon Kouts**

The coming year, 2008, will mark not only the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the State of Israel but also 100 years of the Hebrew daily press in Eretz Israel (and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of its founder, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda). This is a good opportunity to discuss, from a historical perspective, the processes affecting the future of the daily press and the development of alternatives such as online communications and other forms of printed media: sectorial (religious, new immigrants), gendered and the “trend” of free newspapers. *Keshet* would welcome proposals for articles on these subjects and will hold a public discussion on them at a date to be announced.

*Keshet* has extended its sections. In this issue we present a new archives and documents section, which includes documentation and personal testimonies that can serve as a basis or a contribution to the research of Jewish and Israeli journalism and media. In this issue we bring to you the story of *Niv*, the Jewish American youth magazine, told by its editor, Moshe Pelli. And, as always, there is the “research section” of *Keshet*, which contains abstracts from dissertations and lectures (in this issue Ze’ev Segal writes about libel and freedom of speech), as well as the new books reviews’ section.

This time we have opened the issue with a dying breed, that of statesmen and leaders of the Jewish Yishuv and Israel who took up their pens to write polemic articles for the printed press, seeking to persuade and admonish. Nowadays, most politicians do with a 10-second TV “sync”, mostly written by “spinologists”, and they are not always the most articulate people... This genre of journalistic writing, dealing with essential problems of “public” life, was often the continuation or development of a speech, aimed at reaching a wider audience. Our contributors survey the journalistic

work of several political leaders and ideologists in various periods of their lives and of the life of the Yishuv and the State of Israel. Shulamit Laskov writes about Ahad Ha’am, that exemplary (and frustrated) mentor, and his attitude towards the Arab question. Incidentally, the section opens with some witty epigrams taken from Ahad Ha’am’s writings in his newspaper *Ha-Shiloah* regarding his expectations of columnists and politicians... Yosef Gorny writes about David Ben-Gurion, who knew how to be a bitter adversary in his writing as well, in this case with regard to the communists.

Mordechai Na’or brings us a fascinating document relating to Mapai Party, dealing with the transition from being a journalist in *Davar* to being a statesman that the party “imposed” on future Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett. Aviva Halamish’s article focuses on the leader of Mapam, Meir Ya’ari, while Meir Chazan writes about Yitzhak Loufbahn, leader of *Ha-Po’el ha-Tza’ir* and editor of the eponymous newspaper. Arieh Naor discusses the journalistic activities of Menachem Begin. This series of articles is followed by Nurit Govrin’s depiction of the writer and leader, shaper of public opinion Yosef Haim Brenner as a “cultural hero,” in terms of the criteria used in the best of today’s research.

World news is the most deprived sector in the Israeli media today, in terms of the space devoted to it in the press and, especially, in terms of the prominence accorded it. If the written press still keeps several permanent correspondents in some world capitals (even if not as many as one or two decades ago), in the electronic media the title “Foreign Correspondent” is reserved in most cases to journalists and editors who deal with “material” that comes from “there,” while sitting in their studio or office and give a local angle on a foreign and distant

reality. In this respect the illusion of globalization in the media reveals itself as a trap. It is interesting to see how much effort the early Hebrew newspapers invested in overcoming this defect and introducing foreign news reportage, which was considered the most noble section of the news. Back then, even more so than today, it was financial problems that undermined these good intentions. Talented editors had no choice but to masquerade as news correspondents, but when they were found out, there was quite a scandal...

Foreign news reportage was also a vital vector for acquainting European Jews with contemporary history. In this issue we devote the discussion of foreign news and history to marking the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the appearance of *Ha-Magid*, the first modern news weekly in Hebrew. Gideon Kouts writes about how this newspaper “invented” foreign news and how foreign news penetrated into *Ha-Levanon*, its rival for the conservative Hebrew readership in Western Europe and, in its beginning, the first Hebrew journal in Eretz Israel. Yaacov Shavit points to the “window to the world” that these newspapers, led by *Ha-Magid*, opened for European Jews who could read Hebrew and worked hard to develop their Jewish and general historical consciousness from the end of the eighteenth century. The following article, by Uzi Elyada, presents a fascinating example of the news coverage of a central and sensational “foreign” event in the early Hebrew press in Eretz Israel: the sinking of the luxury cruise ship *Titanic*, as described by Itamar Ben-Avi in Jerusalem’s *Ha-Or*. And no, Ben-Avi was not literally on the *Titanic*, but he came very close...

We remain at sea, without drowning, with Avivit Agam Dali’s illustrated article on the depictions of the sea in Israeli

advertisements. Other articles deal with how the international media, alongside the international Jewish press, deal with Jewish subjects. Arie Kizel writes about the attitude of the London *Times* and *New York Times* toward the question of the Holocaust refugees. Yossi Goldstein writes about the Argentinean Jewish press’s treatment of the UN’s resolution in favor of establishing a Jewish state. Yigal Bin-Nun describes the battle waged by the Jewish press in Morocco against the upsurge of anti-Semitism in the local media when Moroccan Jews emigrated to Israel. From the opposite perspective, Nathan Yeini reviews the Israeli press’s attitude to Jewish immigrants from Muslim countries.

To marking the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Six-Day War, Meron Medzini, who at the time was director of the Government Press Office, analyzes an aspect that was overlooked in the recent coverage of this important date – Israel’s “information” policy at that time – the policy that always refused to define itself as “propaganda”, a fact that did not exempt it from traditional criticism, then like today. Orly Tsarfaty recalls a more recent event, the “disengagement” from the Gaza Strip, examining it from the point of view of *Ha-Tzofeh*, the organ of the “orange” national-religious movement, which has just recently ceased to exist as a daily newspaper and to which we will devote extensive space in our next issue, as well as to other newspapers of the religious and ultra-Orthodox communities.

I hope you find this issue enjoyable and thought-provoking. We will meet again in our spring issue.

## *English Abstracts of Hebrew Articles*

### **REMARKS ON THE “INVENTION” OF FOREIGN NEWS IN THE HEBREW PRESS / Gideon Kouts**

#### **The Revolution of *Ha-Magid* – “News and History”**

The foreign news was always a noble domain, because hard to get, of the news text. In fact the newspapers generally grew in sites without a strong central government. However, in the eternal struggle with the censorship of the authorities, it was paradoxically, but understandably, easier to publish more freely foreign news than the domestic ones. The problem of censorship was more serious, of course, in the case of Jewish and Hebrew press, as a consequence of the chronic unstable and uncertain condition of both its editors and readers. Other specific problems stood on the way of the foreign news to the Hebrew newspaper: the language's limited vocabulary, the public's limited general knowledge about the world, strained economic situation and even more, the condition of the printing and distribution infrastructure. However, the special situation had also some positive aspects. The Jewish Diaspora had a transnational character, ignoring borders. It was possible to find potential Hebrew readers and writers, also in places where the world press had difficulty in reaching; the dimension of reporting from the field was, therefore, quite evident in the early Hebrew journalism. The Jews were among the first “foreign reporters”, and the founders of the big international news agencies were also “news merchants” of Jewish origin.

On the objective and subjective difficulties of the Hebrew journalism will testify the fact that the process that took place, as stated, in Europe, as early as at the beginning of the seventeenth century, reached it only some 250 years later, with the publication of *Ha-Magid* at the start of the month of Sivan 5616, June 4, 1856, in the town Lyck in Eastern Prussia, by its publisher Eliezer Lipmann Silbermann. However, this does not diminish the importance of this revolution in the history of Hebrew and Jewish media, or the importance of Silbermann himself as the first modern Hebrew editor and journalist,

The target public was clear: the paper “Will tell Jacob” foreign news intended for the Jewish public and they will be written in Hebrew. Above all Silbermann is the one who gives the word “news” its journalistic meaning in Hebrew.

The “News” department appears already in the first issue, immediately after the first editorial, and it deals with foreign news, on a general political subject: the (temporary) peace in Europe after the Crimean War. Silbermann will not hesitate to bring sensational tales, whether from the life of Kings and Princesses, criminal cases, small and curious events together with the “heavy subjects”. In the first issues, Silbermann continues providing “unprocessed” foreign and national news, without introducing commentary within the news. Other questions facing it were, for instance, the distinction between “Jewish” material and “general” material, and the relation between “raw” news and synthesis.

Responsibility for the revolution in the matter of foreign news belongs to the second personality whose name was linked to that of *Ha-Magid*. This man was David Gordon, who served as a correspondent for *Ha-Magid* in England since the paper's beginning. He was the first foreign correspondent in the Hebrew press, and he also became its first foreign editor. As a foreign reporter, Gordon published in *Ha-Magid* detailed articles in the “historical” spirit of the enlightenment, but moved by his journalistic instinct, he quickly passed, for instance, to write also on the adventures of Dr. Livingstone in Africa as a “scoop”, the first publication in a German newspaper, as noted with pride by Silbermann. Gordon is the “inventor” of the foreign news department in Hebrew journalism, synthesizing the important events of the week, blending in information as commentary. He appeared for the first time in the second issue of the third year (January 12, 1859), under the title “General History”. In issue 14 of the fourth year (April 14, 1860), the department received its permanent name “On the nations will be said”, name of a “mythological” column in the history of Hebrew journalism, that its great competitor Yehiel Brill will not hesitate to copy word by word, except for a little letter, an occurrence not unusual even today among competing papers.

The foreign news department of *Ha-Magid* is an example of news text written by the editor at his desk. Based on

“materials” from abroad that reach him from various sources, and not reporting from the location itself where the events occur. The permanent and the occasional reporters who were ready and even happy to send their writings to the first Hebrew weekly reported, almost exclusively, “Jewish” events in their place of residence and did not touch “general” issues. The quarrel between the editors of *Ha-Magid* and *Ha-Levanon* discloses, among other things, the recognition by the new Hebrew journals, of the problems this created about the reliability of the reports. This quarrel derived from the competition between the two largest Hebrew periodicals in Western Europe identified with the traditional quarters.

A short time after the quarrel had started, *Ha-Magid* had suddenly started publishing at the head of the paper a new permanent section called “Letters from Paris” which was in fact written by David Gordon in Lyck... and this a few weeks before Brill stood to publish his first political department.

From the beginning of the publication of *Ha-Magid*, the publisher did not try to hide the delicate relations with the censorship, both the Prussian and the Russian. Silbermann accepts the censorship as something self-understood, as a natural part of the Media system. With the inauguration of the foreign news section, Gordon was also responsible for the definition of the weekly attached to its name. From issue 14 of the third year (April 6, 1859) it will be called “News and History” (instead of “History Letter”).

#### **“The Lebanon File” : Foreign News in *Ha-Levanon***

In the complicated and delicate subject of the relations between the Jewish press and the authorities, the documents and official correspondence preserved in the archives of the authorities concerned constitute a primary source of greatest importance for understanding the circumstances surrounding the appearance of this press.

Unfortunately, this documentation is hard to find and extremely scarce, and for this reason the complete file the author found in the French National Archives, among the documents of the periodicals department of the French Ministry of the Interior concerning the appearance of the Hebrew newspaper *Ha-Levanon* (*The Lebanon*) in Paris, has unique value.

The story of *Ha-Levanon* is a good example to describe the problems facing a Hebrew newspaper at the time. This was the earliest Hebrew monthly in Palestine (1863) and it was soon carried by its editor, Yehiel Brill, from the Holy

Land to Paris, appearing in the City of Light between 1865 and 1870 as a strictly Orthodox Jewish weekly. Between 1871 and 1882 the paper was published in Mainz, Germany, and in 1886 it reached the end of its career in London, where also Brill passed away. In his wanderings, Brill had to adapt himself to different countries and various regimes, a living example of the “wandering Jew” embodied in the press.

One part of “The Lebanon File” deals with the paper’s political and foreign news column. At the beginning of the paper’s Paris career, Brill was forced to abandon the idea of it being registered as a political journal. Thus, he gave up inserting a foreign news section. As far as it can be established, his renunciation had at least two motives. First, a “political” journal had to pay the sum of fifty thousand French francs as irrevocable guarantee, in addition to a special “stamp duty” payable on every copy.

Secondly, a political journal would naturally attract closer attention from the authorities, and Brill’s legal position was not at all clear. As a British citizen he had to use officially a “Front” or “Ghost Editor”, a French Jewish retailer named Michel Edinger. Nevertheless, as time went by, the absence of a political column became a true obsession for Brill, who believed that this was the main reason for the paper’s small circulation, compared to the success of *Ha-Magid*, which in his eyes was his principal competitor.

On June 12, 1867, after making many promises to his readers, Michel Edinger submitted a petition to the Minister of the Interior, requesting authorization to publish in *Ha-Levanon* news and articles translated from the official government periodical: *Le Moniteur Universel*, and to exempt him from the duty. The Ministry of the Interior preferred to give *Ha-Levanon* a “verbal authorization”, that could be revoked at will “even without any apparent reason ...” .

The first political column appeared on September 13 with the title “This will refer to politics”, a clear copy of “Referring to politics in here” of *Ha-Magid*. Later, on the suggestion of Yehiel Michel Pines, *Ha-Levanon* will change the name of the column to “The Authority’s Space”. Its subtitle, which in this kind of press gave an indication of the contents, also changed to “All that a Jewish person must know as a Jew and a member of human society.” In the same issue Brill wrote “Some words to the Reader” before the political column, where, while trying to hide the real conditions of its publication, he makes a clear and exact analysis of the situation of the paper and of the Hebrew press of his time.

## WINDOW ON THE WORLD / Ya'akov Shavit

Foreign news columns in the Hebrew press of the 19th century are worth a look for two reasons. On the one hand as a colorful chapter in the chronicles of the Hebrew press (and of the Jewish press generally); worth discussing as to how the information was presented, its sources, the time elapsed and what the priorities were in its publication. On the other hand it is also an important chapter in the consolidation of historical awareness among Jews of this new era since the periodicals and press of the period were the chief distributors of knowledge as well as of ideas and values.

Hebrew periodicals did not confine themselves merely to dry reportage of foreign news, but combined information with analysis which itself was anchored in a comprehensive world view and a well-grounded historic perception. It transpires from this that the importance of the news was not their source or how long it took before their publication in the paper, but the way in which the correspondent and the editor chose to present them, and the overall historical mold into which the news were integrated and which gave them their significance.

News coverage in journalism communicated the desire – and need – for the new historical consciousness to concern itself with understanding not just the past but also the present; in other words a need for awareness of current developments alongside analysis and explanation of the significance of these developments, from both a general and Jewish perspective.

The integration of foreign news into the 19th century Hebrew press is here examined via *Ha-Magid*, the first Hebrew weekly that appeared in the city of Lyck in Prussia from 1856 on. From its earliest issues *Ha-Magid* was no narrow provincial periodical, full of trivia and information whose main theme was Jewish affairs. On the contrary, *Ha-Magid* was alert to the importance of the period, and to the core issues of the new era. It wrote extensively on politics and international affairs, such as war in Asia, exploration in Africa, and on a variety of subjects such as technological innovations and stock exchange reports. The paper, censoring itself, refrained from writing on political problems in Prussia and in Czarist Russia, where most of its readers lived.

## COVERING DISASTER IN THE ISRAELI POPULAR PRESS – *HA-OR* AND THE SINKING OF THE TITANIC / Ouzi Elyada

This article analyzes the use and format of disaster stories in the first wide-distribution Hebrew newspaper in Jewish Palestine, the Jerusalem daily *Ha-Tzvi*, later renamed *Ha-Or*.

Inspired by the European popular press, the paper's editor combined coverage of natural disasters (earthquakes, floods, storms, etc.) with stories of human disaster (mainly fires, ships sinking, and railway accidents). These disastrous events were reported in a dramatic narrative style and depicted common man's powerlessness against the terrible fire about to destroy him or the gigantic wave appearing suddenly out of nowhere and threatening to wash him ashore in an instant. Behind these dramatic and visual descriptions lay a pessimistic and deterministic world-view: Man was helpless against the forces of nature and the pull of destiny. After all, catastrophes make no distinction between common folk and those possessing political power, between the poor and the rich. The fact that this sort of story was presented with such dramatic visual intensity instilled a sense of identification and fear among in readers, but also led to a sort of catharsis.

On the one hand, this article presents and analyzes an example of coverage of a local disaster – a fire at a flour mill in Jerusalem in the fall of 1908. On the other hand, it compares the coverage of this event to that of one of the most dramatic disasters of the 20th century – the sinking of the Titanic in the northern Atlantic in April 1912.

How was a small and poorly-funded Jerusalem daily able to cover such a broad global event? What sources did it use, to what extent was it reliable, how quickly did it report developments, and how did it manage to make the story relevant and meaningful to Israeli readers?

The author examines the reaction of the editorial board in Jerusalem and the behavior of Itamar Ben-Avi, the editor-in-chief, who was then on honeymoon in Berlin. The author also analyzes the way in which Ben-Avi covered the event from afar, the rhetorical structure of the disaster coverage, and the profound intellectual and ideological principles that underlay it.

## **ICONOLOGY OF ADVERTISING IN ISRAEL: THE IMAGE OF THE SEASHORE / Avivit Agam Dali**

An analysis of the advertisements appearing in the Israeli press between 1967 and 2004, whose common denominator is the seashore, has shown that image of the sea and shore reflect wide ranging attitudes towards Nature and the immediate environment by the audience for the advertisements over the course of the years. A distinctive change in attitude may be observed, a transformation of the trend of considering natural resources as something to be exploited, as seen in Israeli ads through the 1980s and sometimes in contemporary ads, to a trend of being “greener” and more ecologically-minded as can be seen from the 1990s onward.

The multiple meanings provided by advertisers to the image of the sea are primarily rooted in the iconography of

the mass media. Images of the sea in various advertisements differ as a whole from sea imagery in the visual arts (where the sea functions as a border). The sea takes on different interpretations in advertisements using everyday language that reflects the contemporary times and language used at the time the advertisement was created. The goal of every advertisement is to be clear and understandable to the target audience, to persuade the readers to purchase the offered product. What this article examines is the attitude reflecting the values adopted by society, and the socio cultural changes that Israeli society has undergone over the years and the way it relates to Nature as seen through a look at sea imagery in advertising.

## **AHAD HA'AM – JOURNALIST IN PRACTICE, POTENTIAL POLITICIAN / Shulamit Laskov**

Did Ahad Ha'am operate as a journalist who also related to political issues like a politician?

To be concise – no, says the author of this article.

The article examines whether it is possible to regard his struggle against political Zionism as a political act. After all, aside from his participation in the First (and Tenth and Eleventh) Zionist Congresses, he did not express his opinions except in articles in which, as we know, he claimed to represent a spiritual center in Jewish Palestine – a subject to which all his thoughts were devoted.

In 1905 and 1906 he fought for independent Jewish representation similar to but not in combination with liberal parties, which other leaders advocated.

Since his position was not adopted, he abandoned the campaign and made do with expressing his opinion in written articles.

The height of his involvement in politics began during World War I, when he was one of Weizmann's chief assistants

in his campaign for the Balfour Declaration. But Ahad Ha'am operated behind the scenes and did not directly contact those on whom the signing of the Declaration depended.

A political issue of the utmost importance occupied him from his 1891 visit to Palestine until the end of his life – the Arab problem, which he highlighted during his first visit while other leaders almost ignored it. He insisted on the Arabs' right to Palestine as its inhabitants since time immemorial, just as the Jews had claim to the land through their ancestors. His words might hint to the creation of two countries for two peoples. Still, here too he expressed his opinion in words and not in deeds.

From this, the author may conclude that Ahad Ha'am did take part in political thought and sometimes even political action behind the scenes, but was never responsible for any significant action.



## BEN-GURION'S ATTITUDES TOWARD COMMUNISM / Yosef Gorny

In the first half of 1953, a few months before resigning his position as Prime Minister, Ben-Gurion published a series of articles against Ha-Shomer ha-Tzair and its relationship with the Soviet Union. He was afforded an opportunity to launch a political and ideological attack on Ha-Shomer ha-Tzair's leadership by the Prague Trials in 1952, in which leaders of the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia were tried and executed; most of them were Jews.

Among the other defendants at the same trial was Mordechai Oren, one of the leaders of the left wing in Ha-Shomer ha-Tzair's Ha-Kibbutz ha-Artzi. Ha-Shomer ha-Tzair's leadership adopted an ambiguous approach to the trials: on the one hand, they condoned the accusations against the Communist leaders in Czechoslovakia, and on the other hand they defended Mordechai Oren's innocence. This double standard gave Ben-Gurion the chance to attack what he called HaShomer HaTzair's "two-faced" worldview in relation to Communism.

This article is not primarily about the polemic between Ben-Gurion and Ha-Shomer ha-Tzair but rather about Ben-Gurion's attitude toward Bolshevik Communism as he perceived it in the period between the Revolution and the Prague Trials. The article particularly emphasizes his estimation of two of the leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution: Vladimir Lenin, whom Ben-Gurion appreciated despite criticizing him, and Josef Stalin, whom Ben-Gurion censured for his cruel and tyrannical actions throughout his political career.

In this respect Ben-Gurion anticipated Nikita Khrushchev's famous 1956 speech at the 20th Party Congress of the Communist Party by three years, as well as the biographical studies of Stalin that began to be published during the 1990s.

Ben-Gurion's attitude toward these two leaders – Lenin and Stalin – is likely to shed light on his perception of himself as the leader of a nation creating a revolution in its own history.

## MOSHE SHARETT'S TRANSITION FROM JOURNALISM TO STATESMANSHIP, 1931 / Mordecai Naor

Like many political leaders in the history of Zionism (Herzl, Nordau, Sokolov, Jabotinsky and others), Moshe Sharett (Shertok) began his career in the field of journalism. He was one of the founders of the Histadrut newspaper *Davar* in 1925, specializing mainly in the relationship between the Jewish Yishuv and the British authorities, as well as between Jews and Arabs. He was known in particular for his work as editor of the English version of *Davar*, intended for British officials, Arab intellectuals, tourists, and worldwide supporters of the Zionist enterprise.

In the summer of 1931, when Mapai first joined the Zionist Executive, Dr. Chaim Arlosoroff was appointed head of the political department of the Jewish Agency. He requested Shertok's assistance as secretary and first aide. Berl Katzenelson, a leader of Mapai and editor of *Davar*, adamantly objected to this request.

The current document describes how the affair unfolded: Arlosoroff pushed, Katzenelson objected, and the secretariat of Mapai (comprised of party leaders who were in two decades to become the leaders of Israel, including David Ben-Gurion, Eliezer Kaplan, and Levy Eshkol) was asked to reach a decision. Arlosoroff triumphed, Katzenelson was offended and almost resigned, and Shertok joined the political department.

In June 1933 Arlosoroff was murdered and Moshe Shertok replaced him as head of the political department – paving his road to senior leadership of the Yishuv prior to the establishment of the state and for the first eight years of statehood (when he occupied the posts of Foreign Minister and Prime Minister).

Shertok's transition in 1931 from journalism to political work was, then, the first step towards his becoming a national leader.

## ME'IR YA'ARI AS AN ARTIST OF POLEMIC WRITING / Aviva Halamish

Me'ir Ya'ari (1897-1987), the leader of Ha-Shomer ha-Tza'ir, was known as a master of polemic writing. Writing was his favorite and preferred method of expression; polemic phrasing was his habit in writing and speech alike. He wrote extensively in the newspapers and periodicals of *Ha-Yishuv* (the Jewish community in pre-State Palestine) and Israel, particularly those of the labor movement and later on - his own movement's organs.

The article presents a number of milestones in Ya'ari's public writing, from the early 1920s through 1970, analyzes his polemic style and dwells on the reaction to his articles.

Ya'ari's early writings were either a reaction to attacks on his movement by members of other labor movement's parties or a struggle against his opponents from his own movement. He was widely read and impressed the readers by his rich style

which made use of various layers of the Hebrew language, his intellectual genius and broad spectrum of knowledge.

Most of those features characterized his later writing too but in some cases his opponents were more articulated than him and were exposed to wider readership. Once his political party founded its own daily newspaper his writings were aimed mostly to its members and even more so to the members of his kibbutz movement. He insisted on publishing his articles without being edited, a demand the editors reluctantly complied with. In many cases he first diminished the ideas and opinions of his rivals from the right and the left, and then presented his stand as the most suitable one.

His long polemic articles served as educational tool, and were very well received by his readers, many of them accepted them as the reliable interpretation of domestic politics and international affairs.

## YITZHAK LAUFBAHN, EDITOR OF *HA-POEL HA-TZAIR* / Meir Chazan

From 1923 to 1948 Yitzhak Laufbahn edited the periodical *Ha-Poel ha-Tzair*, the weekly organ first of the Ha-Poel ha-Tzair party and later of Mapai. He was the most persistent of the journalists who articulated the Labor movement's direction throughout the British Mandate years in Palestine. Although he was one of the movement's senior spokesmen and stood for years at the fore of the public debate about its platforms, few of his colleagues appreciated his efforts to impart the movement's opinions and values. He held second or third place in Ha-Poel ha-Tzair and Mapai's chains of command. His position allowed him to publish a comprehensive opinion column on a regular basis (generally once a week) at the front of the party's weekly. While his talents as an editor were considerable, he earned his reputation and power in the political arena on the strength of these opinion pieces, which

are the primary subject of this article. Within this framework I will examine the contributions, uniqueness, and significance of Laufbahn's journalistic writing during the stormy struggles taking place within the Labor movement. In order to illuminate his journalistic methods, several prominent issues in his work, that influenced his personal and political status in the public arena, were selected: his admiration for Herzl, his strained relationships with David Ben-Gurion and Berl Katznelson, the Patria affair, his volatile interactions with moderate intellectuals, his hatred of Revisionism and his appreciation for the Labor Zionist settlements. In his writing, Laufbahn tended to take extreme positions and make use of sharp rhetoric, although his outlook on politics and security issues favored compromise and restraint.

## MENACHEM BEGIN AS A JOURNALIST / Arye Naor

During his forty years as a political leader Prime Minister Menachem Begin wrote several thousand essays, articles, manifestoes, announcements, statements and letters, as well as two books containing descriptive memoirs and interpretive analyses. He published his underground writings in four volumes in Hebrew, and planned to write a three-volume book on the generation of Holocaust and redemption. As a result of his illness he could not make it when he retired from office.

As a journalist he wrote frequently on ideology, policy and politics. His criticism of opponents was sharp and even sarcastic, making his point indirectly by elimination of his opponents' view. He quoted Ze'ev Jabotinsky repeatedly,

appearing as his only legitimate political successor. On the other hand he argued a lot with David Ben Gurion and appeared as his only alternative as Israel's leader. By appearing as Jabotinsky's heir and as Ben Gurion's alternative he strengthened his position in his party and among potential electorate. In the long run this strategy paid very well.

Begin based concrete positions in a deductive system on his ideology; whose main elements were nationalism and liberalism. He applied nationalism to issues of national security and foreign policy, and liberalism to domestic affairs, expressing a belief in the rule of law and in democratic values and procedures.

## THE PRICE OF BEING PRESENT—YOSEF HAIM BRENNER AS CULTURAL HERO / Nurit Govrin

The article begins by asking what being a hero of the media has to do with being a cultural hero, as the former is seen in a negative light while the latter status is considered positive. The article presents ten conditions that characterize an author's coronation as a cultural hero. At the same time, this transformation has a "price": image overtakes reality; the complex becomes superficial; only what is considered suitable for a wide audience is highlighted, while the unsuitable is ignored; and many details, taken out of context, assume a life of their own and become disconnected from the creator and his work. The article presents examples of writers who became cultural heroes, the primary and consummate example being that of the writer Yosef Haim Brenner.<sup>1</sup> This example is reconstructed from his life story, his written work, his letters,

and other's recollections. The second part of the article describes the secret of Brenner's allure for his and future generations, which continually enables him to be rediscovered and readopted and to delight each generation anew with his relevance. The third part of the article presents examples from the past twenty years. These examples supplement, complete, and update my earlier research on this topic. Their continuous accumulation testifies to Brenner's permanent and active presence in various fields of culture: in various literary genres – prose, poetry, and essay; in the publication of new editions of his works, which draw together groups of admirers and scholars; and in quoted "lines," which have been separated from context and used as chapter headings and opening quotations in various literary works, articles, and essays. A special place is held by examples that attest to references – called for and sometimes uncalled for – to Brenner's name in the field of literary criticism and in various articles on socio-cultural and political topics and current events. The article is supplemented with appendices including a list of literary works in which Brenner is mentioned, and which are not discussed in the article and a list of examples in which Brenner's name appears in varied and sometimes amusing contexts. These appendices reinforce Brenner's special status as a cultural hero for the ages.

<sup>1</sup> Yosef Haim Brenner is one of the most important authors in Hebrew literature. His extensive influence is recognized to this day in all fields of Hebrew culture and literature. He was born in the Ukraine in 1881, after which he served in the Russian army from 1901-1904. He lived in London from 1904-1908 where he edited the journal *Ha-Me'orer*, which became the organ for the young writers of his generation. From 1908-1909 he lived in Galicia, and in early 1909 he emigrated to Palestine where he alternated between Tel Aviv, which had just been established, Jerusalem, and various locations throughout the area. He was the foremost moral, cultural, and literary authority in Jewish Palestine and in the Jewish world. He was viciously murdered along with six of his friends by Arabs in a desolate location near Tel Aviv in the riots that broke out on May 1, 1921. He was forty years old. The shock over the terrible way in which he died broadened his myth, which had already begun during his life, reinforced it, and found expression in culture and literature over the years. Yosef Haim

Brenner has been the subject of a very large number of books, articles, studies, and biographies, and many artists have drawn his portrait.

## **MEDIA DARKNESS – THE ATTITUDE OF *THE TIMES* OF LONDON AND *THE NEW YORK TIMES* TO THE ISSUE OF THE DISPLACED AND REFUGEE JEWS DURING THE LAST YEAR OF WORLD WAR II / Arie Kizel**

This article discusses the coverage of the problem of the displaced Jews and Jewish refugees during the last year of World War II, by two main newspapers: *The New York Times* and *The Times of London*.

The discussion which begins in the period of the liberation of the camp of Majdanek until May 1945, is based on the assumption that the problems of the Jews should have produced a moral effect on the public opinion led by those newspapers.

The article is based on a comprehensive study that compares the attitude of each newspaper towards this issue.

The study views several genres: news reports, editorials, letters of readers, journalistic features and printed pictures.

The article has two focal points: overview of the daily reports of each one of the respected newspapers and critical

point of view about the decisions of the editors that did not draw enough attention to the issue of the Jews that were liberated during the war after the victory of the Allies.

The two newspapers did not fulfill their journalistic duties and gave selective picture of the reality and of the conditions of the Jews. *The Times of London* was under the influence of the British government and *The New York Times* policy was to play down the issue, although it covered the problem of the Jewish refugees in details and gave a wider point of view in the news pages and in the editorial articles. *The New York Times* also distinguished between the problems of the Jews that were liberated and the others and gave a special place to the effects of the war on the Jews in Europe.

## **THE JEWISH PRESS IN ARGENTINA AFTER THE U.N. DECISION ON THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE: IMAGES AND ATTITUDES REGARDING ZIONISM AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL, 1947-1956 / Yossef J. Goldstein**

In the years 1947-1956 the Jewish press in Argentina transmitted contradicting messages regarding the meaning of Zionism after the creation of the state of Israel.

Newspapers such as *La Luz*, *Mundo Israelita*, *Principios*, *Arajim* and *Jerusalem* identified with a Zionist approach that adopted the spirit of centrality of Israel, recognized the importance of the Ingathering of the Exiles, and encouraged Alia and Pioneering. Nevertheless, on a more pragmatic level and for the short term, all the newspaper's mutual assumption was that most of the Western Jews, and especially the Argentine Jews, should abstain from making Alia. Therefore, the important mission was to strengthen the communal life in the world. Israel's centrality was needed in order to maintain the national identity, and to change the image of the "Exiled Jew" in his own eyes and in the eyes of the Argentine society. Other periodicals that were published in Spanish, such as *Davar* and *Comentario*, which from the beginning had protected a Diasporic world-view, focused on connecting the spiritual centrality of Israel with the continuation of the

Jewish existence in democratic countries, while omitting or weakening the Alia, the Ingathering of the Exiles.

Opposite to the Spanish press, two daily newspapers in Yiddish, *Di Presse* and *Yiddishe Zeitung*, took a clear ideological line of thought, according to which the Jewish People precede the Jewish State, and the Jewish culture is important for its future. Hence, protecting the Yiddish culture and language determined a low Zionist standard from the start, and blurred the Zionist declarative and spiritual discourse.

Despite the differences of opinion between the approaches, a common denominator existed between them: the search for the legitimization of the Argentine Jew's "double identity", and emphasizing the importance of the Jews' integration into the civil society. From this instance, it is suitable to define the press during those years as a mirror that reflected the Communal Jewish leadership's vacillations and the contradictions in the public discourse and in the ideological atmosphere.

## ANTI-JEWISH CAMPAIGNS IN THE MOROCCAN PRESS IN THE YEARS 1962-1963/ YIGAL BIN-NUN

The modest Moroccan Jewish press played a significant part in the safeguard of the rights of the Jews after the independence of Morocco. As from November 1961, the departure of the Jews from Morocco occurred with the tacit agreement of the authorities. These departures became a crucial topic in the fight of the opposition parties against King Hassan II and his supporters. The question of Jewish emigration was transformed into an instrument of settling political accounts and it was the Jewish community which had to bear the consequences.

In this situation, journalists such as Victor Malka and leaders of the Jewish community such as David Amar or Juda Azuelos engaged to react to any anti-Jewish reference detected in the Moroccan Arab-language press. Unfavorable remarks in the press towards the Jewish community came from both the supporters of a singular ethnic identity and

the supporters of integration into the new Moroccan society resulting from the euphoria of independence. The defense of the rights of the Jews was unanimously declared by politicians of the right, the left and by Hassan II and his father Mohamed V. However, this did not stop some journalists from uttering negative tendencies even though these were condemned by rival newspapers.

Should we assume that the Moroccan society of the early Sixties was anti-Semitic? One is tempted to assume this looking at the large number of reactions in the Jewish press to offensive remarks. In fact, we are looking at an internal political struggle which did not have a direct relationship with the question of Jewish emigration. A final analysis shows that this internal struggle continued until the quasi-total evacuation of the Jewish community.

## THE IMMIGRATION FROM ISLAMIC COUNTRIES IN THE EYES OF ISRAELI PRESS BETWEEN 1950 AND 1952 / Nathan Yeyni

The article studies the immigration from Islamic countries, as seen through the mirror of the Hebrew press between the years 1950-1952, and examines whether the series of articles by the journalist A. Gelblum that were published in *Ha-Aretz* and harshly criticized the immigration from Oriental countries, wholly represented the outlook of the press, as well as the ways in which the press in the state of Israel was influenced by this stereotypical writing.

For this task, the author sampled three opposition newspapers: *Ha-Boker*, *Al ha-Mishmar* and *Herut*, and one non-establishment newspaper, *Ha-Aretz*. He also studied the position of the establishment, as expressed in the newspapers *Davar* and *Ha-Tzofe*. With the conclusions at his disposal, he faced the assertion that the labeling of the immigrants from Oriental countries as inferior perpetuated their failures.

The results showed that the spirit of Gelblum's writing continued to accompany the opposition newspapers, and in spite of being cautious and disinclined towards blunt and racist writing, it displays many motifs of stereotypical

portrayals and construction of the Oriental immigrants' identity as primitive and failed.

At the same time, the massive and open attack on the Oriental immigrants was not supported by the oppositional newspapers; it was succeeded by tacit, sophisticated writing that allowed the reader to shape his view of the image of the immigrant, through information regarding his personality traits, behavior, lifestyle and ability to become integrated into social life.

In contrast, the establishment press showed a reasonable, governmental approach. Neither contented with describing the grim reality nor pointing a blaming finger at the immigrants, it aimed half of its criticism at the absorbing establishment.

As for the "inherited discrimination" theory, the author was not convinced that the press could stigmatize the immigration for generations; a list of personalities from different areas should be enough evidence to show the integration of immigrants of the congregations of the Orient into the Israeli-Jewish experience.

Examination of the influence of “the labeling stain” shows that the oppositional press approved of the assertions of Gelblum, who saw uncontrolled immigration as a danger to the country’s identity. In contrast, the establishment press opposed limiting the immigration, tried to better the image of the immigrants and proposed varied solutions for improving the absorption process. The discrimination theory was mostly developed by the oppositional press that used the immigrants as an instrument for criticizing the Government and as proof that their arrival from Oriental countries would magnify the

social polarity in Israel, as well as the immigrants’ feelings of deprivation. This brings the author to the conclusion that the influence of the labeling stain theory was scant, for the control of the oppositional circles over the future of those belonging to the “deprived classes” was limited. On the other hand, the establishment tried to prove that the immigrants were becoming integrated and involved in the job market and the social life in Israel, since successful absorption is proof for the success of the free immigration policy.

## **ISRAEL AND THE FOREIGN PRESS IN THE SIX DAYS WAR / Meron Medzini**

Among the flood of works marking the 40th anniversary of the Six Days War, conspicuously absent was material dealing with the information (Hasbara) effort before, during and after that cataclysmic event in Israel’s history. The reason for that has to do with the fast pace of events and mainly the smashing military achievement that precluded the need to investigate the Hasbara in that war (unlike the Second War in Lebanon). After a review of the various services and resources available to the foreign press corps in Israel, the paper describes the manner in which government and military spokesmen sought to portray the situation, explain the swift flow of events, the background of the personalities involved and the complex domestic political scene. Interestingly enough, events spoke

for themselves thus in fact obviating the need for an elaborate information effort. The hundreds of foreign reporters who covered the war were basically left to follow their own instincts and sense of what was newsworthy with little or no guidance, on the part of those responsible for information. In retrospect, the policy of letting the media do its own thing with no outside interference or intervention proved to have been the best policy as seen by the highly positive coverage of the events.

Things began to fall apart shortly after the war when Israel began to grapple with the new reality of acquiring territories and population that remains at the top of its national agenda to this very day.

## **MYTHS IN SERVICE OF THE STRUGGLE – *HA-TZOFE*’S COVERAGE OF THE DISENGAGEMENT FROM GAZA / Orly Tsarfaty**

In June 2004, the Israeli government approved a disengagement plan that declared that Israel would unilaterally evacuate all Jewish settlements from the Gaza strip (the Gush Katif settlements) as well as four settlements in Samaria. The primary body representing the settlers and leading the public protest was the Yesha Council, whose dominant position represents the attitude of the Gush Emunim movement.

A narrative textual analysis of the disengagement coverage in the Orthodox newspaper *Ha-Tzofe* sheds some light on the newspaper’s usage of historical myths and their role in strengthening both the component of Jewish identity (as it was represented in the newspaper) and in strengthening the

settlers’ intra-communal solidarity during the struggle. A narrative analysis of the media texts assumes that an inter-textual dialog between the newspaper story and other texts in the cultural field- does exist indeed. Exposing this dialog could contribute to an understanding of the cultural processes taking place in society.

The settlers’ personal and collective identity is based on an understanding that enforces the continuity of Jewish history and regards the history of the State of Israel as an additional link in an ancient chain. This understanding sustains the Orthodox Jewish timeline, which is fundamentally ritual time synchronized to historical continuity. To the settlers,

the separation of secular society, and especially of the Left, from Jewish values and from Zionism's founding myths demonstrates that they have lost their way with regards to values – with dangerous political implications – and enforces the secular Israeli understanding of time.

We can examine how central this topic was in *Ha-Tzofe* from the intensity of its coverage and from the way in which the newspaper's agenda was established. The research corpus includes a sampling of 639 items in the newspaper relating to the disengagement plan from Gush Katif and northern Samaria during the months of July and August 2005.

A narrative textual analysis of the newspaper's coverage of the settlers' protests during this period shows that it was set in the framework of four narratives – four sets of stories that are present in Israeli Jewish consciousness. The link to these is rich with meaning and associations. The first is the myth of "few against many"; the second is the memory of the Holocaust; and the third, the destruction of

The power of historical analogy stems from familiarity with these myths. They are present in the reader's consciousness and shape the collective memory of the community. The encounter with the text – the newspaper text, in this case – invokes shared historical associations among the readers which hold a lesson relevant to the present.

This article examines the media's construction, through myths, of the story of the protest of Gush Katif's evacuation. In other words, it searches for the story that the settlers tell themselves about their struggle and through which, among other things, they construct their identity and deal with the trauma of the disengagement. The process of the newspaper's construction of the protest story is a diffuse process whose representation of the present is informed by the past. It is fed by, and at the same time shapes, the moods of the people it covers.

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