

Journal of Media and Communications History in Israel and the Jewish World
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WHAT'S IN *KESHER* 51?

MEDIA AND CHANGE

When one seeks a theme that embraces most of the articles in this issue of *Kesher*; the good old nexus of media and change comes to mind and is as valid today as ever. The media accompany but also take part in social, cultural, political, economic, technological, and other changes. It is their duty to be alert to and part of this incessant change if they wish to continue existing. In this context, the gender aspect, with which this edition deals at length, should be tested from the perspective of change.

Another area of attention in *Kesher* 51 is the media event, the definition of which has evolved from an only-ostensible event to a “spectacle”—a show or extravaganza—engineered by the media. In our era of digital media, social networks and “fake news” events “created” by and for the mass media or for their dispatchers, in contrast to “spontaneously” evolving events, acquire a new nature and meaning. The public seems to be more of a partner in creating the event and playing an active role in it, as first demonstrated conspicuously in various protest movements. The value of the historical models in research and comparative terms, however, remains intact.

Ouzi Elyada analyzes the Antebi affair, a media event or scandal in Ottoman Jerusalem. Gideon Kouts describes Eliezer Ben-Yehuda’s journalistic use of events marking the anniversary of the proclamation of the British conquest of Eretz Israel. Barack Bar-Zohar deals, at two points in time, in journalistic coverage of the assassinations of Haim Arlosoroff and Yitzhak Rabin. Was Golda Meir really “the only man in the [Israeli] cabinet?” asks Gilad Greenwald, who engages in a gender discourse about Labor’s candidate for the premiership in the Seventh Knesset election campaign. Sagi Elbaz investigates the press’ attitude toward economic changes as reflected in its coverage of Benjamin Netanyahu’s 2003 economic stabilization program. Orly Tsarfaty

writes about a “Facebook revolution” among *haredi* women. Tal Laor, Mira Moshe, and Shimon Fridkin examine gender disparities in online radio. Amos Nevo tells the story of the “little paperboys,” a breed that has totally vanished from the newspaper consumption culture but played an important cultural and economic role in the day. Orit Yael describes congratulation notices for family events in the Mandate-era press as manifestations of the creation of a social network. Shahr Marnin-Distelfeld delves into representations of the housewife in Mandate-era advertisements. Matan Aharoni pinpoints, in his analysis of advertising posters for the film *Sallah Shabati* and the packaging of its DVD version, a transition from the representation of the “Diaspora Jew” to that of the “traditional Mizrahi.” Chen-Tzion Nayot reports, with the help of archive material, on the inception of the national-religious newspaper *Hatsofe*. Menachem Keren-Kratz writes about the newspaper *Kol Yisrael* and its role in the crystallization of the *haredi* identity in Mandate Palestine. Moshe Pelli asks how the Haskalah movement defined itself in the mid-nineteenth-century Maskilic journal *Kochvei Yitzhak*. Yitzhak Cytrin and Nitza Dori recall the travels of the Hakham Bashi, Rabbi Nahum Haim b. Bechor Yosef, in and around Eretz Israel as reported and reflected in the Ladino-language Jewish newspaper *Il Tiempo*.

In *Kesher* 51, sadly we also bid farewell to two prominent personalities in the media and media-research communities in Israel who have passed away: Dr. Dina Goren and Professor Moshe Negbi.

Finally, the regular sections are at the reader’s service as usual. We’ll be seeing you again in the autumn.

**Wishing you an enjoyable and useful read,
The Editors**

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 presstau@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).

A MEDIA SCANDAL IN OTTOMAN JERUSALEM: THE ANTEBI AFFAIR / Ouzi Elyada

In 1909, two “yellow” Hebrew-language newspapers in Ottoman Jerusalem—Itamar Ben-Avi’s *Hazvi* and Avraham Elmalih’s *HaHerut*—squared off over a spat that they ballooned into an ongoing sensationalist scandal. The article tracks the evolution of this media spectacle into a quintessential media event and asks whom it served and what implications it brought in train. It draws on Daniel Boorstin’s distinction between a spontaneous event and a “pseudo-event,” one manufactured by media, and on the subsequent work of Elihu Katz and Daniel Dayan concerning “media events” (events planned out and marketed by media ab initio), among other studies. It also sets the Jerusalem popular press within the context of yellow journalism at large, a genre born in the United States and cultivated in France, where it informed Ben-Avi’s media strategy through the influence of his father, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda.

The Antebi affair marked the first use in Eretz Israel of the journalistic-crusade strategy. The individual chosen was Albert Antebi, the powerful and popular manager of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Jerusalem. The Young Turks had just consolidated their rule, instituting freedom of the press among other reforms. In this atmosphere, Ben-Avi believed, an immensely powerful personality such as Antebi could be attacked in order to boost the circulation of his newspaper, which faced growing competition in the new climate. The trigger for Ben-Avi’s six-week crusade against Antebi was a struggle over the selection of a candidate to represent the Jews of Palestine in the Ottoman legislature: Antebi versus

the director of Anglo-Palestine Bank in Jerusalem, Yitzhak Levi. Ben-Avi’s newspaper, *Hazvi*, threw its weight behind Levi by launching a campaign of defamation against Antebi, to whose defense *HaHerut* rushed. The *mise-en-scène* included Sephardi-Ashkenazi discord and clashing business interests. At day’s end, neither candidate was chosen.

From the media standpoint, Elmalih and *HaHerut* “won” the battle in that Antebi maintained his position of power in Jerusalem, surrendering it four years later for reasons unrelated to the scandal. Ben-Avi and *Hazvi* may have sustained an additional “defeat” by angering, in their conduct, a power that had the ability to hurt them in the wallet: the Rothschild family. Either way, both newspapers were active players that pursued interests of their own, chiefly in increasing their circulation. *Hazvi* was emphatically successful in this endeavor, going over to daily publication and accustoming the country’s Jewish readership to consuming this medium on a daily basis. The affair boosted the stature of the popular press and made it predominant among the print media of the day, leaving the “quality” press with a small and shrinking fan base. The public also profited from the confrontation because the campaign shed powerful light on political power struggles that had played out in the shadows until then. Finally, the newspapers’ appeal to public opinion abetted readers’ education in critical civic involvement and strengthened the trend toward democratization in the embryonic Jewish community of Eretz Israel.

“JERUSALEM ISN’T LONDON”: ELIEZER BEN-YEHUDA’S RESPONSES TO AND USES OF THE BALFOUR DECLARATION ANNIVERSARIES IN 1919–1920 / Gideon Kouts

On November 2, 1917, when Lord Balfour promulgated his famous declaration, there was neither a Jewish nor a Hebrew press in Eretz Israel. Such as had existed before had been shut down by Turkish fiat during World War I and its resurrection under British rule would not begin until well into the following year. Therefore, the first opportunity for Zionists on the ground

to relate directly to the declaration and its importance came about in November 1919.

Prime among those covering these “events about events” were Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and his son, Itamar Ben-Avi, who had launched the popular Hebrew-language newspaper *Doar Hayom*, successor to their pre-war vehicles, on August 8, 1919.

Ben-Yehuda used the anniversary observances in Jerusalem and London as “media events” with which he could explain his positions and interpretation of the declaration and the political situation that it had brought about. In this, his first use of media events for political reportage and commentary purposes, he contrasted the states of mind in the two capitals. The Yishuv (Jewish community) in Jerusalem, he remarked, observed the anniversary modestly if not furtively and greeted it with doubts and skepticism, feeling that the declaration had remained much a dead letter. The parallel festivities in London, he found, exuded unmitigated jubilation. It was the latter approach, he ruled, that should prevail. The Balfour Declaration, Ben-Yehuda said, amounted to the giving of Britain’s word. Using Biblical terminology, he termed it a pillar of Imperial policy. The lack of British action on the ground, he explained, had nothing to do with anti-Yishuv sentiments among local British officials; it merely reflected the disorder that accompanied the aftermath of the Great War. His advice to the Yishuv was to be patient, wait for the political process to play out, and step up the efforts on the ground.

The next year saw two portentous developments. On the ground, Arab violence against the Jewish population caused further disillusionment with Britain as the country’s rulers continued to dither in implementing the declaration. Abroad, in contrast, the declaration was enshrined in international law at the San Remo conference and the first British High Commissioner for Palestine, Herbert Samuel, stepped ashore to implement it. Ben-Yehuda’s treatment of the third anniversary of the declaration (November 2, 1920) ballyhooed the latter events and treated the former events as less consequential if not nearly meaningless.

As time passed, the Mandate regime steadily distanced itself from the Balfour Declaration and Samuel’s successors at the Commissioner’s residence found growing disfavor in the Yishuv’s eyes. The Yishuv and the Zionist Movement, however, did persist in their efforts on the ground, without belittling the historical importance of the declaration for international recognition of the legitimacy of the Zionist discourse.

JOURNALISTIC COVERAGE OF THE ASSASSINATIONS OF HAIM ARLOSOROFF AND YITZHAK RABIN / Barack Bar-Zohar

This article analyzes coverage of the assassination of Haim Arlosoroff in four daily newspapers (*Ha’aretz*, *Davar*, *Doar Hayom*, and *Hazit Ha’am*) and compares it with coverage of Yitzhak Rabin’s assassination in six papers (*Ha’aretz*, *Davar*, *Yedioth Ahronoth*, *Ma’ariv*, *Hatsofe*, and *Hamodia*) in the thirty days after the murders. This study rests on an empirical-theoretical approach known as the media event and shows how this method was invoked after both assassinations. Four main journalistic patterns in presenting these events as tragic and historic occurrences are found: placing journalists in center stage, diversifying sources, glorifying the deceased, and using visual communication. The analysis, covering hundreds of journalistic pieces, is also based on theoretical constructs in

communication research such as agenda-setting, framing, and priming.

The developers of the media-event approach, as it is taught in Israeli universities and colleges, focus on the mediation and presentation of occurrences by television only. It is claimed here, however, that media events are not exclusive to television; they were initially seen via print journalism. In this context, the study shows how these two tragedies were presented as breaking, evolving, and prominent news throughout the thirty-day research period, glorified the deceased by surrounding them with dramatic and theatrical themes, exposed social tensions, exacerbated political conflicts, and, concurrently, projected collective unity.

THE ONLY MAN IN THE CABINET? A GENDER PERSPECTIVE ON GOLDA MEIR'S 1969 ELECTION CAMPAIGN COVERAGE IN THE *YEDIOTH AHRONOTH* AND *HA'ARETZ* DAILIES / Gilad Greenwald

Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, once described Golda Meir as "the only man in the cabinet." This old quip was part of a broader approach in the early stages of Zionism, whereby despite an ideologically based ethos of gender equality, women were asked to mask their femininity in order to take part in public and political life more easily. Indeed, many scholars generally describe Meir's leadership, even as prime minister, as "gender-blind," that is, irrelevant to or even alienated from gender-related topics and feminism.

The study of media representation of female politicians began in the early 1990s. Since then, it is usually found that female politicians have much lower media visibility than do their male opponents and tend to be portrayed within gender-stereotypical media frames such as sexuality and appearance; family-oriented labels; and traditionally "feminine" roles and character traits. Meir's case, however, is unique and worthy of historical examination to ascertain whether this was the practice many years earlier, in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

To this end, a gender-focused content analysis (quantitative and qualitative) of 188 news items investigates Meir's coverage in two prominent Israeli print newspapers (the elite *Ha'aretz* and the mass-circulation *Yedioth Ahronoth*) in the last three months of the 1969 Israeli election campaign, when Meir served as the Labor Party's chair and its candidate for the premiership.

The analysis reveals that notwithstanding the scholars' assertion of a "gender-blind" socio-historical attitude towards Meir, the two newspapers did in fact strongly emphasize gender-oriented elements in their coverage of her 1969 candidacy. In some cases, for example, they framed Meir as "the mother of the Jewish people," highlighting her ostensible "femininity" through the prism of maternal and emotional character traits. In other cases, the papers identify Meir with the most traditional "feminine" family-oriented roles, e.g., consistent use of cartoons that depict her cooking food or mending clothing. In addition, several news items refer to Meir's appearance and clothing, especially during her official September 1969 visit to the United States for meetings with President Nixon. Finally, in a few cases, Meir is actually presented as a young and naïve girl.

Empirically speaking, the study shows that the tendency to comprehend Meir historically as a "masculine woman" or to treat her gender as insignificant or irrelevant in the context of her political career is inaccurate: the discourse regarding Meir's candidacy in the 1969 elections was highly gender-focused and tended to emphasize her "feminine" uniqueness as a female prime minister. Theoretically, it is shown that the mainstream paradigm in the fields of political communication and gender may be much more deeply anchored in history than we may have thought.

THE PRESS AND ECONOMIC CHANGES: COVERAGE OF AND COMMENTARY ON TWO ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLANS / Sagi Elbaz

The article analyzes the coverage of two economic events—the 1985 Economic Stabilization Plan and Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's economic recovery program in 2003—that in both cases reveal much variability and uniformity among different media and over time. The newspaper sample (from *Yedioth Ahronoth* and *Ha'aretz*) comprises 549 news items, of which 356 concern the Stabilization Plan and 193 refer to Netanyahu's economic program. The TV sample (Channel 1 and Channel 2) contains 112 items, thirty-four about the Stabilization Plan and seventy-eight relating to Netanyahu's

economic program. In all, 661 news items are tested in regard to these two economic events.

The most significant change found is manifested by *Yedioth Ahronoth*. Regarding the stabilization plan, the range of voices is broad. The newspaper provides a forum for social criticism: unjust distribution of the economic burden, wage erosion, and continual deterioration of the status of the poor. However, if in the first days after the announcement of Netanyahu's plan few voices at *Yedioth Ahronoth* object to the scheme, the strikes that follow fit the economic commentators into one

interpretative framework—one that supports the Ministry of Finance's proposals.

In contrast, an in-depth look at *Ha'aretz* reveals a monolithic, well-formulated, and unequivocal approach to economic affairs on the part of its commentators. Free-market economics is described in (positive) terms of growth, mobility, and competition throughout both research periods. The newspaper's senior commentators try to crown the Finance Ministry plans with a halo of professionalism and intimate that anyone who doubts the objectivity of the Ministry's personnel must be motivated by prejudice. The newspaper's negative attitude toward the Histadrut and, particularly, to the various works committees seems rooted in the threat that these groups pose to the value system that *Ha'aretz* seeks to advance.

An entirely different approach from that of *Ha'aretz* emerges at Channel 1, which takes care to maintain balance in its economic reportage. Our analysis of the relevant stories

reveals that demonstrations and labor strikes are discussed within a broader socioeconomic context. Channel 1 reporters cover all aspects of the protests—from their motivating forces to their impact. In other words, instead of focusing solely on harsh manifestations of opposition to the government's economic measures, they center on the main reasons for the demonstrators' distress.

A quantitative analysis of Channel 2 news reveals a different picture from that at Channel 1. The background of the labor sanctions is suppressed in most Channel 2 news reports in favor of descriptions of the strikes themselves. These reports focus on the negative economic impact of the strikes and the suffering that they inflict on the public at large. In many instances, workers are assigned much of the blame for the ensuing economic chaos. They become weapons in the hands of their harshest critics and are represented as a concrete threat to the social order.

THE HAREDI WOMEN'S FACEBOOK PROTEST / Orly Tsarfaty*

One of the most important phenomena, if not a unique one, in the Twentieth Knesset elections was the self-organization of *haredi* ("Ultra-Orthodox") women from various streams of their society in demanding political representation in haredi parties that competed for seats in the parliament. Their demand for the sharing of the haredi public sphere was the outgrowth of a political reality in which these parties excluded women.

Ahead of the 2013 elections, a haredi woman's anonymous post on Facebook against this exclusion expressed winds of change that were blowing among haredi women, touching off protest activity by haredi women under the moniker *Loni-Lobo* (a Hebrew abbreviation denoting "No participating as candidates? No voting").

The Facebook activity resumed ahead of the 2015 elections, quickly gathering momentum and evolving into the first haredi Facebook protest. As haredi women came together to demand that their society's political leadership give them representation in their political parties, they inveighed against their exclusion from the public sphere. Their goal—engineering a change of

consciousness among haredi women—was one of the main objectives of the protest.

The Loni-Lobo movement reflects the emergence of a political leadership with feminist consciousness among haredi women. Its activity demonstrates their adoption the Web and Facebook as a platform for the creation of change alongside the old media. This ongoing change in the status of haredi women and their demand for political representation are of revolutionary potential for restructuring of the patriarchal religious hegemony and women's status. The women's protest—if it pays off—will abet the democratization of haredi society and of the Israeli political system.

Given the unique features of haredi society in reference to women's status and the use of communication media, the very use of Facebook for a political struggle by women is an exceptional phenomenon. Facebook manifested its contribution by providing an arena for the organization of the movement within a protest framework and serving as a medium for the dissemination of protest messages. It also offered a platform

* The article is part of a comprehensive study on the haredi women's protest and the emergence of haredi feminism in the 2013 and 2015 elections. I thank my research assistant, Sivan Geller, for her assistance in collecting the data.

for the creation of a women's discourse—an alternative to the hegemonic male version—that circumvented the censorship and exclusion of women that exist in the haredi press.

The establishment of a virtual community of haredi women who maintain a dialogue on the question of the status of haredi women is contributing to the formation of a haredi-feminist political identity.

ARE WOMEN FROM VENUS AND MEN FROM MARS? ONLINE RADIO LISTENING PATTERNS AND THE DIGITAL DIVIDE / Mira Moshe, Tal Laor, and Shimon Fridkin

This study examines the gendered digital divide in Israel in the age of the radiophonic cyber-revolution. The research focuses on increased patterns of listening to on-demand radiophonic content via online radio. Recent years have witnessed a shift at the second level of the gendered digital divide. This shift is effectively captured by the notion of “can’t” transforming into a “don’t want to be bothered” mindset. To explore this phenomenon, an online survey among online listeners of a regional radio station was conducted. Israel’s top-rated regional station, 103FM-Non-Stop Radio, was selected. In the survey,

held in April 2014, 2,013 listeners (1,491 men and 522 women) were polled. It was found that for the under-35 age group of listeners, increased listening patterns were gender-blind. The finding recurred among all other demographic groups: childless listeners, those with and without higher education, secular and religious individuals, and single males and females. The data for the over-35 listenership, however, are different: The findings for this group do in fact attest to a gendered digital divide. The key demographic groups here are married couples and parents.

“THE EVENING PAPERBOYS’ SCREAMING IS MAKING TEL AVIV INTO HELL”—THE WORLD OF YOUNG PAPERBOYS IN ISRAEL / Amos Blobstein-Nevo

This is the first study that sheds light on the world of paperboys in Israel.

They were kids who raced down the sidewalks clutching bundles of newspapers and shouting out the headlines. The practice elsewhere dates as far back as the nineteenth century but reached pre-independence Israel only in the 1930s. It is documented here over a three-decade period with the help of archive documents, press clippings, and interviews with adults who had been paperboys. The study investigates the doings of paperboys in the major cities and focuses on Tel Aviv, where the “profession” is revealed in its full scale, complexity, and severity.

The study shows that in Israel, as in places abroad, most children who sold newspapers came from disadvantaged and impoverished strata. Some were five years old and others fifteen or over; most were offspring of recently arrived immigrants

from the Eastern countries, predominantly Yemen. Their parents had removed them from school and sent into the street to help keep the family fed.

In the street, they proved their mercantile mettle. Their availability, their agility, and their fast and aggressive marketing methods made them the most widespread and successful means of selling newspapers. They based their method on creating street theatre by shouting out headlines or inventing dramatic headlines of their own, thus controlling the state of mind in the street.

By virtue of their special talents, they became important players in the famous putsch or insurrection brought about by the editor of *Yedioth Ahronoth*, Dr. Ezriel Carlebach, in 1948, when he abandoned this newspaper together with his staff and established *Yedioth Ma'ariv*. Carlebach employed the boys in order to defeat the editor of *Yedioth Ahronoth*, Yehuda Mozes,

and the latter's newspaper, by dispatching them to assault vendors of *Yedioth Ahronoth* and snatch the copies out of their hands and tear them up.

Working in the street honed the children's commercial senses and taught them how to deal with people and money—virtues that made them successful business people once they reached adulthood. Their jobs also put their lives at risk. Some were injured and killed as they scampered about in traffic or when they sold papers at times of disturbances and war. The greatest menace, however, was deterioration into crime. Indeed, many paperboys began to live and sleep in the street, pilfering and damaging property.

The paperboys, together with thousands of other children who were discharged into the streets, became a social and national problem. Residents declared war on them due to the noise that they made as they peddled their goods. Adult merchants who sold papers in shops and at newsstands insisted that they be

swept off the street because they cut into their business. Rabbis wanted them kept at arm's length from synagogues and enjoined against selling newspapers on the Sabbath.

The municipal and Yishuv institutions sought to eliminate this phenomenon in various ways. For this purpose, they required the boys to take out licenses, placed them under age restrictions, required them to attend school, confiscated their newspapers, arrested them, and placed them on trial—but nothing helped. Even a proposal to regularize the sale of newspapers by replacing the children with disabled persons and widows failed.

Who torpedoed the attempts to rescue them? Their employers, of all people. The newspaper publishers disregarded the youngsters' rights and suffering. They could have helped but sat on their hands. They arrogated to themselves the right to exploit the children's distress and to trample on them because doing so was good for their bottom line.

“IN LIEU OF A PERSONAL INVITATION”: THE HEBREW PRESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS OF PERSONAL EVENTS / Orit Yaal

The population of the Yishuv (the Jewish collectivity in Mandate Palestine) in 1918–1948 was young and diverse. Most of its demographic growth originated in immigration and its presence was limited mainly to urban localities, especially Tel Aviv and its satellite towns. Although people living in these centers were connected through social networks, meeting regularly at work or at leisure, they needed alternative methods of communication just the same. Because the Yishuv was small and communication technology was scanty, the Hebrew press became its primary informational network of the period.

We find myriad announcements in the Hebrew press of the time—invitations to and congratulations upon engagements, weddings, births, circumcisions, and bar-mitzva ceremonies, as well as obituaries. By focusing on all of these, the article reflects the nature and social customs of the Yishuv's urban population.

The Hebrew press commanded prestige and importance in the Yishuv because it made use of the revitalized national language. By placing a notice in the newspaper, people spread news to a large audience inexpensively and quickly. These tidbits of information, received either first-hand through reading or by

word-of-mouth from readers, helped members of the Yishuv to preserve the characteristics of a small, homogeneous community in which everyone knew everyone else.

The announcements yield a rich portrait of the social networks, ways of life, and accepted norms of the Yishuv. By perusing the newspapers, we can discern customs and symbolic manifestations of establishing friendship and family bonds, social structure, dating, and relationships. We notice which social groups intermarried, who belonged to a social circle and who did not, and what was considered the socially acceptable method of informing the public.

Additionally, we can see that a public announcement or invitation transforms a private, intimate event into a public and national one. Writers of good wishes expressed the connection they felt between unity among members of the new generation and building the country into a mighty nation, a symbol of the devotion of the people to the country, its new language, and to Eretz Israel.

The sheer quantity of announcements makes it seem as though everyone was getting married and having children. This impression greatly influenced young people, especially

if they were alone and without their own family, to perform the “correct” Zionist act—to marry and establish a family. The announcements and messages of congratulations express the significance of building family life in the new country—an act of renewal as well as continuity, creating a new society that would raise a strong generation with which a new nation for an ancient people would be built.

Through these personal announcements, the Hebrew press served as an interpersonal medium of communication for members of the Yishuv. It provided a place of rendezvous between private and the public space, a bulletin board connecting private joy to the building of the nation.

DON'T SHOP BLINDFOLDED!” REPRESENTATIONS OF THE HOMEMAKER IN MANDATORY PALESTINE—LANGUAGE AND IMAGE / Shahar Marnin-Distelfeld

This article deals with Mandate-era advertisements for home products (for cleaning, cooking, baking, and maternal care) that first appeared in the Hebrew press in the 1920s. The ads were imported from Western newspapers, partly or fully translated into Hebrew, and sometimes modified and adapted for Hebrew-speaking readers. Addressed mainly to homemakers and mothers, they focused initially on written representations; starting in the 1930s, visual images—illustrations first, photographs later on—were added.

An advertisement as a cultural text affects and shapes common values and beliefs by reflecting them. In the article, three strategies of constructing homemaker and mother representations are surveyed and analyzed: subjecting women to threats and intimidation, focusing on intimate woman-talk in the domestic sphere; and presenting a man as the supreme scientific authority who tells women how to behave. These strategies, whether consciously or unconsciously used, created stereotypical representations of woman's position and status, depicting them as inferior to and even humiliated by men. The author tracks these strategies after sifting through 150 home-product ads in three daily newspapers (*Davar*, *Ha'aretz*, and *Hatzofe*) and five women's magazines (*Ha-isha*, *Luah ha-em ve-ha-yeled*, *D'var ha-poe'let*, *'Olam ha-isha*, and *La-isha*). While the women's magazines are fully examined, the three dailies are systematically sampled three months each year.

Each ad is iconographically and semiotically analyzed on the basis of various theories and models. The iconographical content

analysis is predicated on a series of measures encompassing both written text and visual image. The visual analysis, drawing on Panofski's methodology, seeks to understand the visual image by scrutinizing its components and tracing gestures, signs, symbols, and ideas characteristic of the culture in which it was created. The formulation of these measures is inspired by Goffman and is viewed from a generic perspective. They focus on women as major characters in the ad: do they appear as nonrecurrent images or are they set within a narrative? Is the heroine passive or active? Is she standing/sedentary/reclining? Where is she located and beside which objects? What gender-role division in the home is put forward—how do husband and wife relate to one another and to the children in terms of gaze and touch? Are bodies featured fully or partly? Is there a feminine touch of objects? What interaction takes place between viewer and woman—does she look the viewer in the eye or not? The relationship between the written text and the visual image is explored in regard to the positioning of captions, the slogan, the body of the ad, and the illustration. The nature of the link between text and image is checked: Do the two supplement one another or do they address the viewer in two different ways? The verbal text is then linguistically tested: Is the language standard, super-standard, or substandard? Its tenor is examined in terms of choice of the vocabulary and terms with which the potential buyer is addressed.

FROM DIASPORA JEW TO TRADITIONAL MIZRAHI: THE SALLAH SHABATI CHARACTER IN FILM POSTERS AND DVD COVER / Matan Aharoni

The article traces the first Israeli cinematic representation of the Mizrahi Jew—which evolved into a prototypical image of the Mizrahi—and presents its development. The article features semiotic analyses of two posters for the film *Sallah Shabati* (Ephraim Kishon, 1964, Israel) and of the cover of the DVD release of the film. The analyses examine the changes that were made in the representation of the Mizrahi hero of the film, Sallah, from the posters to the DVD cover and in relation to five other Israeli film posters from those years.

The article perceives film posters as cultural texts that serve as “Realms of Memory” (after Pierre Nora) for cultural and social needs and examines their meaning. The findings suggest that the Sallah Shabati character in the original film posters leaves room for ambivalent reading and polysemic meaning.

The Sallah character expresses the past and the future: on the one hand, his image is that of an immigrant. He looks like a noble savage and represents the Diaspora Jew, the embodiment of the past, by which one may observe and objectify him. On the other hand, he reflects the revolutionary who will bring about social change in the future. His facial expression radiates authenticity and presents the experiences of an early immigrant to Israel. In the cover of the DVD release of the film (2001), Sallah represents the traditional and Orthodox Mizrahi. A different frame from the film is shown: Sallah is seen at a remote angle, kneeling outside a hut and praying to God for help. A different representation from that in the posters is created: the image of a poor Mizrahi who sanctifies the past and religious and renounces the future, secularism, and modernity.

BLESSED IS HE WHO GIVES VOICE TO THE VOICELESS: THE BEGINNING OF THE *HATZOFE* NEWSPAPER / Chen-Tzion Nayot

In the course of the 1930s, the idea of publishing a daily newspaper for the religious Zionist population came up repeatedly among members of this public in pre-independence Israel. At a time when the press was the most popular and widespread communication medium, the absence of a religious daily paper caused many in the religious community to feel voiceless. The idea had to be shelved each time because no significant sources of funding were found. In 1937, however, a connection forged between Rabbi Meir Berlin and Yehoshua Radler-Feldman (R. Binyamin) eventually led to the creation of the newspaper *Hatzofe* as the organ of the Mizrahi movement. The two were willing to invest their money and energy and Rabbi Berlin had the standing and connections that led to the desired financial aid.

Given the budgetary difficulties, it was decided to publish *Hatzofe* only three days per week—Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays—in order to allow the newspaper to grow in measured steps and to examine the readers' response to its publication. *Hatzofe* made its debut on August 3, 1937, edited by R. Binyamin, and sixteen issues were published in this format. In light of

the public's response, it was decided to discontinue the thrice-weekly format and to make arrangements to go daily. The preparations took longer than planned; the daily *Hatzofe* did not make its first appearance until late that year, on December 17, 1937. Even after a successful trial run, economic problems continued to plague the newspaper. Their impact was evident in many decisions including the place of publication, which moved from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv; the departure of R. Binyamin and his replacement by Mordecai Lipson; the sparsely staffed editorial board; and the small number of news services used.

Before *Hatzofe* began to appear and in its early days, various questions were asked about its purpose that had implications for its vision, structure, and character. Two questions in the ensuing discussion were central: Who was the target audience and what goals should a newspaper of religious nature pursue? The Mizrahi leaders grappled at length with various matters relating to the balance among the three vertices of the triangle: the newspaper, the faith, and the Mizrahi movement.

The publication of *Hatzofe* also sparked internal tensions over the identity of the person who would take the helm of its

management. The differences of opinion that surfaced between members of two Religious Zionist factions, Mizrahi and Ha-po'el ha-Mizrachi, indicate how deep the disputes were only fifteen years after the establishment of the latter movement. The debate over filling various administrative and editorial positions concerned basic principles and the relationship between the two

movements, which maintained profound differences of opinion over social and economic questions. Despite the ideological divergences, however, both entities chose to sit under one roof on the assumption that they had more in common than not, as Rabbi Berlin worked energetically to bring them together.

KOL YISRAEL AND THE CRYSTALLIZATION OF HAREDI IDENTITY IN MANDATE PALESTINE / Menachem Keren-Kratz

The term “Old Yishuv” denotes the traditional and religion-observant Jewish Ashkenazi society that was largely centered in Jerusalem. At the end of World War I, this population group found itself facing rapid social and political change as a result of several major processes. First, following the Second Aliya (the pre-World War I immigration of modern, Zionist, and predominantly secular Jews), it lost its hegemony among the Jews in Palestine. Second, the 1917 Balfour Declaration and the granting of the mandate for Palestine to Britain boosted Zionist activity worldwide. Third, while the previous Ottoman regime gave most of its recognition to bodies representing Jews who originated in Islamic countries, the British Mandate authorities regarded the largely secular and Ashkenazi Zionist leadership as the principal body that looked after the interests of the Jewish people. Fourth, while the Ottomans had permitted associations to operate at the municipal level only, the Mandate authorities promoted the establishment of national, namely Zionist, institutions. Fifth, whereas before the war members of the Old Yishuv had been heavily supported by charitable bodies in Europe, these sources dwindled after World War I and were replaced by American Jewish aid organizations, most of which were run by Zionist leaders. Consequently, the Old Yishuv was overwhelmingly shadowed by the powerful Zionist movement and felt its very existence under threat.

Although most members of the Old Yishuv came from territories in the Russian Empire and were led by rabbis who originated in the same regions, after World War I they accepted Chaim Yosef Sonnenfeld, a Hungarian rabbi, as their spiritual and political leader. The new head of the community advocated

“Hungarian separatism,” a concept that sought to isolate the haredi, namely the non-Zionist Orthodox, segment from the rest of Jewish society and took several steps to bring this about. First, he established a new municipal association, the Jerusalem Ashkenazi City Council, and asked the Mandate authorities to recognize it as a stand-alone organization unrelated to the Zionist movement. In line with their renowned “divide and rule” policy, the British were happy to accede to this request. Rabbi Sonnenfeld then persuaded Agudath Israel, the international haredi non-Zionist movement, to recognize the Council as its Palestinian branch.

Agudath Israel sought to found a newspaper in every country in which it operated and to use it to promote its agenda and expand its influence. Thus, in 1921 it established *Kol Yisrael* in Palestine, which started out as a “pure Torah” magazine but several months later, as the Ashkenazi City Council sought to position itself apart from the rest of the Jewish leadership, became a weekly political journal.

Kol Yisrael appeared regularly throughout the Mandate period, serving as a major instrument in shaping the unique form of the haredi society that evolved in Palestine—a merger between members of the former Old Yishuv, who traced their roots in Palestine several generations back, and more moderate and accommodating haredi immigrants from various countries. The journal portrays the haredi camp’s struggle to maintain its independent status vis-à-vis the Zionist majority and reports on the intra-haredi conflicts that erupted among its various groups, each clinging to its own customs and religious lifestyle.

WHAT IS “HASKALAH” IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY, AS REFLECTED IN *KOCHVEI YITZHAK*? / Moshe Pelli

Ever since the beginning of the Enlightenment in Germany, when the question of what Enlightenment arose, the early Hebrew Maskilim in Berlin struggled to define Haskalah in their own way while adjusting it to their cultural and social circumstances.

Seventy years later, in the middle of the nineteenth century, several Maskilim continued to ponder the nature and essence of Haskalah, as evidenced in *Kochvei Yitzhak*, the Hebrew-language journal of the Haskalah in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1845–1873).

This article examines several typical trends among three major Maskilim who attempted to define Haskalah and, moreover, who is a Maskil. All three published their writings in *Kochvei Yitzhak* for many years, thereby attesting to their commitment to Haskalah, their involvement in it, and their activities in disseminating it.

The first, Selig Mondschein, a writer and principal of the Hebrew school in Bolechów, was contacted by a young Maskil who asked to show him the right way of pursuing Haskalah. The young Maskil claimed that none of his teachers had satisfied his curiosity; all had failed to show him the way to wisdom. The elder Maskil advised him to learn languages, especially German, which would open for him a new vista of knowledge and understanding. Mondschein provided him with a recommended

reading list. Interestingly, the works in question were published by early Maskilim in Berlin, e.g., Mendelssohn's *Be'ur*; and became mainstays on the Haskalah bookshelf. He also mentioned fundamental works of Maimonides and Ibn Ezra in medieval Jewish philosophy, from which the Maskilim took guidance.

The second Maskil, Yehiel Meller, who also published many articles and stories in *Kochvei Yitzhak*, wrote to his future son-in-law when the latter consulted him about some of his creative writings. Meller advised him first to seek *hochma* (wisdom and knowledge) and then to learn German, which would admit him to the worlds of poetry and rhetoric—but not to forsake his adherence to Judaism.

The third Maskil, Dr. Nathan Friedländer, who was trained as a doctor, recounted his dissatisfaction with his studies of Talmud and described his resulting change of direction, a quest for knowledge and scholarship elsewhere. Initially, he sought the combination of Torah and Wisdom in one place but to his disappointment could not find a rabbinical seminary that would accept him for training as a modern rabbi.

All in all, these Maskilim, like their early counterparts in Berlin, realized that the path to Haskalah would be paved through education—not the old archaic Jewish religious education but a revised version of their creation, with the introduction of modern curricula and secular subjects.

THE JOURNEYS OF THE HAKHAM BASHI, RABBI NAHUM HAIM B. BECHOR YOSEF, IN AND AROUND ERETZ ISRAEL (JUNE–JULY 1910), AS REFLECTED IN THE LADINO JEWISH NEWSPAPER *EL TIEMPO* / Yitzhak Cytrin and Nitza Dori

Rabbi Nahum Haim b. Bechor Yosef served as Chief Rabbi of the Ottoman Empire in 1908–1920 and was the only chief rabbi elected to this high office in an orderly and institutional manner until the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923. All the other rabbis who held the position of *bashi* were officially appointed only as replacements. Rabbi Nahum, educated in Paris in 1893–1897 under the auspices and with the support of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, aspired to fulfill his role as chief

rabbi of all the Jewish communities throughout the Ottoman Empire. In 1910, he spent four months visiting Adrianople, Salonika, Alexandria, Cairo, Eretz Israel, Damascus, Beirut, and Izmir; his stay in Eretz Israel lasted a full month. In the course of these travels, including his stop in Eretz Israel, he made it his goal to familiarize himself with the leadership and ways of life throughout the Ottoman Empire; instigate and implement reforms in the spirit of progress, modernity, and liberalism in the

organization of Jewish communities; and establish his authority as the representative of the Jews in general, and of those who

held Ottoman citizenship in particular, vis-à-vis the Ottoman authorities and among the Jewish communities themselves.

DR. DINA GOREN (1930–2018)—EULOGY FOR A LIFELONG TEACHER / Tiki Balas

I first made the acquaintance of Dina Goren in the early 1990s—she as a lecturer at the Bar-Ilan University journalism and media studies department, I as a student enrolled in a departmental seminar that had interesting potential.

'Aliya ve-qots ba—something like “Immigration—a silver lining with a cloud”—was the title of my seminar paper, which described one of the immigration waves of Russian Jews to Israel. I submitted it to Dina as part of my work toward a master’s degree in communications studies, for a course on “Defense, Secrecy, and Freedom of the Press.” Dr. Dina Goren, totally fluent in five languages, spoke and wrote in a tongue rich in metaphors and also enriched the research students whom she gathered around her.

She was a pioneer in media studies in Israel. In the 1970s, at the Hebrew University Institute of Communication, she was the first to teach about the mass media in Israel. She was also the first to write useful Hebrew-language academic and text books on media that were intended not only for students but also for the public, as opposed to other scholars at the time, who focused on academic publications in English. Her opuses in this field were *Mass Media* (1975), *Secrecy, Defense, and Freedom of the Press*—a basic text on this field in Israel, based on her doctoral dissertation (1976), and in English: *Secrecy and the Right to Know* (1979)—and *Media and Reality*, an introduction, the first of its kind in here, to media theory, which was revised and reprinted several times (1986, 1993).

Dina also wore the crown of someone who had come from “there,” from the real world of media. In almost every current issue that cropped up, she was able to offer a personal angle and share her personal experience. We knew that in her past included a connection with the Voice of Israel news department. She was an intriguing lecturer.

It was only natural that I would choose her as one of my supervisors for my thesis and, afterwards, for my doctoral dissertation. Her academic assistance did not end when I received my Ph.D. She prodded me to do post-doctoral work in the United States and helped me obtain entrée with one of the world’s

canon media researchers—Professor Michael Gurevitch of the University of Maryland, a friend of hers from adolescence. It was an experience that thrills me to this day.

As time has passed—after I completed my dissertation and Dina moved to Jerusalem—I occasionally found myself taking the whole trip from the outskirts of Tel Aviv to Jerusalem especially to visit her. Dina took an interest in the conferences of the Israel Communication Association and, although unable to attend, felt it important to hear a little about the participants—her erstwhile colleagues—and the contents of the lectures.

Even then, she was still a communicator and a raconteur. At this stage of our encounters, after I brought her up to date on media studies and the state of the media in Israel, I often fell under the spell of the stories of her travels around the world. By dint of a UNESCO scholarship that she received in the early 1960s—meant to allow her to study and familiarize herself with media schools around the world—she visited Japan, India, Hong Kong, the United States, and the UK. As an Israeli pioneer in exploring such exotic countries, she came back with plenty of stories, each anecdote with its own moral. After all, how many Israelis traveled abroad at all back then?

Especially strong in my memory are her stories about riding mules in Ethiopia in the late 1950s, as she accompanied her husband, Menahem, on a professional mission to that country. The Ethiopian women in the village that they reached, she said, evidently seeing a white woman for the first time in their lives, approached her and rubbed her arm to see if her light pigmentation would come off. The Ethiopian men, who for work purposes headed out from the village to the great world, had already encountered white women. For them, Dina’s presence there was not an attraction.

After her service in the Palmah, her pioneerism found expression in media work among other things. After working for the Israel Telegraphic Agency from 1950 onward, in 1953 she went over to the Voice of Israel, where she became the first woman news editor—a post traditionally reserved for men. In this capacity, in 1963, she was among the founders of the Voice

of Israel training center and became its first director. What followed was a stint in the U.S., for media studies, of course. Returning to Israel, she was placed at the helm of the VOI news department in Tel Aviv. After the Six-Day War, she resigned from VOI and moved to Army Radio, where she served as the station's deputy commander. There, among other things, she was editor of current-affairs programs and had a regular program of her own, titled "Dina Goren—Talking Freely." Then she embarked on an academic career, writing a first-hand dissertation titled *The Press in a State under Siege*, in which she adroitly applied her experience as a news editor and a member of the Committee of Editors at a time of direct and particularly tough government supervision of public broadcasting on behalf of security interests. Due to her sense for public activity, it is no wonder that quickly she became a member of the management

of the Israel Women's Lobby and the Association for Civil Rights in Israel. She was also a founding member of Ratz, the Civil Rights Movement. She manifested her relations with media institutions at this time by joining the Israel Broadcasting Authority plenum and, farther on, the Second Authority Council. Dina was also active in local politics, chairing the municipal council of Ramat Gan, where she lived.

Dina Goren was one fascinating woman! In her company, I never knew a dull moment.

Whenever I had a question to ask or an uncertainty to ponder, Dina Goren was there with sound advice and an enlightening insight. She treated students, researchers, media institutions, and academic research the same way. Sometimes it seemed to me that the expression "a good teacher is a lifelong teacher" was coined under her inspiration.

THE MEDIA AS DEMOCRACY'S WARNING SIREN / Rafi Mann

The late Prof. Moshe Negbi consistently presented freedom of journalists and freedom of the press as pillars of democracy and stressed the immense importance of the media as the watchdog of the functioning of governance.

For nearly four decades, the voice of Prof. Moshe Negbi resounded in two arenas in the Israeli public sphere. One was the public discourse about the judicial system, enforcement of the law, civil rights, quality of governance, and elected officials' compliance with appropriate norms. The other was the discourse over the standing of the media, freedom of the press, laws pertaining to the press, ethics, and the journalist's status.

Prof. Negbi, who died on January 27, 2018, at the age of 69, accompanied almost every public event or discussion on legal matters with clear and trenchant commentary on Voice of Israel radio and in the newspapers as well. His comments were never technical or formalistic; neither were they balanced or neutral. (One doubts if such commentary exists.) They exuded value and were solidly grounded in the democratic worldview, the sort that finds expression in Israel's declaration of Independence and court rulings. A ruling by Chief Justice Meir Shamgar is a case in point: "The democratic outlook and its translation into the language of action are reflected in the structure of governance, in the de jure and de facto status of citizens and residents of the state, and also, among other things, in the principle of the rule of law, including equality before the law. The properties of

democracy are intertwined in the political, social, and cultural life of the state. A conspicuous characteristic is the scrupulous upholding of basic freedoms and rights."¹

Alongside Negbi's analytical talent and vast acquaintance with court rulings, accumulated from his student career onward, Negbi was graced with formidable media talents. With his keen professional sense, he quickly extracted important artifacts from mountains of documents, adapted his work to the unending deadlines of radio broadcasting, and translated legal texts into lay language. In his regular news columns and his weekly program on the Voice of Israel, *Din u-dvarim*, his commentaries were not only pointed but also clear and comprehensible even to people who had never visited a courthouse and had never pored over court records and rulings. "It's a fascinating, intelligent, and popular program that avoids being cheap," Sylvie Keshet of *Yedioth Aharonoth* wrote in June 1986. "In a few pithy and, sometimes, blunt words, Negbi, the living spirit of the show, manages to plunge into the problem at hand and bring it into focus.

As an attorney and a journalist, Negbi adopted the principle of "respect and suspect" toward elected public officials. Familiar with the Israeli reality, he knew, as High Court of Justice once expressed it, that "Indeed, there is serious concern, proved by

1 Supreme Court 1/88, Neumann v. Chair of Twelfth Knesset Election Committee, *Rulings* 42 (4), p. 188.

history more than once—that people in power will develop interests of their own and use the immense authority invested in them for purposes other than the public welfare.”² Negbi’s commentaries reflected the spirit of a ruling by Supreme Court Justice Haim Cohn, finding public authority “created wholly and solely to serve the general weal [and having] nothing whatsoever of its own. Everything that it possesses has been deposited in its hands as a trustee.”³

Negbi’s reference as a commentator to the treatment of public corruption and leaders tainted by it pertains directly to the second arena in which, for decades, he was one of the most important spokesmen, investigators, and teachers—the status of the media in Israeli society. Negbi repeatedly emphasized freedom of the press as central in democracy and noted its prime importance as a watchdog of governmental performance.

“Experience—abroad and here, too—proves that people in key positions have immense power to conceal or blur the traces of their corruption, negligence, or blunders,” he wrote in his book, *Freedom of the Press in Israel—The Legal Aspect* (Hebrew). “Even if an attempt to obscure or obfuscate fails, they have enormous power to bring pressure that will weigh on the investigation of their failures and the exacting of justice against them at both the judicial and the public levels. Therefore, counter pressure is needed that will balance and neutralize the pressures of blurring and damaging evidence against a public figure who has failed or has gone corrupt.

“The investigative press is not the party that should apply this counter pressure. Its searchlights are the best, and at times the only, guarantee that blunders and transgressions will be not only exposed but also investigated in depth. However, unless we allow the press to warn about the suspicions, the revelations may never be brought to light and powerful personalities or officials will not have to pay the judicial price of their failures. It is for good reason that some liken the investigative press to a warning siren. Just as an alarm should sound when evidence of smoke is present so that others should determine whether where fire is also present, so should the media warn about indications of corruption or neglect so that we may be sure the evidence will be thoroughly investigated.”⁴

2 High Court of Justice 164/97, *Contram, Ltd. v. Ministry of Finance, Customs and VAT Division*, *Rulings* 52 (1), p. 347.

3 High Court of Justice 142/70, *Shapira v. Bar Association District Committee*, *Rulings* 51 (1), p. 325.

4 Moshe Negbi, *Hofesh ha-‘itonut be-Yisrael: ‘arakhim be-re’i ha-mishpat* [Freedom of the press in Israel—the legal aspect] (Jerusalem: Jerusalem

Institute for Israel Studies, 1995), p. 91.

Consistent and energetic defense of press freedom, in a country where politicians often engage in media-bashing, is manifest in his books. This is mirrored in the report of the Public Commission on Press Legislation, chaired by Haim Tzadok, of which Negbi was a member. “The existence of a free, responsible, and professional press is one of the conditions for the existence of true democratic governance,” the commission members wrote. “A threat to the ability of the press to do its job freely, responsibly, and professionally is a threat to citizens’ ability to function as they see fit within the frame of democratic governance. Defending the ability of the press is, foremost, defending citizens who need it in order to go about their civic lives in a manner consonant with democratic governance.”⁵

Negbi’s struggle, however, was not only against institutions that wished to crimp the steps of his institution, the media, and turn it into a paper tiger, as in the title of his 1985 book.⁶ An important part of his studies focused on a “domestic” threat—INFRINGEMENTS of freedom of the press by journalists and broadcasting stations. He was one of the most pungent critics of the Committee of Daily Newspaper Editors, whose members often received not-for-publication information and assented to government officials’ requests to soft-pedal or quash it. “Information-cartel syndrome,” Negbi termed the committee members’ willingness to impose “voluntary censorship” chiefly on security matters but also in other fields.⁷ Negbi was not the only critic who lambasted the editors who volunteered to serve as accomplices in secrecy and censorship. However, he will be remembered in this context, among other things, for the straightforward and non-lawyerly language in which he described the committee as “the great emasculator of the press in Israel” and “the main threat to the Israeli citizen’s right to know.”⁸

In 2011, amid steadily growing awareness that publishers or editors were imposing their views on correspondents and

Institute for Israel Studies, 1995), p. 91.

5 Report of the Public Commission on Press Legislation (Hebrew), 1997, Section B8, p. 5.

6 Moshe Negbi, *Namer shel neyar: Ha-ma’avaḥ ‘al ḥofesh ha-‘itonut be-Yiśra’el* [Paper tiger: the struggle for press freedom in Israel] (Tel Aviv: Sifriyat Po’alim, 1985).

7 Negbi, *Freedom of the Press in Israel*, p. 190.

8 Moshe Negbi, “Va’adat ha-‘orkhim: ha-mesareset ha-gedola shel ha-tiqshoret” [The committee of editors: the great emasculator of the press in Israel], *Sefer ha-shana shel ha-‘itonaim* [Journalists yearbook] 1992, pp. 89–93.

depriving them of their freedom, mainly for the advancement of business interests, Negbi chose to place “freedom of journalists” before “freedom of the press” in the title of a textbook that he wrote for the Open University of Israel. In the chapter that he devoted to this topic, he noted that many media were sidelining the actualization of the principle of the public’s right to know, or the freedom of ideas, due to considerations of profit or minimization of losses.⁹ The same year, he wrote in *Kesher* that even in the critical field of defense coverage, it seemed that media organizations were motivated “not necessarily or mainly by the public interest but rather, first and foremost, by the wish of its owners (who are also its controllers) to make a buck.”¹⁰

In the matter of journalists’ freedom, Negbi, to his disappointment, received no assistance from the judicial system. On the contrary: important precedential court rulings on this topic left journalists defenseless. Negbi criticized these rulings mordantly in his book, defining them as “judicial self-estrangement from the freedom of the journalist.” He called particular attention to a ruling by the National Labor Court, subsequently adopted by the Supreme Court: “The owner of a newspaper, be it a public entity or a private company, is entitled to steer the newspaper down the paths that it desires and exclude clashing content. A newspaper owner may determine the political, economic, and cultural policies of his newspaper and need not publish contrary views.” Furthermore, “A newspaper owner, directly or through an agent that he appoints for this purpose, may compel a journalist in his employ to write an article on a topic that he considers important and give him general instructions on what is desired. A journalist within the ambit of his writing may not refuse to write said article. [...] Nothing about a newspaper’s refusal to publish a given article by an employee constitutes an infringement of the journalist’s freedom of speech.”¹¹

9 Moshe Negbi, *Hofesh ha-‘itonai ve-hofesh ha-‘itonut be-Yisrael* [Freedom of journalists and freedom of the press in Israel] (Ra’ananna: The Open University of Israel, 2011), p. 258.

10 Moshe Negbi, “The Kam-Blau Affair as a Symptom of the Vulnerable Freedom of the Press in Israel,” *Kesher* 42 (Hebrew with English abstract), p. 33.

11 Negbi, *Freedom of the Journalist*, pp. 261–263. For the full ruling, see *Palestine Post, Ltd., v. Joanna Yehiel*, at *Ha-‘ayin ha-shevi’it*, <https://goo.gl/TL4cxf>. See also “Judge Menahem Goldberg, Presiding—Is a Journalist Like Any Other Employee? A Second Look. Judgment in the Case of the Palestine Post Ltd. vs. Joanna Yehiel,” *Kesher* 16, November 1993 (Hebrew with English abstract).]

From personal experience Negbi knew the power of publishers and editors and their easily invoked attempts to restrict their employees’ freedom of expression. As a lawyer, however, he also knew how to confront them, availing himself of the courts. Some of the contents of his program on Voice of Israel Radio, *Din u-dvarim*, were not to the liking of politicians and their agents in the Israel Broadcasting Authority’s governing institutions. In summer 1998, for example, VOI management exploited live broadcasts of World Cup soccer games to keep Negbi’s show off the air. Negbi petitioned the Labor Court in Jerusalem, which, expressing concern that the step had not been taken in good faith, issued a temporary injunction that got the program back on the air and enjoined IBA management against making any personnel changes. In July 1999, when it was again decided to stop the program, the court ruled that management’s decision had been “lawful but malodorous.”

At various times, Negbi wrote on legal matters for the newspapers *Hadashot*, *Davar*, *Yedioth Ahronoth*, and *Ma’ariv*. He was dismissed from the last-mentioned in 2001 for refusing to write a column about the acquittal of Avigdor Kahalani in an affair associated with a trial involving the publisher Ofer Nimrodi that ended with a criminal conviction. The dismissal, and remarks about him by Amnon Dankner, who was subsequently named editor of the newspaper, enraged Negbi’s colleagues at *Ma’ariv*, who even sent the publisher a protest letter.

The higher Prof. Negbi’s stature became as a mainstay in the Israeli public discourse on legal affairs, the more he was criticized, chiefly in rightist circles. At the pinnacle of the Bar-On-Hebron affair, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called him “an expert for hire,” Rehavam Zeevi termed him “a leftist lawyer,” and Elyakim Haetzni referred to him as “the high priest of the rule of law” and “the fashionable commentator of the rule of law.” In 1989, Uri Porat described him in *Yedioth Ahronoth* as “a big-mouthed lawyer who for years has been engaging in leftist brainwashing in the guise of defending values and the rule of law.” A short time earlier, during his stint as director general of the IBA, Porat had tried to dismiss Negbi from *Din u-dvarim* on the grounds of a disciplinary infraction: Negbi had published a legal commentary in *Yedioth Ahronoth* without IBA’s permission.

In 1985, after *Paper Tiger* came out, Gabriel Strassman wrote in *Ma’ariv*, “Negbi is an oppositionist by nature and, if you insist, you can detect the political complexion that he tilts toward. None of this, however, blunts the mordancy of his

professional criticism of goings-on in the field of media law in Israel. [...] Censorship ties the hands of the press and sometimes oversteps its limits. The Committee of Editors regularly serves government interests and therefore stands opposed to pure freedom of the press. For years, military correspondents were prisoners of the IDF Spokesman, the censor, and the defense system, and did not dare to criticize those in uniform. It really happened that way.”¹²

Strassman wound up his article as follows: “The grim atmosphere that has recently taken shape against the media in Israel makes Moshe Negbi’s book almost compulsory reading. The public needs to know that the press in Israel is not as free as it seems.” Now of all times, as more and more attempts by politicians to weaken the press are being exposed and publishers’ pressure on journalists escalates, the voice of the late Moshe Negbi is sorely missing.

12 Gabriel Strassman, “Press in Handcuffs,” *Ma’ariv*, September 27, 1985, p. 18.