

ISRAEL

**STUDIES IN ZIONISM AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL
HISTORY, SOCIETY, CULTURE**

The Chaim Weizmann Institute for the Study of Zionism and Israel was set up in 1962 at Tel Aviv University through the initiative and with the assistance of the Executive of the World Zionist Organization, with the aim of furthering the research and the teaching of the history of the Zionist idea, the Zionist movement and the Land of Israel in modern times.

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private collection, Tel Aviv

Back cover: Yosef Zaritsky, *Galilee Landscape*, 1924, watercolor and pencil on
paper, 30.2 X 31.5 cm., collection of The Phoenix Insurance Co. Ltd.

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CONTENTS

ARTICLES

- The After-Shocks of the 1977 Political “Upheaval” and Their Role in the Rise of Shas**
Nissim Leon 1
- Artists as Leaders: Yosef Zaritsky and Raffi Lavie**
Dalia Manor 33
- The Leader, the Scientists and War: David Ben-Gurion and the Establishment of the Science Corps**
Ari Barell 67
- Deserted Women in Palestine at the End of the Ottoman Period and the Beginning of the Mandate Period**
Gur Alroey 93
- An Impossible Rebirth: Zionism and the Holocaust in Shulamith Hareven’s Fiction**
Rachel Feldhay Brenner 117
- “Holocaust Profits”: Personal Compensation Claims from Germany as a Source of Income in the 1950s and 1960s**
Yossi Katz 137
- A Jewish Hero Becomes an Enemy of the People of Israel: The Timerman Affair, the Israeli Establishment and the Hebrew Press**
Raanan Rein and Efraim Davidi 167

REVIEW ESSAY

- Between Baghdad and Ramat Gan: Iraqi Jews in Israel*, by Esther Meir-Glitzenstein
Guy Miron 193

REVIEWS

- Off the Beaten Track: The Mizrahim and the Shoah*, by Hanna Yablonka
Yfaat Weiss 205

<i>A Dual Race against Time: Zionist Immigration Policy in the 1930s,</i> by Aviva Halamish	
Dvora Hacoen	211
<i>The “Forverts” for Mankind: Immigrants, Socialism and Jewish Politics,</i> <i>New York 1890-1917,</i> by Ehud Manor	
Kimmy Kaplan.....	219
<i>The Kibbutz Movement: A History,</i> by Henry Near	
Aviva Halamish.....	227
<i>Leadership in Times of War,</i> edited by Yossi Goldstein	
Zaki Shalom.....	235
<i>Law and Culture in Israel at the Threshold of the Twenty First Century,</i> by Menachem Mautner	
Gadi Barzilai	241
List of Contributors	245
English Summaries	VII

Summaries

Nissim Leon

The After-Shocks of the 1977 Political “Upheaval” and
Their Role in the Rise of Shas

In May 1977 the Likud Party led by Menachem Begin became, for the first time, the dominant party in Israel. The word *mahapakh* (upheaval, turnaround), which was applied to this landmark event, is closely related to the word *mahapekhah* (revolution), capturing the historic moment of semi-revolution in Israeli history. However, this article argues that the major political upheaval was accompanied by two “aftershocks,” or secondary upheavals: a religious upheaval and an ethnic upheaval. The Likud’s agreements with the ultra-Orthodox (*haredi*) parties led to a huge increase in the number of full-time Torah scholars, while agreements with the religious-Zionist party, the Mafdal, contributed to accelerating the settlement movement in the occupied territories. These two “secondary upheavals” deepened the segregation between Mizrahim and Ashkenazim in religious society in Israel, leading to the decision of the Sephardic rabbinical leaders to establish a new ethnic and religious party — Shas — seven years after the *mahapakh*.

Dalia Manor

Artists as Leaders: Yosef Zaritsky and Raffi Lavie

The Ukrainian-born Yosef Zaritsky (1891–1985) and the native-born Raffi Lavie (1937–2007) were charismatic leaders who shaped the canon of Israeli art, despite the differences in their background, education, style and approach to art. Zaritsky’s influence was particularly salient during the 1940s and 1950s when he became the leader of the modernist abstraction group “New Horizons,” while Lavie was especially influential in the 1960s and 1970s as the founder of the “10+” group and as a popular art teacher. Both artists continued to be admired long after these periods, and to express their opinions on art and artists who were outside their immediate circles. Their important position demonstrates what is seldom discussed in art historical literature: the function of creative artists as “goalkeepers,” in determining the value of works of art and the success of fellow artists. Their status is also interesting in the wider context of the story of Zionism and the creation of a new culture in the Land of Israel. Zaritsky is often described as a pioneer who singlehandedly founded the art scene in Palestine. By bringing the high values of modern French art he “made the desert bloom.” By contrast, Raffi Lavie is often described as the mischievous native-born Sabra who created the long-anticipated genuine local Israeli art. These two father figures of Israeli art thus embody two facets of Zionism’s cultural aim: to create universal art that

would be part of “world” culture, i.e., Western civilization; and to create art that would be a unique and authentic reflection of the locale.

Ari Barell

The Leader, the Scientists and War: David Ben-Gurion and the Establishment of the Science Corps

The article examines the involvement of David Ben-Gurion in the establishment of the Science Corps (“Hemed”), the foundation of the Israeli military research complex. The particular historical context of World War II and the Israeli War of Independence, along with the close cooperation that developed between Ben-Gurion and the scientists, led to the establishment of the Science Corps and its subsequent success in becoming a dominant factor in the production of local armaments despite strong objection from parts of the Jewish military establishment.

Gur Alroey

Deserted Women in Palestine at the End of the Ottoman Period and the Beginning of the Mandate Period

In 1919–1921, the Zionist Commission and the American Jewish Relief Committee dealt with more than two hundred Jewish women in Palestine whose husbands had disappeared in the years prior to World War I and during the war itself. From the wide-ranging correspondence on this issue, it appears that in this period there was a large number of men who brought their wives and children to Palestine, deserted them, and emigrated to another country. This article examines the reasons for this phenomenon, evaluates its extent, and considers it within its broader sociohistorical context. By analyzing the *Yishuv* from a comparative perspective, the article seeks to determine the points of similarity between the Jewish immigrants to Palestine in the early twentieth century and those who emigrated to the United States and other countries of destination for Jews in that period.

Rachel Feldhay Brenner

An Impossible Rebirth: Zionism and the Holocaust in Shulamith Hareven’s Fiction

Only four short stories, “The Witness” (1980), “Twilight” (1980), “Great-Aunts” (1966) and “Mahogany” (1997), in Shulamith Hareven’s considerable *oeuvre* deal with the subject of the Holocaust. In view of the writer’s consistent

refusal to acknowledge autobiographical elements in her fiction, the confessional components in the stories represent an important deviation from Hareven's *ars poetica*. At the same time, Hareven's lifelong insistence on having been reborn in the strong sunlight of the Land of Israel — she escaped Warsaw in 1940 — draws attention to her treatment of the Holocaust in the stories. This discussion claims that the stories represent a struggle between the identity that was shaped by her Holocaust experience and her adopted Zionist identity. Ironically, the Zionist ideology, which was determined to create a “new,” strong Jew, liberated from the past, is assigned the instrumental role of a therapeutic system intended to keep the traumatic past away. In a further ironic twist, the ineluctably invasive dark memories of abandonment and weakness in the four stories, which punctuate the representations of the Zionist reality in Hareven's *oeuvre*, evince the failure of the Zionist promise to the Holocaust survivor of a life of confidence, security and normalcy in Israel.

Yossi Katz

“Holocaust Profits”: Personal Compensation Claims from Germany as a Source of Income in the 1950s and 1960s

Although scholars have discussed many aspects of the Reparations Agreement of 1952, very little attention has been devoted to the personal compensation that Germany paid Israeli citizens who were Holocaust survivors. This article examines the various bodies in Israel — private as well as public — that were involved in handling the personal claims against Germany in the 1950s and 1960s (and later also the claims against Switzerland regarding the deposits in Swiss banks). It investigates how these bodies handled the issue and throws some light on their special interests in this matter — especially the material interests compared with the ideological ones. In particular, the article considers the role played by the State of Israel in the personal compensation claims issue as compared to its role in the issue of the collective claim, i.e., the Reparations Agreement. It argues that the state's involvement in the personal claims through the Holocaust Survivors Claims Law, 1957, derived primarily from economic reasons. Moreover, the state preferred to leave the issue of the personal claims in the hands of private enterprise, public bodies and banks. This policy of “keeping aloof” from the survivors can be explained by the disparaging attitude toward them in the 1950s and 1960s, when they were regarded as having gone “like sheep to the slaughter.”

Raanan Rein and Efraim Davidi

A Jewish Hero Becomes an Enemy of the People of Israel: The Timerman Affair, the Israeli Establishment and the Hebrew Press

Upon his arrival in Israel in late September 1979, the Jewish-Argentine journalist Jacobo Timerman was welcomed as a Jewish hero. Timerman, the founding editor of the daily *La Opinión*, was kidnapped in Argentina in April 1977, tortured, and spent almost two and a half years in illegal detention, and later under house arrest, until he was deported to Israel. But the initial enthusiasm quickly gave way to disappointment. Within a few years the Jewish hero became a persona non grata, among others because of his critical writings against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. This article analyzes the changing image of Timerman in the Hebrew press. Israeli society found it difficult to accept such criticism from someone who had come to Israel only a short time earlier, with the help of the Israeli government to boot. Furthermore, the hostility of the Israeli establishment and local media toward Timerman also reflected a lack of understanding as to the meaning of Zionism among many diaspora Jews, especially in Argentina.