ZIONISM

STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE
ZIONIST MOVEMENT
AND OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN PALESTINE

The Chaim Weizmann Institute for the Study of Zionism 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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Yosef Gorni

The Partial 'Melting Pot' in Zionist Thought and Practice

The cardinal question in the article is whether the "melting pot" as conceived by the Zionist thinkers failed. The article attempts to clarify the term "melting pot" in Zionist ideology as realized in the process of building the new Jewish society in Eretz Israel. The article assumes that from the outset there was innate tension within Zionism between intention and implementation in Eretz Israel. This was due to the many different concepts of the "melting pot," such as those of the Labor movement and civil circles; religious and non-religious groups; Sephardim and Ashkenazim, etc. These differences were reflected in the disparity between the ways of life and standards of living of the various groups in the Yishuv, all of which were aware and critical of this phenomenon. The differences were especially noticeable in the relations between the Ashkenazi laborers, who advocated the idea of the "melting pot", and Yemenite laborers. The encounters between these groups who both worked as agriculture laborers in the Jewish settlements of Eretz Israel, emphasized the contradictions between the ideology and realization of the "melting pot." These contradictions still characterize Israeli-Jewish society today.

The article concludes that despite the inevitable difficulties and objective contradictions which accompanied the realization of Zionism, a "partial melting pot" was created by the establishment of a sovereign and cultural framework common to all the different Jewish ethnic communities which took part in building the new society. The social, political and cultural weight of the different diasporas has varied over the years according to the changing historical developments.

Avraham Shapira

Between Utopia and Messianism in Gershom Scholem`s Writings

In Jewish studies the distinction between the value-concepts of messianism and utopia is widespread. Each of these concepts, especially the latter, is interpreted with different connotations. Gershom Scholem, who is largely recognized as the scholar who investigated Jewish

messianism throughout history, also studied the concept of utopia extensively, among others in his works on messianism or eschatological redemption. It may be that the distinction between the two concepts was so obvious to Scholem that he did not take the trouble to reflect on it in any of his works. This omission may have given rise to a misunderstanding of the distinct meanings he ascribed to them. The centrality of the concept of utopia in Scholem`s vocabulary has not previously been discussed. This article examines these two central dimensions in Scholem's writings. It presents a definition of Scholem's conception of Jewish messianism, clarifying his unambiguous distinction between messianism and the Jewish-Zionist utopia.

Yossef Fund

Zionist Symbolism in the Symbols of Agudat Israel

Agudat Israel was established in 1912 as a world organization of Orthodox Jews in response to the development of the secular Zionist movement. From its inception it was marked by ideological diversity. The changes that took place in its views and objectives were expressed in the symbols that were created for the "Major Conferences" of the World Agudat Israel, for the "Land Conferences" of the movement in Palestine and for the groups constituting Agudat Israel.

At the time of its establishment, Agudat Israel adopted a general platform in which it described itself as a religious philanthropic organization without any connection to the issue of Eretz Israel. The increasing political power of the Zionists in Palestine, the deterioration in the economic situation of the Jews in Europe, and the rise of Nazism created in the Aguda a demand for political and practical cooperation with the Zionist movement. Eretz Israel acquired an increasingly prominent position in the Aguda platform, and Zionist symbols became fused with those of Agudat Israel. This process accelerated as the Aguda integrated into the State of Israel.

Silvia Schenkolewski Kroll

Attempts by Argentine Jews to Settle in Eretz Israel after the Balfour Declaration

After the Balfour Declaration, farmers in the Jewish colonies in Argentina organized themselves in two groups with the objective of settling in Eretz

Israel. The first one, "Shevet Ahim", established in Bernasconi in 1918, drafted articles of association and a detailed program, and corresponded with the Zionist settlement organizations in Eretz Israel in order to be alloted some land for settlement. The second group, which was organized in 1919 in the Entre Rios province, did not decide upon a detailed program of action, but it too corresponded with those same organizations in Eretz Israel. From the replies they received we learn that the World Zionist Organization and its institutions preferred to settle victims of the First World War and members of the Third Aliya (the third wave of Zionist emigration) on the limited land that they had available, rather than experienced farmers who would be bringing some belongings with them. They also recommended to the potential immigrants from Argentina that it would be preferable if they donated money to aid the settlement on the land of those who were in need of help. Organized agricultural settlement in Eretz Israel by Argentinian Jews materialized after the establishment of the State of Israel.

Naomi Shiloah

The Union That Weakened – The Split That Strengthened: The Paradox of the General Zionists in Palestine in the 1930s

The historiography of the Yishuv in the 1930s has dealt extensively with the political, social and cultural developments in the Labor and the Revisonist movements and their confrontations, while disregarding the interests of the Citizens Groups in general and the General Zionists in particular. The status of the General Zionists within the Zionist movement gradually weakened after the First World War. In the 1920s, the Citizens Interests Groups were still a dominant factor in Eretz Israel. Moreover, most of the 220,000 new immigrants who arrived in Eretz Israel in the 1930s were middle class, independent professionals and owners of private capital, and as such naturally fitted the Citizens Interests Groups. Nevertheless, the power of the General Zionists within the Zionist movement and the Yishuv declined, despite the fact that the two main factions in the General Zionist movement — the "Citizens" and the "Progressives" — had united and established "the Federation of the General …. in Eretz Israel." Apparently, this union, which was intended to hide the differences between the two factions of the General Zionists, drove away many voters. Five years after the initial merger, the two camps of the General Zionists split. This division, which underscored once again the differences between the factions, did not weaken the General Zionists, but, on the contrary, served to strengthen the movement.

Irit Amit

From Canada to the Holy Land: Characteristics of Canadian-Jewish Investors in Palestine in the 1920s and 1930s

In the 1920s and 1930s there was a Zionist awakening among Canadian Jewry. Alongside contributions and calls for support in purchasing land for settlement in Palestine, there were appeals to invest in economic enterprises, particularly in citrus orchards. Several people responded to this call. Some investors established economic enterprises and also settled in Palestine; others remained in Canada and managed their international businesses from there. This article examines the incentives for and characteristics of their activity, on the basis of research that describes and analyzes the characteristics of the private entrepreneur. The article examines whether Canadian investors who worked in Palestine in the 1920s and 1930s were similar to other private entrepreneurs or whether the situation in Palestine during the British Mandate and the Zionist ideology that motivated them influenced their activity.

Aharon Gaimani

Rabbi Yihye Nahum and His Immigration to Eretz Israel

Rabbi Yihye Nahum, the supervisor in Yemen of the ritual slaughterers and the rabbis, was well known among Yemenite Jews as an expert ritual slaughterer and inspector. He even issued certificates to religious office holders. In 1934 he left for Aden on his way to Eretz Israel. Six of the letters published in this research, which were sent during his stay in Aden to several people in Palestine, provide information about his work on behalf of Yemenite Jewry, as well as about the difficulties of immigration from Yemen in those days. The immigrants from all over Yemen who arrived in Aden encountered two main difficulties. Not only did the long wait for immigration certificates to Palestine constitute an economic burden, with many immigrants becoming destitute during this period, but the severe heat in Aden during the summer months made their conditions even harder. The local Jewish community suffered from the waves of immigrants, but received them well. Rabbi Yihye Nahum waited in Aden about two years until he received an immigration certificate. In Palestine he was appointed to be the rabbi of the Kerem Ha-Teimanim neighborhood in Tel Aviv.

Rachel Sharabi

The Conflict between Yemenite Immigrants and Yishuv Society over the Principle of "Hebrew Labor": A Conceptual-Linguistic Expression

Yishuv society viewed "Hebrew Labor" as a central principle of Zionism and regarded those Jews who employed Arab workers on their land as national traitors. The fact that Yemenite settlements engaged Arab workers was considered by Yishuv authorities as showing contempt for the principles and norms of the Yishuv workers. The Yemenites did not believe that employing Arab workers in their settlements was a problem, a view supported by their official settlement committees and authorities. In Yemen, economic and social interaction with Arabs had been the accepted norm, and since the Yemenites had not undergone Zionist ideological training, they did not share the Yishuv's feeling of shame over employing Arabs. The Yishuv leadership, however, failed to understand the Yemenites' lack of awareness of this issue, and put continual pressure on them to conform to Yishuv rules. This created a conflict in which the leaders of the Yemenite Association, who were familiar with the social codes of both groups, mediated between the Yemenite and Yishuv societies.

Dina Porat

The Influence of the Yishuv's "Negation of the Diaspora" on the Rescue of Jews during the Holocaust

The article inquires whether the efforts to rescue Jews under Nazi occupation in Europe were influenced by one of the tenets of Zionist ideology, the negation of the Diaspora. Zionists wished to foster a new Jew, one who would come to the Land of Israel as a fulfillment of his personal and national vision and become part of a productive collective. Yet the Holocaust turned such priorities upside down, and the public organs of the Yishuv, headed by the Jewish Agency, faced a reality they had no influence on. Decision-makers in the Yishuv wavered between the duty of the Zionist movement to rescue any Jew — for immigration to Palestine remained the only viable solution for Jews at the time — and their obligations towards Zionist youth movements and activists, while being tragically aware that the war in Europe, coupled with the Nazi policies against the Jews, doomed their plans to failure, and that Zionist ideology had lost its relevance in such times.

Yosef Lang

On the Relations between Ahad Ha-Am and Ben-Yehuda

In Zionist historiography it is usual to show Ahad Ha-Am and Ben-Yehuda as standing on opposite sides of the ideological barricade. Ahad Ha-Am, the most important ideologist of the Hibbat Ziyyon period and the creator of "spiritual" Zionism, regarded what he defined as "the problem of Judaism" as the central problem on whose solution the continued existence of the Jewish people depended. Ben-Yehuda, by contrast, was one of the first proponents of the political-territorial school of Zionism, to which he remained faithful all his life. Whereas Ahad Ha-Am insisted that Jews must prepare themselves ideologically and spiritually in the Diaspora before settling in Eretz Israel, Ben-Yehuda called for immediate mass immigration. They also differed on certain aspects of the Hebrew language — whether it was to be the only national language of the Jews, and how a knowledge of it was to be transmitted to the mass of the Jewish people, as well as other questions to do with national education. Nonetheless, there were also a number of topics on which the two men found themselves in complete agreement, and some observers even detected points of similarity between them, such as their external appearance, their fanaticism, and their asceticism.

Few commentators, if any, have understood the special nature of the personal relationship between these two figures, the ups and downs through which it passed, and the tensions and jealousies that were intermittently part of it. This article focuses on the personal connections that developed between them over thirty years or so, as revealed by an examination of their articles in the contemporary press, the testimonies of acquaintances, and the letters they left after their death. Most of Ahad Ha-Am's letters to Ben-Yehuda and to the latter's wife, Hemdah, have appeared in the published collections of Ahad Ha-Am's letters, whereas Ben-Yehuda's letters are printed here for the first time. The correspondence reflects the different interests of the two men: Ben-Yehuda asks for assistance, which Ahad Ha-Am gives him, fully or partially, while not hesitating to criticize Ben-Yehuda's failures, both of commission and of omission. At the same time Ahad Ha-Am remains a constant source of encouragement for Ben-Yehuda and the supporters of his dictionaries and his newspapers. It was in fact only Ahad Ha-Am's followers abroad, the "Odessa school" of writers, who saw themselves as being at war with Ben-Yehuda, fought against many of his projects, and opposed his outlook. Ahad Ha-Am's followers in Eretz Israel, on the other hand, supported Ben-Yehuda and his linguistic projects, made use of his newspapers for various purposes, and were on warm personal terms with

him. Ben-Yehuda expressed great respect for Ahad Ha-Am, admired his judgment and character, and saw in him not only a devoted supporter of his dictionaries and his newspapers but also a friend. Ahad Ha-Am was greatly interested not only in Ben-Yehuda's work but also in his distinctive personality, as is shown by their meetings in Eretz Israel and abroad. In their old age there was even co-operation between them and closeness between their families, and both have honorable places in the pantheon of those considered to have been outstanding personalities of their generation and shapers of its character.

   This article does not aim to give a comprehensive account of the similarities and differences between the two men, or of all the issues they grappled with. However, the topics discussed throw light not only on their relationship but also on important issues in the history of the Jewish national movement and on the political and cultural controversies that took place both within and outside Eretz Israel — issues and events that shaped the political and cultural infrastructure of the Yishuv and the State of Israel

Zvi Zameret

Moshe Sharett's Attitude towards Religion during Israel`s First Years

During Israel's first years there was a wide spectrum of attitudes towards religion within Mapai. There were radical, secular leaders (such as Pinhas Lavon and Beba Idelson) who had rebelled against religion and demanded that Israel be a secular state; there were others (such as Yitzhak Ben-Zvi and Zalman Shazar) who adhered to Jewish religious tradition, even observing some of its customs and who wanted Israel to preserve and foster traditional Jewish culture; and there were even some (such as the leadership of Ha'oved Hadati, a faction that was financed and supported by Mapai) who were deeply religious, punctiliously observed the religious commandments, and hoped that many Israelis would live according to the *halakha* (Jewish religious law).

   The article attempts to determine where Moshe Sharett, (1894–1965), Israel's first foreign minister and its second prime minister, was on this spectrum of attitudes towards religion. The author concludes that Sharett, in his private capacity, had much respect for Jewish tradition and most of its customs and wanted a greater knowledge of Judaism and Jewish consciousness to be instilled in the younger generation. At the same time, he believed that certain religious customs were primitive and even inhumane (such as that of *halitza* – the degrading ceremony in which a childless widow releases her brother-in-law from levirate marriage). He

demanded that such customs be abolished by the religious-rabbinical leadership itself. As prime minister, Sharett feared the religious politicians and was wary of tensions within the nation that might result from confrontations with the religious political parties. Therefore he was apprehensive and hesitant every time that a conflict — even a very minor one — arose with the religious camp. Sharett believed that mutual tolerance and great patience were the order of the day in relations with religious Jews.

Uri Cohen

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem in the Transition from Yishuv to State: Initial Perspectives on the Development of the Credential Society in Israel

The proliferation of formal education in Israel from the declaration of the State of Israel until today followed a very similar process to that in Western Europe. In this process, the whole educational system, from grade school, high school through higher education, has become more and more widespread and has opened its doors to all. As a result, education scholars argue that Israel has become to a large extent a "credential society," in which graduation certificates have become the main criterion for job placement. This article studies the first steps taken by the credential society in Israel's first decade. This decade was formative for the nature of higher education, and projects upon Israeli society as a whole.

In the first decade, the Hebrew University was a dominant factor in the construction of a new collective Israeli identity, namely, the "credential society culture." Definition of this collective identity relies upon the creation of specific codes relating to the structure of a set of priorities that the society constructs, in the creation of new kinds of elite groups and in demands for cultural supremacy. This model established rates and gates that were constructed to regulate and supervise the process of output and flow of resources in the new sovereign society. This process was dominated by a powerful new principle relating to stratification, which gave way to the establishment of exclusive bordering and prevented the "strangers" who had just arrived in Israel from gaining access to the older social group. In contrast to the pattern that is common in most places, of raising the requirements to distinguish between groups according to ethnicity, race or social standing in the process of university admittance, the first step of creating the credential society in Israel was

characterized by a dramatic lowering of the admittance requirements and by relatively easy access to degrees awarded by the only university in Israel at the time. In this situation, it is clear that the matriculation certificates that were issued by the Ministry of Education, immediately after the establishment of the state, as a sufficient condition for high school students' admittance to the university had crucial importance. This subject is one of the major questions in studying the process in which the Hebrew University became a clearly elitist-oriented institution that took part in enforcing the dominant social model, that of the credential society.

Eyal Kafkafi

Moshe Sharett and the Lavon Affair: A Tale of Belated Recognition

Both as foreign minister and subsequently as prime minister Moshe Sharett dared to oppose the most prominent leader of Israel since its inception, David Ben-Gurion. Pinhas Lavon, who was minister of defense in the Sharett government in 1954, is one of the less known and studied figures of the founding generation, and the little that is known about him has been seriously distorted. One possible reason for this is that not only did he clash with Ben-Gurion in the early 1960s, but he also antagonized Sharett when he was his minister of defense. It was only when Lavon came into conflict with Ben-Gurion that Sharett realized that he was not the monster he had made of him in 1954–1955.

Raanan Rein

In the Shadow of Eichmann's Kidnapping: Israeli–Argentine Relations and the Status of the Local Jewish Community

The kidnapping of Adolf Eichmann in Argentina in May 1960, provoked a diplomatic crisis between Argentina and Israel, with the Israeli ambassador being declared *persona non grata.* The Jewish community in Argentina felt insecure in the wake of violent anti-Semitism that followed the seizure of the Nazi war criminal. The contrast between the speedy resolution of the diplomatic crisis and the affair's long-lasting effects of Argentina's Jews indicates once again that the interests of the local Jewish community and those of the Jewish state are not congruent and involve different dynamics. It also indicates that Argentine authorities were too often unwilling or unable to put a stop to anti-Semitic attacks by

nationalist groups. Instead, they opted for closed relations with the Jewish state, hoping in this way to prevent such attacks from blackening Argentina's image in the U.S.

Baruch Kanari

A Critique of Some Basic Assumptions in Research on the Kibbutz

This article examines the main theories guiding sociological research on the kibbutz movement, which were crystallized in the 1960s by Professor Yonina Talmon and her followers. The article criticizes the basic assumption of those theories, i.e. that the kibbutz movement passed through specific development stages: from an intimate, cohesive, small group, with social relationships between individuals, based on affect (*Gemeinschaft*); to a large, economically motivated community based on the division of labor, and contractual relations between individuals (*Gesellschaft*). The problem with this underlying notion is that it was taken from a very different context: that of the study of German society. The criticism presented in this article is based on historical evidence of another kind of kibbutz development, which contradicts the assumptions of the theory, and in particular on Z. Landshut's different account of the development of the kibbutz movement. Landshut was the first researcher of the kibbutz, but his work, published in the late 1930s, has long been neglected. His explanations, based on a holistic understanding of the communitarian phenomenon, provide a much better understanding of the developments of the kibbutz movement within the context of the larger Israeli society.