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Editorial

Yosef Gorny

It is with delight that we mark at the reappearance of *Kesher*, the journal of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Institute for the Study of Jewish Press and Communications at Tel Aviv University.

The thirty-three issues that have appeared over the course of sixteen years have established the unique, distinguished status of *Kesher* among scholars in the relevant academic disciplines, interested readers in Israel, and Hebrew speakers in other countries. By means of the English abstracts of its articles, *Kesher* is available to academicians in universities around the world.

This achievement should, of course, be credited to the scholars who publish their articles in the journal and to its loyal readers. Special credit, however, is owed to the founders Mr. Shalom Rosenfeld, who conceived the idea of *Kesher* and established the Institute for the Study of Jewish Press and Communications; his successor as the director of the Institute, Prof. Michael Keren; and, of course, the first editor of and trailblazer at *Kesher*, Dr. Mordecai Naor, who has agreed to continue contributing his skills and experience to this new series.

With the reappearance of *Kesher*, we will try to continue pursuing our goal of publishing academic studies and critical reviews of Jewish media and media people in all eras and in most of their linguistic, social, cultural, conceptual, and political complexions. By so doing, we will continue to express the existential experience of the Jewish people in the world—not only as the “people of the Book” but also as the “people of the press” that, wherever it has congregated around the globe, has published periodicals in Jewish languages and in the vernacular.

The Jewish press came into being approximately a century after the non-Jewish press in Europe. Even so, it is already at least 334 years old, dating to the first Jewish newspaper in Amsterdam (*Gazeta de Amsterdam*) in 1672, via the first Hebrew weekly (*Ha-Maggid*, 1856), the first Hebrew daily paper, *Ha-Yom* (1886) — which celebrates its 120th anniversary in this issue—to the daily newspapers and magazines, electronic media, and hypermedia (Internet) in Israel and their counterparts in the Diaspora.

In this sense, the Jewish press has not only borne witness to the processes of modernization in Jewish society but has also heralded and battled for these processes since its inception. As such, it has taken a stand in defense of the human and civil rights of Jews as individuals and of their national status as a nation among nations that is entitled to political self-determination. By so doing, it has contributed to the development of the collective Jewish public consciousness in the political and cultural sense.

In our time, too, the Jewish press and media in the democracies are taking a stand—albeit with severely diminished power—in the struggle against the waves of antisemitism that erupt from time to time. Today, too, the question of Jewish collective identity is one of their main concerns. In Israel, where they have established a position of power and influence, the mass media serve—directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously—as the watchdog of a democracy that is in an almost constant state of emergency.

We hope that the issues of the new series of *Kesher* will reflect these and other unique “Jewish character traits” of the Jewish media, past and present, in academic research that is solid and balanced, but not necessarily devoid of a stance of its own.

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. 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).

Keshet 34: Introductory Remarks ***The 120th Anniversary***

Gideon Kouts

The first issue of the new series of *Keshet* for 2006 marks a historic anniversary of the Hebrew press: 120 years since the first Hebrew daily newspaper, *Ha-Yom*, edited by Dr. Yehuda Leib Kantor, appeared on February 12, 1886 (January 31 according to the Julian calendar). In our cover story (pp. ___), by Gideon Kouts, recounts the history and position of *Ha-Yom* in the attempts to establish a “popular” Hebrew-language press. David Tal reviews the early days and sources of funding of this newspaper and, for the first time, presents a copy of Kantor’s application to the authorities in St. Petersburg for permission to publish a daily paper in Hebrew. We also reproduce for the reader a significant innovation in *Ha-Yom*—the first theater review in the Hebrew press—as well as a short eulogy by Hayyim Nahman Bialik for the editor of the paper. We will again turn our attention to this symbolic date at a special seminar on the daily press in Israel, its problems, and its future as a daily press vis-à-vis the new media (in the context of the global crisis) and as a Hebrew press. March 30 is another historic date in the history of Hebrew journalism: the sesquicentennial of the founding of the first weekly, *Ha-Maggid*, published in Lyck, Eastern Prussia, which inaugurated the modern age of Hebrew journalism. We will publish more articles and studies on this subject.

We open this issue with an article adapted from a lecture by Chief Justice (ret.) Meir Shamgar at a conference honoring the founder of the Center for the Media of the Jewish People, our distinguished friend Shalom Rosenfeld. The article focuses on freedom of the press as based on the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Ehud Manor writes on restrictions on the freedom of expression that this Amendment establishes, as manifested in two crises for the socialist Yiddish-language newspaper *Forverts*. Zeev Segal comments on freedom of satire in Israeli domestic case law in the spirit of the First Amendment.

The next section addresses an issue that has hardly been exhausted: the attitude and role of the Jewish press in the free world (and Palestine) in view of the Holocaust. Yosef Gorny presents the first findings of a new comprehensive study on the topic and examines the response of the American and British Jewish press to the way the non-Jewish press in those countries treated the Holocaust in 1942–1944. Liat Steir-Livni discusses the way the Holocaust was represented in media

organs affiliated with Zionist organizations in Palestine and the United States in early postwar years

Mordecai Naor presents a chapter from a book in progress about the poet Natan Alterman’s columns in *Davar* from 1934 to 1967 that focused on the media. Moshe Pelli contributes a preliminary article to his pathbreaking project of indexing the important journals of Jewish Enlightenment in Europe: “From *Ha-Me’asef* to *Bikurei ha-’Itim*.” Yaakov Shavit takes up satire again in his article about an anti-Zionist novel that was serialized in a Russian-Jewish newspaper in 1882–1884. In 1876, the journal *Ha-Ariel* resumed publication in an attempt to break the monopoly of the *Havatsalet* in the Jerusalem press market. This is the subject of Dan Giladi’s article. Two articles focus on the dubious “contribution” of the press, in Mandatory Palestine and contemporary Israel, to incitement and fanning political flames around two traumatic events. Uzi Elyada analyzes the role of the Revisionist newspaper *Do’ar ha-Yom* in using sensationalism for political ends during the Arab “disturbances” of 1929. Ten years after the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Orly Tsarfati terms the media discourse in the Habad press in 1992–1995 “handwriting on the wall.”

The last section of articles in this issue of *Keshet* is devoted to the relatively brief history and the development of television contents in Israel. The first article, by Dana Winkler, revisits the discussions, debates, and opinions in 1950–1968 that led to the establishment of television in Israel. One of the main arguments bruited in this article proposes that the establishment of Israel Television be considered a by-product of the belief in television’s educational and bonding power and an attempt to use this medium to inculcate “Ashkenazi” Western values. Baruch Leshem reviews the “Americanization” of TV election propaganda spots. Michal Hamo analyzes the argumentative discourse in Channel 2’s flagship talk show, called *Be-shidur hai—Dan Shilon me’areah*, from the beginning to the end of its tenure on the air.

In this issue we review, as usual, new books and furnish a list of recently approved doctoral dissertations and master’s theses at Israeli and foreign universities on topics related to our areas of interest.

Have a useful and pleasant read. We’ll be back again in the autumn.

English Abstracts of Hebrew Articles

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESS: REMARKS AT AN EVENING OF TRIBUTE TO SHALOM ROSENFELD / Meir Shamgar

Freedom of expression is a basic right of definitive importance in determining the nature of rule in a political or social setting. It is also a basic condition for the assurance of many other basic rights. The article dwells on the development of this basic right: from the late Middle Ages to the present time and surveys the way this freedom is expressed in the relevant academic literature and legal proceedings. It also analyzes the meaning and interpretation of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States (1791), which are mainstays, at both the declarative and the practical levels, of this freedom in the USA.

At first, freedom of expression was regarded solely as a legal way to inhibit the abuse of ruling power. Subsequent

developments led to the current scope of the basic right as a matter of general extent and incidence. Thus, the article describes the struggle over distinguishing between prior censorial limitation of publication, meant to prevent sedition, and publication without prior review and filtering.

The article surveys the case law that guides freedom of expression in the USA, which proliferated mainly after World War I and upon the establishment of the norm of clear and present danger as the test for invoking the principle.

The last part of the article examples the norm invoked in Israel—“near certainty” of endangerment of life or public safety—and the customary norms in the European Communities.

“PRESIDENT IN THE CROSSHAIRS”: *FORVERTS* AS A TEST CASE FOR THE LIMITS OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT, 1901 AND 1912/ Ehud Manor

The September 11, 2001, terror attacks led to an acute awakening in minority–majority relations in the United States. The First Amendment to the Constitution (1791) should be viewed as an early attempt to regulate the management of these relations. The nature of the USA as an immigrant society, however, clearly implies that the constitutional protection of freedom of expression does not suffice. This inference is based on the fact that groups that negate the American system operated throughout the twentieth century under First Amendment protection, even as the majority society displayed apathy on the grounds that legal rights such as those conferred by the First Amendment are the last word.

One of the lessons of the twentieth century is that majority–minority relations in an open society become worse at times of crisis. The article points to a pattern: until the crisis erupts, the majority is apathetic while the minority practices separatism, but during the crisis the majority persecutes the minority, which, in turn, adopts an apologetic posture in which it attempts to portray itself as part of the mainstream. When the crisis abates, the *status quo ante* is restored.

Forverts provides a case in point. As a Socialist newspaper, its pages, in Yiddish, signaled absolute rejection of the

“system”—which one should not confuse with the fact that most of its readers were undergoing a definite process of Americanization.

In two crisis situations—the assassination of President William McKinley in 1901 and the attempted assassination of President Theodore Roosevelt in 1912—the aforementioned pattern was evident in *Forverts*. During the crisis, as the newspaper became the victim of an onslaught by the American majority against “foreign” players of its ilk, *Forverts* abandoned its separatist rhetoric and tried to transmit a message of loyalty. When the crisis waned, each side returned to its familiar role: the majority to its sociopolitical somnolence and the minority to the pleasant confines of the First Amendment.

The article ends with a question: what limits should be applied to the principle of freedom of expression? Assuming that freedom of expression as applied today in American society—and elsewhere—is actually contributing to the disintegration of this society, it, too, needs checks and balances. As the “system” steadily unravels, expands the correct *modus operandi*, for both the majority and the minority groups, is to conduct a responsible public debate that strives to cast the “system” into a humane, ecological, fair, and just mold.

THE “MOUSE HAS NO CLOTHES”: SIRES LIMITED RECOGNITION OF FREEDOM OF SATIRE/ Ze’ev Segal

A ferocious tirade by Loni (Elon) Herzikowitz, chairman and owner of the Maccabi Tel Aviv football club, against media people who “come out like mice and spread poison,” gave rise to a pungent journalistic satire in the Tel Aviv local paper *Ha-Ir*, titled “The Mouse Has No Clothes.” The satire, which likened Herzikowitz to a mouse, resulted in a libel suit against the newspaper that ended with a ruling by the Supreme Court (in March 2004) recognizing a freedom of satire that comes with limits. The ruling provides a “guide of the perplexed” on this issue.

In its ruling, the Supreme Court accepted the Schocken chain’s appeal of the District Court decision to find the chain responsible for libel in civil proceedings because of the satirical article in *Ha-Ir*. The ruling was based on recognition of the weighty importance of freedom of expression when the issue concerns “expression such as criticism, satire, parody, [or] an opinion column, the main purpose of which is to foment a public debate, but is free of the pretense of presenting factual truth.”

The ruling reinforces prior case law in the spirit of American case law pertaining to the First Amendment to the Constitution, which establishes a special constitutional status for freedom of expression and the press. The American case law assigns freedom of expression the utmost importance when the publication concerns a public figure as opposed to a private individual. In such a case, the courts believe that the right to protection of reputation is less weighty, since a public figure has greater access to the media than a private individual has.

Just the same, the court did not recognize an unlimited freedom of satire, as would be appropriate in a society that

recognizes powerful freedom of expression in theory and in practice. The Supreme Court ruling rejects the acute criticism that was leveled at the District Court judge, Amnon Strashnov, who found the newspaper *Ha-Ir* responsible for libel in this case. In the opinion of the Court, the article as published “rests at the boundary between protected criticism and savage defamation ... The imagery of a person as a mouse evokes a sense of revulsion and disgust in the reasonable reader.” The Supreme Court rejected the libel claim, however, because it was convinced that the imagery in the article was meant not to depict Herzikowitz as a mouse but rather “to serve as an artistic device that illustrates how he became (or in fact has always been) the object against which he had inveighed.”

The boundary of the court’s own recognition of the freedom of satire, parody, and criticism is also “gossamer-thin.” Creative artists cannot know when they may rely call on the “expression of opinion” protection that the Libel Law establishes. Justice Barak noted, “Unrestrained offense should not be allowed merely because it belongs to the genre of parody or satire. Insults and defamation are not protected.”

So where does the limit between expression and the limiting of expression lie? The answer remains problematic and moot. The issue becomes more pointed in view of the existence of fierce satirical television programs—such as “Delightful Country,” “The Game’s Fixed,” and “Hall of Culture”—that hold public figures up to derision and scorn. In the author’s opinion, the boundary should be very close to nearly total freedom of expression. Wherever doubt arises whether to publish or limit something, it is better to err on the side of freedom of expression and satire, following the American case-law.

BETWEEN LIDICE AND MAJDANEK/ Yosef Gorny

This article discusses how the Jewish press in the USA and the UK responded to the attitude of the general press in these countries toward the disaster that befell European Jewry during World War II. The article is part of a comprehensive study that compares the stances of the Jewish press in the free countries—Palestine, the USA, and Great Britain—in view of reports about the fate of Nazi-occupied European Jewry. The study also examines the way the media information evolved into public consciousness, as manifested in the stance of the Jewish press. The comprehensive study is divided into two parts

in this respect. Part 1 deals with the period from September 1939 to May 1942, before the information that reached the press ripened into tragic consciousness. Part 2 concerns the subsequent years, especially from November 1942 to the end of the war, by which time the magnitude of the annihilation of the Jews in occupied Europe was no longer in doubt.

The discussion in this article begins at the “seam” between the two periods—the middle of 1942—and ends in 1944, when the mass murders were revealed to journalists from the non-Jewish American press. This makes the article a “real time”

discussion of the tragic events. In this sense, it is significantly different from the critical studies of American historians, most of whom Jewish, during the past twenty years, about the attitude of the general press toward the Holocaust of the Jews.

Thus, the study has two focal points: criticism by the Jewish press of the general press in real time and academic criticism of this phenomenon some two generations later.

By comparing these two critical approaches toward the same phenomenon at different times, we uncover a cultural and existential difference between them: the difference between emotional journalistic criticism at the time of the events

and thorough academic research that transcends real time. Intellectuals of East European origin whose cultural language was Yiddish stood on one side of the discussion; American- or British-born scholars whose language is English occupied the other. One side was staffed by former immigrant intellectuals who were profusely grateful to the democracies in which they had settled; the other was dominated by natives of these countries who took this equal status for granted as opposed to a generous gift from the host society. Both criticisms, at different times and under different conditions, turn out to be strikingly similar.

REPRESENTATION OF THE HOLOCAUST IN THE PRESS OF ZIONIST ORGANIZATIONS IN PALESTINE AND THE UNITED STATES 1945–1948 / Liat Steir-Livni

The article discusses the way the Holocaust was represented in two sets of press organs—those of Zionist organizations in Palestine and the United States—in 1945–1948. The publications surveyed in the article are weekly and monthly journals of mainstream organizations in Palestine (Jewish National Fund, Keren Hayesod, General Federation of Labor) and among American Jewry (Hadassah, Joint Distribution Committee, Americans for the Haganah). These organizations, in the late 1940s, wished to call the world's attention to the hardships that European Jewry was experiencing and the need to solve the refugee problem and establish a Jewish state in Palestine. Although formally the journals were the internal publications of their respective organizations, they had much larger target populations in mind. Most organs of the entities in Palestine were translated into languages other than Hebrew and distributed around the world as propaganda. The American-Jewish organizations turned their internal publications into mass-circulation magazines that were addressed to Jews and non-Jews alike.

The article shows that even though the print media of the Jewish organizations in Palestine and the USA operated under

the same ideological umbrella, the separate cultural systems in the respective countries led to different representations of the Holocaust and of European Jewry during it. The press in Palestine marginalized the Holocaust, using it to prove the correctness of Zionism and telescoping it down to one aspect: the lesson, i.e., proof that the Jews needed a state of their own. These journals decried the response of most European Jews to the Nazi persecutions and held these Jews to judgment in contrast to the ghetto fighters and partisans, whom they depicted as a Diasporic extension of the “New Jews” in Palestine. The American-Jewish press, in contrast, dealt with the tragedies, the grim stories, the victims, and the suffering. It deconstructed the systematic dichotomization that appeared in the narrative in Palestine (e.g., “lamb to the slaughter” vs. fighters, and victims vs. survivors) and ran diverse accounts of survival without offering criticism, thus explaining the many different ways in which Jews survived the Holocaust. This press portrayed the Holocaust as an integral part of the ethnic components of the Jew's identity, components that coexist with universal and American values of freedom, justice, and equality.

ALTERMAN AND THE MEDIA/ Mordecai Naor

From an early age, Natan Alterman (1910–1970) was a prolific creative artist—a poet, a translator, a playwright, a songwriter, and also (as people sometimes forget) a journalist. In 1949, when asked to fill in a questionnaire from the Association of Journalists in Tel Aviv, he wrote “Fifteen years” beside the question about his longevity in the profession. Indeed, in 1934 he began to write publicistic literature in verse, first in *Davar*

and several months later in *Ha'aretz*, in a department called “Moments”—and continued to do so for more than eight years. In late 1934 he was also employed by *Ha'aretz* (and later also by *Davar*) as “translator of telegrams.”

In the early 1940s, when Gershom Schocken, publisher and chief editor of *Ha'aretz*, rejected his demand for a raise, Alterman quit and returned to *Davar*, where from February

1943 to February 1967 he would publish some 700 current-events columns under the headline "the Seventh Column." It would be no overstatement to say that through this medium he became one of the representative literary and moral figures of his era—the last years of the British Mandate and the first years of the independent State of Israel.

In his columns—written in verse in most years and in prose only toward the end—Alterman reacted to most of the political, military, social, and cultural phenomena of the relevant period. He also devoted much space to internal and external media issues: the price of newspapers, the roles of journalists and the press at large, miscellaneous media issues—print, broadcast, pamphlets and leaflets—and so on. Even though he was a member of the class of creative artists that included journalists, he did not spare them his rod whenever he thought they had misbehaved.

FROM *HA-ME'ASEF* (1783–1811) TO *BIKUREI HA-'ITIM* (1820–1831) / Moshe Pelli

The article examines some of the cultural trends that developed among the Maskilim in Germany since the demise of *Ha-me'asef* first in 1797 and then in 1811, relating them to the emergence of the Haskalah in Austria and to the launching of the periodical *Bikurei ha'itim*. The folding of *Ha-me'asef* came as a result of the changes in cultural needs of the intellectual elite among the Maskilim who increasingly resorted to the use of German culture and literature instead of Hebrew. This trend is documented in the correspondence between the first editor of *Ha-me'asef*, Isaac Euchel, and its last editor, Shalom Hacoheh, and in the writings of the contemporary Maskil Juda Leib Ben Zeev, among others.

Nevertheless, there were attempts to revive that Hebrew journal. First, in 1799, there was an unsuccessful attempt, as Hacoheh prompted Euchel to assume again the editorship of *Ha-me'asef*. Then, in 1809, Hacoheh himself launched the new *Ha-me'asef*, which continued publication for three years, till 1811. Seven years after the closing of the journal, in 1818, there was an attempt to publish selections from *Ha-me'asef*, a plan that most probably did not materialize.

The emergence of the Haskalah in Austria is said to have been a gradual process, following in the footsteps of the Berlin Haskalah, although its course eventually took a somewhat different path. The author notes that two institutions which became active in Vienna in these years led to the growing interest in the Haskalah. They were the Hebrew printing presses, which employed Hebrew proofreaders and editors, and the beginning of modern Hebrew schools and the practice of private Hebrew tutoring. Both institutions attracted noted

The profusion of current-events in verse and article by Alterman that dealt with the media elicits an interesting picture of themes and emphases in regard to the press of his time. Disputes among journalists, ethics, and misuse of language were only examples of the topics that he covered. Alterman himself was a stickler of the highest order, personally checking each of his weekly columns until late at night before they appeared in the next day's paper.

Some critics considered his journalistic, publicistic writing inferior to his output in many other fields. Alterman disagreed. He persevered in this writing, mostly in verse, for decades. Today it is almost universally agreed that although others have attempted to follow his lead, if not to imitate him, he has had no worthy successor in this genre.

Hebrew writers and educators, the carriers of Hebrew culture, to Vienna. When Shalom Hacoheh came to Vienna in 1820 at the invitation of Anton Schmid, the publisher of Hebrew books and owner of the printing press, to become a proofreader and an editor, he found the ground prepared for launching a journal, following somewhat in the footsteps of *Ha-me'asef*.

While this is the generally accepted overview of the backdrop leading to the appearance of *Bikurei Ha'itim*, the writer undertook to examine some other phenomena on the Jewish publications scene that he believes have some bearing on the launching of *Bikurei Ha'itim*. The first phenomenon is the publication of several Jewish journals, which attempted to fill the lacuna of the demised Hebrew journal, *Hame'asef*. In 1806, between the first *Hame'asef* and the renewed one, two Jewish educators, David Fraenkel and Joseph Wolf, published a German periodical, *Sulamith*. It undertook to promote culture and humanism among the "Jewish nation" and to advocate brotherhood and tolerance. *Sulamith* was intended to serve the remnants of the Hebrew Maskilim who wished to read a Hebrew periodical or were nostalgic about *Hame'asef* and its authors.

The second German Jewish periodical was *Jedidja*, published first in 1817 by Jeremias Heinemann, as a religious, ethical and pedagogic quarterly. It, too, carried articles and poems in Hebrew, and was intended as well to serve Hebrew Maskilim.

Meanwhile in Amsterdam, the Hebrew society 'Hevrat To'elet' launched its Hebrew periodical, *Bikurei To'elet*, in 1820, prior to the publication of *Bikurei Ha'itim*.

This writer asserts that these three periodicals must have been on the desk of Shalom Hacoheh and Anton Schmid when they were contemplating their plans to publish a new Hebrew journal in Austria.

In March 1820, Schmid announced that he was going to publish a calendar, titled *Itim Mezumanim*, and an annual by the name of *Bikurei Ha'itim*. The simultaneous publication of the annual and calendar attests to an innovative concept. According to this writer, these two publications were interrelated and interdependent, a view that was not been discussed in any critical writing on *Bikurei Ha'itim*.

To understand this innovative concept, this writer proposes to examine the contemporary phenomenon of Jewish pocket calendars. The contents, style and essence of some calendars were examined while particular attention was given to Joseph Perl's special calendar, *Zir Ne'eman*. It was published in 1814 – 1816.

Thus, it is the conclusion of this writer that *Bikurei Ha'itim* at its inception was planned as an almanac, incorporating data, business and practical information with intellectual and literary material.

SATIRE VS. UTOPIA: GRIGORII BAGAROV (BAHARAV) AND HIS MANIAC/ Yaakov Shavit

The Zionist Movement and the new Yishuv became the subjects of satirical journalistic writing as early as the 1880s. An example is the dystopian novel *Maniac: A Horror Story from the Life of a Young Psychiatrist*, by Grigorii Bagarov (Baharav), which was serialized in the Russian-language Jewish newspaper *Voskhod* in January–May 1884.

Bagarov's novel portrays a Palestine that is controlled by a conservative and fanatical Orthodoxy that fights against all manifestations of enlightenment and progress.

Bagarov's satire is not directed against misdeeds in need of correction but rather, as Y. L. Gordon said, is aimed at ridiculing the Zionist idea as such.

HA-YOM—A “POPULAR” AND “OBJECTIVE” NEWSPAPER / Gideon Kouts

The Hebrew press during the last quarter of the nineteenth century in Europe pursued a conspicuous quest for “popularity,” mainly because there were so few readers of Hebrew. This press, however, found it difficult to break away from its ideological relations and contexts, in the service of political camps and ideas, at a time of transition and crisis in the history of European Jewry—especially in its principal center in the eastern part of the continent. The use of Hebrew was also subordinated to the widely held belief that this language was for “serious” use only, as a secularized and therefore an ideologically charged holy tongue. Furthermore, the need to participate in the modernization and enrichment of Hebrew proved to be a troubling imperative for the press, which held almost sole responsibility for the advancement and dissemination of Hebrew literature. *Ha-Yom*, edited by J. L. Kantor, the first Hebrew daily newspaper (St. Petersburg, 1886–1888), marked a new phase in the attempts to develop a new “popular journalism” in the world of the Hebrew press in Europe. *Ha-Yom* regarded journalistic “objectivity” as a way to popularize the press and attempted to attain this “objectivity” by skirting debates about the main issues on the Jewish social agenda. Thus, it maintained neutrality or kept sensitive issues at arm's length by resorting to the feuilleton

genre. *Ha-Yom* developed a “sparse” language, based mainly on the Bible, that was meant to attract that largest possible readership. By so doing, it took another step toward the creation of modern Hebrew despite the harsh criticism that it attracted in its time. In its coverage, especially where news was concerned, *Ha-Yom* adopted an “informative” model that was based on presenting as much material as possible, usually without taking a stance in order to abide by the rules of “objectivity.” It was the first Hebrew newspaper that published news briefs from a non-Jewish press agency, in “real time” and usually without “reworking.” It expanded its purview to issues of general human or European concern (such as criticism of the theater; see David Frishman's critique of *The Merchant of Venice* in the article proper). A more narrative technique was used in the reportage of non-political news and for publicistic political writings via the feuilleton.

Ha-Yom forced its rivals, *He-Melits* in St. Petersburg and *Ha-Tsefira* in Warsaw, to go over to a frequency similar to its own. *Ha-Tsefira* was its main rival and successor in trying to adopt the popular model. Kantor's attempt to ignore the debate over support for Hibbat Tsiyyon made him suspect in the eyes of these national-minded papers and their journalists,

who waged all-out war against him. The neutralism of *Ha-Yom* and its distance from the Jewish centers in the Russian Empire ultimately led to its demise; the paper shut down two years and two months after its debut.

The period that began with the Zionist Congress in 1897 and the establishment of the Zionist Organization, which gave the Jewish world its first modern political structure, also witnessed the advent of the modern party-associated Jewish

HA-YOM – FIRST DAYS/ David Tal

The first Hebrew-language newspaper, *Ha-Yom*, made its debut in St. Petersburg in early 1886. Its advent heralded the maturation of the Hebrew language, which was being overhauled for use as a vehicle of mass media—“development of national property.” It was an overhaul for which a contemporary Hebrew-language writer of the time, Mordechai Ben-Hillel Hacoheh, called. The current article examines, on the basis of recently located documents, the initiative of Rabbi Dr. Judah Leib Kantor to establish within the Hebrew press a modern and innovative model of a Hebrew-language daily newspaper and the hurdles that he had to surmount to bring his initiative to fruition.

Judah Leib Kantor (1849–1915), born in Vilnius, received rabbinical ordination and, later, earned a degree in medicine. He did whatever was necessary for the publication of *Ha-Yom*—contending with strict representatives of the Russian imperial authorities in order to obtain the requisite permits, making serious financial commitments, and risking his economic future. He dared to be the first person who managed to put out a Hebrew-language journal that carried news every day. “I wanted to create a newspaper in Hebrew for the Jews, but in a European spirit,” Kantor wrote in an article upon the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first edition of *Ha-Yom*. Kantor’s goal,

and Hebrew press. In the first half of the twentieth century, this became the main model of Hebrew press in Europe and Palestine, at the expense of the “broad” popular or ideological model. This development also marked the transition of the press from the Haskalah era to the “rebirth” era. The practical upshot of the changeover was the “normalization” of the daily press in Hebrew and its development in Palestine only.

as he expressed it in his application to the Tsar’s authorities, was “to acquaint Jews who do not read Russian with the local interests and political and economic aspects of the surrounding society.”

Kantor neither based himself on economic calculus nor obtained received financial backing from anyone. Instead, he went ahead with naive doggedness, believing that he was on solid ground and that he had a product in which the public was interested. Therefore, he assumed that his financial success, too, was assured. Kantor confirmed that he had been warned about the onerous financial burden that he was undertaking: “They told me that I would need the riches of Korah in this great affair.”

The freshness that *Ha-Yom* brought to the scene constituted a threat to the veteran weekly journals, which initially adopted a self-defense posture and later turned to emulation. The competition forced both *Ha-Tsefira* and *Ha-Melits* to add new departments, improve existing ones, and upgrade their editing and writing staffs—until they, too, evolved into daily papers and placed *Ha-Yom*’s viability at risk. The last part of the article glances at the other contemporary Hebrew journals in order to assess their attitude toward the new creature, the Hebrew daily newspaper.

MICHAL HACOHEH, AVRAHAM SUSSMAN, AND THE REINCARNATION OF HA-ARIEL, 1876/ Dan Giladi

This article describes the establishment of the monthly journal *Ha-Ariel* by Michal Hacoheh (1834–1914), a journalist and community activist (born in Kaunas province, Lithuania; moved to Palestine in 1844) who was, among other things, was Dov Frumkin’s partner in editing *Ha-Havatsalet* (1870–1873).

In the summer of 1873, Hacoheh parted from Frumkin and resigned from *Ha-Havatsalet*. A year later, he began to publish a journal called *Ha-Ariel* and had it printed at Yitzhak Gosciny’s press.

Although the new journal refrained from attacking the rabbinical establishment as fiercely as Frumkin’s had, the rabbis did not privilege it with their support, evidently frowning on it even in its moderate complexion. Neither did Hacoheh receive the support of Haskala circles in Palestine or elsewhere. From the outset, therefore, *Ha-Ariel* lacked solid backing and resources and struggled to cover its modest expenses.

Ha-Ariel was a rather eclectic journal, publishing translated articles, cullings from various newspapers, and descriptions of the country’s landscapes. It reserved a special place for

current affairs, such as plans and attempts to establish business enterprises and farming settlements.

About a year later, Michael Hacoen realized that he could not continue to bear the journal's expenses alone. On top of his economic difficulties, he had problems with the printer, who meddled with the contents of the journal. Thus, he decided to suspend publication and raise money in Europe to buy his own printing press. At this stage (the summer of 1875), he was joined by his friend Avraham Sussman (born in Telshe, Lithuania, in 1831; moved to Palestine at age twenty-five) as an active co-publisher. It was in July 1876 that the two of them reinstated *Ha-Ariel*.

They went together to Vienna to look for sources of funding for the journal. They met with the "preacher" Dr. Aaron Jellinek, who used his connections and repute to arranged an interview for them with Emperor Franz Josef. Returning to Palestine, they found to their delight that a state-of-the-art printing press had already been shipped to them from Vienna.

Thus, in July 1876, *Ha-Ariel* resumed publication under the byline of Hacoen and Sussman. In all, six editions appeared,

from July to December 1876. The first carried a paean to the Emperor.

The format of the reincarnated *Ha-Ariel* resembled that of its predecessor: offerings from the press, translated articles, and current-affairs prices. One innovation was the publication of translated stories.

Less than half a year after the debut of the reinstated journal, it again proved to lack a financial basis. The money that Sussman had invested in the business apparently did not suffice to sustain a journal under the terms of fierce competition in a very small and poor market. The sixth and last edition came out in December 1876.

The short-lived fate of *Ha-Ariel*, which survived for only two years, was typical of quite a few periodicals of the time. Conditions in Jerusalem were not conducive to the existence of a large number of hand-to-mouth literary organs. The wish of various journalists and editors to have their own journals was inconsistent with the ability of the small and impoverished Jewish community to sustain them.

BETWEEN SENSATIONALISM AND POLITICS: THE NEWSPAPER DO'AR HA-YOM AND THE 1929 "DISTURBANCES"/ Uzi Elyada

This article looks into the way in which Abba Ahimeir and his comrades, who assumed effective control of the newspaper *Do'ar ha-Yom* in July 1929, attempted to establish a linkage between politics and sensationalism against the background of the Western Wall affair that, in late August of that year, evolved into a series of especially violent incidents that are collectively known as the 1929 "disturbances."

Examination of *Do'ar ha-Yom* during the month preceding the eruption of the "disturbances" shows clearly that the paper's editors made a systematic attempt to enflame the Yishuv and, in the main, its youth. By reading the July–August editions of *Do'ar ha-Yom*, we can see the connection between the policy of agitation and the trend of organizing "committees" and demonstrations, which peaked with the demonstration on August 15, 1929, and the Mizrahi funeral on August 21. To carry out this agitation, techniques of circumscription and phrasing that had been learned from Itamar Ben-Avi were put to extensive use. However, these sensationalist editing techniques, reminiscent of the pamphlet style, were employed not only sell more copies of the paper, as had been the case in Ben-Avi's time, but also to advance the political goals of the activist and maximalist circles of the Revisionist Movement in Palestine.

In our opinion, however, the mere fact that *Do'ar ha-Yom* engaged in agitation did not make it a causal factor behind the 1929 "riots." It has been argued that the Mufti and his people decided to embark on massacres of Jews because they feared an attempted Jewish takeover of the Temple Mount in view of Revisionist incitement. This, however, is totally inconsistent with the fact that since 1928 Husayni and his comrades had been invoking the theme of the Western Wall and the Temple Mount for general mobilization of the Arab population against the Zionist enterprise and for action to bring it to an end. Thus, the incitement activity of *Do'ar ha-Yom* in the summer of 1929 could not have been a factor in the decision-making process of the Husayni-directed Arab leadership, which had formulated its policy much earlier.

While *Ha'aretz* and *Davar* did not ignore the existence of a comprehensive Arab strategy that sought to obliterate the Zionist enterprise, they believed that one should not fall into the trap of the Mufti's provocations and play into his hands. In the estimation of these newspapers' columnists, any attempt to stir up the Jewish population would make it easier for the Mufti to mobilize the Arabs. Hence the demand to adopt a lower profile, inspired by the notion that the Arab nationalist leadership could be neutralized by "discreet" cooperation

between the Yishuv and the British administration.

Do'ar ha-Yom categorically rejected the arguments of the rival press. Abba Ahimeir, Yehoshua Heschel Yevin, and Wolfgang von Weisel believed that the British administration had been in the process of abandoning its pro-Zionist policy for several years. A moderate response by the Yishuv would only facilitate the British policy. The editors of *Do'ar ha-Yom* believed that by agitating among the Jewish population and organizing rallies and demonstrations the British could be shown that dissociation from the Zionist enterprise would be no simple task. Agitation, these forces believed, might also awaken world public opinion and world Jewry and bring the British administration under heavy pressure to rescind its abandonment of Zionism. Even those at *Do'ar ha-Yom*, however, were much of two minds. A moderate group headed by Jabotinsky and his representatives, Gafstein, Ben-Horin,

and Rozov, still believed that it was the British Empire that would lead to the establishment of a Jewish state. Ahimeir, Yevin, and Weisel belonged to the activist and maximalist stream, which believed that an alternative to Britain should be sought in the form of countries such as Mussolini's Italy. This difference explains Jabotinsky's preference for an intellectual and moderate editing style in contrast to the sensationalist, pamphlet-like style that Ahimeir and his associates chose.

The success of *Do'ar ha-Yom's* agitation efforts in August 1929 constituted a red light for Weizmann's people, on the one hand, and the Socialist leadership, on the other. After the events in August, too, the British administration began to take the Revisionist Movement and its journal more seriously. At the practical level, after early September 1929 it began to harass *Do'ar ha-Yom* in every possible way.

THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASSASSINATION OF YITZHAK RABIN: "ONE WHO AIDS AN ENEMY FOR IDEOLOGICAL REASONS: WHAT JUDGMENT DOES HE DESERVE?" THE CHABAD PERIODICALS IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST RABIN/ Orly Tsarfati

This article, coinciding with the tenth anniversary of the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, examines the media discourse that took place in two organs of the Chabad movement, *Sihat ha-shavu'a* and *Kefar Chabad*, in 1992–1995. The fact that Chabad had media organs of its own was crucial in diverting the movement's internal discourse from the Messiah issue to the political struggle for Greater Israel.

The struggle against the Oslo accords exposed the raw nerves of the war of identities that Israeli society had been undergoing. Chabad's distinct identity and its affiliation with the ideological religious Right established a common ideological political platform for the delegitimation of the Israeli political Left. The Left was routinely accused of having distanced itself from its Jewish roots and, for this reason, having a weak connection with the Land of Israel and being willing to relinquish parts of it. Chabad's struggle for the indivisibility of the country, in contrast, was depicted as a manifestation of its authentic Jewish identity.

In the struggle against the implementation of the Oslo accords, the Chabad journals were mobilized for the purpose of shaping and structuring the political reality of Chabad hasidim. Analysis of the media discourse in the current-events departments of these journals reveals a set of arguments and

rhetorical devices that were meant to delegitimize the Left-led Government and Rabin personally. The crux of the struggle concerned the image and complexion of the State of the Jews. Thus, Chabad's expectations of the Messianic kingdom clash with democratic rule and acceptance of the authority of an elected government. Validation of the laws of the democratic state is countered by the commitment to *halakha* (rabbinical law), and rabbinical authority was considered superior to that of the government.

Ever since the evening of Rabin's assassination, much has been said about how the "handwriting was on the wall." The controversy that erupted in the wake of Attorney General Mazuz's remarks about the absence of proof of a relationship between inciteful speech and the assassination ignores the role of the media in creating a public atmosphere and shaping public opinion. The analysis of the Chabad journals shows that the political struggle during the period at issue often overstepped the accepted boundaries of the discourse to that time. By accusing the Government and Rabin of responsibility for murder due to the upturn in terrorism, by portraying them as criminals who one day would be held to accounts, and by mobilizing the Holocaust for the political struggle, the journals definitely contributed to the delegitimation of Rabin.

“THE MAKING OF ISRAELI TELEVISION” – DEBATES AHEAD OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ISRAEL TV 1948 – 1968 / Dana Winkler

On May 2, 1968, at 9:30 a.m., a transparency bearing the caption “Pilot Broadcast” went on the air. About an hour later, the director, Louis Lentin, called out the order “take one” to the picture router and a broadcast of a military parade, the debut broadcast of Israel Television, got under way. Thus, nearly twenty years of vigorous debate about television in Israel came to an end.

This article examines the debate and the circumstances that led to the establishment of a television station in Israel—from 1950, when a group of business entrepreneurs raised the first proposal for the introduction of this medium, to the first broadcast in early May 1968—in an attempt to trace the reasons for the establishment of Israel TV and the goals that were set for the station at its outset.

The article presents an intricate mosaic of rationales and views that led to the establishment of Israel Television, with special emphasis on the sociocultural and national-security aspects, and the changes that these rationales underwent over the years.

One of the main arguments arising from the article is that the establishment of Israel TV should be viewed as a consequence of the belief in television’s educational and bonding power and as an attempt to invoke it for the inculcation of “Ashkenazi”

Western values. The findings suggest that the “Arab threat,” even when portrayed as a matter of national security, was fueled, among other things, by fear that the country would be penetrated and overtaken by Arab culture—the sort of culture that clashed with, and was perceived as a genuine threat to, the culture that was dominant in Israel in the 1950s and the 1960s. The study regards the rationales in Israel’s propaganda against the Arab states, which most studies perceive as a major factor behind the introduction of television in Israel, as mostly a stimulus for the introduction of television; they became dominant chiefly after the “waiting period” before the Six-Day War.

Another salient argument concerns political involvement in the television station that began to operate under the auspices of the Israel Broadcasting Authority. Despite an explicit decision and repeated promises to keep Israel Television free of political influence, it seems that the political echelon never really believed that non-involvement and non-reliance on the legislative authority, as well as non-reliance on the executive authority, were applicable in the Israeli reality of the time. The debates in the Knesset (parliament) and internal correspondence among political personalities from various parties indicate as much.

AMERICANIZATION IN ELECTION PROPAGANDA ON ISRAELI TELEVISION/ Baruch Leshem

Political advertising on Israeli television may provide a litmus test for the development of the country’s political system. Initially, the country had a firm and rigid party system that seemed immune to the changes in and depreciation of the status of parties in Europe and the U.S. in recent decades. Since then, Israel’s parties have been losing ground in inverse proportion to gains in the power of television as a main purveyor of American-style political propaganda and a significant mediator between candidates and the electorate.

One may debate whether it was television that actually dealt the parties’ status a direct blow, since additional political and social reasons for this development may be listed. There is no doubt, however, that television stepped effectively into the void that was created by the disintegration of the parties’ apparatus and largely replaced them. This fact makes the status of political advertising on Israeli television, particularly between 1981 to 1999, very significant for two main reasons. First, the parties of the Right and the Left-wing bloc were in electoral equilibrium

during these years. Election campaigns during those years were decided by the shift of several thousand votes from one bloc to the other. In the 1992 elections, for example, the Labor Party candidate, Yitzhak Rabin, won by dint of approximately 20,000 voters who gave him one additional mandate. In 1996, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Likud candidate, won by a margin of 30,000 votes.

Studies cited in the article show that the campaign propaganda induced only a small percent of voters to change their views. However, since it also took only a small percent to swing an election, the propaganda broadcasts during those years should be treated very seriously.

Until 1999, it was forbidden by law to show politicians’ likenesses on ordinary TV shows during the thirty days preceding Election Day. Therefore, most televised propaganda during the period at issue took place in the form of special campaign broadcasts, on which the public focused its attention. When the ban was lifted, the propaganda spilled into

newscasts and current-events programs, which commanded greater public interest than series of propaganda clips did. This is evident in the steady decline in the viewership ratings of campaign broadcasts since then.

The political system will have to consider additional and new ways to generate interest in the televised political propaganda broadcasts. One possibility is to adopt the American system of political advertising on television, i.e., paid spots in the middle of newscasts and other high-rating programs. Another arena that may be developed is the Internet, which offers a combination of text and video. This medium, which has gained much exposure in Israel in recent years, would allow the parties to segment their target populations more finely.

An old-new rival to television may surface in the upcoming election campaign, which will almost certainly revolve around the question of removing additional Jewish settlements in

the West Bank. On the basis of the experience amassed in a 2004 plebiscite among hundreds of thousands of Likud members about the disengagement from Gaza, and during the disengagement itself in 2005, tens of thousands of settlers visit Israelis' homes to persuade them to vote against the evacuation of the settlements. This trend will gather strength when the political battle shifts to struggle over settlements in Judea and Samaria, which the settlers consider the heart of the Land of Israel.

Is it possible that the era of American-style political advertising on television, the main factor in election campaigns in Israel, will give way to the hoary marketing method of person-to-person propaganda and face-to-face persuasion? Politics, of course, is the art of the possible, but Israeli politics, as the past has shown, may be the art of the impossible.

CONFLICTS IN DISCOURSE, DISCOURSE IN CONFLICT: ADVERSARIALITY IN THE DISCOURSE OF ISRAELI TALK SHOWS/ Michal Hamo

Adversarial discourse is a crucial part of a free opinion market. It may also be, however, a threat to the existence of a sound social fabric. The definition of adversarial discourse and the identification of its social functions are highly sensitive to the various levels of context—from the institutional and genre definition of the discursive event to its broad cultural background. The existence of arguments does not necessarily reflect tension in social relations; it may signal solidarity and sociability. This function is especially conspicuous in the Jewish-Israeli cultural tradition, which reserves a central and preferred place for argumentative patterns of discourse. Although the meaning attributed to argumentative patterns of discourse and the cultural ethos related to them have changed, the centrality of these patterns of discourse has been preserved, with a high level of cultural continuity, from the learning-centered East European Jewish collective to the straightforward, "Dugri" culture of Israel.

With this cultural tradition in mind, the current study examines the changes in the status of adversarial discourse in the talk show *Be-shidur hai—Dan Shilon me'areah* (Live—Hosted by Dan Shilon), from its second season (1992) to its last (1999/2000). The hybrid nature of the show, its patterns of discourse typically ranging from the institutional and managed to the natural and the mundane, coupled with the centrality of the program in the Israeli televisual field during its years on the air, makes it a meaningful arena for the representation,

confirmation, and construction of normative patterns and cultural images, in a way that allows us to examine trends and changes in its patterns of discourse as reflections of general trends in Israeli culture.

During the show's tenure, the status of adversarial discourse and the attitude toward it within the framework of the show underwent significant depreciation. Where adversarial discourse had been a desired and central pattern of discourse, it became a source of problems that should be avoided, or at least restrained, contained, and neutralized. This depreciation was reflected at all levels of discourse: from the principles that guided the selection of the cast of participants, via the functioning of the host, to the participants' linguistic behavior. The article traces this depreciation to two developments: general tendencies toward greater softening in the patterns of Israeli discourse, and the social and political processes and events in Israel of the 1990s, which challenged the basic assumptions of taken-for-granted solidarity and social cohesion in Israeli society—a challenge that transformed adversarial discourse into a threat to the social fabric. The solution that the show offered in response to these changes—restraining and softening the debate, along with the demarcation of its institutional boundaries—is one possible answer to the need to establish a balance between the vital functions and the implicit threats of adversariality—a balance that is essential for the continued existence of a public sphere in Israel.