

English Abstracts

Leviathan and the Academia: Was there an Attempt to Nationalize the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in the Early Years of the State of Israel?

Ari Barell

This article examines the relations between the Israeli political center and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in the first years of statehood. After more than a quarter of a century of complex and tense interaction between the University and the leadership of the Jewish community in Palestine, the first decade of Israeli statehood witnessed the emergence of a close, almost symbiotic relationship between the state and the academic institution.

This article is a critique of the existing scholarship, which views the relationship between government and academia in those early years as an attempt by the government to impose state control and supervision on the institutions of higher education, and reduce their academic freedom. In contrast, this research provides a more complex and multidimensional picture, by pointing to the important part played by the academic staff of the Hebrew University in initiating the deep changes in the character and size of the institution; in forging new relations with the political center, and in shaping Israel's higher education policy.

In contrast to the picture portrayed by current research, of a confrontation between Academia and State resulting in the subordination of the former to the latter, the picture that emerges from this study is one of negotiations between the academic institutions and the political center, leading to close cooperation that served and strengthened both sides simultaneously, resulting in symbiosis and in the integration of the academic system into the newly emerging state order.

The Growth of Conservatism in the United States, 1945–2008

Arnon Gutfeld, Nir Zeid

The article focuses on the description and analysis of the main ideas and major spokespersons of Conservatism, New Conservatism, and Neo-Conservatism in the United States in the post-World War II era, and especially from the 1960s to the end of the Bush presidency in 2008. The emphasis is on the intellectual, political, and social history of the various conservative phenomena and its translation by politicians into policy and reality that dictated and influenced American political behavior and policies.

The transition of the conservative movements from vocal minorities to ascendancy in the governmental and political arenas explains the changes in the conduct of policies, especially in foreign relations, and explains Reaganism and the Bush "Revolution" in American foreign policy. Despite the fact that the 2008 elections brought a severe blow to this ideology, the article emphasizes the wide support of this worldview which will continue to influence the formation of future internal and foreign policies in the United States.

The Ultra-Orthodox Minority and the Israeli Mass Media: A Proposal for Cultural Dialogue Predicated on the Media's Role in Shaping Civil Society

Moshe Hellinger, Tsurriel Rashi

The purpose of this paper is to offer a model for a communication-oriented reading of a religious tradition. This model, which is applicable to a modernized society torn by religious-secular conflicts, strives to establish a cultural dialogue between the secular media elite and a strictly religious public. The specific case with which this paper is concerned is the ultra-Orthodox community in Israel, whose relationship with the media is marked by tension, alienation, and even mutual hostility. The

paper offers a renewed reading of Jewish traditional, halakhic notions, thereby suggesting the importance of providing a remedy for the individual and his or her suffering through a communicative activity in the social arena. By applying the terminology of current communication theories, the custom of delaying the prayer, as it unfolded within the Jewish communities in Europe, can be viewed as a grassroots act of “setting the public agenda,” which has nothing to do with the initiative of communal leadership. Seen in this light, both the Jewish halakhic tradition and the essential roles played by the media emerge as beneficial in strengthening society and reinforcing the democratization processes.

Changes to the Landscape of Military Cemeteries as a Reflection of Change in Israeli Society

Yossi Katz

What has always made military cemeteries in the Western world unique is that they are a creation of the state, and have honored the demand for uniformity in graves and tombstones. A military cemetery conveys the state's collective identity as well as its myths and ethos.

This article surveys the dramatic change that has taken place in the scenery of the Israeli military cemeteries since the establishment of the state and until today — the scenery has been transposed from a “collective scenery” to an “individualistic scenery.” The article argues that these changes reflect the deep shifts in Israeli society — from a previously collective society to the current individualistic society.

One could have expected that in such a hallowed institution for Israeli society as the military cemetery — an institution that constitutes a building block of Israeli identity — the collective universal Israeli character, which finds expression in the uniformity and the equality of the tombstones, would have been preserved over time if not in perpetuity. This did not prove to be the case. The embellishments in all their variety on the tombstones, the changes in the uniform inscription, the legal recognition of the families' right to a personal inscription, the phenomenon of substituting compatible stones for the gravestones, and the placement of the

fallen soldiers' portraits on the tombstones — all this in contravention of the law — constitute expressions of the transition to individualism in this sphere as well.

From a physical and visual standpoint, the individualization processes in the military cemeteries have turned the Israeli military cemetery from a mono-hued scenic element, as until and through the 1970s, into a multivariate scenic element. This compares with the military cemetery in North America and Western Europe, where the mono-hued scenery has been preserved.

Carnival by Night: A New Practice of Modern *Tikkun* Rituals

Anat Feldman

The article deals with the reinvention of nightly *tikkun* ceremonies by the “X-Ray” Rabbi-Ya’akov Israel Ifargan — at the Netivot cemetery.

Tikkun ceremonies are mystical kabalistic ceremonies that are intended to resolve personal and community problems. They have standard prayers and times, and are conducted by students at synagogues.

In contrast, Ifargan's *tikkun* ceremonies are a reorganization of crowd politics in which mystics and sorcery play an important role. Ifargan invented a *tikkun* ceremony with a kabalistic framework, but its content is similar to pagan and Christian ceremonies. The components of such *tikkun* ceremonies are: strong fire, which is ignited and fed only by Ifargan, using thousands of candles; the singing by many which ostensibly causes thunder, angels and saints to descend from the sky in order to create personal miracles among the community of believers.

From Halakhic to Pastoral Discourse in Religious-Zionist Halakhah: Masturbation as a Test Case

Avi Sagi and Yakir Englander

“Halakhah” is a concept denoting a clear and defined normative system, which operates on the basis of its own rules. And yet, Halakhah engages in a complex relationship with changing reality: it does not necessarily accept its impositions, but often responds to it.

Religious Zionism is a distinct and well known sociocultural and religious phenomenon that reflects a revolution and a transformation in religious society. The fundamental question of this article is: Is this transformation also evident in the halakhic realm? Is the internalization of modern values, characteristic of the religious Zionist group, translated also into halakhic matters? To examine this question, we chose masturbation as a test case because concealed in the attitude to masturbation is the contradiction between the halakhic norm that forbids it and the modern values that view masturbation as a practice belonging to the personal intimate realm protected by the liberal outlook. Masturbation is also perceived as a healthy and reasonable human act.

Our analysis showed that most religious Zionist halakhists chose to deal with this question by changing the halakhic discourse *per se* rather than by resorting to standard halakhic argumentation. The discourse became pastoral. A decisive majority of religious Zionist halakhists ceased dealing with the normative status of masturbation, and focused on questions of identity and redemption. In the context of the article, we examine the various modes of halakhic and pastoral discourse developing in religious Zionism and examine the reasons for change in the halakhic discourse. As we show, this change is the most significant proof of some degree of internalization of modern values in religious Zionism, because a pastoral discourse is one that internalizes the basic modern values that place individual identity at the core.