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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No. 8, 2005

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
THE CHAIM ROSENBERG SCHOOL OF JEWISH STUDIES
THE CHAIM WEIZMANN INSTITUTE FOR THE
STUDY OF ZIONISM AND ISRAEL

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Cover picture: Reuven Rubin, *Girl with Dove*, oil on canvas, 92x65 cm,
coll. Rubin Museum, Tel Aviv

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Tel Aviv University
The Chaim Weizmann Institute for the Study of Zionism and Israel

Graphic Editing: Michal Semo, TAU's Graphic Design Studio
Printed in Israel at A.R.T. Offset Services Ltd.

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Urban Culture and Academic Identity: The Friends of the Hebrew University in Tel Aviv, 1933–1940

The Friends of the Hebrew University in Tel Aviv, established by a coalition of elite groups, was the first organization that sought to promote academic activity as part of a modern, western urban culture in Tel Aviv. There were no rigid conditions for joining the organization, such as adherence to specific policies or ideology. Rather, it was an interest group that united around the general aim of advancing the academic infrastructure of Tel Aviv, alongside its efforts to raise funds for the Hebrew University. The organization created an autonomous arena for academic activity such as lectures open to the public, independent of the pedagogical and research activity in the Hebrew University and without ties to the organized political center such as the National Council (Va'ad Le'umi), political parties and the Histadrut (labor union). The article argues that in order to understand the development of academic institutions in Israel, it is important to consider not only the official university administration or its relations with the formal political center and parties. The activities of organizations outside the walls of the university, which have regular discussions about policy and are in an ambiguous relationship with the academic institution, also need to be taken into account.

Asaf Kaniel

Orthodox Politics: The Mizrachi Party versus Agudath Israel in Poland, 1916–1939

The rivalry that existed in interwar Poland between the Mizrachi Party and Agudath Israel reflected the inherent conflict between the different models of the relations between orthodoxy and politics that were formulated in that era. On the one hand, Agudath Israel, which promoted political orthodoxy, claimed to have a monopoly on religious representation and attributed religious significance to the political program formulated by its spiritual leaders. On the other hand, the Mizrachi Party represented a more complex model, which regarded its religious ideology as a source of inspiration for its political theory but considered that policy should be determined by political and democratic entities, acting in an informed and rational manner. This rivalry created a constant struggle between those professing to possess the religious truth and those who wanted to prove that, despite their more complex approach, they were no less pious than their opponents. This conflict also engendered doubts as to the necessity and possibility

of political collaboration between the opposing orthodox camps in realizing their common goals.

Itzhak Hamitovsky

"Strength and Peace": The Legitimacy of Territorial Compromise in the Messianic Era in the Thought of Rabbi Hayyim David Halevy

Rabbi Hayyim David Halevy (1924–1998) was one of the leaders of a group of Religious-Zionist rabbis who viewed the Zionist enterprise, the emergence of the State of Israel, and the Six-Day war in 1967 as steps along a divinely ordained path heralding the Messianic era. One of the main consequences of this approach, which to a certain extent was shared by other Religious-Zionist circles as well, was a radical political stand that negated any possibility of territorial compromise. The moderate camp within the Religious-Zionist community feared the practical, political implications of this Messianic theological worldview and therefore attempted to neutralize the Messianic significance of the State of Israel. Until the mid-1970s Rabbi Halevy radically opposed any notion of territorial compromise, in accordance with his general Messianic attitude. However, as Israel embarked upon the peace process with Egypt, he changed his view, enthusiastically supporting the peace agreement. This article seeks to explain Rabbi Halevy's change of opinion, as well as his unique support for the peace process. It suggests that his approach derived from his general understanding of historical events as theological data—source material from which God's will can be discerned.

Haim Grossman

The History of Israel's 30th Independence Day Poster

The Independence Day poster, produced annually for the past 57 years and inspired by the Israeli establishment, serves as yet another visual marker of independence and autonomy. The poster produced for the 30th Independence Day was David Tartakover's "Shalom" (peace) poster, even though it did not win the annual poster competition but only the third prize. The poster displayed a central verbal image: the word "Shalom" (in Hebrew) in black, with a golden *lamed* (the letter "el," which also means "30"), marking 30 years of independence, against the background of a blue sky above white clouds. Tartakover's poster reflected a new establishment message of "peace now," unrelated to prophetic vision. This message invoked the age-old Jewish yearning for peace, the increased hope for peace generated by Egyptian President Sadat's recent visit to Israel, and the desire of Begin's Likud government to appear before the nation and the world as a leadership that sought peace.

Yael Guilat

Artists Rewriting the Myth: Alexander Zaid's Statue and Its Reflection in Recent Works of Art

The only equestrian statue erected since the beginning of Jewish settlement in Palestine until this day is the one dedicated to Alexander Zaid, who was murdered in 1938. Zaid was a founding member of the first Zionist paramilitary organizations such as Bar Giora and Ha-Shomer. He embodied the image of the fearless "new Jew," close to nature, a shepherd, an agriculturist, and amateur archeologist, but he has been remembered as one who sacrificed his life in defense of the Jewish people. During his life, and even more after his death, he became a symbol, a kind of popular legend and finally a myth. It is maybe for this reason that since the 1980s, several Israeli artists have depicted the image of Zaid's statue in their works as part of a general reaction to Zionist art and ideology and, particularly, to "invented" Zionist myths. This article re-examines both the previous interpretations of the monument and the social practice of inventing modern national myths. It considers the iconographical, cultural and ideological sources of the monument and the relations between them, focusing on the visual aspects of Zaid's myth and popular memorial cult, on the one hand, and on recent artistic expressions that relate to them, on the other.