

Rafael Frankel

Bourgul in Talmudic and Classical Literature, and Today

Bourgul (Arabic) (or Bulgur [Turkish]) is prepared today in Israel, Turkey, and neighboring countries from emmer wheat (spelt), which is boiled, dried in the sun, cracked to small pieces, and then sieved to produce grains of three different sizes each with a different name. Pliny the elder (*Naturalis Historia* XVIII 29 #109–116) describes four types: *alica*, *tragum*, and two which he does not name, all slightly different but all sieved to produce grains of different sizes with different names. In Talmudic literature relating to Temple offerings there is reference to thirteen sieves (Mishnah Menahot 10:4; Tosephta Menahot 8:14), clearly connected to the three actually used, and there is frequent mention of *hilka tragis tisani*, clearly deriving from the Latin (*ptisana* is barley groats). In both Talmudim, Babylonian Mo'ed Katan 13 b; Jerusalem Sotah 2 (17, 4 line 914), these terms are explained as referring to the size of the grains: a half, a third, and a quarter, indicating that the Sages knew that there were three different sizes. However, the change in meaning from the Latin is so unusual that their actual meaning in Hebrew is still not certain. Bourgul/bulgur is, therefore, another example of the continuity of ancient practices.

Etan Ayalon, Rafael Frankel, and Amos Kloner

Wine Production in Eretz Israel in Antiquity: Advancement in Research or a Completely New Approach?

The article opens with a summary of wine in ancient civilization: the origin, domestication and cultivation of the vine; the vine and wine in ancient literature;

wine and religion; wine – a curse or a blessing?; the wine banquet and the symposium from biblical times till the Passover *Seder*; types of wine; the wine trade; and the manner of its storage from amphorae to wooden barrels.

The article focuses on wine production. The basic wine press (biblical Hebrew – *gat*, *yekev*, *purah*; later Hebrew – only *gat*) consisted of a treading floor on which the grapes were trodden and a collecting vat to which the must flowed and where it usually fermented. In more complex installations there were also intermediate vats to clear the must and sometimes a second collecting vat, auxiliary floors around the treading floor (on which the grapes were laid for some days before treading to produce sweet wine, during which time the first must that seeps out without treading was collected separately), and a screw press, usually in the center of the treading floor to press out the must remaining after treading. The size of the treading floor could be as much as 30m² and that of the collecting vat as much as 10m³.

Recently it has been suggested that in the simple wine presses fermentation took place not in the vat but on the treading floor and that in the complex wine presses the treading and fermentation were not carried out on the treading floor and in the vat but that both took place on the auxiliary floors. However, in many of the simple wine presses it was not possible to block off the treading floor and similarly in many of the complex wine presses it was not possible to block off the auxiliary floors, so the suggested procedures could simply not have been implemented. Although in some cases that method could have been employed in wine presses, it is not feasible that almost identical installations functioned completely differently. The new suggestion also does not explain the necessity of the large collecting vats.

Deborah Cvikel, Yaacov Kahanov, and Haim Goren
**The Naval Bombardment of Akko,
 December 1831**

On 9 December 1831, the Egyptian fleet commenced a heavy bombardment of Akko. This was a direct outcome of a dispute which broke out at the turn of 1831 between the ruler of Egypt, Mehmet Ali Paşa, and Sultan Mahmud II of the Ottoman Empire. As a result, the Egyptian army advanced northward to conquer the Holy Land and Syria. Together with the land forces, the Egyptian navy bombarded Akko during December. Seven frigates and several additional Egyptian vessels fired about 35,000 cannon balls into the town on the first day of engagement. While the bombardment from the sea was indecisive, the Egyptian fleet suffered serious damage. The Egyptian frigates returned to Alexandria in early 1832. This paper examines the maritime aspects of the campaign – the bombardment of the town from the sea on 9 December – in order to suggest an explanation why, unlike the commonly held opinion, in spite of Egyptian control of the sea and the active involvement of its navy in the siege, the fleet's involvement in conquering the town was negligible. Akko finally fell to the Egyptian land forces six months later, without the involvement of the navy.

Shula Keshet
**From Bithania to Vienna and Back: A New
 Look at Arieh Allweil's *The Gray Mountain*
 Prints**

Arieh Allweil was one of the more respected leaders of the first group of pioneers of Hashomer Hatzair, the Bithania group. The eight prints named *Tura Afura* (The Gray Mountain) were done in Vienna in 1924, after the painter left the country suddenly to return to Vienna where he registered at the Academy of Fine Arts. Previous interpretations related the trauma portrayed in the prints to the tense atmosphere of the confessional conversations held in Bithania under the guidance of Meir Ya'ari. These interpretations were based on a selective reading of the facts, and more than once on suggestive speculations.

A multidisciplinary approach, based on a wider historical and cultural context, could lead, in my opinion, to a better understanding of *Tura Afura*. The paper will examine documents referring to the story of Bithania, biographical data concerning the artist, other literary works inspired by the Bithania episode, and especially the allegorical language developed by the artist in *Tura Afura* and later in other works. According to my new reading, *Tura Afura* is not a traumatic reaction to a specific local story. It represents a wider symbolic range of reference. *Tura Afura* and other literary works inspired by the Bithania episode relate to the pioneers' story as influenced deeply by the tremendous shock caused by World War I, especially the pogroms inflicted upon Jews. Bithania is the last symbolic stop. *Tura Afura* is the narrative of the wandering Jew who finally reaches the shore, the place of redemption, only to find even there death and bereavement.

Meir Chazan

**Lilia Basevitch on the Barricades of
 Gender, the Individual, and Guard Duty in
 the Kibbutz**

Lilia Basevitch, a member of Kibbutz Ein Harod, chose to make the 'woman issue' the focus of her political and social activities. The article describes three of her campaigns. The first centered on representation of women within the public arena; the second concerned the standard of living of the individual; and the third related to participation of women in guard duty on the kibbutz. Basevitch's stands are central landmarks in the establishment of the new concept of female identity in kibbutz society and in shaping the image of women within it. Even though Basevitch was no leading political figure in kibbutz life, she was the most prominent and significant personality who held aloft – strongly, consistently, systematically, and over a long period time, from the mid-1920s to the mid-1940s – the banner of the status and involvement of women within kibbutz society. In her public activity she was prepared both to view critically the status of women within the kibbutz while adhering without compromise to the kibbutz lifestyle.

Atara Isaacson

Moshe Wilensky's 'Yemenite' Songs: Are They Truly Yemenite?

This article questions if Wilensky's seventeen 'Yemenite' songs composed between 1934 and 1958 to texts by Nathan Alterman, are indeed Yemenite from a musical point of view. This was studied by comparing them to the Yemenite liturgical poems from the *diwan* (a collection of devotional songs sung in the home during Sabbath and celebrations such as weddings, holidays, and circumcisions). Wilensky's songs were originally written for various performances, including those of the satirical theaters 'Hamatah' and 'Li La Lo'. These songs are characterized as Yemenite due to the nature of the text that describes the Yemenite Jews, their colorful images, language, and heritage, and especially the use of Yemenite female singers as the lead performers (e.g., Shoshana Damari whom Wilensky met at 'Li La Lo' in 1944, and for whom he composed many of his famous hits). Our findings show that Wilensky's melodies are composed in line with western musical tradition (using major-minor modes), including the phrasing and tonality, while the use of melodic ornaments and embellishments adds a Middle Eastern flavor (the repetitive use of melodic figures of two or three diatonic tones contribute to this result). Thus the melody, harmony, or other musical parameters have almost nothing in common with the liturgical poem. The origin of the Yemenite mood in Wilensky's songs is attributed to non-musical elements.

Shifra Mescheloff

Rabbi Shlomo Goren and David Ben-Gurion

Rabbi Goren, the chief rabbi of the Israel Defense Forces for many years, formed close relationships with Ben-Gurion, the first prime minister and defense minister of Israel. Though mainly working relations, they were also ones of close friendship which influenced the shaping of Rabbi Goren's status as chief rabbi of the IDF. Ben-Gurion backed Rabbi Goren when he was opposed by army officers who weren't always willing to accept his superiority in religious matters. Ben-Gurion also supported Rabbi Goren against the Chief Rabbinate, the Ministry of Religion, and political bodies which wanted to be involved in the exercise of Rabbi Goren's role. Rabbi Goren was sent as Ben-Gurion's emissary to carry out national tasks in the diaspora and also aided Ben-Gurion in solving problems concerning religion and state, and personal status. They often met to discuss spiritual matters, and both shared a love for studying the Bible. It seems that Rabbi Goren thought that it was his task to add spiritual content to Ben-Gurion's performance as prime minister, while Ben-Gurion believed that collaboration with Rabbi Goren would make it possible for religious Jews in Israel to be integrated into the army.