

כרזות מספרות

KRAZOT MESAPROT



POSTER TALES: INDEPENDENCE DAY POSTERS 1948-2008

Educational Material and Poster Gallery
Booklet 1 of 2

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**POSTER TALES:
ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE DAY POSTERS
1948-2008**

**Educational Material and Poster Gallery
Booklet 1 of 2**

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< I > Welcome

Dear Educators,

We are proud to present Krazot Mesaprot (Poster Tales) as part of Israel @ 60 Educational Program and Celebration.

This anniversary presents many opportunities. It is an opportunity to take time and reflect on 60 years of independence, struggles, achievements, aspirations and hopes. It is an opportunity to tell Israel's story and to uncover the many ways in which it intertwines with our own story – our personal story, our family's story and our collective story as a people. It is an opportunity to connect and engage students with Israel. And it is an opportunity to celebrate.

Long before the establishment of the state of Israel, the “connection to Israel” was incorporated into every aspect of daily life. The entire calendar of holidays, the words of the daily prayers, the everyday detail of the stories of the Bible and the laws of the *Mishna* were all permeated with Israel: its landscape, its climate, its agriculture and its geography.

Today, we have to intentionally create opportunities for students to explore their own connection, discover their relationship and find a creative way in which to express it. Our hope is to make Israel's story their own story and to make it personal. We hope that Krazot Mesaprot (Poster Tales) creates exactly such an opportunity.

The educational component of this project consists of:

- Two booklets with educational resources, and a poster gallery
- A CD containing PDF files of the 2 booklets and a Power Point presentation

Enjoy!

< II > INTRODUCTION

For many years, the visual arts have served as commentary on global, national, social and political topics in many cultures. Making a statement, conveying a concern, celebrating achievements or expressing hope for the future – all can be depicted visually. This program invites both educators and students to enter, explore and interpret the material and create their own visual commentary – they are invited to make it personal.

The historical posters designed for Israel's Independence Day throughout the years serve as the backdrop for this curricular and creative program. These posters offer a rare perspective into Israel's national mood and aspirations as well as its historic and esthetic timeline. They reflect on the struggles, values, and ideals of Israeli society and the social and technological changes that have taken place throughout the years.

This program can be used in many ways depending on the classroom setup, the goals, and the allotted time of the group. Students can examine and discuss recurring themes, visual symbols, iconic images and metaphors, styles, and messages as well as interpret and match posters with a historic timeline. They can learn about special commemorative years and their significance, examining the posters based on visual impact, clarity of message, originality, and creativity. All of this can (and should) inspire the students to explore their own connection to Israel. Finally, with an art teacher's guidance, and based on their learning and the message they wish to convey, students will design their own poster or use other artistic forms to express their connection to Israel.

This material, which is rich in both content and creativity, can be approached in many ways. The material can be sorted by themes, motifs and symbols, by values presented in the Declaration of Independence, by artistic techniques, by specific artists, and by decades, to name a few.

In this booklet, we have touched upon a few of these options and encourage the educators, both Judaic Studies and Art teachers, to delve into their own exploration and come up with unique activities and artistic expressions.

We wish you and your students an intellectual, reflective, and creative experience!

<A> THEMES

Major themes of Israeli history include the settlement of the land, the formation of the state and society, the ingathering of the exiles, the ongoing conflict with its Arab neighbors and the quest for peace – all these and more are apparent in the posters. This section focuses on three of these themes that run through the poster collection, themes that reflect the dominant Israeli ethos of the state's founding days as well as the way it has evolved in recent years. During the first three decades, artists have submitted their designs based on personal choice unless it was a special anniversary, a commemorative year or an assigned theme. Since 1989, *Merkaz Ha'hasbara* (Information Center), which is responsible for initiating and choosing the posters, began assigning a yearly theme for the posters. During the past several years and to this day this task is the responsibility of The Ministerial Committee for Symbols and Ceremonies.

<1> Aliyah, Absorption and Diversity

Aliyah, (pl. *aliyot*) “ascension” or “going up,” is the arrival of Jews as individuals or groups, from exile or Diaspora to live in *Eretz Yisrael* – the Land of Israel. Those who “go up” for this purpose are known as *olim* – a term used in the Bible when the Children of Israel went up from Egypt (Genesis 50:14 and Numbers 32:11) and, at a later period, for the exiles who returned from captivity in Babylon (Ezra 2:1,59 and Nehemiah 5-6).

Aliyah has been, and continues to be, a phenomenon among the Jewish people that has no parallel in the history of modern migrations. *Aliyah* remains the ultimate goal and essence of the Jewish state of Israel; it has brought full circle the many distinctive and diverse communities which were formed and have flourished in the Diaspora. *Aliyah* has brought together a creative people in its own land.

Mass Immigration - 1948-1952

On May 14th 1948, the State of Israel was proclaimed. The Proclamation of the Establishment of the State of Israel stated: “The State of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and the ingathering of the exiles; it will foster the development of the country for all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice, and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex...” This was followed in 1950 by the Law of Return, which granted every Jew the automatic right to immigrate to Israel and become a citizen of the state. With the gates wide open after statehood was declared, a wave of mass immigration brought 687,000 Jews to Israel's shores. By 1951, the number of immigrants more than doubled the Jewish population of the country in 1948. The immigrants included survivors of the Holocaust from displaced persons' camps in Germany, Austria and Italy, a majority of the Jewish communities of Bulgaria and Poland and one third of the Jews of Romania, and nearly all of the Jewish communities of Libya, Yemen (Operation Magic Carpet) and Iraq (Operation Ezra and Nehemiah).

The immigrants encountered many difficulties in adjustment. The fledgling state had just emerged from the bruising War of Independence, was in grievous economic condition, and found it difficult to provide hundreds of thousands of immigrants with housing and jobs. Much effort was devoted towards absorbing the immigrants: *ma'abarot* (camps of tin shacks and tents) and later permanent dwellings were erected, employment opportunities were created, the Hebrew language was

taught and the educational system was expanded and adjusted to meet the needs of children from many different backgrounds.

Additional mass immigration took place in the late 1950's and early 1960's, when immigrants arrived from the newly independent countries of North Africa, Morocco and Tunisia. A large number of immigrants also arrived during these years from Poland, Hungary and Egypt.

Immigration from Western Countries

While mass immigrations to Israel have mostly been from countries of distress, immigration of individuals from the free world has also continued throughout the years. Idealism is what motivated most of these immigrants, with the Six-Day War and the awakening feelings of Jewish identity among Diaspora Jewry strengthening this period of *aliyah*.

Since the mid 1990's, there has been a steady stream of South African Jews, American Jews, and French Jews who have either made *aliyah*, or purchased property in Israel for potential future immigration. More specifically, many French Jews have purchased homes in Israel as insurance due to the rising rate of anti-Semitism in France in recent years.

Immigration from the Soviet Union and the Former Soviet Union

While the Soviet Union was among the first states to recognize Israel in 1948, Moscow quickly changed course and aligned itself with Arab nationalist regimes. Therefore, from 1948 to 1967, the relations between Jews in the Soviet Union and the State of Israel were limited. Following the Six-Day War, Jewish consciousness among Soviet Jews was awakened and increasing numbers sought *aliyah*. As an atmosphere of *détente* (reconciliation) began to pervade international relations in the early 1970's, the Soviet Union permitted significant number of Jews to emigrate to Israel. At the end of the decade, a quarter of a million Jews had left the Soviet Union; 140,000 of them immigrated to Israel.

Soviet Jews were permitted to leave the Soviet Union in unprecedented numbers in the late 1980's, with President Gorbachev's bid to liberalize the country. The collapse of the Soviet Union in late 1991 facilitated this process. After 190,000 *olim* (immigrants to Israel) reached Israel in 1990 and 150,000 in 1991, the stabilization of conditions in the former Soviet Union and adjustment difficulties in Israel caused immigration to level off at approximately 70,000 per year. From 1989 to the end of 1996, approximately 700,000 Jews from the former Soviet Union had made their home in Israel.

Immigration from Ethiopia

Operation Moses – 1984 & Operation Solomon – 1991

The Early 1980's

In the early 1980's, many Ethiopian Jews began leaving their villages in the rural areas and making their way to the Southern Sudan, from where they hoped to make their way to Kenya – and from there to Israel. The second stage of their journey was made from Sudan aboard Israeli Navy craft which awaited them at the Red Sea and brought them to Israel. The existing Ethiopian Jewish community in Israel at this time numbered around 7,000 souls and by late 1981 14,000 more Ethiopian Jews had arrived. This figure had doubled by mid-1984.

1984 saw the beginning of a mass rescue operation, entitled *Mivtza Moshe* (Operation Moses) during which, over a period of a few months, 8,000 Jews were flown from Khartoum, Sudan to Europe and from there to Israel. News of the rescue leaked out to the foreign media in November 1985, resulting in President Numeiri of Sudan halting the operation for fear of hostile reaction from the Arab states. After mediation by the US, Numeiri allowed six American Hercules planes to airlift the last remaining Ethiopian Jews in Sudan; their arrival in Israel brought the numbers of *olim* up to around 16,000.

Towards the 1990's

In December 1989, 15 years after the rupture of diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Israel, the Israeli Embassy in Addis Abbeba was reopened. With the renewal of diplomatic relations, contact was made between people who had left Ethiopia for Israel and those who had remained behind. Families were instructed to make their way to Addis Abbeba and apply at the Embassy to bring them to Israel. By the end of 1990, between 16,000 and 17,000 Ethiopian Jews had arrived in Addis.

In May 1991, after Ethiopian dictator Mengistu fled the country, the new regime consented to allow Israel to operate a continuous airlift for a consideration of forty million US dollars. Thus, on May 24th 1991, over the Shavuot festival, 14,000 people were flown overnight to Israel. This was known as *Mivtza Shlomo* (Operation Solomon), a procedure which took all of 48 hours and during which seven babies were born. Following this mass rescue, 6,000 more Ethiopian Jews made *aliyah*, bringing an end to the 3,000 year old saga of the Ethiopian Jewish community, as told in their tradition.

The integration of Ethiopian Jewry, with their distinctive appearance and customs, provided a challenge of the highest order to both the Israeli government and Israeli society. A special plan was drawn up to assist the absorption of this unique population into Israeli society. In all, about 35,000 Ethiopian Jewish have come to Israel.

Diversity

“... Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell in unity.” (Psalms 133:1)

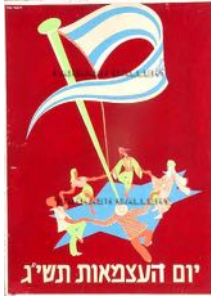
Israeli society is made up of many different groups, which together form the country's social fabric. The groups include different *edot* (ethnic sub-groups) such as: *sefaradim*, who are descendants of those expelled from Spain, *ashkenazim*, who are descendants from Franco-Germany and *mizrachim*, who are generally from Arab or Muslim countries. Members of these groups can be *olim* (immigrants) or *sabras* (native born), they can be members of non-Jewish minorities such as Muslim or Christian Arabs, Druze, Circassian, and of a growing non-Jewish population of foreign workers. Based on their religious beliefs and observances, they can be secular, ultra orthodox and everything in between.

Of Israel's 7 million people, 76.2 percent are Jews, 19.5 percent are Arabs (mostly Muslim) and the remaining 4.3 percent comprise of Druze, Circassians and others not classified by religion. The society is relatively young and characterized by social and religious commitment, political ideology, economic resourcefulness and cultural creativity, all of which contribute momentum to the country's continuing development.

Independence Day posters:

1953, 1959, 1964 (*ha'apala* – illegal immigration), 1975 (diversity), 1986, 1989 (40 years to mass immigration), 1991 (Year of *Aliyah* and *Klita*).

Thumbnails



1953



1959



1964



1975



1986



1989



1991

<A> THEMES

<2> Yearning for Peace

The official emblem of the State of Israel is a menorah with olive branches on either side representing Israel's yearning for peace.

Israelis across the political and social spectrum yearn for peace. Government ministers and opposition politicians debate rival peace plans while retired Israeli army generals initiate plans of their own, as do many women's groups, religious groups, and grass-root Israeli citizens groups, students, schoolchildren and sporting stars. This reflects a society yearning for peace that seeks out Arab and Palestinian leaders and societies that are ready to respond to this desire.

Besides the graphic expression of the hopes for peace, another medium that could illustrate the continued longing for peace is Israeli music. Since Israelis view their music not only as a creative outlet but also as a means of expressing hopes and aspirations as well as building their national identity, it is no surprise that a quick online search yields hundreds of Israeli peace songs.

Minutes before Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated at a political rally in November 1995, Israeli singer Miri Aloni sang the Israeli pop song "*Shir La'shalom*" (Song for Peace). That song, along with a number of other songs sung at the rally, became anthems of the Israeli peace movement. Interestingly enough, "*Shir La'shalom*" song was written after the great victory of the Six-Day War, a fact that puts Israel's yearning for peace in perspective. In fact, even the songs that deal directly with war and conflict are rarely victorious marching songs, and none of them denigrate the Arab enemies. Most of the songs are melancholic and describe the separation and loss during war, and the deep longing for peace.

Israel's Quest for Peace

Highlights of the Peace Process

Since its establishment in 1948, the State of Israel has sought peace with its neighbors through direct negotiations. However, its efforts to reach out for peace and to open direct channels of dialogue were not always met by similar efforts on the Arab side. Here are a few highlights of efforts on several fronts:

The Peace Process with Egypt

Until the 1991 Madrid Conference, only Egypt had accepted Israel's offer to conduct face-to-face negotiations. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat accepted Prime Minister Begin's invitation for dialogue, and the two countries embarked on historic bilateral negotiations which included the historical visit of president Sadat to Israel in 1977, and led to the 1978 Camp David Accords and the 1979 Israel-Egypt peace treaty. Since then, peace has prevailed on this mutual border and cooperation between the two states is growing.

In May 1989, Israel presented a new peace initiative. The breakup of the Soviet Union and the Gulf War produced a change in the basic political order of the Middle East, prompting the Arab world to reassess its attitude toward Israel and to enter into negotiations to build a new future for the Middle East.

The Peace Process with Jordan

Three years of talks between Jordan and Israel following the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference culminated in a declaration by King Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (July 1994), which ended the 46-year state-of-war between their two countries. The Jordan-Israel peace treaty was signed at the Arava border crossing (near Eilat in Israel and Akaba in Jordan) on October 26th 1994, in the presence of American President Bill Clinton.

The Peace Process with the Palestinians

In October 1991, a conference was convened in Madrid to inaugurate direct, face-to-face peace talks. Subsequently, bilateral negotiations were conducted between Israel and Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians, as well as multilateral talks on key regional issues.

These meetings produced the 1993 Oslo Peace Accords between Palestinians and Israel, a plan discussing the necessary elements and conditions for a future Palestinian state. These talks, mediated by the Norwegians, resulted in an agreement whereby the Gaza Strip and the town of Jericho were turned over to the control of the Palestinian Authority. It was further agreed that the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) would redeploy in the West Bank and evacuate large Palestinian towns. Arrangements were made to continue negotiations on the final status of the disputed territory. The agreement, officially titled The Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (DOP), was signed on the White House lawn on September 13th 1993. Rabin, Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres were awarded the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts.

The Oslo Agreements sparked fierce controversy within Israel. Some people wholeheartedly supported the Government's policy, while others saw it as an act of surrender and capitulation. The dispute reached its climax when, at the end of a peace rally, an extremist Israeli Jew shot and killed Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The assassination shocked Israel and the entire world.

After the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in 1995, the peace process slowed to a grinding halt. The Israeli settlements in the West Bank, seen by the Palestinians as one of the largest obstacles to peace, were not being dismantled. Instead, the settler population almost doubled during this period. Additionally, the Palestinians living in the territories did not see their living conditions improve. Later, sporadic suicide bombing attacks from Palestinian militant groups and the subsequent retaliatory actions from the Israeli military made conditions for peace negotiations untenable.

Camp David 2000 Summit

In 2000, US President Bill Clinton convened a peace summit between Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak. The Israeli prime minister, Ehud Barak, reportedly offered the Palestinian leader, among other things, approximately 95% of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as Palestinian sovereignty over East Jerusalem, and that 69 Jewish settlements (which comprise 85% of the West Bank's Jewish settlers) be ceded to Israel. President Arafat rejected this offer.

The Road Map

In July 2002, the “quartet” of the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, and Russia outlined the principles of a “road map” for peace, including an independent Palestinian state. The road map was released in April 2003 after the appointment of Mahmoud Abbas (aka Abu Mazen) as the first-ever Palestinian Authority Prime Minister. Both the US and Israel called for a new Prime Minister position, as both refused to work with Arafat.

The plan called for independent actions by Israel and the Palestinian Authority, with disputed issues put off until a rapport could be established.

The violence which continues to this day, coupled with the lukewarm political support, has led many to conclude that this peace plan has failed.

A partial list of agreements and attempts:

Armistice Agreements – 1949

Camp David Accords – 1978

Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty – 1979

Madrid Conference – 1991

Oslo Accords – 1993

Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace – 1994

Camp David Summit – 2000

Road map – 2002

Geneva Accord – 2003

Excerpts from Yitzhak Rabin Nobel Lecture

Upon receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994

“We will pursue the course of peace with determination and fortitude.

We will not let up.

We will not give in.

Peace will triumph over all our enemies, because the alternative is grim for us all.

And we will prevail.

We will prevail because we regard the building of peace as a great blessing for us, and for our children after us. We regard it as a blessing for our neighbors on all sides, and for our partners in this enterprise – the United States, Russia, Norway, and all mankind.

We wake up every morning, now, as different people. Suddenly, peace. We see the hope in our children’s eyes. We see the light in our soldier’s faces, in the streets, in the buses, in the fields.

We must not let them down.

We will not let them down.”

Wildpeace

By Yehudah Amichai

Not the peace of a cease-fire
 not even the vision of the wolf and the lamb,
 but rather
 as in the heart when the excitement is over
 and you can talk only about a great weariness.
 I know that I know how to kill, that makes me an adult.
 And my son plays with a toy gun that knows
 how to open and close its eyes and say Mama.
 A peace
 without the big noise of beating swords into ploughshares,
 without words, without
 the thud of the heavy rubber stamp: let it be
 light, floating, like lazy white foam.
 A little rest for the wounds – who speaks of healing?
 (And the howl of the orphans is passed from one generation
 to the next, as in a relay race:
 the baton never falls.)
 Let it come
 like wildflowers,
 suddenly, because the field
 must have it: wildpeace.

Amichai read this poem at the 1994 awards ceremony in Oslo when Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres received the Nobel Peace Prize together with Yasser Arafat.

Peace in Independence Day Posters

In November 1977, the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat arrived at Lod airport, becoming the first Arab leader to visit Israel. Sadat's visit broke the psychological barrier that forbade Arab leaders from making peace with Israel. During the course of his visit, Sadat visited Yad Vashem (The Holocaust Memorial Museum) and the Mosque of Omar, as well as the Knesset (Israel's Parliament) where he addressed the parliament. Sadat's visit marked the beginning of a process that ended the decades-long war between Israel and Egypt. While peace was always a goal and a dream for Israel and its citizens, this visit and the peace talks that ensued gave the prospect of peace a visual "push." Except for one poster (after the Yom Kippur War) in 1974, posters prior to this event did not depict peace symbols in an overt way. Only after 1977 does peace become a major theme.

Independence Day Posters

1961, 1965, 1974, 1978, 1979, 1995, 2002

Thumbnails



1961



1965



1974



1978



1979



1995



2002

<A> THEMES

<3> Jerusalem

“Ten measures of beauty were bestowed upon the world; nine were taken by Jerusalem and one by the rest of the world.” (Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Kiddushin 49:2)

Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, is located in the heart of the country, nestled among the Judean Hills. The city’s ancient stones, imbued with millennia of history, and its numerous historical sites, shrines and places of worship attest to its meaning for Jews, Christians and Muslims. Its modern architecture, well-tended parks, contemporary malls, outlying industrial zones, and ever-expanding suburbs proclaim Jerusalem’s hopes for the future.

Jerusalem’s incandescent glow, golden in sunshine, silvery by moonlight, is rivaled in impact only by the kaleidoscope of its people – some the descendants of generations of Jerusalemites, others who have come from the four corners of the earth. Mingling with people wearing the spectrum of modern fashion are dark-suited ultra-Orthodox Jews, Arab women in brightly embroidered shifts and Christian clergy in somber robes.

Jerusalem is central to the Jewish people. When Jews pray three times a day, they turn toward Jerusalem. They also hang a *mizrach* (literally “east”), a decoration hung on the walls of the home or synagogue to indicate the preferred direction or orientation for prayer. Jewish people close the Passover Seder with the words: *“La’shanah Ha’ba’ah Bi’Yerushalayim!”* (“Next Year in Jerusalem”). These same words are also invoked to conclude the holiest day of the Jewish year, Yom Kippur. This connection to Jerusalem is represented during a Jewish wedding ceremony when the groom breaks a glass as a sign of mourning to commemorate the destruction of the two Temples which stood in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem also symbolizes Israel’s sovereignty and is the seat of its government, including the Knesset, Supreme court, the Bank of Israel and many government offices and ministries.

Jerusalem is the largest city in Israel, both in area of jurisdiction and population, comprising 10% of the country’s residents. The total population numbers (as of May 2007) are 732,100 (64% Jews, 32% Muslims, 2% Christians).

Jerusalem Divided and United

Upon termination of the British Mandate on May 14, 1948, and in accordance with the UN resolution of November 29, 1947, Israel proclaimed its independence, with Jerusalem as its capital.

Opposing its establishment, the Arab countries launched an all-out assault on the new state, resulting in the 1948-49 War of Independence. The armistice lines drawn at the end of the war divided Jerusalem in two, with Jordan occupying the Old City and areas to the north and south, and Israel retaining the western and southern parts of the city.

Since the time of King David, except for the 19 years between 1948 and 1967, there has always been a Jewish presence in the ancient city of Jerusalem, the capital of Israel. From 1948 until 1967, the western part of the city was in Israeli hands, while the ancient, eastern part – apart from a small Israeli enclave on Mount Scopus – was under Jordanian control.

When the Six-Day War broke out in June 1967, Israel contacted Jordan through the U.N. as well as the American Embassy and made it clear that if Jordan refrained from attacking Israel, Israel would not attack Jordan. Nevertheless, the Jordanians attacked West Jerusalem and occupied the former High Commissioner's building. Following heavy fighting, the IDF recovered the compound and removed the Jordanian army from East Jerusalem, resulting in the reunification of the city.

The reunification of Jerusalem in 1967 was a seminal event in the history of Israel and is commemorated and celebrated every year as *Yom Yerushalayim* (Jerusalem Day) which is the most recent addition to the Hebrew calendar. It is celebrated on the 28th day of Iyar.

Arguably the best known Israeli song, "*Yerushalayim shel zahav*" (Jerusalem of Gold), was written before the Six Day War by Naomi Shemer in 1967. The songwriter added another stanza after Israel captured East Jerusalem and regained access to the Western Wall. In 1968, Uri Avnery, then a member of the Israeli parliament, proposed that "Jerusalem of Gold" become the Israeli anthem. The proposal was rejected, but the nomination itself says something about the power of this song and its lasting popularity.

The emblem of Jerusalem incorporates a lion, symbolizing the tribe of Judah, and one of Jerusalem's names – Ariel (Lion of God), as well as olive branches, symbolizing peace. In the background are Jerusalem Stones symbolizing the Western Wall. The Jerusalem Stone is the city's preferred building material which gives the city its golden hue.

Independence Day Posters

1968, 1977 (celebrating 10 years to reunification), 1993 (celebrating 25 years to reunification), 2007 (celebrating 40 years to reunification). Also: 1992, 1997.

Thumbnails



1968



1977



1993



2007



1992



1997

<A> THEMES

<4> Other Themes

- Army and Security Forces (1949, 1983, 2003)
- Connection to Bible, History and Antiquity (1951, 1952, 1954, 1955, 1958, 1992)
- Hityashvut (Settlement of the Land) (1969, 1979, 1982)
- 100 years of Hityashvut (Settlement of the Land) (1982)
- The Year of Hebrew Language (1990)
- 500 Years to the Expulsion from Spain (1992)
- Environmental Awareness (1994)
- Industry and Education (1996)
- 100 Years to the First Zionist Congress (1997)
- Establishment of the Knesset (1999)
- Volunteerism and Social Action (2001)
- Children and Youth (2002)
- Sports (2004)
- Israel and the Diaspora (1963, 1980, 2005)
- The Negev and the Galil (2006)

Thumbnails



1954
History



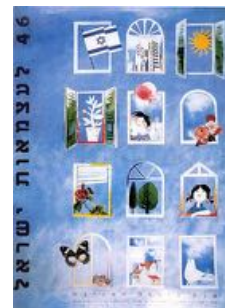
1980
Israel & Diaspora



1982
Settlement



1983
Army



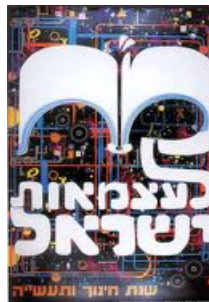
1994
Environment



1990
Hebrew



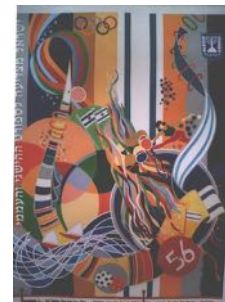
1992
Expulsion



1996
Ind. and Edu.



2001
Volunteerism



2004
Sports

 SYMBOLS

This section explores the origin and evolving meaning of several symbols and recurring elements while trying to put them in context as they appear in the posters. An ongoing tension exists in the depiction of these symbols between the religious and the national connotations, the Jewish and the Israeli connotations, as well as between the historic and the contemporary connotations.

<I> Menorah

The oldest symbol in Judaism is the menorah, the seven-branched candelabra. The menorah was created to serve as a sacred object, first in the Tabernacle and then in the Temple. Over time, through the course of the Jewish people's wanderings in the Diaspora, different layers of meaning were attached to it, and in the modern era it also became a secular symbol. As new meanings were added to its ancient role, the significance of the menorah became increasingly rich and varied. In many cases throughout history, the menorah served as a means of identifying Jews when they lived among other people or nations.

Throughout its history, the menorah was at times a sign of identity, a religious-prophetic image, a magical charm, and a symbol of destruction and rebirth. The establishment of the State of Israel and the selection of the menorah as the emblem of the modern state added a new, momentous dimension to this already complex symbol.

The Original Menorah

For generations, scholars and artists have sought to understand what the menorah actually looked like. Despite the detailed description found in the Bible (Exodus 25:31-40), it is difficult to gain a clear picture of the menorah's exact form. Among those who tried to decipher the enigmatic components of the menorah according to the biblical text were Rashi and Maimonides.

The Menorah on the Emblem

The new State of Israel was in need of an official emblem to demonstrate its sovereignty in the community of nations. The design process was long, as two almost antithetical forces tried to dictate the character of the emblem – religious and ritual values, on the one hand – secular and sovereign norms, on the other. After much deliberation, the committee decided that the seven-branched menorah should be one of the elements of the emblem, and announced a competition to design the emblem of the State.

Since the image of the menorah has been interpreted for so many years appearing on coins and on the walls and floors of synagogues as well as on everyday objects, the question was: which depiction of the menorah would fit the emblem? The final design, by Maxim and Gavriel Shamir, used as its model the depiction of the menorah in relief on the Arch of Titus in Rome. After the destruction of the Temple by the Romans, the Menorah was transported to Rome. A stone relief in the Triumphal Arch of Titus in Rome depicts the parade that carried the Menorah in the streets of Rome.

Borrowing the menorah from the Arch of Titus would constitute the visual metaphor of an idea prevalent in those years: just as the relief representing Titus's triumphal procession in Rome stood for the destruction of the Jewish state in 70 C.E., so its rebirth would be symbolized by the return of the menorah – if not to the Temple – then to the newly born State of Israel. In other words, the menorah is returned from the Arch of Titus, where it symbolizes defeat, humiliation

and disgrace, and is installed in a place of honor on the emblem of the State, the establishment of which is testimony to the eternity of the Jewish people. In this way, past, present and future are all linked in one symbolic motif.

The Israeli Context

The menorah was used as a commercial name and trademark even before the establishment of the State. Already in the 1930's, it had been selected as a symbol for a candle factory, an insurance company, and a soap manufacturer, among other things, in order to express national pride in the renewal of Jewish economic life in the land of Israel.

After the menorah was chosen as the State's emblem, it began to appear even more frequently and could be found on government posters and publications, bank notes and coins, medallions and stamps, to name a few. The use of the menorah – in one design or another – lent an “official” air to public institutions and a sense of quality and reliability to commercial firms.

Over the years, the menorah became so deeply entrenched in Israeli life that it underwent a process of complete secularization. By the time it began to appear on souvenirs, gifts, and everyday objects, it had been thoroughly popularized. Today, the menorah can be seen on a wide range of goods – from chocolate coins, scarves and umbrellas to bed linen made for fans of *Betar Yerushalayim* soccer team, and as the symbol on the ultimate children's hero, Ori On, the Israeli equivalent of Superman.

As a recurring symbol in the posters, the menorah evokes the connection between the past and the present, and between the religious and national identities of the state.

Independence Day Posters

1950, 1956, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1968, 1972, 1983, 1979, 1981, 1986, 1988, 1991, 1997

Thumbnails



 SYMBOLS

<2> Flag/Star of David/Blue & White

Flag

At the ceremony of the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel, the dais was decorated with a picture of Theodor Herzl flanked on either side by the flag of the World Zionist Organization. This flag, adopted by the first Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897, had become accepted by Jewish communities throughout the world as the emblem of Zionism and it was thus natural to use it at the official proclamation of statehood. Five-and-half months earlier, on November 29th 1947 when the Jews of *Eretz Yisrael* had poured into the streets to celebrate the United Nations partition resolution, they too had hoisted the flag of the WZO and used it as a unifying symbol. In May, however, only a few days after the Zionist dream had become reality, the question was raised as to whether or not the Zionist banner should be the flag of the state or should be replaced. The dilemma continued for about six months.

This decision to adopt the Zionist flag to be the flag of the State of Israel reflects its power as a symbol of the spirit of the Zionist movement. In order to examine the reasons that led to this decision, let us look for the symbolism and consider the motives which prompted the members of the Provisional Council of State first to consider replacing it and then to decide against doing so. Zionist tradition credits the design of the Zionist flag to David Wolffsohn. Legend even tells precisely when Wolffsohn had his brainstorm: During a meeting in Basel, Herzl raised the question of the Zionist flag. When his proposal of a white banner with seven gold stars failed to marshal a consensus, Wolffsohn stood up and said: "Why do we have to search? Here is our national flag." He then displayed his prayer shawl against the banner and showed everyone the national flag: a white field with blue stripes along the margin.

In our attempt to uncover the message conveyed by the Zionist flag, we should therefore address each of its components separately – the *Magen David* (Star of David), the blue stripes and the white background.

Star of David

Unlike the *menorah* (candelabrum), the Lion of Judah, the *shofar* (ram's horn) and the *lulav* (palm frond), the Star of David was never a uniquely Jewish symbol. The standard name for the geometric shape is a hexagram or six-pointed star, composed of two interlocking equilateral triangles. In a classic article, Gershom Sholem shed light on the history of the Star of David and its connection with Judaism and tried to answer the question whether it was appropriate to include it in the national flag or state emblem.*

One of the first Jewish uses of the Star of David was as part of a colophon, the special emblem printed on the title page of a book. Sometimes the printer included his family name in the colophon or chose an illustration that alluded to his name, ancestry, or the local prince, or a symbol of success and blessing. The idea was to differentiate this printer's books from those of his competitors and to embellish the title page. Colophons are as old as the printing press itself.

According to Sholem, the motive for the widespread use of the Star of David was a wish to imitate Christianity. During the Emancipation, Jews needed a symbol of Judaism parallel to the cross, the universal symbol of Christianity. In particular, they wanted something to adorn the walls of the

modern Jewish house of worship that would be symbolic like the cross. This is why the Star of David became prominent in the nineteenth century and why it was later used on ritual objects and in synagogues and eventually reached Poland and Russia. The pursuit of imitation, in Sholem's opinion, led to the dissemination of an emblem that was not really Jewish and conveyed no Jewish message. In his opinion, it was also the reason why the Star of David satisfied Zionism: it was a symbol which had already attained wide circulation among the Jewish communities but at the same time evoked no clear-cut religious associations. The Star of David became the emblem of Zionist Jews everywhere. Non-Jews regarded it as representing not only the Zionist current in Judaism, but Jewry as a whole.

* G. Sholem, "The Curious History of the Six Pointed Star; How the 'Magen David' Became the Jewish Symbol," *Commentary*, 8 (1949) pp. 243-351.

Blue & White

The blue stripes on the Zionist flag were inspired by the stripes on the *tallit* (prayer shawl). The *tallit* has two separate symbolic aspects: the light blue hue and the stripes. Some say that the stripes are meant to recall the one dyed strand of the *tzitzit* (ritual fringes). This leads to the significance of the hue itself: according to the Torah, one strand of the *tzitzit* should be light blue. To judge from references in the Talmud, it was a shade between green and blue. Many symbolic meanings were attributed to the color of light blue. Rabbi Meir said that it recalls the color of the sky, while Rabbi Judah Ben Illai maintained that the color of Aaron's staff was light blue, as were the Tablets of the Law, and that this is why God commanded the Jews to include the light blue color on their prayer shawls: "As long as the people of Israel are looking at this *tehelet* (light blue), they are reminded of (the words) written on the tablets and observe them." In other words, the sight of the color *tehelet* leads to observance of the commandments. White and *tehelet*, along with gold and purple, were the colors of the High Priest's raiment (Exodus 28: 4,43) and of the curtains of the Tabernacle (Exodus 26). They were considered to be the colors of purity symbolizing the spirituality of the Jewish people.

The first person in modern times who voiced the idea that blue and white are the national colors of the Jewish people, was the Austrian Jewish poet Ludwig August Frankl (1810-1894). More than three decades before the First Zionist Congress, Frankl published a poem entitled "Judah's Colors":

When sublime feelings his heart fill,
 He is mantled in the colors of his country
 He stands in prayer, wrapped
 In a sparkling robe of white.
 The hems of the white robe
 Are crowned with broad stripes of blue;
 Like the robe of the High Priest,
 Adorned with bands of blue threads.

These are the colors of the beloved country,
 Blue and white are the borders of Judah;
 White is the radiance of the priesthood,
 And blue, the splendors of the firmament.

A. L. Frankl, "Juda's Farben," in *Ahnenbilder* (Leipzig, 1864), p. 127

The blue stripes of the Zionist flag serve as a counterweight to the message of the Star of David, giving the flag the religious and ritual aspect which is totally absent from the latter. Whether the symbolic meaning of the blue stripes was perceived consciously or not, their origin in the *tallit* reminds onlookers of the Torah commandments. The Zionist flag uses the Star of David to express Jewish unity, which is in turn guided by the precepts of the Torah, as represented by the blue stripes and white background.

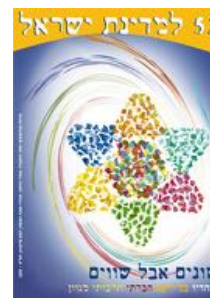
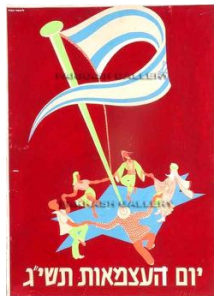
The three symbols (Flag/Star of David/Blue and White) appear in almost all of the posters. While the flag symbolizes the sovereign state, the colors and the Star of David could be interpreted as symbolizing *Am Yisrael* (The People of Israel): religious heritage and historical connection.

Independence Day Posters

Flag: 1949, 1951, 1953, 1955, 1956, 1960, 1965, 1967, 1971, 1991, 1994, 2002, 2004, 2006

Magen David: 1953, 1972, 1976, 1981, 2000, 2006

Thumbnails



<3> Flora and The Seven Species

Flora

The flora of Israel has been linked to beliefs, legends and myths since biblical times and gained visual expression in Jewish culture for generations. Jews, wherever they may have been, were familiar with The Seven Species of blessed crops representing the abundance and plenitude of the land. On the holiday of Sukkot, They blessed “The Four Species” that symbolized, among others, the various groups that comprised the Jewish community. They fantasized about the giant Lebanese cedars used by King Solomon to build the Temple and visualized the palm tree under which the prophetess Deborah sat. *Shoshanat Ha’amakim* (The Lily of the Valley) and *Havazelet Ha’s Sharon* (The Rose of Sharon) added a romantic aspect to their longing for the land of Israel. The flora of the Land of Israel as a symbol of the Holy Land – the object of longing in the Diaspora – was the basis of one of the most significant of the Zionist ideas: making the desert bloom.

Zionist thinking expanded the familiar biblical legends and myths by creating modern legends in Israel. The country’s flora was a popular topic for investigation and research from the early days of the renewal of Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel. It contributed to the creation of a bond between the “new Jew” and his old-new land. When the first Jewish settlers came, they found the flora that they recognized from the scriptures. In the Zionist conception, the act of returning to the land is reinforced by the idea that the “new Jew” comes, in fact, to a place where the flora is familiar, but he meets it physically for the first time. Later, the Jewish settlers found the land’s wild flora – flowers, fruits, trees, weeds (and thorns) – that is not mentioned in the Bible. Gradually, these became the object of new legends, beliefs and myths.

In Israeli schools during the early days of the State, the educational aims of science and geography lessons (*moleDET* in Hebrew, literally “motherland”) were to bring the students closer to the country’s flora and fauna. The three most recognizable flowers are the *rakefet* (cyclamen), *kalanit* (anemone) and *narkis* (narcissus). Beyond the botanical aspects of each flower, there are many symbolic connotations associated with them.

Ever since the 1948 War of Independence, wildflowers have served as symbols of bereavement and remembrance of youth who fell in battle, plucked from life, and also of the longing for rebirth and renewal. These images were borrowed from Hebrew literature and poetry and incorporated into visual art, especially into the public sector graphic design which include stamps, tags, and Independence Day posters.

Trees in Israel

By the early 20th century, Israel’s indigenous forests had been almost totally destroyed by centuries of continuous grazing, as well as by the search for wood that began in the last century. When the country was first established in 1948, there were fewer than 5 million trees in the entire area. Today, over 200 million trees have been planted due to an active reforestation program spearheaded by the Jewish National Fund (JNF). The JNF’s early planting at the beginning of the century was predominantly composed of evergreens in mountainous areas and of eucalyptus in the south. Today, there is a desire to cultivate tree species which were once part of the natural landscape of biblical Israel, such as various kinds of oak. While two-thirds of JNF’s afforestation

efforts once focused on the Jerusalem pine, today's forests feature a wide variety of species including oaks and carobs, terebinths and cypresses, eucalyptus, Judas trees, acacias, olive, almond, and many more.

The reforestation of the land, possible in part through donations from world Jewry, symbolizes not only the settling of land, but also the bond between Israel and the Diaspora.

Independence Day posters

1950, 1963, 1965, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1973, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1986, 1988, 1994, 2001, 2006

Thumbnails



The Seven Species

The Bible describes Israel as a land blessed with seven fruits and grains: “A land of wheat and barley, and (grape) vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and (date) honey.” (Deuteronomy 8:8)

These seven fruits and grains are called *shiv'at ha'minim* (The Seven Species)

While The Seven Species may no longer dominate the diet of modern Israelis, during biblical they characterized the local landscape. They were the staple foods consumed by the Jewish people in the Land of Israel during biblical times. In modern Israel – with dozens of species in a diverse diet – only wheat remains a staple. However, The Seven Species dominate large areas of the countryside, accentuating a sense of continuity between the biblical Land of Israel and the modern state. The Seven Species symbolize the close relationship between the Jewish People and the Land of Israel.

1. *chitah* (wheat)
2. *se'orah* (barley)
3. *gefen* (grapes)
4. *te'edah* (fig)
5. *rimon* (pomegranate)
6. *zayit* (olive)
7. *tamar* (date)

Independence Day posters

1951, 1952, 1971, 1977, 1991

Thumbnails



 SYMBOLS

<4> Other Symbols & Recurring Elements

Children and Youth: 1960, 1965, 1970,1975, 1994, 1998, 2003

Chamsa: 1966, 1998

Chai: 1963, 1966

Dove: 1961, 1977, 1980, 1984, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1998, 2002, 2007

Boat: 1959, 1964, 1989

Dancing: 1953, 1960, 1963

Heart: 1980, 2005, 2006

Thumbnails



Chamsa



Dove



Dancing



Boat



Heart

◀C> HEBREW and GEMATRIA

The Hebrew language revival, one of the truly outstanding socio-linguistic events of modern times, is a major achievement of modern Israel, and an indispensable key to understanding and appreciating Israeli society and culture.

The Revival of the Hebrew Language – A Short History

Hebrew is the language of Israel. Although it virtually ceased to be spoken around 200 CE, it continued to be used by Jews throughout the ages as the “sacred tongue” in liturgy, philosophy, and literature. In the late 19th century, it emerged as a modern cultural medium, becoming a vital factor in the national revival movement which culminated in political Zionism. The British Mandate administration recognized Hebrew as an official language, together with English and Arabic, and its use was adopted by Jewish institutions and their educational networks. Hebrew press and literature flourished with new generations of authors and readers, and today it is a rich, vibrant, living tongue. From some 8,000 words in biblical times, Hebrew vocabulary has expanded to more than 120,000 words. Its formal linguistic development is guided by the Academy of the Hebrew Language, established in 1953.

Hebrew Literacy and Proficiency – *Hanchalat Halashon* – הנחלת הלשון

Since the foundation of the State, Israel has absorbed people from all corners of the world. Immigrants from a variety of socio-cultural and political backgrounds came to find their homeland in Israel. The revival of the language after two thousand years, and the teaching and learning of Hebrew have been major achievements of adult education in Israel. Hundreds of thousands of newcomers, irrespective of age and level of education, passed through flexible frameworks suited to their needs and abilities, where they were able to master the language. It was during the first few years of the State's independence that *mitvza hanchalat halashon* – מבצע הנחלת הלשון (Operation Hebrew Literacy and Proficiency) was at its height, but even up until today most new immigrants spend their first few months in Israel in an *ulpan* – אולפן (Hebrew Language School) taking the time to learn the language before embarking on their new life in Israel.

The campaign to master the Hebrew language included the usage of posters as a tool to enhance learning. Many of the same graphic techniques and strong messages evident in ID posters are also apparent in these educational posters. (see: Booklet 2, Poster & Image Gallery).

The use of Hebrew text in ID posters, especially in the early years, is a manifestation and declaration of the importance of the Hebrew language in Israeli life and culture. Today, it is a matter of fact!

גימטריה – Gematria

Gematria is numerology of the Hebrew Alphabet and Hebrew language, and is used by its proponents to derive meaning or relative relationship from Hebrew text. The word itself comes most likely from the Greek word “geometry.”

Each letter of the Hebrew alphabet is assigned a numeric value. The most common uses are for Hebrew dates, for verses in the Bible, and for chapters in books. (see: Chapter VII, Addenda, Gematria Table)

For our purposes, the common use of Gematria in ID Posters is for indicating the Hebrew year and the number of years of independence.

Example:

Take a look at the 1977 poster.

כ"ט לעצמאות ישראל, תשל"ז - *kaf tet le'atzmaut Israel, taf shin lamed vav*

kaf tet = 29 (כ=20, ט=9) years of independence

Hebrew Year: *taf shin lamed vav* = 5746 (ת=400, ש=300, ל=30, ו=6 and add 'ה=5,000)
(see: Chapter VII, Addenda, Gematria and Years Tables)

Hebrew and Gematria in ID posters

In examining the usage of Hebrew in ID posters, it is important to look at two aspects: the text and the fonts. Together they create a message.

TEXT

Recurring Text

All posters include one form or another of the following:

- Independence Day – *Yom Ha'atzmaut* – יום העצמאות
- Hebrew year. Example: 5714 – תשי"ד (ה')
- Years of Independence, in numbers or Gematria. Example: 25 Years of Israel's Independence – *kaf heh le'atzmaut Israel* – כ"ה לעצמאות ישראל

Other Text

In order to convey a special message, to celebrate a certain value or commemorate particular anniversaries, additional text appears in many of the posters.

FONTS

Usage of Fonts

Fonts have an important role in graphic design by transmitting visual information in addition to the meaning of the text. Some fonts are based on old letterforms and some are modern or newly designed, each projecting different messages – some are serious, while other express joy and creativity.

Interesting Font Usage

1978 – Koren font (a font especially designed for the Koren Bible) שלום

1993 – two different fonts for two purposes. The verse from the Bible is in Koren font and *kaf heh le'atzmaut Israel* (25 to Israel's Independence - כ"ה לעצמאות ישראל -) is in a modern font.

1990 – handwritten square letters and modern fonts.

1966 – font that matches the artwork (mizrachi style).

1986 – fancy old fashioned font that matches the artwork.

ID poster: 1990 – The Year of Hebrew Language

Commemorating 100 years of Hebrew language, since the establishment of *Va'ad Ha'lashon* – ועד הלשון (Hebrew Language Committee) in 1890 (see: Chapter V, *Krazot Mesaprot* – Poster Tales)

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (1858 -1922) spearheaded the momentum for the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language. After immigrating to the Land of Israel in 1881, he pioneered Hebrew usage in home and school, coined thousands of new words, established two Hebrew language periodicals, co-initiated the *Va'ad Ha'lashon* – ועד הלשון (Hebrew Language Committee) in 1890, and compiled several volumes of a 17-volume Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew, which was begun in 1910 and completed by his second wife and son in 1959.

Count and Recount – *Lispor U'lesaper* – לספור ולספר

We are counting 60 years of independence and recounting the stories associated with Israel's land, state, and people – Count and Recount.

In Gematria the number 60 is represented by the letter *samech* – ס' – the first letter in the word *sefer* – ספר (book) and *sipur* – סיפור (story). *Le'saper* – לספר (to recount, to tell) shares a root with *s'fira* – ספירה (counting) and *lispor* – לספור (to count).

In Hebrew, this year's Poster theme is therefore ***Lispor U'lesaper* – לספור ולספר**

Other words deriving from the same root (samech, pheh, resh - ס.פ.ר.) are:

library – *sifria* – ספריה
 librarian – *safran/it* – ספרן/ספרנית
 author – *sofer/et* – סופר/סופרת
 number(s) – *mispar/im* – מספר/מספרים
 booklet – *sifron* – סיפרון
 school – *bet-sefer* – בית ספר
 literature – *sifrut* – ספרות

Vocabulary – otzar milim – אוצר מילים

- poster – kraza – כרזה
posters – krazot – כרזות
poster tales – krazot mesaprot – כרזות מספרות
independence – atzmaut – עצמאות
Day of Independence – yom ha'atzmaut – יום העצמאות
Israel's independence – atzma'ut Israel – עצמאות ישראל
immigration – aliyah – עליה
absorption – klita – קליטה
settlement – hityashvut – התישבות
decade – asor – עשור
year, years, year of – shana, shanim, shnat – שנה, שנים, שנת
Am Israel lives – am Israel chai – עם ישראל חי
life – chai – חי
peace – shalom – שלום
Jerusalem – yerushalyim – ירושלים
unification – ichud – איחוד
let there be peace – va'yehi shalom – ויהי שלום
- ve'shalom ve'sheket eten al Israel – ושלום ושקט אתן על ישראל –
“...and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel”
(Chronicles I - 9:22)
- melechet ha'binyan be'itzuma – מלאכת הבנין בעיצומה –
The building endeavor is at its peak
- reshit ha'aliyah ha'hamonit – ראשית העליה ההמונית –
Beginning of mass immigration
- the Hebrew language – ha'lashon ha'ivrit – הלשון העברית –
- sisu et yerusalyim gilul ba – שישו את ירושלים גילו בה –
“Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be joyful with her”
(Isaiah 65)
- environmental awareness – eichut ha'sviva – איכות הסביבה –

שנת חינוך ותעשייה – shnat hinuch veta'asiya – Year of Education and Industry
 ציונות – tzionut – Zionism
 קונגרס ציוני – congress tzioni – Zionist Congress
 כינון הכנסת – kinun ha'kneset – establishment of the Knesset (Israel's parliament)
 שונים אבל שווים – shonim aval shavim – Different Yet Equal
 יחדיו במרקם חברתי תרבותי מגוון – yachdav be'mirkam chevrati tarbuti meguvan –
 together in a diverse social and cultural tapestry
 אנשים שאכפת להם – anashim sheh'ichpat la'hem – people who care
 ישראל מצדיעה לספורט ההישגי והעממי – Israel matzdia la'sport –
 ha'heseji ve'ha'amami - Israel salutes professional and popular sports
 ברית חיים – brit chayim – life covenant
 צו השעה לקירוב לבבות לגורל אחד ועתיד משותף –
 tzav ha'shaa लेकरuv levavot legoral echad ve'atid meshutaf
 The call of the hour of promoting understanding
 for mutual destiny and shared future
 מתקדמים בשביל הפיתוח – mitkadmim bi'shvil hapitu'ach –
 Advancing on the path to development
 הנגב והגליל בלב של כולנו – ha'negev ve'ha'galil balev shel kulanu –
 The Negev and the Galil in all of our hearts
 בסימן פיתוח הנגב והגליל – besiman pitu'ach ha'negev ve'hagalil –
 Marking the Development of the Negev and the Galil

Independence Day Poster: 1990

Thumbnails



Operation Hebrew Literacy and Proficiency

<A> GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION

<1> About Graphic Communication

Graphic design is the art of combining text and graphics in order to communicate an effective message. By communicating a message visually, unspoken nuances of emotion and importance are conveyed: Is the topic serious or playful? Is the viewer to be soothed, stimulated, urged into action, or persuaded? Is the message personal or national?

Graphic designers control the message and the meta message while contributing to the general visual literacy of the public. Even though many graphic designers are also fine artists, the difference between fine art and poster design lies in the message. While a work of art invites many interpretations, a poster should try to limit them. The message has to be a summarized, crisp, and easily absorbable one, without being simplistic or superficial; the message must be unambiguous yet multi-layered.

<2> Graphic Communication in Israel

Few countries of Israel's size can claim such a fine tradition of graphic design, a tradition that speaks most boldly through posters. Even before the State of Israel was declared, posters have alerted, informed, and encouraged the people.

Israeli graphic designers draw from the nation's rich past to address a challenged and exciting present. They meet the sword of war with the dove of peace, and the Soviet sickle with the Star of David. But the designs use more than just Jewish motifs; as the country itself develops, so does graphic design, absorbing a wealth of styles and movements from both East and West.

Jewish refugees from Germany brought the clean lines of the Bauhaus and the heroic style of the Russian avant-garde influenced posters for the Jewish Brigade, the Civil Defense, and the Society of Jewish Prisoners. Later posters like "Let My People Go" employed the language of the bold Swiss School with the 1960's bringing a spirit of freedom and experiment, backed by technological advances with far-reaching consequences. As television entered more Israeli homes, the saturated power of the televised message led to a greater emphasis on the poster as art form. And while the advent of the computer in the 1980's gave graphic artists a tool of great power, it also sealed the end of the era of simple images, messages, and values.

Israeli graphic design is eclectic, its designers choosing from a variety of techniques, color schemes, typography, and compositions, combining iconic images with newly created ones.

<3> Krazot Yom Ha'atzmaut (Independence Day Posters)

The Hebrew word *kraza* (poster), comes from the three letter root of *kaf-resh-zayin*. Words derived from this root include: declare, proclaim, announce, and herald. The role of the *kraza* was indeed to be a public announcement or communication conveying a message; it was intended to attract attention, to encourage discourse, and to inspire action around the topics and issues it raised. *Krazot Yom Ha'atzmaut* (Independence Day Posters) were a bit different since their major role was to decorate public buildings, and to celebrate the country's sovereignty and independence. They did this by using design and colors to express the symbols, motifs, themes, and values of the Israeli state and society. Examining these posters, entering into their narratives, and interpreting their message, style and artistry, reveal that these are more than just pictures – they are historical documents.

<4> Main Elements of Poster Design

Typography: a short text expressing the theme, the year, and the number of years of independence.

Illustration: a symbol or central motif expressing the idea. This could be a photo, painting photomontage, lithography etc.

Graphic Elements: the usage of color, symbols, frame, composition, placement, etc.

<5> How to “Read” Yom Ha’atzmaut Posters

Things to consider:

- Composition: is it simple or complex?
- Symmetry: are images balanced or uneven?
- Dynamic Design: is there movement, sharp perspective, sharp light and shade, mixed sizes?
- Color: is the image monotonous, multi-colored, strong colored? Does the image contain symbolic colors?

Color symbolism suggestions:

Blue – ephemeral, heavenly, ideal, godly, belief

Blue and white – nationality

Gold – glory, magnificence, Temple’s holiness and history of the people of Israel

Red and gold – profane, earthly

Green – freshness and growth

- Usage of symbols: clear or hidden?
- Depiction of people: realistic or schematic?
- Expression of people: through movement, relationship to background, or other?
- Typography: mixed Hebrew and English, usage of different fonts: old or new, their sizes, where are they placed, relationship to message and style.
- Frames: are there architectural elements such as columns, gates or openings?
- Techniques: is it collage, photography, stained glass like, patchwork, appliqué, embroidery, decoupage or other?

 ARTISTS

The list of artists who designed the ID posters is as varied as Israeli art itself and includes talents who use graphic design, fine arts, photography, and other media to express their ideas. They are Israeli born, new or veteran immigrants, Ashkenazi, Mizrachi, young, old, men, women – in short, they are as diverse as Israeli society itself. The six artists highlighted here were chosen in order to demonstrate this diversity and to give educators a glimpse into their background and other works of art which they produced.

(For all reference to specific images, see: Booklet 2, Poster and Image Gallery)

<1> Yohanan Simon

Yohanan Simon was a major contributor to building the Zionist ethos through his paintings and graphic work, and was responsible for the development of the style of Socialist Realism in Israel. Born in Berlin in 1905, Simon studied in Frankfurt with Max Beckmann at the Art Academy in Munich as well as at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. During the late 1920's, he joined a circle of young painters that included Andre Derain, and in 1934 he worked for the journal "Vogue" in New York. Simon lived in Paris for a time before immigrating to Palestine in 1936. He was a member of Kibbutz Gan-Shmuel until 1953, and was active in the *Hagana*, participating in the War of Independence in 1948. His depiction of the kibbutz life from this period is among the most compelling visual documentation of idyllic socialist ethos. Simon traveled extensively in South America, the United States and Europe between 1954-1961. The South American visits introduced him to the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, whose style and social message influenced him profoundly, and upon his return to Israel Simon proceeded to paint large murals in industrial and business buildings. In 1962, Simon moved to the Israeli city of Herzelia and died in 1976.

Independence Day Poster: 1949



<2> The Shamir Brothers

The brothers Gavriel and Maxim Shamir were among the most noted and productive graphic designers since the mid 1930's and until the early 1990's. Born in Latvia, they studied art in Berlin, and came to Israel in 1935 where they established a design studio in Tel Aviv. They were among the founders of "The Association of Hebrew Artists for Applied Graphics in Eretz Yisrael." Between 1935-1949 they designed posters, print advertisements, and consumer tags in the modernist language they acquired in Europe. The usage of Zionist iconography, such as scenic land, stereotypical *chalutzim* (pioneers) and soldiers, was prevalent in their designs, stemming from either an ideological affinity or from a realization that these images serve as a sales tool.

In 1949 they won the competition for designing the new state's emblem (see: Menorah, Chapter III, B) and in 1958 they won the competition for designing four bank notes with the builders of the state as a motif for the series. From 1950 and until they parted ways as partners in 1974, the brothers widened the range of their design to include emblems, stamps, medals, publications, books, periodicals and logos, including the first logo of the Israeli Postal Service. They also continued to be a driving force in poster design, always updating their graphic language, its distinct message, and catering in a precise manner to both the clients and the audience.

Independence Day Poster: 1956



<3> Kopel Gurwin

Kopel Gurwin was an artist and graphic designer born in Vilna, Lithuania in 1923. He was born to an observant family and later belonged to a Zionist youth movement. During the Second World War, he worked in German work camps immigrating to Israel in 1950. He served in the Israeli army, and later studied at “The Bezalel School of Art and Design” in Jerusalem. Gurwin won many prizes for his work and designed many posters including four Independence Day posters, a poster celebrating 50 years for Tel Aviv, the 25th Zionist Congress and many more. His main artistic media was carpet design and appliqué*. In his work, Gurwin put much emphasis on biblical and Jewish themes using rich, bright colors, and Hebrew lettering as a design element, which became his signature style. Gurwin created beautiful appliqué works for synagogues, public buildings, hotels, and private collections in Israel and abroad. Gurwin died in 1990.

*Appliqué (from French, “applied”) is an ancient needlework technique in which pieces of fabric, embroidery, or other materials are sewn onto a foundation fabric to create designs. It is particularly suitable for work which is to be seen from a distance, such as in banner making.

Independence Day Posters: 1960, 1964, 1968, 1971



◁4> Ziona Shimshi

Ziona Shimshi is a painter, sculptor, and designer working in a variety of media. Shimshi designed sculpted walls, textiles, and rugs for public buildings and set designs for major Israeli theater productions. She was born in 1939 in Tel Aviv and studied art at Machon Avni and in New York. Between 1981-1987 she led the Ceramic and Glass Design Department of the “Bezalel Academy of Art and Design” and taught Interior Design at the “Shenkar College of Engineering and Design.” Shimshi later became the head of the historic building of Bezalel in Jerusalem (1992-1995). Between 1983 and 1993 she wrote an art column in Ha’aretz and published many articles on design and architecture.

In the mid 1960’s, Ziona Shimshi belonged to a group of artists named “Ten Plus” that included Rafi Lavie, Yigal Tumarkin and Uri Lifshitz. The group developed a rough esthetic and included photography, “readymade” (found objects) and collage. This celebrated group aimed to shock the art world, allow young artists to expose their work, and bring art closer to everyday life.

Today, Shimshi has several pieces of art in public spaces and in addition to her artistic contributions, she also curates exhibits and publishes books on art.

Independence Day Poster: 1976



<5> David Tartakover

Tartakover is a graphic designer, political activist, artist, and design curator and educator. Born in 1944 in Haifa, Israel, he studied at the “Bezalel Academy of Art and Design” in Jerusalem and is a graduate of The London College of Printing. Since 1985, he has operated his own studio in Neve Tzedek, an old neighborhood of Tel Aviv. He specializes in various aspects of visual communications, with particular emphasis on culture and politics.

From 1976, Tartakover has been a senior lecturer in the Visual Communication Department of the Bezalel Academy, and is a laureate of the Israel Prize (2002). Referring to their choice, the judges of this coveted prize described Tartakover as one of Israel’s foremost designers, noting that: “His unique work creates a synthesis between popular and high culture, between the written text and visual imagery and between personal statements and collective representations of local cultural values. As a creator, teacher and active member of the community for over 30 years, he has influenced the language of visual representation in Israel.” His work has won numerous awards and prizes and is included in the collections of museum all over the world.

In the early 1970’s, Tartakover started to collect, preserve and research Israeli graphic works. His collection now includes thousands of items, from propaganda and advertisement posters to children’s board games and *Shana Tova* (Happy New Year) cards, and has published two books that document his research in this field. Among his cultural initiatives in public spaces are the ceramic wall “The story of Neve Tzedek” in the Suzanne Dallal Center (1989) in Tel Aviv, and the memorial site for Yitzhak Rabin at the Tel Aviv Municipality (1999).

Tartakover has established a reputation for a series of politically provocative self-produced posters. Whoever stands before a Tartakover poster is forced to think, “How do I feel about this? Do I agree with this message? Is this message what I think it is? What is to be done?” There’s nothing wishy-washy about his art. It is bold, clear, and compellingly provocative.

He describes himself as “a local designer,” meaning that the subjects he tackles concern Israel. He follows his belief, based on poet Avigdor Hameiri’s: “Freedom of opinion is not a right but a duty.”

Independence Day Poster: 1978



<6> Rafael Abecassis

Born in 1953 in Marrakech Morocco, Abecassis immigrated to Israel with his parents at the age of three and later in his life studied art at the “College of Education” in Be’er Sheva.

Raphael Abecassis has gained worldwide recognition as an artist who combines traditional Jewish and Sephardic motifs with modern composition and style, contributing to the creation of a modern Jewish art.

Abecassis restores a whole artistic tradition and pays tribute to his artistic ancestry by combining scripts and verses from the scriptures, illustrated prayers and the Independence Charter of the State of Israel into his compositions. Two such examples are “Odyssey of Spanish Jews,” commemorating 500 years to the expulsion of Jews from Spain, and a collection of twenty-five paintings celebrating the 3,000 years anniversary of Jerusalem. Others are his award winning Independence Day Posters and his work “Psalms.” Here Abecassis recreates the mythical world of King David the poet as sung by the king himself in the Bible, describing the Seven Days of Creation and likening it to everyday life.

His work uses innovative techniques of refreshing colors and forms to portray clear compositions and life-celebrating subjects. With excellent technical performance, Abecassis integrates the old and the new, and natural with mystic, using different mediums such as paintings, serigraphy, decoupage, ceramic, embroidery, silver, and stained glass windows.

Abecassis has exhibited extensively in museums and galleries in the United States, Europe, Canada, and Israel.

Independence Day Posters: 1986, 1991, 2004



<C> GRAPHIC COMMENTARY

Israeli visual culture has maintained a complex relationship with the Zionist ideology of national Jewish revival in the land of Israel. On the one hand, artists identified with this collective national goal and strove to give it a clear and communicative visual expression. On the other hand, these same artists identified with the new modernist avant-garde ideas emerging from Europe, and wished to use innovative revolutionary forms to express themselves as individuals. Today, artists in many disciplines are returning to the original canonic icons in order to question the ideology that produced them, and to present an alternative and critical point of view. Graphic artists, accustomed to conveying a clear message through their art, are especially keen on expressing their political views visually.

Within Israel, the oppositional poster tradition is well-established and some of the most popular Israeli artists embrace an outspoken, polemical style. Contemporary Israeli oppositional posters are invariably solidly researched, rich in historical references, highly nuanced, exquisitely designed and almost always provocative. Irony, however, is the indispensable arrow in the Israeli poster artist's quiver and it is usually aimed with a deftness and unselfconscious courage rarely equaled elsewhere. In a land where much is held sacrosanct, Israeli poster artists recognize no boundaries and honor no restrictions. For them, the highest duty of the artist is to search for, and serve, the truth. Their graphic images are as powerful and poignant as a newspaper editorial or political speech – they are graphic commentaries.

In this section we will examine posters that are a takeoff on iconic symbols and images, concentrating on the ones appearing in Independence Day (ID) posters and created in the same genre or format. Iconic images and taboo themes are excellent vehicles for graphic dissent. (See: Booklet 2, Poster and Image Gallery)

A Takeoff on Iconic Symbols and Images

Israeli poster artist, Yossi Lemel, is one of the most outspoken graphic artists in Israel. His posters, based on the familiar ID posters, are thought provoking and challenge the genre of the *hasbara* poster (*hasbara* literally means “explanation,” but “Israel advocacy,” “public diplomacy,” and even “propaganda” are common translations).

In one poster he depicts a Palestinian Hamas soldier and an Israeli soldier from an elite unit. The poster reads: “2002, A Year of Peace and Security.” Lemel commented that this is “something that looks utopian at the moment but hopefully will happen in the future.”

In a poster published right after the second Lebanon War, in the summer of 2006, he plays on the menorah symbol, constructing it from rotten bananas. The question that arises is whether his protest is against a banana republic, or just a corrupted leadership.

His poster commemorating 18 years to the Lebanon War holds several symbolic references. In Hebrew it reads: “*Chai* to the Lebanon War,” with the Hebrew letters *chet* and *yod* (spelling the word *chai* -alive- which equals 18 in gematria). The photo in the background is a military cemetery and the grave in the forefront is of his friend, Goni Harnick z”l, son of a celebrated poet Raya Harnick. After losing her son, Harnick became an advocate for parents of fallen soldiers and one of the country's foremost opponents of the 1982 “Operation Peace for Galilee.” For Israel's 50th anniversary, Lemel chose an iconic photo from the liberation of Eilat from 1949, only to raise the McDonald's flag in place of the Israeli one.

A mock Yom Ha'atzmaut poster for 1994 shows a plastic hammer which is an icon of independence day celebrations; this one, however, bears the colors of the Palestinian flag.

David Tartakover, who sees himself as “a seismographer of social and political phenomena in Israel,” self produced a poster marking Israel’s 49th Years of Independence. This poster is based on traditional Israeli Independence Day decorations and presents the artist’s opinion during a shift in the Israeli political landscape. Customarily, appearing in the original are the portraits of Israel’s President, Prime Minister, Chief of the General Staff, and Defense Minister. Appearing in this poster are leaders of Shas, a Sephardic Ultra-Orthodox party, and the Director of the Prime Minister’s Office at the time, a controversial political figure, Avigdor Liberman. The portrait in the middle is that of Theodor Herzl, the visionary of Zionism.

Many ID posters became recognizable popular art works, but two of them, both dealing with peace, became iconic images. David Tartakover’s 1978 ID poster “Shalom” is one of them. It was not only the image that became an icon, but the font that was used as well. The designer chose the Koren font that was created especially for printing the Bible, and is used regularly for printing Bible verses. That same font and the word “*Shalom*” were used later that same year, by the same designer, in creating the logo for “*Shalom Achshav*” (the “Peace Now” political movement). A few years later another designer used the same font for “*Shalom, Chaver*” (Goodbye, Friend) as a commemoration slogan for Yitzhak Rabin.

The other iconic poster is that from 2002, depicting a child reaching up to a flag and a dove, both out of reach and blurred.

Students at the “Shenkar School of Engineering and Design” held exhibits for ID poster designs for the year 57 and 58. Several of them are commentary on these two iconic posters (1987 and 2002) and the prospect for peace. The dove of peace gets yet another makeover in a poster showing it as a regular pigeon in danger of being trampled upon.

In a complete disregard to the genre, but in line with public obsessions and the impact of consumerism, a slightly reduced (56.99) is offered here for the 57th year of Independence, as a take-off on Ikea shopping cart.

By deconstructing and recreating iconic symbols and images, graphic artists express their personal opinion on political and social issues, and in turn sharpen our critical thinking and serve as a tool to engage our students in the discourse.

We leave the decision of whether or not to introduce and discuss the material presented as graphic commentary to the discretion of educators, age appropriateness, and the philosophy of the schools.



This chapter explores the many stories told through the visual genre of Yom Ha'atzmaut posters (Independence Day Posters) and includes descriptions, analyses and suggestions for exploration. This chapter provides a decade-by-decade overview of trends and styles and it poses questions. It invites you and your students to engage in critical examination, interpretation of images, while discerning myth from reality. (On how to “read” ID posters, see: IV Artistic Elements, A, 5)

The First Decade (1949-1958)

The first decade is characterized by an emphasis on the connection between the renewed Jewish life in Israel with the historic and biblical past. It is important to notice that the affinity is with ancient history rather than with the 2,000 years of Diaspora experience. In other disciplines, this trend translates into an emotional attachment to the land where biblical events unfold and there is an identification with biblical heroes, preferably powerful figures, such as judges and kings. In addition, this trend presents a validation of the historical right to the land.

(For reference on artistic interpretation, see: Chapter IV, A, 5)



1949

The first Independence Day poster was designed in 1948 by Yohanan Simon who depicted, in a Soviet socialistic realistic style, two powerful arms raising Israel's flag to the top of the flagpole. Alongside, we find a quote taken from the Declaration of Independence that refers to the natural right of the Jewish people to stand independently on its own sovereign land. This poster was issued by the Army's Cultural Department, due to the absence of a civilian authority.

Notice and Interpret: colors used; the depiction of the flag; blue and white stripes; vertical and diagonal lines; arms on their own; sharp light and dark background; What does this poster say about the first year of independence? What message is conveyed? What forces are at play?

Artist: Yohanan Simon (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)



1950

In this poster the artist chose a superimposed anemone (*kalanit*) on the newly designed state emblem. Ever since the 1948 War of Independence, wildflowers have served as symbols of bereavement and remembrance of youth who fell in battle, tragically plucked from life, as well as expressions of the longing for rebirth and renewal.

Notice and Interpret: The focal points are the two red flowers in the forefront symbolizing two years of independence and commemorating the fallen soldiers. How different is this poster from the one preceding it? What do the two main symbols stand for?



1951

In the center of this poster is a part of a classical column bearing a Corinthian capital with a blue and white ribbon around it and a grapevine growing from it. Columns of this kind can be found in ancient synagogues from the era of

The Second Temple and after its destruction in 70 C.E. The grapevine is one of The Seven Species that *Eretz Yisrael* was blessed to have. (see: Symbols, Chapter III, B). “*Why is Israel compared to a grapevine? When you want to improve its fruit, you dig it up and replant it elsewhere and it improves.*” (Shemot Raba 44)

Notice and Interpret: colors used; sharp light and shadow; ancient elements basking in new light; movement in both ribbon and grapevine is toward light source; three grape leaves for three years of independence. What historic period does the poster conjure? What is the connection between the two main symbols?

Artist: Rudolf Sidner

1952

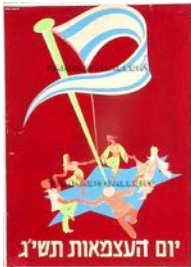


Two figures are depicted in this poster: one is sowing seeds and the other is raising a sheaf of wheat tied with a blue and white ribbon. The biblical reference here is to Shir Ha'ma'alot (Psalms 126:1-6) “*hazor'im bedim'a berina yiktzoru,*” (“*Return us again to freedom, God, like streams, long dry, to the Negev returning. Those who sow in tears will reap in joy. The farmer weeps when he carries the seed to the field. But singing he comes back with his arms filled with grain.*”)

Notice and Interpret: position and colors of each figure; dance movement depicting emotions. What is the connection between the two figures? Is it about the land or the people? Who is in the forefront and why?

Artist: Paul Kor

1953



Five figures are dancing around the Israeli flag on a stage that is shaped as the Star of David; most likely they are dancing the *Hora*, which is usually danced in circles and is fast and dynamic. This is the first ID poster to depict ingathering of the exiles (*Kibbutz Galuyot*) following the mass immigration of 1948-1951. The five figures are a combination of new immigrants from Yemen, Europe and perhaps Morocco, mixed in with a couple of more established Israeli youth.

Notice and Interpret: How is the dynamic scene depicted graphically? Where is the artist's point of view? What is the distinction between the two symbols of the flag and the Star of David? What colors are used for background and foreground, and why?

Artist: Haim Nahor

1954



The main element in the poster is a stone wall built from new bricks on top of an architectural frieze pattern from an ancient synagogue found in Ashkelon. The frieze depicts a menorah with three legs, a *lulav*, an *etrog* and rosettas (in the shape of a *shoshan* or rose) with an olive branch growing out of the stones.

This poster is another in a series of “old meets new” that characterizes posters from the first decade of independence.

Notice and Interpret: six new bricks for six years of independence; use of warm and cool colors that create contrast; Hebrew font mimicking chiseled lettering; light source. Why was an olive branch chosen to represent the new? What do the symbols in the frieze stand for?

Artists: Rothchild and Lipman



1955

In the center of this poster is a fort-like structure built from twelve stones depicting the symbols of the twelve tribes. Flags waving in the wind are placed over this structure, a reminder of the old city of Jerusalem. The poster as a whole marks the absorption of thousands of immigrants comprising the modern twelve tribes arriving from all corners of the earth. This poster is another in a series of “old meets new” that characterizes posters from the first decade of independence.

Notice and Interpret: usage of colors; background gradual color; contrast of warm and cool colors; seven flags for seven years of independence; composition; contrast between heavy stones and light fluttering flags.

Artist: Gidi Keich



1956

This poster depicts a procession banner containing the emblem and a blue and white ribbon. The Shamir Brothers who designed this poster were also the designers of the emblem itself. The diagonal element cutting the composition in two is very typical of their design style and suggests a feeling of movement or direction. The font, “Yerushalmi,” is based on the calligraphic letterform from scriptures and the Dead Sea scrolls (The “Dead Sea Scrolls” comprise roughly 900 documents, including texts from the Hebrew Bible, discovered between 1947 and 1956 in eleven caves in and around the Wadi Qumran). This font, atypical of a bolder, more modern usage in other posters by these designers, is in line with other posters from the first decade connecting the historic and the new.

Notice and Interpret: usage of colors; the division of space; the blue and white ribbon forming the number 8 which represent the eight years of independence.

Artists: Shamir Brothers (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)

1957

There is no documentation of a poster for this year.

1958

The first decade of Independence and the posters which visually documented its unfolding comes to a close with a archeological scene. Ten figures are



assembling a mosaic comprised of the number 10, the word *asor* (decade, derived from the same root as *eser*) and the letter *yod* (10 in gematria). This is the first poster that spells out the number of years of independence, although many will follow, especially on round-numbered anniversaries. The scene is in line with other posters of the first decade, connecting the past with the present.

Notice and Interpret: Why are the figures rendered in outlines and almost blended into the background? Who are these people? Where do we usually find this kind of mosaic? What are the different ways of saying “10”?

Artist: Miriam Karoli

The Second Decade (1959-1968)

By the Second Decade the state was already standing on its own feet: the age of austerity over, there had been a huge absorption of some one million *olim*, the state had established hundreds of new settlements and proved its military might. It was clear that there was a long way to go, but a beginning had been made, and it was an impressive one. The end of this decade is marked by the victory of the Six-Day War, a source of pride for both Israelis and world Jews. Posters of the second decade reflect much pride of achievements and the joy of independence.



1959

This poster, designed by the same artist as the previous year, slightly deviates from the usual convention of design in that in its center it depicts the celebration of the day on a background of exploding colored fireworks against a dark sky. Unexpectedly, there is a small window opening to a blue sea depicting an immigrant family stepping off a boat in a harbor.

Notice and Interpret: artist’s choice of putting the text in the middle; the dichotomy between the design elements; composition; style.

Artist: Miriam Karoli



1960

The first of four posters by Kopel Gurwin depicts children barefoot and dressed for a celebration or a performance; they are dancing while proudly holding the Israeli flag.

Notice and Interpret: complimenting cool and warm colors; flat geometric shapes; bright background; how movement is created.

Artist: Kopel Gurwin (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)



1961

The poster depicts doves against a dark blue background. There is a bright orange circle and a blue vertical line. The artist uses painterly brush strokes in a bold and distinctive composition.

Notice and Interpret: contrasting colors; significance of the circle and the vertical blue line; bold and square font.

Artist: Studio Graphos



1962

In this poster, celebrating 14 years of independence, two objects, a menorah and a bricklayer's trowel are juxtaposed. The text in the middle says "The building endeavor is at its peak." This is the first time we see a schematic menorah as a symbol of the state. (see: Symbols, Chapter III. B)

Notice and Interpret: symbolism of the objects; colors corresponding to objects; dynamic font.

Artist: Eliyahu Vardimon



1963

Two figures, old and young, are dancing around a tree. The words "am Israel chai" appear in straight lines many times, without punctuation. The tree trunk and branches are shaped like a menorah. This poster highlights the importance of planting trees for the next generations who will benefit from them.

Notice and Interpret: the connection between the tree and the menorah; the effect of the background continual text; font and clarity of background text; whom the figures represent; the apparent message and the hidden one; the hat ("kova tembel" literally "fool's hat") that became an iconic Israeli item.

Artist: Paul Kor



1964

This poster marks the *Ha'apala*, or *Aliyah Bet*, the name given to the illegal immigration of Jews to the British Mandate of Palestine in violation of British restrictions against such immigration. From the start of this operation in 1934 and until 1948, 115,000 immigrants arrived mostly by sea under the guise of night. The poster depicts a ship laden with passengers, carried on a menorah shaped form.

Notice and Interpret: significance of black background; colors chosen; symbolism of shapes and colors.

Artist: Kopel Gurwin (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)

Other posters by the same artist: 1960, 1968, 1971



1965

This poster expresses a wish described vividly in Isaiah's (2:1-4) prophecy: "They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore." A typical joyful child is watering an army helmet turned into a flowerpot.

Notice and Interpret: colors chosen for the flag; yellow star and its connotation; anemones (*kalaniyot*) and their symbolism (see: Symbols, Chapter III, B); the hat (*kova tembel*), which is an iconic Israeli item.

Artist: Amram Peret



1966

The oriental inspired design contains the letters *chet* and *yod*, spelling *chai* (18 in gematria) for 18 years of independence, and a palm shape representing both the *chamsa* and the priestly blessing (*birkat ha'kohanim*). The poster presents a unity of style and message. This is the first time that the years of independence are marked only in gematria (rather than in numbers).

Notice and Interpret: connection between “chai” and “chamsa;” unity of style of all elements; background colors.

Artist: Studio Ran Cezar



1967

In this poster, four figures are marching proudly carrying a flag and a drum. Doll-like figures, created from two and three-dimensional shapes, represent Israeli society.

Notice and Interpret: the poster being designed prior to the Six-Day War; attire of figures; boldness of fonts and mixed colors.

Artist: Gidi Keich



1968

This poster marks twenty years to Israeli independence and the return to holy sites in Jerusalem following the Six-Day War. It was designed by the artist as a *Parochet* (the ornamental curtain covering the front of the ark in the synagogue), in the center of which two lions form the base of a seven-branched candelabra. The candelabra and the two supporting lions were adopted as the central theme for the official shield of the city of Jerusalem. Here they represent the unification of the city, and perhaps the troops entering the old city through the Lions' gate. The artistic medium is appliqué, for which this artist is famous.

Notice and Interpret: menorah in the shape of branches and red flowers; lettering on the flowers spell “*yerushalayim*”; depiction of strength and might; pattern on dark frame.

Artist: Kopel Gurwin (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)

Other posters by the same artist: 1960, 1964, 1971

The Third Decade (1969-1978)

When the post Six-Day War euphoria subsided and the War of Attrition with Egypt ended in 1970, relative quiet reigned along Israel's borders. However, The Yom Kippur War erupted in the autumn of 1973 and left deep scars on the fabric of Israeli society. There was, however, a glimpse of hope that closed this decade: in late 1977 a daring Egyptian move brought President Anwar Sadat on his historic visit to Jerusalem. Posters of this decade reflect the great dramas that took place, from the euphoria in the beginning of the decade to the understandable yearning for peace at its end. The style ranges from the ornamental to the graphically bold.



1969

The theme for this poster is border towns and settlements. A red ribbon runs around the circumference of the illustration reading: "gvul" (border). Nine squares comprise a quilt-like pattern representing different types of settlements and life on the border.

Notice and Interpret: items or objects on squares; the color scheme; the overall message.

Artist: Studio Perri



1970

Following a difficult year of katyusha (missile) attacks all across Israel and especially in the North, the 22nd year of independence was dedicated to border towns. The poster highlights children's experiences and shows them coming out of bomb shelters, where they spent many days during the bombings.

Notice and Interpret: artist's choice to depict the situation positively; the children emerging metaphorically out of branches; shape of leaves and branches – reminder of olive branches on both side of the emblem; colors chosen.

Artist: Dan Reisinger



1971

Post Six-Day War euphoria lends a poster for that year depicting a person surrounded by wild flowers, pomegranates, and fig leaves as well as fanciful birds. Relaxed, content and raising the flag, it reminds one of the prophet Micah's: "They shall sit, everyone under their grapevine or fig tree with no one to disturb them." (Micah 4:4).

Notice and Interpret: shapes that stand out; how movement is created.

Artist: Kopel Gurwin (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)

Other posters by the same artist: 1960, 1964, 1968



1972

Made up of many squares in the shape of a window, rug or mosaic, many symbols are included in this colorful design.

Notice and Interpret: colors of each rectangle and what they represent; the many types of symbols; what is in the center and why.

Artist: Asher Cezar



1973

The 25th anniversary poster states the year in both the ribbon under the menorah shaped as the number 25 and in gematria (the letters *kaf* and *heh*) and is made up of real and imaginary flowers. Several version of this poster exist, one with the number 25 depicted as a white and blue ribbon.

Notice and Interpret: choice of colors and contrast to make the elements stand out.

Artist: Asaf Berg

Other posters by the same artist: 1979, 1989, 1993



1974

This is the first poster which gives a clear visual reference to peace. Following the Yom Kippur War in 1973, this poster is a collage of elements with an underlying wish for peace. The words *shalom* and *va'yehi shalom* (let there be peace) repeat in many forms.

Notice and Interpret: other symbols in this poster; colors; unity of style and message – how is it achieved? What does the pattern look like?

Artist: Mimi Tamari



1975

This compilation of portraits created by children portraying their lives, was one of the most popular posters in its time. The variety and creativity of these delightful images celebrates Israel's diversity through innocent, young eyes.

Notice and Interpret: depiction of ethnic diversity; inclusion of hand written text; popularity of this poster.

Artist: Studio Tornovsky



1976

This poster, geometrical and ornamental, uses repetitive patterns and colors. The border mimics ironwork design on windows and directs the eye inward to discover the shape of a Star of David over and over again until it reaches the very center. The letters *kaf chet* (28 in gematria) to Israel's Independence are superimposed on the pattern and for the first time the word Israel is spelled out in English and Arabic as well. The letters *kaf chet* also spell the word *ko'ach* in Hebrew, meaning power or strength.

Notice and interpret: the way movement is created in a static design; the message conveyed; the colors chosen.

Artist: Ziona Shimshi (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)

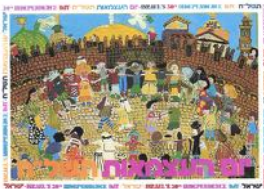


1977

The poster marks the tenth anniversary of Jerusalem's reunification following the Six-Day War. The detailed appliqué and embroidery work depicts several elements in Jerusalem's architecture and history.

Notice and Interpret: What is the central image? How is the canvas divided? What colors and threads are used? How is the connection between the past and the present conveyed? Are any of the architectural elements recognizable?

Artists: Ora and Eliyahu Schwartz



1978

There are two posters for this year.

This Independence Day poster was created by a Korean boy, and was chosen following a worldwide competition of children's drawings of Jerusalem. The chosen poster depicts a very colorful vision of Jerusalem as a holy site for all religions. At its gates, circles of dancers for peace and international fraternity cross the bounds of religion, race and nationality, thus demonstrating the prophetic vision of the coming of the Messiah.

Notice and Interpret: who is dancing; colors of border text matching poster; symbols used and their colors.

Artist: unknown



1978

Arguably the most striking design and one that became a national iconic image, this poster marks 30 years of independence. Against a blue sky and above white clouds, the word *shalom* is spelled out in black. The letter *lamed* (30 in gematria) is in gold.

Following President Anwar Sadat's visit to Israel, with the prospect of peace seemingly within reach, this poster is the first outspoken, clear message of the nation's yearning for peace. Before this, peace was given a visual reference in more subtle ways.

The designer chose the Koren font that was created especially for printing the Bible, and is used regularly for printing Bible verses. That same font and the word *shalom* was used later that same year by the same designer, to create the logo for "*Shalom Achshav*" (Peace Now)* and a few years later for "*Shalom, Chaver*" (Goodbye, Friend) as a commemoration slogan for Yitzhak Rabin.

Notice and Interpret: colors used and their meaning; minimalist yet powerful design; placement of elements (clouds, sky, words); check historical timeline for reference.

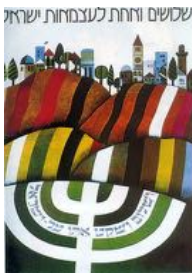
Artist: David Tartakover (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)

* **Shalom Achshav** (Peace Now) is the largest extra-parliamentary movement in Israel, the country's oldest peace movement and the only peace group to

have a broad public base. The movement was founded in 1978 during the Israeli-Egyptian peace talks, at a moment when these talks appeared to be collapsing.

The Fourth Decade (1979-1988)

During this decade, the focus in Israel was on the struggle against Palestinian terror (based mostly in Lebanon), which led to the outbreak of the Lebanon War in 1982, a war which lasted for three years. Towards the end of the decade there was an additional element to the struggle – the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising (intifada) in the West Bank and Gaza. Posters in this decade reflect the yearning for stability, the connection to world Jewry, and a salute to war heroes. The relatively large wave of *aliyah* from Ethiopia during the early 1980's was reflected in one poster of this decade.



1979

The poster incorporates several symbols into a layered composition. At its base there is a menorah shape inscribed with a verse from Chronicles I – 9:22 “...and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel.” The top layer consists of an array of buildings and plants, representing different settlement types such as *kibbutz*, *moshav* and city.

Notice and Interpret: the meaning of the different layers; meaning of stripes and their colors; the structures and buildings; compare the two fonts used.

Artist: Asaf Berg

Other posters by the same artist: 1973, 1989, 1993



1980

The theme of this poster is the connection between Israel and the Diaspora. The letters *lamed* and *bet*, 32 in gematria, representing the thirty-two years of independence, spell out the word *lev* (heart) and its shape is the central repetitive element throughout the design. Folded paper creates layers symbolizing development, industry and history.

Notice and Interpret: What is on each layer? What does the heart shape imply regarding Israel and the Diaspora?

Artist: Gideon Sagi

Other posters by the same artist: 1982, 1985, 1997

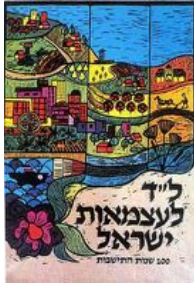


1981

For the 33rd anniversary, a design mimicking stained glass window was created. The two main symbols are the geometric pattern created from Stars of David and the Menorah.

Notice and Interpret: juxtaposition of the cool blue and white of the Israeli flag against warm colors of fire and light; significance of elongated to form the central menorah light; What does this central light look like?

Artist: Gordon Derby



1982

This poster honors 100 years of Jewish settlement in *Eretz Yisrael* during which many changes had taken place since the first *aliyah* in 1882. The poster is divided into three sections and a “reading” of the poster from right to left illustrates the development and changes that took place during these one hundred years of settlement. The technique used is linoleum print.

Notice and Interpret: What does each section describe? What is the visual and thematic connection between the sections and their size?

Artist: Gideon Sagi

Other posters by the same artist: 1980, 1985, 1997



1983

The 35th year of independence was pronounced *Sh'nat Ha'gvura* (Year of Heroism). The letters *lamed* and *heh* – 35 in gematria – create a loaded number in Israeli ethos. This number refers to the 35 soldiers of the *Hagana* who were killed while attempting to re-supply four blockaded kibbutzim of Gush Etzion (the Etzion bloc), south of Jerusalem, following the Arab attack of January 14th 1948. The story of the 35 was immortalized in an emotional poem “Here Our Bodies Lie” written by Haim Guri. In 1949, a group of former *Palmach* soldiers founded a *kibbutz*, Netiv Ha'lamed Heh (Path of the 35) near the convoy’s route. The story continues to be a mythologized symbol of determination and devotion. The year’s theme was a salute to fallen national heroes of wars past: warriors of the underground, Jewish partisans, Jewish soldiers in WW2, and soldiers of Israel’s wars. The tree trunk in this design is made up of *otot milchama* (campaign badges) and its crown is made of blue and green leaves.

Notice and Interpret: Why was the tree chosen as a symbol for this theme? What shapes are hidden between the leaves? What shape are the ribbons and leaves made of? What is the overall message?

Artists: Natan Karp and Miriam Elishar



1984

Jean David, the artist of this poster, designed many of Israel’s tourism posters in the 1950’s and 1960’s. In this poster, he steps away from his graphic style to create a heavenly ephemeral moment, perhaps referring to the letters of *lamed* and *vav* (36), which carry a virtuous message. The *Tzadikim Nistarim* (concealed righteous ones) or *lamed vav tzadikim* refers to 36 righteous people, a notion rooted within the more mystical dimensions of Judaism. According to the *agadah* (legend) there are 36 *tzadikim* in each and every generation and that it is for their sake that God preserves the world.

Notice and Interpret: the background shapes; the dove behind the letters; the colors used; What do these shapes signify? How was the lettering created?

Artist: Jean David



1985

In a play on the number seven, neon-lit menorahs and the number 37 appear in a repetitive pattern with overlapping colors in this poster.

Notice and Interpret: What other shapes are hidden? In what other ways is the number seven suggested? What visual trick does the artist create?

Artist: Gideon Sagi

Other posters by the same artist: 1980, 1982, 1997



1986

This poster deals with democracy and social equality. In order to convey this message, the artist created an illumination manuscript with the relevant text from the Declaration of Independence. It reads: "THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations."

Notice and Interpret: What other Jewish art form does this look like? Why do you think the artist chose this particular format? What Jewish symbols can you find and what is their meaning?

Artist: Rafael Abecassis (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)

Other posters by the same artist: 1991, 2004



1987

In a painterly style of large brush strokes, the artist created a flag composed of more than just the colors blue and white.

Notice and Interpret: Why do you think the artist used these colors and this composition? What is the meaning behind the choice to display it vertically?

Artist: Lina Kapsiz



1988

For Israel's 40th birthday, the artist chose a three-dimensional design of the number 40 with the menorah symbol coined on it. The petal, flower stem, and leaf are made from folded paper in shades of blue and purple. The word "Israel" appears in Hebrew, English and Arabic.

Notice and Interpret: Why was a flower chosen to symbolize the 40th anniversary? How is this flower different than the way flowers are depicted in other posters? What does the style suggest about the artist – is he a painter, a sculptor, a coin and medal designer?

Artist: Eliezer Weishoff

The Fifth Decade (1989-1998)

Since 1989, *Merkaz Ha'hasbara* (Information Center), which is responsible for initiating and choosing the posters, began assigning a yearly theme. This decade's posters celebrate different aspects of society and industry and mark commemorative years. A new wave of *aliyah*, especially from the former Soviet Union in the early 1990's, as well as a heightened hope for peace, were both reflected in posters. This decade marks a shift from collective to individual responsibility as reflected in the theme of 1994's poster – Environmental Awareness.



1989

Theme: Forty Years to Mass Immigration

This poster marks 40 years to mass immigration that started in 1949 and ended in 1952. (see: Themes, Chapter III, A)

Notice and Interpret: What does the upper part of the Star of David look like? What do the different colorful shapes symbolize? What kind of movement do the shapes create? What are the people doing? Who are they and where do they come from? Is this design two or three dimensional?

Artist: Asaf Berg

Other posters by the same artist: 1973, 1979, 1993



1990

Theme: The Year of Hebrew Language

This poster marks 100 years to the establishment of *Va'ad Ha'lashon* (Hebrew Language Committee) in 1890. It was the first organization in *Eretz Yisrael* whose goal was to foster the Hebrew language as the cultural and everyday language of the local residents. (see: Hebrew, Chapter III, C) Members of the committee included Eliezer Ben Yehuda and David Yelin. The poster depicts concentric circles made out of lines and Hebrew words originating from a central Star of David and the word *Israel*.

Notice and Interpret: What image do the circles around the Magen David create? Can you discern some of the Hebrew words? Is the designer's choice of lettering reminiscent of something else?

Artist: Rafi Etgar



1991

Theme: The Year of Immigration and Absorption

Following a steady stream of immigration from the Soviet Union and Ethiopia, *Merkaz Ha'hasbara* (Information Center), declared 1991 as the Year of Immigration and Absorption.

Despite the Gulf War, the unsteady economy and the difficulties in absorption of *olim* (immigrants), 168,000 arrived in this latest wave of *aliyah* (immigration).

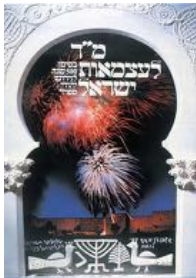
The poster is full of symbols and Jewish themes; in the center, a dove holding a shofar in its beak is carrying ribbons of white and blue and *olim* from all

corners of the world. The designer chose a quote from the Declaration of Independence to place on top as well as from Isaiah (49:12, 49:22, 60:4).

Notice and Interpret: How many Jewish symbols can you detect? How is Jerusalem depicted? How are the quotes from Isaiah related to the symbols and images chosen?

Artist: Rafael Abecassis (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)

Other posters by the same artist: 1986, 2004



1992

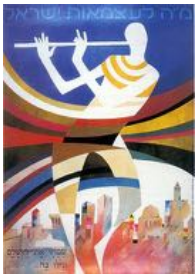
Theme: 500 Years to the Expulsion from Spain

In 1492, under pressure from the church and the inquisition, Ferdinand and Isabella decreed the expulsion of the entire Jewish population from Spain. This marked the end of 1,000 years of a Golden Age when Jews participated in all aspects of Spanish life and society and contributed significantly in areas of science and arts.

This poster portrays Jerusalem's Old City Wall as it is seen through a horseshoe arc and columns decorated in stucco. The city's skies are illuminated with fireworks and the bottom of the poster bears a few motifs from an ancient artifact discovered in Spain: a menorah, a Cedar tree, a couple of peacocks and the verse: "*Shalom al Israel, ve'aleynu ve'al baneynu*" ("Peace unto Israel and unto us and our sons"). The horseshoe arc found in this poster was a typical item in Moorish Medieval Spanish architecture. The style of giving an illustration an architectural framing was adopted by the *Bezalel School* in its early years.

Notice and Interpret: How does the designer connect past with present? What do you think the peacocks represent? Why fireworks?

Artist: Natan Karp



1993

Theme: 25 Years to the Reunification of Jerusalem

Since its reunification in 1967, the city of Jerusalem has developed and grown to become the largest city in Israel with 700,000 inhabitants. Many new neighborhoods have been built and most of the national institutes and organization have moved to the city. Arts and culture, cafés and restaurants, and an annual international festival are among the many activities in which residents can partake.

The central image of the poster is a figure playing a flute. The poster is divided horizontally into two parts, the bottom displaying several of Jerusalem's structures and the top displaying blue skies circled by colorful curved stripes. The verse: "*Simchu et yerushalayim ve'gilu ba*" ("Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be joyful with her") from Isaiah appears on the bottom left.

Notice and Interpret: What do the structures represent? (the Knesset, Tower of David, Heichal Ha'sefer and skyscrapers) What is the connection between

the verse quoted and the image? What is the connection between the figure and Jerusalem? Does the image evoke other Jewish artists or motifs in Jewish art? Do you see hidden menorah shapes?

Artist: Asaf Berg

Other posters by the same artist: 1973, 1979, 1989



1994

Theme: The Year of Environmental Awareness

The 20th century was characterized by an accelerated development of industry and an exploitation of natural resources. The consequences to the unregulated waste and over usage are water, air, and soil pollution. Israel is especially susceptible; in a country comprised of more than fifty percent desert, water conservation and access is critical. In December 1988, the Ministry of the Environment was established in Israel. This proved to be a landmark in Israel's environmental development and in the government's determination to tackle environmental issues.

The awareness of technology's high price raised the issue of individuals' responsibility for their immediate environment and that of the world's.

The poster depicts twelve windows, each dedicated to a different topic, against a blue sky. Among them are a modern city, a rural settlement, animals, and plants to name a few. Written underneath the windows is: *sh'nat eychut ha'sviva* (lit: Year of Environmental Quality), and on the left side: *46 to Israel's Independence*.

Notice and Interpret: the many different window shapes; some windows are looking in and some are looking out; two motifs carry a national meaning; What is the atmosphere created by this poster? What is the significance of twelve in Jewish History? Is there more than one message in this poster?

Artist: David Shapira



1995

Theme: The Year of Peace Tourism

The historic signing of peace agreements with the Palestinians and later with Jordan presented a new hope for peace in the Middle East. Assuming that the stabilization in the region would attract more tourists to visit Israel and its holy sites, this year was declared as: "Year of Peace Tourism."

The poster shows a white dove flying against a blue sky, leaving behind it a rainbow trail.

Notice and Interpret: the dove's eye is a small Magen David; the placement of the text: *47 to Israel's Independence*; What is the significance of the dove and rainbow in Jewish history? Which elements in the poster hint at the connection between past and present? Besides signing of peace agreements, what else happened in 1995 in Israel?

Artist: Dan Reisinger



1996

Theme: Year of Industry and Education

As a tribute to two of the foundations supporting a developed society, this year was dedicated to industry and education. In the center of the poster we find the large letters of “*mem chet le'atzma'ut Yisrael*” (48 to Israel's Independence), against a dark and colorful background consisting of wheels, electronic boards, and tooth wheels, to name a few. The letters *mem chet* also spell *mo'ach* (brain or mind in Hebrew)

Notice and Interpret: What do white letters against a dark board imply? How many times does the number 48 appear? What technologies are represented? What are Israel's world-renowned industries?

Artist: Shmuel Zaafrani



1997

Theme: The Year of Zionism – 100 Years to the First Zionist Congress

This year's theme marks the centenary of the Zionist movement which had its formal beginnings at the First Zionist Congress, held in Basel, Switzerland on August 29th 1897. The Zionist movement enunciated its goal for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in the Land of Israel in the Basel Program. Zionism included diverse groups, ranging from Religious Zionism to Socialist Zionism. All of them cooperated towards the aim of the Jewish National Home, an enterprise that culminated in the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

The poster consists of a photomontage of young people sitting on the ground next to the large metal menorah situated in front of the Knesset building. The outer frame bears a floral design taken from a Yemenite manuscript dated back to the 15th century.

Notice and Interpret: the schematic fireworks; What does the 5 point star mean? Whose silhouette is hidden in the dark blue background? How do the design elements convey both past and present? Notice the diagonal direction of the text – how does it affect the balance and composition? What different artistic techniques were used here?

Artist: Gideon Sagi

Other posters by the same artist: 1980, 1982, 1985



1998

Theme: Jubilee Year – 50 years to the State of Israel

The *chamsa*, a central symbol of this poster, appears here as a national symbol and central image of the multi-cultural Israeli-Jewish society. Against a blue sky, the metal *chamsa* is divided into several additional symbols: a dove, children, plants, and the sun, among others.

Notice and Interpret: What are the symbols and their meaning? What technique was used to create the image? What is the central message?

The Sixth Decade (1999-2008)

This last decade holds both the hopes of reaching a peace agreement with the Palestinians and the dashing of these prospects. The second Intifada, the Disengagement Plan and the Second Lebanon War all took their toll on the Israeli mood and psyche. The Ministerial Committee for Symbols and Ceremonies continued to assign yearly themes, some reflecting the *matzav* (situation) and some highlighting causes worth aspiring for such as social justice, diversity, solidarity, and developing disadvantaged regions.



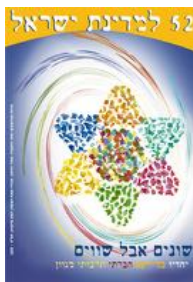
1999

Theme: 50 Years to the Establishment of the Knesset

The Knesset is the House of Representatives of the State of Israel. It has 120 members representing numerous parties that are elected in general, country-wide, proportional elections once every four years. The name “Knesset” derives from the “Great Knesset” (“Great Assembly”) which convened in Jerusalem after the return of the Jews to *Eretz Yisrael* from the Babylonian Exile in the fifth century B.C.E. The number of Knesset members was determined on the basis of the number of members of the Great Knesset.

The poster depicts the Knesset building in a free schematic style, with fireworks behind it. It states both the 51st anniversary of Israel and the 50th year to the establishment of the Knesset.

Notice and Interpret: blue stripes at the foundation of the building; compare the different fonts used for the number 51 and the rest of the text; Where is the location of the Knesset within the composition? What does this colorful rendition of the Knesset building mean?



2000

Theme: Different Yet Equal

This year’s theme highlights the diversity of Israeli society. The many different groups comprising Israeli society come together to form the country’s social fabric. The poster’s central symbol is a Star of David formed from different color patches mixed together in its center. The text reads: *yachdav be’mirkam chevratu tarbuti meguvan* (Together in a diverse social and cultural tapestry). (see: Other Themes, Chapter III, B, 4)

Notice and interpret: How is movement implied? What is the central message of the poster?



2001

Theme: Social Activism As a Way of Life

The Israeli government recognized volunteerism’s critical role in Israeli society by making it the theme of this year’s celebration. During this same year, social activists were also recognized for their charitable work and asked to participate in the Yom Ha’atzmaut torch-lighting ceremony. Each year, twelve Israeli citizens who have made a significant contribution to society are

bestowed with great honor by being chosen to light the torches.

The poster depicts two hands releasing flowers and colorful shapes and text reading: *anashim she'ichpat la'hem* (people who care) and *mitnadvim ke'derech chayim* (volunteering as a way of life).

Notice and Interpret: What are the different symbols and their meanings? What does the position of the hands and their placement in the composition symbolize? Why are the numbers 5 and 3 in a different style? What are they connected to?



2002

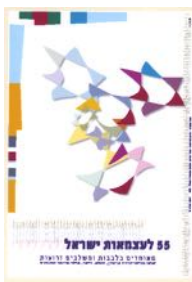
Theme: Children and Youth – The Future and The Might

Since the eruption of the Second Intifada in September 2000, the prospect of stabilization and peace has seemed to be out of reach. This conflict has been unprecedented in both extent and force since the beginning of the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation. However, the peak of the terrorist campaign was during 2001-2002, and since then the number and deadliness of the attacks have been in constant decline.

The poster depicts a child outstretching his arm toward a blurry flag and a dove.

Notice and Interpret: Is the child letting go of or trying to catch the flag and dove? Is there a meaning to the striped shirt? What is the mood and message of this poster? Is there an underlying message?

Artist: Shiraz Vollman



2003

Theme: Salute to Security Forces, Rescue, Identification and Volunteer Organizations

Following three years of heightened terrorist and bombing incidents, this year's theme focuses on security organizations, both governmental and voluntary. Those honored included ZAKA, a humanitarian voluntary organization, coordinating nearly one thousand volunteers responding to tragic incidents in Israel.

The poster includes campaign ribbons, colorful Stars of David, and small figures marching along its frame and above the text, which reads: *Me'uchadim Ba'levavot U'meshalvim Ze'ro'ot* (United in Their Hearts, Embracing Arms)

Notice and Interpret: The Stars of David appear to be soft as cloth, perhaps to suggest the coded colored vests worn by security and rescue workers; The figures next to the word Israel form heart shapes; How does the image imply that the work of the IDF and the rescue workers is comparable?

Artist: Barbara Gur



2004

Theme: The Year of Competitive and Popular Sports

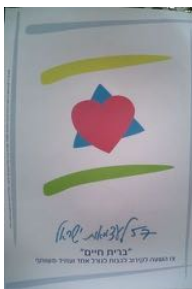
Soccer and basketball are considered to be the most popular sports in Israel, although the nation has reached many achievements in other sports, such as handball and track and field athletics, in addition to a wide variety of other athletic activities.

When it comes to sports in Israel, the emphasis has traditionally been on participation rather than the production of elite athletes. Many Israelis follow soccer and basketball sport teams almost as ardently as many other Europeans do. In the Olympic Games, Israel has won 6 medals in judo, fencing, canoeing, and windsurfing. This poster, a rich tapestry of images typical of the artist, salutes sports and athletes. The central image is an elongated striped dove surrounded by flags, ribbons, and a depiction of many types of sports and athletic games. The design also acknowledges the fact that this was an Olympic year.

Notice and Interpret: The Olympic rings appear more than once. Can you find them? What are the Jewish and national symbols? What are the sports and athletic symbols? What is the connection between these two sets of symbols?

Artist: Rafael Abecassis (see: Artists, Chapter IV, B)

Other posters by the same artist: 1986, 1991



2005

Theme: Life Covenant

The year's theme was announced by The Ministerial Committee for Symbols and Ceremonies as: "The call of the hour is for promoting better understanding for a mutual fate and a common future. It salutes acts promoting brotherhood, generosity and sacrifice, that all sectors of society in Israel and the Jewish Diaspora are partners to, out of solidarity and understanding that we are all brothers."

In September 2005, with the evacuation of over 9,000 Jewish settlers, Israel ended its thirty-eight year rule over the Gaza strip. The country was divided over the Disengagement Plan ever since its inception by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in 2004. In their efforts to win over the public opinion, the settlers and their supporters adopted the color orange to symbolize their struggle against the plan. While some pro-disengagement activists called upon drivers to fly green ribbons from their cars, others opted for blue. It is hard to tell if this poster was in reaction to the "war of ribbons" or a prophetic guess of things to come. The poster depicts a freely drawn flag with orange and green stripes and a Star of David made of one blue triangle and a red heart.

Notice and Interpret: What does each color symbolize? Does the design convey the theme clearly?

Artist: Amit Yaakovitzky



2006

Theme: Developing the Negev and the Galil

The decision by The Ministerial Committee for Symbols and Ceremonies to put these two regions on the national public agenda carries an important message. Both regions are home to Jews and Arabs alike, and they are on the periphery both in terms of their proximity to hostile borders and the socio-economic gap in comparison to central Israel. Supporting and developing the Negev and the Galil will enable coexistence, promote mutual understanding and strengthen the economy, society and esteem in those areas.

In the foreground of the poster is the central symbol: a large heart-shape with a small figure on its top waving the Israeli flag. In the dark blue background, we see a lighter Star of David. The text on top reads: *"Mitkadmim Bishvil Hapitu'ach. Ha'negev Ve'ha'galil Ba'lev Shel Kulanu"* (Advancing on the road to development. The Negev and the Galil are in all of our hearts).

Notice and Interpret: What do the three zones on the heart-shape symbolize? How does the image reflect the slogan? What is the significance of colors chosen? What flora and fauna are depicted?



2007

Theme: 40 Years to the Reunification of Jerusalem

The call for graphic entries to this year's poster described the theme as: "40 years to the unification of Jerusalem, capital of the Jewish and democratic state of Israel and capital of the Jewish people." Since 1967, every tenth anniversary of the Six-Day War and the resulting joining of West and East Jerusalem is commemorated with an ID poster.

This poster joins the old and new city of Jerusalem with an Israeli flag and a dark blue dove carries a sheer veil in its beak while flying along the flag.

Notice and Interpret: What are the structures in each section? Is their placement in the poster significant? Is the message of the unification of Jerusalem clear? What do the dove and veil signify? Is this a contemporary design?

Artist: Yuval Safra



2008

Theme: Israeli Children

The colorful and joyful poster marks 6 decades of Independence by celebrating children and hope.

Notice and Interpret: The six decades are marked by six kites, six doves of peace and six children on skateboards. The kites have menorah shaped design and the number 60 appear as ribbons in the sky.

Artist: Haime Kivkovitz

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Each of the posters presented in this unit tells a story and all of them together create an epic tale. But what story do the posters tell? Is it a collective story, an ancient or contemporary story, a real story or a myth, an inside story, a success story, all or none of the above? This is an invitation to embark on a journey of exploration and discovery; an invitation to delve into, engage and wrestle with the complex story of Israel.

There are endless possibilities of approaching this rich and varied material. There are many considerations such as: how much time to dedicate, age appropriateness, classroom setting, capacity for Judaic Studies and art collaboration, as well as many others that will go into the decision of what activities and what outcome each educator will decide upon.

Included here are a few suggested activities and supporting material for their implementation. The activities are listed in a sequence that implies several different levels of inquiry and learning: knowledge, comprehension, analysis, interpretation, reflection, and a final work of art that will culminate that process.

◁A> Balashim - Detectives

This activity is conducted as a scavenger hunt.

Purpose:

To become familiar with the collection of posters as a whole. To recognize themes, symbols, Hebrew words, and design elements.

Classroom Directions:

Students will work in groups of three (or more).

Students will divide the tasks: runners (look for clues), recorder (writes the answer), and timekeeper (keeps the group focused and on time).

Teacher will decide on a time limit to complete the investigation (suggested 30-50min.).

Students will have fun learning more about the posters and about Israel as they explore the evidence!

Culminating Activity:

Each group will report on their findings and show their drawings.

Examples of clues:

Let's find the following....

Symbols:

A person or a child holding the flag of Israel. Choose one of them and draw here: ...

2 posters that have a *chamsa*

2 heart shapes

Menorot (menorahs) that look like: a tree, flowers, the emblem of Israel, a stone carving, part of a mountain. Also, find the real Knesset menorah and a poster that has seven *menorot*. Choose one menorah and draw here: ...

Themes:

1 poster that shows many people and has the Hebrew word *aliyah*

3 posters that show Jerusalem

1 poster that shows children's drawings

Yellow flowers, red flowers, a purple flower, grape leaves, olive branch. Choose one and draw here:

3 posters that have a white dove. Draw one of them here: ...

Hebrew:

3 posters with the word *shalom*

1 poster with the words *medinat Yisrael*

1 poster that has many Hebrew words in circles. Write three of these words:

1 poster with the word *chai*.

Art:

Posters that look like: a photograph, a painting, cloth or soft material, stained glass, collage (made out of different materials)

Posters that have blue skies as background

1 Poster that has many small details

1 poster that has very few details

⟨B⟩ Midrash Kraza – Interpretation of the Poster

This activity is fashioned after a *Daf Gemara* (Gemara page), which in its center has the text to be studied and explanations and interpretations around it. Much like the verses and stories in the Torah, poster design is a minimalist art form and every detail is there for a reason. It requires an understanding of the context and invites commentary and interpretation. The text to interpret in this case is “visual text.”

Purpose:

To learn about specific aspects of Israel (themes, symbols, historical periods etc.) through analysis and interpretation of selected images.

Classroom Directions:

It is up to the individual teacher to choose the focus of this activity. Students can work individually or in groups, they can choose the poster or be handed one, and they can each work on individual posters that are a part of a larger theme.

Culminating Activity:

Students display their *daf* (page).

If applicable: they can categorize the pages, put them in order, do further research on the topic, write a story about it and so on.

Parts of the Daf (page):

- The image itself (drawn and colored by student)
- The year and years of Independence in both English and Hebrew
- Theme
- Message
- Description
- Symbols and their meaning
- Historical reference
- Artist
- Artistic technique
- Artistic and graphic elements
- Hebrew text
- Personal thoughts and impressions

(For a template of a *daf*, see: Addenda, Chapter VII, E)

<C> Ro'im Kaful - Double Vision

Sometimes seeing two pieces of art side-by-side helps us notice things we might miss if we only looked at one. This activity matches up pairs of posters for comparing and contrasting.

Purpose:

To delve deeper into thematic and artistic expression and to evaluate the message.

Classroom Directions:

Give each student or a group of students a pair of posters to compare and evaluate. Students can work from a list of questions and/or by filling in the Venn diagram (see both below).

Students will determine what is the message and evaluate the effectiveness of each poster in delivering this message. They may choose one or the other.

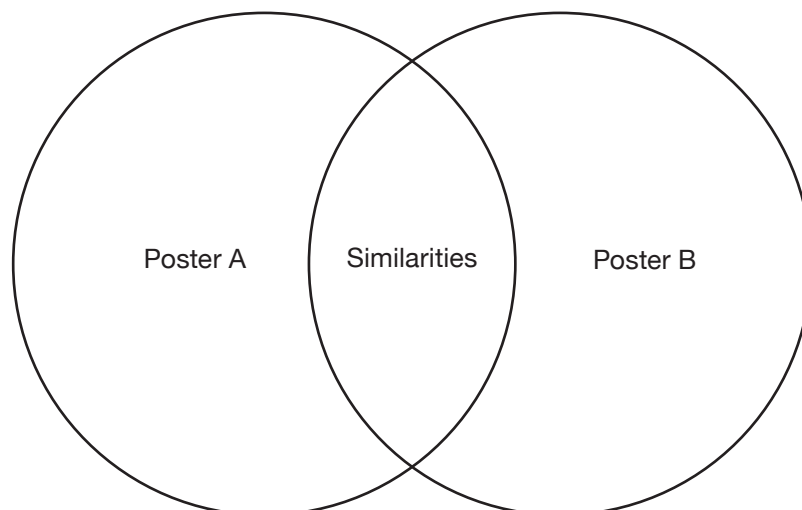
Choosing the Posters:

Any two posters that have something in common will do. Here are a few suggested pairs:

- 1965 and 2002 (children, shalom, flag, then and now)
- 1953 and 1989 (immigration, then and 35 years later)
- 1978 and 1979 (yearning for peace)
- 1968 and 1971 (same artist)
- 1975 and 2000 (diversity)
- 1961 and 1998 (artistic expression: painterly and computer generated)
- 1949 and 2002 (similar symbols, then and now)

Questions to Get You Started:

- What is the theme of each of the two posters?
- Which symbols are used?
- Do you think there are more similarities or differences in the posters?
- Is there a similar message?
- How do the artistic elements (color, composition etc.) and technique (photography, collage, drawing) used by the artists show their attitude toward the theme?
- Can you tell which poster is older? (notice: what are people wearing, style, fonts, colors)
- Which artwork do you think better captures the message? Why?
- Find cool things that attract you!
- Finally: In your opinion – which poster better communicates the message?



<D> Israel and Me – Exploring Personal Connection

This activity can and should be adapted to fit the specific needs of your school or group. Individual teachers can make decisions on whom the students should interview, what questions to ask, and how to share their findings.

Purpose:

To help the students explore and assess the degree to which Israel plays a part in their lives, those of their families, their school and their community.

Classroom Directions:

This exercise is to be preceded by homework.

Each student should talk to three individuals among their parents, grandparents, school teachers, rabbis, etc. Each one of them will be designated their own page.

The central question to be asked is: “How important is Israel to you?” Once they respond and articulate their answer, the second question is: “What image, item or artifact, symbolizes your connection to Israel?”

Each individual should be represented on their own page by a circle. The more important that Israel is in that person’s life, the larger the circle should be. Inside the circle they should write anything that they feel draws them toward the idea or the reality of Israel and include the image (or a photo of an item or artifact) that symbolizes this connection. On the outside of the circle, they should list anything that actually distances them from the country.

In class, each student shall then answer the two questions presented in step #1 themselves, and draw a circle that includes their response and an image that symbolizes their connection to Israel.

Students sit in pairs and present this page to one another, challenging each other with questions to clarify their position on Israel.

Ask for a volunteer who is willing to present their findings.

When individuals have finished presenting, ask them if they think that their own position on Israel has been influenced by that of their family and community. Are there any specific historical events that have influenced their position? Do they expect their position regarding Israel to change in the future? How do they think their feeling for and involvement with Israel will be expressed in the future? What images, items or artifacts were brought in? Are they similar or different from each other? What do they represent? Are any of the images similar to what they see in the posters?

(Adapted from JAFI’s Jewish Zionist Education by Steve Israel)

◁E> Artwork

Art projects that are inspired by this program are hopefully based on students' exploration and learning of the educational content, and their perception of and connection to Israel. Whether it is the Judaic Studies teacher or an Art Specialist leading these activities, there should be a culminating activity of the learning process.

Posters

- Create a poster based on previous activities.
- Take an existing ID poster and “update” it to include yourself (deconstructing and reconstructing).
- Create a poster with a specific message.
- Create a poster with “new” symbols for the state of Israel.
- Create a poster in the style of a particular artist.

How to design a poster?

Decide on:

- Message
- Elements to include in your poster: text, images, and symbols
- Importance of each element: placement, size, dominant or blended colors
- Media: marker, tempera poster paints, collage, paper cuts, computer generated
- Pay attention:
 1. Do not overcrowd the poster.
 2. Arrange elements to attract attention.
 3. Make sure that the design and the text compliment each other.
 4. The design should not detract from the impact of the words.

Include:

- A written articulation of the decision and artistic process

Posters are only one of many ways to express in a creative and artistic way students' learning and connection to Israel. The following section was conceived and written by art educators from the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco and an art specialist for Jewish LearningWorks (previously known as Bureau of Jewish Education.)

<F> Artistic Exploration of Yom Ha'atzmaut Posters

TIPS FOR BEGINNING YOUR LESSON PLAN

Vocabulary

You may want to start your lesson by going over definitions of key terms, such as: Symbol; Motif; Interpretation. Other relevant vocabulary might include: Juxtaposition; Association and Connotation; Influence; Assimilation; Heroism. You can discuss these words as a group, or have students look up definitions to different words.

Interpreting the Posters

Guide your students in looking more closely at the posters. You can look together at a large reproduction or projection of a poster, or hand out a smaller reproduction to each student (or small group of students). Below are examples of the kinds of questions you could ask while looking at a poster, or a sequence of posters.

First, think about what you want your students to understand through looking at the posters. Then select questions, or write other questions, that will help lead your students to this understanding. (5-7 questions can make up the backbone of your discussion, with others added in as relevant.) Make sure your questions are open-ended, so that students' diverse perspectives are heard and valued, and let multiple students provide answers to the same question. Also encourage students to make personal connections to what they see in the posters. If your conversation detours away from the big ideas you want your students to understand, don't be afraid to bring the conversation back and refocus it.

IDENTIFYING AND EXPLORING SYMBOLS

Symbols

Look at one poster:

- What things do you notice in the poster that could be symbols? Some symbols might be obvious to most viewers, while others could be hidden, unclear, or unknown to viewers. What do you think these symbols mean?
- Describe any symbols you see that seem less obvious or less clear to the viewer. Why might the artist have included these "hidden" symbols? How did this "hidden" clue change the way you felt about the poster?
- Looking at a specific symbol: How might it represent a religious, cultural, or political concept? In what other ways might this symbol be interpreted?
- Think about whether you find this symbol simple and easy to remember. Why do you think so? What impact does it have on you?
- What is unique about the symbol? What is familiar?
- Are there symbols you personally identify with right away? Why is that? You might want to think about what image or story comes to mind when you see the symbol.

- Are there other aspects of the poster that seem especially familiar or even give you a feeling of comfort?

Theme

Continue to look at the same poster:

- What message does the poster “scream out?” What do you see that makes you say that?
- How might the symbols you identified connect to the overall theme of the poster?
- Describe any symbols that do not seem to connect to the theme, or that even seem to represent an idea that is in opposition to the main message of the poster. What do you think they stand for? Why might they have been included?
- Look to see if you notice repetition of a motif among a group of posters (or even within one poster). Why do you think this motif has been repeated? What do you think this repetition emphasizes or means?
- To what age group might the artist have been aiming his/her message? What do you see that makes you say that? (What are the clues?)
- What is your own interpretation of the poster’s message?

Connections

Look at a few posters at a time (or all of them):

- What references do you find to Jewish traditions? Why do you think these were included?
- What messages seem the most relevant to modern life today? What messages seem outdated or the least relevant to life in Israel today?
- What ideas in the posters do you personally connect with the most? Name at least two examples. What do they make you think of?
- Choose one idea, symbol, or message that you would like to adopt to be your own. Why did you choose it? How does it relate to the connection you feel to Israel?
- Which poster do you feel most connected to? Describe any changes you would make to the poster. Why do you want to change it in that way? How would it change the message of the poster? How would it change the way people feel when they look at the poster?

ARTISTIC RESPONSES TO POSTERS

Brainstorm:

In preparation for whatever art activity you choose, you may want to lead a brainstorm discussion with your students.

- What is your personal connection to Israel? (How does Israel affect your life today?)
- What message do you want to convey about Israel?
- How will you convey it?

visual arts: symbols, images, words, color, juxtaposition, line, font, mood

theater arts: pose, expression, mood, spoken words, sound, levels, elements seen/
hidden

language arts: metaphor, repetition, rhyme, onomatopoeia (words that literally make the sound they stand for)

Activity Ideas

BRINGING THE POSTERS TO LIFE

Theater Arts: Tableau

- Students select a poster that is relevant or meaningful to them.
- Analyze images in poster, asking:
 - What is the story told through these images?
 - What might have happened before? What could happen next?
- Then, create a tableau to represent the poster, adding a second or third tableau to explore what might have occurred before or after the moment depicted in the poster.
- Variation: Bring the tableau to life. What is the relationship between the characters in the poster? What might they say to one another? Use words and movement to animate the characters in the tableau.
- Example: 2002 Poster

Music: “Reading” the Poster’s Mood

If the group wanted to match music to the poster, what would they choose? Students come up with their different choices and explain the reasons they chose that song or piece of music, based on associations with colors, design, font, theme, background knowledge, personal associations, etc.

Language arts: Written Response

- Write a 5 line poem (*hamshir* in Hebrew is a rhyming 5 lines poem) or Haiku style poem, to capture the theme or essence of the poster.
- Many of the posters tell the viewer a story. As a class (or small group), write a short story (up to 15 lines) using the scene depicted in the poster as either the starting point or the ending point for that story.
- Consider the techniques used to create the poster, including the lettering and design. How might you translate the feeling of these design elements into your writing?
- Add a title, quote or sentence from a prayer to represent what you think is the main idea of the poster or the impression it left on you. Think about how to integrate it into the poster without changing much of the original poster.

Visual Arts Explorations

Relief Collage

- Use posters to inspire the creation of a 3-D collage. Students can combine images and objects from Israel (or representing Israel) with images and objects of personal relevance (e.g. souvenirs, pictures of friends or relatives, etc.). Around the edge, students write a message about Israel’s significance in their lives. Consider color, pattern, and symbolism when creating this collage

-
- Use a *kiru'a* technique (hand torn paper): create a collage using pictures out of magazines, construction paper, pieces of fabric, computer printed images.
 - Create a shoebox diorama to recreate the theme or focal point of one of the posters, or create a diorama exploring a new Israel-related theme of the students' choosing.

New Symbols

- Create a new symbol for Israel. Use stamping or printmaking techniques to create a symbol with layers of shapes and colors (and layers of meaning).

Consider:

What do you want your symbol to represent?

What message do you want to convey about Israel?

What words, images, shapes or colors will convey this message?

Students create their own symbol based on decisions made above

- Transform a symbol by creating a drawing on a piece of velum or acetate that is placed over an image of the original symbol.

Look at examples of transformed symbols (1998 *Chamsa*, 1979 Menorah, for example) and discuss how the transformation changes the meaning of symbols.

Select one of the symbols in the posters, considering the message you wish to convey, and then transform the symbol using a layered painting or drawing.

- Create a new symbol with micrography (a Jewish art form utilizing minute Hebrew letters to form representational, geometric and abstract designs). Use the writing around the symbol to explain its use and include quotes that emphasize the meaning of the symbol.

<A> HISTORICAL TIMELINE

1948

End of British Mandate (14 May)
State of Israel proclaimed (14 May).
Israel invaded by five Arab states (15 May)
War of Independence (May 1948-July 1949)
Israel Defense Forces (IDF) established

1949

Armistice agreements signed with Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon.
Jerusalem divided under Israeli and Jordanian rule
First Knesset (parliament) elected.
Israel admitted to United Nations as 59th member.

1948-52

Mass immigration from Europe and Arab countries.

1956

Sinai Campaign

1962

Adolf Eichmann tried and executed in Israel for his part in the Holocaust.

1964

National Water Carrier completed, bringing water from Lake Kinneret in the north to the semi-arid south.

1967

Six-Day War, Jerusalem reunited

1968-70

Egypt's War of Attrition against Israel

1973

Yom Kippur War

1975

Israel becomes an associate member of the European Common Market

1977

Likud forms government after Knesset elections, end of 30 years of Labor rule
Visit of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to Jerusalem.

1978

Camp David Accords include framework for comprehensive peace in the Middle East and proposal for Palestinian self-government.

1979

Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty signed.
Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Anwar Sadat awarded Nobel Peace Prize.

1981

Israel Air Force destroys Iraqi nuclear reactor just before it is to become operative.

1982

Israel's three-stage withdrawal from Sinai completed.

Operation Peace for Galilee removes PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) terrorists from Lebanon.

1984

National unity government (Likud and Labor) formed after elections.

Operation Moses, immigration of Jews from Ethiopia.

1985

Free Trade Agreement signed with United States.

1987

Widespread violence (intifada) starts in Israeli-administered areas.

1988

Likud government in power following elections.

1989

Four-point peace initiative proposed by Israel.

Start of mass immigration of Jews from former Soviet Union.

1991

Israel attacked by Iraqi Scud missiles during the Gulf War.

Middle East peace conference convened in Madrid;

Operation Solomon, airlift of Jews from Ethiopia.

1992

Diplomatic relations established with China and India.

New government headed by Yitzhak Rabin of Labor party.

1993

Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements for the Palestinians signed by Israel and PLO, as representative of the Palestinian people.

1994

Implementation of Palestinian self-government in Gaza Strip and Jericho area.

Full diplomatic relations with the Holy See.

Morocco and Tunisia interest offices set up.

Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty signed.

Rabin, Peres, Arafat awarded Nobel Peace Prize.

1995

Broadened Palestinian self-government implemented in West Bank and Gaza Strip; Palestinian Council elected.

Prime Minister Rabin assassinated at peace rally.

Shimon Peres becomes prime minister.

1996

Fundamentalist Arab terrorism against Israel escalates.
 Operation Grapes of Wrath, retaliation for Hizbullah terrorists' attacks on northern Israel.
 Trade representation offices set up in Oman and Qatar.
 Likud forms government after Knesset elections.
 Benjamin Netanyahu becomes prime minister.
 Omani trade representation office opened in Tel Aviv.

1997

Hebron Protocol signed by Israel and the PA.

1998

Israel celebrates its 50th anniversary.
 Israel and the PLO sign the Wye River Memorandum to facilitate implementation of the Interim Agreement.

1999

Ehud Barak (left-wing One Israel party) elected Prime Minister; forms coalition government.
 Israel and the PLO sign the Sharm-el-Sheikh Memorandum.

2000

Visit of Pope Paul II.
 Israel withdraws from the Security Zone in southern Lebanon.
 Israel admitted to UN Western European and Others Group.
 Al-Aqsa intifada (renewed violence) breaks out.
 Prime Minister Barak resigns.

2001

Ariel Sharon (Likud) elected Prime Minister and forms broad-based unity government.
 The Sharm-el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee issues a report (the Mitchell Report).
 Palestinian-Israeli Security Implementation Work Plan (Tenet cease-fire plan).
 Rechavam Ze'evy, Minister of Tourism, assassinated by Palestinian terrorists.

2002

Israel launches Operation Defensive Shield in response to massive Palestinian terrorist attacks.
 Prime Minister Sharon disperses the Knesset, calling for new elections on January 28, 2003.

2003

Right-of-center coalition government formed by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon
 Israel accepts the Roadmap

2005

Israel carries out the Disengagement Plan which was approved by the Government and the Knesset

2006

After Prime Minister Sharon suffers a stroke, Ehud Olmert becomes Acting Prime Minister
 Elections held on 28 March.
 Prime Minister Ehud Olmert forms new government.

Israel carries out military operations against Palestinian terrorism from the Gaza Strip. The Second Lebanon War, lasting the entire summer, is carried out against Hizbullah terrorism. The entire northern region is affected by continuous rocket attacks from southern Lebanon.

2007

Fatah and Hamas, the two leading Palestinian political entities, establish a unity government.

June 9-14: Hamas violently seizes control of the Gaza Strip from Fatah, resulting in a Hamas controlled Gaza and a Fatah controlled West Bank.

June 14-17: Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas dismisses the Hamas-led unity government, declares a state of emergency, and swears in an emergency government led by Salam Fayyad.

November 2007: The Annapolis Peace Talks – a face-to-face meeting between Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian leader, and Ehud Olmert, the Prime Minister of Israel, brokered by Condoleezza Rice, the US Secretary of State. Representatives from the European Union, United Nations and Arab countries are also invited.

The History of The Israeli Independence Posters

by Dr. Haim Grossman, Researcher of Israeli Culture, Tel-Aviv.

The issue of Independence Day posters was, following the establishment of the state, a continuation of a visual tradition that existed, albeit to a lesser extent, during the days of the British Mandate. Such posters were of great importance as an additional symbol of sovereignty and as an additional instrument in the building of a new national holiday – “Independence Day”. The uniqueness of the Independence posters was that their messages, that included a greater emphasis on ‘Independence’, were appreciated by the public for their professionalism. “The Independence Day” poster was the ‘grands prix’ of Israeli graphics” – Kopel Gurwin, a four-time winner of the design competition for such posters.

The first Independence Day poster was designed, in 1948, by Yohanan Simon who depicted, in a Soviet socialistic realistic style, two powerful arms raising Israel’s flag to the top of the flagpole alongside a quote referring to the natural right of the Jewish people to stand on its own in its own sovereign land, taken from the Declaration of Independence. This poster was issued by the Army’s Cultural Department, due to the absence of a civilian authority. Later posters, which were issued by the Information Centre, gave visual expression to nationalistic themes by means of both old and new symbols and imagery emphasizing understanding and identification by both the veteran resident and the newly arrived immigrant. Thus was highlighted the building of the State, the absorption of immigrants and their integration in the national melting pot. The experience of five years independence, in a poster designed by Haim Nahor, aroused the opposition of religious members of the government as it showed a ‘pure’ Israeli girl holding out her hand to a male Yemenite dancer, but apparently, the joy of sovereignty overcame everything, when celebrated round the flag. The State of Israel and its peoples, busy with their rebuilding, returned and become associated with the biblical past of *Eretz Yisrael*, as depicted in ancient mosaics, – in the posters of the decade designed by Miriam Karoli.

All the Independence posters of the first decades appeared following design competitions, in which participated not only many professional graphic artists but also non-professionals who wished to design their conception of sovereignty and who, every year, sent many suggestions to the to the competition committee, which are now to be found in the national archives. In later years, from the 1970’s onwards, the Ministerial Committee for Ceremonies and Symbols instructed the Information Centre to deal with the annual Independence Day requirements and this body approached graphic artists, designers and other professionals for their suggestions, one of which would be accepted as the poster.

The approach was made to professionals having regard to the requirement that the suggestions would be professional and appropriate, and not from members of the public, whose contribution was of a lesser standard despite their willingness and readiness. Perhaps this was also to develop the status of the Independence Day poster, both from the point of view of the establishment and also in the eyes of a celebrating population already accustomed to independence.

The independence poster for 1958, also designed by Miriam Karoli, slightly deviated from the usual design convention in that it depicted, in the middle, the celebration of the day on a background of exploding colored fireworks, which even now continues to arouse considerable professional criticism.

The 'official' message that was prominent in the 1961 poster, due to a depiction of a builder's hand – a reminder that 'the building of the State is at its peak', softened in the posters of Paul Kor, Amram Peret and Gidi Kayach; the poster of 1966 highlighted the independence celebrations with a gentler and a more smiling design.

One of the first intentions of the independence poster was to widen the image of Israel by including ethnic eastern Jews and their symbols as a message of hegemony, appeared for the first time with the depiction of a '*Chamsa*' in the 1965 poster of Ran Tzeizar who integrated the significance of Judaism with the 'Israeli-ism' of the first 18 years of the State. The *Chamsa*, a central symbol among Jews living in Moslem lands was used and decorated religious artifacts both in the home and in the synagogue, appeared in the 50-year jubilee poster as a national symbol and central image of the multi-cultured Israel-Jewish society.

The 20th year of the State witnessed the splendid victory of the Six Day War enabling the return to and the emancipation of holy sites, was designed by Kopel Gurwin as a '*Parochet*' (the ornamental curtain covering the front of the ark in the synagogue), in the centre of which two lions formed the base of a seven-branched candelabra. During the first decade this candelabra was not apparent in the annual poster competitions, save as an exact reference to the official symbol of the state, notwithstanding many counter suggestions, which showed it in a variety of designs. It may well be that the reason for this was connected with an attempt, maybe not consciously, to distance the poster from traditional symbols and the richly layered Jewish ritual and practice. During the second decade this view changed and, very slowly, the candelabra became the central theme in many posters and, even later, as an additional sign of Israeli patriotism expanding the display of its symbols.

The candelabra and the two supporting lions became well accepted in Jewish art and were adopted as the central theme for the official shield of the city of Jerusalem. The united capital of Israel, which was only hinted at in the first two decades, became, in the following 20 years, a central element with a visual and accepted expression of sovereignty, which was strengthened in world-wide competitions of children's drawings – one of which was chosen as the independence poster for 1977. The chosen poster depicted a very colorful vision of Jerusalem as a holy site for all religions with, at its gates, circles of dancers for peace and international fraternity, crossing the bounds of religion, race and nationality, thus demonstrating the prophetic vision of the coming of the Messiah. The view of this poster was integrated with a thematic line that had already been highlighted in the poster of the previous year, symbolizing the unification of Jerusalem, presenting and evidencing international stabilization, also for simple and childish people, the centrality of the City as a accepted consensus of Israeliness, at least Jewish, and for a conceptual and political appearance: Jerusalem – United and Israeli.

Peace, however, was hardly ever given visual reference in the Independence posters and it first appeared after the Yom Kippur War, in 1973, in a poster designed by Mimi Tamari. Having regard to the Arab rhetoric of the first decades of the State, the prospect of 'Peace' seemed impossible and was push aside by more significant missions, such as "Build and Plant" and "Ingathering of the Exiles and their resettlement". It is possible that the Israeli dream of Peace was so clear that it was not considered necessary to give it a graphic expression. Another possible reason for its non-appearance is that the perception of "Peace Now" was considered an impossible attainment. It may also be that there existed a fear that a Peace Agreement would require intolerable political and territorial concessions. Whatever may be the reason, the first clear and unequivocal vision of

“Peace” appeared in a 30th year poster of David Tartakover, who, almost prophetically, anticipated the surprising visit of President Sadat to Jerusalem at the start of a process that eventually led to peace between Egypt and Israel.

The posters of the 1980’s saw a return to unified Jewish symbols, such as the Shield of David, whilst those of the 1990’s indicated a lessening of the importance symbols on the poster, which became an additional vehicle for an official educational experiment emphasizing, in a slightly artificial way, a ‘yearly theme’ i.e. for the 41st year of independence the subject was “40 Years of Mass Immigration”; a year later it was “The Year of the Hebrew Language” and, in 1993, “The Year of the Environment” in a poster designed by David Shapiro.

It seems as though the poster that succeeded in giving the maximal expression of purpose, form and color to the contemporary Israeli image was that designed by Raphael Abecassis for the 1986 anniversary. He designed the poster “38 years of Israeli Independence” as an old-new call for fitting values of freedom, justice and equality. The poster included wording from the ‘Declaration’ section of the Charter of Independence and was ornamented with an abundance of motifs taken from marriage contracts – a renewed reminder of love and of the relationship between the bride and groom of the “Song of songs” identified by the Jewish allegorical commentary of the love between a people and its God, concluding with an official document of obligation. The artist placed Jerusalem at the apex of the joy of the festival and adorned the written obligation with Jewish and Zionist iconography in rich even symmetry, decorated with flowers and animals – such as was customary in Moslem countries for Jewish marriage contracts. The existence of sovereignty and independence demanded a renewed integration in the Middle East and this was drawn in Jewish characteristics of symbol and color.

◀C> Gematria - Table

| NUMBERS | GEMATRIA | NUMBERS | GEMATRIA |
|---------|----------|-----------|----------|
| 1 | א | 100 | ק |
| 2 | ב | 200 | ר |
| 3 | ג | 300 | ש |
| 4 | ד | 400 | ת |
| 5 | ה | 500 | ת"ק |
| 6 | ו | 600 | ת"ר |
| 7 | ז | 700 | ת"ש |
| 8 | ח | 800 | ת"ת |
| 9 | ט | 900 | תת"ק |
| 10 | י | 1000 | תת"ר |
| 20 | כ | 5000 | ה' |
| 30 | ל | Irregular | |
| 40 | מ | 15 | ט"ו |
| 50 | נ | 16 | ט"ז |
| 60 | ס | | |
| 70 | ע | | |
| 80 | פ | | |
| 90 | צ | | |

<D> Years - Table

| ANNIVERSARY | מספר שנים | שנה | YEAR |
|-------------|-----------|-------|------|
| | | תש"ח | 1948 |
| 1 | א' | תש"ט | 1949 |
| 2 | ב' | תש"י | 1950 |
| 3 | ג' | תשי"א | 1951 |
| 4 | ד' | תשי"ב | 1952 |
| 5 | ה' | תשי"ג | 1953 |
| 6 | ו' | תשי"ד | 1954 |
| 7 | ז' | תשט"ו | 1955 |
| 8 | ח' | תשט"ז | 1956 |
| 9 | ט' | תשי"ז | 1957 |
| 10 | י' | תשי"ח | 1958 |
| 11 | יא" | תשי"ט | 1959 |
| 12 | יב" | תש"ך | 1960 |
| 13 | יג" | תשכ"א | 1961 |
| 14 | יד" | תשכ"ב | 1962 |
| 15 | ט"ו | תשכ"ג | 1963 |
| 16 | ט"ז | תשכ"ד | 1964 |
| 17 | י"ז | תשכ"ה | 1965 |
| 18 | י"ח | תשכ"ו | 1966 |
| 19 | י"ט | תשכ"ז | 1967 |
| 20 | כ' | תשכ"ח | 1968 |
| 21 | כ"א | תשכ"ט | 1969 |
| 22 | כ"ב | תש"ל | 1970 |
| 23 | כ"ג | תשל"א | 1971 |
| 24 | כ"ד | תשל"ב | 1972 |
| 25 | כ"ה | תשל"ג | 1973 |
| 26 | כ"ו | תשל"ד | 1974 |
| 27 | כ"ז | תשל"ה | 1975 |
| 28 | כ"ח | תשל"ו | 1976 |
| 29 | כ"ט | תשל"ז | 1977 |
| 30 | ל' | תשל"ח | 1978 |

| ANNIVERSARY | מספר שנים | שנה | YEAR |
|-------------|-----------|-------|------|
| 31 | ל"א | תשל"ט | 1979 |
| 32 | ל"ב | תש"ם | 1980 |
| 33 | ל"ג | תשמ"א | 1981 |
| 34 | ל"ד | תשמ"ב | 1982 |
| 35 | ל"ה | תשמ"ג | 1983 |
| 36 | ל"ו | תשמ"ד | 1984 |
| 37 | ל"ז | תשמ"ה | 1985 |
| 38 | ל"ח | תשמ"ו | 1986 |
| 39 | ל"ט | תשמ"ז | 1987 |
| 40 | מ' | תשמ"ח | 1988 |
| 41 | מ"א | תשמ"ט | 1989 |
| 42 | מ"ב | תש"ן | 1990 |
| 43 | מ"ג | תשנ"א | 1991 |
| 44 | מ"ד | תשנ"ב | 1992 |
| 45 | מ"ה | תשנ"ג | 1993 |
| 46 | מ"ו | תשנ"ד | 1994 |
| 47 | מ"ז | תשנ"ה | 1995 |
| 48 | מ"ח | תשנ"ו | 1996 |
| 49 | מ"ט | תשנ"ז | 1997 |
| 50 | נ' | תשנ"ח | 1998 |
| 51 | נ"א | תשנ"ט | 1999 |
| 52 | נ"ב | תש"ס | 2000 |
| 53 | נ"ג | תשס"א | 2001 |
| 54 | נ"ד | תשס"ב | 2002 |
| 55 | נ"ה | תשס"ג | 2003 |
| 56 | נ"ו | תשס"ד | 2004 |
| 57 | נ"ז | תשס"ה | 2005 |
| 58 | נ"ח | תשס"ו | 2006 |
| 59 | נ"ט | תשס"ז | 2007 |
| 60 | ס' | תשס"ח | 2008 |

POSTER INTERPRETATION - MIDRASH KRAZA - מדרש כרזה

| | |
|---|---|
| The year: | The year in Hebrew: |
| Number of years of independence: | Number of years of Independence in Hebrew: |

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Theme: | Artist: |
|---------------|----------------|

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Message: How does the poster communicate the message? | Technique: |
|--|-------------------|

| |
|---|
| Description: _____ _____ _____ _____ |
|---|

| | |
|---|--|
| Symbols List and give their meaning: | Art Colors, composition, shapes, space and their meaning: |
|---|--|

The top section of the page contains three large, empty rectangular boxes. The middle box is distinguished by a decorative scalloped border, while the top and bottom boxes have simple straight borders. These boxes are intended for students to draw or write their responses to the questions below.

History

What happened in Israel around the same time?

Is it reflected in the poster?

Text

How are font, size and color used?

Copy text in Hebrew and find its meaning:

Share thoughts and impressions:

I think this poster is.... _____

I like this poster because..... _____

If I designed a poster on this theme, I would..... _____

Bibliography

Independence Day Posters, Images, Symbols, Themes and Values. Merkaz Ha'hasbara Publication

Israel Museum Exhibit and Book: Story of a Symbol – In the Light of the Menorah.

The Flag and the Emblem/Alec Mishory, art historian, art critic and a lecturer at the Open University of Israel.

Jewish Agency for Israel. Articles by Jonathan Kaplan and Steve Israel.

Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The History of The Israeli Independence Posters/Dr. Haim Grossman, Researcher of Israeli Culture

Israel Through Posters/Joel Segel, Art New England Magazine

Israel Museum Exhibit and Catalogue: Old-New Land, 2003 (Article: First Flowers of Israeli Art. curator: Tami Manor Friedman)

The Seven Species of the Land of Israel/Noga Hareuveni (founder of Neot Kedumim)

The Seven Species/Lisa Katz (article)

Visual Israeliness, Exhibition catalogue, Open University of Israel, 2007/Alec Mishori, Curator

Introduction to a lecture/Larry Abramson, San Francisco, 2004.

Antonym/Synonym: The Poster Art of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict (an online exhibit)

Web Resources

General:

www.mfa.gov.il/MFA

www.jafi.org.il/education/100/concepts

www.jewishagency.org/JewishAgency

www.zionistarchives.org.il

Symbols:

<http://2002.imj.org.il/menorah/galleries.html>

Detailed Israel's History Timeline:

<http://www.jafi.org.il/education/jafi75/timeline3i.html#1>

Detailed Israel-Diaspora Timeline:

www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/israeltimeline.html

Web Sites in Hebrew

Symbols:

Activities around the flag and the emblem: <http://www.cet.ac.il/history/semel/index.asp>

Graphic commentary:

Shenkar School of Design and Industry – poster exhibits for the 57th and 58th ID:

www.nrg.co.il/images/4u/israel57/index.html

www.nrg.co.il/images/4u/58X58/

