

# **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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## Summaries

### Zohar Segev

#### Herzl and the Basel Program from the Perspective of American Zionist Leaders

This article describes the distinct way in which the American Jewish leadership adopted the Zionism of Herzl from the First Zionist Congress until the establishment of the State of Israel. The desire to adapt Herzl's work and thought to the particular circumstances of American Jews produced a special interpretation of Zionism, which legitimized Jewish existence in America while at the same time constructing the Zionist movement as a political, communal and ideological tool for enhancing the Jews' position within American immigrant society. The processes whereby Herzl's theory became accepted by American Zionist leaders shed light on the development and distinctive nature of American Zionism.

### Hizky Shoham

#### "From the Town – and from the Village"? The Creation of Tree-Planting Ceremonies on *Tu Bishvat*

The article describes the emergence, at the turn of the twentieth century, of tree-planting ceremonies as the most frequent festive format of *Tu Bishvat*. These ceremonies were directly influenced by the North American Arbor Day, alongside the general motif of the tree as a symbol in modern European nationalist movements. The ceremonies were invented in the cities, for urban children, as a nostalgic reference to agricultural life, which was already an object of nostalgia in late Ottoman urban society. The tension between the reality of urban life and the nostalgic evocation of an agricultural society formed the basis for the development of *Tu Bishvat* as the tree-planting festival and nourished its cultural vitality.

### Kobi Cohen-Hattab

#### The Water Commission and the Emergence of a Zionist Maritime Culture in Early Mandate Palestine

Historical research on the Yishuv has paid hardly any attention to the sea and the various professions associated with it during the early years of Zionist settlement. This article reconstructs and analyzes the first concepts of a Zionist maritime culture in the new Jewish Yishuv immediately after the First World War, as expressed in the ideas suggested by the Water Commission, which was established

in Jaffa and functioned between 1919 and 1921. The Commission was founded by Meir Gurvitz, a mathematics teacher at the Herzliya Hebrew Gymnasium in Tel Aviv, who left his post to devote his life to the revival of Hebrew seamanship. Although the Water Commission's proposals were not realized at the time, they established several goals which would pave the way to Hebrew maritime independence in Palestine, many of which were realized in a later period, during the 1930s and 1940s when the conditions were ripe.

### Anat Kidron

The Impact of the 1929 Riots on Haifa and Jaffa/Tel Aviv:  
A Comparison

The Arab riots of 1929 are considered to be a significant turning point in Jewish-Arab relations in Palestine, generating changes that led to the outbreak of the Arab rebellion of 1936–1939. In mixed cities, where Jews and Arabs interacted on a daily basis in the economic, cultural and civil spheres, the riots led to their separation into two national communities. However, a comparison of Jaffa, Tel Aviv and Haifa in such times of national tension reveals different patterns of separatism and coexistence in urban societies in Palestine. Whereas in Tel Aviv, emphasis was placed on the image of the Hebrew city in distinction to Arab Jaffa, in Haifa there emerged an organized national community within the urban space which was partly Arab. The gap between the behavior of the different Jewish communities and the declarations of their leadership indicates how the violent events were used to strengthen the political, economic and ideological arguments of the Jewish Yishuv.

### Dorit Yosef

From *Yekke* to Zionist: Narrative Strategies in Life Stories of  
German Jewish Women Immigrants to Mandate Palestine

This article examines the life stories of Jewish women who emigrated from Central Europe to Palestine in the 1930s, on the basis of memoirs written, or transmitted orally, many years later. Although the experience of migration could have caused a crisis in self-perception, their memoirs show that they managed to construct their lives (and identities) anew in a coherent way by means of two main narrative axes – continuity and meaning. The axis of continuity served to establish a bridge between the women's lives, before and after emigration, while the axis of meaning, focusing on the Zionist meta-narrative, provided justification for the choices they made. This discussion illuminates how Central European Jewish women coped with the challenges of immigration to Palestine, both those

that were unique to the experience of *aliyah* to *Eretz Yisrael* and those that were similar to the challenges faced by immigrants in other times and places.

### Doron Bar

#### Between Muslim and Jewish Sanctity: The Judaization of Muslim Holy Places in the State of Israel, 1948–1967

From 1948 to 1967, a few dozen Muslim pilgrimage sites were transferred to Israeli ownership and Judaized. The article describes the extensive involvement of the Israeli Ministry of Religion in this process and describes the legal methods and various other means employed by Israeli officials in order to appropriate Muslim holy sites. In this process Nebi Daud (King David's tomb) on Mount Zion was developed as the most important Jewish holy site in Israel; the Cave of Elijah in Haifa, which before 1948 had been a Muslim *waqf*, subsequently became a prime Jewish pilgrimage destination; and several Muslim holy sites on the coastal plain were Judaized, such as the tomb of Abu Huraira, which was converted into the tomb of Raban Gamliel, one of the most important Jewish sages.

### Michael Feige and David Ohana

#### Ben-Gurion Memorial Ceremonies: State Rituals at the Edge of the Desert

David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister and the acknowledged founder of the state, died on December 1, 1973, and was buried at Midreshet Sede Boker in the Negev, near his desert home. In this article we examine how his image was forged and transformed over the years, as expressed in the annual memorial ceremonies at his grave. Three years after his death, Menachem Begin and the Likud Party came to power, creating a first major challenge to Ben-Gurion's commemoration. Begin's willing participation in the memorial ceremony paved the way to transforming Ben-Gurion into a figure that transcended party politics. Soon the main theme of the commemorations became the neglect of the Negev and other peripheries in Israel. Gradually, the image of Ben-Gurion as a political leader became more distant, and the annual political pilgrimage to the gravesite accentuated the alternative path that Israeli society had taken, detached from that of its founding father.