La sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea și pe parcursul primei jumătăți a secolului al XX-lea, presa ebraică din școlile evreiești din Europa și Statele Unite a făcut, în principal, parte din imaginea socială și culturală a comunităților evreiești din diasporă și a inspirat apariția presei comerciale pentru copii în limba ebraică în statele de referință. Ziarele s-au dezvoltat ca platforme pentru diverse scopuri, în principal, pentru însușirea mai bună a elevilor, precum și pentru exprimarea personală a acestora. Ziarele școlare în acea perioadă erau gestionate și editate de personalul didactic al școlii și doar în rare cazuri se permitea participarea elevilor în procesul de editare și, mai rar, procesul decizional. Această tip de presă a fost folosit ca fundament pentru dezvoltarea presei școlare din Israel în anii dinainte și după înființarea statului Israel în 1948.

Cuvinte-cheie: presa ebraică pentru copii, ziar școlar, școală evreiască, diaspora, Israel, război mondial, Holocaust, Korczak.

DIASPORAL JEWISH SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS AND CHILDRENS’ HEBREW COMMERCIAL PRESS JOURNEY BETWEEN 19TH CENTURY TO THE ISRAELI ESTABLISHMENT

At the end of the 19th century and throughout the first half of the 20th century, the Hebrew press in Jewish schools in Europe and the United States mainly formed part of the social and cultural image of the Jewish communities in the diaspora, and inspired the emergence of a commercial press for children in the Hebrew language. Newspapers developed as platforms for various purposes, mainly as learning Hebrew and personal expression. The newspapers were managed and edited by the school educational staff, and sometimes the students also participated in it. This press was used as an infrastructure for the school press in the Land of Israel in the years before and after the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

Keywords: children Hebrew press, school newspaper, Jewish schools, diaspora, Land of Israel, world war, Holocaust, Korczak.

JOURNAUX D’ÉCOLE JUIVE DE LA DIASPORA ET PRESSE COMMERCIALE HÉBRAÏQUE POUR ENFANTS ENTRE LE 19-e SIÈCLE JUSQU’À L’ETABLISSEMENT DE L’ÉTAT ISRAÉLIEN

À la fin du XIX-e siècle et tout au long de la première moitié du XX-e siècle, la presse hébraïque des écoles juives d’Europe et des États-Unis constituait principalement une partie de l’image sociale et culturelle des communautés juives.
Introduction

In this review, will be revealed the roots of the school newspaper in Jewish educational centers and of the commercial Hebrew journalism for children in the diaspora, between the 19th century-1948. The article is about the complex and important role of this diasporal children’s journalism, which developed as a platform for several reasons. Amongst them learning Hebrew, critical thinking, collective belonging, cultural and educational preservation, assimilation of values, formation of the diasporal Jewish identity, fostering the connection with the Jewish community in Israel and for personal expression. The newspapers included various works penned by the school student teachers, the students, and sometimes by guests and students’ parents. The editorial policy was conducted according to three categories: by the educational staff, with the participation of the school students or managed by the school students only [10, p. 67]. According to Y. Dror, the type of editing was a function of the school and the management policy type. Most of the journalistic activity was conducted within the informal framework, in the after school hours and sometimes within the formal framework of Judaism and Hebrew classes [6, p. 29]. According to A. Kahane et al. (2012) and A. Cohen et al. (2015), the type of educational framework was very important, since it has a decisive influence on the education system’s perception of the educational journalistic activity, in terms of the allocation of economic or pedagogical resources [7], [4]. This press operated at the same time as the schools and gymnasiums newspapers in the Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel (Palestine) at the end of the Ottoman period [8] and the British Mandate in the Land of Israel [6, p. 29]. These both actually served as an infrastructure for the school newspapers, which continued later their activities in the schools after the Israeli state establishment in 1948. The article will review chro-
nologically the phenomenon of children’s Hebrew commercial press and of the school newspapers in the diasporal Jewish educational centers across 4 main activity arenas: the development of school newspapers (also, press or journalism) in Jewish schools during the “Haskalah” period (the enlightenment movement at the end of the 19th century); the development of the commercial Hebrew press for children at the end of the 19th century; the phenomenon of children’s journalism with a mixture of Hebrew and Yiddish (Jewish dialect) in the diasporal Jewish communities between the two world wars and the phenomenon of diasporal children’s journalism in Jewish centers during the Holocaust (1939-1945). In the first 4 decades of the 20th century, the phenomena of Hebrew children’s school newspapers crossed the borders of the Jewish schools and influenced cultural and political discourse in the Jewish diaspora. It inspired the commercial press and the diasporal Hebrew childrens’ literature and served as a foundation for the establishment and development of the school newspapers in the new educational system after the Israeli establishment in 1948. The evolution of the Hebrew school newspapers shows their massive importance in the wider Jewish community and later the Israeli one with a place of honor for the children’s press during the Holocaust.

Content

The beginning of the diasporal Jewish School journalism (newspapers) during the “Haskalah” period is traced as early as the 18th century, but its main activity began in the 19th century. This unique childrens’ journalism mainly developed in Europe and the United States, with the growth of the Hebrew press for adults in Jerusalem (Palestine) at the end of the 19th century. Hebrew newspapers for adults, such as “Ha-Zvi” (in Hebrew: “The Deer”) and “Ha-Chavatselet” (in Hebrew: “The Lily”) [11], were designed to be used for the children’s journalism as an educational platform for teaching Hebrew and assimilating Jewish values in diasporal Jewish schools. This school journalism acted alongside the journalistic activity, which continued to develop in the education system of the Hebrew settlement at the end of the Ottoman period and of the British Mandate in the Land of Israel, from the end of the 19th century into the first decades of the 20th century and beyond [1, p. 239], [6, p. 29], [8], [10, p. 67]. The editorial policy of the school newspapers was the school staff responsibility, usually teachers or administrators, who also wrote for the school newspaper, including opinion articles and personal columns, stories and poems, although occasionally some articles and stories were written by the students. The nature of the school’s journalistic activity resembled the Jewish schools curriculum, in which the sacred language was taught in Hebrew. One of the schools that operated in this format was the “Fraye Shule” [free school], which was founded by the writer Yosef Pearl in Tarnopol (in Galicia, now Ukraine). The name was inspired by the first Jewish school in Berlin, which was founded in 1778 according to the principles of the “Haskalah” movement (Enlightenment) and in a similar manner: biblical and Mishnah studies, Hebrew grammar and history, arithmetic, foreign languages, and he even established a printing house near his school. The school establishment by Pearl was one of the action patterns to which he tried to correct the generation’s and suppress the influence of Hasidism: running and operating it in the spirit of the values of education, and the dissemination of knowledge and education in general. In the three years after the founding of the school, Pearl published three yearbooks for children called “Zir Neeman” (in Hebrew: “Faithful Axis”, (see: Appendix No. 1) [10], which were a kind of multifaceted calendar and included a diver-
The Commercial Hebrew press for children in the diaspora at the end of the 19th century gained its main inspiration from the adults Hebrew press, and from Jewish schools newspapers in the diaspora. This press operated, simultaneously, with the school journalistic activity of the “Ha-Yishuv Ha-Yehudi” (in Hebrew: “Jewish settlement”, during the Ottoman period and during the British Mandate in the Land of Israel-Palestine) [2], [6, p. 29], [8], [10]. This diaspora’s commercial press developed at the end of the 19th century and in the first decades of the 20th century, mainly in Europe and the United States. The newspapers’ written language was Hebrew and Yiddish (a Jewish language that belongs to the Germanic languages and is written with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet) [11].

According to Y. Dror and A. Bar-El, this children’s press began to intensify a few decades after the establishment of Jewish schools in the diaspora. At this turning point, education in the Hebrew language, the development of children’s literature in Hebrew and the publishing of newspapers in Hebrew were all influential for this press. The Hebrew press for children - as well as the Hebrew reading books, began to be published when there was a need to create new Hebrew reading materials for children, in the spirit of the Jewish “Haskalah” movement (In Hebrew: “wisdom”, “erudition” or “education”). This intellectual movement arose as a defined ideological worldview between the 1770s - 1881, with the rise of Jewish nationalism and mainly acted among Central and Eastern Europe Jews. One of the main goals of the Haskalah movement dealt with the preservation of the Jews as a separate and unique collective, and in the process worked for cultural and moral renewal, including the revival of Hebrew mainly for the secular’s use, which resulted in an increase in Hebrew found in print. This goal corresponds with the establishment of Jewish schools and the revival of the spoken and read Hebrew language among children, as by reading newspapers [9]. Along with the kindergartens and the Hebrew schools, which were a central focus of the Hebrew network as a daily spoken language, the children were the ambassadors of the old-new Hebrew language among their families. The children’s newspapers were also used as means of conveying trends, values and social messages to the younger generation.

As all the children’s newspapers in the world, the Hebrew newspapers also provided children with important content: knowledge and education, literature works, amusements for leisure time, and more. Through these, they contributed to the Hebrew literature development for children and for a new generation of Hebrew readers. The editorial policy was guided by the newspaper’s editors, most of whom were also teachers and some were adult
writers, and the essence of Jewish culture, in general, and Hebrew, in particular. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, “The Revival of the Hebrew Language”, published in 1893 in the Ottoman period of Israel (before 1948) [8], the first Hebrew children’s newspaper “Olam Katon” (in Hebrew: “Little World” (see: Appendix No. 3), which focused on assimilating values of the land’s love, and as an agent of education and culture, alongside “Ha-Yishuv Ha-Yehudi” (“Jewish settlement”) schools activities. The children’s newspapers that were published before the Israeli establishment, faithfully expressed the values of Jewish culture and the renewed Hebrew and Zionism, the spiritual and social life of the Jews in the diaspora and in the Land of Israel, as well as the events in their day-to-day life [6, p. 29], [10].

The phenomenon of children’s journalism in Hebrew and Yiddish in the diaspora’s Jewish communities between the two world wars developed at the beginning of the 20th century. This diaspora’s distinctive children’s journalism crossed the boundaries of the school, and influenced cultural and political discourse in the wider Jewish diasporas in Eastern Europe and North America. It was a children’s journalism written in Hebrew letters, but the language was Yiddish (a mixture of several languages and dialects unique to European Jews). This unique journalism was rich, varied, interesting and influential and included various works, poems, stories, and well reflected the essence of the social life, as well as the school and home life of the children. A major factor that led to the creation of this journalism was the establishment of several educational systems that taught in Yiddish, and needed reading and learning materials, as well as a substitute for Russian literature.

This children’s journalism appeared in the Jewish communities in the diaspora during World War I and until the outbreak of World War II. The first children’s newspaper in the Yiddish was “Grenke Beyma’alach” (“Between the Greenish Trees”) (see: Appendix No. 4), whose name was taken from the famous poem of the national poet, Haim Nachman Bialik, “Between the green trees”. The newspaper was founded by Bastomski from Vilna (Poland) in 1914, who was a teacher, writer, newspaper editor and publisher, along with other creators. The cover painting depicted the continuation of the line from the poem ‘Between the green trees / Moish’lim shloimelim mesahakim’, written in the Hebrew alphabet. The newspaper appeared regularly for many years, once every two weeks, until 1939, on the eve of the outbreak of World War II. The newspaper resembled other children’s newspapers in the world and included the editor’s message (lead editorial) to the readers, literature and poetry, news and articles, letters to the editor, readers’ essays and a leisure section. However, the newspaper was not written by school students and was not distributed in schools [2].

The phenomenon of diaspora’s children’s journalism in Jewish centers during the Holocaust between the years 1939-1945, is a fascinating journalism that continued even during the atrocious epoch for Jews. This journalism was characterized by its uniqueness, as it was mostly written and managed by Jewish children in the new and forced frameworks imposed and which replaced their Jewish schools, such as orphanages, ghettos and concentration camps. The journalistic activity was under extremely difficult conditions and most of the children managed the activity and also edited the newspaper’s content. Two examples of extraordinary journalistic activity at that time are attributed to the children’s newspaper “Kamard” (in Czech “A Friend”) and “Mali Peschglund” (in Polish “Little Review”). The children’s newspaper “Kamard” (see: Appendix No. 5), was published in the Theresienstadt ghetto in the Czech Republic between 1943-1944. Czech and German speaking
boys and girls in this ghetto residence, where they lived, wrote in the newspaper in their handwriting. The newspaper, which was edited by the talented 14-year-old, Ivan Polak, included stories, poems and illustrations, the content of the ghetto and the war life, but also contained entertainment and fun. The newspaper also contained a comic column, by the young editor Polak, about a racing driver with an old car who manages to beat his strong German and Italian rivals. Polak, like his friends, did not survive the Holocaust [3].

Another notable and unique newspaper published during the Holocaust epoch is the children’s newspaper MALY PRZEGLAD (abbreviated as MP) (see: Appendix No. 6). The newspaper, published in the orphanage at 7 Nowolipki Street, in the Warsaw Ghetto in Poland. The newspaper, which was published between 1939-1942, run and written by the children of the ghetto, under the guidance of the educators and under the direction of the founder, Janusz Korczak (which was his pen name. His real name was Henrik Goldschmidt) [5, p. 117]. Korczak was a doctor, educator, educational thinker, writer, a Polish Jewish journalist and social activist, and the forerunners of the activity for children’s rights. The orphanages he founded and managed with his partner, Stefania Wilczynska were among the early attempts of the democratic education, which also included a children’s court, in which they tried and were judged, and also conducted a democratic debate and Hogan [Ibid. p. 131]. The children’s newspaper was managed with a progressive educational approach that Korczak was one of its developers, according to which the child was at the center of the educational process and not taught content, an active partner in decisions concerning his education and his wishes and needs should be taken into account. This children’s newspaper “MALY PRZEGLAD” was a weekly supplement of the Jewish daily (in the Polish language) “NASZ PRZEGLĄD” (abbreviated: Nf). This daily newspaper had a wide readership among the educated Jews, mainly, supported Zionism and fought against assimilation. The influence of “Nash Peschglund” was evident on the children’s newspaper “Mali Peschglund”, which was named after it, and was managed autonomously by Korczak, in which honesty and courageous writing was part of its foundations. Although the newspaper was not political or partial, unlike other newspapers intended for Jewish children and youth, nor was he associated with a particular educational stream. Rather, its purpose was to encourage the youth to write or tell orally about their daily needs and difficulties. In his articles in the MP, Korchak criticized the school institutions in a harsh manner, but was careful not to criticize the teachers. Korczak chose to live with his students in the orphanage, and there the daily activities were conducted, which included eating and sleeping, learning and working, managing social activities and classes, such as writing in the newspaper and preparing lessons. A self-governing children’s society operated there, in which the children managed themselves with the help of the adults, while assimilating values such as honesty, democracy, and humanity.

In the orphanage, the children used to run a weekly newspaper in which they wrote together, with Korczak writing the main article, aside mentors and trainees articles. It sometimes even included poems and stories by famous writers, essays, judgments of the court that was conducted at the orphanage by the members, various wishes and requests, and letters sent to the editorial by thousands of children and every Saturday the newspaper was read in front of all. The daily for adults N.F. and the supplement for children M.P., were printed on the same type of paper, although the supplement appeared, for the most part, in a smaller format and of better paper quality, accompanied by illustrations and photogra-
phs. Korczak edited the newspaper for about three years and then transferred the editing to Naberly, possibly due to criticism of his editing work and decisions, since the newspaper appealed mainly to children and not to the youth. From the moment Naberly started editing the newspaper, the youth began to get a wider place in it. Not only because of the change of editor, but out of the consideration that the young journalists have matured and could express themselves in an orderly and better way. Korczak even brought up this criticism of the reporter in the newspaper, and discussed it in one of his letters, where he pointed out that the young children need the newspaper more than the youth, who have a wider world of content and activities. As far as he was concerned, a newspaper for young children, especially in this difficult period, was in the opinion of a necessity, in which they could express themselves and could prepare it on their own. In 1942, Korczak chose to go with the orphanage children and with his partner, Wilczynska, to the Treblinka extermination camp, even though he was given by the Nazis the right to choose to be saved, thus becoming one of the greatest Jewish historical symbols that arose at that time and in general until today [Ibid.], [1, p. 239].

The evolution of Hebrew newspapers in Jewish schools and the commercial journalism for children in the Diaspora, reflects a complex and unique journey that spanned from the end of the 19th century until 1948. The evolving role of Hebrew journalism in Jewish schools in the diaspora acted as a transformative force in the shaping of cultural identity there, when the anticipation for the Israeli state establishment gave the journalistic publications for Jewish children historical significance. These newspapers became a platform for critical thinking, collective belonging and personal expression. The editorial policy, whether managed by adults or children, influenced the thematic diversity in these publications and included content for children, stories, poems and fun, but also included personal columns, opinions and reflections on the dream of building a Jewish home. The subtext of resistance and resilience in the children’s writings, especially during the Holocaust, emphasizes the strong desire for Jewish cultural preservation in the diaspora. This journalism marched alongside the school newspapers during the Ottoman period and the British mandate in the years before the Israeli establishment, and laid the foundation for the vibrant tradition of the school journalism after the Israeli establishment in 1948.

Conclusions

The legacy of Hebrew journalism for children in the diasporal Jewish schools stands as a testament to the enduring power of education and storytelling. The development of school newspapers before the establishment of Israel in 1948 contributed significantly to cultural consciousness and offered a platform for expression and investigation. The global context, which includes Jewish communities in Europe and America is an integral part of understanding this history. The inclusion of newspapers in Hebrew, Yiddish or in the local language during the Holocaust, illustrates the resilience of children who served as young journalists and the inseparable spirit of cultural preservation even in the darkest periods of Jewish history. Editorial policies and content, whether managed by adults or children, provided a diverse understanding of the diversity and resilience contained in these historical publications. Excerpts from newspapers in the orphanage of Janusz Korczak and the Terezin ghetto, led by “Kamarad”, echo the poignant voices raised against the plight and illustrate the lasting impact of these publications.
Bibliographic references


12. YUDILOVICH, D. *A chronological list of Jerusalem newspapers in all languages that were published, until the outbreak of the First World War*. In “*A collection of articles on the history of the press in the Land of Israel*”. Chap. 2. Tel Aviv: the National Israel Press Exhibition Board, 1926 [in Hebrew].