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June 2021 | תמוז תשפ"א | Newsletter #4



From our Archive

Bathing in New York in the 1930s - in Hebrew!

Summer has arrived and with it, beach season is here. Just the time to reach for a fascinating document from our Archive. Histadrut HaNo'ar Halvri (The Hebrew Youth Organization) was founded in New York City in 1936. In the same year, Yitzhak Heller, vice chairman of the organization, as well as chairman of its language committee, wrote to the Committee of the Hebrew Language in Jerusalem requesting Hebrew terms for the topics of culture and leisure.

Other interesting terms on the list: what is called today *kova yam* (a sea cap) is a *kippat rahtsa* (bathing cap), popcorn is *keli tiras* (*pitsputse tiras* according to the Academy), and a lollipop is a *laklekan* (sucker).

If you or anyone you know has information about Histadrut HaNo'ar Halvri in New York in the 1930s, or information about Yitzhak Heller, [please contact us here.](#)

He added to his letter a list of Hebrew terms related to bathing in the sea and asked the Committee for their opinion. He wrote, "We recognize that all renewal of language in the Diaspora without permission from Eretz Israel introduces lawlessness into the language and God forbid that we do such a thing".

The Academy's archive contains the Committee's response as well, which states, among other things, "Your activities to spread the Hebrew language among student youth is commendable and we will try our best to make this easier for you, and especially by inventing the needed terms."

On the document are notes for the list of terms for bathing. For example, the term *ballaner* (from *ballan* (mikve attendant)) for a bathing suit was erased and replaced with *beged rahtsa* (bathing suit - nowadays *beged yam* (swimsuit)), the term *ma'aforet* for a bathrobe was replaced with *me'il rahtsa* (wash robe - nowadays *haluk rahtsa* (bathrobe)).

מילים חרות	תוכן, המפורט הנוצר בעברית	מילים חרות	תוכן, המפורט הנוצר בעברית
anklets	קיסוליות	garbage	מזבלה
amusements	הנאות	hot dog	דוג
back stroke	הנאה גבית	ice cream	קרח
bathing cap	כובע רחצה	ice l	קרח
bathing suit	לבוש	loose	קפוזיט
bathrobe	מגנבת	locker	אגוז
beach	חוף הים	lollipop	קליקן
boardwalk	רצף	lunch	ארוחת צהריים
breat stroke	הנאה תחת	nut	אגוז
bus	אוטובוס	pebble	אבן
car	מכונית	pool	ברי
chlorine	קלורין	popcorn	קלי תירס
circus	קרקס	rocks	אבנים
comfort station	בית הכסא	salt water	מים מלוחים
conductor	מנהל	sand	חול
erab	פרח	shells	צדפים
erawl stroke	הנאה זרועות	shorts	מכנסיים
dive	קוף	side stroke	הנאה צדדית
diving board	דף הקפיצה	sloka	אבן קרס
drinka	מטקה	staircase	סדרגות
driver	נהג	station	תחנה
drown	טב	subway	התחתית
duck	בלל	sun	שמש

To view the original letter and learn more about this item, [click here.](#)

For more items from our archive on our Hebrew site, [click here.](#)

What's in a Name

Kinneret - כִּנְרֵת



The bathing season brings many to the shores of Israel. Many Israeli girls are named Kinneret for the Sea of Galilee. *Kinneret* was also the name of a Canaanite fortress city in the land of the tribe of Naphtali (Joshua), and apparently this city gave the sea its name. What is the origin of the name? The sages of the Talmud debated this question:

"And why is it called *Kinneret*? Because it sweetens its fruit like a *kinnara*" (Talmud Bavli, Megilla 6,1)

What is a *kinnara*? This Aramaic word can be interpreted in two ways. According to one interpretation, *kinnara* is a fruit. The researchers disagreed over the identity of this fruit. According to one suggestion, it was a jujube, a tree that also grows in the vicinity of the *Kinneret*.

According to another interpretation, it is a violin (in Aramaic *kinnara*). King David played the *kinnor* (violin), and it is one of the most important musical instruments played in the Temple. According to this interpretation, the sweetness with which the *Kinneret* sweetens its fruits is similar to the sweet sound of the violin.

Visit our Hebrew site to search for other Hebrew names!

A Modern Hebrew Word

Jet Lag - יַעֲפָת



With summer vacation ahead of us, and travel restrictions being lifted, we will once again experience יַעֲפָת (jet lag). *Ya'efet* is the tiredness and confusion felt after a long flight primarily across multiple time zones from the port of departure to the port of destination. The term יַעֲפָת was discussed, among other suggestions, in the early 1990's in the Academy's Committee for Words in Daily Use. The word *ya'efet* was created, at the suggestion of Dr. Ya'akov Levi, member of the Central Committee for Technological Terminology and in 1993, it was approved in the Plenary of the Academy.

Ya'efet has the equivalent nominal pattern of illnesses such as *ḥatsevet* (measles) and *addemet* (German measles). It combines the words *ayefut* (tiredness) and *te'ufa* (flight)—the root יעף is connected to two words *ayef* and *ya'ef* (by changing the order of the letters) as in the blessing in Shaḥarit "*haNoten laYa'ef ko'ah*"—who gives strength to the weary.

Alongside words like *la'uf* (to fly), *he'if* (throw something in the air), *ofef* (to flutter, to fly) is the phrase *bi'af* which means rapidly, in the twinkling of an eye.

Check out our Hebrew site to learn more about this and other Hebrew words!



Holidays and Jewish Texts

צוֹם, תַּעֲנִית - Fast

Two of the fasts marking the destruction of the Temple fall soon, the fast of 17 Tammuz and Tisha b'Av. In Hebrew, there are two words for refraining from eating and drinking, צוֹם (*tsom*) and תַּעֲנִית (*ta'anit*). The main difference between them is linguistic: the word צוֹם is very common in the bible, while the word תַּעֲנִית is first documented in biblical literature from the Second Temple period and has been prevalent since the time of the Sages.

It seems that the word צוֹם means to refrain from eating and drinking, as is evident in parallels in languages such as Aramaic and Arabic.

The word תַּעֲנִית stems from the root עני (affliction). In the Bible, תַּעֲנִית connotes refraining from food (according to the accepted interpretation). In the context of Yom Kippur, it appears three times in the Tora: "And you shall afflict your souls" (Leviticus 16:31; 23: 32; Numbers 29:7). In the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Wherefore have we fasted and You have not seen / Wherefore have we afflicted our soul and You take no knowledge..." (Isaiah 58:3).

In contemporary Hebrew, the word צוֹם means refraining from eating and drinking, both in religious contexts (the fast of the 17th of Tammuz, the fast of Ramadan) and in other contexts such as fasting prior to a medical examination. The word תַּעֲנִית (*ta'anit*) is rarer and more literary and is often used in religious contexts, including Ta'anit Esther, Ta'anit dibbur, Ta'anit ḥalom.

[Visit our Hebrew site for other Holiday resources](#)



News, Updates and Events

Honorary Fellow of the Academy to Nati Bialistok-Cohen

The Academy of the Hebrew Language awarded the title of Honorary Fellow to the Director General of the Center for the Blind in Israel and a member of the Academy's Public Council, Mr. Nati Bialistok-Cohen. **The title was awarded in a ceremony** that took place in April at the Academy's courtyard in the presence of the Mayor of Jerusalem, Mr. Moshe Lion, and the President of the Academy, Prof. Moshe Bar-Asher, and with the participation of family members, friends and representatives of the Academy. Nati Bialistok-Cohen contributes to and promotes two central projects of the Academy of the Hebrew Language – the Minve and the Historical Dictionary Project. He is, without a doubt, an outstanding true friend of the Academy. At the conclusion of the event, Mr. Bialistok-Cohen thanked the Academy, and spoke about the power of the language to create and innovate: "Hebrew has instilled in us the power to build a new world, to create a startup industry, agriculture that is a model for the whole world, science and creativity, and everything under the wing of the Hebrew language. When everyone speaks the same language, immense power is created. I sincerely hope that we will speak one common language, for the glory of our people in the Land of Israel."

Scientific Conference on Language and Leadership

The Academy of the Hebrew Language held a scientific conference focusing on Hebrew and its status in the generation of the Yishuv leadership in the first half of the twentieth century and beyond, and on the leaders themselves - President Haim Weizmann and his contemporaries. The conference was held with the release of Haim Weizmann's recent biography written by Prof. Jehuda Reinharz of Brandeis University and Prof. Motti Golani of Tel Aviv University. It took place at the Bible Lands Museum in Jerusalem on June 1, and dealt with modern Hebrew at the centenary of the British Mandate.

The conference included three fascinating sessions and concluded with a festive reception for all participants. The conference was also live streamed on the Academy website, and has had hundreds of viewers on YouTube. If you are interested in watching, [you can view it in Hebrew on YouTube here](#).

Honoring the Israel Broadcast Authority

The Academy of the Hebrew Language held **a gathering in honor of the senior newscasters and broadcasters** of the Israel Broadcast Authority. In a Plenary session of the Academy, present and past broadcasters gathered to hear thanks and appreciation for their contribution to Israeli culture and the Hebrew language.

President of the Academy, Professor Moshe Bar-Asher, opened the exceptional and moving event, "It is a privilege and pleasure for us—the Members of the Academy—to give you the respect you so deserve. We have been privileged to have broadcasters with fluent Hebrew, precise pronunciation and language that is pleasing to the ear". Professor Moshe Florentin, Member of the Academy, gave a lecture on Hebrew and its accents. Senior broadcasters, Dan Kaner, Zvi Salton and Hayuta Dvir, whose names are well-known to Israelis, spoke about the different aspects of their work. The evening's final speaker, Ruth Almagor-Ramon, is a Member of the Academy and the current language advisor of the Israel Broadcasting Authority. Almagor-Ramon spoke about the close cooperation between the Academy and the outstanding newscasters and broadcasters in bringing proper Hebrew to the Israeli public.

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