ABSTRACTS

Jewish-Israeli Identity
A Debate
Eliezer Schweid

The Jewish society in Israel faces in our era a critical decision between the new 'Israeli' national-political identity and the historical ethnical-cultural Jewish identity. In this essay the author examines and evaluates the two alternatives. Deciding against the first and for the second he recommends ways of educational and cultural confrontation with the crisis.

Yehoshua Porath

The Founding Fathers of Zionism realized that the only way for the Jews to continue to exist as a collective entity was to transform the Jewish people into a normal nation, in its own land and to renew its national culture. However, only a fraction of the Jews have chosen this solution. Another part of the people continues to live according to traditional religious values, while others prefer to assimilate, to various degrees among other nations. Due to these differences, the breach between the Jewish Israelis and the rest of the Jewish people is continuously growing. The author points out that one cannot evade this new reality and raises the question whether today the Jews are really one people.

Hashomer and Volunteering for Service in the Ottoman Army

Matityahu Minc

The author attempts to prove that the Ottoman orientation of the World Zionist Organization was necessarily tied to promoting Turkish patriotism, and took into account the possibility of organized Jewish volunteering for service in the Turkish army as part of the efforts to achieve favourable political concessions for Zionism in Palestine. The author also claims that the *Poalei Zion* party not only did not distance itself from this aim, but enthusiastically offered the

Shomer in order to help achieve it. Considerations such as these were accepted by the Zionist leadership, and that of *Poalei Zion* (Shohat, Ben-Zvi and Ben-Gurion), and were specifically discussed during the Tripoli dispute (1911), and at the time of the Balkan War in January 1913. The Ottomanization plan at the beginning of the First World War was even aimed at promoting the enlistment of Jews on the Turkish side, once again on the basis of Zionist political considerations. Therefore, the opposition to Rotenberg's plans in 1914 concerning Jewish regiments on the Allied side, in return for a commitment to the setting up of a Jewish republic in Palestine, and/or to Jabotinsky's plans, did not derive from neutral ideological or pacifist positions, but rather from loyalty to Turkey due to a pragmatic evaluation of the situation concerning the chances of success of the sides at war and of the consequent desired Jewish orientation.

What did Ben-Gurion Know about Tel-Hai?

Nakdimon Rogel

D. Ben-Gurion referred to the Tel-Hai affair on many occasions and under various circumstances, especially whenever the *Yishuv* faced grave danger and seemingly hazardous struggles. He also used Ze'ev Jabotinsky's outspoken opposition to the hopeless defence of Upper Galilee in 1920 as an argument against Jabotinsky and his movement. However, Ben-Gurion's knowledge of what really happened in Upper Galilee was scant and erroneous. Biographers and historians who relied on Ben-Gurion's memoires as a reliable source perpetuated these errors of chronology, geography and substance. The author quotes from E. Golomb's retrospective article on the lessons of the Tel-Hai affair, published five years after the event in *Kuntres*, as an example of a balanced analysis of the event and its outcome. Only in the early 1930s did Golomb adopt Ben-Gurion's virulent style in attacking the revisionists and their leader. The article also raises the question to what extent was the decision not to evacuate the Etzion settlements in 1948 inspired by the *Yishuv*'s repugnance to evacuate a Jewish agricultural outpost, in view of the norm and myth based on the Tel-Hai affair.

The Three Hour-Glasses in the Preparations for the War of Independence

Meir Avizohar

At the core of this article lies the following question: to what extent should the success of the *Yishuv* forces to withstand the offensive of the Arab armies in May 1948, be creditted, on the leadership level, to David Ben-Gurion? The author presents a case study of a foresight and authoritative ability to take advance action accordingly.

In this respect, the first relevant initiative was launched in the summer of 1945, whilst in the United States, Ben-Gurion instigated a special fund, separated from the Zionist establishment fund-raising activities for purchase of heavy arms and machines from the junkyards and surpluses of World War II for Israel's Military Industry. This was the first actual move towards the organization of a modern Jewish army. It was also the first action taken on high level that was based on the prediction of the imminent Arab invasion.

The second relevant initiative was that of a far-reaching *Hagana* reform based on the conception that the phase of resistance against the British was soon to come to an end with the pull-out of their forces from *Eretz-Israel*. The *Hagana* had to reorganize itself in order to fulfill a new task: preparations in anticipation for the struggle with the Arab regular armies. It was Ben-Gurion who introduced the concept of the new function and who brought about the change in the structure getting into harsh conflict with *Hagana* commanders whose concept was grounded in a passing reality. The endeavour itself was made possible due to the changes that took place in the top rank of the Zionist Movement towards the end of 1946 when both posts of Executive Head and the defence portfolio were entrusted to Ben-Gurion.

The third initiative took place in October 1947, when Ben-Gurion ordered the purchase of airplanes and artillery, as well as the start of the planning for the repulsion of the expected invasion and the conquering of the land 'wholly or partially, until an authoritative political arrangement be established.'

The article analyzes the circumstances that lead to the triple initiatives and dwells in particular upon the significance of the third point in time.

Intelligence Assessments Towards the War of Independence

Yoav Gelber

The political and military leadership of the *Yishuv* in the 1940s expected the next Arab-Jewish clash to be a reinforced repetition of the 1936-1939 disturbances. Thus, the *Yishuv* was surprised by the timing, the character of the warfare, the methods and the rapid spreading of the fighting. Since the Bludan conference in June 1946, the contingency of the Arab states' intervention in the Palestine conflict could not be ruled out. Nonetheless, the *Yishuv* leadership, except for Ben-Gurion, did not believe it. The *Shai* and the Arab Section of the Jewish Agency's Political Department focused their efforts on the Mufti's preparations for disorders in the style of the 1930s' revolt. They were late in comprehending the role of the Arab states in the forthcoming war and neglected the Arab regular armies as a potential menace. This basic misconception, strengthened by warnings of imminent civil strife, served to distract their attention from the two major processes which preceded the war: the British withdrawal and the Arab states' provisions for the impending clash. Intelligence officials regarded these as separate events and did not perceive the linkage between them, or with news about the likely Arab reaction to the UN resolution and the anticipated evacuation. While they had several impressive successes in obtaining first-hand information on the Arabs, particularly in Palestine and Transjordan, their interpretations were often erroneous. Knowledge and estimation of British intentions and plans were more inaccurate, having been influenced by bitter reminiscences of recent years. Intelligence shortcomings had a substantial impact on the shaping of the *Yishuv's* strategy towards the beginning of the war.

The Israeli Air Force and Operation *Horev*

Ze'ev Tzahor

At the end of the first year of the War of Independence, in December 1948, *Zahal* initiated a large-scale offensive on the Egyptian front in order to remove the Egyptian army from Israeli territory. The operation was intended to be a quick and decisive strike, as it was clear that the US and Britain would not let the war continue. Operation *Horev, as* the offensive was named, was planned according to general guidelines. The assumption was that developments in the

campaign would dictate its progress. Therefore, there were no clear directives regarding the crossing of the international border with Egypt.

The plan called for a general role to be carried out by the air force. The order for the operation was to carry out intelligence surveillance flights, to obstruct Egyptian supply lines, to provide close assistance to ground forces, to bomb airports and to defend Israel's skies, and even to fly in parachute commando forces. All these assignments were conveyed with no specific plans. Though it had been decided that a liaison office would coordinate between the staff of the operation and air force command, no real coordination took place. Moreover, no one took into account the fact that during the appointed days for the operation the air force was due to receive a relatively large number of fighter planes, which at that juncture, limited its capabilities.

Starting so complicated an operation with so little advance planning expresses the compelling forces under which the army had to act. An army which was formed in the midst of war and whose tradition was fostered in the elite units of the *Palmach*. This tradition gave resourcefulness and improvisation important roles in the fighting. These same qualities came into conflict with the needs of an advanced air force, one in which emphasis was placed on professionalism, prepared logistic systems and precise and strict planning.

This clash was expressed as the battle ensued. The command of Operation *Horev* decided, without political authorization, to penetrate deep into Egyptian territory. The consequence of this action was that *Zahal's* units were, in fact, laid bare to assaults by the Egyptian air force. This incident brought on international concern and caused fear of a British military intervention. The Israeli air force had to withstand contradictory demands and pressures that generated tension between the headquarters of the operation and the air force command.

This article deals with the relations between the commands, the functioning of the air force during Operation *Horev*, and the lessons derived by the air force at the end of the war. Particular stress is placed on the air battle of January 7, 1949, in which *Zahal* shot down five British fighter planes. This battle brought the operation to its end, and in fact turned out to be the last battle in the War of Independence.

Operation *Horev* as a Final Stage
of the IDF's Unification

Gabriella Heichal

In this paper the author compares two events which occurred in different historical settings. She defines one of the stages of the development of civil supremacy over the military as the revolutionary phase, with Operation *Horev* serving as an example. The paper stresses the importance which Prime Minister Ben-Gurion placed on the non-politization of the IDF, and the way in which his authority was exerted when he suspected that his instructions were not complied with. This instance is compared to the Frémont Declaration during the American Civil War. Similarities in the behaviour of Lincoln and Ben-Gurion are drawn, though it is shown that Lincoln's reverence for the legal process, as enacted by Congress, was more pronounced. However, both leaders refrained from immediately dismissing the commanders involved.

The paper is based on numerous previously unpublished quotes and original documents. It also partially questions the memoires of Y. Rabin, then Chief-of-Operations, concerning this subject.

Strategy Debated – Arab Infiltration and Israeli Retaliation
Policy in the Early 1950s

Zaki Shalom

Arab infiltration into Israel throughout the early 1950s and Israel's response to it undoubtedly constituted the main theme in Israel's relations with its Arab neighbours in the years after the War of 1948. However, throughout this period no clear definition of the term 'infiltration' was ever given.

The term infiltration was used to describe various types of activities against Israel, its installations, soldiers and citizens. Common to all these acts was the fact that they were carried out by Arabs from neighbouring states across the armistice lines.

In its most innocuous form infiltration involved the accidental entry of Arabs into Israeli territory. Such crossing of the armistice lines was due mainly to a lack of clarity in the demarcation of Israel's borders following the 1948 War.

In many other cases, however, the infiltrators were exploited by militant Arab organizations or official Arab government agencies for other activities such as smuggling, stealing, and the collection of intelligence data. In its worst

form infiltration was effected for the purpose of sabotage raids and the killing of Israelis, soldiers as well as civilians.

Israel's official policy was that the Arab states were responsible for infiltration carried out from their territory. This gave Israel a moral, as well as legal, justification to implement an escalating retaliation policy.

This study reviews, *inter alia*, aspects of the Arab infiltration into Israel, and Israel's retaliation policy in the early 1950s. In particular, it concentrates on the differing views within the Israeli leadership regarding the responsibility of the Arab states for the infiltration, and the assessment of the deterrent effect of the retaliation policy.

National Security and Military Strength – Between Statesman and Military Commander

Yitzhak Greenberg

During the first years of the existence of the State of Israel, discussions were held on the optimal magnitude of defence expenses. In 1952, Lt. General Yigal Yadin resigned as Chief-of-General Staff of the IDF, because of differences with David Ben-Gurion, then Prime Minister and Defence Minister, over the defence budget, priorities in defence expenses and the build-up of military power. Ben-Gurion, the statesman, formulated his concept of national security around various factors: military strength, a stabilized and developed economy, absorption of immigrants, settlement and the education system. On the other hand, Yadin, the military commander, believed in forging military strength. To this was added the controversy over how to build military strength within economic and budgetary restraints. Ben-Gurion favoured a small regular army, equipped with sophisticated, advanced technology and weapons as well as with advanced intelligence and warning systems. Yadin, on the other hand, advocated the formation of a large regular army, even at the expense of better equipment.

The aim of this study is to examine these contrasting concepts of national security, and the establishment of military power during this formative period in Israel's history.

The Civil Components of Israel's National Security Doctrine

Moshe Lissak

The paper has a dual purpose: to propose a conceptual framework for the discussion of the civilian components of the Israeli security doctrine and their implications on army-society relations, and to examine this framework in the Israeli case.

The paper commences with an analysis of the concept of 'security doctrine', with particular attention to the military and civilian components of the comprehensive security doctrine. In this context, both written and unwritten security doctrines are considered. Political and social conditions which encourage or discourage their formulation are also analyzed. Schematic analysis of the correlation between political culture (democratic and non-democratic) and the threat (major or minor) perceived by national leaders and the general public, are proposed.

Very few had questioned the effects of security doctrines on military-society-state relations. The author notes, however, that such effects do have many variations. In this context an assessment of the extent of the army's role expansion and the divergence or convergence between the two systems has been proposed. The author also sought to evaluate the boundaries and linkages between the defence system and civilian systems. The paper then attempts to demonstrate the applicability of the proposed conceptual framework to the Israeli case. Although Israeli leaders have never supplied an official security doctrine, one may indeed discern both military and civilian components in Israel's unwritten doctrine.

Subsequently, the paper investigates several of the changes which occurred in basic assumptions, or rather, the extent of erosion in various domains which nurtured and molded the civilian components, namely Zionist ideology, democratic political culture and the affinity for universal civilian values. Finally, several institutional linkages in the domains of education, culture and communications, which ostensibly reflect practical application of the civilian dimension of the Israeli security doctrine are examined.

Territorial Partition of Palestine: The 1937 Decision

Itzhak Galnoor

The article explores attitudes of nations and states to territory and boundaries. These attitudes are divided into two categories. First, e x p r e s s i v e arguments for maintaining or acquiring territory invoke a higher principle of ideology, faith, history, nature, language, race, community, or culture to prove that this territory 'belongs'. For example, 'historical rights' are presented to prove that the state is entitled to a certain territory. Second, in i n s t r u m e n t a l arguments territory and boundaries are regarded as dependent variables, and invoke functional 'needs' such as strategy, defence, economic viability, social development, transportation and communication to prove that territory is required. The value of territory is thus determined as a means to other collective goals.

To investigate these attitudes, a concrete decision is presented: was the Zionist Movement willing to trade territory for other values when confronted with this dilemma in 1937? In that year, a British Royal Commission proposed that the territory of western Palestine be divided between Arabs and Jews and that an independent Jewish State be established on a territory of 5000 sq.km. The proposal resulted in a heated controversy within the Zionist Movement: should the Jews accept a State on merely one fifth of their homeland?

Five positions regarding this partition proposal are placed on a continuum: strong opposition, opposition, undecided, support, strong support. They are further examined according to their 'expressive' and 'instrumental' contents.

The resolution of the Zionist Congress in August 1937 was to adopt partition on principle and to negotiate with the British Government the precise terms for establishing a Jewish State. This decision is presented as a victory of the instrumentalist pragmatic approach, according to which territory was a means for accomplishing other goals. The choice parameters of the 1937 decision were typical to the dilemma that later confronted the State of Israel as well as other nation-states in similar situations.

The Lausanne Conference – An Early Indication of Different Approaches in Israeli Policy Towards the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Ilan Pappe

This article discerns a substantial difference in the approaches of David

Ben-Gurion and Moshe Sharett towards the Lausanne Conference. The conference was convened by the UN Palestine Conciliation Commission in April 1949, to discuss the outstanding problems of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Arab states, apart from Iraq, the Palestinians and the Israelis participated in the conference.

Whereas Ben-Gurion regarded the UN efforts in 1949 as threatening the achievements of the Jewish State in the 1948 War, Sharett viewed the conference as an opportunity to reach an understanding with the Arab world, and in particular with the Americans, on the basis of a comprehensive solution to the conflict. The basis for this understanding was an Israeli gesture regarding the refugee problem, namely a willingness to repatriate some of the Palestinian refugees, and also Israeli consent to a limited internationalization of Jerusalem and finally an Israeli reaffirmation of the validity of the 1947 Partition Plan. Ben-Gurion did not accept this attitude, and owing to his dominant position in the government, his views, and not Sharett's were eventually adopted by the Israeli leadership. This policy led to a temporary strain in Israel's relations with the United States, as the Americans held Israel responsible for the failure of the Lausanne accord.

These differences in approach are the background for the overt confrontation between the two men during the 1950s; a confrontation that would eventually lead to Sharett's removal from the Israeli political scene. Nevertheless, his concepts and ideas would be echoed and accepted by the Israeli 'Doves' in the post-1967 era.

Israel and the Question of Overflights to Jordan, 1958

Michael Oren

The Suez Crisis of 1956-1957 yielded Israel many apparent gains: free passage through the Straits of Tiran, UN buffer forces in Gaza and Sinai, and improved relations with the United States and Great Britain. In reality, Israel's strategic position remained unchanged, as in the aftermath of the crisis, the Western Powers continued to oppose security guarantees and military aid to Israel.

The predicament worsened considerably in 1958 with the rise of militant Nasserism and the escalation of Soviet hostility towards Israel. The situation reached a crisis level in July 1958, when nationalist forces overthrew the Iraqi government, and staged attempted coups in Lebanon and Jordan. The United States and Britain agreed to extend aid to the latter two countries, though it

soon became clear that the dispatch of troops to Jordan could only be implemented via air over Israel.

Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion sought to take advantage of the crisis to exact arms and defence guarantees from the British and the Americans. However, apart from vague assurances and limited weapon supplies these efforts brought few lasting results. Washington and London remained loath to jeopardize their interests in the Arab world by allying with Israel. On the other hand, Ben-Gurion's acquiescence in the overflights incurred Soviet anger and Moscow threatened to act militarily against Israel.

The episode served as another demonstration of Israel's fragile strategic position in the 1950s, despite the supposed gains of Suez, and the limited ability of a small nation to exact concessions from Great Powers.

The USSR and the Straits of Tiran, 1954-1967

Mordechai Bar-On

Since 1953, and increasingly since the conclusion of their large arms deal with Egypt, the Soviets gave unqualified support to the Arabs in their conflict with Israel, and consistently defended their course in different international fori.

Nevertheless, the Soviets' equivocation with regard to the closure of the Straits of Tiran in 1956 and 1967 stands in clear contrast to their total advocacy of the Arab position on other matters, including the denial of passage, in the Suez Canal, to Israeli ships and Israel-bound cargoes.

In this paper, the author tries to explain this discrepancy in the Soviet diplomatic record. He focuses on the gap between the Arabs' legal justification for the blockade in the Gulf of Aqaba, and the Soviets' position on the Law of the Seas in general and, in particular, their special interest in free navigation in international straits.

The paper analyzes the Soviet attitude towards international law in general and their record on the Law of the Seas, and puts these in contrast to the different legal arguments of the Arabs. The paper explains the ambivalent reaction of the Soviets to this problem in the deliberations of the UN Security Council and on other occasions.

Ben-Gurion's First Encounter with *She'erit Hapleita* Bulgaria, December 1944

Tuvia Friling

This article describes and analyzes Ben-Gurion's first encounter with Holocaust survivors. The article is based mainly on the detailed diary which Ben-Gurion kept of his trip to Bulgaria, which has yet to be utilized by his biographers.

Ben-Gurion stressed the importance of meeting with survivors and clearly defined the goals of his trip: to become acquainted with *She'erit Hapleita*, their problems and their plans. He wished to gain first-hand knowledge of the lurking dangers for the Jews in liberated areas and to gather information as to the relief work required to assist the survivors regain control of their lives, as well as to organize *Aliya* and to prepare the people for the coming political struggle.

Ben-Gurion arrived in Bulgaria following the September 9, 1944, uprising. His hope was that the various forces active within this changing reality in Bulgaria would enable the Jews who so wished to emigrate, and he wanted to encourage the Jewish community against assimilation. During the visit he was extremely active in several areas: 1) Encouraged relief work for Bulgarian Jews who were under harsh economic strains. 2) Participated in releasing Jewish groups who tried to cross through Bulgaria *en route* to Palestine but were detained under difficult conditions. 3) Attempted to run the blockade against *Aliya* from Bulgaria. 4) Involved in the political struggle within the Jewish community between the traditional leadership and the Jewish communists.

The visit throws light on Ben-Gurion's traits as a leader, politician and statesman, as well as his ability to analyze and solve complex problems. He proved his ability to evade opposition, to maneuver and manipulate conflicting powers, and to appear before national leaders as an equal. Finally, he demonstrated his persistence in his attempts to achieve maximum results from the very scarce resources then available.

She'erit Hapleita – Olim or Immigrants

Irit Keinan

At the basis of this paper lies the fundamental question – were *She'erit Hapleita* essentially Zionists or was Zionism compelled upon them *ad hoc?* The author

believes that despite certain difficulties, answers can be given. She discerns three stages concerning the survivors' attitude towards *Eretz-Israel.*

In the first phase, beginning in April 1945, with the liberation of Germany by the Allied Forces, a clear Zionist mood was established. This was influenced by the Zionist groups who began organizing the survivors in Germany.

The second phase started with the first waves of the *Bricha* [-escape], in the autumn of 1945. The population of the DP camps grew continuously and hardly changed. According to the poll taken by the Anglo-American Commission, 96.8% of the refugees chose *Eretz-Israel* as their destination of first priority. It is possible that some may have declared this without being really prepared for the actual *Aliya*. Nevertheless, the high percentage of those in favour of *Aliya*, amongst the survivors in Germany, is also reflected in data that were recorded at the same time by various non-Zionist, and even non-Jewish agencies.

The third phase, beginning in the summer of 1946, following the pogrom in Kielce, brought on a startling rush of Jews from Eastern Europe to Germany and the physical conditions in the camps only worsened. Morale in the camps was low and belief in *Aliya* began to ebb. At this point, there are different estimates, by various factors, as to the survivors' disposition towards *Aliya.*

It was generally accepted that the spontaneous Zionist feelings of the survivors were definitely in favour of *Eretz-Israel*. If they had to go to another country it would only be for lack of choice and despair of being able to reach *Eretz-Israel*, not otherwise. More than 70% of the displaced persons reached *Eretz-Israel.*

Having reviewed the historical facts, one reaches the conclusion that *She'erit Hapleita* was essentially Zionist. Theirs was a spontaneous Zionism that rose out of traumatic and tragic events of life that lead to the one and only result: the people of Israel to the Land of Israel.

The Plan for the 'Direct Absorption' of the Mass Immigration of the 1950s and its Results

Dvora Hacohen

In the process of absorbing the mass immigration in Israel in the 1950s an economic gap was formed between the *Olim* and the old-timers as well as social and cultural isolation and alienation.

This article examines the causes for this development. Was it a result of the lack of proper planning or other factors? The evolving picture shows that a

consciousness for the need for proper planning did exist in order to absorb the mass immigration. A serious effort was made, with the assistance of the best experts, to form the map for settlement in the country according to a state-wide physical, demographic and economic program, and to create a social and cultural integration between the *Yishuv* and the *Olim*. But, in reality, development did not match the planning. There were several reasons for this:

Planning principles – The planners based their program on the concept of the 'dispersal of population' all over the country, while each region made up a complete and autonomous economic, social and cultural unit. This concept was opposed to the typical centralist structure that had developed in the country during the days of the *Yishuv*. A system that was founded on ideological positions and defended by political and economic interests.

The gap was also the result of objective difficulties:

Aliya proportions – The huge waves of immigrants created enormous pressure for fast and immediate solutions for housing and employment for myriads of people. Thus, an immense gap was formed between the rate of planning and the constraints created by reality.

Financial crisis – Lack of financial sources brought about the neglect of the economic infrastructure on which planning had been based.

The policy of the 'dispersal of population' was only partially implemented. New settlements were established but they lacked the factors essential to their success: a basis for economic development and conditions for social and cultural integration were not created. The settlements of the *Olim* remained economically backward, isolated and alienated from those of the established old-timers.

Why the Majority of the Jews of Iraq Immigrated to Israel in 'Operation Ezra and Nehemya'

Daphne Tsimhoni

The mass immigration of the Jews of Iraq to Israel took place following the promulgation of a law in March 1950, permitting the Jews to leave Iraq after several years of prohibition. However, exit was conditioned on surrendering Iraqi nationality, and leaving behind much of the capital. Subsequently, about 124,000, the vast majority of the community, left Iraq for Israel within a year and a half, in an operation organized by the State of Israel. No one anticipated this large scale immigration.

This article analyzes the reasons for this unprecedented mass immigration. The majority of the Jewish community in Iraq had cherished Zion for generations, but it was not only Zionist aspirations that uprooted this long-established community and transferred it to Israel.

The establishment of the State of Israel had a double effect on the Jews of Iraq. It aroused their identification with the Jewish state but at the same time confronted them with the dilemma of a dual national identity. The Iraqi government, and the majority of the Iraqi people identified all Jews with Zionism and the State of Israel. Accordingly, a series of discriminatory measures, including arrests, torture and heavy fines were inflicted on those suspected of Zionist activity. From 1942, a clandestine Zionist movement developed. Though it had a membership of 2000 and gained influence among the younger generation, its prominence within the community was limited. With the prohibition to leave Iraq, many Jews reached the conclusion that they had no future in Iraq and that Israel was the only refuge. What was formerly a strong Jewish identity, based on religion and community, now turned into a national feeling inclined towards Zionism.

The mass registration to leave Iraq created a momentum which accelerated the immigration process. The article discusses this process as it developed through the Jews' close family ties and their concentration in Baghdad. These, among other factors, caused the mass emigration of nearly a whole community, an occurrence which would otherwise appear to defy logic.

The Frumkin Commission – The Investigation of Allegations Concerning Education of New Immigrants

Zvi Zameret

In January 1950, the Government of Israel appointed a Commission of Inquiry in order to investigate allegations concerning education within the camps for new immigrants. The Committee was to supply answers to the claims brought forth by the religious circles to the effect that anti-religious coercion was prevalent in the immigrants' camps. It was also formed to support the government coalition which was based mainly on *Mapai* and *Hehazit Hadatit*. The conclusions that were finally drawn were totally unforeseen.

A) The Commission was unanimously and vigorously critical of the concept that had for many years prevailed among wide circles in the country – first and foremost amongst the labour movements – according to which the new immigrants had to hastily adapt to the ideal image of the 'New Israeli' –

worker, secular, modern. The Commission strongly attacked the efforts that had been made during the first two years of the State's existence, to have the immigrants from all countries conform to the 'New Israeli' experience. Efforts that totally denied the unique traits of the various groups and their traditional background.

B) Though the Commission was established with the aim of bridging the gap between the secular and the religious population, its conclusions only widened the gap. In fact, the findings supported the demand for two separate education systems: a secular framework and a religious one.

C) The conclusions adopted by the Commission assisted Ben-Gurion in his efforts to abolish the various trends of education. But the anti-religious coercion uncovered by the Commission was one of the reasons that these efforts came to fruition in an entirely different way than that which had been envisioned by Ben-Gurion. In fact, the religious circles were left with a decisive measure of influence and autonomy, even after the State Education Act was passed in the *Knesset* in 1953.

The Historical Continuity Motif in American Zionism

Allon Gal

The inherent ideological tendency of European Zionism in its general negation of the *Golah* (diaspora, exile), was to concentrate on and idealize the periods of Jewish sovereignty. Zionist leaders of European background gravitated particularly to the earlier Biblical period. As the thrust of European Zionism was to create an alternative to the exilic experience, European Zionists showed little interest in the long exilic period, other than as an example of the very experience the Zionist enterprise sought to shun.

In contrast to European Zionism, mainstream American Zionism rejected the 'negation of the Diaspora', at least as far as Jewish life in the United States was concerned. The critical challenge for American Zionism was not to respond to anti-Semitism, but rather to preserve Jewish civilization *vis-à-vis* the threat of assimilation. Consequently, American Zionism tended to develop a positive interest in the Jewish historical experience outside of *Eretz-Israel*. Modern Jewish life in America as well as in *Eretz-Israel*, claimed American Zionists – who were never anti-religious – could be enriched and enobled by the heritage of Jewish Middle Ages.

As a striving minority group in the United States, American Zioinists were empathetic to the Jewish people's experience as a minority during the eighteen

hundred years of *Galut*. In this vein they expected the *Yishuv* to identify compassionately with the exilic past and to value the tenets of equal rights. This enlightened interest worked powerfully to sustain the historical continuity motif in American Zionism.

The Holocaust and the bold emergence of the State of Israel served to moderate the uniqueness of American Zionist ideology. A heroic nationalistic strain, with a decisive emphasis on the ancient independent periods, at times gained ascendency.

Still, the unique American conditions did not change substantially. The characteristic factors of American civilization continued therefore to shape the American Zionist mind much along its traditional lines.

The Beginning of *Moshav Haovdim*

Yishai Geva

In the course of the second decade of the twentieth century, an ideological change occurred in the Israeli labour movement. The concept of hired workers' organization striving to strengthen the status of Jewish labour in the First *Aliya* colonies gradually transformed into a movement whose principal aim was to settle the country. At the social and institutional level this change was translated into the *Moshav* organization based on small family farms. Cooperative labour and possession of farm property was considered an obstacle in the realization of the ideal life of the Jewish farmer in *Eretz-Israel*. The ideological component derived from the experience gained from the Jewish capitalistic agricultural settlements and from the few experiments of labour settlements that began prior to World War I. M. Wilkanski provided the theoretical justification for the small family farm under the conditions of modern agriculture in *Eretz-Israel*. Historically, the *Kevutsa* preceded the *Moshav* by more than ten years. Its founders demanded priority for the communal social system in the settlement activity of the labour movement.

The opening of new horizons for the labourers' settlement by the end of World War I induced ideological generalizations of both the *Moshav* and the *Kevutsa* settlement systems. The cooperative aspect of the *Moshav* life was still inferior to the private and individual aspect; its full balance was to unfold in the years to come.

The cultural heritage of the *Moshav* founders held ideal images of the farmer and of the rural life adopted from *Hibbat Zion* literature and European social thought. However, the normative and spiritual content as well as

organizational implications of these images have changed in the development of the *Moshav* ideology. These references to exterior origins of influence are quite general. Genuinely the *Moshav* concept has to be explained in the historical framework of the Second *Aliya* and the growing aspirations of workers for an independent agricultural life. The *Moshav* social system was developed by the Israel labour movement by adapting unique norms and ideals to the Jews' revival in their homeland.

Scientific Research and the Issue of the 'Economic Absorptive Capacity' of *Eretz-Israel*

S. Ilan Troen

The White Paper of June 1922, introduced the concept of the 'economic absorptive capacity' of Palestine. Through an increasingly severe application of this formula, the' British retreated from a commitment to an unlimited immigration of Jews to *Eretz-Israel*. As a consequence, the Zionists found that, in addition to appeals to history, justice and law, they had to create a scientific literature to combat those who opposed large-scale *Aliya*. This literature was based on the calculations of social scientists from disciplines as different as archaelogy, economics, sociology, geography, as well as civil engineering, and became a central feature of the political debates concerning Palestine.

The article focuses first on the findings of archaelogical research which provided the initial corpus of evidence used by advocates of large-scale immigration. Employing interpretations of the country's past, they drew conclusions concerning future possibilities. The writings of foreign experts, particularly in engineering, geography and economics, are then analyzed. The article also examines the efforts of Zionist social scientists who worked for the Economic Research Institute of the Jewish Agency, established in 1935. Building on the work of experts associated with this Institute, Ben-Gurion established the Planning Committee. From 1943 to 1948, this committee provided arguments justifying large-scale *Aliya*, and a new conception for the organization of Jewish society in Palestine in order to accommodate a large population. In so doing, the Committee's work reflects a shift from the perception of Palestine as an agricultural country to envisioning it as an urban and industrial society.

This new conception of the country proved decisive in the discussions on the number of immigrants Israel could absorb upon independence. While still at

war and under pressure from hostile neighbours, Ben-Gurion decided for mass, rather than selective immigration and carried the government with him. This historic decision, which has shaped Israeli history and society, was not based only on sentiment or ideology. It was also the product of an extended scientific discussion which had been carried out by the country's best researchers and by prominent analysts from abroad. Through the Law of Return of 1950, the debate over the economic absorptive capacity of the country was terminated as Israel accepted responsibility for a liberal and open-ended conception of Zionist settlement.

Brenner's Concept of 'Decadence' Against the Background of 'National Revival'

Hamutal Bar-Yosef

In Brenner's publicistic and belletristic writings one can find a constant reference to the term 'decadence' and its characteristics.

In his early essays and feuilletons Brenner uses the term 'decadent' in referring to the psychological and moral traits of an oversensitive and degenerated dandy.

Brenner is conscious of the Western-European sources of decadent literature and negatively treats its influence on Hebrew and Yiddish literatures. He considers both decadent behaviour and literature as unauthentic to Jewish reality. He also views decadent literature as 'unhealthy', thus threatening the efforts of national revival.

In his later publicistic writings Brenner expresses appreciation for the talent of several Hebrew poets (Bialik, Ya'akov Steinberg and Nomberg), although he finds decadence in their poetry. He also defends decadent writing in Hebrew, claiming that it is inevitable as long as Jewish reality in the diaspora is degenerated.

In Brenner's early stories and novels characters of decadent young Jews are satyrically depicted. Still, the influence of decadent ideas and attitudes on Brenner can be discerned in the deterministic and pessimistic concept of plot, in the descriptions of Jewish social reality and in the reactions of the characters.

Brenner's hope that Hebrew literature would become 'healthy' in *Eretz-Israel* did not come true in his own œuvre. On the contrary, the stories and novels which he wrote after his coming to the Land of Israel, in 1909, bear a stronger influence and a better knowledge of European decadence than those he wrote in the diaspora. The decadent behaviour of the characters, and the

composition and style of these writings is an artistic realization of the decadent consciousness of the main hero, with whom the author sympathizes. Brenner repeatedly expresses his belief in the possibility of overcoming decadence by mystic and existentialist-Nietzschean reaction. The analysis of his writings reveal that decadence for him meant not only a threat against national revival but also a deep personal experience, one which he gradually absorbed as it was nurtured in a certain cultural atmosphere.

Uri Zvi Greenberg and the *'Grabski Aliya'*

Pinhas Ginossar

Following economic actions imposed by Polish Prime Minister Stanislaw Grabski in 1924, a vast majority of the Jewish lower middle class was left with no means of livelihood. Since emigration to the United States was blocked, fifty thousand people found their way to *Eretz-Israel*. In those days this was considered to be mass immigration and it became known as the Fourth *Aliya* or the *Grabski Aliya*.

These immigrants had no intention of changing their economic habits or life-styles in the new country, not even for the sake of national redemption. They very soon found themselves in conflict with the veteran settlers of the Second and Third *Aliyot*, known as 'Working *Eretz-Israel*' who believed in constructive socialism, who wished to change the mores of the Diaspora and whose goal was to settle in collective agricultural communities.

Uri Zvi Greenberg, the poet, immigrated to *Eretz-Israel* at the end of 1923. From then until the end of the Fourth *Aliya* (1928), he totally identified with 'Working *Eretz-Israel*'. Despite this, his attitude to the Fourth *Aliya* was ambivalent. On the one hand, he was the Hebrew poet who expressed most sensitively the plight of Eastern European Jews and called for the dire need to save them as they were by means of immigration to *Eretz-Israel*. On the other hand, he was the most emphatic writer to express the spirit of the Third *Aliya* in the days of the Fourth *Aliya*. He shared the labour movement's struggle on three fronts: against the mores of the middle-class, against the ultra-left which questioned Zionist constructive socialism, and against the leadership of the Zionist establishment.