

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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Ha'aretz: Portrait of a Newspaper

Editors

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Summaries

Orit Rozin

The Statesman, the Editor and the Newspaper: David Ben-Gurion, Gershom Schocken and *Ha'aretz*

Throughout the 1950s, Gershom Schocken and the newspaper he owned and edited, *Ha'aretz*, criticized Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion's policies in many realms, from national security to immigration, from economic issues to civil rights. Reputed to be one of the most committed warriors in the battle for freedom of the press, Schocken often clashed bitterly with Ben-Gurion over censorship. The fascinating correspondence between these two figures, which has been preserved in the Israel State Archive and the Ben-Gurion Institute Archive, sheds new light on the multifaceted relationship between the two men. On the basis of their private correspondence and their public debate, this article considers the changes in *Ha'aretz's* attitude towards Ben-Gurion in the 1960s.

Paula Kabalo

Between the Public and the Establishment: The Coverage of the Shurat Hamitnadvim Trial in *Ha'aretz*

In February 1956 Amos Ben-Gurion, the deputy head of police, filed a suit against four members of Shurat Hamitnadvim, a civic grassroots organization, for defamation of character. The trial, which began in January 1957 and lasted for over six months, was accompanied by a public debate in the daily press that continued for around two years and focused on the bounds of public criticism and its legitimate and illegitimate methods. *Haaretz* played a significant role in this debate, one that was even mentioned and criticized by the Supreme Court in its verdict published in 1960. The paper functioned as a "mediator" between contradictory views, as a forum for the exchange of ideas, and finally even as one of the "parties" to the conflict. The press coverage of the trial reflects the tensions between the collectivist ethos and free expression that existed in 1950s Israeli society. Although *Ha'aretz* identified with many of the ideas presented by Shurat Hamitnadvim, it was confronted by a dilemma when the organization was targeted by the government establishment as a threat to its stability. This article describes the methods used by *Ha'aretz* and the views it presented in order to solve the dilemma between its commitment to freedom of speech, on the one hand, and its loyalty to the political establishment, on the other.

Meir Chazan
Ha'aretz during the Waiting Period

In May–June 1967, campaigns were waged in Israel on two fronts: on the external front, the deterioration in Israel's relations with its Arab neighbors led to the outbreak, on June 5, of the Six-Day War. Meanwhile, on the domestic front, the newspaper *Ha'aretz* took an active part in the struggle to determine the civilian political leadership that would lead Israel into war against the Arabs. The three weeks preceding the war—the so-called “waiting period”—have been described more intensively and in greater detail than any other period in the history of the State of Israel. Nevertheless, the involvement of the press in the sensitive political contacts and in molding the public mood which to a large extent dictated the dramatic political changes that occurred during the waiting period has not yet been systematically explored. From the inception of the State of Israel, and even earlier in the pre-independence period, the security discourse in the Israeli press tended to be mobilized to the cause of the nation-building project and the efforts to ensure its survival. The main argument of this article is that this pattern underwent a major change just before the 1967 war, largely due to the security crisis and the lack of consensus within the political and military establishments on the appropriate response to those developments. *Ha'aretz* became an actor in the dispute, seeking to express independent opinions on security matters and the political changes it considered necessary for dealing with them effectively. This was a crucial formative moment in the development of independent democratic discourse in the Israeli press.

Avi Picard
Ha'aretz and the Immigration from North Africa in the 1950s

The attitude of the veteran population of Israel vis-à-vis Jews from Muslim countries was influenced by two opposing perspectives—unease and solidarity. In the 1950s *Ha'aretz* argued that the immigration of North African Jews should be restricted. Fearful of mass immigration, the newspaper stressed “unease” more than “solidarity.” This approach is demonstrated by a series of articles by the reporter Amos Elon, published in 1953, in which he emphasized the difference of North African Jews from the veteran European Jewish population, argued that their desire to immigrate was based more on economic motives than on fears for their security in their countries of birth, and explained why Israel should suspend this immigration. *Ha'aretz*'s overall position, and this series in particular, which became a paradigm of hostile reporting on North African Jews, provoked strong reactions. Unlike other segments of Israeli society, *Ha'aretz* persisted in its hostile position toward North African Jews, even when a deterioration in the Jews' situation in those countries caused a wave of mass immigration to Israel.

Yitzhak Dahan

Ha'aretz and the Development Towns: The Periphery in the Eyes of the Elite

The study analyzes the ways in which development towns (in the relatively poorer peripheral areas in Israel) are perceived by some reporters in the Israeli quality newspaper, *Ha'aretz*. Despite some stylistic and ideological differences, all the articles analyzed manifest similar views and approaches. In particular, they tend to see the news on the micro level as embedded in macro-level political and historical conditions. Although the articles adhere to high standards of journalism that seek to go beyond the news to the level of how and why, to explore factors hidden beneath the surface of events in order to explain the low socioeconomic level in these areas, they tend to highlight underlying causes at the expense of an understanding of local factors such as the local leadership and local political culture.

Oren Livio and Eli Avraham

The Influence of Social-Ideological Distance between Journalists and Social Groups: Representing “The Salt of the Earth” in *Ha'aretz*

This article examines the coverage of different social groups in “Melah Ha'aretz” (literally, “The Salt of the Earth”), a column devoted to personalities and anecdotal news items in the weekend supplement of the Israeli quality newspaper *Ha'aretz*. Using quantitative and qualitative content analysis, we discovered that a vast majority of news items dealt with the main cities, and only a minority focused on the periphery: development towns, the Arab population, Jewish settlements in the Occupied Territories, and the kibbutzim. Most of the items concerning the main cities were based on the journalists' personal experiences and dealt with relatively marginal issues, whereas other social groups received coverage only when they were involved in events of national importance. Coverage of the Arab population and the settlers in the Occupied Territories emphasized how different these groups were from the general population, but while coverage of the settlers was extremely negative, coverage of the Arab population focused on the discrimination it suffered. Development towns were depicted as being the opposite of modern, liberal Tel Aviv, whereas the kibbutzim received more favorable coverage. We discuss how these coverage patterns reflect the influence of the social-ideological distance between journalists and different social groups.

Yael Guilat**Where Were You When It Happened? On Women's Art, Gender Discourse and Art Criticism in *Ha'aretz* during the 1990s**

A discussion of women's art emerged in Israel in the last decades of the twentieth century. Until then both artists and critics had ignored the gender aspects of the work by women artists. The 1990s saw not only numerous exhibitions of women artists dealing with feminine subjects, which engendered related critical texts, but also the appearance of an increasing number of women art critics. A new generation of these critics joined the honorable (and masculine) ranks of writers in *Ha'aretz*. These changes in the field of art and the new opportunities for women in art criticism could have been expected to challenge the discourse about women's art and stimulate the development of a new kind of language, according to Hélène Cixous' assumption that "women will confirm women in a place other than that which is reserved in and by the symbolic, that is, in a place other than silence." On the basis of this hypothesis, the article investigates whether the art critics in *Ha'aretz* took upon themselves a leading role in empowering the feminine presence with the feminine voice, and in developing the incipient art gender discourse, or whether this discourse emerged in the wake of the changes in the field of art itself.