

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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CONTENTS

ARTICLES

- Jabotinsky and Religion** 1
Shalom Ratzabi
- Between Party Politics and Government Politics: Mapai's Leadership
in the First Years of the State of Israel** 31
Avi Bareli
- Conflicting Commitments: The *Mizrahi* Leadership in Mapai in
Israel's Early Years** 63
Esther Meir-Glitzenstein
- Between the Poet and the Diplomat: Alterman's Attitude to Israeli-German
Relations and His Debate with Moshe Sharett, 1952** 99
Yechiam Weitz
- "The Most Appropriate Element to be Farmers Wives' and Women
Agriculture Workers": Zionist Womanhood in the *Moshavot* during
the Second *Aliyah*** 123
Gilat Gofar
- Women in Gedud ha-Avodah** 151
Avigail Paz-Yishayahu

A CONVERSATION with A. B. YEHOSHUA

- "If I lived there, it would crush me": Jerusalem from the Biographical
to the Historical and Back** 179
Motti Golani

REVIEWS

- Citrus Blossoms: Jewish Entrepreneurship in Palestine, 1890-1939,*
by Nahum Karlinsky** 199
Israel Kolatt
- Tabenkin in Eretz-Israel*, by Baruch Kanari** 209
Zeev Tzahor
- Unexpected Child: Itzhak Ben Aharon – An Intimate Biography,***

by Yael Gvirtz	215
Dan Giladi	
<i>Channales of Rage</i>, by Anat Halachmi	221
Naama Sheffi	
List of Contributors	231
English Summaries	VII

Summaries

Shalom Ratzabi

Jabotinsky and Religion

This article presents Jabotinsky's attitude toward Judaism in particular and toward religion in general by examining the impact of two pillars of Jabotinsky's social-political thought — his liberalism and his national concept — on his view of Judaism. The article argues that Jabotinsky articulated his stand toward Judaism in accordance with his general liberal outlook, on the one hand, and in terms of his national concept and practical aims, on the other hand. Perceiving religion in liberal and moral terms, Jabotinsky viewed Rabbinical Judaism as an oriental religion that he was unable to respect. Hence, when he spoke about Judaism with respect and claimed its superiority, he referred either to biblical Judaism, in accordance with his pragmatic goals, or to pure religious feelings, and not to traditional Judaism.

Avi Bareli

Between Party Politics and Government Politics:
Mapai's Leadership in the First Years of the State of Israel

In the early years of the State of Israel, the top leadership of Mapai, the ruling Labor Party, underwent significant changes. Unlike in the pre-state period, the party leadership also tended to be involved in executive leadership, while the importance of leaders who held educational, cultural and ideological functions declined. David Ben-Gurion's standing among the party's leaders was greatly strengthened, relations between the top leadership and second-level leaders became closer, and they became more dependent on each other, while a tighter political link was formed between the party apparatus and leaders on the various levels. New, younger leaders rose to the top, and the influence of previous organizational affiliations or political and ideological standpoints was reduced. These developments form the context for examining the rise of Moshe Sharett, Pinhas Lavon, Levi Eshkol and Golda Meir to the top leadership of Mapai and subsequently to the leadership of Israel, and for discussing the link between their power within the party and their political power as heads of state. The article concludes that in the early years of the state Mapai's leadership became more centralized and professionalized than in the pre-state period. Although this may have been essential at the time of the establishment of the state, it involved political, hierarchical institutionalization to the detriment of public participation in political processes. Mapai became more rigid, and the intensified administrative-hierarchical ethos eventually impaired the party's ability to serve its own fundamental values.

Esther Meir-Glitzstein

Conflicting Commitments: The *Mizrahi* Leadership in Mapai in Israel's Early Years

In the 1950s Mapai cultivated several immigrants from Islamic countries as potential leaders who would spearhead their community's integration into Israeli society and secure its support for the ruling party. Focusing on three prominent figures, a cabinet minister and two members of the Knesset, who represented the main sectors of *Mizrahi* Israelis at the time — Sephardim, Yemenites, and Iraqis — this article examines the circumstances in which they attained their high positions, the positions that they held, their influence, and the limits of their public power. It also considers the different models of *Mizrahi* representation that each of these three figures typified and addresses Mapai's attitude toward the ethnic problem in this early phase and the patterns of action formed by the *Mizrahi* leadership in Mapai. Finally, it explores the limits of the national-ethnic discourse in Israeli public life in the 1950s.

Yechiam Weitz

Between the Poet and the Diplomat: Alterman's Attitude to Israeli-German Relations and His Debate with Moshe Sharett, 1952

In the 1950s, when the issue of the Israeli-German relationship was at the center of public debate, the poet Natan Alterman, while not denying the importance of relations between the states, opposed cultural and human links with Germany. His attitude toward the Reparations Agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany, which was signed in September 1952, was, accordingly, ambivalent. While being well aware that it could greatly benefit the Israeli economy, he nonetheless feared that it would lead to appeasement between the two nations. His stand led to a debate, on the pages of the daily *Davar*, with Moshe Sharett, Israel's first foreign minister, with whom Alterman had a tense and weak relationship, unlike his close relationship with other senior statesmen such as David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Dayan. Sharett, like most of the Mapai leadership, rejected the poet's claim that the Reparations Agreement had to be viewed in the dual light of its necessity and its moral difficulty.

Gilat Gofer

"The Most Appropriate Element to be Farmers Wives' and Women Agriculture Workers": Zionist Womanhood in the *Moshavot* during the Second *Aliyah*

The women of the Second *Aliyah* (the large wave of Jewish immigration to reach Palestine in 1904–1914), their experience and struggle for an active role in Zionism, are prevalently viewed as the origin of the concept of the *halutzah* (female pioneer), the

new Zionist woman. This article presents the dialectical and complex link between these women and the women in the Zionist agricultural settlements prior to them — the *moshavot*. Second *Aliyah* women saw themselves as pioneers in creating an active, independent woman who worked for Zionist goals without needing men as mediators. However, they needed the women of the First *Aliyah* in the *moshavot* as a background to their creation. On the one hand, Second *Aliyah* women based their struggle for a new active role for women in Zionism in opposition to the image of the woman in the *moshavot*, as manifested in Second *Aliyah* literature and other texts. But on the other hand these women depended on women in the *moshavot* in order to cope with practical questions.

Avigail Paz-Yishayahu

Women in Gedud ha-Avodah

In the years 1920–1930 Gedud ha-Avodah was the largest communal framework established in Palestine. Its attempt to unite all those who desired to belong within one communal framework, without differentiation based on gender, economic status or physical ability, posed an organizational and social challenge of a scope beyond that faced by prior communal experiments. The manner in which individuals, families, women and children were integrated into the communal system of the Gedud was therefore the practical touchstone for the Gedud community, which strove to create a society that operated as an egalitarian producers' and consumers' commune. The role of women in Gedud society is thus only one aspect of the far-reaching social experiment conducted by Gedud ha-Avodah. The role of women was derived, inter alia, from the Gedud's attempts to create a different social order within its framework: for example, from its view of the role of the nuclear family within the Gedud, or its definition of the role of the individual within the group as a whole.

While focusing on the place of women in Gedud ha-Avodah, this article views this subject as part of a much broader discussion encompassing all aspects of that society. The issue of the status of women in Gedud ha-Avodah is therefore discussed within its historical context, as part of the discourse on the social experiment it conducted, rather than as a part of the feminist discourse on the issue of the equality of women in this period.